

News release
May 18, 2018

We feel the need... the need for Speed(Machine)

- PSRX Volkswagen Sweden aims for a third win from four starts
- Volkswagen Motorsport's Polo R Supercar tops the WRX standings
- New track at the home of British motorsport for World RX of GB
- Speed Machine means food, music... and great racing
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What's coming?

For the birthplace of rallycross, read the home of British motorsport.

Fifty-one years ago this great sport of rallycross was born in the south-east corner of the garden of England, Kent. It was with a heavy heart that PSRX Volkswagen Sweden signed off from one of the world's finest rallycross tracks last year. But we did it in style, paying tribute to Lydden with a one-two finish for Petter and Johan.

This year, it's all eyes on Silverstone and a new, purpose-built track on the inside of the world-famous Stowe corner.

This year, all eyes will also be on SpeedMachine. Next weekend, round four of the FIA World Rallycross Championships meets Dizze Rascal, Razorlight and some of the best ribs and ramen this side of, well, anywhere.

Round four is to be a festival of food, music and racing. Don't get us wrong, we're Bonkers for Dizze and we're all-in for the perfect burger, but Petter, Johan, Pernilla and the rest of the team will be hoping 1200 horses coming out of the PSRX Volkswagen Sweden stable will steal the show on Sunday.

Pernilla, what's SpeedMachine all about?

PSRX Volkswagen Sweden team principal Pernilla Solberg

"It's a really interesting way to try to introduce a whole new cross-section of fans to the sport of rallycross. It's maybe good to think of it as the first festival weekend of the season.

"The RX promoter [IMG] has worked hard to bring music, food and all sorts of entertainment to a really accessible circuit; Silverstone is a couple of hours' drive away from millions of people. If they can attract some of those people with the entertainment, we're pretty sure they will stay for the racing!

"For us though, Silverstone presents a new challenge. It's a new track for Petter and Johan and all the engineers to learn. We do have some knowledge of the circuit after it was used for the World RX launch and the second pre-season test earlier this year. But still, there's going to be a real emphasis on the early part of the weekend – the boys will want to get a lot of laps in during free practice to familiarise themselves.

“There’s been an awful lot of talk about SpeedMachine and we’re very happy to support the meeting, but at the end of the day this represents the same challenge as any of the other 11 rounds. Next weekend, we need to show the sort of consistency we’ve demonstrated since the start of last season.

“We’ll enjoy the music and the food, but a strong performance from both the boys is really what we’re in Britain for.”

Petter, Britain means a lot to you – how do you feel about Silverstone?

Petter Solberg, PSRX Volkswagen Sweden team owner/driver and triple FIA world champion

“Everybody knows how important Silverstone is, it’s one of the oldest and most famous race circuits in the world. It’s nice to be coming here, nice to be competing in a new place for RX and nice to have the infrastructure of a modern track like this.

“But I must say, I’m going to miss Lydden. That was a proper, proper rallycross track. I was quite emotional when we drove up the hill and out of there for the last time last year. Finishing at Lydden with me winning and Johan second was a nice way to go. But that’s history now.

“Now we have to look forward and we have to look how to get the best out of the Volkswagen Motorsport Polo R Supercar at this new track. We made some good times in testing and we were able to find a nice set-up from the car, even if the rain came down on the second day [of the test].

“You know that I like the really fast tracks – and Lydden was one of the best, with fantastic corners like Devil’s Elbow and Paddock bend – and Silverstone won’t be quite so fast as that. But I love competing in Britain. I had a lot of success here, winning my first world championship here (on Rally GB, 2003) and in many ways it’s like another home for me – the crowds in England are always some of the best in the world.”

How important is it to be back on the podium, Johan?

Johan Kristoffersson, defending FIA World Rallycross Champion

“Of course it’s important, it’s very important to keep scoring points towards the championship. The last race in Belgium, where I was fifth, that hurt a little bit. It was a bit of a crazy race in the final, with a lot of action in every direction. But that was then. This is now.

“We have seen just how close the racing is this year. Winning the championships last year was an absolute dream and everybody in the PSRX Volkswagen Sweden team put so much work in, but defending those titles this year is going to be even harder. Every corner is fought over so hard – we saw that in Belgium last time. Hopefully Silverstone will be a little bit more open with some more room to overtake and make some different moves.

“The track is quite different in nature to the rest of the places we go to, there’s more gravel than we’re used to – more than half of the lap is on the dirt. So, if we get some dry weather, the dust could be a bit of a problem.

“But the priority for us has to be to take the points. We have to drive smarter than ever this season.”

Driver data

Petter Solberg (NOR)

World RX starts: 52

World RX wins: 10

World RX titles: 2

Johan Kristoffersson (SWE)

World RX starts: 43

World RX wins: 11

World RX titles: 1

World RX of GB data

Last year’s winner: Petter Solberg (NOR)

Fastest lap: come back to us Sunday

Circuit length: 0.972km

Asphalt/gravel: 40% – 60%

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