**COX SHINES, BRABEC ON DAKAR BIKE OFFENSIVE**

*Bradley takes Rally 2 as Ricky extends Dakar bike lead*

Californian Ricky Brabec struck hard on Tuesdays 417 km Dakar Stage 9 over mixed terrain to Al’Ula in Saudi Arabia. The Honda rider led most of the way before conceding the day win to teammate Adrien van Beveren, as he opened the gap to second placed Botswana Ross branch to over seven minutes. South African champion Bradley Cox had a fine day to the Rally 2 win in tenth overall

Overall leader Brabec was once again fast out the blocks after making sure he enjoyed an ideal starting position on his Honda as he led through the first waypoint from Toby Price’s KTM, van Beveren, Luciano Benavides’ Husqvarna, and Honda duo Pablo Quintanilla and Jose Florimo. Ross Branch sat eleventh on his Hero, behind Rally 2 leader, SA youngster Bradley Cox on his BAS KTM.

Van Beveren then moved into the lead as the morning progressed as Brabec faded to fourth, but the Californian was back in front by mid distance from van Beveren, Quintanilla, a rampant Cox, and a recovering Branch four minutes off Brabec. Further back, Husqvarna pair, South African Charan Moore ran 27th and Zimbabwean Ash Thixton 40th and SA KTM duo, Ronald Venter and Stuart Gregory pushing on in 68th and 87th.

Brabec led Quintanilla and van Beveren into the final sector, but van Beveren had passed Quintanilla by the final waypoint, and then Brabec, who presumably slowed to ensure a better road position for Wednesday, at the finish. Price was fourth from Branch, who surrendered almost seven minutes to Brabec in the overall chase, with van Beveren third anther four minutes adrift.

Kevin Benavides KTM ended fifth on the day on his KTM from Florimo, Luciano Benavides, Stefan Svitko’s KTM and Rally 2 winner Cox in tenth. Bradley moves up to 14th overall and fourth in Rally 2, just over 17 minutes behind leader Romain Dumontier. Charan Moore was 19th on the day and sits 19th overall and 7th in R2, while Ashton Thixton rose in 33rd, ahead of Venter and Gregory in the pack.

Wednesday’s 371 km loop around Al’Ula should prove decisive for the bile leaders. Mainly on dirt tracks, with a little sand and dunes en route, only three days remain of Dakar 2024. Your Dakar Daily Bike Report is powered by Tork Craft tools.