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HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY REGISTERS A STRONG START AT RALLYE DU MAROC 2025

Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, has kicked off its campaign at the fifth and final round of the 2025 FIM World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC) – the Rallye Du Maroc.

The team is fielding three factory riders at this event: Ross Branch and Nacho Cornejo in the premier Rally GP category, and Tobias Ebster, the team's latest recruit, competing in Rally2.

The rally got underway on Sunday with a 19 km Prologue, where Branch recorded the 7th fastest time in the opening stage. Tobias impressed with a 10th place finish, while Nacho completed the stage in 21th position. Meanwhile, in the Rally2 class, Tobias clocked the 3rd fastest time, marking a strong start to the rally.



Branch, who has endured a challenging year, remains determined to bounce back and close the season with some valuable championship points. Nacho, after a consistent performance throughout the season, is eager to maintain his form and deliver strong results in the stages ahead, despite a modest start in today's Prologue. Tobias, meanwhile, has quickly adapted to the team environment and looks to build on his solid momentum as the rally progresses.



The 26th edition of the iconic Rallye Du Maroc spans five special stages, covering a total distance of 2,274 kilometers, of which 1,448 kilometers will be timed sections against the clock. The event proudly hosts the finale of the World Rally-Raid Championship for the third consecutive year. The week ahead promises a true Moroccan adventure - from rocky sections and rolling sand dunes to desert storms and soaring temperatures. Following several rounds of testing, this event also marked the first official race for Rally GP riders using electronic road books last year. Often referred to as the 'mini Dakar,' the Rallye du Maroc offers a thrilling preview of what lies ahead in the world of rally-raid racing.

Following the administrative and technical checks, 229 vehicles were cleared to start the rally this year, including 116 FIM entries - featuring 11 Rally GP riders and 97 Rally2 competitors. Tomorrow's Stage 1 will be the longest stage of the rally, taking participants from Fez to Erfoud, covering a total of 779 kilometers, with 298 kilometers of special section. The demanding stage will immediately test the riders and set the tone for the days of competition ahead.



Wolfgang Fischer, Team Manager, Hero MotoSports Team Rally:

"After a few days of solid preparation in the south of Morocco, we finally kicked off the final round of the 2025 Championship here in Fez - the King City of Morocco. We are looking forward to an intense few days of racing with long stages across classic Moroccan terrain - a true mix of everything. Fortunately, all our riders are fit to start after a tough race in Portugal just a few days ago. The season hasn't exactly gone the way we planned, but we're here now, fully prepared and focused on a strong result - and with our eyes firmly set on the big one, Dakar 2026 in January."

Ross Branch:

Prologue is done and dusted and it feels great to be back on the bike. The 450 Rally feels incredible, as always and the Prologue here in Fez was beautiful. I am really looking forward to a long week of racing in the desert. Big thanks to all the Hero supporters who came out to cheer for us this morning. We can't wait for a great week ahead!

Tobias Ebster:

"We are back racing in Morocco for the final round of the World Championship. The Prologue is over and I had a good time out there - it was fun, though a bit dangerous at times! We have worked a lot on the bike setup, and it felt great today. I finished 10th overall and 3rd in Rally2, which should give me a strong starting position for tomorrow's first stage - a long 700 km day. Let's keep it rolling!"

Nacho Cornejo:

"We are done with the Prologue here at Rallye Du Maroc. Today was not exactly the result we wanted, but I am starting to feel better and more confident in these short stages. I felt good on the bike – it is working perfectly. Now it's time for the long days ahead. Tomorrow we head to Erfoud, so it is going to be a big one. Thanks to everyone for the support - we will give our best through these five days of racing!"

Provisional Rankings – Prologue (Overall):

1.	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda HRC	12m 48s
2.	Tosha Schareina	Monster Energy Honda HRC	+ 00m 01s
3.	Daniel Sanders	Redbull KTM Racing Team	+ 00m 05s
7.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 00m 18s
10.	Tobias Ebster	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 00m 36s
21.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 01m 16s

Provisional Rankings - Prologue (Rally2 Class):

1.	Michael Docherty	BAS World KTM Team	+ 13m 03s
2.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	+ 00m 01s
3.	Tobias Ebster	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 00m 21s

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