

Press release

10 January 2016

2016 Dakar Rally – Day Nine, Rest Day: First week of Dakar becomes a memory as the crews rest and prepare for the second week and, arguably, the most challenging stages.

Drivers and co-drivers of the MINI ALL4 Racing family take time out to draw up battle plans for week two of the most arduous long distance cross-country rally race.

Munich. Day Nine (Rest Day). Today is classed as Rest Day within the Dakar Rally circus that is presently camped in Salta, Argentina. For the drivers and co-drivers from every manufacturer and the many teams, it is a brief chance to catch up on some sleep, receive deep muscle relaxation (and repairs) from specialist physiotherapists and discuss racing matters with team leaders and technicians.

Today is also marked on the Dakar calendar as the half way point for this most famous long distance cross-country rally. So far, the MINI ALL4 Racing crews should have covered 5316 racing kilometres, but the cancellation of Stage 1 and a slight reduction in distance on one of the Special Stages due to adverse weather conditions has reduced this distance.

However, nothing should be taken away from the Dakar's competing crews – the Dakar Rally is the most unforgiving rally on the sport's calendar. Nothing punishes a chassis, tyres, suspension or the people within these cars quite like Dakar. And so, this day of rest is quite all it seems. Technicians from the support squad of X-raid are busy preparing all of the MINI ALL4 Racing cars for an even tougher second week.

During this period of rest, drivers from the MINI ALL4 Racing family talked about their time at this year's Dakar Rally, and what can be expected with the second week of racing.

Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) and co-pilot Mathieu Baumel (FRA) are still the leading duo of the MINI ALL4 Racing family in the AXION X-raid Team MINI ALL4 Racing (#300). As a pair, their experience of Dakar in 2015 ended with the overall win. As defending champions it means the world is watching and waiting to see if a repeat win is possible. Nobody can be sure, especially moving into the second week, where the coming sand and sand dunes can change everything. Nasser is more aware of this than most competitors...

Nasser: "The route was the same as we always do but there is incoming competition better than us. We cannot say that the route is not good but we have finished the first week and we have to see what we can do next week."

Press release

Date 10 January 2016

Topic 2016 Dakar Rally – Day Nine, Rest Day: First week of Dakar becomes a memory.

page 2

Mikko Hirvonen (FIN), former professional WRC driver joined the experienced Nasser in the MINI ALL4 Racing family in the later months of 2015. The 2016 Dakar Rally is his first attempt and, as such, did he take up any offered advice?

Hirvonen: “Our position is not bad, I’m happy that we are there in 5th after the first week, still a bit behind and we have to fight for places, but there’s another week ahead of us and maybe things can happen. I had some advice from the other MINI ALL4 Racing drivers when testing. I spoke with Nasser and Nani and they gave me advice; not so much about driving but about what to expect. Coming from WRC and knowing how hard that is, I was expecting that you go flat out everywhere here as well. But the boys explained that you can’t do that because you don’t know what’s coming. So yes, they helped me in many ways.”

A genuine Dakar veteran is Spain’s Joan ‘Nani’ Roma. The AXION X-raid Team driver hasn’t had the best start to the 2016 Dakar Rally but has used a lot of his driving knowledge and skill to claw back many, many positions. What are his feelings about the 2016 Dakar Rally so far?

Roma: “I’m pleased to be in Salta for the Rest Day and I hope next week will be the week for MINI... and also the week for me! The rain at this year’s Dakar has been really crazy and the conditions have been really strange – a strange Dakar for me and everyone!”

Great Britain’s Harry Hunt has the direct opposite of Dakar competition. 2016 is his first Dakar Rally but has given his all for an exceptional result of 13th overall so far.

“It’s been a lot wetter and not as hot as I expected,” said Hunt. “The distances and conditions of driving have been as I thought. It’s very hard, very easy to make a mistake and very hard to push. We’re only halfway through and I feel like I’ve done weeks and weeks of driving. I don’t think I would have done any different training except maybe a bit less heat training as today was quite cold but I think next week in Argentina it will get hotter. I think I prepared well and truly so can’t complain, very happy.”

Jakub ‘Kuba’ Przygonski (POL) has contested Dakar before but only as solo rider in the motorcycle class. 2016 is his first year on four-wheels and in the driver’s seat of the MINI ALL4 Racing of ORLEN Team.

Przygonski: “First week for us was really good and I’m really pleased to be here in Salta for a rest day. Until now the car is perfect, a few small problems on the course but this is the Dakar and there are always small problems. For sure for next week will be some sand, maybe dunes. I’m a little bit scared of dunes because I don’t have so much experience on dunes but we’ll see what happens.”

Press release

Date 10 January 2016

Topic 2016 Dakar Rally – Day Nine, Rest Day: First week of Dakar becomes a memory.

page 3

2016 Dakar Rally: Day Nine, Rest Day, Salta – MINI ALL 4 Racing standings to date

Position	Driver	Co-driver	#	Team	Time
4	Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT)	Mathieu Baumel (FRA)	300	AXION X-raid Team	022:04:04 +00:17:36
5	Mikko Hirvonen (FIN)	Michel Périn (FRA)	315	AXION X-raid Team	022:19:21 + 00:32:53
11	Erik van Loon (NDL)	Wouter Rosegaar (NDL)	306	Van Loon Racing	023:04:09 +01:17:41
12	Joan 'Nani' Roma (ESP)	Alex Haro (ESP)	304	AXION X-raid Team	023:07:31 +01:21:03
13	Harry Hunt (GB)	Andreas Schulz (GER)	323	X-raid Team	023:15:28 +01:29:00
15	Jakub 'Kuba' Przygonski (POL)	Andrei Rudnitski (BLR)	327	ORLEN Team	023:37:55 +01:51:27
16	Boris Garafulic (CHL)	Filipe Palmeiro (POR)	313	X-raid Team	023:44:44 +01:58:16
17	Orlando Terranova (ARG)	Bernardo "Ronnie" Graue (ARG)	310	AXION X-raid Team	023:47:16 +02:00:48
75	Nazareno Lopez (ARG)	Sergio Lafuente (URU)	351	X-raid Team	035:59:39 +14:13:11

Find more photos and videos in high resolution of previous Dakar participants in the MINI ALL4 Racing on the BMW Media Website by [clicking here](#)

For any queries, please contact:

MINI Motorsport Communications

Danilo Coglianese

Telefon: +49-176-601-72405

E-Mail: danilo.coglianese@bmwgroup.com

Media website: www.press.bmwgroup-sport.com

Internet: www.press.bmwgroup.com