

## 54 RallyRACC: Important novelties for the only mixed rally in the World Championship

- New design of the longest stage of the rally: La Fatarella-Vilalba
- 4 race days, one on gravel and two on tarmac, with the opening stage on Thursday hosted again by Barcelona
- Salou continues to be venue of an urban stage (Saturday 27)
- 18 special stages (10 different), 331.78 km in total
- Costa Daurada, Salou and PortAventura World, nerve centre for the 14th time

Tarragona, 7 June 2018.- The 54th edition of the RallyRACC CATALUNYA-COSTA DAURADA, Rally de España 2018, 12th and third from last round of the FIA World Rally Championship will be staged this year from 25 to 28 October and will include significant novelties in its itinerary, compared to the previous edition.



The triangle made-up of Costa Daurada, Salou and PortAventura World will continue to be, for the 14th time in a row, the nerve centre of the Spanish round of the WRC. The RallyRACC is still the only rally of the world championship calendar with a mixed gravel-tarmac layout and it is precisely the gravel sections that include the main innovations.

The stage that has been part of the main difficulty of the gravel day, Terra Alta (Vilalba-La Fatarella), evolves to become the great novelty of this edition. The special stage will now be called 'La Fatarella-Vilalba' with a completely new configuration. The first 23 km are the end of Terra Alta, run in opposite direction, to continue on 12 km which are completely new, until Vilalba dels Arcs. The surface-changes from tarmac to gravel will continue to be decisive, but with a completely different itinerary.



This first day will see the comeback of two stages that were not raced since 2014: 'Gandesa' and 'Pesells', thus creating a day in which novelty is a standard. The other two days, run completely on tarmac, will include stages that are already known by the participants of the last two years. Special stages that have proven to be highly selective.

Another novelty of 2018 will be the comeback of the urban stage in Barcelona that will contribute to a large extent to the expectation of the media. It will be identical to the last time it was staged, in 2016. The 54 RallyRACC will have its start on that same day (Thursday, 25 October) in the morning, on the podium in Salou. This town will be again host to the well-known urban stage that will repeat its position of every year, as the last special stage to be run on Saturday.

The 54 RallyRACC slightly increases de percentage of timed kilometres, with a total of 331.78, as opposed to the 312.02 of one year ago.

### Key event for the World Championship

Due to its position in the world championship calendar, the 54 RallyRACC CATALUNYA-COSTA DAURADA, Rally de España 2018 will be a key race for the decision of the World Championship titles: Drivers, Co-Drivers and Manufacturers, but also WRC2 and WRC3. Moreover, the event will also be a scoring round towards the two new championships that have gathered a large number of entrants: Peugeot Rally Cup Ibérica and Beca Junior R2.



Given the sports results of the championship at every event staged so far this season, a thrilling fight between the four official structures can surely be expected: Hyundai, Ford, Toyota and Citroën. The current leader of the championship is Thierry Neuville (Hyundai), who has taken the victory in Sweden and Portugal, although we should not forget that the reigning World Champion, Sébastien Ogier (Ford) won in Monte Carlo, Mexico and Corsica, and that Ott Tänak (Toyota) did it in Argentina.

The alternatives to lead the standings are many, and it is only natural to think that great drivers like Jari-Matti Latvala and Esapekka Lappi (Toyota), Andreas Mikkelsen and Dani Sordo (Hyundai), Craig Breen (Citroën) and Elfyn Evans and Teemu Suninen (Ford) haven't said the last word yet.

There are many crews that have announced their participation in the 54 RallyRACC so far, although they are not registered for the World Championship. A highlight among them will be the great rally star and star of the RallyRACC, Sébastien Loeb (Citroën), nine times World Champion and eight times winner of the Catalan event, who is having this year a mini championship programme, racing at three events, the last one being the Spanish round. American driver Ken Block (Ford) has also announced that his only participation in a WRC round this year will be the RallyRACC.



### The only mixed surface rally of the World Championship

The 54 RallyRACC will keep its structure as a mixed rally, a unique feature in the World Rally Championship. The rally has a total route of 1,132.59 km, including 331.78 timed kilometres split into 18 special stages, 10 of which are different and all of which will be covered twice, except for the urban stages in Barcelona and Salou that will only be run once. This structure as a mixed rally was introduced in 2010, and therefore, this will be the ninth consecutive year of the RallyRACC with this type of gravel-tarmac combination.

## FIA titles for which the 54 RallyRACC counts

- FIA World Rally Championship for Drivers, Co-Drivers and Manufacturers/Teams (12th of 13)
- FIA WRC2 for Drivers, Co-Drivers and Teams (12th of 13)
- FIA WRC3 for Drivers, Co-Drivers and Teams (12th of 13)
- Peugeot Rally Cup Ibérica (5th of 6)
- Beca Junior R2 (6th of 6)



## The itinerary, in detail

### Thursday, 25 October: Shakedown and Start in Salou, Urban Stage in Barcelona

As every year, the Thursday before the race will be a very important day as it will be the day of the Shakedown (test stage) and the official start in Salou. In 2018, this opening day will also include the urban stage in Barcelona, to be precise in Montjuïc. After a one-year break, this stage will be generating large expectation again, and will be broadcasted live to nearly 100 countries.

The return of the RallyRACC to the Catalan capital is great news for this 54 edition. The official start of the race is scheduled for 13.00h, in order to allow the cars to reach Barcelona, where they are expected to arrive from 15.00h. The stage as such will start at 18.08h.

From 15.00h to 18.00h the cars will be under parc fermé conditions at Avenida María Cristina, and the drivers will be performing promotion activities, such as signing autographs and photo shoots. The format of the Barcelona stage will be almost identical to 2016, completely on tarmac, running along the halls of the Barcelona Trade Fair and with a total of 3.2 km. The Barcelona stage will also count on the previous participation of the Vehicles with History.

08.00h Shakedown (Emprius, 2.97 km)  
13.00h Start (Podium on the Salou Promenade)  
18.08h SS1 Barcelona (3.2 km, tarmac) \* (live TV)

### Friday, 26 October: Six gravel stages

The day is made-up of a loop of three stages run twice. Compared with the latest editions of the rally, the special stages of the first day are different, though not new at the RallyRACC, since both 'Gandesa' (7 km) and the long 'Pesells' (26.59 km) on gravel, were staged for the last time, exactly as they will be run this year, in 2014. The mixed stage 'La Fatarella-Vilalba' is completely new.



Despite using the final 23 km of the stage that was known last year as Terra Alta, they will be run in opposite direction, in addition to 12 new



km that will take participants to Vilalba, which had been the location of the start so far.

It is a really difficult stage, with changes between gravel and tarmac, and quite long, almost 39 km. The cars will arrive at Vilalba del Arcs at high speed, at the area which was usually the start, so that there will be a large safe spectator area available, with great visibility.

The cars will have a 30' service at PortAventura World, in-between passages, in addition to four refuelling facilities, two of them in the theme park and two in Bot. The timed kilometres of that day are 145.08 km. This is the schedule:

08.00h	Start from PortAventura World
09.33h	SS2 'La Fatarella-Vilalba' (38.95 km, mixed)
10.38h	SS3 'Gandesa' (7 km, gravel)
11.14h	SS4 'Pesells' (26.59 km, gravel)
13.09h	Regroup (15') and service (30') in PortAventura World
15.12h	SS5 'La Fatarella-Vilalba' (38.95 km, mixed)
16.17h	SS6 'Gandesa' (7 km, gravel) 16.53h SS7 'Pesells' (26.59 km, gravel)
18.52h	Passage through the podium in Salou and parc fermé in PortAventura World (10')
19.02h	Service Park in PortAventura World (1h.15')
20.17h	Parc fermé in PortAventura World



## Saturday, 27 October: Querol is back

Saturday and Sunday will be dedicated exclusively to tarmac stages. Three special stages will be run twice on Saturday, in opposite direction compared to last year, and with the inclusion of Querol. The day will start at 7.00h and the crews will begin the loop with 'Savallà' (14.12 km), which was staged for the first time in 2017, to continue with 'Querol' (21.26 km) and finish with 'El Montmell' (24.40 km). A 30-minute service in PortAventura World will allow them to set-up the machines to face the second passage of the loop. The day will finish with 'Salou' (2.24 km), the urban stage that will be identical to the stage raced in the two last years, arising huge interest among spectators.



Both in the morning and in the afternoon there will be a refuelling area in Santa Coloma de Queralt, in addition to the area in the service park. The timed kilometres of that day are 121.80 km. This is the schedule for Saturday:

07.00h	Start from PortAventura World	08.33h	SS8 'Savallà' (14.12 km)
09.19h	SS9 'Querol' (21.26 km)		
10.08h	SS10 'El Montmell' (24,40 km) *		(live TV)
11.47h	Service in PortAventura World (30')		
13.35h	SS11 'Savallà' (14.12 km)	14.19h	SS12 'Querol' (21.26 km)
15.08h	SS13 'El Montmell' (24.40 km) *	16.42h	Regroup in Salou (20')
17.00h	SS14 'Salou' (2.24 km)		
17.20h	Parc fermé in PortAventura World (10')		
17.30h	Service park in PortAventura World (45')		
18.15h	Parc fermé in PortAventura World		



## Sunday, 28 October: Two stages, twice

Sunday is a decisive day; the structure of the itinerary consists of only two stages to be run twice. The last of them will be the Power Stage (special stage that grants extra points to the top five crews), with live TV, shortly after noon. The stages are 'Riudecanyes' (16.35 km) and 'Santa Marina' (14.50 km), with an identical configuration as last year. This time, however, there will be a stop at the service park in-between the two passages, to allow for a 30-minute service.

The day will have 61.70 timed km. This is the schedule:

- 06.45h Start from PortAventura World
- 07.35h SS15 'Riudecanyes' (16.35 km)
- 08.38h SS16 'Santa Marina' (14.50 km) \* (live TV) 09.45h  
Service in PortAventura World (30')
- 10.50h SS17 'Riudecanyes' (16.35 km) \*
- 11.21h Regroup in Mont-roig del Camp (35')
- 12.18h SS18 'Santa Marina' (14.50 km), Power Stage \* (live TV)
- 13.38h Parc fermé and Service Park in PortAventura World (3'+10')
- 14.01h Finish podium in Salou

## Equilateral triangle: Costa Daurada, Salou and PortAventura

Costa Daurada, Salou and the theme park PortAventura World will be, for the 14th time in a row, the nerve centre of the RallyRACC. Service park, village, race direction and media centre will continue to be based in the excellent location at the PortAventura World resort, with the Convention



Centre as the best location of the WRC, considering their large, comfortable and modern facilities.

Salou boosts its protagonism with four days of international activity, this year as host to the ceremonial start, at 13.00h on Thursday at Pas-seig Jaume I, filled with colour and activities for fans and spectators. The beautiful sailors' town will also be host to the prize-giving (14.00h on Sunday 28) and the heart of the second urban stage of the rally, on Saturday at 17.00h.

The 54 RallyRACC counts on the collaboration of the Tarragona County Council, the Tourism Board of Tarragona-Costa Daurada, the Salou Town Council, the Tourism Board of Salou, PortAventura World, and Seat as official car.

### RallyRACC and the FIA World Rally Championship

The RallyRACC will be staging its 54th edition in 2018. In 2014 it celebrated its 50th anniversary and in 2015 the 25th consecutive edition as a scoring round towards the FIA World Championship, as the former Rally Catalunya entered the World Championship calendar in 1991. In these 27 years in the championship, the RallyRACC has been based for 14 years in Lloret de Mar (Costa Brava) and for 14 years (this year included) in Salou and PortAventura World (Costa Daurada).



- 1916 The Volta Automobilística a Catalunya is born
- 1957 Creation of the Rallye Catalunya-Volta a Catalunya, scoring round towards the Spanish Championship
- 1973 Organisation of the Rally Catalunya-Rallye de les Caves of the Spanish Championship
- 1980 The Rally Catalunya becomes part of the European Championship



- 1988 Merger of Rally Catalunya and Rally Costa Brava in the European Championship
- 1991 1st edition of the Rallye Catalunya-Costa Brava, scoring round towards the World Championship
- 2005 The RallyRACC CATALUNYA-COSTA DAURADA is born (Salou and PortAventura World)
- 2014 The RallyRACC CATALUNYA celebrates its 50th anniversary
- 2018 28 consecutive years of RallyRACC in the FIA World Rally Championship

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- Social media: Facebook, Twitter (#RallyRACC/#WeAreAllRallyRACC) and Instagram