

Rally de España: Preview Toyota Yaris WRC set for crucial mixed-surface spectacular

The TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team is confident of taking its strong form onto both gravel and asphalt in the season's only true mixed-surface event, Rally de España on October 24-27. Heading into the penultimate round of the year, the stakes are high: Toyota Yaris WRC driver Ott Tänak leads the drivers' standings by 28 points and could clinch his first title in Spain, while the team is just eight points from the lead in the manufacturers' standings after wins in three of the last four events.



2019 Yaris WRC

The rally is based in Salou on the Costa Daurada to the south of Barcelona and consists of one day of medium-speed gravel stages followed by two days on smooth and fast asphalt roads that are often likened to racing circuits. Uniquely, teams convert their cars from gravel to asphalt specification in an extended evening service after Friday's opening leg, and drivers have to quickly adjust to the change of surface the following morning.

Following shakedown and a ceremonial start in Salou on Thursday, this year's rally begins on Friday with two loops of three stages held mostly on gravel, although there are some sections on asphalt in the La Fatarella – Vilalba stage, the longest of the weekend at 38.85 kilometres. Saturday has two loops of three asphalt stages, followed by a short stage in Salou itself. Sunday consists of two runs over the Riudecanyes and La Mussara stages, separated by service in Salou, with the second pass of the latter test as the rally-ending Power Stage.

Quotes:

Tommi Mäkinen (Team Principal)

"We are on a good run at the moment and we need to keep pushing for the best results in Spain and Australia, with all the drivers', co-driver's, and manufacturers' titles in our sights. We have been preparing for Spain just as planned, with our pre-event tests on both gravel and asphalt. The mix of surfaces can mean that this is a tricky rally to get right, but we are confident in how our car performs on both types of road. At the same time, we are taking nothing for granted and everyone is working hard to provide our drivers with the strongest car possible."



Martin Järveoja and Ott Tänak

Ott Tänak (Driver car 8)

"I'm looking forward to Spain. As always, I will aim to do my best, but we need to be smart. We know that it could be tricky for us on the first day, as we'll be running first on the road on gravel. The weather could change things too: We saw last year that we can easily get rain in Spain at this time of year. But I believe that our performance should be good on both surfaces: We were already fast on this event last year and hopefully that will be the case again this time, and we can get the result we need."



Miikka Anttila and Jari-Matti Latvala

Jari-Matti Latvala (Driver car 10)

"The combination of gravel and asphalt in Spain is something I've always really liked. The gravel stages are quite smooth but very slippery, while the asphalt roads are best that we have in the championship: really smooth and fast. I had a test on asphalt in Spain last week and I had a really nice feeling in the car. I'm very motivated and looking forward to being back in the car, fighting for the best possible result as we try to win the manufacturers' championship again."



Seb Marshall and Kris Meeke

Kris Meeke (Driver car 5)

"Spain is one of my favourite events on the calendar. I've always enjoyed the mixed-surface challenge, and last time I did the rally in 2017, I managed to take the win. I've had a really good feeling with the Yaris WRC on asphalt so far, so I'm especially looking forward to that part of it. On gravel, we know there will be a couple of drivers who will have ideal road positions and can be very strong on this event. With the manufacturers' championship being so close now, we've got a job to do and we're certainly going to have to be on our game."

The statistics (Rally de España):

Year	Ott Tänak	Jari-Matti Latvala	Kris Meeke
2018	6	8	-
2017	3	DNF	1
2016	6	14	DNF
2015	41	2	5
2014	-	2	19
2013	-	2	-

What happened last year?

Ott Tänak led the rally until a flat tyre on Saturday morning relegated him down the order. On the final day he was able to move up to sixth overall and post the best time on the Power Stage. Jari-Matti Latvala fought for the victory before contact with a barrier damaged a wheel and left him to finish eighth, one place behind Esapekka Lappi.



Yaris WRC Rally de España 2018

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team is inspired by the motto: "ALL FOR WIN" as it competes throughout the 2019 season. Our goal in 2019 is to fight for all three crowns. All team members are aiming for this big goal together. We look forward to your continuous support!



Press release

URL: <https://toyotagazooracing.com/release/2019/#>

Press Kit and Event Pictures will be uploaded here

URL: <https://www.tgr-dam.com>

Last event summary report is uploaded here

URL: <https://toyotagazooracing.com/wrc/report/2019/12/summary.html>

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