

Aliyyah Koloc to return to the cross-country rallying at the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge

The Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge starts with a prologue on Sunday, 26 February, and will finish with a ceremony podium five days later.

TALLINN, ESTONIA, February 24, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- After a busy January that saw Aliyyah Koloc participating in her first ever Dakar Rally followed by the 6h of Abu Dhabi, an endurance race that is part of the 24h Series, the 18 year old Buggyra ZM Racing driver is returning to cross-country rallying this weekend in a Can-Am DV21.

"Aliyyah had a bit of a rest after a busy January schedule. However, she hasn't neglected her physical training to confirm her reputation among strong rivals which she managed to earn by winning the 2022 FIA Middle East Cup for Cross-Country Bajas. This year won't be easy for her as she will face a number of strong rivals in the T3 Light Prototype category," said Buggyra's Head of Communications, Jan Kalivoda.

Among the biggest difficulties of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge is the return to the treacherous Empty Quarter desert that troubled many competitors of the recent Dakar Rally. This time, however, the drivers will sample it from the other side of the border, rather than from Saudi Arabia, as before.

Aliyyah Koloc isn't impressed by the high dunes though. "I really enjoy driving in the dunes. It's



my favourite part of cross-country competitions. I just love the sand," said the young pilot, whose co-driver will once again be experienced Frenchman Stéphane Duplé.

The Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge is the second round of the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC) after Dakar. Aliyah Koloc ranks currently 12th but the Buggyra racer is confident of moving up. "At the Dakar, we had a lot of technical problems at the end. I hope that for Abu Dhabi it will be smooth in this respect. I showed in several Dakar stages that I can fight with the top of the T3 Light Prototype category, and that is my goal now," she explains.

Buggyra's competitors in the T3 Light Prototype category include last year's winner "Chaleco" López, popular Spaniard Cristina Gutierrez, circuit and rally star Mattias Ekström and recent Dakar winner Austin Jones.



The 32nd edition of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge begins on 26 February with a prologue in Al Dhannah. The first of the five stages starts a day later, with the rally centered around the bivouac at Qasr Al Sarab and the finish being in the city of Abu Dhabi.

2023 Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge time table

26 February: prologue

27 February: Stage 1 (Al Dhannah - Qasr Al Sarab, 250 km timed distance including prologue)

28 February: Stage 2 (Qasr Al Sarab - Qasr Al Sarab, 271 km)

1 March: Stage 3 (Qasr Al Sarab - Qasr Al Sarab, 272 km)

2 March: Stage 4 (Qasr Al Sarab - Qasr Al Sarab, 310 km)

3 March: Stage 5 (Qasr Al Sarab - Abu Dhabi, 208 km)

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