



Press information  
For immediate release

### **Latvala given Abu Dhabi Spirit Of The Rally award in Sweden**

**The Abu Dhabi Spirit Of The Rally award for the 2008 Uddeholm Swedish Rally was presented to Jari-Matti Latvala on the occasion of his first win in the FIA World Rally Championship. Latvala took a convincing victory on the second round of the 2008 WRC this weekend and with it, becomes the youngest driver in the history of the WRC to win an event.**

The Abu Dhabi Spirit Of The Rally award recognises an individual who embodies the values for which Abu Dhabi stands; respect, team-work, integrity and innovation. It is awarded to those who display these values and make a positive contribution to the rally on which it is presented and the recipient is judged by a panel of experts from within the WRC community.

The award for this weekend's Uddeholm Swedish Rally was presented to Jari-Matti Latvala, who led the event from the second stage and took a convincing debut win in the WRC on only his second rally driving for the official Ford team, the BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team. Latvala displayed speed, maturity and determination from the outset of the event and was rewarded with his first win, justifying the faith placed in him by Team Director Malcolm Wilson. Latvala joined the works Ford team at the beginning of this year, as team-mate Mikko Hirvonen stepped up to number one status following the retirement of Marcus Grönholm.

Commenting on the weekend's action, Ahmed Hussein, Deputy Director General of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority said; "There can be no better recipient of the Abu Dhabi Spirit of the Rally award in Sweden than Jari-Matti. He drove a superb event and took the victory not as the result of others' misfortunes but completely on the basis of his driving ability. Of course, he was backed by a superb team – our partners at the BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team but he showed all the values which Abu Dhabi stands for and is a worthy recipient of the award."

BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team Director Malcolm Wilson said; "This is a dream result for the BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team. I believe the Abu Dhabi Spirit of the Rally award could not go to a more deserving cause than Jari-Matti, especially to become the youngest driver ever to win a round of the World Rally Championship. He led the event from start to finish and it has been an incredible weekend for him."

Accepting the award, Latvala said; "Winning my first WRC rally and being presented with this award is like a dream come true for me. At the beginning of this rally, I thought a podium result would be excellent but this result is perfect for me. I will make sure that both the rally trophy and the Spirit of the Rally award take pride of place at my home."

