



preview

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NEW BELGIAN CIRCUIT AWAITS WORLD RX CREWS Round 6 – Rallycross of Belgium

The FIA World Rallycross Championship presented by Monster Energy will conclude its busiest stretch of the season in Belgium this weekend as the Championship prepares for its third World RX event in a row. With a newly-built rallycross circuit plus guest drives from former WRC star Francois Duval and GT Racer Edward Sandstrom, the Belgian RX round will be a welcome addition to the calendar as the FIA's newest World Championship approaches its half-way point.

Set 60 miles south-east of Brussels, the Jules Tacheny Circuit in Mettet is situated in the region of Wallonia - the French speaking part of Belgium. A brand new rallycross venue, the Belgian round of this year's World RX will be a leap into the unknown for several drivers who have done little or no testing here. At just over 1030 metres in length, the Jules Tacheny is a very technical circuit made up of 31% gravel and 69% asphalt plus a joker located at the end of the lap before the flying finish. Over 30 Supercars will be fighting it out for the win at Mettet, which also forms the third round of this year's FIA European Rallycross Championship (Euro RX). In addition to the Supercars, there will be 10 TouringCar entries and 23 Super1600s competing this weekend.

Flying the flag for Belgium will be local driver Francois Duval who lives less than 30 miles from Mettet. With support from the Belgian VW Club, Duval will compete in the Marklund Motorsport run car alongside the team's two main drivers, Anton Marklund and Toomas 'Topi' Heikkinen. The only Belgian driver to win a round of WRC, Duval has a strong track record in rallycross after winning the Belgian round of the European Rallycross Championship when it was held at Maasmechelen back in 2010. "The car seems to be performing well and I'll be aiming for a good result," explained Duval. "My car number is 30: the same number I used when to win a Belgian rallycross event in a Ford Focus... hopefully the number 30 will help give me some extra luck this weekend!"

VW Marklund team manager Jan Marklund added: "Belgium is a new track for us and our drivers but I'm sure it will be a successful event and many Belgium fans are coming to see François driving in our team. I'm happy he's driving for us and I'm sure that he will do great job. Sweden was a frustrating weekend as we were not able to keep up our winning momentum from Finland. We will now schedule more testing in order to get the small details in place and keep our drivers' championship bids alive."

Joining Duval as a wildcard in Belgium will be GT racer Edward Sandstrom for the EKS RX Team. Sandstrom has a wealth of racing experience after winning the Porsche Carrera Cup Scandinavia and the Dubai 24 Hours. In 2013 he finished runner-up in the FIA GT Series in an Audi R8 LMS ultra. Currently third in the Blancpain Endurance Series, Sandstrom's racing nous could pay dividends this weekend: "This is my first RX experience, but I've always enjoyed to drive cars in different situations and on different



surfaces – ice, tarmac, gravel,” explained the 35-year-old. “This fits quite well for World RX, which is a very fast kind of motorsport with a lot of adrenaline and you have to be quick in your decisions. I really like that and I immediately felt quite at home in the Audi S1. After the test in Höljes I’m really confident for Belgium.”

Leading the driver standings for the third consecutive event is Ford Olsbergs MSE driver Reinis Nitiss who is also only the only driver to have made it to the semi-final of each World RX event so far. The 18-year-old Latvian will be joined by team-mate Andreas Bakkerud who is third in the driver standings.

Sandwiched between Nitiss and Bakkerud in the overall leadeboard is former WRC Champion and PSRX driver, Petter Solberg. “It’s always interesting to go to a completely new country and a new track,” explained the former WRC Champion. “This one is new for everybody, it’s the first time World RX has been to the town of Mettet. I haven’t tested here before, but I have seen some footage from a media day at the track and it looks like a really interesting one. The big thing in Belgium will be getting points in the bag and making sure we stay out of trouble in the racing. After we leave Belgium all the kit is being shipped straight out to Canada for the next round, which follows three weeks later.”

Monster Energy World RX Team’s Liam Doran had his best result of the season in Sweden last week after finishing fifth but the 27-year-old British driver will be looking to do one better and finish on the podium this weekend. Doran will be joined in Belgium by Frenchman Davy Jeanney in the team’s second Citroen DS3 Supercar.

Team Peugeot Hansen will be hoping that the new Belgian track will bring better luck as Timur Timerzyanov and Timmy Hansen continue their hunt for a podium spot. More than capable of finishing in the top three, both drivers have been dealt an unlucky hand lately which has prevented Peugeot Hansen from securing a top three position this season. Team Principle Kenneth Hansen, however, was feeling upbeat: “It will be interesting to go to a new track, there are a lot of good teams now in the championship. It will be all about who can set their cars up the fastest and we are one of the teams best equipped to do that.”



Former F1 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve is yet to reach a semi-final in this year’s World RX and will be looking to rectify that this weekend. He will compete alongside team owner Andy Scott who returns to the Scottish-based team for the first time after an incident with one of the team’s car meant he was unable to race in the last three events.

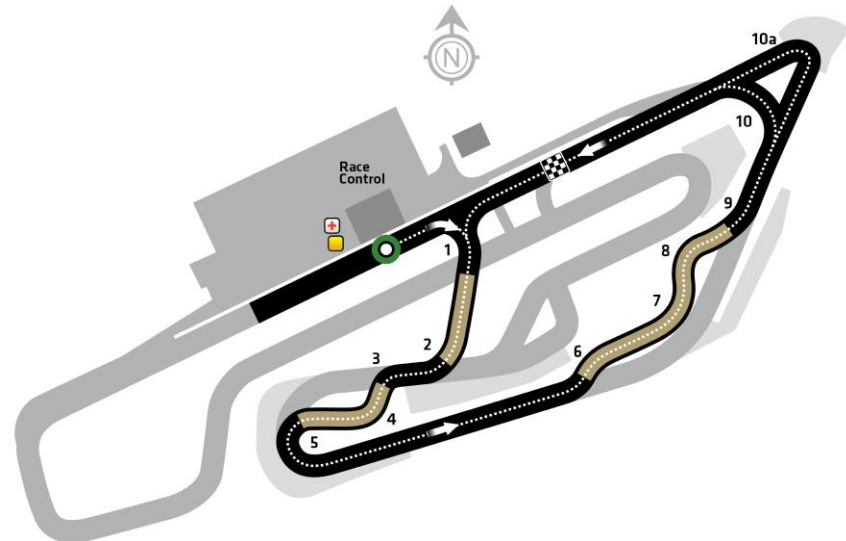
Martin Anayi – Managing Director for World RX at IMG Motorsport – concluded: “It’s been non-stop in World RX lately and with four races in five weeks, there’s been little time for the teams to prep the cars inbetween races. A new circuit always brings added challenges too and with the majority of drivers never having tested at Mettet before it will be interesting to see who comes out top on what could be described as a level playing field. Having seen the track, a good start will be key to success - the drivers face a quick right-hand corner and a full lap of racing before the option to joker. So far we’ve had five different winners from five events so it will be interesting to watch what happens this weekend. Then it will be a quick turnaround for the teams as everyone gets ready to ship their cars to Canada for round seven at Trois-Rivieres.”

CIRCUIT INFORMATION

Mettet

ROUND 6	
RACE DATE:	12-13 JUL 2014
CIRCUIT NAME:	CIRCUIT JULES TACHENY, METTET
CIRCUIT LENGTH:	1.031 km
ASPHALT:	65%
DIRT:	35%

 Start	 Finish	 Medical & Recovery Vehicles
 Route	 Dirt track	 Fire & Rescue Vehicles
 Circuit	 Run-off Area	 Marshal Station



Name:	Jules Tacheny Circuit
Length:	1.031 km
Direction of the track:	Anticlockwise
Composition:	65% Asphalt & 35 % Dirt
Number of laps in the Qualifying Heats:	4 laps
Number of laps in Semi-Finals and Finals:	6 laps

EVENT FORMAT

Each event will comprise of practice sessions, four qualifying heats, two semi-finals and one final. There will be four qualifying heats with a maximum of five cars starting abreast in each race over four laps.

HEAT 1:

Starting positions in the races will be determined by a draw that will be carried out beforehand.

HEAT 2:

Race starters determined according to classification of heat 1. This follows the same format until heat 4. All qualifying heats will be timed and the fastest driver in each heat will be rewarded 50 points, second: 45, third: 42, fourth: 40, fifth: 39, sixth: 38 and so on. After the qualifying heats, there will be an intermediate classification according to each driver's total points scored in the four heats.

SEMI-FINALS:

There will be six starters arranged on a two-by-two grid and each semi-final will be run over six laps. The top 12 scoring drivers in the intermediate classification will qualify for the semi-finals. The winner, second and third placed drivers in each semi-final will qualify for the final.

FINALS:

Finals will also have six starters, arranged over three rows and will be run over six laps. The semi-final winner with the highest number of points in the event will start on the 'pole' side of the grid, followed by the other semi-final winner. The same procedure will be used between the two second-placed drivers and two third-placed drivers. The winner of the final will be the winner of the event. Positions one to six in the final classification will be according to the result of the final. The remaining drivers will be classified according to points scored in the event.

JOKER LAPS:

An alternative section of track that adds at least two seconds to the lap time, and through which every driver must pass once in each race, semi-final and final. Failure to take the Joker Lap is penalised by 30-seconds in the qualifying heats, and by being classified last and loss of points in a semi-final or final.

MEDIA INFORMATION/SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday 11 July

- 1100 All photographers arriving on Friday and wishing to take pictures **MUST** attend this short photographers' briefing. Photographers will be issued with a tabard after the briefing.
- 1600 **Drivers' Draw plus World RX press conference.** This will be held in the IMG truck. Media are invited to attend this the draws are made for the race heats. After the draw, a pre-event press conference will be held with Francois Duval, Edward Sandstrom, Andy Scott and Reinis Nitiss.

Saturday 12 July

- 0800 Media sign-on opens.
- 1100 Photographers' briefing. All photographers arriving on Saturday **MUST** attend this short photographers' briefing which will be held in the media room. Photographers will be issued with a tabard after the briefing.

Sunday 13 July

- 0800 Media sign-on opens.
- 0830 Photographers' briefing. All photographers arriving on Sunday **MUST** attend this short photographers' briefing which will be held in the media room. Photographers will be issued with a tabard after the briefing.
- 1550 Podium and trophy presentations
- 1610 Press conference.

FIA WORLD RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

The provisional classifications for all the Championship can be found on the following link:

<http://www.fia.com/sport/championships/news/world-rallycross-championship>

FIA WORLD RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

Shortly after the finish of the sessions, results of the event can be found on the following link:

<http://www.fia.com/championship/events/world-rallycross-championship/2014/jules-tacheny>

