

News release  
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## Tuthill Porsche Rallye de France Alsace day one report

Francois Delecour (FRA)/Dominique Savignoni (FRA) Porsche 911 RGT #92

When four-time world rally winner Francois Delecour woke this morning, his dream became reality: he started his first ever World Rally Championship stage in a Porsche 911 RGT.

The Tuthill Porsche-prepared 911 didn't miss a beat through the opening day's seven stages, six of which ran through the hills west of the home of European Parliament. The seventh and final test took the crews right through the heart of the city's political landscape. But there was no chance for Delecour to admire the Louise Weiss building – he was far too focused on threading the GT3 through the two right-handers visible from the windows of Europe's political powerbrokers.

As was the case throughout the day, Delecour's Below Zero-backed Porsche was greeted with mass appreciation. The crowd went wild for number 92.

Unfortunately, there was little chance of Francois hearing them over the six, booming cylinders sitting right behind him. Even more unfortunately, there was little chance of him hearing his co-driver Dominique Savignoni for much of the day either after a fault was discovered in the intercom system installed in Delecour's crash helmet.

Just as it had on its World Rally Championship debut – August's ADAC Rallye Deutschland – the Tuthill Porsche ran faultlessly through the opening day's action, allowing Delecour to engage in a fascinating fight with factory Porsche World Endurance Championship pilot Romain Dumas, who is driving a four-litre 911.

Francois Delecour said: "I tell you, I really have dreamed of this day. It's fantastic. More than fantastic to be here at Rallye de France Alsace with a car like this. Listen to it, can you hear it? We are playing the melody with this car, it's a beautiful noise. Today has been good. OK, we have the problem with the intercom and, for a driver, that is frustrating. It's so, so important to be able to hear your co-driver calling the pacenotes. It's vital. This cost us some time today. Dominique and I tried to switch our crash helmets and that helped. But the main thing is that we are here and we have driven this fantastic car down some incredible roads. And we have made some people smile. We have made many people smile. Including me."

Richard Tuthill said: "I think it's fair to say we've lost around 20 seconds with the intercom issue, which is pretty much the gap between the two Porsches at the end of the day. Like Francois says, the big thing is that we are here competing in this fantastic category and showing what these cars are capable of. We have

Francois in the top 20 and really mixing it with the R5 category cars – which is exactly where we thought the car should be.

“Once again, we’ve seen a huge response to the Porsche and what’s also really interesting is that we have the chance to back-to-back our car with Romain’s. We’re running the 3.8-litre engine, while he has the four-litre. It looks, from what we’ve seen from the split times and the nature of the stages, like his car might be giving more torque than ours; it’s all such useful data as we forge ahead with what’s a new category for us all.”

#### Daily data

#92 Porsche 911 R-GT

SS1 18<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> RGT – 18<sup>th</sup> overall

SS2 21<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> RGT – 21<sup>st</sup> overall

SS3 20<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> RGT – 22<sup>nd</sup> overall

SS4 20<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> RGT – 22<sup>nd</sup> overall

SS5 21<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> RGT – 20<sup>th</sup> overall

SS6 21<sup>st</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> RGT – 20<sup>th</sup> overall

SS7 24<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> RGT – 20<sup>th</sup> overall

#### Today in a tweet:

*Fabulous first day in France with Francois and the Tuthill Porsche 911. Noisy on the outside too quiet on the inside. #intercomissues #top20*

Tomorrow is... the furthest south the competitors go on this event, but not the furthest south they go in France this season (Mulhouse is still 500 kilometres north of the most northerly stage on the Monte Carlo Rally). Saturday’s the longest day of the event and the day which takes the crews into the heart of the Vosges mountains.

Longest stage: SS10/13 Pays Welche-Riquewihhr (21.49km)

Shortest stage: SS14 Mulhouse (4.86km)

Weather: Early morning mist clearing to further dry conditions

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