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HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY REACHES DAKAR 2025 MIDPOINT WITH STRONG MOMENTUM

ROSS BRANCH MAINTAINS HIS 3RD SPOT OVERALL AFTER STAGE 5

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

Hero MotoSports riders Nacho Cornejo and Ross Branch continued their impressive form today at the world's toughest rally. Cornejo secured his second consecutive podium finish, crossing the finish line with the 3rd fastest time, with less than 2-minute time gap with the top rank holder. Branch followed him closely, finishing 4th and making a strong comeback after yesterday's navigation error, resulting in a top-5 finish for the duo.





With the completion of Stage 5, Branch has maintained his 3rd position in the overall standings, while Cornejo holds steady at 9th. Both riders remain firmly in the top-10 overall standings.

As the team reaches the rest day, Cornejo and Branch are filled with confidence and motivation. Despite facing a few challenges, the two riders have demonstrated their determination and resilience throughout the rally. With the second week of the Dakar Rally ahead, Cornejo and Branch are brimming with optimism and are ready to tackle the challenges that lie ahead.

Today's long and tough stage comprising of 428 km of timed specials greeted the competitors with super-fast tracks, followed by sandy terrain that forced them to slow down. The stage also featured stony terrain, making for an adventurous ride. After finishing two days of consecutive marathon stages on January 8th and 9th, the competitors now get much needed respite in the form of tomorrow's well-deserved rest day at Ha'il as the rally reaches its midpoint.

Following the rest day, the second week of the 2025 Dakar Rally is expected to be tougher, with longer stages than the first week. As the rally progresses southwards towards Al Duwadimi, the Stage 6 will set the tone further for the competitors, while also marking itself as one of the longest stages of this year's Dakar with 605 km of timed specials. After a transfer section, competitors will face a faster stretch, but the difficulty will ramp up again, where they'll need to navigate treacherous sandy terrain, including hills, dunes, and sandy tracks.



Nacho Cornejo, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:

"We've made it to the rest day, we had some really good stages in the marathon and I'm thrilled to have finished third in today's stage. We arrived with a lot of confidence on the bike, although ninth place isn't where I want like to be in the overall standings in the end, I'm motivated to make up ground in the second week. We'll take it one day at a time, giving it our all until the very last kilometer. I want to thank everyone for their incredible support, and to my team for their tireless efforts."

Ross Branch, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:

"We've arrived at the Ha'il Bivouac, marking the end of the marathon stage. Today was good, unlike yesterday where I made a navigation mistake at the end of the stage which costed us a lot of time and got a speeding penalty halfway through the stage. We are here in one piece, the bike is in good condition, and the team is happy and in high spirits. With a mammoth second week ahead, we're more determined than ever to make our mark. We're still very much in the race, and our motivation is stronger than ever. Bring on week number two!"

Provisional Rankings – Stage 05:

1.	Luciano Benavides	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	04hr 53m 00s
2.	Adrien Van Beveran	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 00m 47s
3.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 01m 31s
4.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 03m 20s

Provisional Rankings – Stage 5– Overall Classification:

1.	Daniel Sanders	Red Bull KTM Factory Racing	30hr 20m 15s
2.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 07m 02s
3.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 17m 48s
9.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 43m 50s

For more information:

www.heromotocorp.com / FB: /HeroMotoCorpIndia / Twitter: @HeroMotoCorp / IG: @HeroMotoCorp

Press Contact:

corporate.communication@heromotocorp.com

Follow the team:

www.heromotosports.com / IG: @Heromotosports / FB: HeroMotoSports / Twitter:@hero_motosports

