



Media Information
Dubai International Baja
09 March 2017

2017 Dubai International Baja - Round 2 FIA Cross Country Rally World cup.

- **Two privateer MINI crews to compete at Dubai International Baja.**
- **Abu Issa and Xavier Panseri reunite after successful 2017 Dakar Rally.**
- **Vladimir Valisyev and Konstantin Zhiltsov start World Cup attack.**

Munich. The 2017 Dubai International Baja takes place 9-11 March 2017 and is the second round of the prestigious FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup – a championship that has seen MINI lift the World Cup title no less than four times (2012-2015). The Dubai International Baja was, until 2015, formerly known as Dubai International Rally and as such is the longest running motorsport event to be held in the United Arab Emirates.

Official prerace procedures for the start of Dubai International Baja begin Thursday 9 March with the regulatory signing-on of competitors and scrutineering of race equipment and, of course, the competing machinery. Race action begins on Friday 10 March with the competitors grouped at the Bab Al Shams event arena complex before departing to start the first of two Special Stages. A third, and final, Special Stage takes place on Saturday 11 March. Total race distance including liaison is given as 476 km.

Two MINI ALL4 Racing cars will be amongst the competitors of the FIA class and crewed by privateers from the MINI Family. Fresh from a successful first Dakar Rally competition at the controls of a MINI ALL4 Racing and wearing race number #309 is Qatar's Mohammed Abu Issa. Joining Abu Issa in a MINI cockpit once again is co-driver Xavier Panseri of France. Together these two stalwarts of desert racing managed an incredible 10th place finish at this year's Dakar Rally despite it being their first competitive race in the same cockpit.

Also lining up at the Bab Al Shams starting stage will be rally veterans Vladimir Valisyev and co-driver Konstantin Zhiltsov (#304). This duo has proved on many occasions they are a force to be reckoned with over all manner of rally terrain and regardless of weather conditions. The Russian duo will obviously be looking to achieve another win with a MINI ALL4 Racing – the last coming on 14th January, when they crossed the finish line of the ninth Africa Eco Race (Monaco to Dakar) in first place.

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