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Press Release

Neuville holds the lead at Rally Italia Sardegna

Alghero (SS), June 11, 2016. What a fight between Thierry Neuville and Jari-Matti Latvala at 2016 Rally Italia Sardegna, underway in the north of the Mediterranean island as the sixth round of the World Rally Championship. Co-driven by fellow co-driver Nicolas Gilsoul, Hyundai Motorsport Belgian driver holds the lead of the rally on his i20 New Generation WRC. They won SS13 Monti di Alà 2 and SS15 Monte Lerno 2 never losing first position during the second leg. On their side, Latvala and his fellow Finn co-driver Mika Anttila on Volkswagen Polo R WRC won SS14 Coiluna-Loelle 2 and still are close to the leaders, behind by only 16.1 seconds with only Sunday's final leg to be run. French World Champion Sebastien Ogier is keeping his third position from yesterday despite some little issues on the rear of his Polo R WRC towards the end of the day.

Spanish Dani Sordo climbed the chart to fourth position and, with no doubt, he improved the feeling with his Hyundai i20 New Generation WRC. Three crews more alternate winning the first three stages of the day. Estonian DMACK World Rally Team Ott Tanak won SS11 Coiluna Loelle 1 on his Ford Fiesta RS WRC gaining some positions up to fifth overall. Dutch Kevin Abbring was fastest in SS10 Monti di Alà 1 but then was slowed down by a gearbox issue while he was running the penultimate Saturday's stage on his Hyundai i20 WRC. Mads Ostberg tried to catch up Ogier's third place but Norwegian M-Sport driver had to stop for mechanical issues during second run of the Monte Lerno stage after winning SS12 there in the morning on his Ford Fiesta RS WRC. Also retired are his fellow driver Andreas Mikkelsen after going off as a consequence of hitting a rock on SS14 at the wheel of his Volkswagen and Italian Lorenzo Bertelli, out on his Ford Fiesta RS WRC at Monte Lerno in the morning. In today's leg not return for Paddon, whose Hyundai's roll cage was damaged in his off on Fryday.

Saturday was the longest and toughest day of the rally, accounting for more than half the event's competitive distance at 177.70km. The stages were clustered round Budduso in the Monte Acuto region and all three stages were run twice before cars get back to service and Parc Fermé. **Final leg** of the rally will take place on Sunday, June 12. It will feature 40.26 competitive kilometers, split in four stages: two passages through Cala Flumini (km 14.06) and two through the new stage of Sassari-Argentiera (km 6.07) which is also the new final Power Stage with worldwide live coverage. Podium Ceremony will end the event at 13:45hrs in the harbour area of Alghero.

WRC Promoter intends to boost Italian distribution of **WRC +**, the service that keeps fans updated with the World Rally Championship through its website and live streaming of several special stages. All Italian fans will have this application free for a month simply subscribing a new account at <https://plus.wrc.com/> using the promo code **IT2016**. Tomorrow (Sunday) both SS17 Sassari-Argentiera 1 (9:08hrs) and Power Stage SS19 Sassari-Argentiera 2 (12:08hrs) will be broadcasted by live streaming.

Top-5 standings: 1. Neuville-Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 New Generation WRC) 2h38m33.9s; 2. Latvala-Anttila (Volkswagen Polo R WRC) +16.1s; 3. Ogier-Ingrassia (Volkswagen Polo R WRC) +1m15.0s; 4. Sordo-Marti (Hyundai i20 New Generation WRC) a +2m19.2s; 5. Tanak-Molder (Ford Fiesta RS WRC) +4m50.6s.