

# Valtr jumps to third place, more issues for Dakar newcomer Aliyyah Koloc

*For the Buggyra ZM Racing team, the route from the Sea Camp bivouac to the ancient oasis of Alula had a bittersweet taste.*

TALLIN, ESTONIA, January 2, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Jaroslav Valtr repeated his fourth place on the stage from the previous day and the Tatra Phoenix pilot moved up to third in the overall standings. Debutant Aliyyah Koloc learned how difficult the Dakar can be as she did not reach the finish of the second stage. Nevertheless, she is determined to continue and do better tomorrow. Radovan Kazarka finished third, also holding the same position in the overall standings in his category of Dakar Classic.

"The second stage gave everyone a hard time and the mechanics will have their hands full until the morning to get everything ready. But what is important is that we all continue tomorrow, fully committed," said Buggyra's head of communications, Jan Kalivoda.



The track had extremely difficult rocky sections, which were replaced by high dunes at the end. "The first hundred kilometers were very rocky, a complete sea of stones. It was left, right, all brakes. They were very much in demand. From the 80th kilometer onwards, we had to slow down for about fifty kilometers to be able to continue at all. I was a bit more careful and had to go to manual to keep the car going. When the brakes cooled down, we could start pushing

again," Jaroslav Valtr described the start of the stage.

"I am happy with the result, because in the morning it didn't look good at all. We were worried that we would arrive in the dark, we made it to the finish just before. Already in the dunes we could not see well. We missed one point there by about two meters. We had to turn around, and reverse, but we only managed about five or six meters. And then we were going uphill in the dune," added the third placed driver in the truck standings of the 45th anniversary edition of the Dakar.

Tatra Buggyra Racing's second driver, Martin Šoltys, kept up with Valtr for a long time. Unfortunately, he lost out at the very end, finishing ninth today and eighth in the overall standings. "From the beginning, it was just rocks, rocks, and riverbeds. But it was nice. Then came the fast flats. When I thought we only had 40 kilometers to go, the turbo failed. It stopped producing power and we had to replace it. We didn't have any problems in the dunes in the dark, but I was a little nervous we were going to be stuck somewhere. I couldn't see a lot as it was dusty," explained Martin Šoltys the reason for the delay at the end of today's stage.

Aliyyah Koloc experienced even more drama today. "The bad luck continues. In the first part of today's stage, a lot of crews had punctures on the rocks. We had two, but we could have continued. At kilometer 140 we had a problem with the engine and couldn't restart it. So we couldn't finish the stage and we were pulled to the bivouac. I am sure that my team will be able to find the cause of the problem and that I will be able to continue tomorrow," described the Buggyra ZM Academy pilot and Dakar newcomer her issues. "The Dakar hasn't been very kind to us so far, but that's part of it. We will do everything we can to improve," Aliyyah Koloc added with determination.

Stéphane Duplé, Aliyyah's navigator said: „We arrived in the dark again. We started well today, and after the start we gradually overtook several competitors. Aliyyah drove well between the rocks. We don't know what happened to the engine, but it suddenly stopped working. Of course,



we are not happy with today's result. Tomorrow we'll start again, but we'll still be very much behind. We'll ask the organizers to move us forward a little bit."

The experienced Josef Machacek also had to admit that the organizers had drawn up a challenging route for the competitors. "It was a very hard and long stage. There were a lot of rocks, riverbeds, and trial sections on the route. 60 kilometers before the finish, our front differential broke. I'm glad we're back in the bivouac because the final part in the dunes was very difficult. And even in the dark, the conditions were really difficult," added the six-times Dakar champion, who finished 17th in the stage standings and 17th overall today.

Robert Kasák took 23rd place in the Tatra Phoenix today and is already knocking on the door of the top 20 in the overall standings. "It started quite well. The organizers did not disappoint and the Dakar is really hard. Even the second stage was difficult. Beautiful valleys, clean riverbeds. It was a typical Argentinian stage, the kind of stage they used to do in South America. The dunes were a nice finishing touch. When you get there at night, you have no view and it's a great achievement to reach the bivouac. The mechanics prepared our truck to perfection, we didn't have any technical issues," said the happy driver of the Tatra Buggyra Slovakia team.

Radovan Kazarka is doing well in the Dakar Classic. Today he finished third, also holding the same position in the overall standings. "The route was beautiful, but very difficult. Rocky sections, valleys. The dunes were beautiful. And again we were the only ones in the Tatra - next to about two vehicles - to pass those dunes. Our crew is great, Josef Kalina is a reliable navigator and Pavol Zachar is also great," said the enthusiastic Tatra Puma pilot.

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