

Bologna (Italy), 10 December 2022

## 2022 WORLD RALLY-RAID CHAMPIONSHIP FIA Awards Ceremony

### Al Attiyah, Baumel and Toyota make history

**Of note:**

- On Friday 9 December in Bologna, in the heart of Motor Vally, in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy, the FIA brought together its 2022 champions for its traditional awards ceremony, in the presence of its president Mohammed Ben Sulayem.
- For the first time in its history, rally-raid joined the FIA's major disciplines by moving from World Cup to World Championship status under the W2RC banner.
- Three World Rally-Raid Championship crowns were awarded: driver to Nasser Al Attiyah, co-driver to Mathieu Baumel and manufacturer to Toyota Gazoo Racing.

2022 will go down as a historic year for rally-raid. For the first time in their history, **FIA cars** and **FIM motorcycles** have come together under a common name and programme, that of **W2RC**, the promotion of which has been entrusted to the **Amaury Sport Organisation (A.S.O.)**.

Within the FIA, W2RC has joined **F1, FE, WEC, WRC, WRX** and **Karting** to bring the total number of world championship status motorsport disciplines to seven.

For competitors in the World Rally-Raid Championship, the season was composed of four rounds, inaugurated in unprecedented fashion by the **Dakar**, putting three new world championship titles at stake.

A major challenge for five-time winner and World Cup title holder **Nasser Al Attiyah**. After his awards in 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2021 and after an epic duel with **Sebastien Loeb**, he is finally the World Rally-Raid Champion for the first time! Like motorcyclist **Sam Sunderland**, **Nasser Al Attiyah** has achieved the most prestigious of 2022 doubles: victory on the Dakar and the W2RC World Championship title.

Alongside the World Champion driver, his co-driver **Mathieu Baumel**, who has already shared four World Cup victories with him since 2015, also became the first co-driver to win the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship.

Rewarded for their second place on the final podium, **Sebastien Loeb** and **Fabian Lurquin** came close to giving the Frenchman his tenth FIA world crown after his nine **WRC** titles. The **Bahrain Raid Xtreme** team were separated by just one point from the eventual world champions throughout the first half of the season, but fell behind on the **Rallye du Maroc**, failing to catch up with the **Toyota** despite winning the final **Andalucía Rally**. At the end of the season, 20 points separated the two teams (169 points to 149 points).

The **Overdrive Racing** pick-up of **Yazeed Al-Rajhi** and **Dirk Von Zitzewitz** was always in the hunt for a podium finish. Twice on the third step of the World Cup (2014 and 2016) and as many times just off it (4th in 2019 and 2021), the Saudi Arabian climbs onto his first World Championship podium, a few days after winning the Baja World Cup.

Their performance, combined with that of the World Champion **Hilux** allows **Toyota Gazoo Racing** to become the first Manufacturers' World Champion with a total of 163 points against 135 points for the **BRX** team's **Hunter**.

**Al Attiyah, Baumel and Toyota Gazoo Racing** now have three weeks to savour their World Championship title. The 2023 W2RC season will begin on December 31 with the prologue of the 45th edition of the Dakar, again the first round of the championship, before the doyenne **Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge**, the **Sonora Rally** (Mexico) and the **Ruta 40** (Argentina), new to the world calendar, and the traditional finale on the **Rallye du Maroc**.

#### Quotes:

##### **David Castera, Motorsport Director of the Amaury Sport Organisation (A.S.O.)**

*"We are particularly happy and proud to have seen the birth of the first FIA World Rally-Raid Championship titles this year, putting our sport in the spotlight.*

*The first season of the W2RC has been an opportunity to harmonise the regulations and to successfully improve safety by providing real support to the discipline. A.S.O. will continue to work on the development of rally-raid in the coming years.*

*From 2023, new events will further strengthen its international scope. The new history of rally-raid is well and truly underway."*

##### **Glyn Hall, Team Principal, Toyota Gazoo Racing - World Champion Manufacturer**

*"We've had the most successful year imaginable. Firstly, by winning the Dakar with a vehicle that was making its debut under the new regulations and winning three stages. Then by winning the championship ahead of Sébastien Loeb, statistically the best rally driver of all time. And finally by winning the Manufacturers' World Championship title thanks to the contribution of Yazeed Al Rajhi. We've just spent six days in Namibia to prepare for the 2023 season and I can say that we will be going into the Dakar stronger than ever. The car has been developed to the limits of what we could achieve today."*

##### **Nasser Al Attiyah, World Drivers' Champion:**

*"It's a really unique feeling to receive my first World Championship title, we have been waiting for it for a long time with Mathieu. We have won many races together over the last few years and this season, which started with the Dakar victory, before the constant ups and downs with Séb, has been incredible and makes me all the happier."*

##### **Mathieu Baumel, World Co-Driver Champion:**

*"This first World Champion title in the history of rally-raid will remain in my memory, especially since it happened in the same year as the Dakar victory. It is obviously a strong emotion to finally be recognised by the FIA in the same way as the other world champions. This should give even more impact to the discipline in the future, maybe to the point of overtaking traditional rally. It's good for us to have closed the chapter of the World Cup with a victory and to open the W2RC book with a first World Championship title, but now we will have to double the victory on the Dakar with the one at the end of the year on the W2RC! We hope to do it again several times, 'inch Allah' as Nasser says!"*

#### Did you know?

**Nasser Al Attiyah's** 2022 W2RC title is his fourth FIA World Championship title.

The Qatari already has three. The first was in 2006 in the **PWRC (Production World Rally Championship)** before a double in 2014 and 2015 in **WRC-2**. The 2015 title was won with his co-driver **Mathieu Baumel**, their first joint World Championship title. The duo now share two FIA World Championship titles.

In **MERC (Middle East Rally Championship)** Nasser has 18 titles, 8 of which he shares with Mathieu.

**All the W2RC 2022 winners:**

- Winner of the FIA Rally-Raid Championship for T3 drivers: **Francisco Contardo Lopez** (CHL-South Racing Can-Am)
- Winner of the FIA Rally-Raid Championship for T3 co-drivers: **François Cazalet** (FRA-Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team)
- Winner of the FIA Rally-Raid Championship for T4 drivers: **Rokas Baciуска** (LTU- South Racing Can-Am)
- Winner of the FIA Rally-Raid Championship for T4 co-drivers: **Lukasz Laskawiec** (POL-Cobant-Energylandia Rally)
- Winner of the FIA Rally-Raid Championship for T5 drivers: **Kees Koolen** (NLD-Project 2030)
- Winner of the FIA Rally-Raid Championship for T5 co-drivers: **Wouter De Graaff** (NLD-Project 2030)

Further information [on the website](#).

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