

News release
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World RX of Hockenheim preview

Solberg: forget the edge of the seat... forget the seats

Talk to Petter Solberg about the FIA World Rallycross Championship joining DTM for the second year in succession at Hockenheim this weekend and he smiles.

Laughs.

"Last year," said Solberg, "people came for the DTM race, but then they stayed because of World RX. I don't want this to sound bad about DTM – it's a really interesting championship – but I don't think there is another series in all of racing that can compare with the action in the FIA World Rallycross Championship.

"The grandstands here in Hockenheim have lots of really nice seats in the stadium, but I don't think we are needing them. Whenever I drive past these seats, the fans are always standing up and cheering. I'm sure, in World RX, there's just no need for a seat! There's this saying about fans being on the edge of their seats, but when we are competing they don't even bother with the edge of the seat!"

"If you are blinking, then you're missing something absolutely incredible on the track. Look at the last round in Portugal, in every race there was something amazing going on."

And Solberg's victory in the final at a wet and foggy Montalegre was one of the most amazing parts about Portugal's World RX 2016 curtain raiser.

"The final was an incredible race. Looking back at it, it required such commitment to come home as winner of that one. There was talk about the collision between me and Johan Kristoffersson, which annoyed me a little bit. Looking back at the television and you can see when I was coming off the joker lap and he was coming out of the last corner, I was ahead of him!

"That's the kind of intensity we get here, that's what World RX is about. Yes, there is a little bit of contact, but the organisers are watching that very, very closely and us drivers all understand each other and don't do any of these things trying to put somebody out of the race. That's not why we're here; we're here to win the race.

"And we have good memories from Hockenheim last year – we won. Of course, we want to do that again this week. But it's important that we keep our feet on the ground and stay focused.

“Winning the first round in Portugal this year was an unbelievable result for us – and it was really because of the fantastic PSRX team behind me. Since then we have done more testing. We have found more speed from the car and that’s what we have to keep on doing all year, more than in previous years when the advantage we’ve started the season with has kept us in front for quite a while. It’s a bigger fight than ever before in World RX.

“We cannot relax for a moment. Winning race one means we have to push harder to win race two; this year we won’t be able to stop working, testing, developing and trying all year. We are a small team fighting big manufacturers. If we want to win, we’ll have to work like hell in Hockenheim.

“But the good thing is, we’ll entertain you while we do!”

What? When?

Friday May 6 qualifying 1/2 1355/1515
Saturday May 7 qualifying 3/4 1725/1828
Sunday May 8 semi-finals 1110 final 1140

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