



SILK WAY 2018 RALLY

丝绸之路拉力赛

An exceptional line-up !



2018 Silk Way Rally will welcome the best pilots of the discipline, and, for the first time, no contender for the title in the car category has ever written his name on the rally's winners list.

Among the new comers, Nani Roma (Spain) from X-Raid Mini John Cooper Works Rally Team, winner of 2014 Dakar, is excited to discover Russian tracks and aiming the first rank on the final podium. The battle promises to be interesting within the team itself, with Yazeed Al Rajhi (Saudi Arabia) second of 2016 Silk Way Rally at the wheel of a Mini John Cooper Works too. On his Mini One, Russian Vladimir Vasilyev from G Energy Team, winner of 2014 World Cup for Cross Country rallies and of 2017 Africa Eco Race will complete the Minis squadron on the start line.

Overdrive Racing will be another serious contender for victory, with at least two Toyota Hilux prototypes. One of them will be driven by one of the very best rally-raid pilots, Nasser Al-Attiyah, the Qatari double winner of the Dakar rally (2011 and 2015), who is coming back to the Silk Way Rally, a race where he has good memories of some fights in the Russian deserts, with Carlos Sainz and Giniel de Villiers on their Volkswagen Tuaregs. Also in the Overdrive team, the winner of the Baja Northern Forest 2017, the Polish driver





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Aron Domzala, will be back on the Russian tracks and will also aim for the podium.

Special attention must be paid to some other competitors of this category, like British Harry Hunt on his ex-factory Peugeot DKR 3008 Maxi of PH-Sport, who has just shown that he could be a serious challenger for the win on the last Kazakhstan rally. Mathieu Serradori (France), winner of the last edition of the Africa Eco Race, with his SRT buggy is just waiting for one thing: to compete against all these great champions.

From Suprotec Racing, Russian pilot Andrei Rudskoy, former FIA world cup T2 champion will, at the wheel of his G-Force BARS, also compete for the victory in the T1 category

China will be represented by its best pilot, Han Wei from Geely Auto Coopertire Team. He finished second of the 2017 Silk Way Rally and has just won the Taklimakan Rally on his two-wheel drive buggy by SMG. His goal at the start is to do at least as good as last year.

In the T2 category, Akira Miura (Japan) is the main challenger on his Toyota Landcruiser, from factory team Toyota Autobody. The manufacturer Toyota will definitely be well represented this year in this category, well known in off-road rallies on her motorcycle, the Russian Anastasiya Nifontova, will wear the colors of Toyota Russia team.

With no less than 7 SUV's on the start line, T3's show that they are the new growing category of cross-country rallies. Maria Oparina (Russia), winner of the category last year, will defend her title on a Maverick X3 from Suprotec Racing. Russian Sergey Karyakin on his Snag Racing Maverick X3 Model Can-Am, winner of the 2017 Dakar, on his quad, changed his vehicle, but not his goal. Still in the same category, team XTreme Plus is entering 3 Polaris, among which one of the most faithful competitors of the Silk Way Frédéric Chavigny (France), together with Nicolas Duclos (France) and Robert Szustkowski (Poland).

As for trucks, still a very impressive category, the KAMAZ-master team has entered 6 vehicles. Inside the famous Russian team all may claim victory. Five diesel Kamaz's are driven by the best pilots of the team: Dmitry Sotnikov (title holder), Eduard Nikolaev (last Dakar winner), Airat Mardeev (2016 Silk Way winner), Anton Shibalov and Andrey Karginov. The sixth truck is a gas-diesel powered Kamaz driven by Sergey Kupriyanov, who has just finished the last Kazakhstan rally brilliantly.

Belarus Team MAZ-Sportauto will be on the start line too, with Siarhei VIAZOVICH, a serious challenger to the win.

Another Russian factory also joins the struggle – GAZ Raid Sport Team, with two trucks. Mikhail Shklyayev and Boleslav Levitskii will be showing all the potential of their machines.

Eastern European crews will cross their swords with serious rivals, among which two Dutch Teams and their Renault trucks. Martin van den Brink from Mammoet Rallye Sport and Gert Huzink from Riwald Dakar Team will show their best abilities on the Russian





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tracks, with the podium on Red Square within sight.

Last contenders for victory are the Japanese pilots from Hino team Sugawara. Father and son, Teruhito and Yoshimasa, are ready to struggle in the Kalmyk desert. Yoshimasa, aged 72, will use this participation to validate a world record of longevity in motor sport.





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