



---

## **Hanninen claims dramatic Sardinia IRC win**

***Juho Hänninen has strengthened his grip on the Intercontinental Rally Challenge drivers' title with his second victory of the season on Rally d'Italia-Sardegna today (Sunday).***

***Driving a factory Škoda Motorsport-run Fabia, the Finn took a slender lead on the rally's ninth stage and pulled clear when Kris Meeke, his closest pursuer, crashed heavily on stage 10. The accident was captured live on Eurosport, which covered four stages of the sun-coated gravel event as they happened.***

***Hänninen's win means he has finished on the podium on all five rounds of the IRC so far this season and is now 11 points to the good in the battle for the coveted drivers' accolade. With team-mate Jan Kopecký taking third behind Peugeot driver Paolo Andreucci, Škoda now tops the manufacturers' table by 34 points.***

***Andreucci started Sunday's six stages 7.4s clear of fellow Peugeot runner Meeke, but lost more than 20 seconds with a sluggish run through the first Coiluna stage after opting to run a soft suspension set-up on his Peugeot Sport Italia 207, which resulted in a handling imbalance. After dropping to third, Andreucci moved to second when Meeke crashed. However, he then had to stave off Kopecký's advances over the final two runs. He prevailed by 2.6s after setting the fastest time on the last Monte Olia run.***

***Kopecký had been playing catch up after a moment on stage three when he inflicted sizable damage to his Fabia's front-right corner striking a rock, which necessitated a rapid overhaul in service by his mechanics.***

***Meeke was 3.6s behind Hänninen when he understeered off the road on a sweeping left-hand bend. His Peugeot UK 207 ended up on its side and would go no further. It was a disappointing end to an impressive drive by the defending IRC champion, who claimed two stage wins during the course of the event.***

---

***The Royal Automobile Club Motor Sports Association Rally of Scotland***

***Organised by International Motor Sports Limited  
Motor Sports House, Riverside Park, Colnbrook, SL3 0HG, UK  
Tel: +44(0)1753 765100 Fax: +44 (0)1753 765106 Email: rallyoffice@rallyofscotland.com  
www.rallyofscotland.com***



---

***Thierry Neuville secured a notable fourth overall in his Team Peugeot Belgium-Luxembourg 207 on his first gravel event in a four-wheel drive car. It was also the first time the 21-year-old has finished an IRC round in three attempts having crashed out on his last two outings.***

***P-G Andersson had fought his way up to seventh place only for a transmission failure to ground his Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution X two kilometres from the end of stage 10 when he was closing on sixth-placed Teemu Arminen for the honour of finishing as the leading driver in a conventional Group N car.***

***Arminen admitted to adopting a more cautious approach on Sunday in order to secure a finish in the Italian Gravel Rally Trophy, which rewarded double points in Sardinia. The Finn's conservatism in his Subaru Impreza ultimately let in Bruno Magalhães for fifth overall, while Arminen clinched the Italian Gravel title with two rounds remaining when Mauro Trentin retired on the last stage.***

***Driving for Peugeot Sport Portugal, Magalhães incurred 2m30s of time penalties for his late departure from midday service in Simaxis on Saturday while his mechanics rectified a major brake problem. He faced the prospect of carving through the loose surface gravel on day two by virtue of starting first on the road but drove without error to battle back to fifth place and maintain his 100 per cent scoring record.***

***Luigi Ricci recovered from a handful of punctures to claim seventh in his Impreza with Daniele Battistini landing the final IRC drivers' championship point in eighth overall.***

***Norwegian Andreas Mikkelsen, 20, restarted on Sunday after rolling into retirement on Saturday's first stage and set a succession of top five times in his M-Sport Ford Fiesta on his first of seven planned IRC appearances.***

---

***The Royal Automobile Club Motor Sports Association Rally of Scotland***

***Organised by International Motor Sports Limited  
Motor Sports House, Riverside Park, Colnbrook, SL3 0HG, UK  
Tel: +44(0)1753 765100 Fax: +44 (0)1753 765106 Email: rallyoffice@rallyofscotland.com  
www.rallyofscotland.com***



***Burcu Çetinkaya also returned to action on Sunday following her retirement on Saturday when a wheel worked loose. The 29-year-old Peugeot Sport Turkey driver used the leg to gain more experience of her 207 S2000 and its Yokohama tyres.***

***Although his 207 was restored to full working order following his off on stage three on Saturday, Saudi Arabian Yazeed Al Rajhi elected not to take the restart. Sébastien Ogier failed to go beyond Saturday's first stage when his Peugeot's engine overheated.***

***Briton Harry Hunt secured the IRC 2WD Cup laurels on his return to the series for the first time since Rallye Automobile Monte-Carlo in January. Driving a Ford Fiesta R2, Hunt had trailed Estonian Kaspar Koitla but moved ahead when the Honda Civic Type R driver rolled on stage eight while leading comfortably. Colin R Smith made it a British one-two in his Civic, despite spending more than six minutes stuck on a bank on Saturday.***

***Guy Wilks spent the night in hospital as he begins his recovery from two fractured vertebrae in his lower back, which he sustained when his Skoda UK Motorsport Fabia S2000 left the road at high speed on the day's first stage. The car sustained a heavy front-end impact as it hit a tree, vaulted a fence and careered over boulders before coming to rest 40 metres from the road. Co-driver Phil Pugh was uninjured but Wilks was flown by helicopter from the crash scene to hospital in Oristano where X-rays revealed the true extent of his injuries.***

**ENDS**

---

***The Royal Automobile Club Motor Sports Association Rally of Scotland***

***Organised by International Motor Sports Limited  
Motor Sports House, Riverside Park, Colnbrook, SL3 0HG, UK  
Tel: +44(0)1753 765100 Fax: +44 (0)1753 765106 Email: rallyoffice@rallyofscotland.com  
www.rallyofscotland.com***