



Dakar 2017 / SS4: Mikko Hirvonen now third in the overall standings

- **Hirvonen finishes second in stage four**
- **Five MINI in the top 10**

Mikko Hirvonen (FIN) and Michel Périn (FRA) keep on working their way up in the overall standings. In stage four, taking the field to Tupiza, Bolivia, the MINI John Cooper Works Rally pairing came second behind Peugeot's Cyril Despres. Kuba Przygonski (POL) and his Belgian navigator finished seventh. Chile's Boris Garafulic and his co-driver Filipe Palmeiro (POR) had a very good day and came ninth, with their MINI ALL4 Racing, with Orlando Terranova (ARG) and Andreas Schulz (GER) in the MINI John Cooper Works Rally finishing right behind them. .

Al-Rajhi, however, had to retire from the special stage due to health problems. He suffers massively due to the high altitude and used the border crossing from Argentina to Bolivia to turn to the service route to the bivouac.

"We had a really great day," beamed Hirvonen. "The early sections featured really big dunes at an altitude of 4000 metres. They were higher than the ones in Abu Dhabi. There even were moments when we thought that we wouldn't be able to cross a dune. But we always found – often at the last moment – a way to do it. This was the section where we succeeded in passing Carlos and Stéphane. In addition, Michel navigated us in great style. Later, the terrain changed and we once again could go faster. But there, the buggy unfortunately could pass us again. Nonetheless, we completed the special stage without encountering any problems, such as a puncture." The Fin now holds third position in the overall standings.

Przygonski also secured another top-10 result. "It was a good day but the dunes at 4000 metres above sea level were really hard for the car," the Pole said. "Tom and I always jointly found a good way across the dunes." He now holds sixth place in the

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overall standings. Garafulic also got out of his MINI ALL4 Racing with a smile on his face. “Never in my life have I seen this kind of dunes,” he revealed, “Although I am living not far away, in Chile. They were hard and soft at the same time. You had traction at times but a moment later it felt as if the car was swimming – and a few metres further on, the traction was back. For drivers without dune experience, this section must have been a nightmare.” Thanks to his performance, the Chilean now holds ninth position in the overall standings.

“It was a tough day for us,” admitted Terranova who holds eight place in the overall standings. “We lost our way in the early stages and couldn’t find a way point. Later, the bushes choked our radiator and we were forced to stop. The dunes also were something special. Unfortunately I later got problems with the altitude and felt rather bad.”

Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT) gets on better and better with the MINI ALL4 Racing and so, he and his co-driver Xavier Panseri (FRA) finished 12th, today. “We expected sand, today, but not that we would have to cope with it nearly all the time. Once we got stuck and lost about eight minutes. So we slightly reduced the tire pressure and made good progress, afterwards. It’s easier for the buggies as they can control their tire pressure from the cockpit. Nonetheless, I really happy with our achievements and even more so as we now are 10th in the overall standings.”

Sylvio de Barros / Rafael Capoani (both BRA) and Stephan Schott (GER) /Paulo Fiúza (POR) finished 15th and 16th respectively, today. De Barros now is 11th overall, Schott 16th.

Tomorrow, on the way to Oruro, the competitors will have to cover a special-stage distance of 447 kilometres plus a liaison-section distance of 245 kilometres. The stage features the most different terrains, inter alia another to dune sections.

“I already felt bad prior to the start but it goes without saying that we started into the special stage, nevertheless,” Al-Rajhi revealed in the bivouac. “But with 190 kilometres covered we stopped and I had a rest for a while. Nonetheless, the headache got worse and worse and so I opted for retiring from the special stage. But now I already am feeling far better again.”

Dakar 2017 Result SS4:

1. C. Depres (FRA) / D. Castera (FRA) - Peugeot - 4h 22m 55s
2. M. Hirvonen (FIN) / M. Périn (FRA) - MINI John Cooper Works Rally – 4h 33m 46s
3. N. Roma (ESP) / A. Haro (ESP) – Toyota - 4h 35m 46s
4. S. Peterhansel (FRA) / J.-P. Cottret (FRA) - Peugeot - 4h 38m 10s
5. S. Loeb (FRA) / D. Elena (MCO) - Peugeot - 4h 45m 08s
- ...
7. J. Przygonski (POL) / T. Colsoul (BEL) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 4h 47m 18s
- ...
9. B. Garafulic (CHI) / F. Palmeiro (POR) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 4h 55m 43s
10. O. Terranova (ARG) / A. Schulz (GER) - MINI John Cooper Works Rally – 5h 5m 28s
- ...
12. M. Abu Issa (QAT) / X. Panseri (FRA) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 5h 13m 55s
- ...
15. S. De Barros (BRA) / R. Capoani (BRA) - MINI ALL4 Racing - 5h 31m 16s
16. S. Schott (GER) / P. Fiúza (POR) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 5h 38m 21s

Dakar 2017 Overall standing after SS4:

1. C. Depres (FRA) / D. Castera (FRA) – Peugeot – 11h 33m 16s
2. S. Peterhansel (FRA) / J.-P. Cottret (FRA) - Peugeot - 11h 37m 24s
3. M. Hirvonen (FIN) / M. Périn (FRA) - MINI John Cooper Works Rally – 11h 38m 20s
4. S. Loeb (FRA) / D. Elena (MCO) - Peugeot - 11h 40m 04s
5. N. Roma (ESP) / A. Haro (ESP) - Toyota - 11h 43m 46s
6. J. Przygonski (POL) / T. Colsoul (BEL) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 12h 09m 51s
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8. O. Terranova (ARG) / A. Schulz (GER) - MINI John Cooper Works Rally – 12h 21m 53s
9. B. Garafulic (CHI) / F. Palmeiro (POR) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 12h 54m 36s
10. M. Abu Issa (QAT) / X. Panseri (FRA) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 13h 09m 06s
11. S. De Barros (BRA) / R. Capoani (BRA) - MINI ALL4 Racing - 13h 37m 50s
- ...
16. S. Schott (GER) / P. Fiúza (POR) - MINI ALL4 Racing – 14h 04m 47s