

Pre-Season Q+A with Sébastien Loeb

- Hyundai Motorsport continues its countdown to the 2019 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) with an intense January schedule
- A revised crew line-up will see nine-time WRC champion Sébastien Loeb join Thierry Neuville, Andreas Mikkelsen and Dani Sordo
- Loeb has already visited the team's Alzenau base and will test the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC shortly before Rallye Monte-Carlo.

Alzenau, Germany

January 4, 2019 – The 2019 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) begins later this month with Rallye Monte-Carlo, the first of 14 rounds on this year's calendar, taking place from January 24-27.

Hyundai Motorsport will field a revised crew line-up for its sixth season in the WRC with nine-time world champion Sébastien Loeb taking part in a six-event program alongside co-driver Daniel Elena.

The Frenchman has already visited the team's Alzenau factory for a seat fitting in the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC ahead of his first test in the car before Monte-Carlo. Loeb will first contest the iconic Dakar Rally before he begins his Hyundai duties, creating a busy January schedule and an intense period of preparation for his first WRC event of the year.

Q+A with Sébastien Loeb

What have you been up to since the announcement of you joining Hyundai Motorsport for 2019?

"I have been twice to Dubai in order to prepare for the Dakar, once with the rally car and once with a buggy to get used to driving the dunes. I have also spent some time with my daughter and family for Christmas. I am now preparing for a busy month which begins with the Dakar."

When will you first drive the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC?

"We have a very short window of opportunity to test the i20 Coupe WRC before Rallye Monte-Carlo. I am back from Dakar only on the 18th, and the recce for Monte is scheduled for the 21st. I am hopeful that we will be as well prepared as we can be for the opening WRC round of the season, even with the short time."

How was your first visit to the team's factory in Alzenau?

"The visit to Alzenau was very productive and will definitely help me and Daniel to get up to speed quickly when we finally get to test the car. I had a special seat fitting during my visit, which I did once in WTCC but have never done before in rally. We made some adjustments to get me comfortable in the car ready for the test. This will help us to maximise our already limited test time before Monte."

Have you got used to your new Hyundai Motorsport colours yet?

"Having spent such a long time with the same manufacturer, it will take time to get used to. I like my new colours, though, and I am really looking forward to the challenge. It promises to be an exciting season."

What about your aspirations for 2019? Are victories possible?

“Of course, I hope that we can fight for wins but at the same time I know it will be a difficult challenge to come back into WRC with a new car and a new team. I did three rallies last year and won one of them. I hope I will get quickly used to the i20 Coupe WRC and be able to show competitive pace – and perhaps even be in the hunt for first place.”

About Hyundai Motorsport GmbH

Established on 19 December 2012, Hyundai Motorsport GmbH is responsible for Hyundai's global motorsport activities, including its FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) program. Based in Alzenau, on the outskirts of Frankfurt in Germany, the company scored victory in its debut season in 2014 with a spectacular 1-2 in Rallye Deutschland. After a year of consolidation, the team claimed two wins in the 2016 season on its way to second in the Manufacturers' Championship. A brand new car, the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC, was developed for 2017 based on revised technical regulations. The team registered four wins on a variety of terrains to finish as close runners-up after a strong season. Hyundai Motorsport continued its competitive form into 2018 with more victories and podiums, again finishing second in the championship.

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 and technical centers worldwide and in 2017 sold about 4.5 million vehicles globally. With more than 110,000 employees worldwide, Hyundai Motor continues to enhance its product lineup with localized models and strives to strengthen its leadership in clean technology, starting with the world's first mass-produced fuel cell electric vehicle ix35 Fuel cell and IONIQ, the world's first model with three electrified powertrains in a single body type.

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/home>

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