



# SILK WAY 2017 RALLY 丝绸之路拉力赛



## Despres wins without playing his joker, Kamaz score a stage podium



Cyril Despres (Peugeot 3008DKR n°100) took his first stage victory of this 2017 edition of the Silk Way Rally, while in the truck category the Kamaz decided to get on the gas - resulting in a stage win for Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°303), ahead of his team mates Shibalov and Nikolaev. Cars and trucks combined this 5th stage to Semey, to the far east of Kazakhstan, saw the Blue Armada put three of their trucks in the top 5...

### Key Points

\*Cars: Loeb plays it safe, more problems for 'Peter'



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\*T2: Muira in a hole

\*Trucks: Good run for Sotnikov, disaster for De Rooy

\*Tomorrow: On the way to Turksib

## Cars: Loeb plays it safe, more problems for 'Peter'

Starting in 18th place this morning, Cyril Despres and David Castera (Peugeot DKR3008 n°100) knew they were taking a big risk in deciding not to play one of their three jokers that would have allowed them to start in a more favourable position. Principally the risk of spending long minutes stuck behind slower competitors. A risk that, in the end, paid off handsomely, with the title holders taking their first stage on this 2017 edition and in the process backing up Loeb's overall lead for Team Peugeot. Second on the day's special, the Chinese driver Yangui Liu, gives the Chinese manufacturer Baïcmotor their best result on the Silk Way rally. Bryce Menzies (Mini John Cooper Works n°105) finishes third ahead of Lu Binglong (Baïcmotor n°130) who was 17 minutes down on Despres. Once again starting first, Sébastien Loeb (Peugeot 3008DKR Maxi n°104), finished fifth at 17m40s, a time explained both by the difficulty in opening the piste in the high grass and the desire to manage his substantial lead over Despres (2<sup>nd</sup> at 50m16s). Menzies got back onto the overall podium at the expense of Frenchman Lavieille. Starting 11<sup>th</sup> this morning, after a long night for his mechanics repairing his car, Peterhansel once again ran into problems. Forced to stop around CP3 (km 385) he lost another 50 minutes overall...

## T2 category

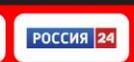
### Miura in a hole

For the Japanese driver Akira Miura and his French team mate Laurent Lichtleuchter (Toyota Land Cruiser n°133) this 5th stage was nearly game over. After falling into a hole 50 km from the finish, they seriously damaged the front of their car, yet nevertheless managed to make it to the end of the special. An excursion that cost them 40 minutes and gives their main rival and class leader, the Australian Adrian Di Lallo (Isuzu MU-X n°135), an almost comfortable margin.

## Trucks: Good run for Sotnikov, disaster for De Rooy



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Playing a low profile since the start in Moscow, last Saturday, the Kamaz choose this first long special to get on the gas. A decision that saw Naberezhnie Tchelny's blue monsters take the first three places on the day. Winning ahead of Shibalov and Nikolaev, Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°303) also takes the overall lead 48 seconds in front of Anton Shibalov (Kamaz-Master n°312) and 15m27s ahead of the Czech driver Kolomy (Tatra Phoenix 311), who lost more than 50 minutes after getting stuck on the going. The day after their fellow countrymen's disastrous run of bad luck that saw all three Team Mammoet / Riwald trucks out, it was the turn of Team De Rooy Iveco to suffer. Starting second today, Gerard De Rooy (Iveco Powerstar n°302) was forced to leave the special at CP2 (Km 260) when his cabin chassis broke. Team mate, the Kazakh driver Artur Ardavicius (Iveco Powerstar n°310), managed to finish the stage but only after giving away nearly an hour to Sotnikov after getting stuck.

## ROAD BOOK

### Tomorrow: "On the way to Turksib"

The 6<sup>nd</sup> stage heads south-east over the vast Kazakh plains towards the Chinese border. With 387,86 km of special on the menu and a total stage distance of 597,13 km, it promises to be a very full day. The main challenges are the numerous changes of direction at the beginning of the special and some tricky sections of off-piste. Competitors will also need to be careful on the rapid sections. A fast special but most certainly not a straightforward one.

## Quotes

### Cars

**Cyril Despres (FRA/Peugeot 3008DKR n°100) :** "Today was the first day since the start of the rally where we haven't had a problem. It is good to leave the rain and the mud behind us. Today it wasn't easy to find the way but David did an excellent job. After two days without much luck I got my fight back. Because over several hundred corners you have to be really unlucky to go off where there was water..."



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**Tom Colsoul (BEL/Copilote Mini John Cooper Works n°101):** "Today we drove a great special. The problem was that we were second on the road and had to drive slowly in the high grass. It was as if we cut the lawn for those following behind us..."

**Sébastien Loeb (FRA/Peugeot 3008DKR maxi n°104):** "A tricky day as it was impossible to drive fast when the track disappeared into the grass. We opened the door to look out where we needed to go. I'm a racer and I promise you that I don't like to spend my day trying to work out where to go... and to prepare the track for those who started behind us. We can't be too bad at it though as nobody managed to catch us."

**Zhou Yong CHN/ Toyota Hilux n°107:** "I am very pleased with today, although we got lost at some point and were overtaken by a lot of cars, which cost us about ten minutes. But the car is fine, every day I understand it better."

**Christian Lavieille (FRA/Baïcmotor n° 108):** "It was a day full of little problems. But the main one was the fire caused by the grass getting stuck between the wheel and the disc. He had to finish without brakes..."

**Adrian DiLallo n° 135 (AUS/ Isuzu Motorsports):** "Today's stage was awesome! Extremely tough from an endurance perspective but amazing for a rally pilot. The stage had a combination of technical and high-speed tracks over dirt and rock with some mud and grass sections and was nearly 500 kilometres in length. We had a good, clean and relatively trouble free run stopping only twice. Once to change a flat and the other to quickly check the car over after a high-speed whack, but all was ok. Another great day for the mu-X."

## Trucks

**Ayrat Mardeev (KAMAZ-master):** "At the beginning we drove with a good pace, overtook Kolomy and Vyazovich, saw Nikolaev ahead of us and realized that we are going well. And then we got a 'strange' puncture. Usually when you're driving and you hit a rock, everything is clear, but today I didn't see anything. I don't know where and how we got it, just that at some point the mechanic said that we had a puncture. The tire tore from the inside... it's very difficult to puncture a tire like this with a rock."

**Nikolaev (KAMAZ-master):** "It was a good day. We drove fast and were even a little surprised to see that Dima [Sotnikov] and Anton [Shibalov] are ahead of us in the results. We overtook



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Vyazovych today and then he followed us for a long time. Then we saw Kolomy stuck and De Rooy with the bonnet open. All day we were fighting with the cars, catching them, passing them in the corners, and then getting caught on the straights".

**Artur Ardavicius (KAZ/Iveco Powerstar n°310) :** "My co-driver didn't hear his alarm clock so we started the special 15 minutes later. Then in the special the accelerator pedal got stuck. We fixed that and then the rear wheel caught fire due to grass stuck in the brakes. Then we stopped to help Kolomy out of a hole..."

**Gerard De Rooy (NLD/Iveco Powerstar N°302) :** "We broke the cab suspension – so impossible to continue on the piste like that. We decided to take the road from CP2 and go directly to the bivouac. It is a pity because we've been going well this the start of the race. For the final podium its game over but we'll continue so as to test the truck and try and take a few special wins off the Kamaz..."



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