



# SILK WAY RALLY 2018 丝绸之路拉力赛



## PRESS RELEASE

Bivouac in Astrakhan, 24 July 2018

Temperature: 25°

GMT +3

**S.4 - ASTRAKHAN-ASTRAKHAN - «On the tracks of Astrakhan» - 390,58 km**

**Special Stage 4: 366,03 km**

### MAXIMUM ATTACK FROM SERRADORI AND KARGINOV

The Frenchman Mathieu Serradori (Buggy SRT n°108) has won the 4<sup>th</sup> stage of the 2018 SILK WAY RALLY barely 1 second ahead Yazeed Al Rajhi (MINI John Cooper Works n°103). Victims of mechanical problems, Harry Hunt (Peugeot 3008 DKR Maxi n°107) and Nasser Al-Attiyah (Toyota Hilux n°101) have both given away considerable time in the overall car classifications, with Al Rajhi now the new leader. In the trucks, Andrei Karginov (Kamaz-Master n°309), beat the Dutchman Van Den Brink (Renault Sherpa n°304) by less than one minute. Running into mechanical difficulties, Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°300) nevertheless holds on to the overall lead. Tomorrow the SILK WAY RALLY starts its long route along the Volga, direction Moscow, for the last three stages of this 2018 edition.

### Of note

# Cars: bad luck for the leaders!

# T2 & T3: Nifontova and Opariina come back

# Trucks: The Mammoet beaten in the final sprint

# Tomorrow: "Rolling river"

# Vasilyev, King of Aragon and Tsar of Russia?





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## Autos : bad luck for the leaders!

Just one tiny second: at the end of 366km of combat that was all that separated Mathieu Serradori (Buggy SRT n°108), the day's winner, from Yazeed Al Rajhi (MINI John Cooper Works n°103). An incredible battle that the two drivers engaged in on the special stage around Astrakhan. After having passed the MINI of Roma and then that Al Rajhi, the French driver and his Belgium navigator Fabian Lurquin opened the piste flat out to finish neck and neck with their sparring partners at the finish line. Nani Roma (MINI John Cooper Works n°104) completed the day's podium. If everything went well for these three, the day's stage turned into a nightmare for the two other challengers. Starting first this morning, the overnight leader Harry Hunt (Peugeot 3008 DKR Maxi n°107) suffered first from suspension problems and then with oil pressure. Twice forced to wait for his rapid assistance truck, the British driver has given away several hours. Starting 26th this morning, Nasser Al-Attiyah (Toyota Hilux n°101) looked all set to pull back time before being forced to stop once again at km 200 due to problems with his rear differential. All of which played into the hands of Yazeed Al Rajhi, who at race mid-way point takes the overall lead 46 minutes ahead of Serradori, while Al-Attiyah, third, is now 56 minutes behind.

## Catégorie T2 in brief

### Nifontova and Opariina pull back

Losing time in yesterday's difficult conditions, Anastasia Nifontova (Toyota LandCruiser n°132) managed to pull back today to shore up her position as leader of the T2 category. The ex-motorcycle champion posted her 3rd stage victory today ahead of the Toyotas of the Chinese competitors Zi Yun Gang and Lu Binglong, who complete the provisional overall podium at the mid-way point. By beating the Bulgarian Cenkov (Quaddy Yxz n°130) and the Frenchman Chavigny (Polaris RZR n°126), Mariia Opariina (Maverick X3 n°115) took back the lead off the men in the T3 category.

## Trucks: The Mammoet beaten at the final sprint

He was so happy. Taking a break with his 16 year old son, with whom he is sharing the cab of his Renault Sherpa for the first time, the team Mammoet Rally Sport driver, Martin Van Den Brink thought he's won the fourth stage. On seeing the Kamaz of Andrei Karginov (n°309) arrive at the finish line the Dutchman needed to take only a quick look at his watch to understand. For less than one minute the Russian driver had pulled the rug from out under





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his feet. The reason for the Russian's charge: he'd seen his team mate and the overall leader Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°300), stopped at the side of the track. Karginov didn't manage to take the overall lead but he did win the stage and by retaking his 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall has reignited the truck race. Running into problems with a shock absorber, his electrics and a water hose, Sotnikov was indeed in big trouble. But the crew managed to sort themselves out in record time and finally lost only 20 minutes. Sixth on the stage, Sotnikov holds on to the lead in front of his team mates Karginov and Mardeev who ran into problems with his turbo right at the beginning of the special. Finally the race directors have noted with regret the withdrawal of the MAZ Sport Auto team, following a racing incident on Tuesday's stage 3 between Elista and Astrakhan.

## ROAD BOOK

### Tomorrow: Stage 5 - ASTRAKHAN-VOLGOGRAD : "Rolling river" - 537,88 km

This 5th stage (537 kms) between Astrakhan and Volgograd (previously Stalingrad) will follow the Volga for the longest special stage of this 2018 edition of the SILK WAY RALLY. The competitors will discover similar conditions to the start of the race (sandy tracks, sometimes fast, sometimes bumpy) over the first third of the route. Then harder tracks will follow, winding through denser vegetation and between fields. Care will need to be taken with holes at the side of the track. Towards the end the tracks will become narrower as its runs into valleys.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Vasilyev, King of Aragon and Tsar of Russia?

For this 5th stage, taking the competitors to Volgograd, some 23 vehicles racing in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the Russian All-Terrain Championship will join the 2018 SILK WAY RALLY caravan. Among them Vladimir Vasilyev (MINI All4Racing). The most well known Russian driver in rally-raid, he last weekend won the Aragon Baja in Spain, the 7<sup>th</sup> round of the All-Terrain Rallies World Cup, at the wheel of his Toyota Hilux Overdrive, before heading for Astrakhan to join the SILK WAY RALLY, keen to measure himself against the best drivers on the race...

## INTERVIEWS





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## CARS

### Mathieu Serradori (Fra/Buggy SRT n°108 – 1<sup>st</sup>)

#### ‘We really enjoyed opening the piste...’

‘The day went well. We started fourth this morning and saw over the first 30 kilometres that our pace was good. We past the Peugeot, which was having problems, and then we moved up to fight with Nani and Yazeed. My co-driver did a super job as we opened the piste for quite a while with no tracks in front of us and really enjoyed ourselves. The stage was good for buggies, apart from the first 50 kilometres which were very difficult.’

### Yazeed Al Rajhi (SAR/MINI John Cooper Works n°103 – 2<sup>nd</sup>)

#### ‘Navigation not so easy...’

‘We couldn’t find the road because of the grass and twice we turned around maybe 3 minutes and then Nani arrived and we looked together and then over the last part we pushed a little bit. We saw the French guys with the buggy. It was a stage for buggies.’

### Nani Roma (Spa/MINI John Cooper Works n°104 – 3<sup>rd</sup>)

#### ‘Stomach problems again...’

‘A hard long stage, my stomach doesn’t feel good. I stopped at kilometre 120 and then I got back in the car to get to the end. My goal now is to finish the race, it is important for us to do kilometres. For sure it is not the perfect situation, but it could be worse. Sometimes you need to learn in these kind of situations.’

### Nasser Al-Attiyah (Qat/Toyota Hilux n°101- 6<sup>th</sup>)

#### ‘Same problem with the diff...’

‘We had the same problem as the other day. The rear differential broke after 100 kilometres. We stopped at CP1 for about 20 minutes to see if we could repair something but there was nothing we could do. We were going hard so I’m really disappointed. I don’t know what the problem is but we’ll see with the team because we need to sort this out as the next three days are going to be very hard.’

## TRUCKS

### Karginov (Kamaz-Master n°309 - 1st)

#### ‘Just two short stops...’

‘The day went well, today we made two short stops - the first for an electrical problem that cost us two minutes. Then we stopped at KAMAZ of Dmitry Sotnikov to give them some water.’





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**Martin Van Den Brink (NDL/Renault n°304 – 2nd)**

**‘Still chasing a stage win...’**

‘We drove the whole day flat out but I think Karginov also did a good job and he should be 59 seconds quicker. That’s racing – still chasing a stage win here. We’ll have to see, tomorrow they say it will be a bad track’

**Dmitry Sotnikov (Kamaz-Master n°300 - 6th)**

**‘We’re at the finish and that’s the most important thing’**

‘We had to stop because of the problems with the electrics and that’s when we saw that we had a broken shock absorber and were losing water. We quickly fixed the shock absorber problem and then asked Andrei Karginov to stop and give us some water because it was very hot. We didn’t stop him for long. It’s a shame we had these problems but we are at the finish and that’s the most important thing.’

