



The Empty Quarter Desert opens its doors to the Dakar Rally on Stage 11



(clockwise) Daniel Sanders, Corbin Leaverton, Mattias Ekström and Seth Quintero © DPPI/Kin Marcin/Red Bull Content Pool

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Stage 11 was billed as a final roll of the dice at the [2025 Dakar Rally](#). After a delayed start due to heavy fog, hundreds of kilometres over the mighty sand dunes of the Empty Quarter Desert were on the menu. The potential was

there to reel in the leaders and strike a late, late blow at this edition of the Dakar. Let's find out who managed to shake things up on the penultimate stage of the rally...

[Daniel Sanders](#) was in no mood to let anything slip and he's now just one stage away from claiming his first Dakar Rally bike race title. The Australian has led since the Prologue and is holding a nine-minute advantage over his closest competitor following today's bike special which ended up shortened to 152km. The Red Bull KTM Factory Racing rider is maintaining full focus on the 62km still to race on tomorrow's Stage 12.

"Tomorrow we've got 62km in the sand dunes. Tonight I'm going to look at changing the bike setup a little bit, I wasn't fully happy with it today. We know what's coming tomorrow and the focus will be on having a good day." – **Daniel Sanders**

[Luciano Benavides](#) continues his blistering speed in the second week of this Dakar. The Argentinian scored second place on Stage 11, his third stage podium in four days. The KTM biker is fourth overall, just 6m26s off the podium going into tomorrow's final stage.

"It's been a tough Dakar in general. Everyone who has made it into the Top 10 has done a really good job. The competition has been strong throughout the whole race." – **Luciano Benavides**

It's been a memorable rookie ride at the Dakar for 19-year-old [Edgar Canet](#). Red Bull KTM Factory Racing's newest recruit is out to seal the Rally2 title tomorrow and also an incredible eighth place overall in the two-wheel contest. The gap between Canet and [Tobias Ebster](#), second place overall in Rally2, stands at 35m08s ahead of Stage 12.

"We had over 150km of just dunes today, but that was shorter than we expected. It feels good to just have one more stage of 65km to go at this Dakar, I'm happy about that." – **Edgar Canet**

Watch Toby Price and Sam Sunderland take on the Ultimate class [here](#)

There was a charge on the penultimate stage from both [Mattias Ekström](#) of Ford M-Sport and [Nasser Al-Attiyah](#) of the Dacia Sandriders. These two battled for the stage win during the 321km car stage and eventually it was Ekström who came out on top by 41 seconds.

"I was pushing all stage. It's been a very competitive two weeks with lots of tough challenges along the way." – **Mattias Ekström**

The result keeps Ekström third overall, 15 minutes behind second placed **Henk Lategan** and 22m34s off race leader **Yazeed Al Rajhi**. A further four minutes back from Ekström is five-time Dakar winner Al-Attiyah in fourth overall. With just one stage remaining the sands of time seem to be running out for a major shakeup of the Ultimate class leaderboard.

"It was a difficult stage from the beginning. We had two flat tyres so that cost us time. After that we tried to push again. We didn't have any big problems today and the car was working very well." – **Nasser Al-Attiyah**

[Mitch Guthrie Jr.](#) continues to enjoy his rookie ride in the Ultimate class. The Californian brought home his Ford Raptor T1+ with the fourth fastest time of the day. Guthrie Jr. is holding down fifth place overall in the Ultimate class and is looking to finish off an impressive job on tomorrow's final stage.

"There were some tough areas to navigate and get up the dunes on this stage. We kept it moving, made some passes and I feel like we did alright." – **Mitch Guthrie Jr.**

Guthrie Jr. was joined in the Top 10 on today's stage by [Rokas Baciūška](#) and [Guillaume De Mévius](#) while [Seth Quintero](#) dug deep to stay in the Top 10 overall after suffering mechanical misfortune.

"It wasn't a fun one today. We ended up losing a damper about halfway through and then we had an issue with the hydraulic jack. It could have cost us our place in the Top 10 and that would suck because we've been fighting all week to get in there." – **Seth Quintero**

It was also a tough stage for [Lucas Moraes](#), [Cristina Gutiérrez](#) and [Nani Roma](#) as the dunes of the Empty Quarter Desert lived up to their fearsome reputation.

In the Challenger class **Nicolas Cavigliasso** now holds a lead of over an hour on second placed [Gonçalo Guerreiro](#). It was a tough day on the dunes for the Portuguese rookie of the Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team who burnt his hand fixing a mechanical. Now the gap between Guerreiro and third placed [Pau Navarro](#) has squeezed up to less than 20 minutes and nothing can be ruled out on tomorrow's final dash of 62km over the towering dunes of the Empty Quarter.

"We started off very calmly today. We're third overall so we want to keep our place on the podium. Today I felt tired, but I must stay focused on finishing the race tomorrow." – **Pau Navarro**

Yesterday's Challenger stage winner [Dania Akeel](#) was on the pace again today as she took third place on the stage. The Saudi Arabian driver didn't even mind today's delayed start.

"It was a strange beginning because we were delayed due to fog. It was nice talking with everybody. The stage was good, there was a lot of soft sand. I remembered parts of it from last year's 48-hour stage. It was good to be back." – **Dania Akeel**

The news was not so good for [Corbin Leaverton](#) of the Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team as he found himself at a standstill in the desert, requiring the assistance truck to get him moving again.

Problems for **Xavier De Soultrait** in the SSV class presented [Francisco 'Chaleco'](#)

[López](#) with the chance to shift up the rankings. The Chilean has now climbed to second overall in the SSV, but the gap between López and SSV leader **Brock Heger** is more than two hours. Surely that can't be closed on a single 62km stage? We'll find out tomorrow.

"It was a long stage in the sand and also in the sun. The car was going good and we didn't lose time in the dunes. It was a difficult stage, but we did a good job." –

Francisco López

At last we've reached the final stage of the 2025 Dakar Rally! Tomorrow will see the convoy convene for a mass start to create a special desert spectacle, before charging towards one final finishing line. Winners will get their trophies, but every competitor reaching the end of this Dakar will have every right to feel immensely proud.

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Mitch Guthrie Jr. © Kin Marcin/Red Bull Content Pool



Guillaume De Mévius © Flavien Duhamel/Red Bull Content Pool



Nasser Al-Attiyah © Kin Marcin/Red Bull Content Pool



Lucas Moraes © Kin Marcin/Red Bull Content Pool



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Tobias Ebster © Kin Marcin/Red Bull Content Pool



Luciano Benavides © DPPI/Red Bull Content Pool



Edgar Canet © Kin Marcin/Red Bull Content Pool

Selected Standings after Stage 11

ULTIMATE

1. Yazeed Al Rajhi (SAU) / Timo Gottschalk (DEU) – Toyota 51:53:36
2. Henk Lategan (ZAF) / Brett Cummings (ZAF) – Toyota +06:11
3. Mattias Ekström (SWE) / Emil Bergkvist (SWE) – Ford +22:34
4. Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) / Edouard Boulanger (FRA) – Dacia +26:50
5. Mitch Guthrie Jr. (USA) / Kellon Walch (USA) – Ford +54:05
9. Seth Quintero (USA) / Dennis Zenz (DEU) – Toyota +02:19:47
12. Rokas Baciūška (LTU) / Oriol Mena (ESP) – Toyota +03:40:19
14. Lucas Moraes (BRA) / Armand Monleon (ESP) – Toyota +05:27:55
18. Guillaume De Mévius (BEL) / Mathieu Baumel (FRA) – MINI +08:04:02
41. Cristina Gutiérrez (ESP) / Pablo Moreno (ESP) – Dacia +38:42:40
43. Nani Roma (ESP) / Alex Haro (ESP) – Ford +70:14:08

CHALLENGER

1. Nicolas Cavigliasso (ARG) / Valentina Pertegarini (ARG) – Taurus 56:44:09
2. Gonçalo Guerreiro (POR) / Cadu Sachs (BRA) – Taurus +01:11:36
3. Pau Navarro (ESP) / Lisandro Sisterna (ARG) – Taurus +01:30:11
20. Corbin Leaverton (USA) / Taye Perry (DEU) – Taurus +34:31:41
28. Dania Akeel (SAU) / Stéphane Duplé (FRA) – Taurus +73:04:22

SSV

1. Brock Heger (USA) / Max Eddy (USA) – Polaris 58:04:54
2. Francisco López (CHL) / Juan Pablo Latrach (CHL) – CAN-AM +02:06:00
3. Jeremías González Ferioli (ARG) / Pedro Rinaldi (ARG) – CAN-AM +03:37:06

BIKE (OVERALL)

1. Daniel Sanders (AUS) – KTM 52:13:34
2. Tosha Schareina (ESP) – Honda +09:00
3. Adrien Van Beveren (FRA) – Honda +15:50
4. Luciano Benavides (ARG) – KTM +22:16
8. Edgar Canet (ESP) – KTM +01:39:09

BIKE (RALLY2)

1. Edgar Canet (ESP) – KTM 53:52:43
 2. Tobias Ebster (AUT) – KTM +35:08
 3. Romain Dumontier (FRA) – Honda +01:22:53
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QUOTES

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Luciano Benavides: "It's been a tough Dakar in general. Everyone who has made it into the Top 10 has done a really good job. The competition has been strong throughout the whole race."

Edgar Canet: "We had over 150km of just dunes today, but that was shorter than we expected. It feels good to have just one more stage of 65km to go at this Dakar, I'm happy about that."

Mattias Ekström: "I was pushing all stage. It's been a very competitive two weeks with lots of tough challenges along the way. Emil (Bergkvist) and myself having been doing our best every day and so far there's not been many things I would do different."

Nasser Al-Attiyah: "It was a difficult stage from the beginning. We had two flat tyres so that cost us time. After that we tried to push again. We didn't have any big problems today and the car was working very well."

Mitch Guthrie Jr.: "It was a good day for us. We ended up in a great spot after yesterday's short stage. It was a long day today and it wasn't easy. We did our best to keep it clean. There were some tough areas to navigate and get up the dunes. We kept it moving, made some passes and I feel like we did alright."

Seth Quintero: "It wasn't a fun one today. We ended up losing a damper about halfway through and then we had an issue with the hydraulic jack. It could have cost us our chance of a Top 10 and that would suck because we've been fighting all week to get in there. Hopefully next year is a better."

Guillaume De Mévius: "It was a tricky day today. I made some mistakes and had to turn around on some dunes because I couldn't reach the top. To go faster on this type of terrain I think I still have a few things to learn. Now it's important that we finish the race."

Rokas Baciūška: "It was a long day after a late start, but we're here. We had a good pace on the stage, some parts we risked and in other parts we went easy. I felt something wrong with the car in the last kilometres so the mechanics will check that tonight."

Lucas Moraes: "I took the chance today to get some experience of opening in the dunes. During the stage I started to get a little bit of motion sickness, but I took some medicine for that. It was a great experience and now let's keep going on the final stage."

Cristina Gutiérrez: "We waited for Nasser (Al-Attiyah) at the beginning and then we stopped when we saw he had a flat tyre. Now we have one more day left and we'll do our best for the team."

Pau Navarro: "We started off very calmly today. We're third overall so we want to keep our place on the podium. Today I felt tired, but I must stay focused on finishing the race tomorrow."

Dania Akeel: "It was a strange beginning because we were delayed due to fog. It was nice talking with everybody. The stage was good, there was a lot of soft sand. I remembered parts of it from last year's 48-hour stage. It was good to be back."

Francisco López: "It was a long stage in the sand and also in the sun. The car was going good and we didn't lose time in the dunes. It was a difficult stage, but we did a good job."

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