



### **Stage 13: Ullevalsteter Nails One; Al-Attiyah Is Not Letting Go**

Norwegian rider Pal-Anders Ullevalseter wins the Santa Rosa stage; it is his first Dakar stage victory in any Dakar. He also gets to second place in the general standings. In cars, the day's stage goes to Stéphane Peterhansel but it mainly allowed Nasser Al Attiyah to get closer to Carlos Sainz in the general standings. Sainz's lead is not a short 2'48''.

Finishing second is the story of his life. Pal-Anders Ullevalseter is one of the pillars of the rally raid and has been so for many years. A collector of honorable second or third places, often the foil or the arbiter of famous Despres/Coma duels, the Norwegian has finished eight times second of a Dakar stage. He will have had to wait for his eighth Dakar to prove that he can be the fastest as well. In this penultimate Dakar stage in the 2010 edition, Ullevalseter started by crossing the first 50 km of sand dunes before pushing its KTM bike to the max on ultra-fast tracks that were the bulk of today's route. In the end, he beat Cyril Despres for the first time in a stage... by 43''. The event could be a trigger for more.

To get out of hiding, Ullevalseter waited till he was in an immediate challenge situation. Pushed back in the standings yesterday by Francisco "Chaleco" Lopez, he had to hit hard to get back to ... second place in the standings! Along the way, he passed the Chilean rider who finished the day's stage 5'35'' behind the day's winner. This is more than enough for Pal to keep his second position up to Buenos Aires. Cyril Despres as solid leader in the raid only has 666 km to ride before getting his third Dakar title with only 202 km as a special stage. This distance seems way to short for anyone including second place Ullevalseter to compensate the 1h04'12'' lead Despres now has in the standings.

As for the car category, the race is far from being won: both leaders of the Volkswagen team are still fiercely battling for final victory. If race orders have often been given to freeze – sometimes too early – the positions of contenders in the general standings, no one will now suspect Kriss Nissen of having done so and influencing the rivalry between Carlos Sainz and Nasser Al Attiyah. Obviously, the Qatari had a free hand this morning to go tickle the back of the leader in the general standings. And it is exactly what he did as soon as they crossed the first sandy section of the stage where he was 1'22'' faster than Sainz. In the dust of the "Matador", Nasser kept on pushing to make the leader doubt and win second after second. In the end, his mission was half accomplished: Al Attiyah, who arrived second of the day's stage wins 2'32'' over Sainz. Before the last stage, the gap between the two Race Touareg drivers is minute: a short 2'48''. The margin of Sainz has never been this small since he took command of the standings on stage 5.

The penultimate stage also reassured the BMW X-Raid clan on its abilities to defy Volkswagen in the following editions of the Dakar and in other rally raids. Stéphane

Peterhansel gets the day's best time whilst Guerlain Chicherit squeezes in between Al Attiyah and Sainz in the stage rankings. In total "Peter" wins here his fourth stage in this year's Dakar.µ

In the truck category, there is still one stage to go for the Kamaz team to reach 100% stage success. Today – again – as in the previous 12 stages, a member of the Russian team proved to be the fastest i.e. Firdaus Kabirov. For the fourth time in the rally raid, the title holder arrived ahead of his teammate Vladimir Chagin although just 1'50 min ahead. Today was the perfect day for the Kamaz team as Ilgizar Mardeev arrived third after his two teammates. In the overall standings, Chagin is getting very close to a sixth Dakar victory. He is 1h11 ahead of Kabirov in the standings.

source: [www.dakar.com](http://www.dakar.com)