



preview

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BLOCK AND EKSTROM ADD TO STAR LINE-UP FOR HELL RX Round 3 – Rallycross of Norway

Round three of the FIA World Rallycross Championship – World RX of Norway – boasts a truly international line-up with drivers from a variety of motorsport disciplines including F1, WRC, DTM and X Games. Amongst the stars competing in Norway are American Gymkhana hero Ken Block plus two-time DTM Champion Mattias Ekstrom, who makes his World RX debut this weekend as part of the all-new EKS RX Team.

Set 25 miles east of the city of Trondheim, Hell is located in the Lanke area of the municipality of Stjørdal and will host round three of the Championship. The event has attracted a staggering 38 Supercars in the headline Supercar category with the supporting TouringCar and Super1600 categories attracting a further 39 entries. Hell also marks the second round of the five-round FIA European Rallycross Championship (Euro RX), of which there are 23 drivers eligible to score points.

Currently leading the drivers' standings and eager to secure a win on home turf is Ford Olsbergs MSE driver Andreas Bakkerud. "My win at Lydden felt like a dream and it's incredible to be leading the Championship as I get ready to race at my home event," explained the 22-year-old who was a spotter for former F1 driver Nelson Piquet Jnr at X Games in Austin last weekend.

Another home favourite will be Norwegian star Petter "Hollywood" Solberg. As one of the most experienced drivers on the grid, Solberg and his Citroen DS3 Supercar will be a formidable match. "Winning means everything to me," admitted Solberg who won the World RX season-opener in Portugal back in May. "It's why I'm here and why I'm racing. We go to the race second in the championship, just three points down from [Andreas] Bakkerud. I want to come away at the top of the table again. That's the aim... and there won't be a happier Norwegian than me if we win at Hell."

Joining World RX for the first time will be popular rally driver Ken Block and his Hoonigan Racing Division Ford Fiesta. Block – who became an internet sensation as a result of his hugely popular Gymkhana series on YouTube – will contest a three-round World RX campaign in 2014. The American explained: "I've been enjoying racing rallycross the last few years and I've been keeping an eye on the European circuits – they look like really fun tracks. I've also been curious about the level of competition and I'm looking forward to seeing how I stack up against the guys that are running in World RX."

A brand new team will also shake up the World RX proceedings in Norway as Swedish DTM star Mattias Ekstrom will be joined by reigning Junior World Rally Champion Pontus Tidemand in the all-new EKS RX Team. Fielding two Audi S1 Supercars, the squad has been flat out preparing the cars for its debut on the world stage but team owner Ekstrom ensures that the wait will be worth it: "Quality is always the most important thing for me – I'd rather be five minutes late rather than rushing and compromising on quality. Our ultimate aim in World RX is to become World Champions. I have also never been to an FIA prize giving before so that would be pretty cool too!"

Adding to the star-studded line-up in Norway will be former F1 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve who returns to his Albatec Racing-prepared Peugeot 208 Supercar after missing the previous round at Lydden Hill. Villeneuve will be joined in the two-man squad by team owner and multiple British Rallycross Championship event winner, Andy Scott.

In the Teams' Championship, Ford Olsbergs MSE and its team drivers Andreas Bakkerud/Reinis Nitiss will be hoping to extend their 22 points lead over VW Marklund's Topi Heikkinen/Anton Marklund. PSRX lie third in the standings with Peugeot-Hansen's Timur Timerzyanov/Timmy Hansen currently fourth. Monster Energy World RX Team's Liam Doran and Krzysztof Skorupski have had a difficult start to the season but will be looking to make amends in Norway: an event which Doran is particularly fond of after the Englishman clinched victory in 2013.

After a phenomenal outing in his Audi A1 Supercar at the previous round at Lydden Hill, Robin Larsson is currently leading the hotly contested FIA European Rallycross Championship. He will be joined by a number of notable entrants including Frode Holte in the Hyundai i20 Supercar, Swedish Touring Car Champion Tommy Rustad and reigning Swedish Rallycross Champion Peter Hedstrom. Current French Rallycross Champion Jerome Grosset-Janin will also be competing in a Renault Clio Supercar.


Elsewhere, Henning Solberg's son Oscar will make his international debut in a Citroen C2 in the Super1600 class while his father competes alongside lady driver Ramona Karlsson in a pair of Saab 9-3 Supercars. Karlsson will be joined by four other female competitors at Hell including Super1600 drivers Lina Marie Holt, Ada Marie Hvaal (cousin of PSRX Supercar driver Alex Hvaal) and Lisa Marie Sandmo. Camilla Antonsen will compete in the TouringCar category.

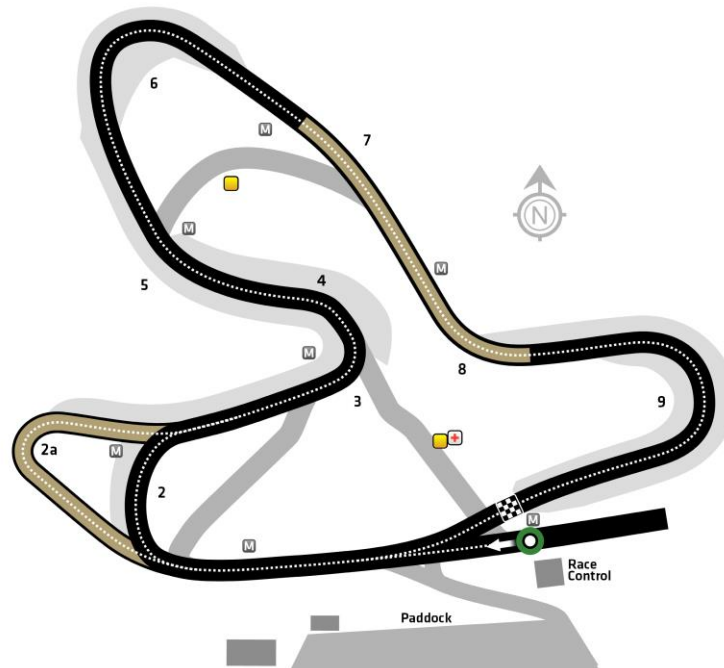
BBC F1 commentator David Coulthard will also visit Hell as a brand ambassador for Cooper Tires, the Championship's control tyre supplier. The former F1 driver spoke positively ahead of his visit: "Rallycross is one of motorsport's hidden jewels that really deserves the additional investment and support it is now getting. It's a truly spectacular form of the sport and, because of its gladiatorial nature, it's one of the most entertaining forms of racing there is, so I'm keen to go along and get some proper insight into what it's all about."

CIRCUIT INFORMATION

Norway Hell

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| ROUND 3 | |
| RACE DATE: | 14-15 JUN 2014 |
| CIRCUIT NAME: | NORWAY HELL CIRCUIT |
| CIRCUIT LENGTH: | 1.019km |
| ASPHALT: | 63% |
| DIRT: | 37% |

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



| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Name: | Norway Hell |
| Length: | 1.019km |
| Composition: | 63 % asphalt and 37 % dirt |
| Direction of the track: | Clockwise |
| 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 13 June

- 1200-1900 Media sign-on.
1530. Photographers' briefing. All photographers arriving on Friday MUST attend this short photographers' briefing which will be held in the press room in the race tower. 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 Ken Block, Mattias Ekstrom, Andreas Bakkerud and Anton Marklund.

Saturday 14 June

- 0800 Media sign-on opens.
- 1030 Photographers' briefing. All photographers arriving on Saturday MUST attend this short photographers' briefing which will be held in the press room in the race tower. Photographers will be issued with a tabard after the briefing.

Sunday 15 June

- 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 press room in the race tower. Photographers will be issued with a tabard after the briefing.
- 1740 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/hell>

