

Qsar Al Sarab, 1 March 2023

## FIA-FIM WORLD RALLY-RAID CHAMPIONSHIPS HONDA GOES BIG, AL ATTIYAH GOES HOME

### Key points:

- **Stage 3 of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge marked the halfway point of the race and the end of the marathon stage for the motorbikes. The finish in Abu Dhabi is two days away.**
- **Toby Price (KTM) clinched the motorbike special and vaulted back onto the overall podium behind Adrien Van Beveren and another HRC rider, Pablo Quintanilla.**
- **Meanwhile, Nasser Al Attiyah recovered from a barrel roll 10 kilometres before the finish to claim the car stage, but the massive damage to his roll cage left the factory Toyota Gazoo Racing driver with no choice but to quit the race.**
- **This major upset puts Yazeed Al Rajhi (Overdrive Racing), Martin Prokop (Benzina Orlen Team) and Denis Krotov (X-raid Mini JCW) back in the running for the ADDC, the second round of the championship.**

### FIM: PRICE WINS BUT HONDA STAYS ON TOP

**Pablo Quintanilla** (Monster Energy Honda) lit up the race again. The Chilean crossed the finish line as the provisional winner, only for a 2-minute penalty for speeding to relegate him to second place, a mere 17 seconds behind **Toby Price** (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing). **Skyler Howes** (Husqvarna Factory Racing) came in third, 19 seconds off the pace. Three men within 20 seconds! Meanwhile, **Adrien Van Beveren**, fifth on the day at 1'03", defended his lead with 43 seconds to spare over his teammate **Quintanilla**. **Price** is back on the podium at 2'56". A Honda 1-2-3 is still on the cards, as the Chilean **Nacho Cornejo**, who started the stage one second from the podium, remains within 4 seconds of the KTM rider! Honda still has three riders in the top 4. In the Rally2 category, **Paolo Lucci** (BAS World KTM Racing) took the win by 6'37" over **Jean-Loup Lèpan** (Duust Diverse Racing). The Italian remains the top dog of the category, over 23 minutes clear of the Frenchman and more than 33 minutes ahead of the other BAS World KTM Racing rider, **Toni Mulec**. In the quad race, **Abdulaziz Ahli** (Abu Dhabi Team) went back to his winning ways by 2 minutes over **Laisvydas Kancius** (AG Dakar School) and 24 over **Rodolfo Guilioli**. The Lithuanian is almost 45 minutes down on the Emirati in the general standings.

### FIA: AL ATTIYAH SIDELINED

**Nasser Al Attiyah** (Toyota Gazoo Racing) again outfoxed **Sébastien Loeb** (Bahrain Raid Xtreme) to take the special in the car race. Not even a series of barrel rolls in the final kilometres could stop the Qatari from crossing the finish line with 48 seconds to spare, but when he reached the bivouac, the FIA officials who inspected his vehicle found that it was no longer in the proper condition to take the start of stage 4 due to serious damage to its roll cage. As a result, he will not be able to add to his world championship tally of 85 points. **Sébastien Loeb** has a chance to continue picking up points in every stage to defend and expand his lead after the race... as long as he makes it to the finish. Following the earlier withdrawal of **Guerlain Chicherit**, third in the championship, the Frenchman holds a comfortable margin thanks to his performance in the Dakar. The Saudi **Yazeed Al Rajhi** inherited the lead of the ADDC by almost 10 minutes over **Martin Prokop** and twice as much over **Denis Krotov**. In the T3 race, **Mattias Ekström** seemed poised to take the win until his engine gave out 66 kilometres into the special, leaving **Mitch Guthrie** to take the spoils ahead of a resurgent **Cristina Gutiérrez** and **Seth Quintero**, who remains in control of the overall by 27'06" over his Red Bull Off-Road Jr Team USA teammate **Austin Jones**. Meanwhile, in the T4 race, **Rokas Baciūška** (Red Bull Can-Am Factory) again emerged victorious from his duel with **Pau Navarro** (FN Speed), increasing the Lithuanian's overall lead over the Catalan by 9 minutes to a total of 18.

Tomorrow is the longest special of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge, which really lived up to its name today.

**TOMORROW'S PROGRAMME\***

- Qsar Al Sarab – Qsar Al Sarab
- Total: 457 km
- A+B road sections: 149 km
- Special: 308 km
- Special start times:

- first FIM start: 8 am

- first FIA start: 9:35 am

Follow stage 4 live: [HERE](#).

\* local time: GMT+4

**Stage 3 and overall standings [here](#).**

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