

Interview

Sandra and Simon: Getting ready for 2022 Dakar Rally

The Dakar Rally is just a few weeks away with many riders already in intense preparations for the race. We caught up with two Mitas riders, Sandra Gomez, who will be racing her first Dakar, and Simon Marčič, who is going to Dakar for the 8th time.

What brought you to Dakar for the first time?

Sandra: I have watched the Dakar on TV and dreamt about being part of the event since my childhood. Last year, the idea matured, and now my dream will finally come true. At the end of this summer, one of my sponsors, Cres, encouraged me to go. I discussed the matter with Mitas and my other sponsors, and I feel lucky as everybody agreed to help me live out my dream.

Simon: To race the Dakar rally has been my biggest dream since childhood. In 2013, I got the opportunity for my debut and the start of the 2014 Dakar rally in Argentina, Bolivia and Chile.



Sandra Gomez, photo: @rally_zone

Do you have an idol of Dakar?

Sandra: Laia Sanz is one of them, for sure. We are friends and I was able to closely follow her early years and her progress in the rally. But to be honest, Jutta Kleinsmith is still my biggest idol of Dakar; at only eight years of age, I was fascinated by seeing a girl win the Dakar.

Simon: My idol of Dakar is Stéphane Peterhansel, a 14-time Dakar winner - six times with a motorbike and eight times by car. For me, however, his finest achievement dates back to 2017 when we collided and I ended up with a broken leg. After this unfortunate event, he showed his greatness by helping me raise funds for the next Dakar rally.

How are you preparing for Dakar?

Sandra: I practice as much as possible and use roadbooks, which is something completely new for me. I also spend all the time I can on the bike to sharpen my sense of riding and try to improve my cornering and speed. In Spain, there are no dunes, so I practice racing them in Morocco Rally.

Simon: My preparations for the Dakar rally include racing rallies, bajas, enduro and motocross. I'm also cycling a lot and working out in the gym with my personal trainer.



Simon Marčič, photo: Denis Janežič

What do you expect from the race?

Sandra: My goal is to finish the race. I can say that I am very competitive. Day by day, I will keep track of the results achieved by female competitors, and I definitely want to cross the finish line every day.

Simon: I expect to win the podium in the Original by Motul class but also to improve my last year's overall result.

We can't wait to see some good racing and let's keep our fingers crossed for great results of Mitas riders!

THE SEEKER 2 feat Pol Tarrés



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