

## Rallye Monte-Carlo – Day Four Report

- Hyundai Motorsport has secured an important podium finish at Rallye Monte-Carlo, getting the 2023 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) off to a positive start
- Thierry Neuville and Martijn Wydaeghe finished the 18-stage rally in third overall, showing solid pace against the competition – including two stage wins
- Dani Sordo/Cándido Carrera and Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm made advancements over the weekend with both crews concluding the event more optimistically than they had started.

Monte-Carlo, Monaco

January 22, 2023 – Hyundai Motorsport has opened its 2023 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) account with a podium finish and a three-car finish in the challenging Rallye Monte-Carlo round.

Thierry Neuville and co-driver Martijn Wydaeghe cemented the top-three position that they had held since Friday, having shown encouraging speed and reliability over the weekend. The pair shuffled the established pack on Saturday, taking two stage wins to stake their podium claim. Third place for the Belgian duo gets Hyundai Motorsport's tenth season in WRC off to a solid start at an event where the team struggled twelve months ago.

Sunday's itinerary covered a repeated run of Luceram / Lantosque (SS15/SS17, 18.82km) and the iconic La Bollène-Vésubie / Col de Turini (SS16/SS18, 15.12km). Atypically dry tarmac roads were sprinkled with salt, which created slippery conditions in places, so it was far from a straightforward final day. All three Hyundai crews targeted a clean finish, in stark contrast to the last season's Monte, although Sunday's stages weren't without a few nervous moments.

Dani Sordo and Esapekka Lappi continued to seek improved form from their Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid cars on the final four stages. Sordo found a step change in performance alongside co-driver Cándido Carrera, as he shifted into top-five stage pace despite battling an ongoing hybrid issue which limited power up the Col de Turini. The Spaniards ultimately finished seventh overall, one spot ahead of their team-mates Lappi and co-driver Janne Ferm. The Finns, in their first WRC event with the team, made valuable gains during the weekend as they acclimatised to their new car.

Despite the lack of wintry conditions on this year's Rallye Monte-Carlo, the event has proven to be a complex and strategic event, in which tyre choice and management has played a key role. The team has adapted quickly to the unexpectedly dry tarmac conditions, making set-up adjustments over the 18 stages to enable the crews to perform at their best. While there is undoubtedly still work to be done for future rallies, there are plenty of positives to take from the first round.

### Crew Notes: Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe (#11 Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid)

- Two stage wins on Saturday afternoon outlined the crew's podium intentions
- Fourth place in the Power Stage delivered two extra championship points

Neuville said: *"I gave everything I could this weekend and while we would have preferred to be much more in the fight for victory, it is still a good start into a new season, especially compared to last year. The speed was not that great, but it also wasn't too bad, so there's no need to be too alarmed. We had more tyre wear than the others and even taking risks we weren't in a position to match the lead times. We had to be clever, which we were, and we kept the car on the road. In the end, it's great to be back on the podium in Monte-Carlo. Sweden will be an entirely different type of event and we should be in the game."*



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**Crew Notes: Dani Sordo/Cándido Carrera (#6 Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid)**

- Spaniards found renewed confidence on Sunday despite an ongoing hybrid issue
- Strong top-five stage time in SS15 was a marked step forward

Sordo said: *"Honestly, this weekend has not been to our standards or expectations. We had a lot of problems with the hybrid yesterday, and again on today's final stages. I know the team has done all it can to give me a car to perform better. It's disappointing to have the problems, but we have tackled things well as a team and can look forward with some encouragement. I have enjoyed myself a bit more today and the times have also been better considering the issues – that's a positive, at least."*

**Crew Notes: Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (#4 Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid)**

- Finns made their Hyundai Motorsport debut with a weekend of useful experience
- Breakthrough on Saturday helped the crew improve their feeling and pace in the car

Lappi said: *"We have gathered important mileage this weekend and made some steps forward. On tarmac, you need to be smart if you want to make the times faster. You must get the indication from the car that you can drive it faster. I think we did just that this weekend. We saw we were not on the pace, so we slowly developed ourselves and made some progress. We are now much better prepared for Croatia, the next tarmac event. There are just small details we need to work on to be as fast as we want to be. This is the trickiest thing because the level is so high, you need perfection to match the top times."*

Hyundai Motorsport Team Principal Cyril Abiteboul said: *"Third place is not a bad start, but we should not lose sight of the fact we have a bigger vision, fighting for wins and championship titles, so we must not get complacent. There has been lots to digest for myself and for the team; we have had strong drivers, encouraging moments, long days, and lots of work. A podium is nice but we're still 45 seconds from the win. Ogier has been the benchmark all weekend and that should act as inspiration for us all to get stronger. We need to understand what we're missing and come back with a response. Ultimately, we need more pace. We have tried to be more aggressive with the car set-up and in hindsight we should have done this earlier in the weekend, which might have given a better dynamic and more confidence to the crews. Thierry had a strong weekend, being decisive and smart with the team, his set-up, and the tyres. For Dani and Esapekka, it was a valuable learning weekend in tricky conditions. I have been pleased to see progress each day from both. Unfortunately, we had a recurrence of the hybrid issues on Dani's car, so we need to understand from a team perspective what happened to avoid it happening again."*

**Next rally**

- The snow-covered roads of Rally Sweden feature next on the 2023 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) for round two of the 13-event season
- Taking place February 9-12, Hyundai Motorsport will field three cars, with Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe, Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm and Craig Breen/James Fulton at the helm.

## Final Overall Classification –Rallye Monte-Carlo

1	S. Ogier	V. Landais	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid	3:12:02.0
2	K. Rovvanperä	J. Halttunen	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid	+18.8
<b>3</b>	<b>T. Neuville</b>	<b>M. Wydaeghe</b>	<b>Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid</b>	<b>+44.6</b>
4	E. Evans	S. Martin	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid	+1:12.4
5	O. Tänak	M. Järveoja	Ford Puma Rally1 Hybrid	+2:34.9
6	T. Katsuta	A. Johnston	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 Hybrid	+3:32.6
<b>7</b>	<b>D. Sordo</b>	<b>C. Carrera</b>	<b>Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid</b>	<b>+3:47.5</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>E. Lappi</b>	<b>J. Ferm</b>	<b>Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid</b>	<b>+3:51.3</b>
9	N. Gryazin	K. Aleksandrov	Škoda Fabia RS	+10:03.4
10	Y. Rossel	A. Dunand	Citroën C3 Rally2	+10:07.9

## 2023 FIA World Rally Championship for Manufacturers' Standings

After round 1

1	Toyota Gazoo Racing World Rally Team	51
<b>2</b>	<b>Hyundai Shell Mobis World Rally Team</b>	<b>27</b>
3	M-Sport Ford World Rally Team	16

## 2023 FIA World Rally Championship for Drivers' Standings

After round 1

1	S. Ogier	26
2	K. Rovvanperä	23
<b>3</b>	<b>T. Neuville</b>	<b>17</b>
4	E. Evans	15
5	O. Tänak	14
6	T. Katsuta	8
<b>7</b>	<b>D. Sordo</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>E. Lappi</b>	<b>4</b>

All results remain subject to official FIA confirmation.

### **About Hyundai Motorsport GmbH**

Established on 19 December 2012, Hyundai Motorsport GmbH is responsible for Hyundai's global motorsport activities, including the FIA World Rally Championship, FIA ETCR – eTouring Car World Cup, and Customer Racing projects. Hyundai Motorsport quickly established a strong reputation in WRC, finishing as runners-up in the manufacturers' championship on three consecutive occasions between 2016 and 2018 before claiming the title in 2019 and 2020. The company then embraced the all-new technical challenge of WRC's hybrid era in 2022, resulting in the birth of the Hyundai i20 N Rally1 Hybrid. Since the establishment of its Customer Racing activities in September 2015, Hyundai Motorsport has become a trusted partner for teams and drivers looking for success on the rally stages or on racetracks around the world. From its competitive i20 N Rally2 to the front-running Elantra N TCR, Hyundai Motorsport-built cars have claimed victory in several championships, including national rally series in France and Spain, as well as titles in the FIA World Touring Car Cup (WTCR) in 2018, 2019 and 2022. Designed and built at its Alzenau headquarters, the Veloster N ETCR heralded an exciting new era in 2019, in which electric racing became one of the company's pillars. Embarking on its tenth year in 2023, Hyundai Motorsport continues to unify WRC, Customer Racing, and electric racing, which play instrumental roles in driving Hyundai's global high-performance N brand and are supporting an important perception shift for the Hyundai brand around the world.

Further information about Hyundai Motorsport is available at: <http://motorsport.hyundai.com>

### **About Hyundai Motor Company**

Established in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is present in over 200 countries with more than 120,000 employees dedicated to tackling real-world mobility challenges around the globe. Based on the brand vision 'Progress for Humanity,' Hyundai Motor is accelerating its transformation into a Smart Mobility Solution Provider. The company invests in advanced technologies such as robotics and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) to bring about revolutionary mobility solutions, while pursuing open innovation to introduce future mobility services. In pursuit of sustainable future for the world, Hyundai will continue its efforts to introduce zero emission vehicles equipped with industry-leading hydrogen fuel cell and EV technologies.

More information about Hyundai Motor and its products can be found at:

<http://worldwide.hyundai.com> or <http://globalpr.hyundai.com/>

To download high-resolution photos for editorial use, full drivers' profiles, as well as other useful press information about the team please refer to:

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