



Hungarian Baja: Hirvonen wins his first Cross-Country-Rally

- One-two for the MINI ALL4 Racing
- Menzies secures the fine second place

In the Hungarian Baja, round six of the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup, two MINI ALL4 Racing pairings, Mikko Hirvonen / Michel Périn and Bryce Menzies / Pete Mortensen, outclassed the entire field. While Mikko Hirvonen celebrated his first win as MINI ALL4 Racing driver, the US-American added to the great MINI ALL4 racing result by finishing second, thus also securing his best result in raid rallying. At the same time, the two Dutchmen, Erik van Loon and Wouter Rosegaar, had to cope with a major dose of bad luck and were forced into early retirement.

Apart from the prologue on Friday evening, the MINI ALL4 Racing won every single special stage. In the special stages two to four, Hirvonen / Périn always set the fastest time, with Menzies / Mortensen finishing second twice and fifth in the final stage. In the end, Hirvonen won the event with a six-minute lead over Menzies. "I'm so happy about my first win the MINI and X-raid," beamed Hirvonen. "We had a great weekend and everything ran perfectly. I hadn't expected the Hungarian Baja to be so challenging and difficult. When I learned about the distances of the special stage I thought this would be a kind of a sprint event but they were very technical and on the slippery terrain tackling them often was anything but easy."

Menzies also was delighted with having finished runner-up, in his second Baja. "In the run-up I wasn't aware what I would have to cope with and in the end, it proved to be a major challenge. There were high-speed sections across trees and open space with hard terrain," said the US-American. "Between the trees I opted for a more careful approach as I don't know the MINI that well and the track surface was extremely slippery. But I'm happy about the result and having finished that close behind a great driver, such as Mikko, is positive for me."

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Van Loon and Rosegaar also delivered in fine style and wanted to push in the third special stage to keep their chances of securing a top result alive. But then, they got stuck in a ditch and a few metres later, the left rear wheel broke and they had to retire. "We proved that we have got what it takes to battle for the win," the Dutchman said annoyed. "A pity that we couldn't keep on demonstrating our competitiveness."

In only two weeks, the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup will be continued with the seventh round, the Baja Poland.