



Al Henakiyah, Saudi Arabia | 07 Jan 2025

HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY DELIVERS A STRONG PERFORMANCE IN STAGE 3 AT DAKAR 2025

ROSS BRANCH CONTINUES IN OVERALL 3RD POSITION

Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, has successfully completed the third stage at the Dakar Rally 2025.

Ross Branch from Botswana delivered a solid performance, finishing the stage with the 4th fastest time, while his teammate Nacho Cornejo also impressed, securing 13th place in the stage.



In the overall rankings, Ross has maintained his 3rd position – however, by the end of Stage 3, he has reduced his overall deficit from the leader of the rally by a massive 10 minutes and 35 seconds. Ross is now just 2 minutes away from the #1 spot, and 7 seconds behind the 2nd place holder. Nacho Cornejo has also recovered over 7 minutes today, and enjoys his spot in the overall top-10 – at the 9th position.



The 2024 W2RC title holder Ross Branch, who finished 2nd in last year's Dakar, was leading today's stage after 118 km and pushed hard at the start. However, tricky navigation later in the Stage created havoc for most of the lead riders in the Stage. As the first few riders in the stage struggled with their navigation, Ross made the best out of it, and regained much of his deficit time against his competitors.

The Chilean athlete Nacho Cornejo has also showcased consistent strength from the start of the rally and continues to perform admirably, leaving both Hero riders comfortably within the top 10 overall rankings after the end of the third stage.

After the grueling 48-hour chrono and a long stay in Bisha, the rally moved north to Al Henakiyah for Stage 3 today. The day began with rocky and challenging terrain, demanding extra caution from competitors who couldn't push full throttle.

The region of Al Henakiyah is experiencing severe storms, which are expected to continue, forcing the organizers to revise today's stage. As a result, a lighter and more accessible route was set to provide some relief for the competitors and their machines, more so keeping in mind the tough marathon stages coming up on January 8th and 9th. Due to this, the original 496 km route was shortened to 327 km, removing 169 km of rainfall affected areas. Departure times from the bivouac remained unchanged.

Stage 4, tomorrow, will kick off the marathon stages of the rally, taking competitors to Alula. The stage promises to be extremely challenging, with volcanic landscapes and narrow canyons. Riders will face even more pressure as they will only have 1.5 hours at a dedicated bivouac to repair and maintain their bikes.



Ross Branch, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:

"Stage 3 is done, and it was a fun day. The terrain was rocky, so we had to keep the bike under control. Overall, it went well; the navigation was tricky, and I got caught up a few times, but that's part of the rally. I'm happy with where I stand."

Nacho Cornejo, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:

"We've finished Stage 3. The beginning was rocky, and I struggled a bit to find my confidence and comfort. But after the refueling, I felt much better and more like myself. It was a tough stage, but I'm happy to be in one piece and ready to fight day by day."



Provisional Rankings – Stage 03:

1.	Lorenzo Santolino	Sherco Rally Factory Team	03hr 44m 34s
2.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 04m 01s
3.	Skyler Howes	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 04m 10s
4.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 04m 14s
13.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 07m 10s

Provisional Overall Rankings - at the end of Stage 03:

1.	Daniel Sanders	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	20hr 09m 54s
2.	Skyler Howes	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 01m 57s
3.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 02m 05s
9.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 41m 18s

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