

new dimension **X-raid**



Dakar Rally
4th - 17th January 2015



MINI ALL4 Racing on day seven once again invincible

- **Five MINI ALL4 vehicles in the top**
- **Tomorrow, the teams will have to cope with the demanding marathon stage**

Courtesy of Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) and his navigator Mathieu Baumel (FRA), the Qatar Rally Team and its MINI ALL4 Racing celebrated the next stage win and kept on extending its overall lead. The three Monster Energy Rally Raid crews secured top-10 positions, in today's stage. Nani Roma (ESP) and Michel Périn (FRA) took their green and black MINI ALL4 racing to third place, the Argentineans Orlando Terranova / Bernardo 'Ronnie' in the red and black MINI ALL4 Racing came fifth and Krzysztof Holowczyc (POL) / Xavier Panseri (FRA) finished eighth, with their blue and black MINI ALL4 Racing. With this result, the Pole defended his fourth position in the overall standings.

Throughout the special stage, Al-Attiyah was involved in a tough battle with Giniel de Villiers and Robby Gordon. In the dunes, however, he made perfect use of his experience to celebrate his fourth stage win. "We kept an eye on the car at any time," revealed the driver from Qatar. "After all, we need a perfect vehicle for the marathon stage we will have to contest on the coming to two days. Now we just have to wait and see what the days in Bolivia will bring. I don't know Bolivia and so, we just will respond to what will happen".

Roma also could gain a lot of ground in the closing stages, thus working his way up to third. "The dunes were nice but the sun was really high and so, I just couldn't see if there were holes or other dangers," explained the Spaniard. "The marathon stage definitely will be thrilling. Having to survive it without any service will be a kind of weird."

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The two Dutchmen Erik van Loon and Wouter Rosegaar also secured another top-10 result, with their MINI ALL4 Racing. “The first part of the special stage was really gruelling,” said Van Loon, “For both man and machine. Later, we saw some of our direct competitors being in problems. In the dunes, finding out who was driving in front of you was extremely difficult and therefore, we opted for a slightly conservative approach. But our sixth position in the overall standings still is very very good.”

Boris Garafulic (CHI) and Filipe Palmeiro (POR) finished 12th, thus also making for a good result. “I had a lot of fun, today,” beamed Garafulic. “We were fast and also had no problems on our way across the dunes.” Chinese Zhou Yong and his German navigator Andreas Schulz also once again delivered in fine style to finish 15th.

Guerlain Chicherit and Alex Winoqc made for a Dakar fairy tale, with their Buggy All Terrain. The vehicle caught fire in yesterday’s stage and everybody was convinced that this was the end of the Zebra Buggy’s 2015 Dakar involvement. But in cooperation with the race-truck crew, the pairing succeeded in getting the car ready to race, again. Late in the evening, Chicherit arrived in the bivouac and the mechanics started working on the buggy right away. So, the two Frenchmen could start into today’s stage and secure the fine 22nd place. “A big thank you to the guys, they did a fantastic job,” said Chicherit.

Tomorrow, on the way to contesting the marathon stage, the Dakar field will drive to Bolivia. This means that the crews will have to spend the night in Bolivia without their teams and without any service. The only help they may accept is the one of other competitors. In addition, there won’t be any extra tyres. Therefore, the forthcoming two days could be crucial for the battle for the win in this year’s Dakar Rally.