

Hyundai Motorsport aims for the podium as WRC heads to high-speed Rally Finland

- Hyundai Motorsport is hoping to secure its first Rally Finland podium in round eight of the 2016 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)
- The team will field a modified driver line-up with Kevin Abbring replacing the injured Dani Sordo in the #20 New Generation i20 WRC
- Abbring has joined Thierry Neuville (#3) and Hayden Paddon (#4) in a successful pre-event test session in Finland since Friday to prepare for this week's rally.

Alzenau, Germany

July 25, 2016 – Hyundai Motorsport has its sights set on a podium finish this weekend as the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) enters the second half of the 2016 season with Rally Finland.

The Alzenau-based team has a best result of fourth position in Finland (2015 – Thierry Neuville), a rally that features some of the fastest and toughest stages on the WRC calendar, as well as a daunting array of jumps.

Hyundai Motorsport is fielding a revised driver line-up for Rally Finland after Dani Sordo was ruled out of the event as a result of an injury sustained in a pre-event testing accident. In his place, Kevin Abbring will drive the #20 New Generation i20 WRC, joining Thierry Neuville (#3) and Hayden Paddon (#4).

All three drivers have been testing in Finland since Friday in a rescheduled pre-event test that has allowed them to get acquainted with the New Generation i20 WRC ahead of the rally. The team has identified the problem that caused Sordo's testing crash and has had a trouble-free test, giving cause for confidence in the potential of the New Generation i20 WRC on the fast and uncompromising Finnish terrain.

Hyundai Motorsport now aims to add to its impressive results so far in 2016. The team has taken two victories (Argentina and Sardinia) and an additional three podiums (Monte Carlo, Sweden and Poland). A maiden Finnish podium is next on the wish list.



Team Principal Michel Nandan commented: *"We want to get the second half of the 2016 season started in the same way we finished the first half – on the podium! We've had some decent performances in Finland in the past two seasons but we've not yet cracked the top-three, so that's our target this weekend. We have been carrying out our rescheduled pre-event testing since last Friday to finalise our preparations before the rally gets underway. We already identified the cause of Dani's crash and have taken all necessary steps to ensure we don't see a repeat of that issue. The PET has allowed us to verify the car performance and to give the three drivers – Thierry, Hayden and Kevin – the chance to prepare themselves fully."*

Neuville (#3 New Generation i20 WRC) and co-driver Nicolas Gilsoul have been enjoying a competitive run of form recently with a win in Sardinia and fourth place in Poland, just 0.8s off the podium. The Belgian pair achieved Hyundai Motorsport's best result in Finland, fourth place in last year's rally.

Neuville said: *"Finland is probably one of the most challenging rallies of the season. Everybody is always a bit nervous going there. It's a very fast event with huge grip and big jumps. You need to get everything 100% right to be fast and not make any mistakes. It's very enjoyable once you get a good feeling and you are 'on it'. It is the rally where you get the best sensations. But, it can be a difficult rally if you don't find the best settings and get a good feeling, then it can quickly turn into the worst rally of the season! Nicolas and myself have had some positive results recently, so we want to build on that in Finland."*

Paddon (#4 New Generation i20 WRC) is looking to capitalise on his and co-driver John Kennard's podium from earlier this month in Poland. The crew often draw comparisons between Finland's roads with rallies in their native New Zealand.

Paddon said: *"The result in Poland was really important for us and allowed us to bounce back after two tough results. I think Finland is the one we always look forward to the most. It's like the home of rallying, the Monaco Grand Prix of the World Rally Championship. It's a rally that I aspire to win one day, it's very high on my list! We have a good car and a good package this year, so for sure we are going to try and fight right up near the front. But the Scandinavians on home turf are also very fast so we'll have our work cut out for us. We're feeling up for the challenge."*

For Abbring (#20 New Generation i20 WRC) and co-driver Seb Marshall, Finland will be their third WRC event of the season after Portugal and Sardinia. It will, however, be the crew's first rally in the

New Generation i20 WRC – and their first time in a WRC car on the fastest roads in the championship.

Abbring commented: *“First of all, I would like to wish Dani a speedy recovery and thank Hyundai Motorsport for this opportunity. Our debut in the New Generation i20 WRC will be at rallying’s most challenging event. We’re obviously really excited for it, but we know that it’s a tall order. Rally Finland is just special; the roads are really fast and the fans are passionate about rallying. It has such an amazing atmosphere! The plan will be to continue to gain as much experience as possible and get more acquainted with the New Generation i20 WRC – I cannot wait to tackle the amazing stages this week.”*

Based once again in the popular university town of Jyväskylä and centred at the Paviljonki service park, Rally Finland features 24 special stages covering a competitive distance of 333.60km.

The action commences on Thursday evening with the Harju street stage in Jyväskylä and continues throughout the weekend with new routes and two stages unseen since 1999 and 1994. Friday’s stages are situated west towards Keuruu and include classic forest challenges Mökkiperä and Jukojärvi. Two passes through the world-famous Ouninpohja await on Saturday as well as Päijälä (23.50km) and short 4.23km blasts through Saalahti, one of several sprint tests introduced to help break up long liaison sections. Sunday’s line-up south east of the rally base will be unfamiliar to all having not been used this millennium.

Hyundai Motorsport Crews’ Info

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| <u>New Generation i20 WRC #3</u> Chassis number: 002 | | |
| | Thierry Neuville | Nicolas Gilsoul |
| DOB | 16 June 1988 | 5 February 1982 |
| First WRC event | 2009, Rally Catalunya | 2007, Rallye Monte-Carlo |
| WRC starts | 66 | 61 |
| WRC podiums | 14 | 14 |
| WRC wins | 2 | 2 |
| Rally Finland starts | 4 | 4 |
| Rally Finland previous results | 2012: 16 th , 2013: 2 nd , 2014: Ret, 2015: 4 th | 2012: 16 th , 2013: 2 nd , 2014: Ret, 2015: 4 th |

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| <u>New Generation i20 WRC #4</u> | | |
| Chassis number: 001 | | |
| | Hayden Paddon | John Kennard |
| DOB | 20 April 1987 | 11 February 1959 |
| First WRC event | 2007, Rally New Zealand | 1985, Rally Finland |
| WRC starts | 54 | 62 |
| WRC podiums | 4 | 5 |
| WRC wins | 1 | 1 |
| Rally Finland starts | 6 | 8 |
| Rally Finland previous results | 2010: 21 st (3 rd PWRC), 2011: 19 th (1 st PWRC), 2012: Ret., 2013: 11 th (3 rd WRC2), 2014: 8 th , 2015: Ret. | 1985: 44 th (8 th A5 class), 1989: Ret., 2010: 21 st (3 rd PWRC), 2011: 19 th (1 st PWRC), 2012: Ret., 2013: 11 th (3 rd WRC2), 2014: 8 th , 2015: Ret. |

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| <u>New Generation i20 WRC #20</u> | | |
| Chassis number: 007 | | |
| | Kevin Abbring | Sebastian Marshall |
| DOB | 20 January 1989 | 29 May 1988 |
| First WRC event | 2007, Rallye Deutschland | 2008, Rallye Deutschland |
| WRC starts | 31 | 29 |
| WRC podiums | – | – |
| WRC wins | – | – |
| Rally Finland starts | 2 | 4 |
| Rally Finland previous results | 2008: 33 rd (8 th JWRC), 2009, Ret. | 2010: Ret., 2011: 9 th WRC Academy, 2012: Ret., 2014: 35 th (3 rd JWRC) |

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About Hyundai Motorsport GmbH

Established on 19 December 2012, Hyundai Motorsport GmbH is responsible for Hyundai's global motorsport activities and primarily for its World Rally Championship programme. Based in Alzenau on the outskirts of Frankfurt in Germany, the company embarked on its debut season in the FIA World Rally Championship in 2014 with a bespoke team of skilled staff and a brand new car, the Hyundai i20 WRC. The team made a strong impression in its first year claiming podium results in Mexico and Poland, as well as a memorable 1-2 in Germany. In its second season, the team was involved in a closely fought battle for second place in the Manufacturers' Championship, adding more podiums and stage wins to its tally. For its third season in WRC, Hyundai Motorsport has developed a brand new car, the New Generation i20 WRC, which made its rally debut with a podium finish in Rallye Monte-Carlo in January 2016. The team registered its first win with the new car in Rally Argentina, the fourth round of the season.

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

About Hyundai Motor

Established in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is committed to becoming a lifetime partner in automobiles and beyond. The company leads the Hyundai Motor Group, an innovative business structure capable of circulating resources from molten iron to finished cars. Hyundai Motor has eight manufacturing bases and seven design & technical centers worldwide and in 2015 sold 4.96 million vehicles globally. With more than 110,000 employees worldwide, Hyundai Motor continues to enhance its product line-up with localised models and strives to strengthen its leadership in clean technology, starting with the world's first mass-produced hydrogen-powered vehicle, Tucson Fuel Cell and IONIQ, the world's first model with three electrified powertrains.

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 and complete press information about the WRC and Customer Racing projects, please refer to:

<https://motorsport.hyundai.com/en/press>

Username : HyundaiWRC

Password : hmsg2013

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