



SILK WAY 2019 RALLY 丝绸之路拉力赛



PRESS RELEASE

Ulan Bator, July 9th 2019

GMT +8

S.3 – ULAN UDE - ULAANBAATAR

Distance: 691,35KM - Selective section: 243,00KM

ULAN UDE - ULAANBAATAR - Up and down!

There is some tricky navigation among the hills on the way from Buryatia to Mongolia. Cars go up and down through the hills, following the steps of wild animals. This area has many dangerous ravines but is also rich with absolutely magnificent landscapes! It is a true challenge for navigators: dozens of path crossings and even more parallel tracks. The route then goes upwards – halfway to finish the altitude reaches 1,000 meters. You'll have foothills, covered with forest, and picturesque rivers after the first 150 kilometers, but one shouldn't get lost in contemplation – small river beds are able to bring a big danger. The track continues to go higher and offers you a breathtaking view from the altitude of 1,500 meters, a perfect spot for photo and video shooting. The rest of selective section is set on a plateau with many parallel tracks.

@ OF NOTE

Bikes: Benavides increases his overall lead

Cars: Nasser Al-Attiyah insatiable

Trucks: Karginov attacks, Viazovich resists

Tomorrow: a gallop across the steppes

S.3 – The race





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Credit MCH Photo/Marian Chytko



Bikes: Benavides increases his overall lead

A big change of scenery coming into Mongolia. No more enduro type specials, with the terrain opening up and the speeds increasing as a consequence. First on the road this morning, Sam Sunderland (Red Bull KTM Factory) inevitably lost time but nevertheless crossed the finish line without being overtaken. Starting in a more comfortable fourth, Kevin Benavides (Monster Energy Honda Team) took full advantage of the situation to win his second stage and increase his overall lead over Sunderland from 8 seconds to 02:54.

Kevin Benavides' teammate Joan Barreda (Monster Energy Honda Team) also had a good day, despite getting stuck in a deep hole just after the start. He finished second at 30 seconds and in the processes takes the third place overall off Paulo Goncalves, who got stuck in exactly the same hole. However, on the eve of the marathon stage, talk amongst the riders wasn't so much what happened today but what might happen over the next two days, deprived as they will be of mechanics and new tyres. Some of the factory teams are debating whether or not to use a harder tyre, riders will be looking to economise both man and machine. In theory such considerations should slow the pace of the top riders down by a significant margin. In practice, with the top four so tightly bunched and everyone hungry for victory, it might be a different story.

Kevin Benavides (Monster Energy Honda Team) 1st

"I didn't push to the limit, just focused to keep a good pace and I'm happy with the result. It means that tomorrow I will have to open. We always lose time when we do this and I think we will have tricky navigation tomorrow. So, it maybe isn't so good for the result, but for pure riding pleasure it is the best."

In the quads Rafal Sonik (Yamaha Raptor), continues his charge and virtually doubles his overall lead on the Russian Maksimov (Yamaha Raptor), while the Polish rider Linder (Can-Am Renegade) spent a large part of the day stopped on the track, to cross the finish line out of time.

Cars: Nasser Al-Attiyah insatiable

Welcome to the green desert! Unfortunately for the car category, the crossing over into Mongolia was made without Yazeed Al Rahji (Toyota Gazoo Racing Overdrive). The 2018 edition winner was forced to throw in the towel following yesterday's mechanical problems (a bust engine, resulting from a broken alternator / water pump belt) with his Toyota Hilux.





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If he was sad for their friend and teammate, Nasser Al-Attiyah and Mathieu Baumel were nevertheless rid of one of their main rivals in their quest for their first ever SILK WAY RALLY crown. Not that it seemed to slow the Qatari driver, who appears determined to build as big a margin as possible between himself and the pack of buggies chasing after him. Driving at an average speed of more than 101 kph, Nasser has now pulled out a lead of over 20 minutes. And that over terrain that should have suited the two-wheel drives more! Second today behind the three times Dakar winner... the MINI JCW of Russian Denis Krotov – the exception that proves the rule – pushing the Chinese driver Han Wei (Buggy Geely SMG) down to third place on this third stage, ahead of his countryman Liu Kun (Hanwei SMG). Van Loon (Toyota Overdrive) completes the day's top 5.

Nasser Al-Attiyah (Qat/Toyota Gazoo Racing Overdrive) 1st:

"It is the first time I have driven in Mongolia and it is really magnificent. Everything is green! We drove well today. The pace was perfect. Mathieu (Baumel), gave me the rythme to follow. After 150 kilometres we saw that no one was following us, so we backed off a little. We had to stop for a slow puncture 20 kilometres from the finish. We really had to push a little more today, to give us more of a gap going into the first big stage of this SILK WAY RALLY."

In the SSV class the battle continues between the Can-Am Mavericks of the Russian class leader Sergei Kariakin and the American Austin Jones, fully recovered from his spectacular first day...

Trucks: Karginov attacks, Viazovich resists

This third stage represented the first real bout in the fight for the heavyweight crown between the Russians of the Kamaz-Master team and the MAZ trucks from Belarus. Still the first truck on the track, following on from his two consecutive wins, Siarhey Viazovich (MAZ) tried as best as he could to hold off the return of the Blue Armada. And although he didn't manage to win the stage, he did at least keep the overall lead, while at the same time giving himself a good starting position for the big stage coming up. Winner Andrei Karginov (Kamaz-Master) didn't have to blow his horn to take the win today. The second fastest man today all categories combined, the title holder reinforces his second place overall ahead of his teammate Anton Shibalov (3rd overall). Viazovich, third on the day, finished ahead of the Renault of Dutchman van den Brink and his teammate Vishneuski.

Andrei Karginov (Rus/Kamaz-Master) 1st

"We drove for 40 kilometres in Viazovich's dust without being able to get closer enough to make the Sentinel work. In the end we had to wait for a danger zone to get close enough. After that we were able to drive at our own pace over terrain that is better suited to our truck and take back precious time on the MAZ."



STAT OF THE DAY

841,55





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For the bikes, arriving in Ulaanbaatar means the start of the marathon stage. This evening each rider must get their wheels and tyres marked by the federation officials and they won't be allowed to change them until Thursday evening. On finishing Wednesday's loop the bikes will be placed in parc ferme where only the riders are allowed to touch their machines, without any contact with their team. Thursday morning they will have 15 minutes to work on their bikes before starting stage 5. In total, including liaisons, bikes and riders will have to cover 841.55 kms without assistance, of which 807.19 are against the clock.

ROAD BOOK

Tomorrow: Stage 4 - ULAANBAATAR - ULAANBAATAR: "Rushing across the steppes of Mongolia!" - Distance: 476,96KM - Selective section: 470,19KM

It is a circle stage from Ulaanbaatar to Ulaanbaatar with start and finish points just two kilometers away from the bivouac. Accept the challenge of dry creek beds, low hills and endless steppe roads of Mongolia! Competitors will drive through stony plateaus, between picturesque rocks and salty lakes. Beware of wild animals: they are fond of racing too! The second half of the route offers some beautiful landscapes on a track across stony pyramids and rocks. This section may affect the day's classification, so one should get ready to deal with hard navigation and high speed on steppe roads.



FAITHFUL PARTNERS

GAZPROM, the rally's main partner

The Russian global energy company PJSC Gazprom has been engaged on the event as a main partner since the first edition of the Silk Way Rally in 2009.

TOYOTA, « official vehicles » of the organization

Toyota Hilux for the forth time already are the Silk Way Rally official cars.

Because of their unique design and capabilities, TOYOTA all-terrain vehicles have proved their extraordinary resistance during the various reconnaissance and on the rally. Toyota is producing vehicles that you can rely on in any situation. Distinguishing characteristics offroad, endurance, an amazing ability to adapt to harsh road conditions and climate.... Main idea is that Land Cruiser Prado, Land Cruiser 200, Fortuner and Hilux tackle the challenges delegated to them.

SIBUR, technical partner

PJSC SIBUR is the largest integrated petrochemicals company in Russia and the technical partner for innovative materials. They are sponsoring a special award for "impressive vehicle reliability and excellent skills demonstrated under extreme circumstances".

GAZPROM NEFT, official fuel partner

Gazprom will be filling up the Silk Way Rally's vehicles along the route with the company's branded diesel fuel, *Diesel Opti*. OPTI fuel performed excellently in extreme conditions, and our continuing cooperation is the best proof.

GAZPROMBANK, financial partner





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Gazprombank is one of the largest multifunctional banks in Russia.

MEDIA CONTACT:

International media director

Chris Rodrigo

crodrigo@silkwayrally.ru

