

Dos Hermanas, 22 October 2022

'CHALECO' LOPEZ T3 WORLD CHAMPION

In the bikes, stage victory went to Kevin Benavides (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing) in front of Adrien van Beveren (Monster Energy Honda) with Kevin's brother Luciano (Husqvarna Factory Racing) third. Overall van Beveren leads K Benavides (2nd at 2'58'') with brother Luciano (Husqvarna Factory Racing) 3rd at 5'06''. In the W2RC RallyGP battle Sam Sunderland (GasGas Factory Racing) maintains his overall lead ahead of his closest rival Ricky Brabec (Monster Energy Honda). No surprises in Rally2 with W2RC champion Klein winning ahead of Cox and Dumontier. Cox is looking increasingly likely to take 3rd place off Dabrowski in W2RC. In the cars Sebastien Loeb (Bahrain Raid Xtreme) completed a trouble-free stage, comfortably beating Yazeed Al-Rajhi (Toyota Overdrive) and Guerlain Chicherit (GCK Motorsport). De Mevius (Red Bull Off Road Junior Team) repeated his victory in T3 ahead of team-mate Seth Quintero and Portugal's Portela Morais (GRallyTeam). In T4, the stage victory went to Gerard Farrés (Can-Am Factory South Racing), who beat Rokas Baciуска (South Racing) and the young Pau Navarro (FN Speed).

ON TRACK

The fog was slow to lift again this morning and for a while the competitors were worried that the day's stage was going to suffer the same fate as yesterday's. But in the end the first bike on the track, **Adrien van Beveren** was given the start at 11:30 and despite it being a long and tricky stage the **Honda** rider opened the piste all the way to the finish line, to maintain his overall lead. Behind him **Ross Branch (Hero Motosports)** also charged hard and had it not been for a speeding penalty and a small crash within sight of the line he would have won the day. In the end that honour went to the **Argentinian Kevin Benavides (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing)** who this evening is second overall just ahead of his brother Luciano. Keen to preserve his W2RC supremacy **Sam Sunderland (GasGas Factory Racing)** admitted to backing off after getting caught out a couple of times by the terrain alternating between grippy sand and slippery dirt tracks. The Brit's reduced pace didn't however allow Dakar winner **Ricky Brabec (Monster Energy Honda)** to pull back any significant time on the **GasGas** rider who this evening has just over a 100 kilometres between him and the W2RC RallyGP crown. In Rally2 not even speeding penalties can deprive **Mason Klein (BAS World KTM Racing)** of stage wins with his teammate **Bradley Cox** also going well. Fourth in the World Championship going into this round it is looking increasingly likely that tomorrow he will finish on the Rally2 podium at the expense of the young Pole **Konrad Dabrowski (Duust Rally Team)**. In the quads victory once again went to W2RC leader **Alexandre Giroud**.

In the car category, the day again produced an unexpected result. Few could have predicted that **Nasser Al Attiyah (Toyota Gazoo Racing)** would lose his lead to **Sebastien Loeb (Bahrain Raid Xtreme)**. But this time, the race circumstances were unfavourable to the Qatari. Two early punctures forced the W2RC leader to be very conservative for the rest of the stage as he ran out of spare tyres. He had to slow down so much that he lost all the advantage he had gained in the first stage, but the most important thing for him is that he is still within reach of the W2RC title... and even, if he wanted to risk it, of winning the Andalucía Rally, as **Loeb** is only 28 seconds ahead of him.

In T3, **Guillaume de Mevius (Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team)** is on course for his first rally win this year. He took the stage win again today and tomorrow he will defend a lead of 6:06 over his **Red Bull** team-mate **Seth Quintero** and almost 20 minutes over **Chaleco Lopez (Can-Am Factory South Racing)**. Spain's **Cristina Gutiérrez (Red Bull Off Road Junior Team)** is out of the running after losing almost 40 minutes to **De Mevius** today.

With his stage victory in T4, **Gerard Farrés (Can-Am Factory South Racing)** has taken the lead of the Andalucía Rally from another Spaniard, **Pau Navarro (FN Speed)**. The two Spaniards, separated by less than three minutes, will play for the victory tomorrow at home.

RADIO BIVOUAC

It is not easy to stand out as a rally-raid car driver, especially if you are young (or at least younger). Experience on four wheels is so important that the drivers who have dominated the Dakar in the last decade have tended to be over 50 years old. If you think about who could succeed the giants: **Peterhansel**, **Sainz**, **Roma** or **Al Attiyah**, one of the most obvious names is that of Frenchman **Mathieu Serradori**.

At 43 years of age, he is ripe to take over. He made his car debut in 2019 and has since amassed a great CV: two top 10s on the Dakar, including a stage win, victory in the **Kazakhstan Rally** in 2021... all as a privateer. Double merit.

All he lacks is... the right machine: *"It's not impossible to aspire to an official team. It is a goal that I hope to achieve in the years to come"*. But for the time being, he will continue as a privateer. At the beginning of November he will test his new Century buggy in Namibia and hopes to be among the top teams again: *"It will be difficult because the T1+ are more competitive, but let's hope that our new car can at least put us in the top 10 and give us a shot at some stage victories"*.

While his new car is being prepared, Serradori has come to the Andalucía Rally with a T3 PH Sport... and has already made his mark on stage 1, where he was fastest in the first section. *"We are here to improve our driving as much as possible, maintain our speed and to build our driver / co-driver relationship - Loeb 'stole' his co-driver last year - and to give the team info on how the car is doing and the direction they can take to development it"*. And also to have fun: *"It's a very different car, my T1 is rear-wheel drive and these are 4x4s, but the T3 is a lot of fun and it's very good for honing your skills"*. But when asked about his favourite, he has no doubts: the kings of the Dakar are the T1s.

STAT OF THE DAY: 30 + 5

Yesterday we looked at the W2RC points scoring system for bikes, today we put the spotlight on the cars... similar, but with an additional element that adds to the suspense. Because in addition to the points awarded for their final classification, drivers receive extra points depending on their daily position. This allowed, for example, **Loeb** - second overall - to come out on top on the Dakar thanks to his three stage wins and two second places... even though the final victory went to **Al Attiyah**.

On the Andalucía Rally, as on the Dakar, in Abu Dhabi or Morocco, each day, the first five of the day receive 5, 4, 3, 2 or 1 point, while the prize for the leader of the final general classification is 30 points... except on the Dakar, which, being considered a Marathon Rally, offers 50 points as the prize for winning.

However, for the points from each stage to be awarded, the driver has to complete the rally, which makes the system perfectly balanced. It also maintains the excitement right to the end as, for example, in Andalusia, a driver with a perfect rally could score 50 points in one go.

Except... since the cancellation of yesterday's stage there's an added complication. The FIA rules state that for a rally to be worth full points at least 75% of 1200 kms of special stage (i.e. over 900 kms) must be covered. For between 50% and 75% distance (i.e. 600 to 900 kms), which is the case here, only half the points are awarded, though stage points remain unchanged. For the bikes just 50% of the initially planned special has to be run for the points tally to remain the same.

W2RC

Francisco 'Chaleco' López (Can-Am Factory South Racing) will go to bed tonight as W2RC World Champion in the T3 category. Whatever happens tomorrow, even if the Chilean does not finish the race, the title is his because, with a maximum of 15 points for the winner (half the usual number), neither **Cristina Gutiérrez** nor **Seth Quintero** will be able to catch him. He joins **Mason Klein** and **Kees Koolen** on the list of W2RC 2022 winners.

Nasser Al Attiyah (Toyota Gazoo Racing) is not mathematically champion... but almost. He only needs to finish the rally tomorrow to secure the title, regardless of what happens to Loeb. Today, the T4 category saw a major turnaround as **Marek Goczał (Cobant-Energylandia Rally Team)**, leader until today, suffered an accident and did not finish the day and **Austin Jones (Can-Am Factory South Racing)** lost a lot of time, so that **Rokas Baciуска (South Racing Can-Am)** is the new leader. In the bike category, **Sunderland (GasGas Factory Racing)** dropped to fifth overall, but is still ahead of **Ricky Brabec (Monster Energy Honda)** in ninth.

W2RC standings : [HERE](#)

Follow the race live : [HERE](#)

QUOTES

Sam Sunderland (GasGas Factory Racing): *"There was a delay again at the start 'cos of the fog and we were thinking 'ah no its going to be the same story as yesterday' but eventually it burnt off. A really long day. The first part was really fun in some sandy terrain and then I had a couple of scary moments when we switched from grippy, sandy tracks to really slippery dirt tracks. So I decided that today maybe I wasn't in the rhythm and settled down a bit."*

Kevin Benavides (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing): *"Today was a really long day. We have just finished and it is 5pm. Mentally tough as well. I did some mistakes at the beginning and maybe lost a minute and then I started to push. Despite a little crash I feel happy with my day and good with the bike and the navigation."*

Sebastien Loeb (Bahrain Raid Xtreme): *"A good day for us, no big mistakes, no punctures, no problems with the car. I tried to push as hard as I could from the start, on a stage that was easier to navigate than yesterday. We were a long way back and we made up 11 minutes, more than we expected. We're leading, but only just... and we know that tomorrow Nasser will be pushing hard"*

TOMORROW'S PROGRAMME

STAGE 4

Liaison: 300 km / SS: 105 km (26%) / total: 405 km

Cadiz, final stage at the gateway to Africa

David Castera: *"The last one is a fun special to finish by the sea in an atmosphere that will remind us of the old of Dakar finish next to Lac Rose. We will be just on the other side of the Straits of Gibraltar, it is a symbolic finish for the end of the world championship, looking towards Africa, the birthplace of the rally-raid."*

MEDIA CONTENT

Stage 3: photos and quotes of the day : [DROPBOX](#)

Videos : [HERE](#)

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Websites

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