



## 2017 SWR: Menzies still fourth in the overall standings

- **Al-Rajhi secures fine stage results**
- **The forthcoming special stages will be fast**

With the first four days of the Silk Way Rally contested, the X-raid Team has arrived in Kazakhstan or, more precisely, in the country's capital Astana. Bryce Menzies and Pete Mortensen (both USA) deliver in fine style, following their long cross-country rallying break and defend their fourth position in the overall standings. Meanwhile, Yazeed Al-Rajhi (KSA) and Tom Colsoul (BEL) refuse to let the bad luck they had to cope with in the second stage make an impact on their motivation. They don't hang their heads but keep on pushing. Although they only hold 23rd position in the overall standings they secured really good stage results on the past two days.

For Menzies and Mortensen, the Silk Way Rally first of all represents the opportunity to gather more cross-country rallying experience. Having secured two top-10 results on the previous two days they finished 12th, yesterday. "The first 100 kilometres were fine but then, navigating became rather difficult as the vision was poor due to the high grass," revealed Menzies. "Furthermore, the road had a lot of holes. Later we had a puncture on the right rear tyre." In the opening sections of today's special stage they were really fast and so, they passed the first checkpoint in second condition. "Then, however, things got more difficult as rain began to fall," says the US-American. "Therefore we skidded into a ditch but it could have been worse: after 20 minutes a Kamaz stopped and towed us out of the ditch." Therefore, they finished seventh and defended their fourth position in the overall standings.

Al-Rajhi lost a lot of time in the second stage when he skidded in a two-metre deep hole. The car was wedged so badly that other competitors couldn't help and two tractors were necessary to tow the car out. Therefore, Al-Rajhi had to start into the following stages behind several trucks. "We were blocked by one of them for 30

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kilometres,” says the Saudi. Nonetheless, he finished fifth. Today he really went for it and secured second place. “In the beginning driving was really nice today but with about 60 kilometres to go in the first part torrential rain began to fall,” reports Al-Rajhi. “In the second part we were only sliding. Therefore, we are really happy with the result we secured today.”

On the following two days the rally will take the field from Astana to Semey and then to Urdzhar. Both special stages are difficult regarding navigation and very fast.

**Silk Way Rally – Overall standings after SS4:**

1st S. Loeb (FRA) / D. Elena (MCO) Peugeot – 8h 56m 10s

2nd C. Despres (FRA) / D. Castera (FRA) Peugeot – 10h 04m 06s

3rd C. Lavieille (FRA) / J.-P. Garcin (FRA) Baicmotor – 10h 08m 45s

**4. B. Menzies (USA) / P. Mortensen (USA) MINI John Cooper Works Rally – 10h 15m 18s**

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**23. Y. Al-Rajhi (KSA) / T. Colsoul (BEL) MINI John Cooper Works Rally – 13h 37m 31s**