



Fernando Alonso Joins Star-Studded Toyota Gazoo Racing Line-Up For Rally Of Morocco

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Fernando Alonso is making his international rally-raid competition debut next week, joined in the Toyota Hilux by co-driver Marc Coma for the Rally of Morocco, the final round of the FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies.

Their participation is the latest stage in an intensive training programme for Alonso, who has his sights set firmly on competing in the Dakar, the world's most famous and gruelling rally. Morocco will be their second event in just three weeks, following the Lichtenburg 400, part of the South African Cross Country series which tested their perseverance and resolve to the limits.

They form part of a star-studded entry from Toyota Gazoo Racing which includes multiple Dakar and Morocco winners: current Dakar and four-time Rally of Morocco victors Nasser Al-Attiyah and navigator Mathieu Baumel, Giniel de Villiers and Alex Haro, and Bernhard Ten Brinke and Tom Colsoul. The four crews will be testing their skills against a field of unprecedented talent, while Attiyah has the chance to seal a fifth world title.

Alonso and Coma have prepared for the rally with a successful four-day test in Morocco, adding a further 870 miles to their training programme as they both transition to a new motorsport discipline. They continue to be mentored by past Dakar-winner de Villiers, who also carried out some technical testing for the team with his new navigator, Haro. The other Toyota Gazoo Racing crews also took part in the pre-event test.

Al-Attiyah recently welcomed Alonso to Qatar to share his vast rally-raid expertise in a private training session in side-by-side off-road vehicles. Demonstrating his determination to succeed, Alonso made the trip to the Gulf immediately after the conclusion of the South African race.

Five days of action in the 20th anniversary running of the Rally of Morocco get under way tomorrow (5 October), starting and finishing in the city of Fes. The crews face a mixture of technical, fast and sandy tracks and dunes on the edge of the Sahara Desert. Considered a precursor to and final long-distance training opportunity for the Dakar, the event has a cloverleaf layout of five competitive stages, covering more than 1,500 miles.

Looking ahead to the rally, Alonso said: "We are building a strong relationship in the team together and I'm looking forward to racing with my teammates. The team are highly experienced and successful, which gives me a lot of confidence knowing that I'm in good hands. I'll definitely be comparing my performance against my experienced teammates and the field as a reference and to understand how much to push in races like this as we set our sights on the Dakar Rally."

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