



Al Henakiyah, Saudi Arabia | 15 January 2026

## HERO MOTOSPORTS POWERS THROUGH A TRICKY STAGE 11 AT DAKAR RALLY 2026

### CORNEJO AND BRANCH TIGHTEN GRIP ON THEIR OVERALL TOP-10 RANKINGS

**Hero MotoSports Team Rally**, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, has successfully completed Stage 11 of the Dakar 2026, as the rally moves into its final phase with just two stages remaining. Ross Branch from Botswana finished the stage at 8th place, while Chile's Nacho Cornejo crossed the line in the 14th position. After the end of the Stage 11, both riders continue to hold strong overall positions inside the Top-10, with Cornejo in 7th place and Branch following close behind at 8th.



Ross Branch delivered a confident ride, bouncing back well after a tough previous day. He quickly found a good rhythm and felt comfortable across the changing terrain. With the Hero 450 Rally running flawlessly, Branch focused on riding cleanly and avoiding unnecessary risks. He reached the finish in a positive mood, well set up for the final long stage before the rally heads toward its finish.



For Nacho Cornejo, Stage 11 was a more difficult day. The rocky sections made it hard for him to find his usual flow, and he lost some time to his rivals as a result. Still, the Chilean stayed calm, avoided mistakes and brought the bike safely back to the bivouac. With two stages remaining, he remains focused on finishing strong and protecting his solid overall position.

Stage 11 was more about navigation than raw speed. While the tracks allowed riders to push, the numerous intersections and split paths made it easy to get confused. Staying sharp and making the right decisions was key on the long road to Al Henakiyah. The day covered a massive 883 kilometres in total, including 346 kilometres against the clock, making it one of the longest stages of Dakar 2026.

Looking ahead to Stage 12, the final long stage of this year's rally, there is still plenty to play for. Even if the gaps between riders look settled, this route can still turn out to be decisive in shaping up the final overall rankings. Fast tracks will give way to narrow and twisting sections, followed by tricky and unpredictable riverbeds. The final stretch of small dunes will also demand full focus before the 48th edition of Dakar moves into its grand finale. The second last stage of this edition will have 311 kilometres of timed section, with a total of 720 kilometres on offer.



**Ross Branch, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:**

*"Stage 11 is done and it was a really positive day for me. I felt good on the bike and the Hero 450 Rally was working incredibly well. After yesterday, I was a bit nervous coming into today, so it was great to get back into a good rhythm and bring the bike safely to the finish. Now we're focused on the final long stage tomorrow, followed by the sprint to the finish."*

**Nacho Cornejo, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:**

*"We've completed Stage 11 and arrived at the bivouac. It wasn't my best day — I didn't feel completely comfortable in some of the rocky sections and lost a bit of time there — but the important thing is that we made it to the finish. With two stages still to go, we will keep pushing and give our best until the very end. Thanks to everyone for the support."*

### **Provisional Classification - Stage 11:**

1.	Skyler Howes	Monster Energy Honda HRC	03h 09m 02s
2.	Adrien Van Beveren	Monster Energy Honda HRC	+ 00m 21s
3.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Factory Racing	+ 01m 15s
8.	<b>Ross Branch</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 09m 00s</b>
14.	<b>Nacho Cornejo</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 13m 52s</b>

### **Provisional Classification after Stage 11 (Overall):**

1.	Luciano Benavides	Redbull KTM Racing Team	44h 48m 48s
2.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda HRC	+ 00m 23s
3.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda HRC	+ 15m 16s
7.	<b>Nacho Cornejo</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 01h 10m 50s</b>
8.	<b>Ross Branch</b>	<b>Hero MotoSports Team Rally</b>	<b>+ 02h 25m 56s</b>

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### **For more information:**

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