



**A glorious triumph for Hero MotoSports Team Rally
Oriol Mena finishes in top 10 in a dream debut, CS Santosh delivers his best Dakar ever**

Cordoba, Argentina, January 20th, 2018

It was a glorious day at Cordoba as the Dakar Rally 2018 came to a grand end after a gruelling 14 day journey. As the competitors crossed the finishing line, the emotions rolled high amidst the cheer from the teams and the crowd alike. For Hero MotoSports Team Rally, it was a particularly special day as they delivered their best ever Dakar performance, which is even more commendable given that it is only their second Dakar.



Oriol Mena impressed one and all to deliver an excellent 7th position finish in his debut Dakar. Delivering consistent top 10 stages towards the end of the rally while everyone was getting tired, shows the kind of skills and stamina he had and also his ability to learn the game fast. He was also adjudged as the best rookie rider of the rally for his special performance.

Hero MotoSports Team Rally is fast gaining a reputation for bringing in top class debutants in the rally with every year. If it was the 12th place finish of Joaquim Rodrigues last year, this year it was Oriol Mena's turn to even better the results of last year for the team.



Indian MotoSports superstar CS Santosh became the first and the only Indian rider to have finished the Dakar thrice, an honour that is going to make him and all the Indian fans very proud. Not only did he finish it, but he did it in style by delivering his best Dakar performance ever, finishing at 34th position this year. His performance was particularly commendable given the higher competition level and the stages being toughest this year. This performance of the Hero MotoSports Team Rally has again proved that with right focus and team, one can deliver top class performance. It can be surely said that the team has transformed itself from being rookies of the last year to the Heroes of 2018.

Wolfgang Fischer, Team Manager: *"Finishing this Dakar at Cordoba is really the toughest experience in our Dakar years so far. Starting with the accident of Joaquim Rodrigues, getting into the tough stages at Peru, seeing all our guys overcoming difficulties with bravery, Mena improving with every stage and learning the Dakar mode fast, seeing CS and Mena making their way through the finish, is just a privilege. Santosh getting his best ever result in which was the toughest Dakar is an achievement we are really proud of. For Oriol Mena, it was a big accomplishment to finish in*

the top 10. He kept going up the rankings while maintaining his position in top 10 in the last few stages gives a lot of confidence for the team's future. My compliments to the team who worked really hard not allowing any technical issues. We send our best regards to JRod for a fast recovery. We missed him very much in the team and we are counting on him to come back racing soon. Finally our thanks and regards to everyone back in India, and our fans. It's just a fantastic feeling at the moment."

Oriol Mena (Comp No: 61): "I am really happy with my results. I enjoyed the last stage a lot and it felt as if these 120 kms were longer than my life. I am at the finish line and also won in the rookie class so it's a real good result and what can I say, dreams do come true"

C.S Santosh (Comp No: 49): "It was as tough Dakar this year for sure, every day you had to bow down to the stages. I had lots of ups and downs, some high points in the beginning, then some lows as well. I think it was everything that you would envision a Dakar to be. Lot of stages we off-piste but much difficult from before. I am happy to make it to the finish line of another Dakar. My best Dakar so far so I am really happy to be going home with that."

Provisional Stage 14 Classifications

1. Kevin Benavides	Monster Energy Honda	Honda	01hr 26m 41s
2. Toby Price	Redbull KTM Racing	KTM	+54s
3. Antoine Meo	RedBull KTM Racing	KTM	+02m 49s
6. Oriol Mena	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	Hero MotoSports	+05m 01s
32. C.S. Santosh	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	Hero MotoSports	+18m 40s

Overall Provisional Classifications after Stage 14

1. Matthias Walkner	Redbull KTM Racing	KTM	43h 06m 01s
2. Kevin Benavides	Monster Energy Honda	Honda	+16m 53s
3. Toby Price	Redbull KTM Racing	KTM	+23m 01s
7. Oriol Mena	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	Hero MotoSports	+02h 22m 52s
34. C.S. Santosh	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	Hero MotoSports	+11h 29m 31s

For more information, please visit:

www.heromotosports.com

FB: /HeroMotoSports

Twitter: @Hero_MotoSports

Press contact Hero MotoSports Team Rally

e-Mail: motosports@heromotosports.com

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