



Yanbu, Saudi Arabia, January 19, 2023

HERO MOTOSPORTS CREATES HISTORY!

ACHIEVES SECOND POSITION AT THE DAKAR RALLY 2024

**TEAM RIDER ROSS BRANCH FINISHES ON THE PODIUM
FOR THE INDIAN MANUFACTURER TEAM**

“Today marks a historic day, not only for Hero MotoCorp but also for India and its sports. Congratulations to Ross and the entire Hero MotoSports team, showcasing that success is a result of dedication, consistency, and unwavering passion.

While Hero MotoCorp has supported sports and athletes for decades, this achievement by our own team holds a unique significance coinciding with the 40th anniversary of Hero Motocorp. May this result inspire aspiring riders to pursue motorsports in India, and around the world.”

Dr. Pawan Munjal,
Executive Chairman, Hero MotoCorp



Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, has created history today becoming the first ever Indian manufacturer team to finish on the podium of the legendary Dakar Rally.

Ross Branch finished the Rally at the second place for the team. His consistent performance over the 12 stages saw him at the first and second spots in the overall rankings throughout the Rally.



For the Indian manufacturer this is a phenomenal achievement and a solid validation for the many years of effort put into their racing program. The growth curve for the team has also been steep in the last few years - raking up a first Stage Win at Dakar 2022, doubling it to 2 Stage Wins in 2023, and eventually finishing on the podium in this edition. The team achieved two stage wins during this edition.

Hero MotoSports Team Rally was formed in 2016 and it participated in its first Dakar Rally in 2017. Over the years, the team has achieved multiple podiums, wins and stage wins at top rally-raids across the world. This edition of the Rally was extremely grueling and saw three of the four Hero riders drop out of the race during the first week - Joaquim Rodrigues and Sebastian Buhler suffered injuries, while Joan Barreda who displayed a fantastic performance in the first week, exited due to an unfortunate mechanical failure in Stage 6. The pressure on Ross Branch to continue in the race and continue in the top order was tremendous. However, the Botswanan Hero made it look easy - conquering every mile with a broad smile.

In its fifth year at Saudi Arabia, the 2024 edition was undoubtedly the toughest Dakar so far – longer stages, extreme terrains, and confusing navigation right from the start. Two new formats of racing were also introduced by the organizers to add more spice – a marathon stage early on in the race, and a 48H chrono stage during which the competitors were split across several bivouacs - away from their teams, and surviving on bare minimum essentials. As many as one-third of the competitors who started the race retired from the rally across the 14 days of grind. To get to a Dakar podium is no small feat - a thousand things need to be right, and yet, each kilometer of these many thousands can destroy a result with a tiny mistake. 8,000 kilometers at the world's toughest rally conquered with a top-2 result – Hero has made it clear they're here to stay.



Dr. Arun Jaura, Chief Technology Officer, Hero MotoCorp and Team Principal, Hero MotoSports Team Rally: *"This is a fantastic result for our young team! Hero MotoSports is truly the flag bearer of Indian motorsport. A few years ago, no one could have imagined that an Indian manufacturer team will be on the podium of Dakar Rally. Huge congratulations to Ross, Waffi and the entire team for this massive achievement. We will continue to build on this result."*

Wolfgang Fischer, Team Manager & Head, Hero MotoSports Team Rally: *"Truly a sensational result. It's a big reward to reach the podium today. We started many years ago as small set-up within Hero MotoCorp and building on that every year we have reached here. So, many people have worked hard for us to reach here. We had a tough time in the first week of the Rally losing three of our four riders. However, Rossi carried forward our hopes, keeping a cool head to bring home success in this very difficult Dakar. At the end, by overcoming many obstacles we are on the podium. This 2nd place podium I want to dedicate to Paulo Goncalves, we carry his never-give-up attitude deeply in our team."*

"Many thanks to the Chairman Dr. Munjal, the entire Hero family across the globe and all our fans, supporters and partners. We will continue to build on this success."



Ross Branch, Team Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally: *"Finally finished the Dakar!! It was a really tough Dakar 2024, and I'm so thrilled to be here! Finishing on the podium was always the goal, and today it's a dream come true. I'm really over the moon to achieve this goal for Hero. And a big thank you to the team for developing a highly competitive machine, for the sleepless 3 weeks here, and for everything they've sacrificed to reach to this point. I'm really proud of my team. We've got some more work to do to be on the next step, so we'll look forward to that in the next year. A big thank you to everyone for your continued support from all around the world!"*

For more information:

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