

Press release

23 July 2016

Silk Way Rally 2016 – Al Rahji takes penultimate Stage victory. Four of the five MINI ALL4 Racing crews retain the top five positions overall.

Stage 14 of the gruelling Silk Way Rally brought a well-earned victory for the MINI ALL4 Racing team. Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA) and Timo Gottschalk (GER) piloted the #103 vehicle across the finish line in first position to maintain their second place position in the overall standings.

Munich. The penultimate Stage of the 2016 Silk Way Rally saw the MINI ALL4 Racing crews complete the Wuhai-Hohhot route. The 754km leg was mainly sandy terrain with fast tracks, but the dunes towards the end of the route were a challenge for even the most experienced drivers.

Speaking after their Stage 14 victory, Al Rahji said: “The Silk Way has been a good rally – we’ve improved a lot and have learnt a lot of different roads. The car is strong and performed well, that’s the most important thing. It has been a very hard rally and some of the stages were very tough. But, I’d definitely like to come back!”

“It’s been a hard rally with some difficult navigation,” added Gottschalk. “The Silk Way has some very demanding stages, and compared with the Dakar, it is a very big adventure. I expected that there would be some long days for sure, but I didn’t expect the stages to be so hard.”

Meanwhile, the MINI ALL4 Racing crew of Harry Hunt (GB) and Andreas Schulz (GER) brought their #105 across the line in third place. The result has enabled them to retain their fourth position in the overall standings.

“I’m so happy to have achieved fourth in the Silk Way Rally – I’m over the moon and couldn’t have hoped for anything more,” said Hunt. “It’s a great rally but it was a lot harder than I expected and I personally found it harder than the Dakar. The stages were longer, the liaisons were longer and the days were longer. The heat was difficult to cope with but some of the scenery was fantastic!”

The Russian duo of Vladimir Vasilyev and Konstantin Zhiltsov (X-raid Team) completed Stage 14 in fourth place and were the third MINI ALL4 Racing team home today. Their result means they maintain third spot in the standings overall.

“The Silk Way has been a good rally,” said Zhiltsov. “Today was a good race, not too difficult, although the dunes section was tricky.”

Aidyn Rakhimbayev (KAZ) and Anton Nikolaev (RUS) of MINI ALL4 Racing #106 completed the 14th Stage in seventh place, while Bauyrzhan Issabayev (KAZ) and

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Vladimir Demyanenko (RUS) finished in 26th place. Rakhimbayev completes the rally in fifth place overall with Issabayev in tenth.

Rakhimbayev said: “I’m happy and pleased with my achievements. I enjoyed contesting the Silk Way Rally, it was an interesting challenge.”

For further information about the Silk Way Rally 2016, please visit:

www.silkwayrally.com

Silk Way Rally 2016: MINI ALL4 Racing Overall Classification after Stage 14

Position	Driver	Co-driver	#	Team	Time
2 nd	Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA)	Timo Gottschalk (GER)	103	X-raid Team	+00h:25m:51s
3 rd	Vladimir Vasilyev (RUS)	Konstantin Zhiltsov (RUS)	101	G-Energy Team	+00h:49m:46s
4 th	Harry Hunt (GB)	Andreas Schulz (GER)	105	X-raid Team	+01h:54m:47s
5 th	Aidyn Rakhimbayev (KAZ)	Anton Nikolaev (RUS)	106	Astana Motorsport	+02h:12m:45s
10 th	Bauyrzhan Issabayev (KAZ)	Vladimir Demyanenko (RUS)	109	Astana Motorsport	+05h:08m:09s

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

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