



ROAD BOOK D3 NASSER UNBEATABLE

Key points :

- In the bikes victory went to **Tosha Schareina (Honda Team)** with **Michael Docherty (BAS World KTM Racing)** first in Rally2 and **Souleymane Addahri (Africa Rallye Team)** in Rally3. Overall **Ross Branch (Hero MotoSports)** holds on to the lead with **Bradley Cox** leading Rally2, **Cheikh-Yves Jacquemain** out in front in Rally3 and **Manuel Andujar (Drag'on Rally)** winning the quads.
- In the cars **Nasser Al Attiyah (Toyota Gazoo Racing)** was quickest in T1 to extend his overall lead. **Mitch Guthrie (Red Bull Off Road Junior Team by BFG)** won in the T3s while his teammate **Seth Quintero** leads overall. In T4 the American **Sara Price (South Racing Can-Am)** wins with teammate **Joao Ferreira** leading overall.

ON TRACK

In the bikes **Tosha Schareina** made up for yesterday's navigation error to win ahead of a less than top form **Toby Price** (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing) with **'Nacho' Cornejo** (Monster Energy Honda) third. Overall, behind **Branch**, **Price** is second with **Pablo Quintanilla** (Monster Energy Honda) third. In Rally2 South African **Michael Docherty** also made up for stage 1 navigation errors to win ahead of countryman **Bradley Cox** (BAS World KTM Racing) with **Romain Dumontier** (HT Rally Raid Husqvarna Racing) third. Overall **Cox** leads **Dumontier** with **Lucci** (BAS World KTM Racing) third. In Rally3 the Moroccan rider **Souleymane Addahri** won the stage ahead of **Jacquemain** with the Hungarian **Hodola** third. Overall **Jacquemain** leads with **Hodola** second and **Addahri** third. In the quads **Manuel Andujar** won the special and overall leads **Giroud** and **Varga**.

In the car category, **Nasser Al Attiyah** won the stage 2'11" ahead of **Carlos Sainz** (Audi Sport), 2'30" in front of **Sébastien Loeb** (Bahrain Raid Xtreme) and 3'12" faster than **Yazeed Al Rajhi** (Overdrive Racing). Two wins in a row that have enabled the Qatari to extend his lead in the overall standings. **Al Rajhi** is now 2nd overall at 5'31". **Sainz** and **Loeb** are 3rd and 4th, 35" and 37" behind the Saudi. In T3, **Eryk Goczal** (BBR) dominated the stage right up to the Chegaga dunes, where he broke his suspension.

The three Americans in the Red Bull Off-Road Jr Team USA by BFG were thus able to regain control of the stage. **Mitch Guthrie** won by 2'41" ahead of **Austin Jones** and 3'46" in front of **Seth Quintero**. **Seth**, the title holder on the Rallye du Maroc, is the overall leader this evening with a margin of 1'22" over **Mitch** and 11'26" over **Marek Goczal** (BBR). **AJ** is 4th at 12'29". In T4, **Sara Price** won the stage and climbed from 5th to 3rd overall (11'52"). **Joao Ferreira** retained the lead ahead of **Juan Cruz Mana** (Automode E) at 4'59". In the trucks, **Janus Van Kasteren** (Boss Machinery) won ahead of **Martin Macik** (MM Technology). A 'one-all' result after the Czech's victory yesterday. It was a stage victory for the honour of the Dutchman, who is almost an hour and a half behind the leader after yesterday's one hour penalty for missing a point. **Tomas Vratny** (Fesh Fesh) is 2nd overall at 37'35".

STAT OF THE DAY: 2.08

A rider is always proud to win a special. But the way to get maximum peer respect is to open the piste over the whole special without ever being caught by another competitor. The problem is that, inevitably, opening the piste means losing time and so in terms of race strategy can be a very bad idea indeed. Last year on the Rallye du Maroc, to try and remedy this injustice, a bonus system was introduced whereby the first 3 on the road had time deducted from their actual result: 1.5 sec/km for the 1st, 1 sec/km for the 2nd and 0.5 sec/km for the 3rd over a given part of the special. It was an initiative that proved instantly popular and was subsequently adopted on the 2023 Dakar. Today was a perfect example of how it works. **Ross Branch** won yesterday's stage and so had the difficult job of opening today's piste and inevitably lost time. To compensate yesterday's achievement he was 'rewarded' with a 2.08 minute bonus and means that today he maintains the overall lead by just over a minute!

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RADIO BIVOUAC

Nasser Al Attiyah became double world champion today in Zagora – *subject to official publication by the FIA!* How is that possible before the race is even over? The explanation is mathematical. Having arrived in Morocco with a 51-point lead over **Yazeed Al Rajhi**, the latter was obliged to score a total of 52 points over the whole rally. However, this is no longer possible. **Al Rajhi** finished 2nd yesterday (4 points) and 4th today (2 points). Even if he were to win in Merzouga (30 points) and the three remaining stages (15 points) and **Al Attiyah** were to retire, he would still only achieve a total of 51 points. And in the event of a tie, the Qatari would be ranked ahead due to his greater number of race wins this year (Dakar, Sonora Rally and Desafío Ruta 40). **Nasser Al Attiyah** is therefore crowned FIA rally-raid world champion today. In doing so, he follows in the footsteps of his co-driver **Mathieu Baumel** and his manufacturer Toyota Gazoo Racing, both of whom won their crowns at the previous W2RC round. Record winner of the Rallye du Maroc with 6 crowns, the Qatari now has his hands completely free to chase after another victory.

W2RC

The 2023 FIA W2RC champion has been crowned as **Nasser Al Attiyah** ascends to the throne for the second time in a row! He is out of the reach of **Yazeed Al Rajhi**, who will now aim for the runner up's spot (subject to the official publication of the results by the FIA). The race for third is a real nail-biter, with a mere 8 points separating **Juan Cruz Yacopini** (Overdrive Racing) and **Sébastien Loeb** before the start of the fifth round. The Frenchman is sitting in fourth place in the rally, while the Argentinian is seventh. **Loeb** has already slashed his deficit with a 6-point haul, but he needs to finish the race to make it count.

The T3 championship leader, **Mitch Guthrie**, claimed the special and moved within 1'22" of **Seth Quintero**, a brilliant result that cemented his grip on the W2RC. The third title contender, **Austin Jones**, is hanging on at 12'29". **Sebastián Guayasamín** (FN Speed) was the fastest W2RC entrant in T4, but **João Ferreira** stayed in control of the rally ahead of **Rebecca Busi** (FN Speed). The Portuguese driver is eyeing his maiden T4 win, while the Italian wants to retake third place in the championship. **Janus van Kasteren** went back to his winning ways by 6'02" over **Martin Macík**. However, the Czech still holds the overall lead, with the Dutchman in fifth place 1 h 26'28" back. **Macík** is going for broke in a bid to win the race and erase his 11-point deficit in the W2RC.

Meanwhile, the fierce battle for the RallyGP title rages on. **Toby Price** was the speediest W2RC entrant and rocketed to second in the rally, behind **Ross Branch** but ahead of **Luciano Benavides** in fifth place. As things stand, we are looking at a dead heat between the two men, with 91 points apiece! The tie-breaking mechanism would crown the Argentinian because he has won a round of the series (Desafío Ruta 40), whereas Price has none to his name. **Michael Docherty** emerged victorious in Rally2, where the W2RC leader, **Romain Dumontier**, is now 5'23" ahead of his closest rival, **Paolo Lucci**. "Dudu" is right on track to take the title.

Ardit Kurtaj (Xraids Expérience) is more than an hour down on the Rally3 leader, **Cheikh-Yves Jacquemain**, but he moved closer to victory by staying ahead of **Massimo Camurri** (McDonald's Rally). **Manuel Andújar** remains in a class of his own in the quad race. The W2RC leader, **Laisvydas Kancius** (Story Racing), has no room for error. **Juraj Varga** (Varga Motorsport), with just 23 fewer points than the Lithuanian, is second in the rally, 20'29" ahead of **Kancius**, who has no choice but to push hard until the last metre.

Find out more: <https://www.worldrallyraidchampionship.com/en/>
Media content: <https://www.worldrallyraidchampionship.com/en/media-area>

ANALYSIS BY KEVIN BENAVIDES: THE EYE OF THE TIGER

On the sidelines with an injured wrist, the 2023 Dakar winner is closely following the race from the bivouac and gives us his daily analysis of the motorcycle race:

"Contrary to yesterday, all the RallyGPs finished and none of them made a major navigation error. Pablo Quintanilla set the pace after overtaking Ross Branch. Matthias, Luciano and Toby all did a good job and Tosha and Nacho attacked from behind. This changes the overall positions a little, but for my brother, who was consistent like yesterday, it allows him to keep a good position again for the next day. The bonuses came into play today, but only up to kilometre 110, with a transfer section that wasn't bonused, which limited the reward. But tomorrow bonuses will play an important role."

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QUOTES

Tosha Schareina (Honda Team): "Today I'm super happy. Another hard day at the office – another 300 kays over some tough terrain. I rode hard from the start to the finish to recover the time we lost yesterday. Maybe yesterday puts another rally win out of reach but we'll push hard and see what happens."

Pablo Quintanilla (Monster Energy Honda): "Today was a difficult day in terms of navigation but a great day for me. I caught up with the frontrunner at around kilometre 40 and then did some good navigation at a quick pace. I lost some time in the dunes, but in the end it's a great result because I only lost 5 minutes on a day with a lot of off-piste where I was opening the piste. I think it was an important day for me because tomorrow I'm going to start in a good position. A little further back, which should enable me to make up time on the riders in front and to be in a position, as I was today, to pick up bonuses on stage 4 to be able to manage the final day."

Nasser Al Attiyah (Toyota Gazoo Racing): "On condition of confirmation by the FIA... I'm absolutely happy to have defended our title from last year. Yesterday we started 38th and we won the stage. Today we opened and we win the stage – its amazing – especially as everybody is here. Now I'm free from any worries about the world championship and can concentrate on winning a 7th Rallye du Maroc."

Sébastien Loeb (Bahrain Raid Xtreme): "I tried to set a good pace, but the others were just as fast. After 200 kilometres, we broke the exhaust and lost turbo pressure, which led to a loss of power. After that, we lost time. I'm happy to have finished the stage because it was very hot in the cockpit with the heat generated underneath us by the broken exhaust. And also because we're still in the race. "

THE PROGRAMME*

- > October 16: Stage 3 - Zagora-Zagora (Liaison: 108 km / Special stage: 333 km / Total: 441 km)
- > October 17: Stage 4 - Zagora-Merzouga (Liaison: 78 km / Special stage: 343 km / Total: 421 km)
- > October 18: Stage 5 - Merzouga-Merzouga (Liaison: 3 km / Special stage: 152 km / Total: 155km)
- > 18 October evening: Rallye du Maroc and W2RC prize-giving ceremonies

*GMT +1

Best of photos, press release, quotes:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/tl560vts721uqmczbw6a9/h?rlkey=p6t2t8vz7hks5idghvw7bmkyp&dl=0>

Programme news:

<https://e.pcloud.link/publink/show?code=kZsPiWZB7Puf8mcanQan589FIVEQVH3NLsk>

Official website / Sitio oficial: [HERE](#).

PRESS CONTACT

Matthieu Perez – media@rallyedumaroc.com

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