

Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson: Participants are confirmed

On July 11th, 2008 more than 30 teams from 23 nations will set out on the trying journey from Moscow to Ulaanbaatar.

Bad Hindelang, June 11th, 2008. The adventure will begin in exactly one month: On July 11th, 2008 the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson, one of the toughest rallies for close-to-production vehicles worldwide starts. The participating pros, as well as the amateurs can barely wait to set off on the strenuous route from Moscow to Ulaanbaatar.

Aside from the experienced rally pilots, like Said Rashid Al Hajri from Katar (dual Middle-East Rally Champion) or the Italian Antonio Tognana (Second at the Transsyberia Rally 2007), there will also be rally newcomers at the starting line, who want to compete against the „old-timers“. For the Swiss Aurele Bachmann, who is lining up with a Mitsubishi Pajero, the participation in the Transsyberia Rally is the realization of his dream to take part in a 4x4 Off Road Rally once in his life and discover unknown nature at the same time. The team JoeVito (Germany) also consists of rally novices and has high expectations - towards their own performance as well as their vehicle, a Land Rover Defender. One will have to wait and see whether they will follow their own plans and are able to put a „prospective start-finish victory“ into action. Melina Frey (South Africa) and Alexandra Hahn (Germany), who are going into this competition as the only women's team will certainly want to avert this intention with their well tried Suzuki Grand Vitara. „Thanks to the officer training course which made me push the envelope several times, I feel physically and mentally extremely well prepared for the Transsyberia“, so Alexandra Hahn. She has already completed two Kosovo deployments as head of the mobile army surgical hospital ER. Ryan Millen and his co-pilot Colin Godby will set out on the journey in a Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia for the USA. It'll be thrilling to see whether the son of last year's winner Rod Millen can keep the first place in the family. It won't be easy to defeat his opponents. The mixed team from Spain with pilot Pau Soler and his co-driver Laia Peinado will utilize the experiences from last year in order to top fifth place. Due to their rally experience, both, the Russian Transsyberia newcomers Fedor Fedorov and Mikhail Bardashov shouldn't be underestimated, as well as Martin Rowe, the multiple British Rally Champion, who can look back on 15 successful years as a professional rally pilot.

All teams have set themselves the goal to at least arrive in Ulaanbaatar. Especially those who didn't make it to the finish line in 2007 have been gripped by ambition. „Last year we weren't able to complete the rally after a crash in the Gobi Desert. We have to attend to unfinished business! We're not giving up!“, says Paul Watson (Australia) of Team Oz – Unfinished Business. The same applies to Kees Nierop (Canada) and Armin Schwarz (Germany). In 2007, Nierop drove his Porsche Cayenne S Transsyberia over a bank, flew approximately 25 meters and overturned multiple times. Thanks to the high safety standards of the vehicle, both occupants were almost uninjured. Armin Schwarz also completed the Rally 2007 with several flips. This year he wants to steer towards a victory with his navigator, the dual Dakar winner Andi Schulz.

The Ural Mountains, the swampy Siberian Lowlands, the Altai Mountain passes which are up to 3700 meters high and the offshoots of the Gobi Desert are only some of the obstacles the teams have to tackle on their tour from the Russian to the Mongolian capital. From Canada to Columbia, from Qatar to Japan – representatives from all five continents are competing for the victory at the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson. Whether it's Land Rover, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Porsche, Puch, Suzuki or Toyota – which team of human and machine will be harmonizing, navigating and operating best, will reveal itself during the special tests which in part stretch out over hundreds of kilometers. For speed is not the key to success at the Transsyberia Rally.

You can follow the Transsyberia Rally from the participant's perspective in a daily photo blog at www.transsyberia-rallye.com. The teams will capture their personal impressions and experiences with the new water and dust proofed Sony Ericsson C702 Cyber-Shot Cellphone.

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Press conference

Thursday, July 10th, 2008

6 – 8 pm

Hotel Kempinski, Red Square, Ul. Balchug 1, RUS 115035 Moscow

You'll find more information, as well as downloadable text and extraordinary picture material of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson at:

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

TV and Online

REBEL Media will accompany the teams during the entire rally with a TV Production Crew and will record the rally events in HD quality. Daily news feeds and rough cuts are guaranteed, as well as up-to-date online reporting in text and photo.

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