

Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson: Team Spain wins first stage in Mongolia

Change at the top. Team Middle East unfortunately drops out. The French Lavieille / Borsotto assume the overall lead.

Mongolia has been reached and with it the “end of the asphalt”. That’s what the last entry of the road book in Russia said. If the special tests previously have been clear and brief, the participants are now faced with up to 407 kilometer long special stages through the jagged Mongolian mountainous landscape. From the sudatory temperatures in the Russian plains, it’s now going up to an altitude of 3000 meter, icy temperatures and snow included.

Mankhan, July 20th, 2008.

Stage nine led the teams of the Transsyberia Rally 2008 powered by Sony Ericsson from Olgy to Mankhan. They went through valleys and over mountain passes up to an altitude difference of 3025 meter. After 4 hours, 45 minutes and 47 seconds Team Spain with Pau Soler and Laia Painado crossed the finish line of the 282 km long special stage in first place. They’re participating in the Transsyberia for the second time as the only mixed team and it’s their first stage victory. “We started in ninth position this morning and arrived first. That’s excellent!“, the co-pilot of the Spanish winning duo beamed. “Laia did an amazing job, the navigation wasn’t easy today“, added Pau Soler. “About 100 km before the finish, we weren’t sure if we were lost, since we couldn’t see any tracks at all, but then we passed Armin Schwarz. We came to a fork in the road, where we went to the right, and Armin drove to the left. We were right.“ Once again it’s clear how important navigation is in a rally.

Team France followed only 7:15 minutes later. Lavieille and Borsotto had also consistently stayed in second place in the overall standings, but now assumed the lead. With only 30:12 minutes lag, the third place in the daily standings went to Armin Schwarz from Team Germany 1. Team Portugal reached the finish line as the fourth team with 30:54 lag. The youngsters of the rally, Ryan Millen and Colin Godby, achieved their best result at the Transsyberia Rally 2008 to date, coming in fifth. And that even though they had to change a tire twice. The ground in Mongolia is rocky. The Suzuki Team Kramer / Ettenberger made the Top 10 for the first time by coming in eighth.

Five teams aren’t part of the stages in Mongolia anymore. Team Porsche Cars Great Britain, whose vehicle burned out during the fifth stage, Team Italia, that had to fly home in Novosibirsk due to the injury pilot Tognana suffered, as well as Team Canada and Team STT Racing / Porsche Poland 1, who weren’t able to get their cars restarted. Since stage nine it’s also over for Team Middle East. The team which had been leading in the overall standings up to now, overlooked a bump in the rocky terrain. Pilot Said Rashid Al Hajri was injured during the hard landing. The 51-year old was brought to the hospital for observation. Navigator Tim Trenker remained unharmed. In their second participation in the Transsyberia, Team Middle East was also kept from arriving at the destination in Ulaanbaatar.

Even without a special stage, there were changes to the overall standings a few days ago: The rally management imposed a 30 minute time penalty on three of the teams for not adhering to the start time of the special test during the 6th stage. Affected were Team Germany 3 (Lars Kern and Daniel van Kan), Team Germany 1 (Armin Schwarz and Andreas Schulz), as well as Team USA (Ryan Millen and Colin Godby).

Interim daily standings for the Transsyberia Rally 2008, 9th of 14 stages, Olgy – Mankhan

1. Soler/Peinado	Team Spain	Porsche	4:45:47 hrs.
2. Lavieille/Borsotta	Team France	Porsche	0:07:15 hrs. lag
3. Schwarz/Schulz	Team Germany 1	Porsche	0:30:12
4. Gameiro/Figueiredo	Team Portuguese	Porsche	0:30:54
5. Millen/Godby	Team USA	Porsche	0:36:22
6. Abdulla/Lutteri	Team Qatar	Porsche	1:00:25
7. Ding/Keng	Team CN	Porsche	1:27:57
8. Kramer/Ettenberger	Suzuki/SPOX.COM	Suzuki	1:37:46
9. Levyatov/Talantsev	Team Russia 1	Porsche	1:37:54
100. Danner/Szekeres	Danner Racing Team	Mercedes	1:43:43

Overall standings – as of July 20th, 2008

1. Lavieille/Borsotta	Team France	Porsche	9:09:57 hrs.
2. Gameiro/Figueiredo	Team Portuguese	Porsche	0:46:49 hrs. lag
3. Schwarz/Schulz	Team Germany 1	Porsche	1:17:55
4. Soler/Peinado	Team Spain	Porsche	2:16:56
5. Levyatov/Talantsev	Team Russia 1	Porsche	2:37:35
6. Abdulla/Lutteri	Team Qatar	Porsche	2:47:23
7. Kern/van Kan	Team Germany 3	Porsche	3:14:33
8. Millen/Godby	Team USA	Porsche	3:15:20
9. Pfeil-Schneider/Steuer	Colombian Arrow	Porsche	3:38:53
10. Baier/Steinbring	Teambuctou	Toyota	4:11:46

Free, up-to-date images for editorial use are available at:
<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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