



# SILK WAY 2017 RALLY 丝绸之路拉力赛



## S.7 Menzies gets the 'Lions' share'



It was the American Bryce Menzies' (Mini John Cooper Works n°105) turn to win his first special this morning on this 7th stage of the Silk Way Rally 2017, just before the entire rally caravan crossed over the border from Kazakhstan to China. In the trucks it was the overall leader, the Russian Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°303), who took his second stage victory on this short and dusty 106 kilometre special.

### Key points

- \*Cars: Menzies gets the Lions' share
- \*T2: Chernenkov takes the honours



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\*Trucks: Kamaz to the power of 4

\*Tomorrow: "Following the Uyghurs of Xinjiang"

**Cars:**

## Menzies gets the Lions' share

Since leaving Moscow almost a month ago the Peugeots have reigned supreme, leaving just the crumbs for their rivals. That domination came to end today 'thanks' to Americans Bryce Menzies and Peter Mortensen (Mini John Cooper Works n°105). Starting 18<sup>th</sup>, the X-Raid drivers were able to take advantage of the opening skills of Cyril Despres and David Castera (Peugeot 3008DKR n°100), who started just ahead of them. Better still, with the Armada of Kamaz-Master who went through just a little earlier, the high grass of the first half of the special had already been cut down to size to facilitate this 'Made in USA' victory. Despres posted the second fastest time of the day, six seconds ahead of Sébastien Loeb (3<sup>rd</sup>), who nevertheless maintains a comfortable lead. Waited for by Peterhansel at the start, Loeb and Elena thus opened the special, but avoided the dust, to keep their team mate / rivals over an hour behind in the rankings (1h03m35s). For his part Menzies sures up his 3<sup>rd</sup> place, ahead of the Chinese driver Han Wei (Geeley SMG Buggy) and Christian Lavieille (Baicmotor n°108).

**T2 category:**

## Chernenkov takes the honours

After playing second fiddle to Muira and DiLallo, it was the turn Chernenkov to win the production based car class – a fine way for the Kazak competitor to say goodbye to his homeland. He came in just over 20 mins ahead of his Australian rival who nevertheless possesses a very comfortable margin overall.

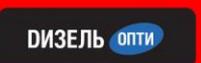
**Trucks:**

## Kamaz to the power of 4

Another quick special for the trucks with the overall leader, Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°303) taking his second stage win with an average speed of 96 kph at the finish line. And that despite, according to Silk Way Rally adviser Luc Alphand, who opened the piste this morning



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two hours before the first competitor, the terrain being much less suited to 'corner cutting'. With Shibalov, Mardeev and Nikolaev coming in behind him, the Kamaz-Master team would have been hard pushed to do better. Fifth on the stage but just 2m34s behind Sotnikov, the Czech Martin Kolomy (Tatra Phoenix n°311), attacked hard on the track today to stay in touch overall and this evening is in 3rd place, 15m27s behind the leader and less than 13 minutes from Shibalov.

## ROAD BOOK

### Tomorrow: "FOLLOWING THE UYGHURS OF XINJIANG"

Tomorrow's route will be a relatively short 436 kilometres, of which 250 will be timed special. For the competitors it will be an important day, as it marks the mid-way point of the race, after a short night, due to the rally switching to Chinese time (from GMT+6 to GMT+8). Once in Urumqi, the competitors will be able to enjoy a rest day after a hard week's racing. The terrain on the 8<sup>th</sup> stage will be similar to today – dusty with tricky navigation, especially just before the finish. There are several dangers indicated on the road book, so co-driver will need to be on the ball.

## Quotes

### Cyril DESPRES, Team Peugeot Total

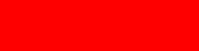
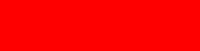
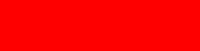
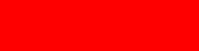
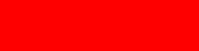
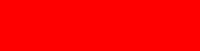
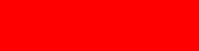
*"After spending so much of the first part of the rally surrounded by water and mud, today was a big change. It was completely dry and this was causing a lot of dust: it meant that it was difficult to get even with 800 metres or so of the car in front, let alone try to pass! As you can imagine that's a lot of dust, quite a dangerous situation, and the first time we've seen that on this rally. In terms of the terrain and the roads, it was actually a bit like the WRC stages in Sardinia I think: even though this was a short transition stage before we crossed the border into China, it had quite a European feel. I'm happy enough with our progress today though: at least we had no major mistakes like yesterday, when both Seb and I got lost."*

### Sébastien LOEB, Team Peugeot Total

*"I was at the front for a lot of the stage so I didn't get any dust but on the other hand I had to find the way, so the two things probably balance each other out. In the end the stage went well for us: as*



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*it was so short the most important thing was to have a clean run and try not to make any mistakes. Thanks to some good work from Daniel as well we achieved that, so I'm quite happy with our progress today."*

## **Stéphane PETERHANSEL, Team Peugeot Total**

*"No problems for us on this stage. The navigation was tricky for the first car on the road, especially with some of the long grass and the fact that the tracks were difficult to see. So, we decided to wait two minutes for Seb 3.5 kilometres after the start and both of us then got safely to the finish. Now we are in China but there is still a very long way to go so a lot can still happen."*

## **Bryce Menzies, X-Raid MINI**

*"Great stage, dusty, very fast! At the beginning we were in clean air and attacked and then 40 kilometres before the finish we got into the dust and went to the end almost blindly. But anyway, this is my first stage victory and I'm very pleased. But tomorrow we will have to open the track, perhaps we will lose a little time with this. "*

## **Dmitry Sotnikov KAMAZ-master**

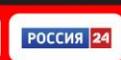
*"The piste has become harder and bumpy. It seems to be fast, but not as "straight", as in the previous days, it became more twisting. It seemed to everyone that 100 kilometres would pass in one breath, but it was not so. It was hard work, practically no places where you could rest. We had an oil leak, but we did not even notice it - the pressure was normal. If the special had been longer we might have had a problem.... "*

## **Airat Mardeev KAMAZ-master**

*"Hundred kilometres of fast trails, a little off-piste, it was tricky in places because of the high grass. In some places there were large holes, but in general everything was fine. First we caught up with Dmitri Sotnikov, but he overtook a car but we couldn't get past and had to sit in his dust. Now we are waiting for the sand, we are waiting for the off-piste, the dunes. The sand in this heat is very soft, so let's see what happens next. "*



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