



## 83<sup>rd</sup> Rallye Monte-Carlo 2015 FIA World Rally Championship

### Tyre combinations covering the full spectrum of conditions contribute to an all-Volkswagen/Michelin podium in Monte Carlo

Much of the 2015 Rallye Monte-Carlo was marked by a thrilling clash between Sébastien Loeb (Citroën DS3 WRC) and defending world champion Sébastien Ogier (Volkswagen Polo R WRC) which kicked off on Leg 1. In the course of the four-day event, the constantly-shifting conditions kept competitors on their toes with regard to tyre strategy, resulting in a broad variety of combinations of asphalt and studded/non-studded winter Michelin tyres being used.

The two French stars hit the ground running to pull out a consequential gap at the front of the field until Friday afternoon's SS8 when the fight came to an abrupt end. Running first on the road with his Volkswagen fitted with for studded MICHELIN Pilot Alpin PA4 CLs, Sébastien Ogier came through the increasingly icy tests unscathed, while Sébastien Loeb – who was 14<sup>th</sup> in start order – chose the same tyres but without studs in the belief that the surface conditions would evolve with each passing car. With the gap between the two standing at eight seconds, in favour of Ogier, there was drama when Loeb hit a rock and damaged his rear-left wheel on SS8. The incident sent him tumbling down the order.

At the end of the rally, Michelin Motorsport Director **Pascal Couasnon** underlined the consistency of Michelin's tyres in the shifting conditions: "The Michelin tyres used during the Rallye de Monte-Carlo delivered a high level of versatility which enabled them to cover the complex range of difficult conditions the crews faced as the weather evolved."

With Loeb no longer in contention, Ogier and his Volkswagen team-mates Jari-Matti Latvala and Andreas Mikkelsen – now running in first, second and third places – still had to keep their Citroën, Ford and Hyundai rivals at a safe distance. They succeeded and the trio went on the lock out the podium for the German make at Sunday afternoon's finish ceremony in front of the Principality's Palace.

"Four of the five tyres we brought for the Rallye Monte-Carlo were ultimately used. Only the hard-compound MICHELIN Pilot Sport H4 wasn't fitted during the four days," notes **Jacques Morelli**, manager of Michelin's rally activities. "All four ensured an exceptionally high level of grip and safety. We are delighted to have scored our 277<sup>th</sup> victory in the FIA WRC which is a series that permits open competition between tyre brands. Our partners also came first and second in the WRC2 class thanks to Stéphane LEFEBVRE/Stéphane PREVOT (Citroën DS3 R5) and Craig BREEN/Scott MARTIN (Peugeot 208 T16). Results like these in such exacting conditions are eloquent pointers to Michelin's savoir faire."

The next round of the 2015 FIA WRC will take teams to Sweden and Norway on February 12-15 where the cars of Michelin's partners will compete on 15-inch MICHELIN X Ice-North 3 tyres, an evolution of the X Ice-North 2. Each of these tyres is fitted with 380 studs which protrude 6.5mm from the tread blocks.



**A Rallye Monte-Carlo experience for VIPs!**

Before the rally, French actor François Cluzet and pole-vaulting world record holder Renaud Lavillenie enjoyed passenger rides alongside Sébastien Loeb (Citroën DS3 WRC) and Sébastien Ogier (Volkswagen Polo R WRC).

As part of the build-up to the official start of the 2015 Rallye Monte-Carlo, Cluzet and Lavillenie attended a celebrity ride session that was organised with the sport's top drivers through the streets of the Principality. The 2.5km loop visited several well-known landmarks of the F1 circuit (tunnel, swimming pool complex, Rascasse, start/finish line) and the two Michelin guests enjoyed every second of the experience which enabled them to admire the skills of the two multiple world champions from close up.