

Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson: Team Spain wins and lots of movement in the Top 10

The Spanish team captures the daily win for the second time and displaces team Schwarz/Schulz to third place in the overall standings. Team France keeps on extending its advantage in the overall standings. Danner Racing second fastest.

The stage led for 339 km from Bayankhor into the sand dunes of Mongol Els in the province Middlegobi. After lots of desert dust a special stage with water crossing was imminent. Many drivers, who took part in the rally last year, were looking forward to it. Others fostered unpleasant memories of 2007, when they took a bath with their car. It became clear the night before, that the special stage was somewhat shortened, because the tow and rescue vehicles wouldn't have been able to get through the last section. The teams were left with 172 kilometers. The stretch led along the Shargaljuut River and Mountain through impressive nature, into the vicinity of the former Mongolian capital Karakorum.

Mongol Els, July 24th, 2008

This second to last day of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson also belonged to the outsider teams. The Austrian Christof Danner managed a sensational run and with 4:31 minutes lag he secured second place. "For a while the Transsyberia seemed jinxed for us. A lot of small unforeseeable malfunctions, which all had to be repaired by us in the evening, after the stages. Now it's working!", explained the pilot of the Danner Racing Team. "I was one with the car, we really got along well." Danner passed Team France in muddy terrain and the towing maneuver of Team Germany 2 and Team USA. "The stretch was excellent. I liked the drifting in particular. The most important thing was not to get a defect."

Andreas Kramer's face was also beaming with joy. "We would've made minimum time today", the pilot was sure. After starting in 16th position, the Suzuki Team kept moving ahead. "In the end we had five Porsche in tow who followed our tracks." Shortly before the destination: a navigation mistake and they got stuck in the swamp. "That definitely cost us fifteen minutes." It was enough for an outstanding 5th place (9:35 minutes behind). Both Germans also appeared thrilled about the terrain. "Our rally heart beat faster at the choice of stretch! Fast, perfect for drifting. When the rubble on the main track became too jolty, one was able to swerve onto the meadows."

Panos Meyer and Birger Veit with their Land Rover made sixth place. That's an absolute top result for the amateur team, which has enlivened the rally all around. As a precaution, the Team JoeVito mounted a floating tire to their car, which wasn't used though. "We did manage the water like this and otherwise: smile, wave, accelerate", the pilot was obviously satisfied.

The team from Spain most notably benefited from the river crossings. Laia Peinado, navigator of the winning team: "I have respect for the rapid waters in Mongolia. At home in Spain we don't have those. I was really happy that the water was only up to one meter deep today, Pau could steer through it and I didn't have to get out like I had to last year." After 3:16:30 hours Pau Soler and Laia Paneido (Team Spain) crossed the finish-line first and moved up in the overall standings from third to second place.

Christian Lavieille and Francois Borsotto confidently extended the lead in the overall standings of the Transsyberia 2008. Their winning margin to the second placed is now 2:18:57 hours. They landed in third place in the special stage with a 5:09 lag by driving craftily and prudently. Electronic problems threw Armin Schwarz, the fivefold daily winner of the Transsyberia 2008, from second to third place in the overall standings. Team Portuguese in fourth place in the overall standings, didn't find the right rythm, had problems with its off-road vehicle and landed in seventh, loosing 28:31 minutes to the top. It'll be pure suspense on Friday regarding the final results of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson, since there's only 28 minutes between place two and four.

Team Germany 2 had taken on the role of the Samaritan. First they towed the car of Armin Schwarz out of the mud, then they helped the Team Colombian Arrow change a tire and finally they towed the Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia of Ryan Millen 30 km into the next village after the special stage. There, nothing worked any longer, so the car of Team USA was loaded onto a tow truck with transmission damage and brought to camp.

Yesterday's third-placed Adel Abdulla and Norbert Lutteri from Team Qatar couldn't start today. The damage to their Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia, which occurred during yesterday's stage, couldn't be repaired quickly. Together with the Swiss Aurele Bachmann and the Team RUS&SWED, they both continued to follow the events of the Transsyberia by watching and will celebrate the winner in Ulaanbaatar Friday night.

Interim daily standings for the Transsyberia Rally 2008, July 24th Bayankhor – Mongol Els

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|---------------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1. Soler/Peinado | Team Spain | Porsche | 03:16:30 hrs. |
| 2. Danner/Szekeres | Danner Racing Team | Mercedes | 00:04:31 hrs. lag |
| 3. Lavieille/Borsotto | Team France | Porsche | 00:05:09 |
| 4. Szustkowski/Kazberuk | STT Racing/Poland 2 | Porsche | 00:08:17 |
| 5. Kramer/Ettenberger | Suzuki/SPOX.COM | Suzuki | 00:09:35 |
| 6. Meyer/Veit | Team JoeVito | Land Rover | 00:26:38 |
| 7. Gameiro/Figueiredo | Team Portuguese | Porsche | 00:28:31 |
| 8. Pfeil-Schneider/Steuer | Colombian Arrow | Porsche | 00:31:36 |
| 9. Levyatov/Talantsev | Team Russia 1 | Porsche | 00:31:50 |
| 10. Baier/Steinbring | Teambuctou | Toyota | 00:31:58 |

Overall standings as of July 24th, 2008

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|---------------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1. Lavieille/Borsotto | Team France | Porsche | 26:07:47 hrs.. |
| 2. Soler/Peinado | Team Spain | Porsche | 02:18:57 hrs. lag |
| 3. Schwarz/Schulz | Team Germany 1 | Porsche | 02:32:01 |
| 4. Gameiro/Figueiredo | Team Portuguese | Porsche | 02:56:23 |
| 5. Levyatov/Talantsev | Team Russia 1 | Porsche | 03:58:02 |
| 6. Celma/Unger | Team Germany 2 | Porsche | 08:20:17 |
| 7. Baier/Steinbring | Teambuctou | Toyota | 09:32:47 |
| 8. Pfeil-Schneider/Steuer | Colombian Arrow | Porsche | 10:54:23 |
| 9. Szustkowski/Kazberuk | STT Racing/Poland 2 | Porsche | 13:15:41 |
| 10. Millen/Godby | Team USA | Porsche | 17:36:14 |

Spectacular images, free of charge: <http://www.transsyberia-rallye.de/en/presstart/pressphotos/>.

Which team is in which position? What's the up-to-date course of the stages? You can follow each team of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 closely on the screen via the Live Tracker at <http://www.transsyberia-rallye.de/en/route/live-trackingen/>.

The Transsyberia Rally 2008 can be followed from the perspective of the participants in a daily photo blog at 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-cell phone.

TV and Online

REBEL Media accompanies the teams for the entire rally with a TV production crew and records the rally events in HD quality. Daily news feeds, rough cuts and video clips are guaranteed and downloadable via FTP server. We'll be happy to supply you with additional details upon request.

You'll find daily updated information, as well as 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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