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## **LEG THREE REPORT: Sata Rallye Acores, 15-17 July, 2010 Intercontinental Rally Challenge, round seven of 12**

### **Magalhaes Lands Dramatic Azores Victory**

**Portuguese hero wins after thrilling final stage as Kopecky crashes.  
Hanninen maintains title initiative despite losing out on win with a puncture**

Bruno Magalhaes has claimed his first victory in the Intercontinental Rally Challenge following a thrilling finish to Sata Rally Acores today (Saturday). The Peugeot Sport Portugal driver took the lead on Friday's first stage but dropped out of top spot on stage 15 with a gearbox problem and feared his chances of winning were over. But in a dramatic turn of events, Juho Hanninen lost first place with a puncture on the penultimate stage before Jan Kopecky, who started the last test leading by 6.4s, crashed out four kilometres from the finish to hand Magalhaes an emotional win in front of thousands of enthusiastic fans.

Magalhaes had driven without fault throughout the event but his once commanding lead had slowly been eroded by the flying Hanninen, who started Saturday's final seven stages a mere 2.2s behind his Portuguese rival. A faster time through the opening stage of the day for Hanninen elevated him into the joint lead of the event. With stage 14 cancelled after a herd of cows had wandered into the road, Hanninen had to wait until the following test to move in front of Magalhaes although his task was eased when Magalhaes' gearbox lost its oil and coated the windscreen of his 207 in liquid.

A heroic effort by Magalhaes' mechanics to change his gearbox in the allotted 20-minute service time kept him in the battle for a podium finish before despair turned to joy in the closing stages of the last test when Kopecky crashed out.

Peugeot UK's Kris Meeke, saddled by a high-speed spin on stage six and several punctures, started the final leg first on the road in fifth overall and conceded that overhauling Andreas Mikkelsen for fourth on Saturday's opening stage would be as good as it would get. But he refused to give up and moved into third when Hanninen had to stop to change a front-right puncture, before seizing second when Kopecky stopped, despite a minor electrical glitch. Hanninen, driving a factory Skoda Fabia S2000, made up for the disappointment of losing out on his third win of the season by claiming third to extend his lead of the IRC drivers'

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standings to nine points over Kopecky with Magalhaes moving ahead of the absent Guy Wilks into third after becoming the sixth different winner from seven events.

For Hanninen's team-mate Kopecky, his retirement marked the first time this season that he had failed to score points. It was also poor reward for a strong performance by the Czech resident who was fastest on three stages.

Andreas Mikkelsen, who claimed his maiden IRC stage victory on Thursday evening, survived a dramatic scare on stage 14 when he encountered a herd of cows in the middle of the road. Despite veering off the stage he was unable to avoid striking two cows, which left his M-Sport Ford Fiesta S2000 with extensive bodywork damage. He was able to continue and eventually finished fourth despite his powersteering failing two stages from the end.

"We were flat-out in sixth gear and 50 metres after a big crest there was eight or 10 cows in the middle of the road," said the Norwegian driver. "We had to put the car into the ditch where we hit two of the cows. It was a scary moment."

Portuguese championship leader Bernardo Sousa was set for sixth overall only to damage his M-Sport Ford Fiesta S2000's right-rear suspension striking a bank on stage 18. He limped to the finish a disconsolate 10th overall.

There were strong performances by several local drivers most notably Azores champion Ricardo Moura who recovered from a puncture on the first stage to take fifth overall in his Ralliart Mitsubishi Lancer. Vitor Pascoal completed the top six in his Peugeot 207 with Pedro Vale and Sergio Silva, the leading Subaru Impreza finisher, seventh and eighth respectively.

Rafael Tulio secured IRC 2WD Cup honours following a dominant display in his Peugeot 206. The Brazilian's second victory of the season elevates him to the top of the drivers' standings ahead of Pierre Campana, who wasn't contesting the island event.

As well as picking up the overall honours, Bruno Magalhaes secured the inaugural Colin McRae IRC Flat Out Trophy, which will be presented to the most spectacular driver on all remaining rounds of this year's IRC as part of the association between Eurosport Events, promoter of the IRC, and the Colin McRae Vision charity. Magalhaes was chosen as the winner by IRC's Jean-Pierre Nicolas, Eurosport's Gilbert Roy and Jim McRae, Colin's father.

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## Driver Quotes

**Bruno Magalhaes (Portugal), Peugeot 207 S2000, first overall:** "It's like a dream and I think we deserved it after the problem with our gearbox. We pushed from the first metre of the first stage, we led for a long time and won many stages and didn't make any mistake. When I saw the car of Jan Kopecky I could not believe what was happening and I drove very slowly to the finish. It's a fantastic feeling."

**Kris Meeke (United Kingdom), Peugeot 207 S2000, second overall:** "We have to be realistic because we were gifted a second place. We'll take the points whenever we can get them but we can't be satisfied because we didn't have the pace to win. We were competitive on some stages but we need to do more."

**Juho Hanninen (Finland), Skoda Fabia S2000, third overall:** "I couldn't see any rock and if I'd really hit something then I could blame myself. It's so frustrating and difficult to say how bad it was. Ten points was so close and with 10 points it would look quite good for the championship but with only six points it's still very open."

## Top Ten IRC Positions After Leg Three

- 1 Bruno Magalhaes/Carlos Magalhaes (Peugeot 207 S2000) 2h34m00.4s
- 2 Kris Meeke/Paul Nagle (Peugeot 207 S2000) +1m00.1s
- 3 Juho Hanninen/Mikko Markkula (Skoda Fabia S2000) +1m20.7s
- 4 Andreas Mikkelsen/Ola Floene (M-Sport Ford Fiesta S2000) +4m45.6s
- 5 Ricardo Moura/Sancho Eiro (Ralliart Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution IX) +5m22.0s
- 6 Vitor Pascoal/Mario Castro (Peugeot 207 S2000) +8m58.7s
- 7 Pedro Vale/Rui Medeiros (Ralliart Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution IX) +10m55.3s
- 8 Sergio Silva/Paulo Leal (Subaru Impreza WRX) +12m54.5s
- 9 Ricardo Carmo/Justino Reis (Ralliart Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution IX) +14m23.6s
- 10 Bernardo Sousa/Nuno Silva (M-Sport Ford Fiesta S2000) +15m09.8s

Leading IRC 2WD Cup finishers: Rafael Tulio/Cesar Valandro (Peugeot 206)

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## IRC Standing

### Drivers after round seven of 12

- 1 Juho Hanninen (Finland) 48pts
- 2 Jan Kopecky (Czech Republic) 39pts
- 3 Bruno Magalhaes (Portugal) 30pts
- 4 Guy Wilks (United Kingdom) 25pts
- 5 Kris Meeke (United Kingdom) 23pts
- 6 Thierry Neuville (Belgium) 11pts
- 7 Mikko Hirvonen (Finland) 10pts
- = Freddy Loix (Belgium) 10pts
- 9 Andreas Mikkelsen (Norway) 9pts
- 10 Paolo Andreucci (Italy) 8pts etc

### Manufacturers after round seven of 12

- 1 Skoda 104pts
- 2 Peugeot 73pts
- 3 M-Sport 26pts
- 4 Ralliart 15
- 5 Subaru 11pts

### IRC 2WD Drivers after round seven of 12

- 1 Rafael Tulio 20pts
- 2 Pierre Campana 16pts
- 3 Kevin Abbring 10pts
- = Harry Hunt 10pts
- = Yeray Lemes 10pts
- = Kris Princen 10pts
- = Marcos Tokarski 10pts
- 8 Carlos Oliveira 9pts
- 9 Pierre Campana 8pts
- = Enrique Cruz 8pts
- = Luis Gius 8pts
- = Pablo Pelaez 8pts
- = Colin R Smith 8pts
- = Luis Tedesco 8pts etc

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## **IRC 2WD Manufacturers after round seven of 12**

- 1 M-Sport 68pts
- 2 Peugeot 54pts
- 3 Abarth 19pts
- 4 Honda 16pts
- 5 Skoda 5pts

## **Stage Winners**

### **Thursday 15 July**

- SS1: Lagoa/Marques 1 (14.90kms): Bruno Magalhaes  
SS2: Coroa da Mata (7.50kms): Juho Hanninen  
SS3: Grupo Marques 1 (2.00kms): Andreas Mikkelsen

### **Friday 16 July**

- SS4: Batalha Golfe 1 (7.90kms): Bruno Magalhaes  
SS5: Feteiras 1 (7.47kms): Jan Kopecky  
SS6: Sete Cidades 1 (18.30kms): Bruno Magalhaes  
SS7: Batalha Golfe 2 (7.90kms): Juho Hanninen  
SS8: Feteiras 2 (7.47kms): Kris Meeke  
SS9: Sete Cidades 2 (18.30kms): Bruno Magalhaes  
SS10: Lagoa/Marques 2 (14.90kms): Juho Hanninen  
SS11: Achada das Furnas 1 (8.42kms): Jan Kopecky  
SS12: Lomba da Maia 1 (7.80kms): Juho Hanninen

### **Saturday 17 July**

- SS13: Achada das Furnas 2 (8.42kms): Juho Hanninen  
SS14: Graminhais 1 (20.68kms): Stage cancelled due to cows on road  
SS15: Tronqueira 1 (21.94kms): Bernardo Sousa  
SS16: Grupo Marques 2 (2.00kms): Juho Hanninen  
SS17: Lomba da Maia 2 (7.80kms): Juho Hanninen  
SS18: Graminhais 2 (20.68kms): Jan Kopecky  
SS19: Tronqueira 2 (21.94kms): Kris Meeke

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## Key Statistics

### Rally wins in 2010 (drivers)

Hanninen: 2  
Hirvonen: 1  
Kopecky: 1  
Loix: 1  
Magalhaes: 1  
Meeke: 1

### Rally wins in 2010 (manufacturers)

Skoda: 4  
Peugeot: 2  
M-Sport: 1

### Stage wins in 2010 (drivers)

Juho Hanninen: 29  
Kris Meeke: 25  
Jan Kopecky: 19  
Freddy Loix: 9  
Sebastien Ogier: 7  
Paolo Andreucci: 5  
Bruno Magalhaes: 4  
Mikko Hirvonen: 3  
Stephane Sarrazin: 2  
Andreas Mikkelsen: 1  
Bernardo Sousa: 1  
Nicolas Vouilloz: 1  
Guy Wilks: 1

### Stage wins in 2010 (manufacturers)

Skoda: 59  
Peugeot: 41  
M-Sport: 5

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## TV Times

Eurosport, Europe's largest television sports channel, will show highlights of the third day of the rally, which will also be available at [www.rally-irc.com](http://www.rally-irc.com), as follows:

### Saturday 17 July

23:00hrs-23:30hrs Day three highlights (Eurosport and Eurosport Asia-Pacific)

### Sunday 18 July

08:30hrs-09:00hrs Day three highlights repeated (Eurosport)

23:00hrs-23:30hrs Rally review (Eurosport and Eurosport Asia-Pacific)

### Monday 19 July

13:00hrs-13:30hrs Rally review repeated (Eurosport 2)

### Tuesday 20 July

03:30hrs-04:00hrs Rally review repeated (Eurosport Asia-Pacific)

17:30hrs-18:00hrs Rally review repeated (Eurosport 2)

25:00hrs-25:30hrs Rally review repeated (Eurosport Asia-Pacific)

All times are CET

## Media Enquiries

**IRC enquiries:** Richard Rodgers on [media@ircseries.com](mailto:media@ircseries.com), +44 7833 470541, or visit [www.rally-irc.com](http://www.rally-irc.com) for all the latest news, information, live stage times, live rally radio and the free IRC iPhone Application.

**Images:** Copyright-free, high-resolution photographs are available to download at the end of each leg on the official IRC website. To access them please go to the Partner Login section. The username is IRC. The password is media

## Next Event

Rali Vinho Madeira, August 5-7

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