

SILK WAY RALLY 2017
NEWS ACCESS 20170722
STAGE 14 (ZHONGWEI – XI'AN) **CANCELLED + PODIUM CEREMONY**

SCRIPTING INFO

There was to be no 14th Stage of the 2017 Silk Way Rally, as organisers made the decision late on Friday night to cancel the final 100-kilometre special between Zhongwei and Xi'an, due to heavy rain in the Zhongwei region.

While the results were not made official until the competitors reached Xi'an on Saturday, there were celebrations in the Peugeot and Kamaz camps on the Zhongwei bivouac, as Cyril Despres celebrated his second straight victory in the cars, and Dmitry Sotnikov added to his 2013 crown in the trucks. Kamaz have now won the trucks category at the Silk Way in six of seven editions (the only exception being 2011, when Ales Loprais won for Tatra).

In the end, 39 vehicles (23 cars + 16 trucks) from a total of 54 participants (33 cars + 21 trucks) made it to the finish line in Xian.

Christian Lavieille continued his excellent summer by finishing second in the cars, a month after winning the Taklimakan Rally in China. The Frenchman, racing for ambitious Chinese manufacturer Baicmotor, finished 1h04m39s behind Despres. Han Wei, already last year's highest-placed Chinese driver (6th), earned himself a spot on the podium this year, finishing third in the cars (+1h11m29s).

Kamaz completed a hat-trick in the trucks. Anton Shibalov (the only member of the four-man team yet to win the Silk Way) finished just 6m04s down on Sotnikov, with defending champion Airat Mardeev 23m12s off the pace in third. Artur Ardavicius was a distant fourth (+2h40m27s) in his Iveco for the Petronas De Rooy team.

SHOT LIST

- 10" **COUNTDOWN**
- 10" **SHOTS OF ORGANISERS ANNOUNCING CANCELLATION OF STAGE 14**
- 40" **SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES & DAVID CASTERA CELEBRATING AT ZHONGWEI BIVOUAC**
- 23" ITW CYRIL DESPRES IN FRENCH**

"Yeah, it's incredible. David was preparing his roadbook for tomorrow's special, and I was getting my stuff together... and, how to put it, it's a different kind of victory, in these circumstances. Normally we would have had a final stage to get through, but I can't admit to being all that upset – I'm absolutely delighted that it's over!"

- 9" **SHOTS OF KAMAZ CELEBRATIONS**

20" ITW DMITRY SOTNIKOV IN RUSSIAN

"It's been a very exciting rally - lots of adrenaline in the last few days. There were only a few minutes between us. Kolomy was fighting hard, he was very fast - it's a pity he had problems. And Anton Shibalov even managed to briefly take the lead today, but we turned it around, so I'm very happy."

- 17" **SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES #100 ARRIVING ON PODIUM + CELEBRATIONS**

26" ITW CYRIL DESPRES IN FRENCH

“I’m very, very happy! I was here for the rally, to discover new things, to try to give the best possible account of myself. And so was David. We threw ourselves into the stages, gave them our all. The goal for us, and for Team Peugeot, was to arrive here as the winners. And that’s what we did!”

- 14” SHOTS OF CHRISTIAN LAVIEILLE #108 ON PODIUM
- 11” SHOTS OF HAN WEI #107 ON PODIUM
- 6” SHOTS OF CROWD
- 20” SHOTS OF DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303 ON PODIUM + CELEBRATIONS

END

**SILK WAY RALLY 2017
24-MINUTE HIGHLIGHTS (WEEK 2)
20170722**

RUNNING ORDER

1. INTRO + POSTCARD XI’AN
2. STAGE 14 CANCELLED
3. ***
4. HIGHLIGHTS CARS: STAGES 8-10
5. FEATURE: BAICMOTOR RACING
6. HIGHLIGHTS CARS: STAGES 11-13
7. ***
8. HIGHLIGHTS TRUCKS: STAGES 8-11
9. FEATURE: CAB-OVER VS TORPEDO TRUCKS
10. HIGHLIGHTS TRUCKS: STAGES 12-13
11. ***
12. SLOW-MOTION
13. PODIUM CEREMONY XI’AN + OUTRO

INTRO + POSTCARD XI’AN

- 10” COUNTDOWN
- 17” OPENING CREDITS
- Don’t speak
- 36” SHOTS OF XI’AN

Welcome to Xi’an.

After a marathon journey of nearly 10,000 kilometres, across Russia, Kazakhstan and China, the 2017 Silk Way Rally has finally reached its destination.

Home to one of China’s greatest cultural treasures, the Terracotta Army, Xi’an is also one of the country’s ancient capitals, with history stretching back thousands of years.

For this year's competitors, the former eastern starting point of the Silk Road marks the end of a breathtaking adventure.

STAGE 14 CANCELLED

8" MAP OF STAGE 14 - CANCELLED

In the end there was to be no 14th stage of the 2017 Silk Way Rally...

16" SHOTS OF ORGANISERS ANNOUNCING STAGE 14 CANCELLATION

After heavy rain in the Zhongwei region, the rally organisers chose to cancel the final 100-kilometre special – preferring to see the drivers arrive safely in Xi'an for the podium ceremony on Saturday evening...

25" **ITW VLADIMIR CHAGIN IN RUSSIAN**

"If you go outside, you can see yourself that it's raining – and it's forecast to keep raining all night. Tomorrow's special goes through river beds and narrow roads, so it could well be dangerous, and we don't want anyone getting hurt. We've covered so many kilometres, it would be a shame to get stuck at the very end. We want every crew to reach the finish line safe and sound."

3" SHOTS OF ORGANISERS CLAPPING

Don't speak

12" SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES + PEUGEOT TEAM CELEBRATING

While it wasn't technically official until today, Peugeot celebrated a second straight Silk Way victory for Cyril Despres and David Castera at the Zhongwei bivouac...

21" **ITW CYRIL DESPRES IN FRENCH**

"David was preparing his roadbook for tomorrow's special, and I was getting my stuff together... and, how to put it, it's a different kind of victory, in these circumstances. Normally we would have had a final stage to get through, but I can't admit to being all that upset – I'm very happy !"

14" SHOTS OF DESPRES + CASTERA OPENING CHAMPAGNE

Don't speak

8" **ITW CYRIL DESPRES IN FRENCH**

"Everyone got caught out, either in driving or navigation. We simply made fewer mistakes than the others! That's also what rally raid is about."

6" **ITW DAVID CASTERA IN FRENCH**

"That's why rally raid is great ... it's not just about speed, you need a bit of everything."

3" SHOTS OF DESPRES CELEBRATING

Don't speak

7" SHOTS OF KAMAZ CELEBRATING

Kamaz also celebrating victory for Dmitry Sotnikov...

12" ITW DMITRY SOTNIKOV IN RUSSIAN

"We don't know who will win next year, Airat and I have two each. But the rally's very difficult and unpredictable, and the winner can always change, even in the last stage. But we hope it's a Kamaz victory!"

7" SHOTS OF CELEBRATIONS

Don't speak

8" CARS OVERALL CLASSIFICATION

So, Despres winning ahead of fellow Frenchman Christian Lavieille. China's Han Wei completing the podium in the cars.

8" TRUCKS OVERALL CLASSIFICATION

A hat-trick for Kamaz in the trucks... only six minutes and four seconds separating Sotnikov and Anton Shibalov.

HIGHLIGHTS CARS: STAGES 8-10

4" GRAPHIC

9" MAP OF CHINA STAGES (8-14)

Now we take a look back at the best action from the second week of the Silk Way Rally, since crossing over the border into China...

5" SHOTS OF SEBASTIEN LOEB #104

There was a major turning point in the cars on Stage 9 ...

15" ONBOARD SHOTS OF LOEB CRASH

Sebastien Loeb was leading by over an hour in the overall standings, when this happened...

19" SHOTS OF LOEB + DANIEL ELENA BY CAR AFTER CRASH

The nine-time WRC champion rolling his Peugeot 3008 DKR Maxi in the dunes, and unable to complete the special.

That crash ending his hopes of claiming a first major win in rally raid...

20" ITW SEBASTIEN LOEB IN FRENCH

"We arrived from that direction, and there was a shallow ditch here, in an off-piste section. We were following these tracks, and we couldn't see it from where we were coming. And seeing as we're the first car out on the road... We're really unlucky, because 4 metres to the side, even 2 metres, and we would have been fine. But sadly not."

16" SHOTS OF LOEB ARRIVING AT BIVOUAC + PEUGEOT MECHANICS WORKING

It was after midnight when Loeb reached the bivouac...

And in spite of the best effort of the Peugeot mechanics, the Frenchman was forced to pull out of the rally with a dislocated finger.

8" SHOTS OF ZHOU YONG #116 AFTER CRASH

Loeb wasn't the only one to hit trouble on Stage 9... Zhou Yong also quitting after rolling his Toyota.

14" ITW ZHOU YONG IN CHINESE

"When I got here, I didn't notice the second slope. The back of the car lifted up, flipped over, and then rolled sideways."

15" SHOTS OF STEPHANE PETERHANSEL #106

Stephane Peterhansel – who had briefly stopped to see if he could help Loeb out – went on to take his third stage win of the rally, while teammate Cyril Despres moved into the overall lead.

2" BEAUTY SHOTS

15" SHOTS OF HAN WEI #107

Loeb's abandon pushed Chinese driver Han Wei up to second overall, around 45 minutes behind Despres.

The man who finished sixth last year reaping the rewards of his very consistent performances.

12" SHOTS OF CHRISTIAN LAVIEILLE #108

Christian Lavieille also involved in the battle for second place...

The Frenchman managing to complete the entire special on Stage 10 with a flap open on the side of his Baicmotor.

5" WIDE HELICOPTER SHOTS

Don't speak

18" SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES #100

Despres apparently not feeling the heat after taking over from Loeb at the top.

The defending champion with a controlled performance on Stage 10 to finish just 2 minutes and 20 seconds off the pace ... extending his lead to 47 minutes.

11" SHOTS OF YAZEED ALRAJHI #101

Little more than pride at stake for Yazeed Alrajhi... well off the pace overall.

Last year's runner-up narrowly missing out on a stage victory, only 46 seconds off the pace...

17" SHOTS OF EUGENIO AMOS #115

Instead Stage 10 was won by an unlikely suspect... Italian Eugenio Amos of Two Wheels Drive.

A day that will live long in the memory for the self-styled 'gentleman driver' of Varese...

8" ITW EUGENIO AMOS IN ITALIAN

"It's the first stage victory of my life, so it's a very emotional moment, very special."

2" SHOTS OF AMOS CELEBRATING STAGE WIN

Don't speak

FEATURE: BAICMOTOR RACING TEAM

1" GRAPHIC

4" DON'T SPEAK

9" **ITW JIARUN LI (TEAM DIRECTOR) IN CHINESE**

"The full name of our team is the Baicmotor Racing Team, and we're based in Beijing. BAIC is the biggest manufacturer of passenger cars and SUVs in China.

9" DON'T SPEAK

19" **ITW JIARUN LI (TEAM DIRECTOR) IN CHINESE**

"Last year was the first year that we took part in a rally raid, the Taklimakan Rally. This year we did our second Taklimakan, and now this is our first Silk Way Rally. We're also taking part in the China Rally at the same time."

5" DON'T SPEAK

10" **ITW JIARUN LI (TEAM DIRECTOR) IN CHINESE**

"Eventually our goal is to go to the Dakar Rally. So our plan is to keep developing and learning over the next three years."

4" DON'T SPEAK

34" **ITW LU BINGLONG #130 IN CHINESE (SLOW!)**

"I'm really proud and delighted to be representing a Chinese team at a major international rally raid like the Silk Way. The level of racing is very high. For the time being, motor sport isn't hugely popular in China, but it is improving all the time. In the future, we will keep getting better and better. And one day, I'm confident that we will be the best in the world."

5" DON'T SPEAK

HIGHLIGHTS CARS: STAGES 11-13

8" SHOTS OF DESERT DUNES + CAMELS

And so on to the home stretch of this year's Silk Way ... with some of the rally's toughest stages to come in the dunes.

9" SHOTS OF STEPHANE PETERHANSEL #106

Stephane Peterhansel had already taken victory in a shortened Stage 11, bringing his total of wins to 4 – level with retired teammate Sebastien Loeb...

10" SHOTS OF STEPHANE PETERHANSEL #106 + CYRIL DESPRES #100

On Stage 12 he showed his altruistic side, guiding Cyril Despres through one of the most gruelling days of his career...

11" ITW CYRIL DESPRES IN FRENCH

"A one-and-a-half tonne car without power steering, it's like trying to turn with 500 kilos in your arms. It's exhausting. My hands and arms really hurt!"

10" SHOTS OF YAZEED ALRAJHI #101

It was a mixed 12th stage for Mini... Yazeed Alrajhi, who knows the dunes like the back of his hand, came in fifth...

14" SHOTS OF BRYCE MENZIES #105

But it was a nightmare day for Bryce Menzies.

The American came in 20 minutes down after losing his way, and was also handed a 20-minute penalty for missing a waypoint. He dropped from second to fourth overall.

13" SHOTS OF HAN WEI #107

Han Wei took full advantage... moving back up to second behind Despres.

The Geely man coming third in his yellow buggy, around six and a half minutes back.

11" SHOTS OF CHRISTIAN LAVIEILLE #108

Meanwhile Christian Lavieille took the Stage 12 win – a first for Chinese manufacturer Baicmotor.

The Frenchman only three minutes behind Han in the battle for second place.

11" ITW CHRISTIAN LAVIEILLE IN FRENCH

"I'm happy for the whole team, and for our Chinese manufacturer. It's the first time they've invested in a big rally raid, and now they have their first major win, so it's a nice reward."

5" SHOTS OF GENGHIS KHAN STATUE

And so to the lands of Genghis Khan for Stage 13 – which would turn out to be very unlucky for some...

14" SHOTS OF BRYCE MENZIES #105 OVERTAKING KAMAZ + SHOTS OF MENZIES

Things falling apart for Bryce Menzies, after this close shave with a Kamaz...

The rookie losing three hours after getting stuck, and tumbling to ninth overall...

A shame for the American, who's had such a promising first experience of rally raid – he could easily have ended up on the podium.

7" SHOTS OF LAKES

Don't speak

20" SHOTS OF CHRISTIAN LAVIEILLE #108

But it was a dream day for Christian Lavieille...

Even if he couldn't match the pace of the top two, he came in third on Stage 13, leapfrogging Han Wei into second place overall.

The Frenchman continuing his superb summer after winning the Taklimakan Rally in China last month.

13" SHOTS OF HAN WEI #107 + LIU KUN #121

Han forced to settle for third place overall – only seven minutes off Lavieille.

He ended the rally as the top Chinese drivers, improving on his sixth-placed finish last year.

2" SHOTS OF LAKE

Don't speak

22" SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES #100 + STEPHANE PETERHANSEL #106

But this stage – and ultimately the rally – was all about Peugeot.

Despres coming in second, and giving himself a comfortable lead that he wouldn't even have to defend, following the cancellation of Stage 14.

A fifth stage win for Peterhansel, the most of anyone at the Silk Way.

Peugeot topping the overall standings from the first stage to the last...

5" ONBOARD WITH DESPRES + CASTERA

Don't speak

HIGHLIGHTS TRUCKS: STAGES 8-11

2" GRAPHIC TRUCKS

11" SHOTS OF MAZ: SIARHEI VIAZOVICH #304 & ALIAKSEI VISHNEUSKI #316

Onto the trucks – and it's fair to say Maz never really got going at this Silk Way Rally.

In spite of a win for Siarhei Viazovich on Stage 3, they never looked like threatening the Kamaz.

7" SHOTS OF ALEKSANDR VASILEVSKI #309 STOPPED

Reliability also an issue for the Belarusian outfit.

11" SHOTS OF KAMAZ: AIRAT MARDEEV #300 & ANTON SHIBALOV #312

Midway through the first week, the blue armada took a firm grip on the rally, winning all but one special between stages 5 and 13...

24" SHOTS OF DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303

Dmitry Sotnikov snatched the overall lead from Martin Kolomy after the fifth stage, and continued to forge ahead with three wins in four stages...

The 2013 champion may not have topped the timesheets in Stages 9 and 10, but he was never far off the pace...

Sotnikov keeping teammate Anton Shibalov at arm's length in the early part of the second week.

10" SHOTS OF DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303 & AIRAT MARDEEV #300

The Kamaz often working together in the desert dunes... and more often than not, they were matching the cars for pace...

6" ONBOARD SHOTS OF ANTON SHIBALOV #312

Shibalov continuing to tick along nicely, even without a stage win.

7" SHOTS OF AIRAT MARDEEV #300

And defending champion Airat Mardeev taking his first win of the rally, on Stage 9.

13" SHOTS OF MARTIN KOLOMY #311 + BURST TYRE

The only man standing up to the Kamaz was Tatra's Martin Kolomy...

The Czech powering to second place behind Eduard Nikolaev on Stage 10 – in spite of a late puncture.

20" ITW MARTIN KOLOMY IN CZECH

"The stage was really beautiful, just how I like them. But 70 kilometres from the end, we had a puncture, and we decided to carry on instead of fixing it. 15 kilometres from the finish line, the tyre burst, but we thought, we're only 15 kilometres from the end – it'll be quicker to go on three wheels than to stop and change."

15" SHOTS OF MARTIN KOLOMY #311

Rock-and-roll tactics from Kolomy, which seemed to put the wind in his sails.

The following day, he took his third victory on Stage 11 – moving back above Mardeev into third overall.

6" SHOTS OF ARTUR ARDAVICIUS #310 (CLOSE) & GERARD DE ROOY #302 (FAR)

And what of Iveco? Gerard De Rooy, by this time, totally out of the running...

13" SHOTS OF ARTUR ARDAVICIUS #310

But Artur Ardavicius was flying the flag for the Petronas Team... the Kazakh never really threatening a stage win, but keeping a tenacious grip on fifth place overall.

11" SHOTS OF TON VAN GENUTGEN #306

Ton Van Genutgen also running well off the pace – but not enduring the same mechanical issues as his compatriot De Rooy...

3" ONBOARD SHOTS OF VAN GENUTGEN #306

Don't speak

5" SHOTS OF TON VAN GENUTGEN #306

The Dutchman ninth overall, after 11 stages.

FEATURE: CAB-OVER TRUCKS VS TORPEDO TRUCKS

1" CAPTION

18" SHOTS OF TRUCKS AT SCRUTINEERING / ON PODIUM

They come in two distinct types...

Classic cab-over trucks, with a flat face, where drivers sit directly above the front axle...

And the newer torpedo trucks, where the bonnet emerges from the front.

But what exactly is the difference between the two? Here's Gerard De Rooy to take us through it.

20" ITW GERARD DE ROOY IN DUTCH

"Essentially, the biggest difference between these two trucks is comfort. In terms of the chassis, the engine and the suspension, everything is actually the same. But with the cab-over truck you're sitting right on top of the axle, so when you're racing you feel every bump, every impact going straight up."

24" ITW GERARD DE ROOY IN DUTCH

"With the Torpedo, your axle is here, but you're sitting here, so a metre and a half further back. The front axle is also lighter, which means there is a bit more weight in the back, and better traction. Overall it's more balanced – it's like being in the middle of a set of scales. And it is certainly more comfortable."

14" SHOTS OF IVECO IN ACTION

Comfort is one thing, but De Rooy has certainly had a few teething problems with his new Iveco Powerstar at this Silk Way...

Reliability issues aside, though, he believes torpedoes are the future...

10" ITW GERARD DE ROOY IN DUTCH

"Nowadays, a lot more truck manufacturers are making Torpedoes... And once you've driven one, you'll never go back to cab-over trucks."

6" SHOTS OF EDUARD NIKOLAEV USING TORPEDO AT SILK WAY 2016

De Rooy not the only man who's a fan of Torpedoes...

4" ITW EDUARD NIKOLAEV IN ENGLISH

"I prefer bonnet truck!" (laughs)

20" ITW EDUARD NIKOLAEV IN RUSSIAN

"Seriously though, I like torpedo trucks very much. If I had been driving a torpedo in yesterday's special, I would have got on better than I did with an ordinary cab-over truck. We're going to keep working on both kinds of truck, but when I return to the Dakar, it will be in a torpedo."

5" SHOTS OF MARTIN KOLOMY #311

Not everyone, though, is a fan of the newer style of truck...

7" ITW MARTIN KOLOMY IN CZECH

“We overhauled the cabin suspension after I had an accident in 2011, so comfort isn’t a problem.”

3” DON’T SPEAK

9” ITW MARTIN KOLOMY IN CZECH

“My truck has another advantage – I have a better view of what’s going on. Personally, I prefer the cab-over style to the torpedo.”

5” SHOTS OF IVECO & KAMAZ RACING

20” ITW GERARD DE ROOY IN DUTCH

“With a cab-over truck, you can see maybe one metre closer in front of you. But when you’re driving at 100 kilometres an hour, you’re obviously not looking down, you’re looking ahead, 50 metres in front of the truck. So as far as I’m concerned, it doesn’t affect the view.”

2” DON’T SPEAK

5” ITW GERARD DE ROOY IN DUTCH

“I can use this one to go shopping, but for rallies, for the Dakar, it will always be the Torpedo.”

10” SHOTS OF IVECO ONBOARD

HIGHLIGHTS TRUCKS: STAGES 12-13

10” SHOTS OF DESERT + DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303

The outcome of the trucks race also set to be decided on the golden sands of the Gobi Desert...

Dmitry Sotnikov led by around 15 minutes heading into Stage 12, but lost time due to a lack of engine power...

8” SHOTS OF ANTON SHIBALOV #312

Anton Shibalov closing the gap on his Kamaz teammate to just three minutes and four seconds.

4” SHOTS OF DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303 + EDUARD NIKOLAEV #307

Don’t speak

10” SHOTS OF AIRAT MARDEEV #300

An imperious drive from Airat Mardeev... the defending champion with his second stage win, and pulling to within 18 minutes of Sotnikov overall...

6” SHOTS OF EDUARD NIKOLAEV #307

While Eduard Nikolaev, third, boosted his chances of making it four Kamaz in the top four.

15” SHOTS OF MARTIN KOLOMY #311

Disaster, though, for Martin Kolomy.

The Czech, winner of three stages, had been the only man keeping the Kamaz honest up to this point, battling with Mardeev for third place.

But a mechanical problem would put an end to his hopes...

17" SHOTS OF KOLOMY STOPPED IN DUNES

He was even later handed a 100-hour penalty for unauthorised assistance.

A disappointing end to the rally for Tatra – the only team apart from Kamaz to have won the Silk Way, with Ales Loprais, in 2011.

4" ITW TATRA MECHANIC IN ENGLISH

"It'll be impossible to get to the finish."

15" SHOTS OF SIARHEI VIAZOVICH #304

Kolomy's woes pushed Siarhei Viazovich up to sixth place overall.

The Maz driver losing a little bit of time but still coming in ahead of Sotnikov. He was in fifth place on Stage 12.

6" BEAUTY SHOTS + SHOTS OF HORSES

Onto Stage 13 then, with mere minutes separating the top two.

12" SHOTS OF EDUARD NIKOLAEV #307

Decidedly, this wasn't Eduard Nikolaev's rally...

The Dakar winner forced to abandon the special with a mechanical issue, ending his hopes of a top-four finish.

9" SHOTS OF GENGHIS KHAN STATUE + ARTUR ARDAVICIUS #310

Fourth place instead going to Artur Ardavicius...

The Petronas De Rooy man well off the pace though... 2 hours and 40 minutes behind the eventual winner.

3" SHOTS OF LAKE

Don't speak

17" SHOTS OF AIRAT MARDEEV #300

Airat Mardeev wasn't quite able to produce the goods down the home stretch ...

The defending champion coming third on Stage 13 – meaning he would have 23 minutes to catch up in the final stage. Though of course, he wouldn't get that opportunity...

22" SHOTS OF ANTON SHIBALOV #312 + DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303

But the real battle was here, between Shibalov and Sotnikov...

Shibalov – the only Kamaz driver yet to win the Silk Way – managed to reduce the gap to just six seconds... but 2013 champion Sotnikov hit back, winning the stage by three minutes.

That was enough to seal overall victory – and a sixth Silk Way crown for Kamaz in seven editions.

SLOW-MOTION DUNES

1" GRAPHIC

54" SHOTS OF DRIVERS STRUGGLING IN DUNES

Well there was certainly drama in the dunes in the latter stages of this Silk Way Rally.

Many drivers failing to master the rolling sands, and seeing their dreams of glory scattered by the desert winds.

But when it comes to rally raid, endurance is the name of the game ...

And those who made it through the dunes unscathed got their reward, as they completed the marathon and reached the end of the ancient Silk Road, in Xi'an.

PODIUM XI'AN + OUTRO

1" GRAPHIC

13" SHOTS OF PODIUM IN XI'AN

And so the 2017 Silk Way Rally drew to a close in the former Chinese capital on Saturday.

An opportunity to celebrate not just the winners, but all 39 vehicles – 23 cars and 16 trucks – who completed this epic journey across central Asia.

11" SHOTS OF CYRIL DESPRES & DAVID CASTERA #100 – WINNERS, CARS

In the cars, a second successive victory for Cyril Despres and David Castera...

13" SHOTS OF CHRISTIAN LAVIEILLE #108 – 2ND PLACE, CARS

And a superb second-placed finish for Christian Lavieille and Chinese team Baicmotor... ahead of Chinese driver Han Wei.

It's been some adventure...

16" SHOTS OF JEAN-PIERRE GARCIN & LAVIEILLE SPRAYING CHAMPAGNE

Don't speak

8" FINAL STANDINGS – CARS

Here's how they lined up in the cars... Eugenio Amos, Stephane Peterhansel and Binglong Lu completing the top six.

26" SHOTS OF PODIUM CELEBRATIONS

Don't speak

11" SHOTS OF VLADIMIR CHAGIN + PODIUM CELEBRATIONS

Don't speak

11" SHOTS OF DMITRY SOTNIKOV #303 – WINNERS, TRUCKS + KAMAZ CELEBRATIONS

More domination from the blue armada of Kamaz in the trucks...

Dmitry Sotnikov claiming his second Silk Way title after 2013, ahead of teammates Anton Shibalov and Airat Mardeev.

8" **FINAL STANDINGS – TRUCKS**

A Kamaz top three then ... Artur Ardavicius, Siarhei Viazovich and Ton van Genugten all a long way back.

11" **SHOTS OF PODIUM CELEBRATIONS**

Well thank you very much for joining us on the 2017 Silk Way Rally ... we hope you enjoyed it.

See you again in 2018!

6" ITW PODIUM GIRLS IN CHINESE

"See you next year on the Silk Way Rally!"

13" **END CREDITS**

END OF PROGRAMME