

DACIA PRESENTS SANDRIDER: ADVENTUROUS BRAND HEADS FOR DAKAR!

- Today, Dacia unveils Sandrider, a prototype that will be driven by The Dacia Sandriders team in the Dakar Rally and the World Rally-Raid Championship from 2025
- Taking inspiration from the Dacia Manifesto concept car, Sandrider will be homologated to run in the premier Ultimate T1+ category
- Participation in motorsport is a way for Dacia to test its approach of essentialism - and in particular its commitment to affordable decarbonisation - on the toughest terrains: Sandrider will run on synthetic fuel made by Aramco



Continuing its quest to redefine the essentials, Dacia, the brand with outdoor spirit, is taking part in the Dakar Rally and the World-Rally Raid Championship (W2RC) from 2025. Tackling some of the world's most demanding and harshest terrains, Dacia unveils its contender, the Sandrider, a prototype designed to win.

Inspired by the Manifesto concept car, Dacia's laboratory for new ideas unveiled in 2022, Sandrider is an all-new vehicle designed specifically for rally-raids. It draws on the sporting expertise of Renault Group and Prodrive, a UK company specialising in motorsports.

In keeping with Dacia's famed approach, Sandrider was designed to focus on the essentials of motorsport, that is performance and victory. This innovative prototype cleverly exploits all the possibilities offered by the regulations in the Ultimate T1+ category, focusing primarily on agility and weight. It fully meets the essential needs of both drivers and co-drivers, who were actively involved in its development from the start. From the beginning of the project, and ahead of the many test sessions, the drivers and co-drivers offered their extensive experience and knowledge to both designers and engineers, mainly through hands-on design sessions using virtual reality.

A very special Dacia, but a Dacia nonetheless, Sandrider is strongly aligned with the brand's core values.

STYLISH, ESSENTIAL DESIGN

Styled by Dacia's in-house designers, the no-frills exterior of Sandrider goes straight to the essentials. **The vehicle is fitted with body panels only considered as an absolutely necessity.** There are no decorative or superfluous parts and naturally, particular emphasis has been placed on aerodynamics.

As part of the brand's approach focusing on the essential needs of both the drivers and co-drivers, the short, floating bonnet features a raked design, disappearing from the crew's field of vision. **The anti-reflective paint** used on the upper part of the dashboard – a technique borrowed from the aviation industry– also optimises visibility.

For the cabin, Dacia's designers and engineers placed particular emphasis on the needs, habits and constraints of both drivers and co-drivers. Sandrider's modular dashboard lets each crew member adapt the ergonomics and layout of certain features to their own requirements.

ROBUST AND OUTDOOR DESIGN

The Dakar and other rally-raids are some of the world's toughest motorsport events. For this reason, Sandrider required an approach that takes Dacia's robust, outdoor concept to the extreme.

This involved **strengthening the vehicle**, with a consolidated subframe and bumpers, carbon bodywork, double wishbone suspension and a 4x4 transmission built for the gruelling requirements of rally-raid events. **An innovative electrical system** maintains optimum power for all on-board accessories, even in the most difficult conditions.

Looking beyond these fundamental design features, Sandrider's robust, outdoor approach also extends to aspects that may seem like details, but actually make life much easier for crews.

For example, the **Sabelt seats are upholstered in special anti-bacterial fabrics that self-regulate humidity.** The spare wheels are uncovered for easier handling. Similarly, the crew can access onboard tools quickly, without needing to open a box.

Further examples include **a magnetic plate**, built into the bodywork of Sandrider to prevent **the fixation bolts** for the wheels getting lost in the sand. This was a tip inspired directly from the experience of the team's drivers and actioned using Dacia's famed good thinking.

Sandrider is equipped with **new-generation BF Goodrich tyres** delivering optimum grip on all types of terrain, with maximum resistance to knocks and punctures.

AN ECO-SMART APPROACH

Dacia is determined to be the leader in affordable decarbonisation and is fully onboard with the commitment made by the organisers of The Dakar and other rally-raids to make motorsport more sustainable.

Engineers have worked particularly hard to make the car lighter and to reduce fuel consumption. **The overall weight of Sandrider has been cut by around 15kg** in relation to comparable prototypes. This result was achieved by using a lighter tubular chassis, getting rid of all superfluous body panels and using carbon for the others. Designers also removed all decorative features, and engineers opted for a more compact and lighter engine. To optimise traction and dynamic performance, the weight distribution between front and rear has been significantly increased at the front.

What's more, particular emphasis was placed on aerodynamics to reduce fuel consumption while improving performance. **Engineers were able to reduce drag by 10% and lift by 40% in relation to comparable prototypes.** As part of their work, they focused particularly on the air inlets that cool the engine.

Heat management is key in the extreme conditions of The Dakar and other rally-raids. **To keep the temperature down in the cabin**, the designers of Sandrider used anti-infrared pigments directly integrated with the vehicle's **carbon body panels**. A patent has been filed for this process.

Sandrider's engine runs on synthetic fuel supplied by Aramco. It's a simple, affordable solution for reducing its environmental impact. The synthetic fuels developed by Aramco combine renewable hydrogen with sequestered CO₂, providing a lower-carbon fuel that is compatible with today's engines. For Dacia, The Dakar Rally is the ideal testing ground for this technology.

A MOTORSPORT DEBUT SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER

Unveiled today, Sandrider will now begin a long series of development tests in several countries. Its motorsport debut will take place at the **Rallye du Maroc 2024**, the Moroccan leg of the World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC) between the 5 to 11 October 2024.

The Dacia Sandriders, Dacia's official W2RC team, will compete in their first Dakar and the other legs of the World Rally-Raid Championship in 2025.

The Dacia Sandriders bring together three crews combining experience, talent and enthusiasm.

French rally driver **Sébastien Loeb**, 49, won the World Rally Championship nine times in a row between 2004 and 2012. He is motorsport's most successful driver and is often regarded as the greatest rally driver of all time. Sébastien Loeb has been taking part in the Dakar since 2016. He will be partnered by co-driver Fabian Lurquin.

Rally driver **Cristina Gutierrez Herrero**, 32, is a leading name in cross-country rallying. She has already taken part in eight Dakar rallies between 2017 and 2024. Cristina won the World Cup for Cross-Country Rallies, category T3, in 2021. In January 2024, she became the second woman to win in a category (Challenger) of the Dakar, after Jutta Kleinschmidt who came first overall. Cristina's co-driver will be Pablo Moreno Huete.

Nasser Al-Attiyah is a five-time winner of the World Cup for Cross-Country Rallies and two-time winner of the World Rally-Raid Championship. A true Dakar legend, he has won this spectacular event five times.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SANDRIDER

- **FIA class:** Ultimate T1+
- **Chassis:** tubular
- **Body:** carbon fibre
- **Engine:** V6, 3 litres, twin-turbo, direct injection
- **Maximum power:** 265 kW/360 bhp at 5,000 rpm
- **Maximum torque:** 539 Nm at 4,250 rpm
- **Transmission:** 4X4
- **Gearbox:** 6-speed sequential
- **Front/rear suspension:** double wishbone
- **Suspension travel:** 350 mm
- **Wheels:** 17-inch aluminium
- **Tyres:** BF Goodrich, 37 inches
- **Length x width x height:** 4,140 x 2,290 x 1,810 mm
- **Wheelbase:** 3,000 mm
- **Front/rear overhang:** 590/550 mm

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ABOUT DACIA

Born in 1968 then relaunched by the Renault Group from 2004 all across Europe and Mediterranean countries, Dacia has always offered the best value for money cars, by constantly redefining the essentials. As a game-changer, Dacia proposes simple, multi-purpose, reliable cars in tune with customers lifestyles. Dacia models became a reference on the market: Sandero, the most sold car to European private customers each year since 2017; Duster, on the podium of SUVs sold to private customers in Europe since 2018; Spring, 3rd electric vehicle sold to private customers in Europe for the second year running; Jogger, 1st non-SUV C-segment vehicle sold to private customers in Europe for the first time. Present in 44 countries, Dacia has sold over 8 million vehicles since 2004.