

The Loudon-clear guide to...**Rally Turkey**

The World Rally Championship has been to Turkey six times before, but still next week's Marmaris-based event will be a real step into the unknown. None of the drivers or co-drivers know what they're in for. They have an idea, but they don't know and they won't know until 0700 on Tuesday, when they start the recce.

That's exciting. That's a genuinely level playing field. And that's something which can only feed a championship battle which is heading rapidly towards fever pitch.

What we do know from last year's candidate event is that the stages around Marmaris are split in nature, there are some quicker, smoother, more flowing sections where the speed should be quite high, but then there are the rougher, rockier roads in the mountains where the demands on car and crew will be high. And the town itself? Well, it's a tourist town not dissimilar in rally-terms to Salou on Rally Spain.

Rally Turkey in detail

FIA World Rally Championship round 10/13

WRC – WRC2 – JWRC – WRC3

Date: Thursday September 13 – Sunday September 16

Based: Marmaris

Service: Marmaris

Stages: 17

Competitive distance: 312.44km (194.15 miles)

Liaison distance: 562.90km (349.78 miles)

Total distance: 875.34km (543.93 miles)

Shortest stage: SS1 Super Special Stage Turkey Full Speed 2.00km (1.24 miles)

Longest stage: SS2/5 Çetibeli 38.10km (23.67 miles)

Currency: Turkish Lira

Time difference: GMT +3

Sunrise: 0647

Sunset: 1917

Shakedown:

The 4.70km (2.92 miles) shakedown stage is located in Degirmenyani, 7.17km (4.45 miles) from the service park in Asparan. The stage runs from 0930-1500 on Thursday September 13.

Rally Turkey itinerary

Thursday September 13

SS1 Super Special Stage Turkey Full Speed 2.00km (1.24 miles) 2008

Friday September 14

SS2 Çetibeli 1 38.10km (23.67 miles) 0758

SS3 Ula 1 21.75km (13.51 miles) 0921

SS4 Çiçekli 1 12.57km (7.81 miles) 1024

Service Asparan 1159

SS5 Çetibeli 2 38.10km (23.67 miles) 1337

SS6 Ula 2 21.75km (13.51 miles) 1500

SS7 Çiçekli 2 12.57km (7.81 miles) 1603

Service Asparan 1738

Saturday September 15

SS8 Yesilbelde 1 34.24km (21.27 miles) 0835

SS9 Datça 1 10.70km (6.64 miles) 1008
SS10 İçmeler 1 20.37km (12.65 miles) 1111
Service Asparan 1151
SS11 Yesilbelde 2 34.24km (21.27 miles) 1324
SS12 Datça 2 10.70km (6.64 miles) 1508
SS13 İçmeler 1 20.37km (12.65 miles) 1611
Service Asparan 1651

Sunday September 16

SS14 Marmaris 1 7.14km (4.43 miles) 1008
SS15 Ovacik 8.05km (5.00 miles) 1046
SS16 Gökçe 12.65km (7.86 miles) 1124
SS17 Marmaris 2 7.14km (4.43 miles) 1318
Finish Marmaris 1338

Running order:

5 Thierry Neuville/Nicolas Gilsoul (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)
1 Sébastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia (Ford Fiesta WRC)
8 Ott Tänak/Martin Jarveoja (Toyota Yaris WRC)
9 Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (Toyota Yaris WRC)
6 Hayden Paddon/Sebastian Marshall (Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)
7 Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila (Toyota Yaris WRC)
2 Elfyn Evans/Dan Barritt (Ford Fiesta WRC)
10 Mads Østberg/Torstein Eriksen (Citroën C3 WRC)
11 Craig Breen/Scott Martin (Citroën C3 WRC)
3 Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula (Ford Fiesta WRC)

Leading WRC championship positions:

1 Neuville 172pts; 2 Ogier 149; 3 Tänak 136; 4 Lappi 88; 5 Mikkelsen 65; 6 Dani Sordo 60; 7 Latvala 55; 8 Evans 52; 9 Ostberg 48; 10 Craig Breen 47, etc

WRC manufacturer championship positions:

1 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 254pts; 2 Toyota Gazoo Racing 241; 3 M-Sport Ford WRT 224; 4 Citroën Total Abu Dhabi WRT 159

Leading WRC2 runners:

31 Pontus Tidemand/Jonas Andersson (Skoda Fabia R5)
32 Jan Kopecky/Pavel Dresler (Škoda Fabia R5)
33 Gus Greensmith/TBC (Ford Fiesta R5)
34 Pedro Heller/Pablo Olmos (Ford Fiesta R5)
35 Diogo Salvi/Hugo Magalhães (Skoda Fabia R5)
36 Kajetan kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (Ford Fiesta R5)
37 Simone Tempestini/Sergiu Itu (Citroën C3 R5)
38 Murat Bostanci/Onur Vatansever (Ford Fiesta R5)
39 Chris Ingram/Ross Whittock (Skoda Fabia R5)
40 Burak Çukurova/Vedat Bostanci (Skoda Fabia R5)

Leading WRC2 championship positions:

1 Kopecky 100pts; 2 Tidemand 93; 3 Greensmith 55; 4 Pieniazek 48; 5 Andolfi 46; 6 Veiby 45, etc

JWRC/WRC3 entry:

61 Emil Bergkvist/Patrik Barth (Ford Fiesta R2)
62 Dennis Rådström/Johan Johansson (Ford Fiesta R2)
63 Jean-Baptiste Franceschi/Romain Courbon (Ford Fiesta R2)

64 Ken Torn/Kuldar Sikk (Ford Fiesta R2)
65 Julius Tannert/Jürgen Heigl (Ford Fiesta R2)
66 Callum Devine/Brian Hoy (Ford Fiesta R2)
67 Enrico Oldrati/Elia De Guio (Ford Fiesta R2)
68 Bugra Banaz/Burak Erdener (Ford Fiesta R2)
69 Luca Bottarelli/Manuel Fenoli (Ford Fiesta R2)
70 David Holder/Jason Farmer (Ford Fiesta R2)
71 Tom Williams/Phil Hall (Ford Fiesta R2)
72 Emilio Fernández/Joaquinn Riquelme (Ford Fiesta R2)
73 Raul Badiu/Gabriel Lazar (Ford Fiesta R2)
74 Louise Cook/Stefan Davis (Ford Fiesta R2)

Leading WRC3 championship positions:

1 Franceschi 79pts; 2 Lario 68; 3 Rådström 62; 4 Bergkvist 61; 5 Brazzoli 55; 6 Torn 33, etc

Leading JWRC championship positions:

1 Bergkvist 88pts; 2 Rådström 74pts; 3 Franceschi 62; 4 Torn 49; 5 Tannert 31; 6 Folb 30, etc

Stuart Loudon's key stage: SS2 Çetibeli 38.10km (23.67 miles)

If almost 40 brand new, flat-out kilometres of World Rally Championship action doesn't have you leaping out of bed on Friday morning then there's something wrong with you.

It's quite rare these days to start the first full day of action with a stage as long as this one. This test will provide a real opportunity for those fast starters in the field and it will seriously punish anybody caught napping. The guys will have to be up and on it from the first corner; there's time to be won in this one and coming out of here with a 10 or 12-second lead puts you firmly on the front foot and lays a great foundation.

I've been keeping an eye on the temperature in the region recently and you'd be tempted to say the first run of this stage, starting just before eight, shouldn't be too hard on the tyres. I'm not so sure; it's perfectly possible the ambient will be up around 30 and it hasn't rained on those roads for a very long time. With a further two stages and 35km to come, tyres will have to be managed even in this early stage.

Stuart will be watching... #10 Mads Østberg/Torstein Eriksen (Citroën C3 WRC)

I think everybody was a little bit surprised by Mads' performance in Finland in the summer. Nobody could ever doubt this guy's ability, but to chase the win in Jyväskylä and eventually come out of the season's fastest rally with second place was exceptional for somebody with so little experience of Citroën's C3 WRC – it was only his third World Rally Championship start in the car.

Even Turkey's quickest bits won't be a patch on what Finland had to offer, but Østberg's well placed for a number of reasons: he generally goes well first time out on new events, he knows he's on a level playing field with the same knowledge as everybody else and he's in a great place on the road. Providing it doesn't rain (highly unlikely), eighth on the road should provide the #10 C3 WRC with a cleaner line and good grip.

Weather with you:

It's hot (30-plus degrees). It's sunny (rain not pictured). It's all you need to know.

Most successful driver on Rally Turkey:

Sébastien Loeb (3 wins)

2018 World Rally Championship stats...

Stages planned: 169

Stages run: 169

Longest stage of the season: Vero – Sarrola-Carcopino 55.17km (34.28 miles) Tour de Corse

Shortest stage of the season: Street Stage Leon 1.11km (0.68 miles) Rally Mexico

Longest competitive route of the season: Rallye Monte-Carlo 388.59km (241.46 miles)

Shortest competitive route of the season: Rally Turkey 312.44km (194.15 miles)

WRC fastest times in 2018:

1 Tänak 49; 2 Neuville 30; 3 Ogier 24; 4 Lappi 13; 5 Latvala 11; 6 Dani Sordo 9; 7 Kris Meeke 8 Breen/Sébastien Loeb/Mikkelsen 6, etc

WRC stages led in 2018:

1 Ogier 55; 2 Tänak 53; 3 Neuville 34; 4 Sordo 9; 5 Mikkelsen 6; 6 Østberg 4; 7

Meeke/Loeb 3; 9 Paddon 2

WRC2 fastest times in 2018:

1 Tidemand 43; 2 Kalle Rovannerä 34; 3 Kopecky 27; 4 Ole Christian Veiby 17; 5 Katsuta Takamoto 10; 6 Stéphane Lefebvre 9, etc

WRC2 stages led in 2018:

1 Kopecky 45; 2 Tidemand 42; 3 Rovannerä 27; 4 Takamoto 17; 5 Lefebvre 14; 6 Eric Camilli 8, etc.

JWRC fastest times in 2018:

1 Emil Bergkvist 31; 2 Ken Torn 20; 3 Denis Rådström 14; 4 Jean-Baptiste Franceschi 9; 5 Luca Bottarelli 4; 6 Terry Folb 3, etc

JWRC stages led in 2018:

1 Rådström 28; 2 Bergkvist 19; 3 Torn 16; 4 Franceschi 6; 5 Folb 5.

WRC3 fastest times in 2018:

1 Franceschi 34; 2 Bergkvist 29; 3 Taisko Lario 24; 4 Williams 23; 5 Torn 19; 6 Rådström 11, etc

WRC3 stages led in 2018:

1 Franceschi 31; 2 Rådström 28; 3 Lario 23; 4 Williams 21; 5 Bergkvist 19; 6 Torn 1, etc.

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Stuart Loudon is a semi-professional co-driver who has started 103 rallies, 21 of which are rounds of the World Rally Championship and one of which was with an Ashes-winning English cricketer. He makes biscuits in the family business when he's not working towards his dream of becoming a factory co-driver in the WRC.

Stuart Loudon and Words PR work their socks off to make sure every last dot and detail

of the document is 100 per cent accurate – but we can't be responsible for any changes to the itinerary or stage distances.

Stats courtesy of ewrc-results.com