

Media Information
2017 Dakar Rally
09 January 2017

2017 Dakar Rally - Stage 7: La Paz - Uyuni, 622 km

- Hirvonen returns to form with 4th place stage finish
- Top 10 stage finishes for Al Rajhi, Garafulic and Terranova
- Hirvonen maintains top five position overall

Munich. A full day's racing resumed at the 2017 Dakar today, with a revised Stage 7 route that integrated some of the locations from the cancelled Stage 6 into the road book. After poor weather conditions caused Stage 5 to be shortened and Stage 6 cancelled, yesterday's rest day provided the perfect opportunity for organisers to change the first part of the marathon stage today. The Dakar website referred to the new road book as an unprecedented combination of the original routes, with the drivers doing battle on mostly sandy terrain for two of the day's main sections.

The combination of a sandy stage and two days' rest seemed to work well for Mikko Hirvonen (FIN) and Michel Perin (FRA) as the pair showed a return to form in the #303 MINI John Cooper Works Rally car. The Finn completed today's section of the race in 4th position, just over 5 minutes behind the race winner to maintain 5th place in the overall standings.

The rest also benefitted fellow MINI John Cooper Works Rally driver, Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA), who is now recovered from his week one illness. He and co-driver Timo Gottschalk (DEU) were the second X-raid Team to complete today's stage, crossing the finish line in 8th place in the #306 car. His official overall position is still to be confirmed following an appeal.

The third MINI John Cooper Works Rally car (#308) finished Stage 7 just two places behind Al Rajhi in 10th place. The consistent performances of Orlando Terranova (ARG) and co-driver Andreas Schulz (GER) sees them maintain 7th position overall, less than five minutes behind their closest rival in 6th place.

Sandwiched between Al Rajhi and Terranova in 9th place today was Boris Garafulic (ARG) and co-driver Filipe Palmeiro (POR) in the #314 MINI ALL4 Racing. Today's finish was enough to maintain the pair's 9th position in the overall top ten.

Still one position ahead of them in the main race is Jakub Przygonski (POL) and Tom Colsoul (BEL), who are 8th overall despite a challenging stage today in the #316 MINI ALL4 Racing that saw them finish 15th.

The remaining three MINI ALL4 Racing pairings also completed Stage 7 with Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT) and Xavier Panseri (FRA) finishing in 16th, ahead of Stephan Schott (GER) and Paulo Fiuza (POR) in 25th. The final MINI ALL4 Racing of Sylvio deBarros (BR) and Rafael Capoani (BR) finished in 30th.

The second part of the marathon stage will depart from Uyuni barracks tomorrow (10-01-2017) and is scheduled to complete in Salta, a total distance of 892 km.

2017 Dakar Rally: MINI Family standings overall after Stage 7.

Position	Driver	Co-driver	#	Team	Time
5	Mikko Hirvonen (FIN)	Michel Périn (FRA)	303	X-raid Team	16:44:30 +00:47:24
7	Orlando Terranova (ARG)	Andreas Schulz (GER)	308	X-raid Team	17:13:12 +01:16:06
8	Jakub Przygonski (POL)	Tom Colsoul (BEL)	316	ORLEN Team	17:15:08 +01:18:02
9	Boris Garafulic (CHL)	Filipe Palmeiro (POR)	314	X-raid Team	18:05:26 +02:08:20
12	Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT)	Xavier Panseri (FRA)	322	X-raid Team	16:45:04 +02:42:06
16	Sylvio de Barros (BR)	Rafael Capoani (IT)	339	X-raid Team	20:03:05 +04:05:59
17	Stephan Schott (GER)	Paulo Fiuza (POR)	325	X-raid Team	20:13:40 +04:16:34
33*	Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA)	Timo Gottschalk (DEU)	306	X-raid Team	30:14:35 +14:17:29

*subject to appeal

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