



# SILK WAY 2017 RALLY 丝绸之路拉力赛



## S.8 Loeb and Sotnikov dominant



On the eve of the rest day, the 8th stage to Urümqi, the capital of the autonomous region of Xinjiang, saw wins by Sébastien Loeb (Peugeot 3008DKR Maxi n°104) in the car class and from Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master) in the trucks. With 6 stages left to run, before the finish in Xi'An, the two leaders of the 2017 Silk Way Rally continue to strengthen their positions.

### Key points



Russia~Kazakhstan~China  
7-22 July, 2017





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\*Cars: Loeb, the lion roars

\*Trucks: Sotnikov from beginning to end

\*Tomorrow: Rest day in Urümqi

## Cars: Loeb, the lion roars

One day is starting to look very much like another for Sébastien Loeb and Daniel Elena (Peugeot 3008DKR Maxi n°102) who took advantage of this 8<sup>th</sup> stage to win their 4<sup>th</sup> special and reinforce their overall lead going into the rest day. If they don't actually start first on the road it doesn't usually take long for them to get to the front of the pack... Passing Despres and then Menzies today, on reaching the finish line, 'Mr 50%' beat his team mate by 5m06s and the American by a whole 13m57s. Stuck in the traffic and dust, over this often bumpy track, Peterhansel, who started 15<sup>th</sup> on the road this morning, finished in 4<sup>th</sup> giving away just under 15 minutes. The Saudian driver Yazeed Al Rajhi (MINI John Cooper Works n°102), rounds out the day's top 5 at 16m49s. With a lead of 1h08m41s overall over Despres and 1h48m32s over Menzies, Loeb and Elena can look forward to next week's racing in the Chinese dunes with plenty of confidence. Despres is also in a reasonably comfortable position, but behind him the fight for the third place is going to be a close one, with Menzies, Han Wei (Geeley SMG Buggy n°107) and Lavieille (Baicmotor n°108) separated by less than 10 minutes.

## Trucks: Sotnikov from beginning to end

Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°303) also showed total mastery of his subject. Starting first, the overall leader of the truck class was momentarily threatened by his team mates Nikolaev and Mardeev. Until that is, they got to the soft dunes. Sotnikov made it through unhindered to take his third win, while his fellow Kamaz drivers had a less clear run. Untouchable from beginning to the end in his new truck, the Russian finished 01m52 ahead of Mardeev and 04m59 in front of the Czech Kolomy.

## ROAD BOOK

Tomorrow: "Rest day in Urümqi"



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No special this Sunday, with the entire 2017 Silk Way Rally enjoying a well-earned rest in Ürümqi, the capital of the autonomous region of Xinjiang. A late morning for the drivers but lots of work for the mechanics to get their vehicles ready for the last 6 stages of this 2017 Silk Way Rally.

## Quotes

### Sébastien Loeb

"We caught up Cyril quite quickly so we found ourselves first on the road again. It was an interesting mixed stage with some very rough terrain as well as sand, but it was good that we managed to judge the right speed in these tricky conditions to win the stage because that's not obvious. The car was perfectly reliable too, and it's in conditions like this that the Peugeot DKR Maxi shows it's a good evolution as it feels more stable to drive, which was always the aim."

### Cyril Despres

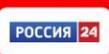
"Today was the same stage as we drove last year but since then an entire rally has been through it so the roads were really broken up, which meant that we were bounced around all over the place for most of the stage. Seb caught us up at around kilometre 50 but then we managed to stick with his pace, around a minute and a half behind him for most of the stage, although we suffered a bit with the dust. Seb's a great driver and the Peugeot DKR Maxi seems like a better car! The stage was quite quick today and the art to it is keeping up the speed without falling into all the traps that can catch you out so easily if you're not super careful. All in all, I'm satisfied; anything can happen next week so we will continue to do our best."

### Bryce Menzies

"Opening the stage I was pretty nervous but it went pretty good. There were fast tracks at the beginning and then we got into sandy off-piste. A lot of bumps, probably the roughest stage I've ever done. I thought they would have caught us a lot quicker but they didn't come up to us until 100 kilometres in and then we followed Cyril and Loeb from there. We pushed as hard as we could and came away with a third so I feel really good about it. Tomorrow is rest day and the body needs it!"



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## Liu Yangui

"The stage was really interesting, really fun today. I'm on the pace now, even if the car has some damage. My goal for the rest of the race is first to finish and then to try my best to show everybody what I am capable of."

## Christian Lavieille

"We didn't start with the right set up for the car – a little too soft and we often touched front and back. The sand was very soft as well, cut up because it followed a previous route. 2 or 3 times we had to turn back. There were 2 Kamaz that couldn't get up at around kilometre 100 / 110. Then at the end we had a lot of dust and we thought it was the Mini but in fact it was another Kamaz. There we stopped several times and lost a lot of time."

## Dmitry Sotnikov

"We tried to go carefully, without making any mistakes. The only problem we had was at the end of the stage where we had to 'reset' the engine by stopping it and restarting it again. So a good day but not perfect."

## Airat Mardeev

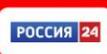
"Today there was a lot of off-piste, very bumpy and you had to choose the right line – a real rally raid stage. We started well and caught up Anton Shibalov... The only problem we have is getting used to the automatic gearbox which gives us less engine braking."

## Siarhey Viazovich

"We didn't take any chances today because we have a good lead on those behind us and the gap ahead of us is too big to chase after anyone. Since the start we have managed to fight with the best but without being able to take advantage of that. We will use the rest day to look at different strategies. As team leader it is my job to give my boost my troops."



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