

SILK WAY RALLY HIGHLIGHTS

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INTRO + WELCOME TO CHINA + POSTCARD KARAMAY

10" COUNTDOWN

18" OPENING CREDITS

Don't speak

27" BEAUTY SHOTS OF CHINA + SHOTS OF KARAMAY

The Silk Way has arrived in China.

Some of the rally's most incredible scenery – and its toughest stages – lie ahead in the scorching dunes of the Gobi Desert.

After a short final special in Kazakhstan, it was over the border and on to Karamay, in the far north-west corner of the world's most populous country.

Home to one of China's largest oil fields, much of Karamay's wealth is down to oil production and refinery.

HIGHLIGHTS CARS

7" MAP OF STAGE 7

A short special of only 106 kilometres on the menu in this seventh stage, winding down from Urzhar to Karamay...

10" SHOTS OF START

After a week of rain, mud and thunderstorms in Russia and Kazakhstan, the weather still not playing ball ... a cloudy start to this one, although the temperature was steadily rising on the road to China.

7" ONBOARD SHOTS

Don't speak

8" ONBOARD SHOTS

Even in this short stage, the drivers needing to be switched on, with some tricky navigation in certain sections...

16" SHOTS OF YAZEED ALRAHJI #101

Here's Mini's Yazeed Alrahji, he's over five hours back in the overall classification.

Struggling to find his way, but he managed to come sixth on the stage.

18" SHOTS OF LIU YANGUI #127 4th

Chinese driver Lui Yangui powering towards home soil. Another solid drive from the Baicmotor man, he was in fourth.

13" SHOTS OF SEBASTIEN LOEB #104 3rd

Generally speaking it was a comfortable day for overall leader Sebastien Loeb, give or take a few hitches with navigation.

5" ONBOARD WITH LOEB

Don't speak.

10" SHOTS OF LOEB

He only lost six seconds to his teammate and nearest rival Cyril Despres... a similarly smooth day for the defending champion.

25" ONBOARD SEQUENCE: LOEB-DESPRES-LOEB-DESPRES

Don't speak!

14" SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES #100 2nd

Both Despres and Loeb having a couple of issues, but a solid day for the Peugeot pair. The gap between them overall remains steady at an hour and three minutes.

22" ITW CYRIL DESPRES IN FRENCH

"One part of the rally is over, now what's coming is what we prefer: dunes, sand, and some nice rolling (up and down) terrain tomorrow. And the heat will be an important factor too. It should be a really great second half of the rally."

18" SHOTS OF BRYCE MENZIES #105 1st

A first major stage win today for Bryce Menzies of Mini.

The American posting an impressive time of 1 hour, 3 minutes and 56 seconds to win the special by a minute and a half from Despres.

He remains third in the overall standings.

12" ITW BRYCE MENZIES IN ENGLISH

"We were going wide open through the dust. Sketchy in places because there's big holes and we don't really know what's coming up, so we got out of control a couple of times, but that's part of it, and hopefully we made up some time today."

15" CAR STANDINGS STAGE + OVERALL

Well here's how they line up... Menzies ahead of Despres and Loeb. Very small time gaps on a fairly short stage. In the overall still a comfortable advantage for Loeb. Menzies, Han Wei and Christian Lavieille make up the top five.

FEATURE REMY VAUTHIER #131 (1'00")

2" GRAPHIC

6" SHOTS OF RAIN + CAR #131 BROKEN DOWN

The unpredictable weather claiming another victim on the Silk Way Rally...

13" ITW REMY VAUTHIER IN FRENCH

"Both triangles are broken, so we'll try to repair the car tonight, but there's no guarantee we'll succeed. Jean has gone to a local village to try to sort out the triangles, so we can get back by ourselves. We'll see – we're trying!"

10" DON'T SPEAK

In the end though, it had to be the assistance truck...

The locals unable to offer more than some home comforts...

12" ITW JEAN BRUCY IN FRENCH

"They invited me to dinner! I went there to repair the triangles, but first they invited me to eat. All I wanted to do was weld the triangles, but unfortunately it wasn't possible."

1" DON'T SPEAK

10" ITW JEAN BRUCY IN FRENCH

"We came here to play in the desert, in the Chinese dunes, which are particularly beautiful, and high. So we have to get at least that far, to have some fun!"

4" DON'T SPEAK

TRUCKS

2" GRAPHIC

28" SHOTS OF ALEKSANDR VASILEVSKI #309 ONBOARD + STOPPED

And so onto the trucks...

A short stage, this, but by no means the most straightforward ... with hard ground and some tricky navigation.

Maz driver Aleksandr Vasilevski getting stuck early on, and enduring a bit of a splattering...

With some help from the assistance truck the Belarusian did eventually get back on track and only finished 3 minutes off the pace, in 7th position.

13" SHOTS OF MARTIN KOLOMY #311 – 5th

Martin Kolomy was around 13 minutes back at the start of the day, and the Czech lost a couple of minutes here – not quite able to match the pace of the Kamaz fleet as he finished fifth.

7" SHOTS OF EDUARD NIKOLAEV #307 – 4th

Once again, the stage was set to be dominated by the Russian giants... Eduard Nikolaev coming 4th.

12" SHOTS OF GERARD DE ROOY #302

Elsewhere, things going a little bit better for Gerard De Rooy.

He was only 5 minutes back today, and generally satisfied with his truck - a little less so with the roadbook.

5" SHOTS OF DE ROOY BEING OVERTAKEN BY CAR

Don't speak

10" SHOTS OF TON VAN GENUGTEN #306 CRASHING INTO DITCH

It wasn't all good news for Iveco. De Rooy's teammate Ton Van Genugten getting caught out here in rather spectacular fashion

19" SHOTS OF AIRAT MARDEEV #300 ONBOARD + LEADING DE ROOY – 3rd

Here's Airat Mardeev, who claimed third place... he was a minute and 13 seconds back.

The defending champion charging through the Kazakh countryside.

He has 25 minutes to make up on the overall leader, Dmitry Sotnikov. Last year he beat his teammate to overall victory by 15 minutes...

13" SHOTS OF ANTON SHIBALOV #312

Things are really hotting up at the top. Here's Anton Shibalov – he was in second place today, only 27 seconds adrift...

He's the only Kamaz team member not to have won the Silk Way Rally... and currently trails Sotnikov by 2 minutes and 39 seconds ...

35" SHOTS OF DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303

The 2013 champion currently leading the way, and once again giving the cars a run for their money

He posted the fourth-best time across all vehicles – 1 hour, 6 minutes and 26 seconds.

Sotnikov took the stage win as Kamaz completed a clean sweep, 1-2-3-4 for their four drivers.

But there's still a long way to go until Xi'an...

13" ITW DMITRY SOTNIKOV IN RUSSIAN

"It was great to finish first today. The stage was short and fast, but not easy because the ground was very hard. Everybody tried to attack, because the battle for position overall is very close."

15" TRUCKS STANDINGS STAGE + OVERALL

So a confidence-boosting day for Kamaz, even if the time gains were marginal... 5 minutes separating the top 10.

Sotnikov narrowly increases his lead... Kolomy the only non-Kamaz within an hour.

LUC ALPHAND ON CHINA (3:37)

2" GRAPHIC

22" MAP OF SILK WAY RALLY (TRACED FROM MOSCOW TO XI'AN)

It's the halfway stage of the Silk Way Rally.

The competitors have covered over 5,000 kilometres from Moscow, through Kazakhstan and into China.

They've braved the rain and the mud, but arguably the most challenging and breath-taking stages of the race lie ahead, as sports advisor Luc Alphand explains...

21" ITW LUC ALPHAND IN ENGLISH

"In China, we have everything, every kind of route that makes up the discipline of rally-raid. We have sand, big deserts, canyons and high-speed plateaus. It's very similar to certain places in Chile or in Africa. China is a really nice place to race for off-road rally."

13" SHOTS OF VEHICLES IN DESERT DUNES

Don't speak

17" ITW LUC ALPHAND IN ENGLISH

"We brought back the images of our recce (reconnaissance), so that's exactly the route of the race. In some places it's beautiful. I know it's hard when you race, you know, to look outside a little bit. Anyway, it's better to race in a beautiful place."

2" DON'T SPEAK

6" ITW LUC ALPHAND IN ENGLISH

"We did this recce in April, so four months ago, and we brought back some nice pictures."

12" SHOTS OF VEHICLES IN DESERT

As well as navigating the sand and the dunes, the drivers will have to contend with the searing heat of the desert, where the rally could well be won or lost...

27" ITW LUC ALPHAND IN ENGLISH

"Of course, in this year's race, the Silk Way Rally is not over on the rest day in Urumqi. What is coming afterwards is not decisive, but it's a big part of the rally. It's going to be difficult, of course, because the sand is coming. It's very hot, the temperature is something above 40°C. So it's tough for the mechanics, it's tough for the cars, and also for the crews. So this part of the rally is very important, in sporting terms."

15" SHOTS OF VEHICLES IN DESERT

Don't speak

18" ITW LUC ALPHAND IN ENGLISH

"And also in cultural terms, it's very different. We are going from Moscow to Chinese and oriental culture. Everything is very different. You can feel it when you cross the border, everything is different."

30" VARIOUS BEAUTY SHOTS OF MONK + DESERT

The Gobi Desert has always exerted a fascination on explorers from all over the world, and its hidden treasures date back tens of thousands of years.

As well as taking a journey through some of the world's most incredible landscapes, the Silk Way rally is also travelling back through history...

32" SHOTS OF XI'AN + TERRACOTTA ARMY

Nowhere better captures the spirit of ancient Chinese culture than the city of Xi'an, where the Silk Way Rally finishes on July the 22nd...

The starting point of the ancient Silk Road, it boasts a rich history and is home to some of China's most iconic sites, including the famous Terracotta Army...

This is China, where untamed natural beauty, history and culture are united as one.

TOMORROW

14" MAP OF STAGE 8

Stage 8 will give the competitors a taste of what's to come, with a 250-kilometre special between Karamay and Urumqi.

Sandy tracks and the first dunes on the menu in a tricky, technical stage – before a well-earned rest day.

8" **HOSTESS IN ENGLISH THEN IN RUSSIAN (!)**

"Hello, we will see you tomorrow on the Silk Way Rally, in Urumqi."

13" END CREDITS

END PROGRAMME