**ROSBERG X RACING MAKES HISTORY AS FIRST EXTREME E WINNER FOLLOWING DRAMATIC DESERT DUST-UP**

**4 April 2021, London:**Rosberg X Racing duo Johan Kristoffersson and Molly Taylor were the pace-setters from the outset in Extreme E’s inaugural race weekend in AlUla, Saudi Arabia (3/4 April), but the pair still had to dig deep in the desert to battle their way to victory and carve themselves out a piece of motorsport history.

There has been feverish anticipation in the build-up to this weekend’s Desert X Prix, and the event delivered in every aspect. Following yesterday’s Qualifying time trials, today, the drivers went wheel-to-wheel for the first time, generating some of the most spectacular images ever seen in the sport and drawing widespread acclaim from competitors and fans alike.

**Alejandro Agag, Founder and CEO of Extreme E, said:** “We’ve worked so hard on this for many years, and finally everything has come together this weekend. It really has been beyond my wildest expectations. If I had written a script for the perfect weekend, I could not have come up with anything better than what we have witnessed these past two days – I’ve never seen such extreme racing in my life.

“This first race weekend will have a huge influence on how Extreme E evolves, and one of the reasons I feel so proud is that we have built this platform where female drivers can shine like they deserve. What we have seen from them here is extraordinary – some incredible talent and courage – and overall, I think it’s fair to say we have really made our mark. I’m over the moon.”

Ultimately, nothing could stop Kristoffersson and Taylor from storming to the top step of the podium – not a 60-second penalty for exceeding the 30km/h limit in the driver switch zone yesterday, nor less favourable grid slots in both the Semi-Final and Final today. It was a virtuoso display of speed, skill and superhuman car control in the most challenging of conditions.

**Nico Rosberg,** **Rosberg X Racing Founder and CEO, said:** “This is insane. I’m so thankful to the whole team for the effort put in this weekend, which has been intense and really on-the-edge. Everything has come together so well and everybody has worked together so well.

“We have a fantastic team of engineers and mechanics, who prepared perfectly for this first weekend with so many unknowns, and Molly and Johan produced some phenomenal driving. Neither of them put a foot wrong in really tough conditions, and they both showed unbelievable speed out there – their performance was really inspiring and I felt really proud watching them. To come back to claim victory after a 60-second penalty caused by a technical problem is just awesome, and they are definitely deserving winners.For the championship as a whole, it’s really been a good start.”

**Shoot Out**

The duel for seventh place in the overall classification was fought out between Segi TV Chip Ganassi Racing (Kyle LeDuc / Sara Price) and ABT CUPRA XE (Mattias Ekström / Claudia Hürtgen), both of whom endured difficult Qualifying runs. Price initially pulled ahead by using her Hyperdrive power boost, before Ekström repaid the favour on the exit of Turn One to snatch the lead.

Once the driver switch was complete, LeDuc set about chasing down Hürtgen, but almost within sight of the finish line, the American – unsighted by the dust – made contact with his German rival and the pair both ended their weekend beached in the desert.

**Crazy Race**

With just one spot up for grabs in the Final, the stakes were high for the three Crazy Race competitors – Andretti United’s Timmy Hansen / Catie Munnings, Hispano Suiza XITE Energy Team pairing Oliver Bennett / Christine Giampaoli Zonca and JBXE duo Jenson Button / Mikaela Åhlin-Kottulinsky.

A demon start by 2019 FIA World Rallycross Champion Hansen saw the Swede already clear of his adversaries before the trio arrived at the first gate, with Bennett narrowly sneaking in front of former Formula 1 World Champion Button to snatch second.

Hansen opened up a 30-second margin before Munnings took over, after which, the 2016 European Rally Championship Ladies’ Trophy winner artfully managed the gap to safely bring the Andretti United car home. Giampaoli Zonca did a good job to peg her British rival throughout, with Åhlin-Kottulinsky similarly showing a strong turn-of-speed on her way to the finish line in third.

**Semi-Final**

As top qualifiers yesterday, the X44 crew of Sébastien Loeb and Cristina Gutiérrez opted to start from the right-hand side of the grid for the Semi-Final – giving them the theoretical inside line for ‘Turn One’. ACCIONA | Sainz XE Team duo Carlos Sainz and Laia Sanz chose the middle slot, with Rosberg X Racing (Kristoffersson / Taylor) taking up position on the left.

When the action got underway, Sainz got the best launch to edge fellow multiple FIA World Rally Champion Loeb away from the line, with the pole-sitter briefly slipping back to third. Loeb then regained the advantage as the battling Sainz and Kristoffersson both drifted wide, but the Swede was not done yet and neatly undercut both of his adversaries on the exit of the first gate to seize the initiative.

Kicking up a sandstorm in his wake, Kristoffersson rapidly made his escape as his pursuers found themselves driving blindly through the dust – and by the time he arrived at the switch zone to hand over to team-mate Taylor, the Rosberg X Racing car was almost 13 seconds to the good.

Thereafter, the former Australian Rally Champion continued to eke out the gap, crossing the finish line just under half-a-minute ahead of Gutiérrez, as both teams successfully booked their places in the all-important Final. Another 38 seconds in arrears, ACCIONA | Sainz XE Team wound up third to slip out of contention.

**Final**

As winners of the fan-led GridPlay vote, Andretti United had the luxury of choosing their starting spot for the Final. Hansen duly plumped for pole position on the right, with Kristoffersson lining up in the middle for Rosberg X Racing and X44’s Loeb taking up the third grid slot on the left.

Hansen replicated his lightning launch from the Crazy Race as Kristoffersson focussed his efforts on fending off Loeb for second, before employing the same tactic that had served him so well in the Semi-Final to sweep wide going into Turn One and undercut compatriot Hansen on the exit in a sensational switchback move.

The three-time FIA World Rallycross Champion then wasted no time at all in stretching his legs, as Hansen settled into second and Loeb – grappling with power steering problems – trailed behind the pair in third. Kristoffersson handed the car over to Taylor with a half-minute advantage, and whilst Munnings would go on to narrow the deficit slightly over the course of the second lap, the Australian always had the situation under control and wound up just over 23 seconds clear at the finish.

**Molly Taylor, Rosberg X Racing driver, said:** “What an amazing start to the season! It feels a bit surreal, with so much anticipation and preparation leading into the weekend and we all came here not really knowing what to expect. It was definitely extreme. It was the first time we had experienced terrain like that, and on every lap, the course was changing – there were so many different variables to deal with. We just wanted to make the most of the little time we had in the car – every single kilometre.

“We had a small issue in the pit-lane during Qualifying, but aside from that we were the quickest in every session. You have to be fast when it counts, be smart when it counts and take the big moves when it counts, and for it to all come together when it mattered was really special. Huge thanks to Johan – his opening laps were just insane – and the team has done such an incredible amount of work behind-the-scenes.

“It’s pretty cool to be part of this journey at the start of something that I think has an amazing future. This series is really throwing the traditional rule book out of the window and starting afresh, and I think everyone will agree it was spectacular to watch. The male drivers we have here are the best in any motorsport category in the world, so it’s an awesome opportunity for us female drivers and a real investment in the development of female racing talent. This is just a dream come true all-round.”

**Johan Kristoffersson, Rosberg X Racing driver, said:** “First of all, huge congratulations to the team. We had some minor issues but we came here very well-prepared, which made our life so much easier out on-track. This sport isn’t only about the drivers; it’s about the team giving us the tools to do the job. With such a limited amount of track time, you need to have confidence that the car will do what you ask of it – and the Rosberg X Racing guys did an amazing job to give Molly and myself such a great car.

“Molly performed fantastically; it was her that made the difference in the first Qualifying session. When you’re in the lead, you need to strike the right balance between backing off too much and risking too much, which is a new learning experience in this situation.

“In the Semi-Final and especially the Final, I really didn’t want to be in the dust after seeing some of the on-boards! Those first 30 seconds of the race are what you are really working for, when the adrenaline is pumping the fastest – we’re all adrenaline junkies here, and that’s the feeling you really want. It’s been such an amazing team effort overall, and I’m just super happy and already looking forward to the next event in Senegal – after a few weeks off first!”

Hansen and Munnings completed a remarkable recovery for Andretti United following the team’s Saturday struggles, when a puncture in Qualifying had threatened to derail their weekend altogether.

**Catie Munnings, Andretti United driver, said:** “I just don’t have the words – I’m smiling so much! Timmy [Hansen] is my absolute hero, just a legend. His starts today have been incredible, which has made my job easy and all about bringing it home. With the puncture back at the beginning of Qualifying, who would have thought we would be here in second place now? The hard work paid off and we managed to turn our weekend around.

“Extreme E offers an amazing platform for female drivers, and it’s super cool to be racing against such fast girls. It’s been really nice to see everyone coming together, encouraging each other and creating a competitive environment, and all of us – men and women alike – have been learning on the job and having a great time while doing it.

“I’m super happy with the start to the season. This is a massive moment for my career and one I will remember forever. It’s been such a journey just to get to this point with a big build-up and no-one really knowing what to expect, so to finish with a great result makes it even more special. We know we can be faster, too, so we’ll get our heads down now and come back stronger in Senegal!”

**Timmy Hansen, Andretti United driver, said:** “This feels amazing. After Q1, this kind of result really felt a long way off. What a performance by Catie in Qualifying to keep the car on-track with the puncture; she brought our ODYSSEY 21 home and with a good time, too. That was a key moment for us this weekend. We were still the underdogs, but it felt like it all came together in the Crazy Race, which was a ‘must-win’.

“I think GridPlay was very important for us in the Final. That allowed us to choose our starting position and from there, I got way more traction than the others and could pull a gap straightaway. Obviously I’m a bit disappointed that we couldn’t keep the lead, but Johan [Kristoffersson] pulled a mega move into the chicane so congratulations to Rosberg X Racing. I’m still really happy to finish second in the first-ever Extreme E event. Catie and the whole team did a fantastic job throughout.

“Senegal next time out will be a completely different proposition, and almost like starting from zero again. With so many high-profile teams and drivers, we will have to be on our toes and work even harder. Massive congratulations to Alejandro Agag and the entire Extreme E organisation; to pull this idea off at such a high level is astonishing. It has exceeded any expectations that I had, and I’m excited to see where this championship will take off to. I think Extreme E has an incredibly bright future.”

After topping the timesheets at the end of Qualifying, Loeb and Gutiérrez ultimately completed the podium in third for X44, consistently losing time due to their power steering failure in the Final.

**Cristina Gutiérrez, X44 driver, said:** “The whole weekend has been really good, and it all just came down to some bad luck in the Final with the power steering breaking. There was nothing we could do about that, so we have to be pleased to finish third.

“I’m very happy to be in such a great team. I spoke to Lewis [Hamilton – X44 Founder] during the weekend and he gave me a lot of advice and tips, and now I’m looking forward to going to Senegal to try to win. Extreme E offers such a great opportunity for female drivers to race directly against so many legends of the sport, and I’m so proud to be a part of it.”

**Sébastien Loeb, X44 driver, said:** “It was a good weekend overall, scoring some good points, finishing on the podium in the first event of the season and leaving sitting second in the championship. For sure, we expected to do better in the Final, but entering the first corner, we lost the power steering – and without that, a car this big and heavy is just so difficult to drive and it became a hard battle to keep it on the track.

“That was a bit disappointing, but for the rest I’m happy with the weekend and the team did a great job. The main thing is that we showed that together, we can fight for the win. Both Cristina and I were very fast, so I think we have a good chance for the rest of the season.”

**Final Result**

1. **Rosberg X Racing** (Johan Kristoffersson / Molly Taylor) **2 laps**

2. **Andretti United** (Timmy Hansen / Catie Munnings) **+23.73s**

3. **X44** (Sébastien Loeb / Cristina Gutiérrez) **+1m38.09s**

With the Desert X Prix now done-and-dusted, the cars will be loaded back onto the St. Helena – Extreme E’s floating centrepiece – to set sail for Lac Rose in Senegal, the setting for the Ocean X Prix on 29/30 May.

**Championship Standings**

1. **Rosberg X Racing** (Johan Kristoffersson / Molly Taylor) **35 points**

2. **X44** (Sébastien Loeb / Cristina Gutiérrez) **30 points**

3. **Andretti United** (Timmy Hansen / Catie Munnings) **28 points**

4. **ACCIONA | Sainz XE Team** (Carlos Sainz / Laia Sanz) **26 points**

5. **Hispano Suiza XITE Energy Team** (Oliver Bennett / Christine Giampaoli Zonca) **20 points**

6. **JBXE** (Jenson Button / Mikaela Åhlin-Kottulinsky) **17 points**

7. **ABT Cupra XE** (Mattias Ekström / Claudia Hürtgen) **13 points**

8. **Segi TV Chip Ganassi Racing** (Kyle LeDuc / Sara Price) **12 points**

9. **Veloce Racing** (Stéphane Sarrazin / Jamie Chadwick) **8 points**

**To learn more about Extreme E, visit -** [**www.Extreme-E.com**](http://www.extreme-e.com)

**ENDS**

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**About Extreme E:**

Extreme E is a radical new racing series, which will see electric SUVs competing in extreme environments around the world which have already been damaged or affected by climate and environmental issues. The five-race global voyage highlights the impact of climate change and human interference in some of the world’s most remote locations and promotes the adoption of electric vehicles in the quest for a lower carbon future for the planet.

To minimise local impact, Extreme E races will not be open to spectators, with fans instead invited to follow the action through live TV broadcast, and on social media.

The St. Helena, a former passenger cargo ship, has undergone a multi-million Euro refit to minimise emissions and transform her into Extreme E’s operations hub. The ship will be used to transport the championship’s freight and infrastructure, including vehicles, to the nearest port, minimising Extreme E’s footprint, as well as being used to facilitate scientific research through its on-board laboratory.

Extreme E is also pioneering hydrogen fuel cell technology which will enable its race fleet to be charged using zero emission energy. This innovative solution from AFC Energy uses water and sun to generate hydrogen power. Not only will this process emit no greenhouse emissions, its only by-product will be water, which will be utilised elsewhere on-site.

Season 1 Calendar:

Desert X Prix: AlUla, Saudi Arabia
3-4 April 2021
Ocean X Prix: Lac Rose, Senegal
29-30 May 2021
Arctic X Prix: Kangerlussuaq, Greenland
28-29 August 2021
Amazon X Prix: Pará, Brazil
23-24 October 2021
Glacier X Prix: Tierra del Fuego, Argentina
11-12 December 2021

**About Continental Tires: Founding Partner and Official Tire Partner**

Continental develops pioneering technologies and services for sustainable and connected mobility of people and their goods. Founded in 1871, the technology company offers safe, efficient, intelligent, and affordable solutions for vehicles, machines, traffic and transportation. Continental generated preliminary sales of €37.7 billion in 2020 and currently employs more than 235,000 people in 58 countries and markets. In 2021, the company celebrates its 150th anniversary.

The Tires business area has 24 production and development locations worldwide. Continental is one of the leading tire manufacturers with more than 56,000 employees and posted preliminary sales of €10.2 billion in 2020 in this business area. Continental ranks among the technology leaders in tire production and offers a broad product range for passenger cars, commercial and special-purpose vehicles as well as two-wheelers. Through continuous investment in research and development, Continental makes a major contribution to safe, cost effective and ecologically efficient mobility. The portfolio of the Tires business area includes services for the tire trade and fleet applications, as well as digital management systems for tires.

 **About CBMM: Founding Supplier**
CBMM is the world leading supplier of niobium products and technology. Headquartered in Brazil, with offices and subsidiaries in China, Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland and the United States. CBMM offers technical innovation to customers around the globe through a team of over 2,000 highly trained, dedicated professionals providing cutting-edge niobium products and technology to over 400 clients in around 40 countries.

**About LuisaViaRoma:**
Defined by the Financial Times as “A haven for directional fashion,” [LUISAVIAROMA.COM](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Furl6.mailanyone.net%2Fv1%2F%3Fm%3D1l40NA-00039a-3X%26i%3D57e1b682%26c%3D195AVmsnACejGQbj8XWTN7evBrvKJ1dnbRSlGauikIN1jvOJqayL11c08sfz5q1cceT_kfGhbO_Pgdul_vKgCHKD7IRSCNz5N1nGW9IZudTMsArXH_4RgkZJ_1yUJ1LCnfuAdJA1-KMInD6ZezFTWMgr389RpxOBDTwby2-m0iGBYpmPZjv9wwqhM1MxBH243uOw61cdEjXAR5FWvZyEV-xrW9U-ZTO-2PYSpSwfH4s&data=04%7C01%7CCarla.Corbet%40mpacreative.com%7C0caf6dd47e0f4a1eab8908d8c127765b%7C3891b9e18f6b4fe3a38ee5305dc2823a%7C1%7C0%7C637471722513203463%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=jOWRp6eyKk%2BAXQzlhUUINtGvz6Jil8elRhPIOfB8uOY%3D&reserved=0) is the top online luxury fashion destination with 5,000,000 visitors per month and worldwide shipping. With each new season, the website presents the collections of more than 600 established designers and young emerging talents.

**About Neat Burger: Official Plant-based Partner**
Neat Burger is the first of its kind – the planet-friendly, plant-based, full-flavoured game-changer the world has been waiting for. The world’s first plant-based sustainable burger chain, Neat Burger offers a menu that appeals to not only those who follow plant-based diets, but anyone, meat-eaters included, who wants to eat delicious meat-free dishes that are more sustainable, healthier and ethical. The brand is backed by seven-time FIA Formula One World Champion Lewis Hamilton, in collaboration with hospitality organisation The Cream Group and investors, as well as UNICEF Ambassador and early backer of Beyond Meat Tommaso Chiabra.

Neat Burger opened its first site in September 2019, just off Regent Street in London, and its second and third dine-in outlets at Camden Market and Soho in 2020. Plans for global expansion across Europe, the US and Middle East are already in place for 2021 and beyond.

**About XITE ENERGY: Official Energy Drink Supplier**
XITE ENERGY was founded by Oliver Bennett and Megan Jones straight out of university two years ago. XITE brings disruptive innovation within the beverage industry; a new frontier to energy drinks. Designed around functionality but with no limitations on health, XITE ENERGY uses functional ingredients that are fused together to provide a cognitive boost, combining natural flavours, natural caffeine and zero sugar.

**Founding Partner and Official Tyre Partner:**



**Founding Supplier:**



**Official Fashion Partner:**

**Official Plant-based Partner:**



**Official Energy Drink Supplier:**

