

## **Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson: Team Portuguese wins first special test**

**Strong rain transformed the first stage of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 into a mud battle. Team Portugal masters this challenge with bravado and succeeds against Team Germany 3 and Team France.**

*Moscow/Vladimir, July 12th, 2008.*

Juri Rossljak, Moscow's Deputy Mayor, gave the starting-signal in the Red Square. The first special test for the 30 teams from 24 nations then took place 80 km before Vladimir. The ambitious stretch led across 48 km of rain-drenched sandy soil, through water ditches, mud holes and mixed forests.

Together with his co-pilot Pedro Figueiredo, Pedro Gameiro was able accomplish the initial phase successfully. Team Portugal in its Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia mastered the first evaluation test best and became the day's winner with a lead of 13.42 minutes ahead of the second placed, 20 year old Lars Kern and his Czech partner Daniel van Kan / Team Germany 3. In 2007 Kern and van Kan took fourth place in the overall standings. Team France with Christian Lavieille and Francois Borsotto achieved an excellent third place with 15.33 minutes arrears.

The most significant spot was a large and deep water hole. Here, most of the teams had problems/difficulties getting to the other side. Only team spirit made an advance possible. The agenda was, for the competitors to mutually pull each other out. Even experienced pilots, like Said Rashid Al Hajri from Qatar (4.), last years second placed Antonio Tognana from Italy (5.) or the German Armin Schwarz (7.) battled the intricacies of the test. Schwarz and his co-pilot Andi Schulz lost 57 minutes on leading team due to a navigation mistake.

Uta Baier, who had driven the Transsyberia Service Track last year, made an outstanding 8th place in her Toyota HZJ80. Utterly enthusiastic, with several mud splashes in her face, the German beamed after crossing the finish-line: "That was exciting and challenging! Loads of water holes and water crossings. We lost our way once – as probably everyone did."

Ryan Millen from Team USA, son of last year's winner, didn't do his starting number 1 justice and made a not quite satisfying 17th place. Rally newcomers Meyer and Veit of the JoeVito Team from Germany however, couldn't have been happier after crossing the finish-line in 13<sup>th</sup> place. The Land Rover wasn't damaged but proved to be decidedly leaky.

Most teams had to deal with wild rides through this water and mud stretch. Everyone got clear on the fact, that the difficult part of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson doesn't primarily start in Mongolia, but rather with the very first day. All in all, the first stage left its mark on several of the cars but in the end, all of them turned up in Vladimir by the late evening though.

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Daily Standings Transsyberia Rally 2008, 1st of 14 stages, Moscow – Vladimir

1. Gameiro/Figueiredo	Team Portugal	Porsche	1:04.01 hours
2. Kern/van Kan	Team Germany 3	Porsche	0:13.42 hours behind
3. Lavieille/Borsotta	Team France	Porsche	0:15.33
4. Al Hajri/Trenker	Team Middle East	Porsche	0:17.57
5. Tognana/Cassina	Team Italy	Porsche	0:23.52
6. Pfeil-Schneider/Steuer	Colombian Arrow	Porsche	0:48.16
7. Schwarz/Schulz	Team Germany 1	Porsche	0:57.36
8. Baier/Steinbring	Teambuctou	Toyota	1:14.49
9. Levyatov/Talantsev	Team Russia 1	Porsche	1:31.08
10. Pasetti/Gröger	Lybia-Rally-Raid	Toyota	1:35.24

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<http://www.transsyberia-rallye.de/en/presstart/pressphotos/>

The Transsyberia Rally 2008 can be followed from the perspective of the participants in the daily photo blog at [www.transsyberia-rallye.com](http://www.transsyberia-rallye.com). The teams are recording their personal impressions and experiences with the new water- and dirt-resistant Sony Ericsson C702 Cyber-shot-cellphone.

We offer daily news clips, as well as downloadable images via FTP Server to all online media. We'll be happy to supply you with details about this upon request.

You can find additional up-to-date information and downloadable text material of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson at:

<http://www.transsyberia-rallye.de/de/presse/> (German)

<http://www.transsyberia-rallye.de/en/presstart/> (English)

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### TV and Online

During the entire rally REBEL Media will accompany the teams with a TV production crew and will record the rally events in HD quality. Daily news feeds, rough cuts and video clips are guaranteed, as well as up-to-date online reporting with texts and photos on a daily basis.

We'll be happy to supply you with additional details upon request.