

News release
April 29, 2018

Perfect Portuguese podiums for PSRX Volkswagen Sweden

- PSRX Volkswagen Sweden extends its lead in both championships
- It's two from two for defending champ Johan
- Petter storms through the snow to third in the final
- And yes, we did say snow... weather-wise, it's been bonkers

Just when we thought we'd seen it all in the FIA World Rallycross Championship... Christmas came to World RX of Portugal and the PSRX Volkswagen Sweden team enjoyed the best present of all.

Johan Kristoffersson took his second win in as many starts to build his lead at the top of the drivers' championship, while team owner Petter Solberg overcame a dramatic semi-final to clinch third in what turned out to be a winter wonderland of a final race.

Everybody was expecting changeable weather on this second round of the World RX season, but nothing prepared the paddock for the snow storm that hit today (Sunday). The hardy Portuguese fans pulled their collars higher and their hats lower, stayed in their seats and let Johan and Petter treat them to some of the most breathtakingly audacious and courageous driving yet.

Round two definitely took more than the odd twist and turn, but in the end, the story was the same for round two as it was a fortnight ago in Barcelona. The pair of Volkswagen Motorsport Polo R Supercars were simply sublime. And utterly unbeatable.

Driver	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	SF	F
Johan Kristoffersson	3	6	2	4	1	1
Petter Solberg	10	4	3	2	3	3

Johan Kristoffersson (SWE) #1

What can I say? Everything happened today!

In Q3 and Q4 things weren't exactly perfect for us, but with the crazy weather and such close times at the top we knew anything was possible. From the second row of the grid in the semi-finals, my plan was to follow the leader on the main lap, but after [Andreas] Bakkerud slid wide I grabbed the chance and was very happy to take the win.

But then the snow really started to fall and I was wondering what could happen in the final – in the end, it was perfect for us. The car was great and I couldn't be happier. Sure, the battle at the top is getting closer, so to take two wins from two starts – and to have Petter on the podium as well – is the

perfect start to the season for me and for the whole PSRX Volkswagen Sweden team.

Petter Solberg (NOR) #11

This whole weekend has been really tough right from the very first heat.

We have had just about every type of condition. You know, I am in rallying for a lot of years and I know how to drive in the snow, on the dry gravel, wet mud and asphalt – I did that for a long time in the World Rally Championship.

But until I came to Montalegre, until I came to World RX of Portugal, I never drove in all of those conditions in one day. It was unbelievable to be racing in a snow storm. But quite cool as well...

What we have to focus on now is the small details with our car. Yes, it's fantastic to lead the championships and to take two cars on the podium – congratulations, of course to my team-mate Johan for his second win of the season – but we have to be ready for the other cars coming. We saw here with Peugeot, [Sébastien] Loeb is strong and those guys are only going to get stronger.

We have to be *even* stronger.

But, you know, what a fantastic race that final was. It was unbelievable and a really nice way for me to forget about stalling on the line in the semi-final. I drove like hell through that race, I was sure I wouldn't make the top three, but I did. What we have done here is race smart and take the points. That's so important.

Pernilla Solberg (PSRX Volkswagen Sweden team principal)

I have to say... what a bizarre weekend! I think it's fair to say that this hasn't been perfect for us – but we have made it perfect. The conditions have been a little bit crazy and the boys have struggled at times to find the speed from the car, just those last tenths of a second have been missing a little bit.

When we got to the semi-finals, it was good that we had one car in each race and this is always helping. I have to say, Johan did the most amazing job in his semi, he totally deserved that place in the final, but then Petter stalled on the start line and I was thinking: "Oh, OK, well we have to be happy – we have Johan in the final." But then somehow, through some brilliant driving, Petter came back and got to the final as well.

I was so happy to get them both to the final, but then to see them on the podium, it was fantastic. It was all just a little bit surreal though, seeing these cars racing through the snow.

I think, when you don't expect so much from the race, to come away with the double podium is even more special. What a completely insane, but like I said, totally brilliant weekend!

Volkswagen R Performance fact of the weekend:

At 1050m altitude that we have in Montalegre, we lose 10-12% maximum power, which is the equivalent to a 1.0l road-going Polo.

Result:

1 Johan Kristoffersson	4m16.859s
2 Sébastien Loeb	4m19.112s
3 Petter Solberg	4m20.797s
4 Andreas Bakkerud	4m23.501s
5 Guerlain Chicherit	4m26.425s
6 Timmy Hansen	4m38.103s

Drivers' championship positions:

1 Kristoffersson	53pts
2 Bakkerud	44pts
3 Solberg	43pts
4 Loeb	39pts
5 Ekström	36pts
=Timmy Hansen	36pts

Teams' championship positions:

1 PSRX Volkswagen Sweden	96pts
2 EKS Audi Sport	80pts
2 Team Peugeot Total	75pts

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