

**2012 FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP**

Rallye de France Alsace – Round 11

**A 20<sup>th</sup> Drivers' title and a 22<sup>nd</sup> Manufacturers crown for MICHELIN  
in the FIA World Rally Championship**

Sébastien LOEB and Daniel ELENA rose to the occasion to secure the 2012 Drivers' world title\* at the Rallye de France Alsace today, October 7, 2012! Their ninth consecutive crown coincides with CITROEN Racing's eighth Manufacturers' title since 2003. The weekend's action in France's Alsace region saw Loeb take the lead on home soil first thing Friday morning thanks to his tyre choice for the opening loop of three tricky stages.

The result takes MICHELIN's score in the WRC to 20 Drivers' and 22 Manufacturers' crowns since the championship's creation by the FIA in 1973. Every one of these 42 world crowns was claimed within a framework that allowed open competition between tyre companies.

**Pascal COUASNON** (Director, MICHELIN Competition): "I want to underline that MICHELIN is involved in motorsport as a technical partner in competitions that relate in a real way to the development of mobility. This way, we go much further than just promoting the brand. We seek conditions that allow us progress every time we compete, either through competition with other tyre firms or as a function of the demands dictated by the tyre regulations in question. Indeed, it is MICHELIN's unique approach that makes us so proud of the world titles that Sébastien LOEB and CITROEN Racing have brought us today."

The 2012 Rallye de France Alsace took place in extremely variable weather. It had only just stopped raining when the drivers contested the 3.63km super-special (SS1) through Strasbourg's damp streets on Thursday evening. Friday morning's action was then marked by low cloud and more damp, occasionally wet surfaces which forced the drivers to think long and hard about their choice between the hard-compound MICHELIN PILOT Sport 'H1' and the softer 'S1' version.

The weather improved on Friday, and the spectators who flocked to the stages and service park to cheer on Sébastien Loeb on Saturday were treated to warm, sunny conditions. Throughout this phase of the rally, all the WRC competitors ran on hard-compound MICHELINs.

The teams, drivers and spectators woke up to pouring rain on Sunday morning, but the sun made a welcome reappearance at lunchtime to dry out the asphalt which had become increasingly caked in mud with each passing car during the first pass. The last loop of three stages was consequently a tough test inasmuch as all the cars were competing on the soft 'S1' variant of the MICHELIN PILOT Sport.

(\*) subject to publication of the official results by the FIA

Sébastien LOEB et Daniel ELENA (N°1 CITROEN DS3 WRC) were joined on the final podium in Alsace by Finns Jari-Matti LATVALA / Miikka ANTTILA (N°3 FORD FIESTA RS WRC) and Mikko HIRVONEN / Jarmo LEHTINEN (N°2 CITRO EN DS3 WRC).

The next round of the 2012 FIA WRC is the Rally d'Italia (October 18-21) in Sardinia which features the rocky tracks of one the Mediterranean Sea's prettiest islands.

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