



La Rioja, Argentina, June 06, 2024

TEAM HERO MAINTAINS A STEADY PACE AS DESAFIO RUTA 40, 2024 NEARS COMPLETION

Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, completed the 4th and penultimate Stage of the 2024 edition of Desafio Ruta 40. Competing in the premier Rally GP class, Hero MotoSports riders Ross Branch, Sebastian Buhler, and Nacho Cornejo finished the Stage in the 4th, 7th and 9th positions respectively.

Clocking over 650 kms on the saddle, the competitors found the second loop around La Rioja demanding, and very exhausting. The day started off in the only dune section in this edition of the DR40. Several changing terrains under the morning sun made it difficult for the competitors to throttle ahead confidently – chotts, uphill and downhill dunes, sandy river crossings, and more dunes. Navigation was also particularly difficult in this very technical WRC-style track. In all, the competitors had to cover 264 km of road sections and 391 km against the clock, on this long day.





Moving on towards the very end of the Rally, the pace has become extremely high in the top order. There is no room for mistake or slowing down, as the competition becomes neck to neck at this 4th round of the W2RC 2024. Ross Branch – the current leader of the World Championship - has shown consistent top performance right from the start of the race, and is currently in the 5th overall place. Sebastian Buhler and Nacho Cornejo stand in the 7th and 9th overall positions in the Rally GP class.

With just one stage left in the race, the competitors will now focus on going all in on a final dash to improve their positions. If there are no major shake ups in the standings in the last day, Ross is expected to walk away from the race maintaining his World Championship lead position.

Stage 5, the finale, will resume a southeast course back towards Córdoba, the host city of this edition of the DR40. It will be yet another long stage with 218 kms of competitive racing and over 300 kms on the road - leaving ground for last minute surprises in the final tally. All eyes will be on the final podium and the championship rankings, as competitors embark on the last day of this phenomenal rally.



Ross Branch:

"It was a really long day on the bike, but I enjoyed it! It had a bit of everything - rocks, sand, and much more. I lost a bit of time, not too sure where, but we've got one more day to try. Looking forward to the last Stage!"

Sebastian Buhler:

"In the morning today, the sun was ahead and the track was quite broken, so I didn't risk it much. However, the pace of the race is such, that if you don't push hard you'll miss out on time - and that's what happened with me today. I tried to hammer down after refueling, but it wasn't enough. I look forward to the last day tomorrow."

Nacho Cornejo:

"Another long day done here at Desafio Ruta 40. It was quite hard and technical. I tried my best to get into a good rhythm but unfortunately lost some time in the harsh terrain. Taking in all my learning from this race and looking forward to the last day!"

Provisional Rankings – Stage 4 (Rally GP Class)

1.	Toscha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	3h 37m 25s
2.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 3m 27s
3.	Adrien Van Beveren	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 3m 38s
4.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 3m 05s
7.	Sebastian Buhler	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 9m 51s
9.	Ignacio Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 23m 08s

Provisional Overall Standings after Stage 4 (Rally GP Class):

1.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	15h 31m 35s
2.	Toscha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 1m 27s
3.	Adrien Van Beveren	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 4m 28s
5.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 12m 26s
7.	Sebastian Buhler	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 20m 50s
9.	Ignacio Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 1h 10m 03s

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