



CITROËN TOTAL WORLD RALLY TEAM

2009 FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

www.citroen-wrc.com

Rally GB (October 22-25, 2009) – Day 3

Victory and a sixth world title for Loeb/Elena*

It was an emotional final day of Rally GB for the Citroën Total WRT. In spite of having led from the outset, Sébastien Loeb and Daniel Elena only saw the rally swing decisively in their favour on the penultimate stage.

With their 54th world class win, the Franco-Monegasque pairing sealed their sixth consecutive World Championship. After fighting until the final minutes of the rally, Dani Sordo and Marc Marti finished just one second off second place.

The third day of Rally GB was shorter than the first two – but it still proved a real challenge. The competitors had to complete two runs through the Port Talbot and Rheola stages, which equated to nearly 80km without any breaks for service.

Although he held a 30 second lead over Mikko Hirvonen, Sébastien Loeb knew he couldn't afford to relax during this decisive final leg. In Port Talbot 1 (SS13), the five-time World Champion lost eight tenths to his rival: "It's not a bad time, but I felt a loss in power just after the start of the stage. I hope it's not too serious..."

Several phone calls later, the Citroën Racing engineers had diagnosed a 'fresh air' problem, which is a system that optimises the performance of the turbocharger. In SS14 (Rheola 1), Seb lost 11 seconds in one go: "This stage was much twistier and our problem is quite a big handicap in those sections. We've still got a lead of 18.2 seconds, we'll need to give everything."

Dani Sordo's morning wasn't any more relaxing. After a good start on SS13, he lost seven seconds to Petter Solberg in SS14: "We swiped a big rock with the right rear, but the car isn't too badly damaged. I don't want to lose my place on the podium, so I need to keep on pushing to stay ahead of Petter."

The rally took another big swing in SS15, when Mikko Hirvonen lost more than a minute after having to stop to close his bonnet! "It's a great stroke of luck, but we've still got a tough stage to come," emphasised Sébastien. At the same time, Dani Sordo had come within 0.9 seconds of second place!

Each member of the Citroën Total World Rally Team was holding their breath during the last stage. Sébastien and Daniel put in a controlled performance to secure their 54th victory and sixth world title. At the same time, Dani and Marc were attempting to snatch second place from Mikko Hirvonen, but the Finn was one tenth faster and retained the advantage.



After returning to Cardiff, the team and drivers celebrated together enthusiastically. "There were so much pressure right up to the end of the rally," said Sébastien Loeb amidst a swarm of microphones. "We had a good start to the year, but then encountered a few problems. However, we got back on top of things just before this rally. Finally, we've managed to win the title again, on the penultimate stage. Mikko didn't give up and I had to push right to the finish. It's never easy to compare one title with another, but I think this is the best one in terms of the sporting battle we had.

When you win a title with three rallies to go, the pressure isn't the same because you've always got another opportunity to do it. This was the final rally and we couldn't afford to get it wrong. Everybody expected us to win, but I can tell you that nothing was certain until we reached the finish.

That's why it means so much to us." As well as being delighted for his team-mate, Dani Sordo was pleased with his third place overall: "When we got to within nine tenths of Mikko in the penultimate stage, we told ourselves we had to give it a go and we pushed to the limit. We believed we could do it, but he managed to hold out. I'm satisfied with a third-place finish in the championship, and that I made a real contribution to Citroën's success. We've had another very good season."

"Three weeks after winning the Manufacturers' title, we've rounded off this extraordinary season with the Drivers' title, too," concluded Frédéric Banzet, Director of Automobiles Citroën. "We'd got it back to five titles each, but now Seb's slipped back ahead with his sixth! We're pleased to have the best team, and best driver and co-driver, in the WRC. Rallying fits perfectly with Citroën's strategy; it's an integral part of the brand's DNA. Motor sport is important, and particularly when you win... and that's what we've achieved again this year."

* Subject to the official publication of the results by the FIA.

THE RALLY BY NUMBERS

	Sébastien Loeb / Daniel Elena		Dani Sordo / Marc Marti	
	Stage	Overall	Stage	Overall
SS13 : Port Talbot 1 (17,41 km)	2nd +0''8	1st	4th +7''4	3rd +1'26''7
SS14 : Rheola 1 (22,51 km)	5th +11''2	1st	4th +9''5	3rd +1'25''0
SS15 : Port Talbot 2 (17,41 km)	1st	1st	2 nd +1''6	3rd +1'26''6
SS16 : Rheola 2 (22,51 km)	4th +19''6	1st	2nd +0''1	3rd +1'07''1

Fastest stage times

Day 1: SS1 to SS3: S. Loeb (Citröen C4), SS4: M. Hirvonen (Ford Focus), **SS5: S. Loeb**, SS6: M. Hirvonen.

Day 2: SS7: M. Hirvonen, SS8 and SS9: S. Loeb, SS10: M. Hirvonen, **SS11 and SS12: S. Loeb**.

Day 3: SS13 and 14: M. Hirvonen, SS15: S. Loeb, SS16: M. Hirvonen

Best performers: S. Loeb 9, M. Hirvonen 7.

Leaders: SS1 to SS16: S. Loeb.

Provisional final classification

1. Loeb/Elena	Citröen C4	3h16'25''4
2. Hirvonen/Lehtinen	Ford Focus	+1'06''1
3. Sordo/Marti	Citröen C4	+1'07''1
4. P. Solberg/Mills	Citröen C4	+1'28''1
5. H. Solberg/Menkerud	Ford Focus	+6'28''0
6. Wilson/Martin	Ford Focus	+7'46''0
7. Latvala/Anttila	Ford Focus	+12'11''9
8. Rautenbach/Barritt	Citröen C4	+14'27''8
9. Brynildsen/Giraudet	Skoda Fabia	+22'22''7
10. Araujo/Ramalho	Mitsubishi Lancer	+24'18''8...
13. Burkart/Kolbach	Citröen C4	+24'56''5...

FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP OFFICIAL CLASSIFICATION:

	IRL	NOR	CYP	POR	ARG	ITA	GRK	POL	FIN	AUS	ESP	GBR	TOT
1 Sébastien Loeb	10	10	10	10	10	5	0	2	8	8	10	10	93
2 Mikko Hirvonen	6	8	8	8	0	8	10	10	10	10	6	8	92
3 Dani Sordo	8	4	5	6	8	0	0	8	5	6	8	6	64
4 Jari-Matti Latvala	0	6	0	0	3	10	6	0	6	5	3	2	41
5 Petter Solberg	-	3	6	5	0	6	0	5	0	-	5	5	35
6 Henning Solberg	5	5	0	4	6	1	0	6	0	2	0	4	33
7 Matthew Wilson	2	2	4	0	4	3	0	4	1	3	2	3	28
8 Sébastien Ogier	3	0	0	0	2	0	8	0	3	4	4	0	24
9 Federico Villagra	-	-	2	2	5	0	5	-	0	1	1	-	16
10 Conrad Rautenbach	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	1	9
11 Mads Ostberg	-	0	-	3	-	2	2	0	0	-	-	0	7
12 Khalid Al Qassimi	1	-	1	1	-	0	3	-	0	-	0	0	6
13 Matti Rantanen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
14 Evgeny Novikov	-	0	0	0	-	4	0	0	0	-	0	-	4
15 Chris Atkinson	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
16 Krzysztof Holowczyc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
17 Jari Ketomaa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
18 Urmo Aava	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	1
19 Nasser Al Attiyah	-	-	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	0	1
20 L. Athanassoulas	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1

1 Citroën Total WRT	18	14	16	16	18	8	4	12	13	14	18	16	167
2 BP Ford Abu Dhabi	8	14	10	8	3	18	18	10	16	15	10	10	140
3 Stobart VK M-Sport	8	8	6	5	10	7	5	11	4	5	4	7	80
4 Citroën Junior Team	5	2	4	0	2	5	6	5	4	4	5	5	47
5 Munchi's Ford	-	-	3	4	5	0	6	-	2	1	2	-	23

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