



## ROAD BOOK D6

# PRICE AND AL RAJHI WIN THE RALLYE DU MAROC

- In the motorcycle category, **Toby Price** (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing) wins the Rallye du Maroc for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in his career. **Luciano Benavides** (Husqvarna Factory Racing) came 2<sup>nd</sup> to become 2023 FIM World Champion. In Rally2, **Bradley Cox** (BAS World KTM Racing) took victory, while in Rally3 Enduro Cup Afrikaia, **Cheikh-Yves Jacquemain** won convincingly. In the quad category, **Alexandre Giroud** (Team Giroud) was victorious.
- In the car category, **Yazeed Al Rajhi** (Overdrive Racing) added his name to the list of Rallye du Maroc winners for the first time. In T3, **Marek Goczal** (BBR) won his first race in the category, while in T4 **Joao Ferreira** did the same. In T5 the win goes to **Michiel Becx** (Team De Rooy). In the Open category, **Jérôme Cambier** (MD Rallye) won ahead of **Tomas Mickus** (Bro Racing), the latter taking the Maroc Telecom Open SSV category.

### ON TRACK

Leading the overall since he won stage 3, **Toby Price** maintained his advantage right up to the finish today at the foot of the Merzouga dunes. The Australian takes his first win of the season and his third Rallye du Maroc crown after those of 2016 and 2018. **Luciano Benavides**, finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and in doing so wins his duel with **Price** to the triumph in W2RC for the first time in his career. Winner of the day, **Pablo Quintanilla** (Monster Energy Honda) finishes 3<sup>rd</sup> in the race. In Rally2, **Bradley Cox** won in Morocco, where he had made his debut on the international circuit in 2021. It was the South African's second W2RC win of the season, following his victory on the Désafío Ruta 40. **Romain Dumontier** (HT Rally Raid Husqvarna Racing) finished 2<sup>nd</sup> ahead of **Paulo Lucci** (BAS World KTM Racing) and wins the Rally2 world cup.

In the Rally3 Enduro Cup Afrikaia, the Africa Rallye Team dominated the week with **Cheikh-Yves Jacquemain** and **Souleymane Addahri** each winning two stages. The Senegalese rider is the overall winner of this year's event, ahead of Hungary's **Richard Hodola** and the Moroccan. In the quad category, **Alexandre Giroud**, a two-time Dakar winner, took the win, the duel with **Manuel Andujar** coming to an abrupt end after the Argentinean broke his engine on the penultimate stage. **Juraj Varga** (Varga Motorsport) and **Rodolfo Guilloli** complete the podium.

**Yazeed Al Rajhi** had zero problems with his Hilux this week and didn't make any mistakes. Once again the Saudi driver was both fast and consistent throughout the race, while his rivals dropped out of the running over the five stages. **Nasser Al Attiyah** (Toyota Gazoo Racing), overall leader for the first three stages, **Carlos Sainz** and **Stéphane Peterhansel** (Audi Sport) all suffered mechanical problems. **Sébastien Loeb** (BRX) and title holder **Guerlain Chicherit** (Overdrive Racing) damaged their cars. In the end, **Al Rajhi** won the Rallye du Maroc for the first time in his career after finishing second in 2021 and third in 2016. His team-mate **Dennis Krotov** took 2<sup>nd</sup> place while **'Nani' Roma** (M-Sport NWM Ford) finished on the podium at the wheel of the new Ranger (see *Stat of the Day*). By winning the 24<sup>th</sup> Rallye du Maroc, **Al Rajhi** secured his second victory of the season after the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge and takes the W2RC runner-up spot behind **Al Attiyah** and ahead of **Yacopini** (Overdrive Racing). In the T3 category, the arrival of the three **Goczals**, who transferred from the T4 category to BBR team Taurus cars, did not go unnoticed. **Eryk** won the prologue and stage 1 before his father and uncle led each stage. In the end, **Marek Goczal** won ahead of **Seth Quintero** (Red Bull Off-Road Jr Team USA by BFG) and **Cristina Gutierrez** (Red Bull Can-Am Factory).

In T4, **Joao Ferreira**, from T3, and **Sara Price**, from the American off-road scene, livened up proceedings. The two South Racing Can-Am team-mates each won two stages. At the finishers' arch, it was the Portuguese driver who came out on top. A duel which certainly foreshadows the one we will see next January.

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## RADIO BIVOUAC

Surprising as it may seem, **David Castera** has never before produced an entire rally-raid road book! While he has always plotted it out, in the past circumstances have meant he has delegated the drawing of all or part of it to specialists. The one used on this 6<sup>th</sup> edition however is 100% all his own work. The principle motivation was to instil a new philosophy: less precision to give more importance to the interpretation of the road book. A return to a more 'old school' style of navigation where intuition and analysis by the rider or the co-driver takes on more importance. At the end of today's stage, where he welcomed each finisher, the race boss was satisfied... as were the competitors: *"This was my first time, I've never done a road book in its entirety before. I rarely have the time to do it myself on the track. I'm happy because I was able to put my own stamp on it, even if there are some things that need fine-tuning. Overall, it was a great race. Aside from the road book, we need to work on the course to create difficulties at the right moment, to know how to put on and take off the pressure. I'm satisfied but it's the competitors that counts. If they're happy, I'm happy. I goal is, above all, to please them."*

## STAT OF THE DAY: 7395

That's the total number of kilometres that the new Ford Ranger has covered in Morocco this year, including the 1169 kilometres the car has done on this 24<sup>th</sup> Rallye du Maroc. Including the Spanish Baja and tests in different countries including France, Dubai and South Africa that figure increases to over 13,000 kilometres. So, why much time in Morocco? According to M-Sport NWM Ford team manager **Matthew Wilson** the country has several advantages. You can transport your team and equipment from Europe with relative ease, you're never too far from a workshop and above all the country offers a huge variety of terrain, featuring pretty much all the conditions you might encounter on a rally raid, whatever the continent. Added their driver, the hugely experienced '**Nani**' Roma: "However much testing you do, it is never enough. Plus, there's no substitute for racing kilometres, but we've actually broken very little. I think we're as ready as we'll ever be for Saudi Arabia in January."

## QUOTES

### Luciano Benavides (Husqvarna Factory Racing)

*"Finally, the dream has come true. In all I've won 10 stages this year and to finish like this is incredible. Battling with Toby on the last day and opening the piste in the dunes gives this W2RC championship a special flavour. When I started in this sport I was really a long way from the level of the top guys, but I learnt that in rally raid you need to know how to adapt to the situation and never give up. I couldn't feel happier than right now – an amazing feeling."*

### Toby Price (Red Bull KTM Factory Racing)

*"We gave everything we could to this race but it (the W2RC) just didn't pan out. It is a tough one to swallow. A lot of things didn't go our way but it is what it is. Luciano did a great job leading out today. I need my luck to change a little bit. The boys did a great job on my bike – I can't thank them enough."*

### Bradley Cox (BAS World KTM Racing)

*"I'm stoked to win this rally. To finish off my year like this is really good. The start of the year (the Dakar) wasn't good, so to win in Argentina and then again here is amazing. The hard work is starting to pay off. Now I'm really excited for Dakar and hopefully I can put a good result in there."*

### Yazeed Al Rajhi (Overdrive Racing)

*"Super happy to win here at the Rallye du Maroc. This season started with a bad result in Dakar. But we kept going and pushing at the right moments and had a big fight in this race. When anyone made a mistake we were always there to snatch the win. Good for us and good for our team. They do a great job as does my co-driver Timo. Everybody worked together to get this victory."*

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### Nasser Al Attiyah (Toyota Gazoo Racing)

*"I'm so happy to win the world championship. The communication between Matthieu and me is fantastic and that is the key to our success. We were leading here on the Rallye du Maroc but had a small issue yesterday and today. But OK we are so happy to finish. Thank you to David (Castera) and to the organisation - it is an amazing rally."*

### Marek Goczal (BBR)

*"We had so many adventures today, more than the whole of the rest of the rally put together. My co-driver did a great job and we gained some time with the navigation. We had a puncture and a few other problems on the special but we are at the finish line. Now on to the next goal which is to get the three cars in the team on the Dakar podium."*

### Joao Ferreira (South Racing Can Am)

*"Our first race in the T4 and we get the victory. We learnt a lot about the car and that's excellent preparation for the Dakar. There was some stress today because there was a lot of navigation but we always have fun. Now we'll go to Dubai to continuing training."*

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<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/k3y3ohqvbc4mzaf1eewmw/h?rlkey=gaexmke5qj2006tyj9lllrrz&dl=0>

Programme news :

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

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Official website/Sitio oficial:

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