



DAKAR NEWS

N°3
OCT. 2005

EDITORIAL TO YOUR COMPASSES



■ The Dakar is an endurance race, in which navigating skills count more than pure performance. It is by sticking as close as possible to this basic principle that the new team in charge of sports management set to work. The results of the last few months' reflection are up to expectations as the impact of the measures adopted will be palpable as early as the initial African stages.

Technological advances developed and tested over the last few years enable us to take radical decisions while retaining the

objective of maximum safety for competitors. GPS, too often accused of making the rally "easy" after having been praised to the skies, will in some way be blinded. The road book, relegated to the sidelines, will this year again become the bible of each stage, the use of GPS points by activating a release code being penalised. This profound reform will return control to the most inspired navigators, whether amateur or professional.

Etienne LAVIGNE
Director of the Dakar

USEFUL INFORMATION

■ **FOLLOW THE RECONNAISSANCE** of the next Dakar live on our Website www.dakar.com

■ **VISA INFO:** Download your visa application forms from www.visas-express.fr

■ **THE REST DAY** will be 8th January 2006 in NOUAKCHOTT

■ **V.S.O. TRAVEL INFO** www.dakar.com

■ The substantial rise in oil products that we are experiencing means that we strongly advise you to review your fuel budget for the Dakar 2006. The repercussions of this hike should be in the region of 30% on the price of fuel in 2006. We would remind you that A.S.O does not make any profit on selling fuel as it is sold at cost price.

■ **DAKAR CHALLENGE:** Continuing on from the "Volant Dakar" operation, A.S.O., Nismo (Nissan Motorsport) and Total have joined forces to allow a young crew to take part in the next Dakar. Selection from a dossier open to all European countries, semi-finals in the heights of Clermont-Ferrand, a Final in Morocco, a Jury consisting of personalities from the world of motor sport, such are the ingredients of the Dakar Challenge.

So, if you have in your entourage a young, gifted crew, under 30 years of age, keen for adventure, go to www.dakar.com : registrations are open until midnight on 31st October!

■ The company Mutuaid has been selected by A.S.O. to provide medical assistance during the next Dakar.



THE REGULATIONS

WHAT HAS CHANGED AND WHY



Each of the major measures taken this year has been taken for a specific purpose; the overall reform is seeking to both improve safety conditions and ensure fair competition between all competitors. Explanations.

150 KM/H SPEED LIMIT FOR MOTORCYCLES

Removes risk of high-speed accidents

RANGE REDUCED TO 250 KILOMETRES FOR MOTORCYCLES

Lighter and therefore easier to handle vehicles, more refuelling stops...

XTE CORRIDOR REMOVED

Navigation guided only by road-book indications

CREATION OF HIDDEN WAY-POINTS (HWP), COMPULSORY WAY-POINTS WHICH DO NOT APPEAR ON THE GPS SCREEN UNTIL WITHIN A 3 KM RADIUS

Much more active navigation

COMPULSORY IRITRACK

A safety and communication tool for competitors

SPEED CHECKS EXTENDED TO ORGANISATION AND PRESS VEHICLES

Implementation of the principle of zero tolerance



Download a full set of regulations from www.dakar.com



RÉMI HEMERYCK : « RESPONDING TO THOSE WHO WANT TO HELP »

■ The Dakar and SOS Sahel, which are working for the protection of the environment within the framework of “Dakar Actions” have renewed their partnership for another three years. Rémi Hemeryck, chief representative of the association, has drawn up an inventory.

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THREE YEARS PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DAKAR?

■ It has been a real success, because 60 actions, initiated by local associations, have seen the light of day thanks to the existence of this collaboration. These projects are easy to run because they need a budget of 2,000 to 5,000 Euros and involved on average about 100 people. In concrete terms, by way of example, we are installing drip feed crop irrigation systems. These are simple techniques which enable water savings to be made especially if they are widespread.

THE “DAKAR ACTIONS” FALL WITHIN A LONG TERM FRAMEWORK...

■ The idea is precisely to reach the youngest people and change behaviour and have effective action. For a real regional development policy which respects the environment to be applied, there needs to be real awareness. I feel that the impact of the Dakar Actions is even more valuable from the point of view of durability than immediately changing living conditions. It is not enough to dig a well in a village, it also needs to be preserved.



Reafforestation at Ndiodène Mbatar

WHAT ARE THE LINES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE “DAKAR ACTIONS”?

■ We have chosen to retain the same themes, namely, reforestation, organisation of waste collection and improvement of health conditions in general. The aim is also to develop the involvement of local authorities which, as far as possible, will contribute 15 or 20% of the financing of the actions. We now have credibility which encourages all local players to invest even more. That is also why we want to avoid dispersion and concentrate our actions on the regions that we already know, namely Louga and its surrounding area.



Tree nursery in the village of Potou

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE ROLE OF DAKAR COMPETITORS IN RELATION TO THESE INITIATIVES?

■ First of all, I realise that all the competitors that I come across really love Africa. Most of them want to do something and wonder how. It so happens we have the means of involving them in concrete, co-ordinated actions. We therefore respond to them, they are receptive to our approach. For example, a Poitiers team recently contacted us because they want to do some irrigation work. It is an action which will certainly succeed.



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*Etienne Lavigne and his sporting team with all the competitors.
(A big thank to Challenge 75 for lending the bike)*



**SOME OF THE FIRST
PARTICIPANTS IN THE RALLY
TOOK A THEORETICAL TRAINING
COURSE ARRANGED OVER TWO
WEEKENDS.
WHAT DID THEY LEARN?**

■ The Dakar is always the culmination of a project which has taken a long time to mature, frequently initiated several years before it takes place. And yet, however painstaking the preparation, however confident and sound the candidates, all experience a period of uncertainty as their first start in this great challenge approaches. The Dakar Courses were specifically designed to help novices of the rally take stock of the adventure which awaits them.

This year, about 50 competitors attended over two weekends (one for motorcyclists, one for drivers) to store up useful advice, information and practical tips on preparation and the rally itself. Daniel Vermeloux, who enters the Dakar with only a

few treks and outings in Morocco on his CV, for example left Issy-les-Moulineaux more “knowledgeable” than when he arrived : “I took on board a number of small details that I would perhaps not have taken into account without these explanations. It is comforting to be briefed by specialists who know exactly what traps to avoid.”

Whether relating to the use of navigation instruments, driving skills or physical preparation, the sessions were in fact conducted by qualified experts such as Stéphane Le Bail, David Castera and even Dr Feuillade. Their in-depth knowledge of the rally’s demands certainly put Patrick Hillewaere, who had travelled from Belgium, back on track : “Never having done any long distance rallying, I have had little opportunity to meet specialists, I therefore learned a lot. I realised above all that in terms of timing, I did not have second to lose, particularly in terms of physical training. Now I know where I am.”



The car competitors around Stéphane LEBAIL and Etienne LAVIGNE.



A SIDEKICK IN THE DESERT

Scott Withney and his sidekick Duane McDowell are preparing for the Dakar with a very special side-car ...

■ In addition to an automobile competition of the first order, the Dakar is also a laboratory for ideas, a refuge for more or less inspired but always bold inventors. From the 2CV to the Rolls-Royce, the most unexpected vehicles turn up on the rally's start line, with to say the least variable success rates as to their arrival at Lac Rose. We thought we had seen everything, but we were wrong. Scott Withney, motorcyclist, challenged himself to do the Dakar on a Harley-Davidson! The prank had already been attempted, unsuccessfully, by Jean-Gilles Soupeaux, in 1991. But this time, the American is spicing up the matter and multiplying the problems : he intends crossing Morocco, Mauritania, Mali, Guinea and Senegal with his team mate Duane McDowell, in a side-car.

So far only a couple of nutcases have managed to complete the rally on one of these weird machines, in 2000 (Deprez-Devolder). The project of Scott and his sidekick is however not so harebrained : *"I have converted the Suzuki side-car*



which I usually use by replacing the engine with a Harley-Davidson V-Rod which is much better for driving in the dunes, as strange as that may seem. We have tested it several times on similar terrain and it is proving to be very reliable," explains this side-car expert who has already taken on the famous Pikes Peak (Colorado) ascent four times, the driving Mecca in the USA.

Of course it has not escaped this rather special pair that the Dakar challenge is not much of a comparison : *"On the one hand, there is a 15 minute race which ends in the snow at an altitude of 4,300 m and on the other nearly 15 days in the hottest desert in the world. But both of them are top-level, world competitions and that's what inspires me. And telling me that so far no-one has managed to finish in a side-car, that is highly motivating."*



www.dakar.com

