

## **Team Mitsubishi Ralliart Takes on Asia Cross Country Rally 2024 with Four All-New Triton Rally Cars**

**Tokyo, July 4, 2024** – Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (hereafter, Mitsubishi Motors) has announced that Team Mitsubishi Ralliart, for which the company provides technical support, will be competing in the Asia Cross Country Rally (hereafter, AXCR) scheduled for August 11 to 17 of this year. The team will be competing with four all-new Tritons in AXCR 2024, which will be held in southern and central Thailand.

This will be the third year that Team Mitsubishi Ralliart takes on the challenges of the AXCR with the Triton pickup truck. The first year, it claimed an overall victory, and the second year, the team switched to a new model and came in third place overall. In both rallies, the Triton demonstrated a high level of durability and exceptional maneuverability and road handling on rough roads. This year, the Triton's driving performance has been significantly increased, and the team will be aiming for another overall victory, its first in two years.



Team Mitsubishi Ralliart

AXCR Special Website

<https://www.mitsubishi-motors.com/en/brand/ralliart/axcr/>

Team Mitsubishi Ralliart is owned by Tant Sport (Thailand) and helmed by Hiroshi Masuoka, a team director from Mitsubishi Motors who claimed two consecutive victories in the Dakar Rally. Mitsubishi Motors engineers will develop the rally cars and accompany the team to provide technical support during the competition.

As with last year, the drivers and co-drivers will be Chayapon Yotha (Thailand) and Peerapong Sombutwong (Thailand), who took the overall victory in AXCR 2022, and Japanese duo Katsuhiko Taguchi and Takahiro Yasui, who came in eighth place, the highest of any team of Japanese drivers, in the AXCR 2023. They will be joined by the team of Sakchai Hantrakul (Thailand) and Jumpol Dounghip (Thailand), highly experienced rally drivers with a deep knowledge of Mitsubishi vehicles, and Mitsubishi Motors' test driver Kazuto Koide (Japan), and co-driver Eiji Chiba (Japan), who has

achieved a podium finish in the past AXCR. Together, the team will be aiming to claim the championship with the T1 prototype, a modified cross-country model, of the all-new Triton.

Reflecting on last year's results, the Triton's driving performance has been greatly increased to enable it to compete against vehicles with high-displacement engines in high-speed stages. A new racing transmission with a high torque capacity has also been selected to improve both durability and maneuverability. Further, the tread size has been increased, and the rear suspension has been switched from rigid/leaf springs to rigid/4-link coil springs. This will allow the vehicle to absorb major shocks on rough roads and improve its traction on extremely bumpy road surfaces, significantly enhancing its road handling on rough roads.

From June 21 to 27, Team Mitsubishi Ralliart conducted high-stress endurance tests of the Triton rally cars, envisioning actual rally conditions, on an off-road course near Khao Yai National Park in Thailand. The reliability and durability of the rally cars' bodies, chassis, and engines, which acceleration performance has been further improved, were confirmed by driving roughly 800 kilometers (km) over the course of the seven-day endurance test, and adjustments were made in preparation for the actual competition.

"Last year, we tried for a second consecutive victory with the all-new Triton, which had just gone on sale, but we were unable to bring out its full potential, ending in third place," said Hiroshi Masuoka, team director of Team Mitsubishi Ralliart. "With this year's Triton, we have made major improvements primarily to driving performance and rough road handling, further enhancing our four-vehicle team as we aim to reclaim our position as champions. This year's drivers will also include Kazuto Koide, a test driver who I have worked with in developing Mitsubishi vehicles for over two decades. At Mitsubishi Motors, we leverage our experience in grueling motor sports for vehicle development, so I hope to pass on this tradition to the next generation."

### **Profile of Team Mitsubishi Ralliart**

Team Director: Hiroshi Masuoka (Mitsubishi Motors)

Team Principal: Chayut Yangpichit (Tant Sport)

Technical Director: Kopong Amatayakul (Tant Sport)

Technical Support (body, chassis): Noriyoshi Aiba (Mitsubishi Motors)

Technical Support (engine): Tetsuya Makita, Masataka Tsuiki (Mitsubishi Motors)

Drivers and co-drivers:

Chayapon Yotha

From: Udon Thani Province, Thailand

Born: August 16, 1987 (36)

Career: Chayapon Yotha competes in numerous rallies and races in Thailand. He led Team Mitsubishi Ralliart to its first victory when it competed in the AXCR for the first

time in 2022 and took third place in last year's competition.

Co-driver: Peerapong Sombutwong (Thailand)

**Katsuhiko Taguchi**

From: Okayama Prefecture, Japan

Born: February 7, 1972 (52)

Career: In 2007, Katsuhiko Taguchi won the Rally Japan in Group N. He has also competed overseas, winning the FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championship (APRC) twice.

Co-driver: Takahiro Yasui (Japan)

**Sakchai Hantrakul**

From: Chiang Mai, Thailand

Born: November 29, 1962 (61)

Career: Sakchai Hantrakul has over 30 years of rally experience, and he is well-versed with Mitsubishi vehicles, with a track record that includes driving the Mitsubishi Pajero in the 1996 Dakar Rally.

Co-driver: Jumpol Dounghthip (Thailand)

**Kazuto Koide**

From: Aichi Prefecture, Japan

Born: June 19, 1979 (45)

Career: Kazuto Koide joined Mitsubishi Motors in April 1998. As a Mitsubishi test driver, he has experience driving vehicles such as the Pajero and the Lancer Evolution. He also now serves as a driving instructor for Mitsubishi Motors employees and a demonstration driver at events in Japan and abroad.

Co-driver: Eiji Chiba (Japan)

### **Triton rally car**

Overall length x overall width	5,320 mm x 1,995 mm
Wheelbase	3,130 mm
Tread (front/rear)	1,730 mm
Engine	4N16 (intercooled turbocharger)
Fuel injector	High-pressure common-rail direct injection diesel
Displacement	2,439 cc
Turbocharger	Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Engine & Turbocharger
Maximum output	150 kW or more
Maximum torque	470 Nm or more
Exhaust system	HKS AXCR 2024 Competition Model
Transmission	6-speed sequential transmission Moty's gear oil
4WD system	Full-time 4WD
Differential	CUSCO front and rear LSD
Front suspension	Independent double-wishbone with coil springs
Rear suspension	Rigid/4-link coil spring
Shock absorbers	CUSCO adjustable front and rear twin dampers
Bump stops	Hydraulic

Steering	Rack and pinion with power assist
Brakes	ENDLESS ventilated discs with monoblock brake calipers and pads, FORTEC racing brake fluid
Wheels	WORK aluminum alloy wheels (17-inch x 7J)
Tires	Yokohama GEOLANDAR M/T G003 (245/75R17)
Other features	Carbon fiber front fenders Carbon fiber front and rear door panels Carbon fiber cargo outer panel

### **Partners (in alphabetical order, current as of July 4, 2024)**

Team Mitsubishi Ralliart will compete in AXCR 2024 with the support of the following partners.

Partners	Support
CARROSSER Co., Ltd.	Support for development and supply of front & rear suspension and front & rear LSD
CARRY ART LLC	Activity support
ENDLESS ADVANCE Co., Ltd.	Supply of brake calipers, rotors and pads
ENEOS Corporation	Supply of engine oil
Fortec Motorsport Ltd	Supply of racing coolant, brake fluid
HANKYU HANSHIN EXPRESS Co., Ltd.	Activity support
HKS Co., Ltd.	Support for development of rally engine
Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Engine & Turbocharger, Ltd.	Supply of turbochargers
Mitsubishi Motors Dealers Association	Activity support
TPR Co., Ltd.	Supply of piston rings, activity support
TriboJapan Co., Ltd.	Supply of gear oil
Work Co., Ltd.	Supply of alloy wheels (CRAG T-GRABIC II)
The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd.	Supply of GEOLANDAR M/T G003 mud terrain tires

### **Overview of AXCR 2024**

AXCR is the ASEAN region's largest cross-country rally. This year's rally, the 29th in its history, will begin with a ceremonial start held in Surat Thani, on the coast of the Gulf of Thailand in the south of Thailand, on August 11th. The competition will begin the next day, on the 12th. The course has been changed since its initial announcement, and after starting, it will work its way up the border between Thailand and Myanmar, on the Thailand side. It will pass through Hua Hin District, a resort area famous as

being a vacation destination of the Thai royal family. On the 17th, the rally will finish in Kanchanaburi, located roughly 130 km west of Bangkok. Covering approximately 2,400 km, over 1,000 km of which will be special stages, the course this year is expected to be even more grueling than ever, with a wide range of terrain such as mountains, jungle, and river crossings that will demand exceptional road handling, durability, and, this year in particular, speed.

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#### **About Mitsubishi Motors**

Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (TSE:7211) – a member of the Alliance with Renault and Nissan – is a global automobile company based in Tokyo, Japan, which has about 28,000 employees and a global footprint with production facilities in Japan and the ASEAN region. Mitsubishi Motors has a competitive edge in SUVs, pickup trucks and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, and appeals to ambitious drivers willing to challenge convention and embrace innovation. Since the production of our first vehicle more than a century ago, Mitsubishi Motors has been a leader in electrification – launched the i-MiEV, the world's first mass-produced electric vehicle in 2009, followed by the Outlander PHEV, the world's first plug-in hybrid electric SUV in 2013. With a target of increasing the sales ratio of electrified vehicles to 100% by 2035, Mitsubishi Motors will deliver models that embody Mitsubishi Motors-ness and contribute to the realization of a carbon-neutral society.

For more information on Mitsubishi Motors, please visit the company's website at <https://www.mitsubishi-motors.com/en/>