

Media Information
2017 Dakar Rally
14 January 2017

2017 Dakar Rally - Stage 11: San Juan – Rio Cuarto, 759 km

- 3rd place stage finish for Terranova
- Al Rajhi completes Stage 11 in 5th
- Top five in reach for Terranova as 2017 Dakar enters the final stage

Munich. The penultimate stage of the 2017 Dakar took the competitors to the sand dunes of San Juan to do battle on a WRC-type track in the Cordoba region. It was a terrain that seemed to suit the style of driver Orlando Terranova (ARG) as he continued to quietly progress through the ranks of the overall standings with another impressive stage performance. The Argentinian driver and co-driver Andreas Schulz (GER) crossed the finish line in 3rd in the #308 MINI John Cooper Works Rally car to maintain 6th overall, within reach of a top five finish ahead of the final stage of this year's event.

Terranova: "The beginning of the stage was very hard – it was bumpy and sandy – we tried to push but it was difficult. We tried in the second half to push more but there was too much dust from the quads and bikes. Tomorrow we keep trying."

Just two places behind them reaching Rio Cuarto was Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA) and co-driver Timo Gottschalk (DEU) in the #306 MINI John Cooper Works Rally car. The pairing finished the stage in 5th to move up to 26th in the general standings.*

Al Rajhi: "The first part of the stage everything was ok. On the second part we tried to push hard, we did it well and made no mistakes."

Mikko Hirvonen (FIN) and Michel Perin (FRA) fared better in the #303 MINI John Cooper Works Rally car for Stage 11. The pairing completed the 759km just outside the top ten, in 11th, as the first car in a cavalcade of three MINIs. They now sit in 13th overall.

Hirvonen: "Today was okay, it was better than yesterday! The first part of the stage was really horrible in a way, really bumpy and up and down, but the second part was nice, really twisty and narrow. In the last 100 km though we were always in somebody's dust so we just cruised to the finish."

Just one place behind in 12th was the #322 MINI ALL4 RACING of Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT) and co-driver Xavier Panseri (FRA). The pair's solid performance saw them move into the top ten overall with just one round remaining – remarkable when you consider that this is Abu Issa's first Dakar in a car and the first time the driver and co-driver have competed together.

Abu Issa: "It was a good day. The first section was 120km of sand, which I like and we were only a few seconds away from 8th and 9th; for me it was really good to come that close in a stage. The second part was WRC-style, so I was a little bit scared to be honest but it was satisfying to see that I could still keep my pace in the territory that I'm not familiar with. I learnt a lot and this is the stage that made my rally."

The third consecutive MINI to cross the line in 13th was the #316 MINI ALL4 Racing of Jakub Przygonski (POL) and Tom Colsoul (BEL). They maintained 7th in the general standings.

Przygonski: "The second part of today was WRC-style and we were able to push and see that we had the speed. We enjoyed this stage, it was a really nice stage to drive, quite technical and a lot of corners but it was good. We have only one more day so we have to keep focused now."

Sylvio de Barros (BR) and Rafael Capoani (BR) also completed the stage in 16th to move to 18th overall. Stephan Schott (GER) and Paulo Fiuza (POR) will also start the final part of the Dakar after conquering Stage 11 in 21st to move to 15th in the standings.

Unfortunately, Boris Garafulic (CHL) and Filipe Palmeiro (POR) decide to retire from the race on the penultimate stage.

2017 Dakar Rally: MINI Family standings overall after Stage 11.

Position	Driver	Co-driver	#	Team	Time
6	Orlando Terranova (ARG)	Andreas Schulz (GER)	308	X-raid Team	30:11:56 +01:51:40
7	Jakub Przygonski	Tom Colsoul (BEL)	316	ORLEN Team	32:33:14 +04:12:58

	(POL)				
10	Mohamed Abu Issa (QAT)	Xavier Panseri (FRA)	322	X-raid Team	33:11:06 +04:50:50
13	Mikko Hirvonen (FIN)	Michel Périn (FRA)	303	X-raid Team	34:15:02 +05:54:46
15	Stephan Schott (GER)	Paulo Fiuza (POR)	325	X-raid Team	31:26:06 +06:27:23
18	Sylvio de Barros (BR)	Rafael Capoani (BR)	339	X-raid Team	36:29:23 +08:09:07
26*	Yazeed Al Rajhi (KSA)	Timo Gottschalk (DEU)	306	X-raid Team	43:20:32 +15:00:16

***subject to appeal**

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