



**Oriol Mena delivers another top 15 stage  
CS Santosh holds it steady to see off a tough marathon stage**

*Tupiza, Bolivia, January 14, 2018*

Having spent a night at Uyuni without assistance, the competitors started the leg 2 of the Marathon stage from Uyuni to Tupiza this morning for the longest stage of the Dakar Rally. The riders had to make a total run of 498 km in today's special stage followed by an 87 km liaison section. Today's stage offered the challenge of tough high altitude riding in the mountain sand dunes at 3500 m above sea level.



For Hero MotoSports Team Rally, both the riders delivered solid performances to close the Marathon stage in a strong position for the team. Oriol Mena has been consistently delivering under top 20 performances for the past few stages and today was no different as finished today's

special at 12th position. Today's performance helped Mena in defending his top 20 ranking and grabbing up the 18th spot overall. Santosh too has been gaining good ground lately and continued his steady run today as well. He finished the tough marathon stage at 38th position, which lands him at 42nd place in the overall rankings at the ends of stage 8.



Stage 9 of the Dakar Rally has been cancelled due to excessive rains the region has witnessed over the last few days. Overflowing rivers are expected to pose grave dangers to the competitors and hence the organizers decided to call off the stage. However the riders and the rally will still need to cross the borders to move into Argentina on to their next bivouac at Salta, while covering the longest liaison section of the Dakar.

**Oriol Mena** (Comp No: 61): *“Today was a good day for me. My body was feeling good and I started the stage really well. For this stage I decided to ride with my full potential and finish the stage without any major mistakes. I did lose may be 20s in one small navigation error but it was ok as I reached the finish line and my bivouac in good time. So one day more gone and now one day less to Cordoba.”*

**C.S Santosh** (Comp No: 49): *“I think this Marathon stage was the hardest I have ever done. It was incredibly difficult as we did 80 km off-piste and the camel grass. I was physically drained with the high altitude riding and also crashed a couple of times. By the time I reached the marathon bivouac I had nothing left in me. This morning we had the longest stage of the Dakar which was tough again. Happy to be back here with the team, I missed these guys. Now we got a lucky break tomorrow and then we go racing all the way to Cordoba”*

## Provisional Stage 8 Classifications

1. Antoine Meo, RedBull KTM Racing, KTM, 5h 24m 01s
2. Ricky Brabec, Honda Factory Racing, Honda, +01m 08s
3. Toby Price, RedBull KTM Racing, KTM, +02m 45s
- 12. Oriol Mena, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +16m 57s**
- 38. C.S. Santosh, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +06h 31m 43s**

## Overall Provisional Classifications after Stage 8

1. Adrien Van Beveren, Yamaha Factory Racing, Yamaha, 27h 22m 03s
2. Kevin Benavides, Honda Factory Racing, Honda, +00m 22s
3. Mathias Walkner, Redbull KTM Racing, KTM, +06m 34s
- 18. Oriol Mena, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +01h 42m 57s**
- 42. C.S. Santosh, Hero MotoSports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +07h 19m 21s**

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