



Erfoud, Morocco | 13 October 2025

AN IMPRESSIVE FIRST STAGE AT RALLYE DU MAROC 2025

ROSS BRANCH FINISHES 3RD IN STAGE 01

Hero MotoSports Team Rally, the motorsport team of the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters - **Hero MotoCorp**, completed the first special stage of the Rallye Du Maroc 2025, with strong results.

Competing in the premier Rally GP class, Ross Branch delivered an impressive performance in Stage 1 - finishing well on the podium, with the 3rd fastest time of the day. His teammate Nacho Cornejo also showed strong pace, finishing 10th, while Tobias Ebster followed closely behind in the 12th spot. Competing in the Rally2 category, Tobias also earned a 4th place finish in his class.

At the end of Stage 1, Ross sits comfortably inside the overall Top-3, with Nacho and Tobias occupying 11th and 12th positions respectively in the general classification of the rally. Tobias holds the 4th place in the overall Rally2 standings, a strong head-start to the team in Morocco.



Having finished 21st in the Prologue stage, Nacho was 2nd rider to open Stage 01 with an early start from Fes at 4 am. Considered one of the best navigators in rally-raid, the Chilean passed the opening rider at around km 70, taking on the challenge of leading the pack until the finish line. Despite tricky terrain and the pressure of opening the track, Nacho managed the stage well, losing only a few minutes to the frontrunners while maintaining strong confidence on his trusted Hero 450 Rally.



Ross had a confident and composed start to the rally, using the early kilometers to rebuild rhythm and focus on his navigation. Once settled, he delivered a smooth and consistent ride, finishing the day satisfied and optimistic about the stages ahead. Meanwhile, Tobias endured one of the longest and toughest days of this rally with great determination. Despite minor navigation and technical issues, the young athlete showed a strong resolve to bring his Hero to the finish. He expects better days ahead as the rally moves forward to faster, dune-filled stages.

On Monday, competitors embarked on a 779 km long Stage 1 which included a 276 km liaison from the Grand Stade de Fès to the start of a 298 km special, followed by another 205 km to the bivouac in Erfoud. The Stage resembled a classic Dakar profile - long, technical, and set across Morocco's Oriental province, once part of the legendary African Dakar route. Riders navigated between 1,000 and 1,600 meters above sea level through rocky tracks, trial-style sections, and high-speed zones, with multiple junctions testing both navigation and endurance - a true separator of early contenders from the rest. The rally caravan too, moved from Fez to Erfoud - marking the fourth time in Rallye Du Maroc history that Morocco's "spiritual capital" and "dates capital" have served as the start and finish cities, respectively.

Stage 2 on Tuesday will take competitors on a 397 km loop around Erfoud, of which 307 kms will be timed. The stage will dive deep into the heart of Morocco's desert, crossing the legendary dunes of Merzouga, and its smaller neighboring ergs. Competitors will have to endure constantly shifting terrain and intricate navigation, as the route promises not just endless dunes, but a total variety of landscapes that will test both man and machine.



Ross Branch:

"Back from Stage 1, and I'm really happy with how today went. It started off a bit slow as I tried to get my head back in the game and rebuild confidence on the bike. It took a little while, but once I found my rhythm, the rest of the day went really well - both the riding and the navigation felt solid. It is a good way to start the rally, and I am getting my confidence back. Looking forward to a great weekend of racing. Thanks to everyone for all the support!"

Nacho Cornejo:

"We are done with Stage 1 here at Rallye du Maroc. It was not an easy day for me. I started second and knew I will have to open the stage at some point. From around kilometer 70 onwards, I was opening all the way to the finish. It wasn't as easy as I expected - quite tricky in some sections - but overall, we did a decent job. I lost a few minutes to the front, but there is still a lot of racing left. I am feeling comfortable on my Hero 450 Rally bike; it's working great. Happy to be here in one piece and ready to keep fighting over the next four days!"

Tobias Ebster:

"The longest day of the rally is finally over - almost 800 km! We made it through the start feeling good, but it was a tough one with endless rocky and stony sections. A few issues with the tablet and myself made things more challenging, but overall, I am happy to reach the finish. Hopefully, we get some dunes in the next stages!"

Provisional Classification of Stage 2 (Overall):

1.	Daniel Sanders	Redbull KTM Racing Team	03h 04m 37s
2.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	+ 01m 24s
3.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 04m 05s
10.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 13m 22s
12.	Tobias Ebster	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 14m 51s

Provisional Classification after Stage 2 (Overall):

1.	Daniel Sanders	Redbull KTM Racing Team	03h 17m 30s
2.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	+ 01m 35s
3.	Ross Branch	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 04m 18s
11.	Nacho Cornejo	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 14m 33s
12.	Tobias Ebster	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 15m 22s

Provisional Classification of Stage 2 (Rally2):

1.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	3h 06m 01s
2.	Michael Docherty	BAS World KTM Team	+ 08m 25s
3.	Martim Ventura	Honda HRC	+ 12m 13s
4.	Tobias Ebster	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 13m 27s

Provisional Classification after Stage 2 (Rally2)

1.	Edgar Canet	Redbull KTM Racing Team	03h 19m 05s
2.	Michael Docherty	BAS World KTM Team	+ 08m 24s
3.	Martim Ventura	Honda HRC	+ 12m 34s
4.	Tobias Ebster	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 13m 47s

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

