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Dakar Rally
4th - 17th January 2015



Next stage win for the MINI ALL4 Racing

- **Qatar Rally Team secures its next success**
- **Nani Roma with heavy accident**

Nine of the ten 2015 Dakar stages contested to date have been won by the MINI ALL4 Racing. Today, it once again was the turn of the Qatar Rally Team pairing Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) / Mathieu Baumel (FRA) who extended their lead in the overall standings by another five minutes, with this success. Right behind them, the Argentinean's Orlando Terranova and Bernardo 'Ronnie' Graue, representing the Monster Energy Rally Raid Team colours, finished second, with their team-mates Krzysztof Holowczyc and Xavier Panseri crossing the finish line in seventh position..

"It was a good stage for us, allowing us to once again extend our lead," said Al-Attiyah. "I'm really delighted with already having won five stages in this Dakar. Now we have to survive another three days. Today's track rather resembled a WRC stage. For the major part of the day we were racing in the mountains and rain was falling in the closing stages. I feel really sorry for Nani – and even more so as the hole wasn't documented in the road book."

Orlando Terranova originally had hoped for being able to win today's stage contested in Argentina but at the end of the day, he also was happy with having clinched second place. "We were looking for a waypoint for quite a while, thus losing a lot of time," revealed Terranova. "It's a real pity for Nani. After all, he hasn't made a mistake." Terranova's team-mate Holowczyc experienced a similar day: "Actually, we were in a really good shape today and had found our pace," the Pole said. "But we missed two waypoints although we don't exactly know how this could happen as we were racing on the track all the time."

Dutch pairing Erik van Loon and Wouter Rosegaar von Van Loon Racing finished 11th. "It was a long day for us," admitted Van Loon. "In my position, gaining ground

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currently is impossible and therefore, I have to focus on not losing too much time. In the closing stages, I could make up some ground on Vasilyev and Laveille who are my direct rivals. Therefore, I'm happy with our performance." The Russians Vladimir Vasilyev and Konstantin Zhiltsov finished right behind them. "Nothing special today," revealed Zhiltsov, "But the road book was absolutely useless. It lacked the dangerous places while others were marked as dangerous – and there was nothing." Boris Garafulic (CHI) and Filipe Palmeiro (POL) came 16th, two positions ahead of Kazakhstan's Aidyn Rakhimbayev and his Russian navigator Anton Nikolaev.

Meanwhile, it just isn't the Dakar of Nani Roma. Yesterday, the Spaniard celebrated his first stage win but today, he crashed into a deep hole that wasn't documented in the road book and somersaulted. Fortunately, he and his co-driver Michel Périn survived the accident unharmed. He is on his way back to the team. The decision if he will be able to continue will be made after an intense check-up of the car.

Tomorrow's stage will take the Dakar field from Salta to Termas Rio Hondo. Following a 184-kilometre liaison-section, the competitors will start into a 194-kilometre special stage that will be – according to the organisers – fast and a navigational challenge. Afterwards, the field will have to cover another 142 kilometres to the bivouac.