

# Despite bad weather conditions, Valtr took the lead in the truck category

*Valtr made history in the truck category for the Tatra Buggyra ZM Racing team. He finished third which saw him rise to the top of the official standings!*

TALLIN, ESTONIA, January 3, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Martin Šoltys was seventh on Tuesday and holds the same position. As for the two representatives in Buggyra Can-Ams, Josef Machacek was 14th today and Aliyyah Koloc came 25th. In the overall standings, this means both of them moved up to 12th and 40th place respectively. The participants in the Dakar Classic category saw Tuesday's stage cancelled, yet Tatra Puma once again showed what it and its crew, led by Radovan Kazarka, have in them.

Everyone thinks that the Dakar showed us everything, but it always brings out something worse than the previous day." There is no better way to describe Tuesday's Dakar Rally than in the words of Josef Machacek. The third stage of the famous event was literally washed away by rain. Crews in trucks and vehicles of the T3 Light Prototypes category completed 69 km less of the timed test on the route from Alula to Da'il instead of the originally planned 447 km.

"The stage was technical at the beginning, sandy roads between rocks. The second part of the opening stage was fast, always full throttle. Then, after neutralisation, we got into a scenery I've never seen before. There were huge flat stone slabs and sand in between," Jaroslav Valtr



described the beauty of the Saudi nature. But besides the beauty, there were also some tricky pitfalls for the racers. "Suddenly we came to a high mountain from which a huge stream of water was rushing down, which normally washed away the buggies. We were looking for a navigation point that was right in that water. We crossed the river once, which was getting bigger before our eyes. We had to cross it back again in search of the point. There was the point. And we had to go across that river again. We tried to help pull one of the buggies out of the water, but the rope snapped. If these guys don't have proper ropes, there's nothing we can do about it," explained the pilot of Tatra Phoenix, who became the new leader of the competition. He is 5:45 minutes ahead of second-placed Ales Loprais.

Martin Šoltys, seventh on Tuesday, was also satisfied. "I'm excited. I really liked the stage because we tried our new feature, the heated window. At the

beginning we had to slow down a bit because there were huge hailstones falling down and even the heated glass didn't work on them. Then it kept on raining, but otherwise it was fine. The Tatra drove perfectly, we had no problems," said the driver of the Tatra 815.

The Tatra Buggyra Racing driver described how he cleverly dealt with the problem of the swollen river. "The river was deep, but if you moved a hundred metres upstream, you could drive beautifully. There was a rocky ford, so we didn't even have to get in the water. We saw some Can-Ams drowned, but we didn't even go into the water," said Martin Šoltys at the finish line.

After Monday's problems, newcomer Aliyyah Koloc finally had a relatively relaxing Dakar stage. Although this time the weather was her downfall. "Our only problem today was one puncture. The car was running great, but the weather was terrible. It was wet, cold and muddy. But we're back in the race and I've got hot tea in the bivouac now," she said with a laugh. "The Dakar is pretty brutal from the start, but it's a good experience. But we only have 11 days left so I'm feeling positive," added the 18-year-old racer in the Buggyra Can-AM DV 21 special.





Josef Macháček, the second of the Buggyra ZM Academy team pilots, enjoyed the day in his own way. "Not that I like this weather, but it always helps me to get a better result. Anyway, I have nothing else to do but enjoy the drive. The last third of the route was a big one. We were facing swollen rivers, plains full of huge puddles. It was a struggle and we feared for worse. We were cold and couldn't see much of the track because there was a lot of muddy water," described the experienced racer his feelings.

Even though today's stage was cancelled for the Dakar Classic category, the participants made the best out of their time on the track. "We thought we were on an island by the sea and we were about to swim. Water, mud, just brutal conditions. On the salt flats, the car was dancing like on ice. But our crew was great. And again, we were the first and only ones to make it in the truck," said Radovan Kazarka, the Tatra Puma driver.

His navigator, the legendary Josef Kalina, summed up Tuesday's Dakar experience succinctly: "It was terrible." "It's not that the track was impossible to drive. But the problem was that at times it was a flat lake and there were no tracks at all. You had to come out of one lake and figure out how to dive into the next one. Then I found out that there was a main road within reach. And when we got there, we saw that it had become a rapid river. You couldn't even drive into it. So we took the way around in the mud. In addition, we couldn't get the windshield blower to work, so we couldn't see much," the 73-year-old doyen explained.

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