

Craig Breen on the podium after winning at the RWC in France.



# Breen back on top after French win

BY TREVOR McGRATH

At the World Rallye de France over the weekend, the penultimate Super 2000 World Rally Championship (SWRC) event of the season, Craig Breen pulled off an incredible victory to now lead the championship going into the final round next month in Spain. Breen, partnered by Paul Nagle clenched his third win of the season in extraordinary style on the final day when long-time class leader Hayden Paddon crashed out with two stages remaining, leaving Breen on hand to benefit from the New Zealander's ill fortune.

The Irish driver had battled with Paddon over the opening two days but fell back with a mechanical problem on Saturday afternoon. Craig started the final day third in the class and was after recovering

to 2nd when Paddon had his accident.

At the finish an ecstatic Breen said, "For sure it's a good win but I've been very lucky. What happened to Hayden was very unfortunate. Where he went off, it could have happened to anyone of us. Ok, we had some descent speed in the beginning, not enough to match Hayden and we suffered mechanical problems yesterday.

"Today was just unbelievable; the overnight rain made conditions treacherous, we were pushed by Yazeed (Al-Rajhi) and after getting in front were in the right place to benefit from Hayden's accident. I'm in a good position now going into the final round in Spain but we need to put in a good effort to get prepared but I think we will have a good package."

The final round of the season

take place in Spain from November 8th to 12th and will be a dual surface event on both tarmac and gravel.

This weekend's result has set up a thrilling final-round SWRC title decider in Spain next month but beforehand Craig and Paul have an appointment in Italy next weekend on IRC Rally Sanremo. Craig rejoins the Intercontinental Rally Challenge and Sainteloc Racing for the tarmac event.

## SWRC PROVISIONAL POINTS TABLE AFTER WORLD RALLYE FRANCE

1. Craig Breen	93 points
2. P-G Andersson	91 points
3. Yazeed Al-Rajhi	73 points
4. Hayden Paddon	68 points
5. Maciej Oleksowicz	65 points
6. Tom Cave	18 points
7. Pontus Tidemand	15 points