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David Higgins Takes 2Nd Overall In Hard-Fought Sno*Drift Rally

Cherry Hill, N.J., Jan 28, 2013 - The 2013 Sno*Drift Rally, round one of the 2013 Rally America National Championship, was an epic seesaw battle between defending Rally America Champion David Higgins in his Subaru WRX STI and his arch rival, Canadian Rally Champion Antoine L'Estage. Higgins won or tied eight of the event's 20 stages while trading the lead three times throughout the two-day rally. On the final stage, L'Estage pulled past Higgins to win the rally by a mere 6.2 seconds. Higgins settled for second place overall but was content with the fact that he'll get a rematch with L'Estage at the next six Rally America rounds.

The legendary Sno*Drift Rally, now in its 47th year, comprised of 130 miles of twisting, tree-lined, ice and snow covered roads in Northern Michigan near the towns of Atlanta and Lewiston. The challenge of racing on the roads that compose the Sno*Drift Rally are compounded by rules which prohibit studded or spiked competition ice tires, meaning traction is fleeting and driving skill and patience truly shine. Higgins ran afoul on those conditions on stage six during the event's first day where he slid wide and impacted a tree, damaging the front corner of his 2013 Subaru WRX STI. Higgins at first thought his rally was over, but his Subaru rumbled back to life and was able to continue with some inventive roadside repairs including duct tape and the shoelaces from Co-driver Craig Drew's PUMA shoes! Although they lost time during stage six, the duo was able to carry-on and even managed to set the fastest stage times on the subsequent two stages before arriving to the service park for much needed repairs.

Higgins ended the first day just 0.5 seconds ahead of L'Estage and was able to retain his lead for most of the second day. However, the size of Higgins' lead was in constant flux as he and L'Estage took turns taking time from each other on the stages. Heading into the final stage Higgins held a 1.4 second lead which, L'Estage overcame, stealing victory from Higgins.

"The rally started very well on first day and just when we built a bit of a lead we had the accident on stage six. We were so lucky to even be in the rally after that, let alone in the lead at end of day," explained Higgins. "On the second day we made a few small mistakes which cost us time. We tried to be very careful in the last two stages, to avoid mistakes again, but maybe I was too cautious while Antoine [L'Estage] was on full attack. It was a fantastic battle to be part of and great for the championship but one I would have rather won! You always learn from events but the only way I am going to feel better is to get revenge at the next rally!"

Higgins will get his re-match with L'Estage at the Rally in the 100 Acre Wood, February 22-23, based in the Ozark foothills of Missouri.

About Subaru Rally Team USA

Subaru Rally Team USA is managed by Vermont SportsCar and proudly supported by Subaru of America, Inc., Subaru Tecnica International (STI), Subaru Performance Tuning (SPT), PUMA, BFGoodrich Tires, RECARO, PIAA, Exedy, Race Proven, and MOTUL. For more information on Subaru Rally Team USA, as well as exclusive photo and video galleries, visit subaru.com/rally and for the latest news follow the team on [Twitter: @srtusa](https://twitter.com/srtusa).

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