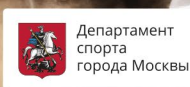




# SILK WAY 2022 RALLY 丝绸之路拉力赛



## LEG 2. Astrakhan – Astrakhan

In the morning of July 8, the competitors of the 12th edition of the Silk Way Rally started at the second in a row and the first proper special stage, the route of which was circular. The rally organizers did not leave the crews time to build up – from the very beginning they faced difficult challenges that had a serious impact on the final day results.

### Make Way for the Young Drivers? No!

On the eve of the Silk Way Rally start the main favorites in the Car standings were Vladimir Vasilyev in BMW and Denis Krotov in MINI. But after all, young drivers should say their word – Evgeny Sukhovenko, Alexander Rusanov?

They probably will, but definitely not today. It cannot be said that the experienced drivers in foreign cars had no problems, but the youth from the GAZ Raid Sport factory team faced even more serious problems.

Andrey Rudskoy, the yesterday's Prologue winner, was the first to start on the second day. At first everything went well, but soon the problems with transmission in his G-Force BARS arose. As a result, the crew had to stop several times for repairs in the field. And after their prototype went from 4WD to 2WD, they were forced to avoid any sand. The result is the first day leader finished the second special stage only fourth, losing almost two hours to the winner.



But the news about breakdowns in the group of T1 prototypes did not end there. Evgeny Sukhovenko and Kirill Chapaev were laconic and, when asked about what happened to them, answered as follows, "We hit the front and tore off the axle".

After the impact the front right wheel of the GAZelle NEXT prototype was warped, but the car showed enviable durability and remained all-wheel drive. However, the speed fell, and the Rostovite was third at the finish line, forty-eight minutes behind the best result.

Another GAZelle NEXT, driven by Alexander Rusanov, finished the second special stage and only the fifth – the reason for that was a blown turbine pipe. It is impossible to fight for victory with an atmospheric engine: at the finish line the crew was fifth, two hours from the leader.

Another GAZelle NEXT has started at the Silk Way Rally, but its driver Alexander Semyonov fulfills a special task – he is a test driver of the GAZ Raid Sport team and he is testing a new version of the car, so speed on the track is not his main priority.

A year ago, Denis Krotov in the very debut of the Silk Way Rally led the overall standings, leaving all eminent rivals behind. But this time Lady Luck was less favorable to him. He had to stop on the track in order to clean the radiator. After that the MSK Rally Team driver reached the finish line, but only with the second result.

Numerous journalists who met Vladimir Vasilyev at the second special stage finish and listened to his story about the events of the day thought that his final result would not be the highest. The rear-wheel drive of his BMW was cut off, and the gearbox lost the 5th and 6th gears.

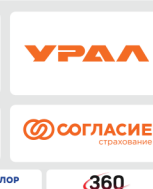
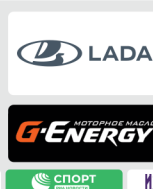
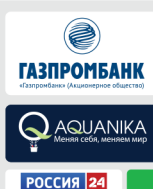
But all these did not prevent Vasilyev and his co-driver Alexey Kuzmich from setting the best time and coming out on top in the Car standings.

### Unlucky Nifontova...

The situation in the SSV standings was completely different. Favorites Sergey Karyakin and Anastasia Nifontova finished Friday's special stage outside the top three. However, the reasons were completely different.

Ex-Formula 1 driver Nikita Mazepin competes in the Karyakin's team at the 12th edition of the Silk Way Rally. This is his debut cross-country rally, however, at the Prologue, and today the Muscovite outperformed his much more experienced teammate. It can be concluded that Sergey Karyakin will help Mazepin, who is taking his first steps in this difficult kind of motorsport.

Anastasia Nifontova planned to fight for the victory, but her car let her down. First, the cardan shaft broke and the car became rear-wheel drive. Then the drive was cut off.



БОЛЬШЕ ЧЕМ ГОНКА, ЯРЧЕ ЧЕМ ПРИКЛЮЧЕНИЕ!

Nifontova and her co-driver Ekaterina Zhadanova tried to rearrange one of the front drives back, but failed to do it. As a result, the female crew was forced to drive to the bivouac.

In the absence of Karyakin and Nifontova the Cherkesov brothers, as well as Armen Puzyan and Nikita Mazepin were locked in a struggle for leadership. As a result, Dmitry, the youngest brother, won, Puzyan became the second, and Alexey Cherkesov rounded out the top three. Mazepin finished fourth just five and a half minutes behind Dmitry Cherkesov and three seconds from the third place, despite the fact that due to the engine overheating he was forced to stop several times, which led to a great loss of time.

### Give-away checkers game

It seems that the Truck category competitors decided to play a give-away checkers game and got involved in one problem after another.

The KAMAZ-master team drivers Eduard Nikolaev and Andrey Karginov got lost in the same place, after which they were forced to return back to the right track. The front wheels of Sergey Kupriyanov's truck looked like a house roof – there should have been a reason. And, finally, Dmitry Sotnikov was forced to stop in order to deal with a broken cardan shaft.

The main rivals of the "Blue Armada" – the Belarusian MAZ-SPORTauto factory team drivers synchronously finished with punctured rear wheels. But if Sergey Vyazovich broke the wheel – moreover, five hundred meters before the finish line – then Alexey Vishnevsky faced much more serious troubles. About forty kilometers from the special stage finish the rear right spring of his truck burst and he had to slow down to finish.

Sergey Vyazovich set the best time among trucks. Andrey Karginov lost six minutes to him. The third was Eduard Nikolaev.

### And again – experience wins!

Quad driver Alexander Maximov and motorcyclist Alexey Naumov have extensive experience in rally marathons, so it is not surprising that they did not leave a chance for their rivals, having won in the respective classifications.

### Voronov loses

Crews from Turkmenistan are against the AVTOVAZ factory team driver. There is a plot in the production car standings. At the Prologue Dmitry Voronov lost to Merdan Toylyev, and today he repeated his result, but this time Maxamyrat Donatarov was the best. The Petersburgers' result could have been better, if there were no problems with the transmission.



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## Target – Peter’s places of Astrakhan

For the competitors of the new “Following Peter the Great” Grand Tour category the second day of the Silk Way Rally consisted of two parts – one was more interesting than the other. In the first half of the day, they drove along the route, looking for checkpoints associated with Peter I and photographed the points found. And in the afternoon the competitors went to the track of a specifically laid test special stage, where they learned the basics of creating a Road Book.

## What to expect tomorrow?

On the third day of the 12th edition of the Silk Way Rally the competitors will find the Astrakhan – Astrakhan circle stage with a total distance of 385 km and competitive distance of 321 km.

Particular thanks to our media partners. This year **MATCH TV**, **Russia 24**, **NTV**, **360** federal TV channels continue their cooperation with rally; an information support is also provided by the **Izvestia** multimedia information center and IZ.RU TV channels 5TV and Ren TV. We are pleased to note that our long-term cooperation with the **Rossiya Segodnya** media group continues. For the first time **Tricolor**, the multiplatform operator of the digital environment, and **RUTUBE** became the information partners.



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