

MISSION ABU DHABI DESERT CHALLENGE STAGE 02



DOMINATE THE DUNES

RACE SUMMARY

HERO MOTOSPORTS REGISTERS A STAGE WIN
AT ABU DHABI DESERT CHALLENGE

**ROSS BRANCH MAKES A TERRIFIC COMEBACK
TO BAG THE STAGE**

Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - Hero MotoCorp, emerged winners of the second stage of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge 2022.

Ross Branch, who crashed and could not finish Stage 1, delivered an outstanding performance to win Stage 2 of the rally. His fellow riders Franco Caimi and Joaquim Rodrigues too delivered good results, finishing the stage in the fifth and seventh positions respectively.

The newest member of the team – Ross, is still familiarizing himself with the Hero 450 Rally bike. Even though the crash on the previous day made him quite weak physically, his undeterred passion and commitment to the sport was visibly on record throughout Stage 2. His terrific comeback is a strong boost to the morale and overall confidence of the team.

Franco and JRod faced severe weariness throughout the stage, but their strong resolve to push to the finish puts them at the eighth and ninth positions in the overall Rally GP class rankings.

The second stage of the rally, and also the longest special of this edition, proved to be the toughest challenge for the riders so far. Riding over 316kms of special sections and another 137kms in transit, the riders found the bright sun and the extreme heat of the terrain exceptionally exhausting.

COMING UP

Stage 3 will take the riders on a 255km loop in the desert around Qasr-Al-Sarab. It will also be the second day of the marathon stage, which the riders will complete without any assistance from the team.



ADDC22

ROSS BRANCH

"Today was really hard – I started the morning with a lot of pain from the crash yesterday, and by the time I reached refuel, I didn't really feel like going on! However, I was learning a lot about the bike today – about braking, hard reacts to the dunes, shifting gears through the dunes, jumping off dunes in the most comfortable manner – and that was fun. A better understanding of my new bike brought back a lot of confidence to me, and I definitely took a big step in the right direction. My body is aching everywhere, but it's definitely worth the pain. I've been waiting for a positive result for some time, and I'm happy we're here with a win!"



ROSS



FRANCO

FRANCO CAIMI

"I'm extremely happy to be here at the end of stage 2. The goal is always to get into a good rhythm and get to the finish line, and we accomplished that well today. I'm so proud of the amazing job that the team has been doing to keep us running. The stages here in the desert are quite demanding, and I have to put a lot of energy to finish each stage safe. The result today is very encouraging, and I will focus on recovering to continue the fight tomorrow."

JOAQUIM RODRIGUES

"It was a really difficult stage for me today – it was very fast, and the sun was too bright, we couldn't see anything! I couldn't find my rhythm at all in the beginning, but slowly started gaining my pace and then focused on finishing the stage without making any mistakes. I'm happy that we finally ended up with a good result."



JROD

PROVISIONAL RANKINGS STAGE 2 (RALLY GP CLASS)

POS.	NAME	TEAM	TIMING
1.	ROSS BRANCH	HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY	4H 10M 28S
2.	LUCIANO BENAVIDES	HUSQVARNA FACTORY RACING	+ 39S
3.	KEVIN BENAVIDES	RED BULL KTM FACTORY TEAM	+ 41S
5.	FRANCO CAIMI	HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY	+ 1M 34S
6.	PABLO QUINTANILLA	MONSTER ENERGY HONDA TEAM	+ 3M 52S
7.	JOAQUIM RODRIGUES	HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY	+ 4M 02S

PROVISIONAL OVERALL STANDINGS AFTER STAGE 2 (RALLY GP CLASS)

POS.	NAME	TEAM	TIMING
1.	KEVIN BENAVIDES	RED BULL KTM FACTORY TEAM	7H 52M 48S
2.	RICKY BRABEC	MONSTER ENERGY HONDA TEAM	+ 4M 23S
3.	IGNACIO CORNEJO	MONSTER ENERGY HONDA TEAM	+ 5M 04S
8.	FRANCO CAIMI	HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY	+ 9M 25S
9.	JOAQUIM RODRIGUES	HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY	+ 9M 46S
14.	ROSS BRANCH	HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY	+21H 53M 36S

Regards,
Hero MotoSports

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