

Hyundai Motorsport aims to come back fighting in Sweden

- Hyundai Motorsport is aiming for its third consecutive podium finish in Rally Sweden, the second round of the 2017 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC)
- The team hopes to build on a positive performance at Rallye Monte-Carlo, in which it fought for victory with its new Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC
- A three-crew line-up will see Hayden Paddon, Thierry Neuville and Dani Sordo compete in cars #4, #5 and #6 respectively

Alzenau, Germany

February 3, 2017 – Hyundai Motorsport is ready to repeat its rally-leading pace from the opening round of the 2017 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC), as the team prepares to tackle round two, Rally Sweden, next week (8-11 February).

The Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC made an impressive debut in Monte-Carlo, with the team securing seven stage wins – including a dominant performance for Thierry Neuville and Nicolas Gilsoul in the Power Stage. The Belgian crew had led the rally by one minute before an unfortunate incident on the penultimate day handed over control to eventual winner Sébastien Ogier.

Hyundai Motorsport is taking all the positives from Monte-Carlo forward as it aims for its third consecutive podium finish on the stages of Sweden and Norway next weekend. The team will again field a three-crew entry into the rally with Hayden Paddon returning in the #4 car, Neuville in the #5 and Dani Sordo, who finished fourth in Monte-Carlo, back in the #6.

Setting up for Sweden

On a typical Rally Sweden the set-up of the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC has to be transformed to cope with the lower temperatures and snowy terrain – the hallmarks of any classic Swedish rally!

Aerodynamics can be affected with crews using the snow banks to guide the car. Extra spare parts are brought to the event, as the aero parts cannot be reinforced due to homologation restrictions. The front of the car is also susceptible to picking up snow and ice, so air filters need added protection.

Specific studded Michelin tyres will be used, which requires the car's differential to be set-up accordingly. The added engine power on the 2017-specification cars could cause tyre studs to loosen, which is another consideration. A good suspension is needed to tackle the big jumps, including the famous Colin's Crest in the Vargåsen stage.

Testing update

Although Rally Sweden is typically snowy, last year's edition proved that nothing is guaranteed. Hyundai Motorsport had to abort plans for a pre-event test in December due to conditions but enjoyed near perfect weather in a post-Monte test with Neuville. After a pause due to a lack of snow, testing resumed this week with Paddon and Sordo on driving duties with the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC for one day each.

Team Principal Michel Nandan commented: *"Rally Sweden will offer us a very different test to Monte-Carlo, which is something of a one-off. It's always been a good rally for us, so I hope we continue this trend. Monte showed us that our Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC is running competitively and, generally, reliably. We had a small power steering issue in the opening rally but we are on top of that now. We didn't really get the result we wanted in the first rally, but we saw the potential in our car from Thierry's performances and our seven stage wins. In fact, all the cars seem very close in terms of outright performance so it promises to be a fierce battle in each round of the Championship. Snow conditions have been changeable recently, which has resulted in a slightly disjointed test schedule. We are all hoping for plenty of the white stuff – and another classic Rally Sweden."*

Crew Notes: Paddon/Kennard (#4 Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)

Hyundai Motorsport's Kiwi crew of Paddon and Kennard put in an impressive display in Sweden last year. The duo claimed two stage wins on their way to second-place and are hopeful that they can produce a similarly strong performance when they take to this season's stages.

Paddon said: *"Rally Sweden is a bit of a winter wonderland. Along with Finland, it's one of my favourites. It is very fast and filled with lots of jumps. The sensation of driving on snow and with the snow banks is like no other. We came second in Sweden last year and we're hopeful that we can go one better this time out, especially given the speed of the new cars this season, and the potential shown by our Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC."*

Crew Notes: Neuville/Gilsoul (#5 Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)

Neuville and Gilsoul put in a Monte-Carlo masterclass in the opening rally of the 2017 until an unfortunate off ended their victory charge. Nonetheless, the Belgians are aiming to put that right in Sweden. Previous podium scorers in the event, having finished second in 2015, they are confident in their chances.

Neuville said: *"Rally Sweden is a unique event on the calendar, as it is the only event where the cars are fitted with proper studded tyres on the snow for the duration of the rally. Also it is one of the fastest rallies of the season, with the average speeds through some of the stages higher than anywhere else that we'll see this season. Obviously with the snow, the tyres and the high speeds, a lot of experience is necessary to mount a challenge, but I'm confident having competed here on many occasions. We have had some good results in previous years. We are looking forward to trying to build upon those with even more success – particularly after the promise and ultimate disappointment of Monte-Carlo."*

Crew Notes: Sordo/Martí (#6 Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)

Having secured a solid fourth-place finish in Monte Carlo's curtain raiser, Sordo and Martí are hopeful that they can find a better rhythm from their Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC in Sweden.

Sordo said: *"I think that everyone involved with the team would agree that Rally Sweden is a very special event. If we can get good conditions on the road with the snow and the snowbanks, it becomes a really enjoyable event, because the speed gets quicker and quicker. We had a good finish in Monte-Carlo, so we are looking to push on from there and try our best to get a strong result in Sweden."*

Rally Sweden 2017 at a Glance

Covering 18 stages over a competitive distance of 331.74km, Sweden is WRC's only true winter rally. Almost 58 per cent of the stage composition is new compared to 2016, including Friday's Hof-Finnskog test, which has never been used before.

In a bid to enjoy more wintry conditions, the service park moves to a more northerly location in Torsby this season.

The event will get underway on Thursday with a super special stage at the Färjestad Trotting Course in Karlstad, a 1.9km stage popular with spectators, which will be repeated on Saturday evening.

Friday's itinerary will once again see crews cross over the border into Norway but a mid-leg service will be re-introduced instead of the previous Tyre Fitting Zone.

Saturday's seven stages will feature two runs through Vargåsen with the Colin's Crest Award, twice won previously by Hyundai Motorsport (2014/2015) up for grabs for the longest jump.

Sunday's live TV Power Stage finishes in the Torsby service park.

-Ends-

Hyundai Motorsport Crews' Info

Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC #4		
Chassis number: 003		
	Hayden Paddon	John Kennard
DOB	20 April 1987	11 February 1959
First WRC event	2007, Rally New Zealand	1985, Rally Finland
WRC starts	61	69
WRC podiums	4	5
WRC wins	1	1
Rally Sweden starts	3	3
Rally Sweden best result	2nd	2nd
Rally Sweden previous results	2012: 23rd (4th SWRC)	2012: 23rd (4th SWRC)
	2015: 5th	2015: 5th
	2016: 2nd	2016: 2nd

Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC #5

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	73	68
WRC podiums	19	19
WRC wins	2	2
Rally Sweden starts	5	6
Rally Sweden best result	2nd	2nd
Rally Sweden previous results	2012: 12th	2008: 30th (16th N4 class)
	2013: 5th	2012: 12th
	2014: 28th	2013: 5th
	2015: 2nd	2014: 28th
	2016: 14th	2015: 2nd
		2016: 14th

Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC #6

Chassis number: 001

	Dani Sordo	Marc Martí
DOB	2 May 1983	1 October 1966
First WRC event	2003, Rally Catalunya	1992, Rally Catalunya
WRC starts	141	176
WRC podiums	40	46
WRC wins	1	3
Rally Sweden starts	7	8
Rally Sweden best result	4th	4th
Rally Sweden previous results	2006: 16th	1998: 36th (6th A7 class)
	2007: 12th	2003: 9th
	2008: 6th	2004: 5th
	2010: 4th	2006: 16th
	2012, 2013: Ret.	2007: 12th
	2016: 6th	2008: 6th
		2010: 4th
		2016: 6th

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 year in WRC, Hyundai Motorsport developed a brand new car, the New Generation i20 WRC. The team enjoyed its most successful season to date in 2016 with two victories (Argentina and Sardinia) and a total of 12 individual podium results, finishing second in the Manufacturers' Championship. With a number of key technical regulation changes introduced for the 2017 season, Hyundai Motorsport has developed a brand new car, the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC, with which it will contest its fourth 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 centres 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, full drivers' profiles, as well as other useful press information about the team please refer to:

<http://press.motorsport.hyundai.com>

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