

2010 Rally Bulgaria : WRC Round 7 of 13 : 9th - 11th July

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1. Final Unofficial Leaderboard

POS	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	#	VEHICLE	HH:MM:SS
1st.	S. Loeb	D. Elena	#1	C4 WRC	3:02:39.2
2nd.	D. Sordo	M. Marti	#2	C4 WRC	3:03:8.7
3rd.	P. Solberg	C. Patterson	#11	C4 WRC	3:03:15.5
4th.	S. Ogier	J. Ingrassia	#7	C4 WRC	3:04:34.2
5th.	M. Hirvonen	J. Lehtinen	#3	Focus (Mk2) WRC	3:05:57
6th.	J. Latvala	M. Anttila	#4	Focus (Mk2) WRC	3:07:7.7
7th.	P. Andersson	J. Andersson	#6	Focus (Mk2) WRC	3:08:4.4
8th.	F. Turan	. Sziros	#41	307 WRC	3:09:43.2
9th.	M. Wilson	S. Martin	#5	Focus (Mk2) WRC	3:12:7.8
10th.	H. Solberg	I. Minor	#12	Fiesta (Mk6) S2000	3:15:45
11th.	K. Räikkönen	K. Lindström	#8	C4 WRC	3:16:45.6

2. Final News

Citroen has completed dominant performance at the weekend (9-11 July 2010) in the debut Bulgarian round of the World Rally Championship, with six times World Champion Sébastien Loeb leading home a Citroen 1-2-3-4 for the first time ever in the WRC.

Fellow Citroën World Rally Team driver, Dani Sordo, held on to second place despite a spirited performance by Peter Solberg who claimed third place in his privateer Citroen C4, with Citroën Junior Team driver Sébastien Ogier rounding out Citroën's dominant quartet.

The result gives Loeb a 51 point lead over Ogier in the battle for the World Championship Drivers' title and Citroën now leads the manufacturers' race for the title by 47 points ahead of Ford.

BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team drivers Mikko Hirvonen and Jarmo Lehtinen and team-mates Jari-Matti Latvala and Miikka Anttila finished fifth and sixth respectively after struggling to match the Citroen pace.

Stobart M-Sport Ford debutants P-G Andersson and Jonas Andersson finished seventh in a Focus RS World Rally Car after a troublefree rally. Team-mates Matthew Wilson and Scott Martin were ninth. The Ford Fiesta S2000 clinched first and second in the Group N category. Henning Solberg and Ilka Minor were 10th overall in their debut in the orange car, with Dennis Kuipers and Fred Miclotte taking second in 13th overall.

Rally Bulgaria was the first sealed surface round of the WRC since October last year. It was based in Borovets, the country's old ski resort, and the route offered 14 speed tests covering 354.10km over three days of competition. One special stage was cancelled during the second leg for safety reasons, reducing the competitive distance to 329.24km. Blistering heat was expected but drivers encountered rain, fog and cool temperatures until the thermometer finally rose to higher levels on today's last leg.

4. Team by Team News

Citroen Total World Rally Team

<http://citroen.rallye-info.com/teams.asp?sid=1>

Loeb laid the foundations for his 58th WRC win right from the start, winning all four stages on Day One, finishing the opening leg with a 28.1 second advantage. On Day two he consolidated his position and opened his lead out to 40.5 seconds. Sordo spent most of the event playing cat and mouse with Petter Solberg, with Citroën privateer putting on a charge from Day 2 after he made some refinements to the set up of his Citroën.

#1 : Sebastien Loeb/Daniel Elena: Loeb kept up the pace to score his 58th WRC victory increasing his lead in the Drivers' World Championship to 51 points: "It's all gone off like a dream, really. We began with a good first day and we consolidated our position on the next one. Today was a bit more relaxed! I like the first Rally Bulgaria! It's got good stages that highlight the qualities of the drivers and the cars. Bravo to Dani who drove a great race."

#2 : Daniel Sordo/Marc Marti: The Sordo / Solberg duel continued in the next two stages. Dani fended off all his rival's attacks and kept his second place: "I've achieved my aim in this rally. Seb made a decisive break in the opening stages and once again he was the quickest this weekend. My role was to bag as many points as possible for Citroën for the Manufacturers' World Championship title, and I also wanted to win my duel with Petter. My second podium on the trot has boosted my confidence for the rest of the season."

BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team

<http://ford.rallye-info.com/teams.asp?sid=2>

BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team drivers Mikko Hirvonen and Jarmo Lehtinen and team-mates Jari-Matti Latvala and Miikka Anttila finished fifth and sixth respectively in Rally Bulgaria today. It was the first occasion that Bulgaria has hosted a round of the FIA World Rally Championship and the asphalt roads in the mountains near Sofia provided a stern test for the Focus RS World Rally Car pair.

#3 : Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen: Hirvonen ended the opening day in fourth, finding increased pace during the afternoon after lowering the suspension settings on his Focus RS WRC. However, he dropped a

place on the leaderboard early in the second leg after a poor tyre choice. The team's detailed weather information provided by an expert weather service in Britain suggested dry conditions for the opening test, but Pirelli's hard compound PZero tyres were totally unsuited when the roads turned out to be wet.

The 29-year-old Finn lost a minute and, with no realistic opportunity of regaining that time, he settled for a solid points finish. "I had a good feeling with the car and enjoyed the stages, which were extremely fast in places. But the times weren't as good as we hoped, so we have to keep working hard to improve. With no chance of moving up today, we tested a few things for future rallies. Today was better and I think we learned something that will help on the remaining asphalt rallies," he said.

"Fifth brings good points for the team but I hoped for more. Now I'm looking forward to my home rally in Finland later this month where I want to fight for a win," added Hirvonen.

#4 : Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila: Latvala ended the first day in fifth, just 10.3sec behind his team-mate, after stiffening his car's suspension settings midway through the leg. The 25-year-old Finn made the same tyre choice yesterday morning and also lost a minute, and a damaged power steering system in the afternoon loop cost another 30 seconds. He, too, settled for a cautious drive through the final leg.

"I tested soft compound tyres this morning as an experiment to see how they would work in these conditions," he said. "The car was unbalanced and I switched to harder tyres for the final two stages. It was a difficult weekend but I had a clear run and made no mistakes. I can take confidence from finishing after my retirement in Portugal on the last round. I was hoping for a place in the top five, so I'm a little disappointed not to achieve that.

"My driving on asphalt has improved since last year. Earlier in the season I raced in the Nürburgring 24 Hours race and that helped on the asphalt here. When I drove on a circuit with other cars around and sometimes saw them going faster, I realised I might be taking the wrong line in some corners or could exit bends more quickly. It was a good learning process," he added.

Citroen Junior Team

<http://citroen.rallye-info.com/teams.asp?sid=1>

Citroen's Junior Rally team put in a performance that, once again, belied their 'junior' status at the weekend's (9-11 July 2010) World Rally Championship Rally of Bulgaria with Sébastien Ogier claiming fourth place behind a Citroën dominated podium, lifting him to second place in the battle for the 2010 Driver's title, while Kimi Raikkonen fought back from a first day 'off' climbing back through the field from 26th place to claim 11th place.

#7 : Sébastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia: Sébastien Ogier eventually finished fourth behind three more Citroën C4 WRCs, having set fastest time on the final stage. The Frenchman was able to draw an extremely positive conclusion from the first asphalt rally of the season.

"It's a great result for the championship," he said. "We've shown as of now that we're able to fight for a podium on asphalt, which is extremely promising for the rest of the season. Now we're going to concentrate on the forthcoming Rally Finland, which we'll be contesting for the first time with the Citroën Total World Rally Team. "

#8 : Kimi Räikkönen/Kaj Lindström: On the final loop of stages, Kimi continued reducing the gap to the top 10 by taking more than 45 seconds from Henning Solberg in Muhovo 2. But the Finn made a small mistake on the final stage and had to settle for 11th overall in the end. "At least we tried!" he said at the finish.

"Our feeling with the car was very good throughout the rally and that's extremely positive for what is only our first asphalt event. We keep on learning and I have the feeling that we're making progress now."

Stobart VK M-Sport Ford World Rally Team

<http://ford.rallye-info.com/teams.asp?sid=2>

New Stobart M-Sport Ford team-mate, Per-Gunnar Andersson and co-driver Jonas Andersson, put in a strong performance in Bulgaria over the weekend as the duo contested the seventh round of the FIA World

2010 WRC Drivers Championship Points:

EVENTS >															TOTAL
		L													
1st	 Sébastien Loeb	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	151
2nd	 Sébastien Ogier	1	1	8	1	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
	r	0	5		2	8	5	2							
3rd	 Mikko Hirvonen	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	86
		5	2		5	2	2	0							
4th	 Jari-Matti Latvala	1	1	1	4	2	0	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
		5	0	8		5									
5th	 Petter Solberg	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	78
		8	8	5	8	0	0	5							
6th	 Daniel Sordo	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	67
		2		2		0	5	8							
7th	 Matthew Wilson	6	0	1	6	8	8	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
	n			0											
8th	 Frederico Villagra	-	6	6	8	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
	ra														
9th	 Henning Solberg	8	8	2	0	6	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
	g														
10th	 Kimi Räikkönen	0	0	4	1	-	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
					0										

6. Next Event

The championship returns to gravel later this month for one of the sport's classic events. Rally Finland, complete with its high speed roller coaster jumps, is based in Jyväskylä on 29 - 31 July.

