

Media Information
2017 Dakar Rally
03 January 2017

2017 Dakar Rally – Stage 2: Resistencia - San Miguel de Tucumán, 803 km

- Two MINI John Cooper Works Rally cars move up the top ten leader board
- Al-Rajhi completes Stage 2 in sixth place; Hirvonen eighth
- Przygonski climbs to 12th overall

Munich. Day two of the 2017 Dakar Rally arrived for all competitors with the Stage 2 starting point in the city of Resistencia, Argentina. It was 12:05pm when the first car got away for Stage 2 to cover a total of 803 km, of which 275 km were outlined for the Special Stage off-road section – a section that promised fast racing on dusty and rocky terrain, not unlike a WRC stage.

X-raid Team's Yazeed Al-Rajhi (KSA) and co-driver Timo Gottschalk (GER) climbed up the leader board after a spirited drive saw them complete Stage 2 in sixth place. This result pushed them one place further up the overall result table to now sit in sixth place. The X-raid Team duo are enjoying the early stages in their new MINI John Cooper Works Rally (#306) and looking forward to the ascent section leading to the mountains.

Talking about Stage 2, Al-Rajhi said: "A lot of speed zone and a lot of straight line. We try our best to keep our speed – as you know if you lose 2 kmh on top speed then you lose a lot over land. Ten more days left and we can push a bit more because it is not so much about speed now."

Fellow X-raid Team crew Mikko Hirvonen (FIN) and Michel Périn (FRA) in the second of the three new MINI John Cooper Works Rally cars also progressed further up the leader board. Another solid drive, reminiscent of last year's performance at Dakar, placed him eighth at the end of Stage 2. This means the former WRC driver is now eighth overall.

Hirvonen: "It was a really fast stage. Completely straight for 10 kilometres at one point and nearly flat out all the time. There's a long way to go but today was good for drag racing and not so much for rallying."

Jakub Przygonski (POL) and Tom Colsoul (BEL) in a MINI ALL4 Racing (#316) also enjoyed the pace of today's Stage 2 by moving to 12th overall after a fantastic 11th place finish at the finishing point of Stage 2. Although it is early days, Przygonski already has his eyes on a top ten position.

One place behind Przygonski in 13th position is the MINI John Cooper Works Rally (#308) of Orlando Terranova (ARG) and co-driver Andreas Schulz (GER). The X-raid pair didn't complete Stage 2 as they would have liked but the Dakar experienced Terranova is well aware that race positions can change as quickly as the South American weather.

Terranova. "It was not good today. The wipers didn't not work for some reason and I could not see because of the mud, so we lose time..."

For Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT) and Xavier Panseri (FRA) of X-raid Team (#322) it is their first race together. Even more interesting is the fact this the first Dakar for Abu Issa in a car! All the same, his experience with buggies has paid off with a 19th place finish in Stage 2. He and Panseri now sit inside the top 20 in 19th.

The remainder of the MINI Family all completed Stage 2 safely and inside the top 30. Boris Garafulic (CHL) and Filipe Palmeiro (POR) driving a MINI ALL4 Racing (#314) maintain their 22nd placement after Stage 2.

Sylvio deBarros (BR) and Rafael Capoani (BR) completed Stage 2 in 26th and in the same overall position. Stephan Schott (GER) and Paulo Fiuza (POR) are the eighth crew of the MINI Family and are now 28th overall.

Tomorrow's (04-01-2017) Stage 3 starts in San Miguel de Tucumán and completes in San Salvador de Jujuy, a total distance of 780 km.

2017 Dakar Rally: MINI Family standings overall after Stage 2.

Position	Driver	Co-driver	#	Team	Time
6	Yazeed Al-Rajhi (KSA)	Timo Gottschalk (GER)	306	X-raid Team	02:38:43 +00:05:12
8	Mikko Hirvonen	Michel Périn	303	X-raid Team	02:42:20

	(FIN)	(FRA)			+00:08:49
12	Jakub Przygonski (POL)	Tom Colsoul (BEL)	316	ORLEN Team	02:44:18 +00:10:47
13	Orlando Terranova (ARG)	Andreas Schulz (GER)	308	X-raid Team	02:46:42 +00:13:11
19	Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT)	Xavier Panseri (FRA)	322	X-raid Team	03:00:56 +00:27:25
22	Boris Garafulic (CHL)	Filipe Palmeiro (POR)	314	X-raid Team	03:06:04 +00:32:33
26	Sylvio de Barros (BR)	Rafael Capoani (IT)	339	X-raid Team	03:11:12 +00:37:41
28	Stephan Schott (GER)	Paulo Fiuza (POR)	325	X-raid Team	03:16:44 00:43:13

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