

Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson: Start into uncertainty

Moscow's Deputy Mayor Juri Rossljak sends the gang on the journey in eastward direction. 7.235 fatiguing kilometers are ahead of the teams.

Moscow, July 11th, 2008.

The starting shot for the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson was fired today at 11:20 am in the Red Square in Moscow. After the opening speech by Moscow's deputy mayor Juri Rossljak, the winning car of the Transsyberia 2007 rolled through the starting arch first. The vehicle with the number 1, a Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia, is steered by Ryan Millen – son of last year's winner Rod Millen. Rubble, marsh, snow, sand and daily special tests lay between the 30 teams and their destination, the Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar. Due to heavy rain, which set in shortly after the start, the first special test is already turn out to be a demanding challenge for the participants.

Shortly before the rally began, the participating teams were cut by two teams. Oliver Naske from the set-in-motion-racing Team had an accident during the vehicle transport and had to abandon his Land Rover Defender. A second team also wasn't able to start with short-term notice.

Numerous stars of the rally scene can be found amongst the starting teams. Amongst them the former French FIA World Champion Christian Lavieille, the double Middle-East Rally Champion Said Rashid Al Hajri from Qatar and the Italian rally professional Wolfgang Pasetti, as well as Germany's European Rally Champion Armin Schwarz and the desert tested Uta Baier. The rally newcomers however won't make it easy for the pros. Panos Meyer from Germany wants to cross the finish-line first with his Land Rover Defender, just as the South African Melina Frey wants to lead the only women's team to victory behind the steering wheel of her Suzuki Grand Vitara. Whether Land Rover, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Porsche, Puch, Suzuki or Toyota – which team of human and machine will lastly harmonize best, will show itself. Not until the arrival in Ulaanbaatar on July 25th will it be decided which team wins the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson.

A gang of 63 vehicles set out today on this adventure. The participating cars are accompanied by service- and organizational-vehicles, as well as two ambulances and two helicopters, which will follow the rally events from above.

The Transsyberia Rally 2008 can be followed from the perspective of the participants in the daily photo blog at www.transsyberia-rallye.com. The teams will record their personal impressions and experiences with the new water and dirt resistant Sony Ericsson C702 Cyber-shot cellphone.

You'll find additional daily updated information, as well as downloadable text material and extraordinary images 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.

List of participants

Nat.	Driver		Nat.	Co-driver		Vehicle	Team	Starting number
US	Ryan Millen		US	Colin Godby		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team USA	1
IT	Antonio Tognana		IT	Carlo Cassina		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche Italia	2
QA	Adel Abdulla		IT	Norbert Lutteri		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche Centre Doha	3
BA	Mirko Risovic		BA	Bojan Risovic		Land Rover Defender 110	Team Tropic	4
RU	Sergey Kvashnin		RU	Alexey Pavlovskiy		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche Russia Team 2	5
ES	Pau Soler		ES	Laia Peinado		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Spain	6
CN	Ding Luo		SG	Eddie Keng		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche CN	8
UK	Martin Rowe		UK	Richard Tuthill		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche Cars Great Britain	9
DE	Armin Schwarz		DE	Andreas Schulz		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Germany 1	10
JP	Yoshifumi Ogawa		JP	Hirohisa Kaneko		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Porsche Japan	11
QA	Said Rashid Al Hajri		AE	Tim Trenker		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche Middle East	12
ZA	Melina Frey		DE	Alexandra Hahn		Suzuki Grand Vitara 3D DDiS	Suzuki / Maxi	13
CA	Kees Nierop		CA	Laurance Yap		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Canada	14
CO	Christian Pfeil-Schneider		CO	Tommy Steuer		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Colombian Arrow	15
ES	Carles Celma		DE	Wolf-Hendrik Unger		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Germany 2	16

FR	Christian Lavieille		FR	François Borsotto		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team France	17
PT	Pedro Gameiro		PT	Pedro Figueiredo		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Portuguese	18
CH	Aurele Bachmann		CH	Damien Blanke		Mitsubishi Pajero	Desert fox	19
RU	Denis Levyatov		RU	Sergey Talantsev		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Porsche Russia Team 1	20
DE	Panos Meyer		DE	Birger Veit		Land Rover Defender 90	Team JoeVito	21
AU	Paul Watson		AU	David Morley		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Oz - Unfinished Business	22
DE	Uta Baier		DE	Mario Steinbring		Toyota HZJ 80	Teambuctou	24
RU	Fedor Fedorov		RU	Mikhail Bardashov		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	INTEKO	25
SE	Lars Jakob Grapengiesser		RU	Vladimir Kalinin		Nissan Pathfinder	RUS&SWED	27
PL	Robert Szustkowski		PL	Jaroslav Kazberuk		Porsche Cayenne S	STT Racing / Porsche Poland	28
DE	Lars Kern		CZ	Daniel van Kan		Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia	Team Germany 3	29
PL	Lucasz Komornicki		PL	Rafal Marton		Porsche Cayenne S	STT Racing / Porsche Poland	31
AT	Christof Danner		DE	Jan Szekeres		Puch G 320	Danner Racing Team	33
DE	Andreas Kramer		DE	Kurt Ethenberger		Suzuki Grand Vitara 3D DDiS	Suzuki / SPOX.COM	34
IT	Wolfgang Pasetti		DE	Martin Gröger		Toyota Landcruiser J9	LYBIA-RALLY-RAID	37