



HERO MOTOSPORTS TEAM RALLY HAVE A STEADY RUN IN STAGE 1 OF RALLYE DU MAROC

Zagora, Morocco, October 9, 2021

Hero MotoSports Team Rally had a steady run in the first stage of the Rallye Du Maroc on Saturday. In difficult conditions, the riders arrived at the finish line safely.



Starting the stage in first and fourth positions, Rodrigues and Caimi rode with focus to finish in the 11th and 16th positions. Buhler's day, however, was hampered by a technical issue and he finished the stage in 30th position.

Caimi spent the opening 80km of the stage in the second place behind the leader, before dropping back and finishing just outside the top 10. Opening the stage, Joaquim was first to face the tough navigation of the stage and lost some time in the process.

Sebastian was running in the top 15 up to the halfway mark of the stage, but a technical problem made him stop around 50kms from the finish, dropping him down in the rankings.

After the first stage, Caimi is in the ninth position in overall rankings, with Rodrigues in 16th and Buhler in 30th positions.

The stage today opened with a fast 80km stretch over dusty tracks, before the riders entered the dunes. The majority of the stage alternated between sandy off-road tracks and soft dunes,

finishing on stony tracks. The day's total distance of 440kms was split between the 150kms of liaison and 288kms of special section that was covered in three parts.

The second stage of the rally on Sunday will see the competitors heading North East for a 330km loop and then heading back to the Bivouac at Zagora. With a total distance of 609kms, Stage 2 will be the longest stage of the rally.



Joaquim Rodrigues, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally: *“Even though it was a really tough stage for me, this is exactly why we are here, to train for similar situations and gain confidence before the Dakar. Riding without any tracks to follow is not easy. I took a wrong turn and lost some time. Luckily though, I was able to find the correct route and once Caimi caught up with me, we rode together till the end. We brought the bikes to the finish and that is the important part.”*

Franco Caimi, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally: *“I am super happy with the stage as I feel I did a good job. I opened around 200km of the stage and I navigated well, so it is definitely good training for me before the Dakar. Overall, the bike was perfect and the team did a great job, so I am motivated for the next stage and the rest of the rally.”*

Sebastian Buhler, Rider, Hero MotoSports Team Rally: *“The stage started well for me and I was getting into a good rhythm in the opening sections. But around 50km from the finish, I had to stop due to a technical problem. It is not the best feeling, but it is part of the sport. I have lost a lot of time, but we have four more days, so the aim is to maximize the learnings in preparation for Dakar '22.”*



Provisional Stage 1 Standings

1	Joan Barreda Bort	Monster Energy Honda Team	02h 58m 53s
2	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 01m 10s
3	Pablo Quintanilla	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 02m 59s
11	Franco Caimi	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 13m 53s
16	Joaquim Rodrigues	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 22m 56s
30	Sebastian Buhler	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	

Provisional Overall Rankings

1	Joan Barreda Bort	Monster Energy Honda Team	03h 25m 57s
2	Ricky Brabec	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 00m 54s
3	Pablo Quintanilla	Monster Energy Honda Team	+ 03m 11s
9	Franco Caimi	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 12m 09s
16	Joaquim Rodrigues	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	+ 20m 52s
30	Sebastian Buhler	Hero MotoSports Team Rally	

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Press contact Hero MotoSports Team Rally

e-Mail: corporate.communication@heromotocorp.com

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