

19-year-old Aliyyah Koloc ready to start her second Dakar Rally

After her Dakar debut in the T3
Lightweight Prototype category in
January, Aliyyah Koloc, who is driving for
Buggyra ZM Racing, is set to make
another debut.

DUBAI, UAE, December 28, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At only 19 years old, she will be racing in the Ultimate category, the highest class of off-road rallying, in a RedLined Revo T1+, with start number #239. Her navigator will be experienced Frenchman Sébastien Delaunay.

After a year of racing in selected events of the South African Off-Road Rally Championship, one of the most difficult series in the world, and after recent testing in Abu Dhabi, Aliyyah Koloc is ready for the challenge of racing against the world's rallying elite. "It is an honor to compete with the biggest names in off-road rallying," she says, thinking of the likes of Nasser Al-Attiyah, Carlos Sainz, or Sébastian Loeb. "The T1+ will be a new challenge





for me, but I am as prepared as I can be and really look forward to gaining more experience." The Dakar Rally is also the first of five events of the 2024 FIA World Rally-Raid Championship. Aliyyah Koloc's #239 entry is one of only 20 cars that form the ultimate category of this highly competitive championship.

In January of this year at her first Dakar, her goal was to finish the event and to get as much experience as possible. She did both, despite some challenges. "During my first Dakar, I faced a

lot of technical issues. On top of that, the days were long, it was very cold at night, but as a team we did very well overall and gained a lot of experience. This will help me to approach my second Dakar with more confidence even though the car is more difficult to drive than the Can-Am, particularly in the dunes as it is a very heavy car."

The 2024 Dakar will be a challenge indeed. The route promises to be probably the toughest Dakar in Saudi Arabia yet. However, Aliyyah feels prepared. "For my second Dakar, I have more of an idea of what to expect, but generally, I'll approach it with the same goal as for my first Dakar, which is to make it to the finish, and, of course, to achieve some decent results along the way."

Compared to the T3 Lightweight category she drove in January, the T1+ car is very different. Aliyyah explains: "At the Dakar, you have to be able to focus all day, so you have to train your





endurance. In the T1+ which is bigger, I need more strength physically. Mentally it is also a challenge, particularly going into the second week when everybody starts to get tired. But I have a great team around me. I always get useful advice from them and other more experienced drivers. In addition, I have also started to do some meditation which helps me to focus before I get into the car."

With all those preparations on a physical, mental, and technical level the 19-year-old is impatient for the rally to start: "The off-road events I did with the T1+ this year definitely helped me to improve as a racer, as did the final tests in Abu Dhabi earlier this month. Now I'm looking forward to the start of the rally where I want to show everything I have in me," she concludes.

The Dakar Rally takes place in Saudi Arabia from January 5 to 19, 2024. It starts in the city of Al-Ula, crosses the country towards the legendary Empty Quarter area, and finishes in Yanbu on the shores of the Red Sea.

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