

Aliyyah Koloc reaches the finish of first rally raid event with top-tier REVO T1+ in South Africa

Dubai-born teenager Aliyyah Koloc completed her maiden outing in the top T1+ category of the South African Rally Raid Championship.

TALLINN, ESTONIA, August 22, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 19-year-old all-rounder, who previously contested the Sugarbelt 400 in a T1 prototype after moving up from the T3 Lightweight Prototype with which she drove the Dakar Rally in January, teamed up with experienced navigator Riaan Greyling at the wheel of the #229 Red-Lined REVO T1+ machine.

Taking place over two days in the picturesque resort town of Parys in South Africa's Northern Free State region – and based around the Afridome – Aliyyah and Riaan faced a pair of qualifying stages and two loops each day.

Prior to the event, Aliyyah and the Red-Lined team, in partnership with Buggyra ZM Racing, carried out an extensive test of the REVO T1+ prototype, giving her valuable seat time ahead of her first top-tier debut on the Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia.



First up on Friday morning was a 32km qualifying stage which decided the running order for the opening loop stage. Keen to get as much experience as possible in her new surroundings, Aliyyah took things steady and set a stage time of 12m29s, a little over two minutes down on the fastest time.

Aliyyah continued her development curve by posting the 17th quickest time on the opening loop of the rally, reaching the end of the 165.82km test 15 minutes behind the leader but ahead of some vastly more experienced crews who hit trouble.

Unfortunately, engine issues after getting stuck in a river meant Aliyyah and Greyling dropped 10 minutes on their SS1 time, but the pair produced a valiant effort to make it to the end of the day's action, classified ninth among the T1+ runners.

"Our first time in the REVO T1+ car was a long day for sure," reflected Aliyyah at the end of the day. "We had a good stage, but I made a small mistake at the river which got us a little bit stuck. I managed to get the car out, it was a little bit soaked, but we managed to get to the finish, so it was a tough day."

Navigator Greyling added: "Aliyyah did a great job today, for the second time in the car after the test she performed very well. She had good car handling, in the fast speeds, you can see that she has come from the track world. The navigation today in qualifying was very tricky because there was a lot of dust which was hanging, but on the first loop, we had no issues. In the second loop, we were even faster, just a small error in judgment at the 150km marker."

Round 5 – Saturday

On the itinerary for the second day was a 29km qualifying stage followed by two passes of the 190km loop which took the crews around the towns of Sasolburg and Wolwefontein before turning back towards Parys via the Weiveld Silos.



Having successfully navigated her way through the opening two specials in round four, Aliyyah faced fast technical tracks and then a section of rocky terrain for round five.

The pair enjoyed a trouble-free day, with a clean run in both of the loop stages and avoiding the pitfalls of the river en route to the 16th fastest time in SS3 and the 12th quickest time in SS4.

The consistency of Aliyyah and Greyling throughout the day left them rewarded with an eighth-place result at the finish and a strong end to her first top-line outing in rally raid.

“Today was a different route, a longer one but a really good day for us,” said Aliyyah. “It was really technical, a lot more rocks but overall, we had no problems except for a penalty for not stopping properly, but the result doesn’t matter. It was all about getting kilometres and experience.”

“We had a clean, perfect run, Aliyyah was great in the car. So when we got the same river crossing we learned our lesson from yesterday and we went slowly through and took it easy,” concluded Riaan.

Buggyra Racing Organisation

Buggyra Powersports OU

+372 5606 4169

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