

RALLYRACC RALLY DE ESPAÑA
FIA JUNIOR WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP (FOR DRIVERS)

21 OCTOBER – 24 OCTOBER 2010
ROUND 6 OF 6

DRIVER BY DRIVER SUMMARY

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21 – AARON BURKART (DEU, Suzuki Swift Super 1600)

Day One – Burkart started Day One seven J-WRC points ahead of Championship title rival Weijs and ready to attack the new gravel stages in Spain. Unfortunately, he wasn't as quick as he'd hoped to be in the morning. He was plagued by brake problems – they were too soft on SS1 and then the balance changed for the following two stages and the front of his Swift kept swinging out wide. However, he enjoyed the second loop of stages much more and clawed back seven seconds in his battle with Weijs. After a near spin on SS6, he finished the day 39 seconds behind the young Dutchman and nearly a minute and a half behind leader Lemes.

Day Two – Disaster struck for Burkart on SS7, the opening stage of Day Two when his wheel came off and he had to retire 50m from the end of the stage. The only comfort for his Championship hopes was that only three J-WRC drivers completed the day's stages. This gave him a shot at fourth place, which would be enough to take the Junior title if Lemes could hold Weijs in second.

Day Three – A good drive on Day Three meant Burkart moved up to fourth. When Weijs then lost over 10 minutes on SS15, fell to third place, and was unable to catch the top two drivers, Burkart was delighted to be declared 2010 Junior World Rally Champion*.

*Subject to the official publication of the results by the FIA

23 – HANS WEIJS (NLD, Citroën C2 Super 1600)

Day One – Weijs focused on fulfilling his aim of getting through Day One's gravel stages to move onto the preferred tarmac of Days Two and Three, because in the 2009 tarmac-based Spanish event, he scooped his first J-WRC win, beating the rest of the field by over five minutes. He succeeded, setting consistently strong times, despite having problems with his gears throughout the morning. When his gear stick broke, he had to change gears with his left hand, which meant he had to adopt a new technique mid-rally – where you normally push to change down a gear, he had to push to change up. This cost him precious time as he fought to catch leader Lemes. With poor grip and understeering problems in the afternoon, he finished 44 seconds behind the Spaniard, but ready to go flat out on Day Two and determined to close the gap.

Day Two – A rip-roaring pace on Day Two meant Weijs won five of the day's six stages and picked up 30 seconds on Lemes in the process, even scoring top ten stage times on SS8 and SS9 in the overall stage results. His C2 working perfectly, he came home only 14 seconds behind the young Spaniard. In the knowledge that the only way he could make sure he scooped the Championship title was to win the rally, he entered Day Three ready to push as hard as he could.

Day Three – Weijs was promoted to the lead after Lemes stopped to change a tyre on SS13, costing the Spaniard over two and half minutes. However, disaster struck for the Dutchman on SS15 when his crankshaft sensor broke. He was able to repair it, but lost over 10 minutes, seeing him fall to third and shattering his

dreams of winning the Championship title. He ended the season second in the Junior standings, only four points behind winner Burkart.

24 - EGOI VALDES LOPEZ (ESP, Renault Clio R3)

Having failed to attend Rallye de France a few weeks ago, Valdes was fined and excluded by the stewards from the rest of the J-WRC season.

26 - TODOR SLAVOV (BLG, Renault Clio R3)

Day One - Slavov got off to a good start in Spain. His set-up didn't feel quite right on the opening stage and left the rear of his car sliding a lot, but he made some alterations after SS1, and it improved dramatically.

Unfortunately, further changes to the suspension at midday service had negative repercussions in the afternoon and he found SS6 especially difficult. Even so, he ended the day in fourth with a positive feeling about the weekend ahead.

Day Two - After Burkart's day was truncated on SS9, Slavov opted for a steady drive to try and ensure a place on the J-WRC podium. Minor electrical problems troubled him throughout the day, but he was confident he could fix them in service and make it safely to the end of the rally.

Day Three - A mistake on a slow corner on SS14 meant Slavov went off and hit a bank. It cost him around 20 seconds, but with nearly 30 minutes in hand over fourth-placed Hunt, it didn't affect his position and he didn't do any serious damage to his Clio. When Weijs then lost over 10 minutes on SS15, Slavov was overjoyed to move up to second, giving him his highest ever finish in a J-WRC round and his second podium of the season. This fine result also put him third in the 2010 J-WRC standings.

27 - ALESSANDRO BROCCOLI (SMR, Renault Clio R3)

Day One - Broccoli withdrew from the rally after the ceremonial start for personal reasons.

28 - HARRY HUNT (GBR, Ford Fiesta R2)

Day One - After a slow start on the tarmac as he battled with the fog, recently crowned 'best rookie'* Hunt found a better rhythm on the rest of the day's stages. On SS4 he dented his rear right wing when he skidded into the Armco on a corner and lost his front grill after landing heavily over a bump on the final gravel section, but his first day was otherwise uneventful and he finished the second loop of stages a contented fifth.

Day Two - Unfortunately, after two confident stages, Hunt went off and hit a concrete wall on SS9, denying him the chance to complete the rest of the day's stages.

Day Three - Brake problems and an imbalance in his tyres meant a tricky start to Day Three for Hunt. However, he steered his Fiesta home safely to finish in fifth place, under 10 seconds behind 2010 J-WRC Champion Burkart and claimed 10 more J-WRC points, putting him eighth in the Junior standings at the end of his first season.

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30 - MARTIN KANGUR (EST, Honda Civic R3)

Day One - Engine problems plagued Kangur from the start. The 18 year-old Estonian driving in place of Karl Kruuda lost power throughout the morning due to valve problems. The first ever J-WRC entrant to drive a Honda Civic R3, he was disappointed to cruise through the morning stages unable to push his car. However, after a spin on SS4 costing around 20 seconds, the afternoon offered more hope and he found a good rhythm.

Day Two - The young Estonian unfortunately picked up three punctures on SS7 and SS8, the first two stages of the morning. Without having enough spare tyre to continue, he had to stop on the road section to SS9, but was

able to return to service and make repairs ready for restart the final day.

Day Three – Kangur had a difficult start to Day Three. A flat tyre on the fifth corner of SS13 became a bigger problem than expected when he realised he didn't have a jack with him and had to ask the spectators to help lift his Civic up, costing him over two minutes. However, the crowning glory of Kangur's rally came when he won SS16, the final stage of the event. A great finish, he was pleased to come home sixth and pick up his first eight J-WRC points.

31 – YERAY LEMES (ESP, Renault Clio Super 1600)

Day One – After retiring from the J-WRC on Day Two in Spain in 2007, local driver Lemes saw this as his chance to prove himself. Helped by his experience on the Spanish gravel, he dominated the category on Day One's stages. After brake problems on the asphalt of SS1, he pushed hard, taking five out of six stage wins and finishing the day 44 seconds ahead of second-placed Weijs. His only mistake came when he spun on the final stage, but a quick correction meant that this cost him less than 10 seconds.

Day Two – SS7 and SS9 (SS10 and SS12 in the second loop) were familiar to Lemes, because he'd driven them in 2007. However, his uncertainty on SS8 and SS11 broke his rhythm and he had to ease off, losing nearly 10 seconds to Weijs on this stage on each loop. Focused on winning his home event, he was pleased to win SS10 and to retain a 14-second lead over the Dutchman.

Day Three – Unfortunately for Lemes, he broke a wheel on the opening stage of Day Three and had to stop to change a tyre, losing over two and a half minutes to Weijs and falling to second. Immediately back on the pace though, he zoomed through the subsequent stages and when Weijs fell to third on SS15, the Spaniard was pleased to be back in control and to pick up his first J-WRC win on his home event. Maximum points also left him sixth overall in the J-WRC standings, despite suffering a series of problems throughout the season.

32 – MATHIEU ARZENO (FRA, Ford Fiesta R2)

Day One – Arzeno withdrew from the rally after the ceremonial start for personal reasons.

49 – CLIMENT DOMINGO (ESP, Peugeot 206 Super 1600)

Day One – 25 year-old Spanish guest driver Domingo came to Salou determined to wow his home crowds. Having been awarded a scholarship by Formula 1 driver Fernando Alonso to study technical engineering in England, the 2007 2WD Spanish Gravel Champion returned to Spain to prove himself on his first world rally. However, it wasn't to be. After a trouble-free season in his local championship, everything fell apart for him on Day One. A broken shock absorber on SS1 was followed by a broken differential on SS2, which damaged his gearbox irreparably and forced him to stop on the road section after the second stage. Insufficient spare parts meant he did not restart on Day Two.