



Stage 6 plunges the 2025 Dakar Rally convoy into the toughest terrain



(clockwise) Cristina Gutiérrez, Guillaume De Mévius, Daniel Sanders and Gonçalo Guerreiro © Flavien Duhamel/Red Bull Content Pool

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The [2025 Dakar Rally](#) roared back into life on Stage 6 leaving the Rest Day in Hail as just a distant memory. Getting back into the rhythm of racing proved a struggle for some on the 434-kilometre timed special stage to Al Duwadimi.

There were of course plenty of competitors waiting to pounce on any mistakes made by the frontrunners. Here's how things played out on Stage 6.

[Daniel Sanders](#) found himself in top spot of the Dakar bike race at Rest Day once again this year. He's clearly determined not to let his lead slip away this time and drove a tactically sound Stage 6. The Red Bull KTM Factory Racing rider will look use a favourable starting position on Stage 7 to his advantage.

"It's tough to get back on the rhythm after the Rest Day. Tomorrow's stage looks like another tough one and hopefully we're in a good starting position for it." – **Daniel Sanders**

The dangers for the bikers on Stage 6 was clear from the off with top riders **Ross Branch** and **Bradley Cox** both crashing out of the rally. After witnessing accidents on the stage it was decided by KTM riders [Luciano Benavides](#) and [Edgar Canet](#) not to risk it all on the route to Al Duwadimi.

"I had a crash 45km into today's stage and after that I needed to calm down my rhythm. There's still six stages so there's a long way to go." – **Edgar Canet**

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There was a first stage win at this Dakar for [Guillaume De Mévius](#) in the Ultimate class. The Belgian finished as runner-up on his Ultimate class debut 12 months ago. A tough first week means that the overall podium is a distant prospect for De Mévius this time around, but he's determined to enjoy this coming week in the dunes.

"It seems like we've won the stage so that's a good day for us. We had a bad first week so we'll push during this second week. Our target is to pick up World Championship points and also secure a spot inside the Top 10." – **Guillaume De Mévius**

The biggest push at the top of the Ultimate class overall leaderboard came from [Nasser Al-Attiyah](#) behind the wheel of his Dacia Sandrider. The five-time Dakar winner stays fourth, but took more than four and a half minutes out of race leader **Henk Lategan**.

"From 30km we were opening the stage. On the dunes it was not easy but we did a good job. I'm sure we can be even faster to try and get back the time we've lost." – **Nasser Al-Attiyah**

One spot ahead of Al-Attiyah in the overall is the Ford Raptor T1+ of [Mattias Ekström](#). The Swede is 22m27s behind Lategan and 15 minutes behind **Yazeed Al Rajhi** in second.

"We did our best and we're here again at the finish. It's a still long race and we have a lot of fight left in us." – **Mattias Ekström**

Toyota Gazoo Racing driver [Lucas Moraes](#) starting today in fifth overall but the Brazilian ran into trouble on Stage 6. While stationary with a broken dampener Lucas was helped out by his father **Marcos Moraes**, who is also driving a Toyota Hilux at this Dakar. Lucas was eventually able to get moving again, but ended up losing three hours and slipping out of the overall Top 10.

Moving ahead of Moraes were a pair of Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team graduates, [Mitch Guthrie Jr.](#) and [Seth Quintero](#). Guthrie Jr's Ford Raptor T1+ now sits fifth overall while Quintero has his Toyota GR DKR Hilux parked in eighth.

"Every day we seem to be moving up in the overall so the plan is working and the car is getting better all the time." – **Mitch Guthrie Jr.**

Also still part of the convoy as the rally moves closer to the notorious Empty Quarter Desert are [Rokas Baciūška](#), [Giniel de Villiers](#), [Toby Price](#), [Cristina Gutiérrez](#) and [Nani Roma](#).

There was a total of 829 kilometres to cover today with a combination of special stage, liaison plus a neutralised section of 172km. This mammoth day meant that it was nighttime before the Challenger and SSV classes crossed the finish line. It was a long day at the office for [Corbin Leaverton](#) of the Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team but the American stuck to the task and took second place on the stage in the Challenger class.

"I probably enjoyed that stage more than any I've raced since I've been here. A lot of guys might whine because it was a long day and we finished in the dark. Shoutout to my co-driver Taye (Perry), it was a faultless day from her in the navigator's seat." – **Corbin Leaverton**

Leaverton's fellow Red Bull Off-Road Junior Team driver [Gonçalo Guerreiro](#) also had a very long day in the dust after the Rest Day. The Portuguese driver conceded a few minutes to Challenger class leader **Nicolas Cavigliasso**, but stays second overall with a gap of 28m34s to first place.

"It was a tough day and we finished in the dark. It was a really demanding stage, but we made it." – **Gonçalo Guerreiro**

There was a first Challenger class podium for [Pau Navarro](#) and the Taurus T3 Max driver is now up to fourth overall. [Dania Akeel](#) was fighting for the stage win before a collision with a rock saw her vehicle suffer a broken wishbone near the end of Stage 6.

Another stage win in the SSV class has lifted [Francisco López](#) onto the overall podium. The Chilean now has six stages left to try and grab the second SSV title of his illustrious Dakar career.

"We drove the final kilometres at nighttime and this was difficult for everyone. This race has been a real adventure so far and we still have the Empty Quarter to come." –

Francisco López

Tomorrow's Stage 7 is one of five stages at this Dakar that sees two-wheel and four-wheel competitors take divergent paths. This certainly complicates things in the car category, where the first Ultimate class crews on the 481km special stage will have no bike lines to follow in the sand. On the other hand, it means an earlier start for the cars so they have a much better chance of finishing the stage before nightfall.

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Mattias Ekström © Flavien Duhamel/Red Bull Content Pool



Nani Roma © DPPI/Red Bull Content Pool



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Luciano Benavides © Flavien Duhamel/Red Bull Content Pool



Edgar Canet © Flavien Duhamel/Red Bull Content Pool

Selected Standings at Rest Day

ULTIMATE

1. Henk Lategan (ZAF) / Brett Cummings (ZAF) – Toyota 32:51:36
3. Mattias Ekström (SWE) / Emil Bergkvist (SWE) – Ford +22:27
4. Nasser Al-Attiyah (QAT) / Edouard Boulanger (FRA) – Dacia +30:25
5. Mitch Guthrie Jr. (USA) / Kellon Walch (USA) – Ford +50:16
8. Seth Quintero (USA) / Dennis Zenz (DEU) – Toyota +01:36:37
13. Rokas Baciūška (LTU) / Oriol Mena (ESP) – Toyota +03:27:44
14. Lucas Moraes (BRA) / Armand Monleon (ESP) – Toyota +03:33:56
15. Guillaume De Mévius (BEL) / Mathieu Baumel (FRA) – MINI +03:43:43
16. Giniel de Villiers (ZAF) / Dirk von Zitzewitz (DEU) – Toyota +03:51:23
24. Toby Price (AUS) / Sam Sunderland (GBR) – Toyota +06:29:38
46. Cristina Gutiérrez (ESP) / Pablo Moreno (ESP) – Dacia +37:46:22
50. Nani Roma (ESP) / Alex Haro (ESP) – Ford +65:23:04

CHALLENGER

1. Nicolas Cavigliasso (ARG) / Valentina Pertegarini (ARG) – Taurus 35:57:59
2. Gonçalo Guerreiro (POR) / Cadu Sachs (BRA) – Taurus +35:02
- 4: Pau Navarro (ESP) / Lisandro Sisterna (ARG) – Taurus +01:57:08
7. Corbin Leaverton (USA) / Taye Perry (DEU) – Taurus +04:05:26

SSV

1. Brock Heger (USA) / Max Eddy (USA) – Polaris 37:21:01
3. Francisco López (CHL) / Juan Pablo Latrach (CHL) – CAN-AM +01:47:27

BIKE

1. Daniel Sanders (AUS) – KTM 35:18:49
6. Luciano Benavides (ARG) – KTM +30:08
10. Edgar Canet (ESP) – KTM +01:16:59

QUOTES

Daniel Sanders: “The second week got off to a bit of a rough start for me when I got a little bit lost at the beginning. It’s tough to get back on the rhythm after the Rest Day. Tomorrow’s stage looks like another tough one and hopefully we’re in a good starting position for it.”

Luciano Benavides: “In the morning I did a mistake and Nacho (Cornejo) caught me

from behind. After that we rode together for most of the stage. We pushed all day and in the last kilometres we caught up to Adrien (Van Beveren)."

Edgar Canet: "Today was a long day on the bike. Even from the finish line we have another 123km to ride back to the bivouac. I had a crash 45km into today's stage and after that I needed to calm down my rhythm. There's still six stages so there's a long way to go."

Guillaume De Mévius: "It seems like we've won the stage so that's a good day for us. We had a bad first week so we push during this second week. Our target is to pick up World Championship points and also secure a spot inside the Top 10."

Nasser Al-Attiyah: "From 30km we were opening the stage. On the dunes it was not easy but we did a good job. I'm sure we can be even faster to try and get back the time we have lost. If somebody else opens tomorrow that would be good."

Mattias Ekström: "The first part of the stage was tricky because of the navigation and the second part was in the dunes so that was also very tricky. We did our best and we're here again at the finish. It's a still long race and we have a lot of fight left in us."

Seth Quintero: "We had a plan for today to get a better starting position for tomorrow. I hope we've executed that. When I saw we were OK for fuel in the second section I was able to turn up the pace quite a bit. We had a really fun battle with Ekström all the way to the finish."

Mitch Guthrie Jr.: "It was a long day, but a good day. I'm glad we got some rest before this one. We saw Lucas (Moraes) pull over at the beginning and after that we just tried to keep it clean. Every day we seem to be moving up in the overall so the plan is working and the car is getting better all the time."

Cristina Gutiérrez: "We struggled with our rhythm from the beginning today. I wasn't very comfortable with the car's suspension. Tonight we will work with the engineers to find an improvement for tomorrow."

Toby Price: "We're finding it tough to catch a break at the moment. We had an issue with the power today so we'll assess that tonight. It's frustrating but that's the Dakar Rally for you, sometimes it's not too kind."

Rokas Baciūška: "We had a clean run without any problems. I'm OK with starting near the front tomorrow because when you're at the back it's hard to get past in the dust. We're here and we're surviving."

Nani Roma: "It was a real Dakar stage, very long. This morning I suffered a lot trying to overtake the cars in front. The car is working well and we're happy to still be in the race."

Corbin Leaverton: "I probably enjoyed that stage more than any I've raced since

I've been here. A lot of guys might whine because it was a long day and we finished in the dark. Shoutout to my co-driver Taye (Perry), it was a faultless day from her in the navigator's seat."

Gonçalo Guerreiro: "It was a tough day and we finished in the dark. It was a really demanding stage, but we made it. We lost some time changing a wheel. Now we have six stages to go and we're fully focused on finishing this Dakar."

Francisco López: "We drove the final kilometres at nighttime and this was difficult for everyone. This race has been a real adventure so far and we still have the Empty Quarter to come."

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