



## 2019 FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP RALLY ARGENTINA

**Meet the Crew - Thursday 25th, April**

**Present:**

Ott Tänak,

Kris Meeke, Toyota Gazoo Racing World Rally Team

Thierry Neuville (BEL), Hyundai Shell Mobis World Rally Team

This is the moment, we are ready to go to with our “Meet the Crew” session after Shakedown and our three fastest drivers. We’d like to welcome to the stage to Ott Tänak representing Toyota, his teammate Kris Meeke and Thierry Neuville representing Hyundai.

Welcome to you all guys on this rainy Thursday Shakedown day ought to remember very fondly your performance here in Argentina last year.

**Q:**

**Let’s start with you Ott Tänak who had an incredible victory, it started well and how is it going on the Shakedown this morning? Do you feel confident coming into this weekend?**

**OT:**

Of course, I’m feeling confident, our package is good enough to fight for the win here but I believe if you see the weather outside I’m not sure anybody is really feeling confident going gain tomorrow. We know there is something quite tough waiting for us and I’d feel a bit challenged tomorrow. I think the conditions we will have to start the event will be tough.

**Q:**

**How demanding is this because it is rough and tough but it is also quick out there. You have to find out balance between speed and looking after your car?**

**OT:**

The event is fast and in the south, roads are quite sanded, so of course, for second loop they get rough but especially the last was not so so bad the characteristics of the road is very nice and it is enjoyable the drive there but I believe that much water will destroy the roads quite a bit so it will get very demanding for the cars.

**Q:**

**Thank you very much. It’s time to Kris Meeke now. It is nice Kris to see three winners of this event here on the stage, it’s a special event, it’s a legendary event of the**

**calendar. We've seen brilliant days on the top of the podium over the years and you've done it before. How special was it to you that?**

KM:

It was my first victory in the WRC so that is always going to be a bit special but to do it here in Argentina in one of the star events of the calendar is always something nice. That was a few years ago now. We've always been quite strong here. But, it's certainly a tough rally, like Ott says the weather this year sort of played hard picture in the reeve, hopefully it will get better throughout the weekend but how much the stages are going to dry or not, we don't know. Certainly, if there is a lot of water on the road, it can get muddy in places and it's gonna be a big challenge.

**Q:**

**One thing Kris I can guarantee whatever the weather here fans will turn out in forces, passion is only valid here for rally. They absolutely love it. How much does it lift you as a driver to see this kind of support that you have?**

KM:

There's always special, you know, in South America we get huge support, but here in Argentina especially I think the Rally is steeped in so much history here. but we all know the images from El Condor on Sunday there may be people walking there, I'm sure there are people already there camping at night, so yes its a special place to drive a rally car but certainly when you are focused on the stages and on these conditions, it's gonna be tough for us but hopefully the weather clears a bit for the spectators and they can enjoy it as well.

**Q:**

**Okay, Kris, thank you very much, let's go to Thierry Neuville, our championship leader coming into Rally Argentina. Great rally for you previously in Corsica and you come back to a rally you have also won on a final stage thriller, a couple of years ago, how hard is the confidence to start around?**

TN:

As I said just before, with the weather conditions now and what we've seen during the reeve, probably the confidence is not the same as if the conditions were dry. There could be much more consistency, you could push much harder, but I still had a good feeling with the car this morning at the Shakedown. We know we can expect completely different conditions in the afternoon loop and in the morning loop, so there might be two different rallies in the morning and in the afternoon but that's what makes this rally so difficult and so demanding for us.

**Q:**

**They've already said you must be an exceptional rain dancer because you come here being first on the road and we have had a lot of rain, maybe a little bit too much, more than anyone was expecting, but how much is that going to benefit you? ...**

TN:

Everybody knows I'm a very good dancer but only after many drinks. Obviously, we are not making the conditions, it's part of the game but it won't be on every rally like this. Last year I remember, it was really tough. Now conditions for us that will be the first on the road should be pretty similar, so it's going to be a nice fight and we are looking forward to it.

**Q:**

**I would like to welcome a man to the stage right now who is celebrating his two hundred WRC events starting here in Argentina and that is Jari-Matti Latvala. Jari-Matti would you like to join us?**

**Jari-Matti I believe there is a present for you. You are going to get a special present for this two hundred celebration. How are you feeling racking up two hundred WRC events.**

**JL:**

In a way, it's really nice when you can break some records because I like statistics and now I feel very good. You know, this number feels quite a lot, I don't feel that old, it seems I'm getting older but I will tell you that 199 World Rally Championships is a lot. There's Carlos Sainz, Colin McRae, Tommi Makinen, Richard Burns, Juha Kankkunen, Kenneth Eriksson. The names are very different. And Kris Meeke is the only one properly from the same start line up which 2002 in Rally GB. Men have changed and new generations have come in and they are always coming and pushing. Me and Kris, we are not too old yet. we are getting there in some years.

**Q:**

**Jari-Matti we have a little present in this bag that I would like you to open it up and show the fans what you've got.**

**It's an Argentinean football shirt. We have a cake, of course. Not sure you are not going to eat that before the rally. Thank you very much. Congratulations, Jari-Matti Latvala! And thank you very much, guys, good luck for this weekend.**