

PRESSRELEASE

Successful season kick-off for X-raid in Russia

- Vladimir Vasilyev takes his MINI ALL4 Racing to second place
- Martin Kaczmarski finishes fourth, thus being the best Polish driver

Following the Dakar Rally in January, featuring heat and sand, X-raid had to cope with completely different conditions, in the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup season opener in Russia: Ice, snow and even more ice and snow. In the Baja Russia Northern Forest, Russian pairing Vladimir Vasilyev / Konstantin Zhiltsov secured second place behind Toyota's Yazeed Al-Rajhi, with their MINI ALL4 Racing. While young Pole Martin Kaczmarski and his Portuguese co-driver Filipe Palmeiro came fourth. Ruslan Misikov (RUS) and Vitaliy Yevtyekhov (UKR) in the first BMW X3 CC finished sixth, with the Russians Andrey Dmitriev and Vladimir Demyanenko taking the second BMW X3 CC to 13th place.

For the MINI ALL4 Racing, the Russian event represented the first kilometres on ice and snow. To be well prepared for the unfamiliar conditions, the vehicle was modified in several areas. For instance, it had to be made sure that engine, gearbox and differential maintained their working temperatures to be able to fully deliver in the cold. In addition, the cabin also had to be heated to keep drivers and co-drivers warm.

In the prologue with its distance of just 6.5 kilometres, the drivers mainly focused on covering the distance without damaging their vehicles – to be well prepared for the things to come on the following days. Vasilyev entered the event as defending champion but in the first special stage on Saturday, he seemed to have signed a bad-luck deal. Twice he hit a rock and had to stop for changing a tyre. He nonetheless finished third but crossed the finish line some four minutes behind the leader, Al-Rajhi. For the second special stage, he opted for a more conservative approach, encountered no problems whatsoever – and finished runner-up, just a second behind the second fastest. In the final special stage on Sunday, Vasilyev pushed to the max and secured the special-stage win. He also succeeded in massively closing in on Al-Rajhi but in the end, this wasn't enough for overtaking and defeating the driver from Saudi Arabia.

For Kaczmarski, it was the first appearance in an ice-and-snow cross-country event – but the Pole delivered in fine style, nevertheless. He contested all the special stages without suffering punctures or encountering any other problems. By finishing fourth, he also proved to be the best Polish competitor. Meanwhile, the two pairings contesting the Russian Baja with BMW X3 CC vehicles also impressed with good results. Due to minor driving mistakes, Misikov and Dmitriev had their meetings with the Russian flora but succeeded in surviving these incidents without damaging their cars seriously and so, they finished sixth and twelfth respectively.

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MAGNA STEYR



“We are really happy with the result,” said X-raid Team Manager Sven Quandt. “For us and the MINI ALL4 Racing, it was the first event we had to contest in conditions as cold as here. The drivers delivered in great style and the MINI also convinced, thus demonstrating that we did a good preparation job and made the appropriate modifications. Nonetheless, I’m happy that the next events on the calendar will be held in warmer conditions.”

The next event for X-raid will be the Baja Italy, the second round of the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup 2014, held in mid-March.

More photos available at press.x-raid.de