

News release
October 6, 2019

Petter lands the high five with another Wales Rally GB win

- The Solberg story headlines at Wales Rally GB (again)
- Emotional farewell as Petter signs off with a WRC 2 victory
- Petter: "That's a proper way to say goodbye."
- Oliver fastest on his first ever WRC outing
- Stunning Saturday morning speed, Oliver beats everybody on just his third WRC stage

Mixed emotions doesn't come close for the Solberg family following another thrilling week in Wales.

Petter and Oliver drove their Volkswagen Polo GTI R5s on one of the season's most complicated and competitive rallies. Both have a story to tell...

For Petter, a four-time Wales Rally GB winner, the last week has been an astonishingly rapid run down memory lane. It's seven years since the triple world champion competed in Britain, but it felt like yesterday when he delivered the dream: a fifth Wales Rally GB win – admittedly, this one was in the WRC 2 category.

This time, even Hollywood was almost lost for words.

"Incredible," he said. "*Unbelievable*. Since we planned the Farewell Tour at the start of the year, I wanted to come here and wanted to do GB. It was different this time with Oliver driving as well. The emotions were a little bit more complicated, but this result... what can I say?

"The comeback starts now!"

Petter admitted returning to one of the season's most complicated rallies was not straightforward.

"I didn't underestimate how tough this would be? But maybe I forgot a little bit about how tough it was! This rally is one of the hardest in the championship and it always was – that's one of the things that make it so special when you are having the success here.

"The days are long and the roads are so, so difficult to read and take confidence from, but when you get it right, it's the best feeling in the world."

More on that comeback?

"Do you think I should? Maybe? No, we're working on Oliver's plan now.

Oliver is the future for the Solberg story, mine is a little bit in the history now. Honestly, it's been really nice, fun and a lot of emotions coming to this rally. I love this place and these people, so to share my last proper WRC round with Wales was so special for me and Phil.

"That was the proper way to say goodbye."

Back to the future...

In the last week, Oliver's World Rally Championship dream got real.

After an already insanely successful rookie season of four-wheel drive rallying, where Oliver has become the youngest ever European Rally Championship event winner and taken America by storm with Subaru Motorsports USA, Wales Rally GB was the next mountain to climb.

Predictably, Oliver made short work of his big moment. He was fastest of all the R5 cars (including WRC 2 Pro and WRC 2) on just his third stage in the World Rally Championship.

Unfortunately, a misted-up windscreen spoiled SS1, while a smashed wheel rim on the second test ruled him out Friday. After a day by the north Wales seaside, Oliver was very much back in business on Saturday morning.

That's when the fastest times started. Nobody drove an R5 car faster than Oliver through Dyfi and Myherin. Nobody.

Unfortunately, just as the weekend was starting to fly, Sweet Lamb turned sour and Saturday was done.

"The car stopped," said Oliver. "We don't know why. We checked everything, but it wasn't possible to continue. We came to service and the team made lots of investigations, worked on the car and then I could come back again on Sunday.

"Of course, it was disappointing that we couldn't take the experience we wanted from all of the stages, but the thing I wanted to have a look at for myself was the speed.

"I have been asking myself for the whole time: "Where am I for the speed? How will I compare with the other guys?"

"When I came to the first stage on Saturday morning, it was really difficult. I had nothing to win and a lot to lose if I crashed. Honestly, we drove at around 95 per cent and the times were good."

Good? Try sensational.

Through the 26-kilometre Dyfi test, Oliver was 9.1 seconds faster than any other R5 cars. And 24.7s up on Papa.

“That was good,” he said. “I enjoyed that one – the grip was really good in places and this took me by surprise. I was braking early many times.”

In Myherin, Oliver could *only* manage fastest by 3.1s and this time Petter was just eight down.

After that, Saturday went south, but Sunday demonstrated more speed and more potential before he rolled in the penultimate test.

Oliver said: “The end of the event wasn’t like we wanted, but the dream really has come true for me to be here. Wales and the World Rally Championship wasn’t like my Papa told me it would be. It was *even* better.”

Contact:

Sandra Evans

Media and communications

sandra@pettersolberg.no

+44 7887 693993

+46 76 110 7 110

Produced in association with Words PR