



Abu Dhabi, February 27, 2025

HERO MOTOSPORTS COMPLETES ABU DHABI DESERT CHALLENGE 2025 WITH A STRONG RESULT

NACHO CORNEJO IS SIXTH OVERALL

Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, completed its campaign at the 2025 edition of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge, with their rider Nacho Cornejo finishing in the overall 6th position.

Hero factory rider Nacho Cornejo followed up his impressive Dakar 2025 performance with a highly consistent act all through the six days of the rally. He finished well within the top-10 spots in every stage, and fought well to maintain his overall top position. In the fifth and final stage, he crossed the finish line in the 7th fastest time, and earned the 6th place in the overall standings of the rally.





His fellow team mate, Ross Branch had to withdraw during Stage 2 of the rally due to an unfortunate technical mishap. Ross was well placed in the overall top-5 at the time of his exit. Nacho became the sole Hero rider in the race, and yet, he managed to put up a terrific fight to break into the overall top-5 positions, working his way up consistently. The Chilean bagged two Stage podium finishes this week, battling an extremely fierce competition amongst the sport's top riders.

The last and 5th stage of the rally sent the competitors on a final dash northward from Mezair'a to Abu Dhabi. Only 167 of the 364 km journey were timed in this special. A podium ceremony and gala event by the shores of the Arabian Gulf closed this edition of the challenge, which was also the second round of the World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC) 2025.

The top positions at ADDC were tightly contested by top Rally GP class riders, all of whom had an equal chance to find a place on the final podium. At the end of 4 Stages, the 2nd to 6th position holders were separated by just under 2 minutes. While crossing the final finish line today, after 6 days of back-to-back racing, Cornejo was just 6 minutes away from the podium. This goes on to show how vigorously competitive the battle for the top positions have become at ADDC.

This was also one of the best performances from Nacho Cornejo in recent times. The Chilean who joined the Hero camp last year, had showcased an equally commendable ride at his first Dakar outing with the team. At Dakar 2025, as the lone Hero rider left in the race, a confident Nacho hung on till the end, and finished with an incredible 7th place overall. These solid performances from Nacho proves that he is on the right track with his Hero 450 Rally, and greater results are just around the corner. With 24 points after the 2nd round, Nacho has moved up to the 6th position in the World Championship.

In its 34th year now, the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge is traditionally known for its 100% sand conditions and highly technical nature. The organizer, Emirates Motorsport Organization (EMSO), reimagined several pieces to evolve this Emirati classic into a brand new identity. Over 60% of the 1920 km journey was planned in entirely new terrains, and the race itself started from the historic city of Al Ain instead of Abu Dhabi. From Al Ain, the rally caravan moved on to Mezaira'a in Al Dhafra region – the gateway to the Empty Quarter (Rub' al Khali), before finally heading back to Abu Dhabi for the traditional finish. Competitors also went on a Marathon Stage and camped overnight in one of the remotest parts of the UAE - the famous “Milkyway spot” in the Al Qua’a region.

Coming up next for the team is a brand new race on the World Championship calendar – The South African Safari Rally, hosted in May 2025. This is pretty much a race in the backyard for Hero rider Ross Branch who hails from Botswana, and the team aims to capitalize on his expertise in the region.



Wolfgang Fischer, Team Manager, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:

"We're happy to have Nacho finishing well at the ADDC 2025, after again being the sole Hero rider in the 2nd part of a race. It was a very close fight for the podium, and he gave it his all, up until the last minute. After a scary moment early on in the last stage, he settled for a safe arrival, and finished 6th overall. This proves once again that we are highly competitive, and motivates us to go beyond. The next round in South Africa is pretty much Ross' "home turf", and we expect him and Buhler to get back in full strength, alongside Nacho. I extend my thanks and regards to the Hero family, partners and fans across the world for their continued love and support."

Nacho Cornejo:

"I'm glad to have made it to the finish line of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge 2025. We kept pushing and were fighting for the podium until the last Stage. Unfortunately, we couldn't make it, but I'm happy that we could give it our all. A big thank you to everyone who supported me here, my team, mechanics, engineers, physio, managers and everyone working tirelessly in the background. We'll come back stronger!"



Final Rankings – Stage 5:

1.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	2h 03m 27s
2.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	01m 31s
3.	Luciano Benavides	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	+ 02m 22s
4.	Daniel Sanders	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	+ 03m 07s
5.	Adrien Van Beveren	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 03m 52s
6.	Skyler Howes	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 05m 25s
7.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 06m 03s

Overall Standings after Stage 5:

1.	Daniel Sanders	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	14h 20m 56s
2.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 05m 47s
3.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 06m 04s
4.	Luciano Benavides	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	+ 08m 01s
5.	Adrien Van Beveren	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 09m 52s
6.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 12m 33s

2025 FIM World Rally-Raid Championship Standings (After Round 2)

1.	Daniel Sanders	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	63 points
2.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	8 points
3.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	37 points
4.	Adrien Van Beveren	Monster Energy Honda Team	35 points
5.	Luciano Benavides	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	33 points
6.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	24 points

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