



TÄNAK AND TOYOTA TRIUMPHANT IN ARGENTINA

30 April 2018

Ott Tänak and the Toyota Gazoo Racing World Rally Team secured an impressive victory on Rally Argentina, the young Estonian claiming his first win for the team in only his fifth event at the wheel of the Yaris WRC.

Tänak and co-driver Martin Järveoja dominated the all-gravel rally, holding the lead from the end of the first full day of competition on Friday through to its climax on Sunday. En route to the winner's podium, they won 10 stages and were able to control their advantage over the field through Sunday to finish more than 33 seconds clear of their nearest challengers.

Celebrating his success, Tänak said: "It is very special to take my first win with the team. We have been improving the car very quickly, and it is now pretty much how I like it. To dominate a rally like this for the first time is very nice, but it has definitely not been easy. Earlier in the weekend I was pushing a lot. As the gap was growing it was possible for us to control it more and more, and today we were more on the safe side. The direction is good and we are closing up in the championship. It is still fairly early in the season, so now we just need to keep going in the same way in the coming rallies."

Tommi Mäkinen, Team Principal, added: "This is an absolutely fantastic result for our team. It's Ott's first win for us and it has come on one of the hardest rallies. Everybody has seen that our car can perform in these conditions and that it is strong enough. For us to be so strong together this weekend is something that we couldn't have dreamt of before."

Espakka Lappi completed his first Rally Argentina in eighth place, his progress hampered by a succession of punctures through the weekend, including during Sunday's opening stage which cost him two places on the leaderboard. His pace was encouraging, however, on what is one of the toughest events on the World Rally Championship calendar. Jari-Matti Latvala's participation ended on Friday after hitting a rock, causing damage to his Yaris WRC that could not be repaired in time for a re-start.

Tänak and the Toyota team remain third in the drivers' and manufacturers' standings and have narrowed the gap on those ahead of them.

The championship will return to Europe for round six, Rally Portugal from 17 to 20 May. Based in Matosinhos near Porto in the north of the country, the event features classic stages on sandy and rocky roads. Grip can be difficult to find on the soft roads during the first pass through the stages, while rocks can be exposed and deep ruts can form during the second run.

FINAL RESULT, RALLY ARGENTINA

1 Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja (Toyota Yaris WRC) 3h43m28.9s

2 Thierry Neuville/Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) +37.7s

3 Dani Sordo/Carlos Del Barrio (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) +1m15.7s

4 Sebastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia (Ford Fiesta WRC) +1m58.6s

5 Andreas Mikkelsen/Anders Jaeger (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC) +2m02.6s

6 Elfyn Evans/Daniel Barritt (Ford Fiesta WRC) +3m06.3s

7 Kris Meeke/Paul Nagle (Citroen C3 WRC) +3m25.7s

8 Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (Toyota Yaris WRC) +4m32.6s

9 Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula (Ford Fiesta WRC) +5m38.6s

10 Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (Skoda Fabia R5) +12m15.8s

Retired after day 2 Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila (Toyota Yaris WRC)

ENDS