

Press release

11 November 2015

MINI announces global driver line-up of MINI ALL4 Racing crews to challenge 2016 Dakar Rally.

MINI set to challenge for fifth consecutive Dakar Rally win with 12 MINI ALL4 Racing crews.

Munich. Make no mistake: Dakar Rally is the cross-country race of all cross-country races simply by being the toughest automotive race on earth. Despite its fearsome reputation, MINI with its MINI ALL4 Racing has achieved four (2012-2015) consecutive Dakar wins and now looks to a fifth demolition of the competition in 2016. MINI's bid to secure the 2016 Dakar Rally has already begun with the announcement of a starting line-up of 12 MINI ALL4 Racing crews.

Ever since the original Mini evolved in the hands of John Cooper to Mini Cooper 997 rally projectiles, circa 1961, the name Mini is synonymous with international rally involvement and, of course, winning.

MINI today has continued to uphold this tradition of world-wide racing success through its MINI ALL4 Racing. Like the original Mini Cooper, MINI and its MINI ALL4 Racing have become iconic motorsport combatants through continued domination of global cross-country rally events and championships. One such cross-country event is the Dakar Rally.

Considered to be the most challenging race on the cross-country rally calendar, the Dakar Rally – a two-week-long endurance marathon of cars and crews – will once again be contested by MINI and its race proven MINI ALL4 Racing.

The X-raid Team entry for the Dakar will consist of four MINI ALL4 Racing crews. These crews are made up of highly skilled and professional drivers and co-drivers, all recognised as masters in the world of rally motorsport – and all readied to claim MINI its fifth Dakar title.

Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) and long-term co-pilot Mathieu Baumel (FRA) are the defending Dakar champions after they climbed onto the top podium step at the end of the 2015 Dakar Rally. “To win Dakar,” said Al-Attiyah, “you need good luck, a good team and good co-driver – and also work very hard yourself to achieve a win. The MINI ALL4 Racing is very good because it has won four Dakar titles. My aim now is to win the Dakar again.”



Press release

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Topic MINI announces global driver line-up of MINI ALL4 Racing crews to challenge 2016 Dakar Rally.

page 2

Spanish star Joan 'Nani' Roma is a former Dakar winner in both car and motorcycle categories. Together with compatriot Alex Haro, the amassed experience of Dakar is wide and formidable. Even so, Roma is as keen as ever to win... "Every Dakar holds something special," said Roma. "After 20 Dakars you still find it is special – you always find it is something nice but when you have won it is one of those great moments."

Argentine duo Orlando Terranova and Bernardo 'Ronnie' Graue make up the third official team entry and they too have huge experience with Dakar – between them over 15 years including motorcycle and Buggy rides and, of course, the MINI ALL4 Racing. "The MINI ALL4 Racing is a very strong car," said Terranova. "The quality of the car is incredible. The engine is amazing – you can be fast in dunes, in the open areas and also the WRC areas, and this is what gives the MINI ALL4 Racing an advantage."

Mikko Hirvonen (FIN) is a former WRC specialist who came out of retirement in order to contest Dakar in a MINI ALL4 Racing because of the race's challenging nature. Hirvonen's co-pilot for his first Dakar is the much respected and experienced Michel Périn (FRA). Talking about his route to Dakar, Hirvonen said: "When MINI offered me the chance to test the MINI ALL4 Racing with the experienced X-raid team, of course I really, really wanted to give it a go – Dakar is one of the toughest challenges what you can do with a car."

The remaining eight MINI ALL4 Racing crews challenging for podium honour at the 2016 Dakar Rally are privateer teams from all corners of the globe. From Europe to South America to China, 13 countries in total are represented by the combined MINI ALL4 Racing crews and underline the demand for the race-proven reliability and performance of the MINI ALL4 Racing – as witnessed in the 2015 Dakar Rally when four of the top five finishing cars were MINI ALL4 Racing.

Throughout 2015, Great Britain's (GB) Harry Hunt has proven he has, for the youngest member of the MINI ALL4 Racing line-up, a mature racing head. As a privateer pilot and ambassador for MINI UK, Hunt will be partnered by Andreas Schulz of Germany. This pairing clearly demonstrates the global appeal of MINI ALL4 Racing at cross-country rally and, like the other privateers, will be a crew to be reckoned with.

Perfect China Health 100 Yong Team of China is another such MINI ALL4 Racing privateer crew to participate at Dakar. Although China has had previous ties with MINI and its MINI ALL4 Racing within the sport of cross-country rally, the 2016 Dakar Rally will be the first ever Dakar to include a female driver from China. Guo Meiling, an exceptional business lady based in China, will be joined by co-pilot Min Liao in the cockpit of a MINI ALL4 Racing.

Press release

Date 11 November 2015

Topic MINI announces global driver line-up of MINI ALL4 Racing crews to challenge 2016 Dakar Rally.

page 3

The MINI ALL4 Racing cars to compete at the 2016 Dakar Rally are further refined from last year's event. Throughout the course of 2015, MINI ALL4 Racing crews in conjunction with X-raid (DE), builders of the MINI ALL4 Racing, have developed the cars in testing and actual race conditions. The result of this is recorded with a successful title defence of the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup.

The 2016 Dakar Rally (2-16th January) is now less than two months away and kick starts the 2016 cross-country rally season. Once again the Dakar organising team has set a challenging route for man and machine to cover incredible terrain across the varying land masses of Argentina and Bolivia.

To drive across mountains, valleys, river beds, deserts and everything in between in all weathers takes skill. It also requires the specialised orienteering/navigational skills of a co-pilot to ensure the end is reached. It takes a car like the MINI ALL4 Racing with a proven reliability record and performance to cover demanding terrain. And it takes the exceptional experience of X-raid (DE) technicians to service MINI ALL4 Racing during rest periods.

2016 Dakar Rally MINI ALL4 Racing crew line-up

Driver	Co-driver	Team
Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT)	Mathieu Baumel (FRA)	X-raid Team
Joan "Nani" Roma (ESP)	Alex Haro (ESP)	X-raid Team
Orlando Terranova (ARG)	Bernardo "Ronnie" Graue (ARG)	X-raid Team
Mikko Hirvonen (FIN)	Michel Périn (FRA)	X-raid Team
Erik van Loon (NDL)	Wouter Rosegaar (NDL)	Van Loon Racing
Adam Malysz (POL)	Xavier Panseri (FRA)	ORLEN Team
Jakub "Kuba" Przygonski (POL)	Andrei Rudnitski (BLR)	ORLEN Team
Harry Hunt (GB)	Andreas Schulz (GER)	X-raid Team
Boris Garafulic (CHL)	Filipe Palmeiro (POR)	X-raid Team
Nazareno Lopez (ARG)	Sergio Lafuente (URU)	X-raid Team
Stephan Schott (GER)	Holm Schmidt (GER)	X-raid Team
Guo Meiling (CHN)	Min Liao (CHN)	Perfect China Health 100 Yong Team



Press release

Date 11 November 2015

Topic MINI announces global driver line-up of MINI ALL4 Racing crews to challenge 2016 Dakar Rally.

page 4

2016 Dakar Rally media resource

Cross-country rally is a growing spectator sport. To ensure full media assistance, the MINI Motorsport reporting team will be fully mobilised. Prior to 2016 Dakar Rally, a highly detailed electronic media pack will be made available. Throughout the duration of the Dakar, media update reports on every stage of the event, complete with hi-res images will also be available. The media pack and following Dakar race reports will be available in six languages (English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese) via the BMW Media Website.

Find more photos and videos in high resolution of previous Dakar participants in the MINI ALL4 Racing on the BMW Media Website by [clicking here](#).

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