

## FIA-FIM RALLY-RAID WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS SANDERS AND AL ATTIYAH TAKE THE LEAD

### Key points:

- **Daniel Sanders (Red Bull GasGas Factory Racing)** took the win ahead of **Pablo Quintanilla (Monster Energy Honda)** and **Matthias Walkner (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing)** in the W2RC motorbike category. "Chucky" rocketed to the top of the standings. The leader of the championship, **Toby Price (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing)**, lost nearly eight minutes due to a navigation blunder.
- **Nasser Al Attiyah (Toyota Gazoo Racing)** dominated the car stage and took the lead of the Sonora Rally. **Yazeed Al Rajhi (Overdrive Racing)** snatched second place in the final stretch. **Sébastien Loeb (Bahrain Raid Xtreme)**, who opened the road, finished third without losing too much time.
- In T3, the championship leader, **Seth Quintero (Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team USA)**, had to stop in the first few kilometers after ripping off a wheel.

### FIM: AN OFF DAY FOR TOBY PRICE

The fastest W2RC RallyGP rider in the prologue, **Toby Price**, did not benefit for long from his choice to begin stage 1 in sixth place: "Rough day for me. Everything felt good at the start and then at about kilometer 40, I made a mistake, missed a cap, and managed to head off in the wrong direction. It ended up costing me seven or eight minutes, so not the best way to start the rally. There's still four days to go, so I'll get my head down and see what tomorrow brings." The man from Down Under shipped 7'39" to **Sanders** at the finish.

The rest of the Austrian clan is breathing a sigh of relief. **Daniel Sanders**, **Matthias Walkner**, and **Sam Sunderland** (Red Bull GasGas Factory Racing) picked up where they left off after being sidelined since the Dakar. "**Chucky**" posted the fastest time among the W2RC riders, 35" ahead of **Pablo Quintanilla's** Honda. Behind them, **Walkner** and "**Sundersam**" finished in this same order, one minute behind for the Austrian and a bit over two minutes behind for the reigning world champion. Reasonable gaps, like those of the riders in the next four spots. **Skyler Howes** (Husqvarna Factory Racing), **Adrien Van Beveren** (Monster Energy Honda), **Luciano Benavides** (Husqvarna Factory Racing), and **Ricky Brabec** (Monster Energy Honda) came out of the stage within about two and a half minutes of **Sanders**. In the overall standings, after adding up the times of the day and those of the prologue with a coefficient 8 (as per the regulations), **Sanders** leads **Quintanilla** by 35", **Walkner** by 1'24", **Luciano Benavides** by 1'27", **VBA** by 1'34", **Brabec** by 1'58", **Howes** by 1'59", and **Sunderland** by 2'30". A close-run affair, with eight riders within 2'30". In Rally2, the winner of the prologue, **Bradley Cox** (BAS World KTM Racing), was not as lucky this time round. His GPS and Irtrack bailed out on him, preventing him from cruising at the pace he had started to show at the beginning of the stage. **Romain Dumontier** pocketed the stage ahead of **Neels Theric** on a Kove and **Cox**, who got twelve minutes back after filing a claim. The Rally2 winner of the Dakar is 1'16" clear of **Bradley** and 6'21" clear of **Neels** in the overall. In Rally3, the Italian **Massimo Camurri** already has an advantage of more than twenty minutes over his two rivals. The leader of the provisional standings, **Laisvydas Kancius**, beat **Rodolfo Guilliolí** by almost ten minutes in the quad race. The Lithuanian is already over 17 minutes ahead of the Guatemalan.

### FIA: (ALMOST) NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS IN THE CAR RACE

After the daily recital of twists and turns in Abu Dhabi, with **Loeb**, **Chicherit** (GCK Motorsport), and **Al Attiyah** as unwilling protagonists, there was finally a trouble-free day in the dust and among the cacti on the ranches in the Hermosillo region. The aforementioned trio and **Yazeed Al Rajhi** almost settled into a routine, with the only hiccup coming near the end of the stage for **Chicherit**, who looked poised to take second place, consistently posting times within half a minute of **Al Attiyah's** for more than 150 kilometers. A last-minute mistake and two instances of speeding allowed **Al Rajhi**, **Loeb**, and **Halpern** to pip him at the post. **Al Rajhi** came in second, 28" off the pace. **Loeb**, opening the road, struggled with the nuances of navigation in Sonora to finish third at 2'38". As **Jean-Paul Cottret**, an opener for the W2RC, had warned, reading the tracks in the vegetation is a new challenge. **Loeb** stuck his neck out and left his tracks like a sort of Ariadne's thread for his pursuers. **Sebastián Halpern** (X-raid Mini JCW) was fourth at 3'17". **Guerlain Chicherit** ended up fifth at 3'46" after factoring in his penalties. **Al Attiyah** is a mere 27" ahead of **Al Rajhi** in the standings, with **Loeb** third at 2'42", **Halpern** fourth at 3'33" and **Chicherit** fifth at 3'49".

In T3, the leader of the championship, **Seth Quintero**, tore off a rear wheel just eight kilometers into the stage. His teammates, who passed by him, are still wondering where on Earth the American found the rock that likely caused this breakage. **Quintero** conceded an hour and forty minutes by the finish. **Mattias Ekström** (South Racing Can-Am) grabbed the win ahead of **João Ferreira** (X-raid Yamaha), **Cristina Gutiérrez** (Red Bull Can-Am Factory), **Mitch Guthrie** (Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team USA), and "**Chaleco**" **López** (Red Bull Can-Am Factory). The overall standings are a carbon copy of the stage classification. **Ekström** now leads the Portuguese by a minute, the Spaniard

by 1'47", the American by 2'22", and the Chilean by 3'32". In T4, **Rokas Baciūška** (Red Bull Can-Am Factory) scored his second win in as many days and expanded his lead over **Rebecca Busi** (FN Speed) to over 25 minutes. Tomorrow, the Sonora Rally caravan will leave the bivouac in downtown Hermosillo for the beach camp in Puerto Peñasco, in the northwest of the state. Sandier tracks and the beaches of the Sea of Cortez await the competitors. Yet another step into the unknown for the W2RC regulars.

**TOMORROW'S PROGRAMME\***

- Stage 2: Hermosillo – Puerto Peñasco
- Total : 541 km
- Road sections: 255 km
- Special: 286 km
- Special start times:
  - first FIM start: 6:30 am
  - first FIA start: 8:00 am

Follow stage 2 live [HERE](#).

\*Local times: GMT -7

Stage 1 and overall standings [here](#).

**Stage 2 starting list on Sportity**

Find all the practical information of the race on Sportity:



- All categories Sonora Rally 2023: sonorarally2023
- National: NATIONALSONORARALLY2023
- FIA: FIASONORARALLY2023
- FIM: FIMSONORARALLY2023

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