

ENERGYLANDIA RALLY TEAM

Eryk Goczał and Szymon Gospodarczyk Kicks Off the 2026 Dakar Rally with an Excellent 7th Place at the Prologue



- Eryk Goczał and Szymon Gospodarczyk were the fastest Polish crew today. They finished prologue at an excellent 7th place
- The 2026 Dakar Rally prologue meant a really complicated 22-kilometer stage
- All Energylandia Rally Team crews reached the finish line

On January 3rd, the 2026 Dakar Rally officially got underway. Just before noon local time, competitors took on the 22-kilometre prologue. Although such stages usually serve mainly as a warm-up, the organizer set the bar very high. Competitors emphasized that the stage was extremely demanding – not only in terms of terrain and route diversity, but also due to complicated navigation.

The fastest representatives of the Energylandia Rally Team today were Eryk Goczał and Szymon Gospodarczyk, who secured an



excellent 7th place. This result places them firmly among the world's elite, alongside highly experienced crews from factory teams of the biggest manufacturers. Thanks to this performance, Eryk and Szymon will take part in the evening ceremony where starting positions for Stage 1 will be selected, together with the best crews in the world. Slightly

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further back today were Marek Goczał with Maciej Marton and Michał Goczał with Diego Ortega. All of them emphasized, however, that the real competition begins tomorrow.

- *The 2026 Dakar Rally has started in a beautiful way! We finished the prologue in 7th place, just 14 seconds behind the winners. This means we'll take part in the ceremony with starting positions selection this evening. We're among the world's elite – that's a wonderful feeling. The prologue was very tough and rocky – I broke a windshield and tore off a mirror, my head is still spinning. But I'm very happy! –* said Eryk Goczał at the finish of the prologue.

- *I think this prologue was really difficult. I didn't expect navigation to be so complicated right at the start. The route was diverse – with very technical and rocky sections, but also parts where speed didn't drop below 170 km/h. 7th place is a really great result – I'm very satisfied. Eryk gives it everything, and the results show that –* emphasized Eryk Goczał's co-driver, Szymon Gospodarczyk.



- *For me, the prologue is always the worst moment of the rally. There's still a lot of stress and emotion, but we're already at the finish and we have a good starting position for tomorrow, so I'm satisfied. What matters to me is that we've started and have the first kilometers behind us. From experience, I know we need a bit of time to get going and find a good rhythm. Prologues have never been my strong point – I'm already looking forward to the long, real stages –* noted Marek Goczał.

- *The organizer warned that this prologue would not be a "simple warm-up." The bar was really set very high. We were one of the crews that had navigation problems today – we lost the correct route for a moment. We take comfort in the fact that it's only a prologue and the results don't really matter much here. We'll start a bit further back, but we will definitely fight with all our strength –* said Michał Goczał.

On Sunday, January 4th, the first stage of the 2026 Dakar Rally will take place. Competitors will face 213 kilometers of liaison section and 305 kilometers of special stage. The organizer warns that especially

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the first part of the stage will be extremely demanding, with plenty of rocks that could cause mass tyre punctures.