

South African Safari Rally
19 -24 May, 2024

THE DACIA
SANDRIDERS



MEDIA GUIDE

South African Safari Rally 2025



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Frank Marotte

Dacia Brand, VP Sales
& Marketing

“From the familiar terrain of the Middle East, where The Dacia Sandriders claimed a second FIA World Rally-Raid Championship victory in February, we excitedly embark on a mission of discovery in South Africa.

A newcomer to the W2RC, the South African Safari Rally perfectly embodies the spirit of rally-raid as a human and sporting adventure.

Providing an exhilarating blend of gravel and dirt tracks, open savanna, dense bush, even mountainous sections, the South African Safari Rally is an event that matches Dacia's brand identity; robust and outdoor-oriented with a four-wheel-drive prototype designed to withstand extreme conditions.

While the South African Safari Rally symbolises rally-raid, this hugely challenging sport perfectly represents the balance between the rational and emotional aspects that are at the core of Dacia's DNA.

The Dacia Sandriders will meet the challenge of the South African Safari Rally head on with a driver line-up consisting of Nasser Al-Attiyah and Édouard Boulanger and Sébastien Loeb and Fabian Lurquin.

Nasser and Édouard were the winners of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge in their sustainable-fuelled Dacia Sandrider. It was a magnificent performance that puts them in the lead of the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship heading to South Africa.

Sébastien and Fabian took a stage win and led overall in Abu Dhabi but were unfortunate to retire due to damage sustained to their Dacia Sandrider when they rolled on the fourth stage of the event.

Like Nasser and Édouard, we will count on them to do all they can to deliver a strong result for team in South Africa from where we are looking forward to a warm welcome and a successful third round of the W2RC.”

“



Tiphanie Isnard
TEAM PRINCIPAL

“It’s a real pleasure to continue our FIA World Rally-Raid Championship adventure in South Africa for what marks the third round and halfway point of the season and the fourth appearance of The Dacia Sandriders in the W2RC.

As well as being another new event, the South African Safari Rally represents a step into the unknown for our team and crews as we switch from the desert-based events we’ve tackled to date to something with a bit of almost everything, sand dunes excluded. Although Nasser Al-Attiyah has tested in the country before with one of his previous teams, it really is uncharted territory.

Fortunately, we’ll take the start with crucial knowledge and experience, gained from a test in South Africa, which we’ll add to all the hard work and preparation we have done since our Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge victory in February.

That’s included making several changes to the Dacia Sandrider for the rough and tough terrain we expect to encounter, as well as the fact the stages are at a higher altitude than what we’ve experienced previously.

Because we haven’t competed in South Africa before, we approach this rally with a lot of humility, especially as we will be in the backyard of some of our rivals, who we know will be very strong.

Despite all the challenges, the target will be to maintain Nasser and Édouard’s position in the Drivers’ and Navigators’ championships, while also strengthening our position in the Manufacturers’ championship.

Above all we start the South African Safari Rally with the aim of accumulating valuable data and understanding this type of terrain by getting our two Dacia Sandriders to the finish.”

OUR DREAM TEAM

Nasser
AL-ATTIYAH



► DRIVING

Born: 21/12/1970 (age 54)
Doha, Qatar

In 100 words: A five-time winner of what is now the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship, Al-Attiyah's Dakar victory tally also totals five triumphs, such has been his domination of the sport over the past decade and a half. He's been prolific in stage rallying too. As well as finishing in the top four of a World Rally Championship event outright, Al-Attiyah claimed the Production Car world crown in 2006, back-to-back WRC2 honours between 2014 and 2015 and a record 19 Middle East titles. He's also tried out circuit racing and won the skeet shooting bronze medal in the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

W2RC current position: 1st

Edouard
BOULANGER



► NAVIGATING

Born: 04/05/1979 (age 46)
Nancy, France

In 100 words: A passionate outdoor sports enthusiast, Boulanger developed a love for motorcycles early in life. His endurance mindset was shaped by his competitive rowing days, when he learned that hard work leads to success. After finishing second in his category in his first enduro rally in 2005, Edouard honed his navigation skills and became a map specialist, bringing digital mapping to rally-raid. In 2012, he earned his first Dakar entry by winning the Dakar Challenge on Rallye des Pharaons. He later won the 2021 Dakar alongside Stéphane Peterhansel. Boulanger embarks on a new adventure with Nasser Al-Attiyah and The Dacia Sandriders.

W2RC current position: 1st

OUR DREAM TEAM

Sébastien
LOEB



► DRIVING

Born: 26/02/1974 (age 51)
Haguenau, France

In 100 words: The benchmark in the FIA World Rally Championship with nine overall titles, Loeb is now a force in rally-raid. He led on his Dakar debut in 2016, finished runner-up one year later – and again in 2022 and 2023 – and also won the FIA W2RC-counting Andalucía Rally in 2022. Loeb has raced in the Le Mans 24 Hours, tested in Formula One and claimed victories in World Touring Cars and World Rallycross. Competing with The Dacia Sandriders team-mate Cristina Gutiérrez, Loeb became Extreme E champion in 2022, while his Pikes Peak Hill Climb record, set in 2013, stood for five years.

W2RC current position: 20th

Fabian
LURQUIN



► NAVIGATING

Born: 09/09/1975 (age 49)
Liège, Belgium

In 100 words: Lurquin began his Dakar journey 20 years ago as a navigator aboard a T4 assistance truck. Over time, he gained extensive knowledge and experience, eventually co-driving for Erik Wevers in three Dakars from 2012 to 2014. His major breakthrough came alongside Mathieu Serradori when they won Africa Race in 2018 before going on to secure a Dakar stage victory in 2020. Later, partnering with Sébastien Loeb, Lurquin achieved three Dakar podium finishes: second in 2022 and again in 2023, and third in 2024. He's embarking on a new adventure with The Dacia Sandriders and aiming for his first Dakar victory.

W2RC current position: 19th

THE DACIA SANDRIDERS: KEY PERSONNEL



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DACIA SANDRIDER UNDER THE SKIN

Inspired by the Dacia Manifesto concept car, the Dacia Sandrider has been designed specifically for use on rally-raid events and is homologated for the FIA W2RC's headlining Ultimate category.

With key inputs from experts within the Renault Group and motorsport engineering specialist Prodrive, agility and weight-saving were among the main considerations during the design process. That's resulted in a no-frills exterior with body panels fitted only as necessary, with its lighter weight helping to reduce fuel consumption.

While the Sandrider is as light as possible, it's also as strong as possible to withstand the punishing terrain it will encounter and to keep its crews safe.

Anti-reflective paint has been applied to improve on-board visibility, while the Sabelt seats are upholstered in special anti-bacterial fabrics that self-regulate humidity. A magnetic plate built into the Sandrider's bodywork prevents bolts from being lost in the sand during wheel changes.

To keep cockpit temperatures down, anti-infrared pigments have been directly integrated with the Sandrider's carbon body panels.

The Sandrider's 3-litre V6 twin-turbo direct injection engine runs on sustainable fuel supplied by Aramco.



TECH SPEC

FIA CLASS

Ultimate T1+

Chassis
Tubular

Body
Carbon fibre

Engine

V6, 3 litres, twin-turbo,
direct injection

Maximum power

265 kW/360 bhp at 5,000 rpm

Maximum torque

539 Nm at 4,250 rpm

Fuel

ARAMCO sustainable
fuel, 102 RON to FIA
Appendix J Art.252-9.1

Wheels

17-inch aluminium

Tyres

BF Goodrich, 37 inches

Length x width x height

4,140 x 2,290 x 1,810 mm

Wheelbase

3,000 mm

Front/rear overhang

590/550 mm

Transmission

4X4

Gearbox

6-speed sequential

Front/rear suspension

Double wishbone

Suspension travel

350 mm

Brake calipers

Alcon 6 piston, monoblock

Brake discs

Alcon ventilated discs, diameter 355mm

Pedal box

Alcon floor mounted, adjustable.
Alcon brake and clutch master cylinders.

Seats and belts

Sabelt 6 point harnesses and
carbon fibre seats

South African Safari Rally IN SHORT

Based out of Sun City, 140 kilometres northwest of Johannesburg and adjacent to the Pilanesberg National Park, the South African Safari Rally marks the country's debut in the FIA World Rally-Raid Championship.

The rally has its origins in last June's test event, TGRSA Safari 1000, but has been extensively enhanced to meet W2RC standards.

It begins with a 25-kilometre Prologue on Monday May 19 with Stage 1, a loop stage southwest of the Sun City Bivouac, following on Tuesday May 20 with a timed route of 285 kilometres and a total distance of 571 kilometres.

Stage 2 further southwest of Sun City on Wednesday May 21 marks part one of the Marathon Stage with crews covering 418 kilometres to reach the overnight Marathon Camp. The South African Safari Rally resumes on Thursday May 22 with part two of the Marathon Stage, Stage 3, which covers a further 537 kilometres.

Stage 4, which runs close to South Africa's border with Botswana on Friday May 23, is another loop stage starting from and finishing in Sun City. It adds 698 kilometres to the event's total distance. The deciding Stage 5 on Saturday May 24, located a short distance from Sun City, measures 290 kilometres of which 218 kilometres are against the clock (including eight kilometres of the Power Selective Section).

While dry conditions are the norm during May in northwest South Africa, the possibility of light rain remains, while the ambient temperature ranges from five degrees centigrade in the morning and at night to 26 degrees centigrade during the day.



THE CHALLENGE IN STORE

South African Safari Rally

FIA World Rally-Raid Championship

Round 3 of 5 **19 -24 May, 2024**



Monday's Prologue provides a taste of what's in store during the next five days of competition, albeit over a timed distance of nine kilometres. Based just 13 kilometres from Sun City, event organisers have described the route as "an unpredictable, undulating gravel track through the African bush, with tight sections and open fast sections and no room for error".

19 MAY

PROLOGUE

105
KM

Total

80
KM

Liaison

25
KM

Special



Located approximately 200 kilometres west of Sun City, Stage 1 of the South African Safari Rally puts crews to the test on farmland tracks and roads around Lichtenburg. The stage also includes sections on sand tracks and open bush and is the rally's second longest in terms of competitive kilometres.

20 MAY

STAGE 1

571
KM

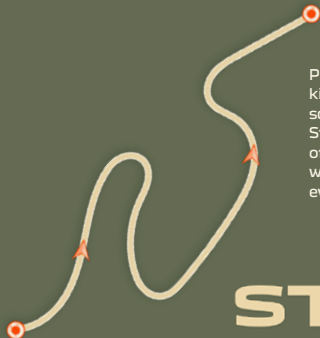
Total

286
KM

Liaison

285
KM

Special



Part one of the Marathon Stage offers the most timed kilometres of the rally. Crews will experience more open savanna areas and lots of fast open tracks during Stage 2, which is centred around Barberspan southwest of Sun City. The route includes "some off-piste sections where navigation will be important", according to the event organisers.

21 MAY

STAGE 2

418
KM

Total

233
KM

Liaison

315
KM

Special



Crews set off from the Marathon Camp near Stella on Thursday May 22. Ahead of arriving at the Sun City Bivouac, they'll encounter a 253-kilometre timed route similar in character to Stage 2. That means open savanna areas and lots of dirt tracks. Organisers have highlighted sections where navigational skills will be put to the test.

22 MAY

STAGE 3

537
KM

Total

257
KM

Liaison

280
KM

Special



Located west of Sun City close to South Africa's border with Botswana and passing near to Dinokana and Skilpadshok, the penultimate stage of the South African Safari Rally starts on dirt tracks through bushland before it becomes "tight and rocky as it goes into the mountains", according to the event organisers.

23 MAY

STAGE 4

698
KM

Total

418
KM

Liaison

280
KM

Special



With 118 kilometres against the clock, the fifth and final stage of the South African Safari Rally is, according to the event organisers, "a fast-paced loop through red dirt tracks and open farmlands, with some narrow sections through invasive bush". It's located in close proximity to Sun City.

24 MAY

STAGE 5

290
KM

Total

80
KM

Liaison

210
KM

Special

Power Selective Section: 8km

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roole

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Sabell

ROUTE MAP



DACIA SANDRIDER RALLY-RAID EXPLAINER

Can't tell the difference between a Prologue and Marathon Stage? Unsure what a Power Selective Section is? This short rally-raid explainer will help.

PROLOGUE:

The Prologue is a timed section designed to determine the starting order for the rally. It takes place as a Selective Section and sets the basis for the running order of the first stage. Organisers can assign start times based on prologue results, while they also have the flexibility to adjust these - for example, by letting the top 10 finishers choose their starting positions for the next section. Additionally, it is up to the event organisers to decide whether or not the prologue results will count towards the overall classification.

POWER SELECTIVE SECTION:

Held at the end of every W2RC round, this final sprint, which runs for between five and 30 kilometres, rewards the three fastest crews in each class with 3, 2 and 1 points respectively. The Power Selective Section is a recommendation for organisers in 2025 but mandatory in 2026.

MARATHON STAGE:

The Marathon Stage takes place over two consecutive days, during which no assistance vehicles or team personnel are permitted to provide support. Competitors must carry out any maintenance or repairs on their own, although mutual help between those still competing is allowed. This stage tests both endurance and mechanical self-sufficiency.



WHAT'S NEXT?

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22-28 SEPTEMBER 2025

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RALLY RAID PORTUGAL



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GET IN TOUCH

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MEDIA WEBSITE

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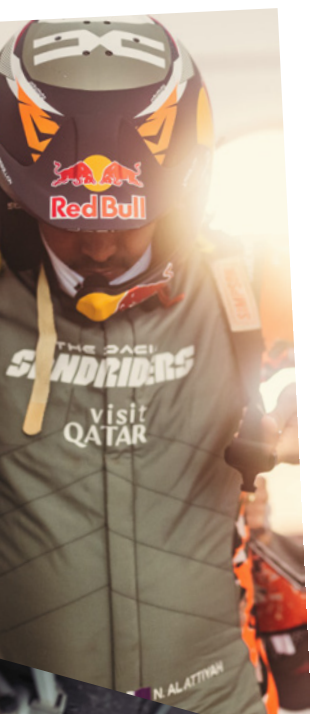
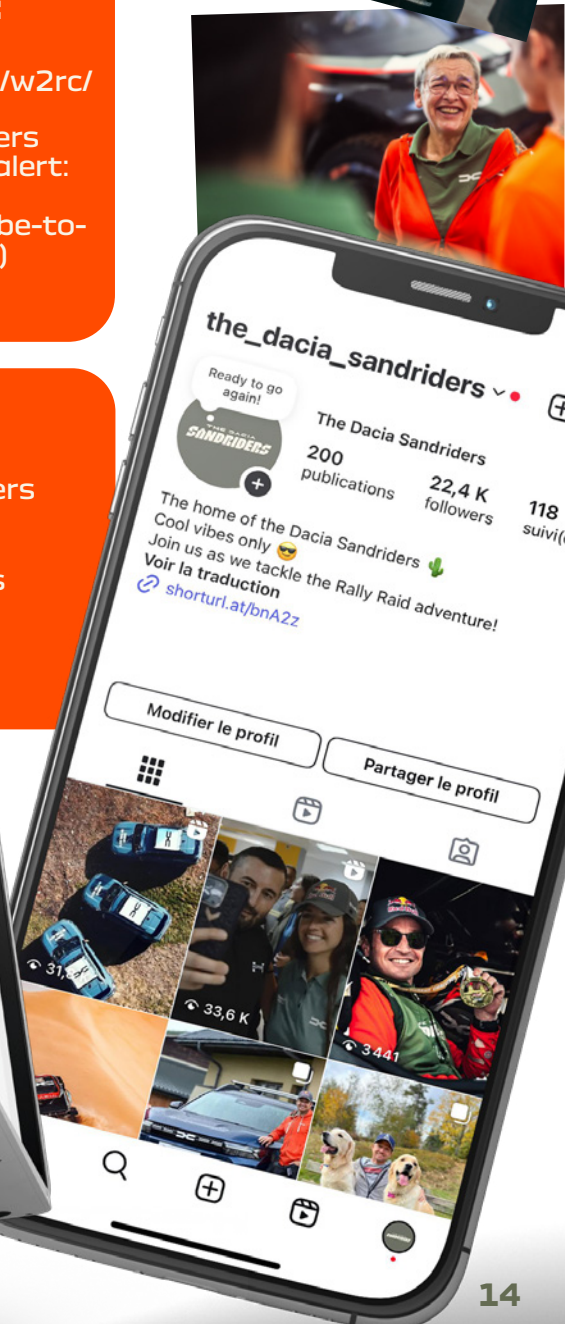
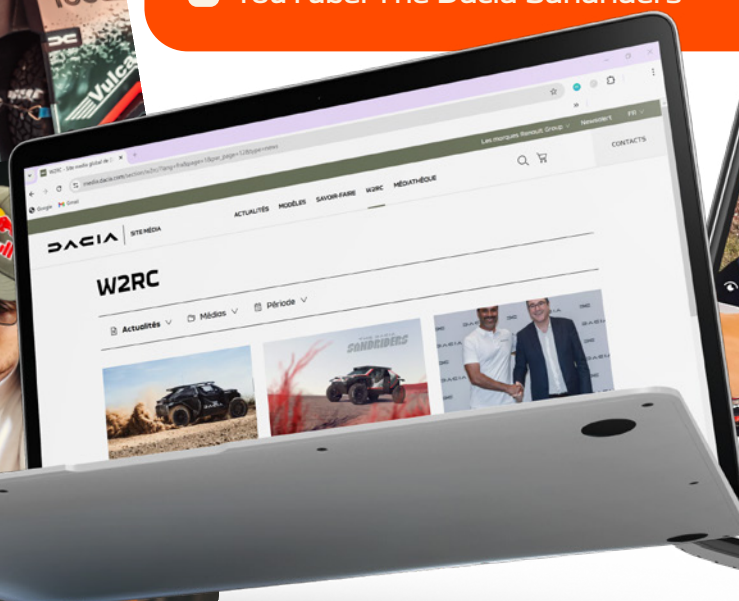
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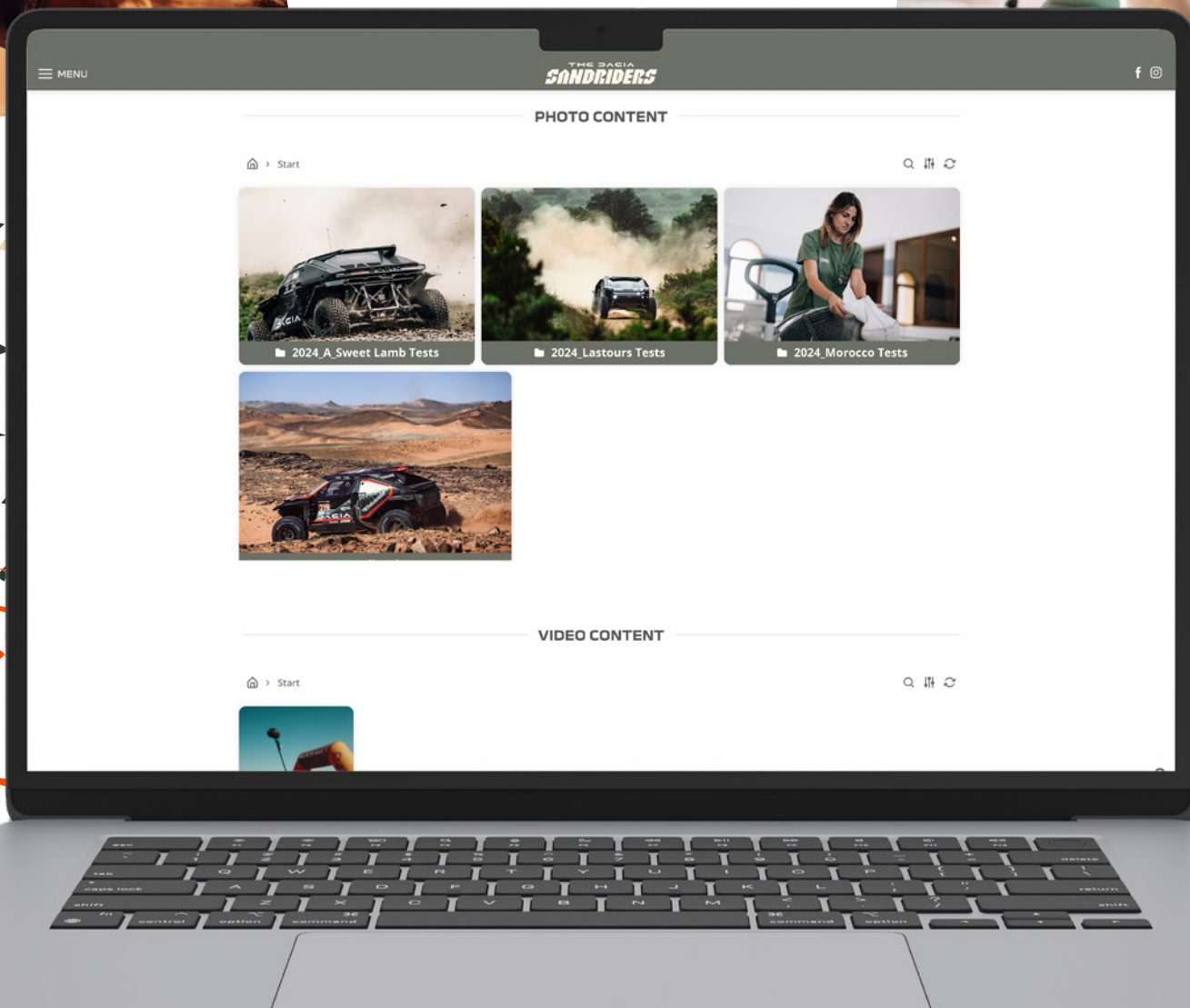


THE DACIA SANDRIDERS MEDIACONTENT

Welcome to our media content site.
Here you can download content from
races and events that you can use for
your media coverage.

MEDIA WEBSITE

 <https://media.thesandrivers.com>
 Password: DaciaSandRDRS2025



EVENTS DURING South African Safari Rally 2025

18th of May

18:00 / 19:00

Pre Event Press Conference
Location: SASR Podium / Bivouac

19th of May

9:00 / 11:45

Opening Ceremony
Sun City Bivouac Stage

24th of May

10:00

Ceremonial Finish
Sun City Bivouac Stage

16:00 / 17:00

Post Event Press Conference
Location: SASR Podium / Bivouac

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