

Media Information
Silk Way Rally 2018
24 July 2018

Silk Way Rally 2018, First Edition, Stage 4: Astrakhan to Astrakhan.

- **MINI tops the leader board after Stage 4 of Silk Way Rally in Russia.**
- **Yazeed Al Rajhi and co-driver Timo Gottschalk in a MINI John Cooper Works Rally complete Stage 4 in second and now lead Silk Way Rally**
- **Joan 'Nani' Roma and Alex Haro in a second MINI John Cooper Works Rally finish third in stage.**

Munich. MINI Motorsport leads the 2018 Silk Way Rally (First Edition) after Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA) and co-driver Timo Gottschalk (GER) achieved second place in today's Stage 4 of the seven stage event. The second MINI John Cooper Works Rally of Joan 'Nani' Roma (ESP) and co-driver Alex Haro (ESP) finished the stage in third place.

After four days of racing, the MINI Family crews have experienced dry, bumpy conditions during Stage 1, and an overnight Marathon Stage going into Stage 3, which meant only drivers and their co-drivers could service their vehicles.

Stage 3 turned out to be the total opposite of the two previous stages. Torrential rain resulted in deep mud along the route and caused problems for many competitors. This eventually led to the organisers cancelling the stage. Interestingly, of the three race vehicles that made it to the end of the stage without problems, two were the MINI John Cooper Works Rally cars.

For Yazeed Al Rajhi and Timo Gottschalk, their leading position comes after consistent results. For the pairing of Roma and Haro, it is a case of what could have been. During Stage 1, Roma was forced to retire from the stage after the bumpy conditions aggravated an old injury. This meant the pairing were handed a time penalty of 110 hours. Since then, Roma has driven like a man possessed to achieve a fifth and two third place finishes to move his MINI John Cooper Works Rally to 22nd overall.

Al Rajhi: "We are delighted with having taken the lead and demonstrates that you should never give up – even if you have lost some time on day one. We opted for a very controlled approach in the previous stages and tried to avoid making mistakes – we are really happy with our strategy. We hope to be able to defend our lead in the coming stages and that things will keep on running as flawlessly for us as they did so

far. But there still are three long days to go and tomorrow we will have to contest the longest stage of the entire rally. Furthermore, the weather also makes for difficult conditions. It's raining a lot and consequently, the track often is very slippery.”

Roma: “Unfortunately, I have got stomach problems that forced me to take a five-minute rest today. But afterwards I found a good rhythm and succeeded in securing a good result. Apart from that everything is fine – the MINI John Cooper Works Rally runs perfectly and the team does a fantastic job. I'm really happy that Yazeed took the lead for the team. I'm glad to be contesting this rally, although the result isn't as good as I hoped for.”

Tomorrow's Stage 5 (Astrakhan – Volgograd) is the longest stage of the 2018 Silk Way Rally (First Edition) and consists of 552.71km distance, 443.79 of which are Special Stage racing against the clock.

For further information on Silk Way Rally 2018 and the full rally schedule please click [here](#).

Silk Way Rally 2018: overall standings after Stage 4

	Driver	Co-driver	Type	Team	Time
1 st	Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA)	Timo Gottschalk (GER)	MINI John Cooper Works Rally #104	X-raid Team	14:48:09
22 nd	Joan ' Nani' Roma (ESP)	Alex Haro (ESP)	MINI John Cooper Works Rally #103	X-raid Team	118:10:47

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