



preview

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VOLKSWAGEN WORLD RX OF SWEDEN ATTRACTS OVER 100 ENTRIES **Round 5 – Rallycross of Sweden**

Teams and drivers competing in the FIA World Rallycross Championship presented by Monster Energy have had little time to rest as the FIA's newest World Championship moves to Sweden for round five this weekend (5-6 July). A real highlight in the rallycross calendar, Volkswagen World RX of Sweden has attracted a record 40 Supercars – the biggest ever Supercar entry to be seen at Höljes.

Described by some as the jewel in the rallycross crown, Höljes is extremely popular with both drivers and fans alike. Located 120 miles north of the Swedish city of Karlstad, Höljes is a small town set in the woods of Värmland which is expected to attract more than 30,000 passionate rallycross fans from across Europe. Forty Supercars will make up the headline Supercar category with the TouringCar and Super1600 classes plus the supporting RX Lites Cup bringing the total number of cars competing in Sweden to a staggering 107.

Leading the driver standings by 14 points is Ford Olsbergs MSE driver Reinis Nitiss who will be joined by team-mate Andreas Bakkerud who won in Höljes last year. Sebastien Eriksson and RX Lites regular Daniel Holten will also compete under the Olsbergs MSE banner as guest drivers in the Ford Fiesta Supercar. Team owner Andreas Eriksson spoke confidently about his drivers: "It is young, talented guys like Andreas and Reinis who are the future of the sport of rallycross. It's great to see them succeed and we'll continue to work hard this season to get the championship title."

Norway's Petter 'Hollywood' Solberg will be eager to make amends in Sweden after an incident during the Finnish semi-finals left his Citroen DS3 Supercar undriveable for the final. The PSRX driver explained: "We've not had much time to do work on the car before Sweden but the good thing is we don't have long to wait until we can get back on the track. There was big frustration after Finland, it didn't go the way we wanted in terms of Championship points but I want to put the disappointment behind us and concentrate on Sweden."

Monster Energy World RX Team have yet to finish on the World RX podium but the team which is fronted by British driver Liam Doran will be looking for a top three finish this weekend. Joining the team for the first time will be Davy Jeanney, who finished runner-up in last year's FIA European Rallycross Championship. "Racing in Sweden is always a great experience," explained Frenchman Jeanney. "In 2013 I was very fast on the first day - and was leading the standings before a technical problem forced me out of the competition. Naturally I am looking forward to racing in a Citroen again as well - it's a great car and suits my driving style well."



Among the several Swedish drivers competing in front of a home crowd, Team Peugeot Hansen driver Timmy Hansen is a likely contender to reach the all-important final. Both Hansen and team-mate Timur Timerzyanov have shown good pace in the Peugeot 208 Supercar but a string of unfortunate events have prevented the duo from a podium spot thus far.

Another driver who hopes his luck will change ahead of the weekend is Volkswagen Marklund's Topi Heikkinen who is currently fourth in the overall standings. The Finn was left feeling frustrated after missing out on the opportunity to win in front of a packed home crowd last weekend. "Höljes is really exceptional track," explained 23-year-old Heikkinen. "It's very fast and beautiful, a true rallycross track and one of the best in the world. These weeks are special for all of us in the team having three Scandinavian races in a row: Norway first, then Finland and now Sweden. Anton [Marklund] and I receive a lot of media attention during these weeks but we really enjoy this time."

Joining the stellar line-up of Swedish stars this weekend will be Team EKS RX driver and founder, Mattias Ekstrom, who finished runner-up in Höljes in 2013. Fresh from a podium position on his most recent outing in DTM, Ekstrom and his Audi S1 Supercar will be looking for more of the same this weekend. Joining Ekstrom will be reigning Junior World Rally Champion Pontus Tidemand, who took time to reflect on the team's performance so far: "Looking at the big picture, we have made great progress since the premiere in Norway," explained the 23-year-old. "The car is much better now, it runs amazing on the track and I know it has the capacity to be a winning car. We have a good feeling and we are excited to aim higher and improve for each race."

Supercar driver Ramona Karlsson will be joined by seven other women drivers in Sweden: the highest number of female entries so far in World RX. Karlsson, who is key member of the FIA's Women in Motorsport Commission, will drive her Saab 9-3 Supercar alongside Henning Solberg. Other female entries include fellow Swedes Sandra Hultgren and Mikaela Ahlin-Kotulinsky in the RX Lites Cup. Camilla Antonsen will drive a Fiesta in the TouringCar category while Lina Marie Holt, Ada Marie Hvaal, Mandie August and Lise Marie Sandmo will all compete in the Super1600 category.

Former F1 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve is entered under the Albatec Racing team alongside team owner Andy Scott who makes his World RX return after skipping the previous round in Finland. Villeneuve commented: "I'm hoping to capitalise on the undoubted pace of the car, and to convert that into some good results and push for a semi final and final place in Sweden."

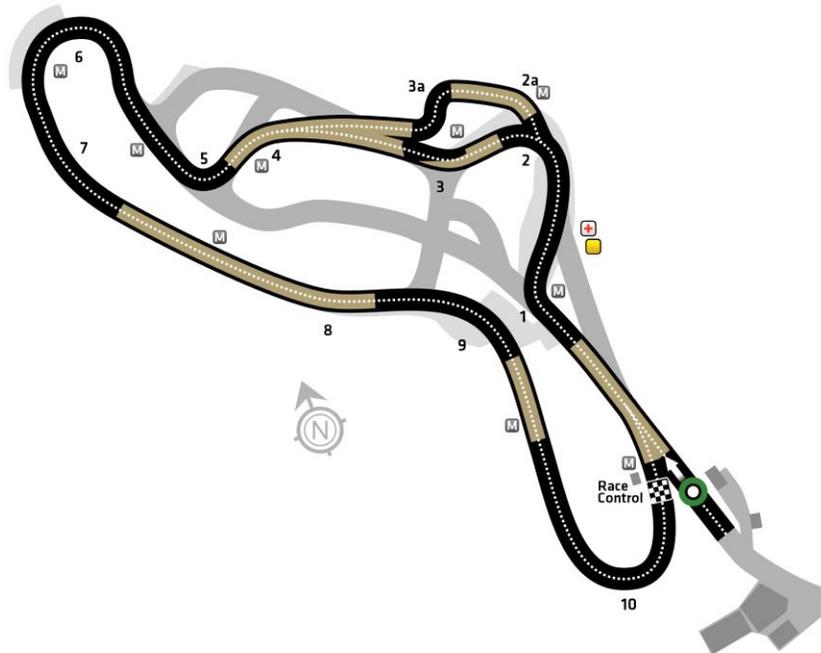
Other notable entries in Sweden include former double European Rallycross Champion Ludvig Hunsbedt will compete as a one-off in a Ford Focus Supercar.

Martin Anayi – Managing Director for World RX at IMG Motorsport – concluded: "This is the event we've all been waiting for. Anyone that has been to Höljes to watch rallycross can appreciate just how special it is and of course this has now been reflected in the huge number of entries we have received across the Supercar, Super1600, TouringCar and the RX Lites Cup. In 2013, 29,200 spectators descended on Höljes which was a new record but this year we are hoping to smash that number and attract over 30,000 people – quite an achievement considering it is a tiny town with little more than 100 inhabitants! We've had four different winners in four events and with a record 40 Supercars this weekend, there's a very strong chance that we will witness a fifth World RX winner in Sweden. Competition will be extremely high and the smallest mistake in one of the heats could jeopardise drivers a spot in the semis – concentration from the off will be the key to success this weekend."

CIRCUIT INFORMATION

Holjes

ROUND 5	
RACE DATE:	05-06 JUL 2014
CIRCUIT NAME:	HOLJES CIRCUIT
CIRCUIT LENGTH:	1.210 km
ASPHALT:	60%
DIRT:	40%



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

Name:	Holjes Circuit
Length:	1.210 km
Composition:	60% Asphalt and 40% Dirt
Direction of the track:	Anticlockwise
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 4 July

1400-1800 Media sign-on.
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 Reinis Nitiss, Davy Jeanney, Mattias Ekstrom and Ramona Karlsson.

Saturday 5 July

0800 Media sign-on opens.
0930 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 6 July

0800 Media sign-on opens.
0815 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.
1640 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/h-ljes>

