

Aliyyah Koloc swallowed 200 kilometers of dust: Martin Šoltys already fourth overall

Stage 5 of the Dakar Rally turned into a dramatic event for the Buggyra team.

MONACO, FRANCE, January 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In the second part of the marathon stage, where crews could not rely on mechanics for overnight repairs, Aliyyah Koloc had to endure 200 kilometers of dust and stones. Following a clutch failure in her Red-Lined REVO T1+, she was towed by teammate Karel Poslední's Tatra Phoenix. The 20-year-old driver arrived at the bivouac with yet another quintessential Dakar story. Meanwhile, Martin Šoltys, in the Tatra Buggyra EVO3, climbed to an impressive fourth place overall after finishing fifth in today's stage.

"It was an incredible and heroic performance. Aliyyah showed tremendous determination to finish this difficult stage. She made it look easy while being towed, but she had to endure all the dust and flying stones," said team principal Martin Koloc.

The Buggyra ZM Racing driver started today's stage well. However, around the halfway mark, her car began rattling and eventually stalled. Aliyyah Koloc had no choice but to pull out a tow rope and ask for help. And who better to assist than a teammate? The savior of the fastest woman in this year's Dakar so far was Karel Poslední.



"The clutch went 'boom' and it was gone. It had already been giving us trouble during the second stage. We thought it was fixed, but no—it's completely gone now. For 200 kilometers, Karel towed us in the Tatra. So thank you, Karel!" said Aliyyah Koloc with sadness in her voice. A loss of over 4 hours left her finishing 52nd in the stage and dropping to 36th in the Elite Ultimate category standings.

"I'm totally exhausted but happy that we made it to the finish. Tomorrow is a rest day, and I want to keep racing," the young driver added.

Karel Poslední, representing Tatra Buggyra ZM Racing, considered helping his 20-year-old teammate a natural act. "Yesterday, 100 kilometers into the stage, all our cabin shock absorbers broke off. Today, we saw Aliyyah standing on the track. We towed her—of course we did. We couldn't drive too fast anyway, or we'd have been thrown around in the cab. So at least we could help," said the Dakar rookie, who finished 16th today and is now 13th overall.

The best performance of the day came from Martin Šoltys of Tatra Buggyra ZM Racing. In yet another navigationally demanding stage, his crew briefly lost their way but maintained a steady pace to secure a spot just outside the podium positions in the Dakar truck category standings.

"We couldn't go full throttle because we couldn't afford any more punctures after yesterday. The mood in the cab is great, although Vlastik Miksch is still sick. I still regret the loss at Chrono48—that was on me. Getting stuck in the dunes was my mistake. But I'm glad we managed to claw back an hour, and we're still in the game," said Šoltys.

After a grueling first half of the Dakar Rally, participants will have a well-deserved rest day tomorrow. However, the mechanics will spend the day maintaining the vehicles, while the crews focus on recovery.

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