



Badajoz, Spain | 25 September 2025

## HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY ENDURES MIXED FORTUNES IN SECOND STAGE OF RALLY RAID PORTUGAL, 2025

### CORNEJO IN TOP-10 OVERALL, BRANCH OUT

**Hero MotoSports Team Rally**, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, experienced an eventful second stage at the Ultimate BP Rally Raid Portugal, the fourth round of the 2025 FIM World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC).

Competing in the premier Rally GP class, Nacho Cornejo once again showcased his consistency and speed, securing a strong 11th place finish in the stage. His result places him firmly inside the top-10 of the overall standings, where he currently sits at 10th position. The Chilean rider demonstrated improved pace and confidence over the previous day, further supported by successful setup changes on the bike that allowed him to adapt better to the demanding terrain.





For Tobias Ebster, Stage 2 came to an unfortunate halt. After a promising start, he damaged his oil cooler, leaving him with no option but to withdraw from the day's stage. However, as a Rally2 competitor, Tobias will be allowed to restart tomorrow, meaning this incident does not mark the end of his rally. He currently holds 45th overall and has slipped to 27th position in his category. The current Rally2 leader in the championship remains optimistic and determined to fight back in the remaining stages, with his focus firmly on delivering strong performances.



The stage also brought heartbreak for the reigning World Champion - Ross Branch, whose rally came to an early close. Riding strongly through the opening sections, Ross was caught off guard by a hidden rut in the grass, resulting in a heavy crash. While his bike sustained irreparable damage, forcing him to retire, Ross fortunately escaped without major injuries. Ross now turns his focus towards recovery, with his sights firmly set on the upcoming Rallye du Maroc next month and the Dakar Rally in January 2026.

Stage 2 took the riders from Grândola (Portugal) to Badajoz (Spain), covering an arduous 655 km route including a 429 km timed special. The stage bid farewell to the Alentejo region before heading into Extremadura, where Badajoz – the largest city in the region – will host the rally caravan for the next two nights.

Stage 3 will be held entirely in Spain, featuring fast, winding dirt tracks similar to Stage 1 – the signature terrain of this edition. The stage will demand competitors to navigate through 511 km of terrain, out of which 308 km will be against the clock.



**Nacho Cornejo, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:**

*"Stage 2 is done – it was a really long day with slippery conditions, but we managed to put in a decent stage. It wasn't the best, but I'm happy to see some improvements in my feeling and speed compared to yesterday, and also with the changes we made on the bike."*

*"I feel really sorry for my two teammates, Ross and Tobias. I hope they are okay, that there are no injuries, and that they can come back stronger very soon. As for me, I'll keep taking it day by day, stage by stage, and giving my best until the finish here in Morocco. Thanks to everyone for the support."*

**Tobias Ebster, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:**

*"Stage 2 is done and I'm back at the bivouac, but unfortunately without my bike today. I destroyed my oil cooler and that was the end of my stage. There was no way to repair it, so I had to call it a day. The positive side is that I had a really good flow in the morning, and we'll be back out there tomorrow to have some more fun on the stages."*

**Ross Branch, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:**

*"It was a really disappointing end to the rally for me. The second stage didn't go as planned - I was riding well this morning but hit a hidden rut in the grass, which caused a crash. Thankfully, I am okay and in one piece, but the bike was too damaged to continue. We will regroup quickly and shift focus to Morocco next week, and of course, the big one in January 2026 – Dakar. I am grateful to my incredible team for their support and to all the fans for the love you have shown. I'm sorry for the disappointment, but that's racing - we'll come back stronger."*



### Stage 02 - Provisional Rankings:

1.	Daniel Sanders	Redbull KTM Racing Team	03h 11m 55s
2.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 00m 04s
3.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 02m 10s
<b>11.</b>	<b>Nacho Cornejo</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 11m 18s</b>
<b>DNF</b>	<b>Tobias Ebster</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>DNF</b>	<b>Ross Branch</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>--</b>

### Overall Provisional Rankings after Stage 2:

1.	Daniel Sanders	Redbull KTM Racing Team	05h 55m 35s
2.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 01m 36s
3.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 07m 22s
<b>10.</b>	<b>Nacho Cornejo</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 23m 20s</b>
<b>45.</b>	<b>Tobias Ebster</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 28h 50m 21s</b>
<b>DNF</b>	<b>Ross Branch</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>--</b>

### Stage 02 - Provisional Rankings (Rally2 Class):

1.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	03h 17m 51s
2.	Michael Docherty	BAS World KTM Team	+ 01m 58s
3.	Bruno Santos	BS Frutas Patricia Pilar	+ 02m 51s
<b>DNF</b>	<b>Tobias Ebster</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>--</b>

### Overall Provisional Rankings after Stage 2 (Rally2 Class):

1.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	06h 06m 14s
2.	Bruno Santos	BS Frutas Patricia Pilar	+ 04m 58s
3.	Michael Docherty	BAS World KTM Team	+ 05m 22s
<b>27.</b>	<b>Tobias Ebster</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 28h 50m 21s</b>

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### For more information:

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