

Rally Mexico: Preview

From one extreme to the other for the Toyota Yaris WRC

Following its victory on the snow and ice of Rally Sweden to take the triple lead of the manufacturers', drivers' and co-drivers championships, the TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team is preparing for a very different challenge on Rally Mexico: the first true gravel event of the season. Ott Tänak heads to Mexico on top of the drivers' standings for the first time after his Swedish success, while his team-mates Jari-Matti Latvala and Kris Meeke are both past winners of the event.



Ott Tänak and Martin Järveoja (Car 8)

As well as usually being one of the warmest events on the WRC calendar, with ambient temperatures around 30 °C, Rally Mexico is also the highest round of the season. The route peaks at 2,737m above sea level, where the thinner air reduces engine power by as much as 20 per cent.

The rally begins again this year with the spectacular Thursday evening stage through the colourful streets and tunnels of Guanajuato. Another street stage runs next to the service park in Leon on Friday and Saturday together with laps of the city's racing circuit. On Sunday the new Mesa Cueta stage features the first half of Friday's El Chocolate test, while a second visit to Las Minas runs as the rally-ending Power Stage.

Quotes:

Tommi Mäkinen (Team Principal)

"After our brilliant win in Sweden, the team is feeling very confident that we can also have a good rally in Mexico. It is always a tough event for the teams because of the altitude and the high temperatures, but over the past year we have done a lot of work to make our car more reliable in

these conditions, while also improving the performance. We have worked very hard with the cooling package in particular. Our pre-event testing in Spain last week went well and we're feeling ready."



Martin Järveoja and Ott Tänak

Ott Tänak (Driver car 8)

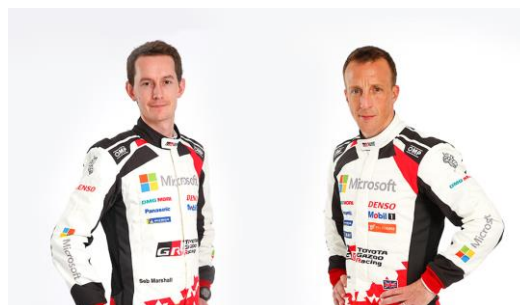
"It was a great feeling for us to win in Sweden, but we quickly changed our focus to Mexico. We flew straight to Spain for two days of gravel testing on the Monday and Tuesday after the rally. We worked on a number of different things, just trying to be as well-prepared as we can be. The whole team has been working hard and I believe we should be competitive in Mexico. As championship leaders, we will have to run first on the road on the Friday. It won't be easy but we saw in Mexico last year that it is possible to have a good result from this position, so let's see how it goes."



Miikka Anttila and Jari-Matti Latvala

Jari-Matti Latvala (Driver car 10)

I am looking forward to being in Mexico: particularly the warm sun at the end of the Finnish winter! So far, it hasn't really been the start to the season for me that I would have wanted. If there is one positive from this, however, it is that I will have quite a nice starting position for the first day in Mexico, as the eighth car on the road. I had a good test in Spain last week, using pretty much the same setup that I used to win in Australia, with just a few small tweaks. Most importantly, I am confident that as a team we are totally prepared this year for the altitude and the high temperatures."



Seb Marshall and Kris Meeke

Kris Meeke (Driver car 5)

"I had two days of testing in the south of Spain last week, which was my first time driving the car on gravel outside of Finland. It was really useful for me and I came away feeling comfortable. Mexico is a place I've gone well in the last few years: I won in 2017, and last year I was in the fight for the victory and finished third. Now with a different car I hope to be competing at the sharp end once again. Monte Carlo and Sweden were events with very complicated conditions where it would have been easy to make a mistake. Mexico is usually a lot more consistent, and I'm looking forward to it."

The statistics (Rally Mexico):

Year	Ott Tänak	Jari-Matti Latvala	Kris Meeke
2018	14	8	3

2017	4	6	1
2016	6	1	-
2015	22	15	16
2014	15	2	DNF
2013	-	16	-

What happened last year?

In his first rally on gravel in the Toyota Yaris WRC, Ott Tänak showed good performance in Mexico, lying third overall and within reach of the lead before suffering a turbo issue on Saturday morning. He restarted on Sunday and won the Power Stage ahead of Jari-Matti Latvala, who finished eighth overall under restart rules following an alternator failure on Friday. Esapekka Lappi was also forced to restart in the third Yaris WRC after going off the road.



Rallye Mexico 2018

TOYOTA GAZOO Racing World Rally Team is inspired by the motto: "ALL FOR WIN" as it competes throughout the 2019 season. Our goal in 2019 is to fight for all three crowns. All team members are aiming for this big goal together. We look forward to your continuous support!



Press release

URL: <https://toyotagazooracing.com/release/2019/#>

Press Kit and Event Pictures will be uploaded here

URL: <https://www.tgr-dam.com>

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