

# Dakar prologue: Aliyyah Koloc struggled with technical issues on her Dakar debut

*Šoltys fourth in truck category for Buggyra ZM Racing*

TALLIN, ESTONIA, January 1, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Although the 45th Dakar Rally started with a prologue of just 13 kilometres on New Year's Eve, there was no shortage of drama for the Buggyra ZM Racing team's drivers. Martin Šoltys took fourth place from the start-finish special at the Sea Camp bivouac. Debutant Aliyyah Koloc knew right from the start how demanding the Dakar is.

The prologue has long since ceased to be about driving slowly. On the contrary, in Saudi Arabia it was a battle for every second from the first metres. Martin Šoltys was only seven seconds short of the imaginary podium, finishing fourth in the truck category.

Šoltys had an issue at the third corner after the start. "Everybody was pumped up, so we started a bit hard.

Right at the beginning, there was a small problem when we went off the track, because Mañas didn't tell me that there was a sharp right, so we lost some 10-15 seconds," the pilot described the small omission of his navigator Roman Krejčí.

Otherwise, everything went according to plan, the Tatra 815 ran smoothly. "The truck works well, but we only drove a few kilometers. That's not enough to run tests, but the truck is running smoothly and you can see the weight reduction," explained the pilot who is racing for Tatra Buggyra ZM Racing.



18-year-old debutant Aliyyah Koloc was very unlucky to have technical issues with her Can-Am DV21, finishing only in 43rd position. "The prologue didn't quite work out for me today. The first part was fine, but then the new driveshaft broke. It was very unlucky because I had to drive slowly to the finish. I lost a lot of time, but I made it to the finish, and tomorrow I will try to get the best possible result," explained the Dakar newcomer her technical issues



Buggyra team principal Martin Koloc described the reasons for the young racer's troubles in more detail. "On the fourth kilometer Aliyyah broke a cardan, the front axle drive. She had two options. Either stop, remove the cardan and continue, which would have been a loss of 10 to 15 minutes. Or slow down and drive so that the gimbal doesn't smash everything around it. She finished with a loss of less than two minutes, which was the better solution and means absolutely nothing for the development of the Dakar," said Koloc.



Although Šoltys' teammate Jaroslav Valtr Sr. fell just short of his top 10 ambition, finishing 11th, he didn't lose his good spirits either.

"It didn't go as well as we hoped today, " said Valtr . "I wanted to drive safe, not to tip the truck over. I'm not really happy, but I wanted to get the truck to the finish. I wanted to finish in the top ten, which didn't happen, but we'll fight back tomorrow. Today, I stayed within the limits of the track, which a lot of my rivals didn't. We'll see if there are any more penalties and shuffles in the standings."

Róbert Kasák, the first Slovak driving for Buggyra at the Dakar, climbed out of the Tatra with a smile on his face. He finished the prologue in 33rd position.

"It was great. I think we did well at the start of the Dakar. The track was very difficult, because quite a few cars had already driven on it. Even though the organisers said that there would be

penalties for driving off the track, they directed us there themselves. Our crew works well together and from the first kilometers it looked really good," Kasak explained.

Josef Machacek, six-time Dakar champion and mentor of Aliyyah Koloc, enjoyed the first kilometers of the jubilee Dakar. "It was a nice change from other years, today's prologue was a proper rally track . It was fun to drive, especially in this car. The time differences are minimal. Starting a prologue stage on the shores of the Red Sea is something wonderful," explained the doyen of the T3 - Light Prototypes category with a smile .

The Dakar Rally continues tomorrow, Sunday, with the first stage. "We wish all our fans and partners good luck, health and love for the new year and keep your fingers crossed for us in the new year," said Buggyra's Head of Communications, Jan Kalivoda.

The Dakar Classic participants also started their prologue today. Tatra Puma pilot Radovan Kazarka joined in with his New Year's wishes. For the New Year, I wish everyone the best of luck, and personal well-being. Fingers crossed that we make it to the finish line in good shape."

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