



**Oriol Mena delivers his best stage, finishes 4th  
Breaks into Top 15 overall**

*Belen, Argentina, January 17, 2018*

For the stage 10, the rally moved to the town of Belen from the overnight halt at Salta which was also an off day due to the cancellation of stage 9. Not many would have expected the day to turn into the most destructive stage of the Dakar yet.



For Oriol Mena of Hero MotoSports Team Rally, however it looked like a different rally altogether as he attacked from the very beginning, consistently maintaining his top 15 position through the

day. He finished today's stage in a very commendable 4th position, his best Dakar stage yet, owing to his gritty performance and flawless navigation. He also stopped and called for rescue for a fellow rider who crashed in front of him, displaying excellent sportsman's spirit. Overall he stands at the 14th position at the end of stage 10 breaking into the top 15 rankings for the first time.



Santosh started the stage quite well until he had a really bad crash in the second half of the stage that knocked him out for some time. With the help of a quick intervention from the team, Santosh managed to finish the difficult stage at the 44th position, helping him to finish at the 40th position overall at the end of stage 10.

Hero MotoSports Team Rally was relieved and happy to see this stage in the books with both their riders back at the bivouac, ready to fight another day.

Stage 10 of the Dakar Rally was the first full stage in Argentina with a total run of 797 km out of which 373 kms were allocated to the special stage and an initial long liaison of 424 kms. It was meant to be navigation contest today, however, as the day progressed, the day turned into chaos, as the bad news of crashes, exits and riders getting lost kept on trickling into the bivouac through the day.

The competitors, however, will get only a few hours to shrug off the events of today and regain their composure as tomorrow's Stage 11 is going to be the 2nd Marathon stage for the bike category.

**Oriol Mena** (Comp No: 61): *"I am really happy with my today's performance. We decided that today would be a good day to attack for me and I did that from the word go, while riding safe. I also did well in the tough navigation in the 2nd part of the stage and got all the waypoints correctly. I had to stop to help Luciano Benavides, who had a really bad crash just about 20 km before the end of first part. Unfortunately he is out of the race and my best wishes for him, but this is how the Dakar is. Fortunately for me it was a good day today and I want to thank all my team mates who put in a lot of hard work for me. So one day more and one day less!"*

**C.S Santosh** (Comp No: 49): *"I began the stage well and was enjoying the stage. But 20 km before the neutralization point, in the fast-piste section, I took a big jump, landed on some rocks and had a big crash. It was very difficult from then on and somehow I made it to the end of the first special. I met the team there and we were able to quickly fix the bike and got going again to finish the stage. It was really tough today but we got it done and now 3 more days to go for Cordoba."*

### **Provisional Stage 10 Classifications**

1. Matthias Walkner, RedBull KTM Racing, KTM, 04h 52m 26s
2. Pablo Quintanilla, Husqvarna Factory Racing, Husqvarna, +11m 35s
3. Gerard Guell Farres, RedBull KTM Racing, KTM, +16m 21s
- 4. Oriol Mena, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +20m 45s**
- 44. C.S. Santosh, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +01h 53m 15s**

### **Overall Provisional Classifications after Stage 10**

1. Matthias Walkner, RedBull KTM Racing, KTM, 32h 21m 03s
2. Joan Bort Barreda, Honda Factory Racing, Honda, +39m 42s
3. Kevin Benavides, Honda Factory Racing, Honda, +41m 23s
- 14. Oriol Mena, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +01h 57m 08s**
- 40. C.S. Santosh, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +09h 06m 02s**

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