



PRESS INFORMATION TEAM GALP ENERGIA

BAJA ANTA DA SERRA 500 PORTALEGRE

Saturday October 22nd 2005

1ST LEG : SS 1 – 175,34 Km / SS 2 – 222,90 Km

Incident-filled day for Team Galp Energia ...

Today, the competitors in the 19th Baja Portalegre were far from spoiled. Neither the weather nor the road conditions were easy on them. As for Carlos Sousa, he was additionally hit by bad luck. But the morale of the Portuguese driver is still high, despite two punctures, windscreen-wiper problems, and a reluctant third gear. Race incidents which did not dampen his enthusiasm or his optimism concerning the potential of his Nissan Navara.

There has been no let-up in the bad weather conditions which have hit the Portalegre region over the past three days. This morning's downpours made the route particularly slippery and tricky.

On the first timed sector, Team Galp Energia driver Carlos Sousa moved up to third position by the half-way point, at CP1. But unfortunately a minor race incident perturbed this magnificent start to the race.

«The route was incredibly slippery, but the car behaved very well. The Navara is slightly too long for this sort of terrain (and is even the biggest car in the field), but it is very competitive. It's the first time I've seen the trees get out of the way !!! But more seriously, we are sometimes on the limit... Staying on the track was our priority. Everything went very well until CP1, but afterwards we had some problems with our windscreen wipers. First of all we thought it was a problem with the fuses, but actually the whole mechanism was broken. We stopped for around fifteen minutes to repair it. We got going again, but forty minutes later, we had a puncture. It must have been a slow puncture. We drove slowly until we found a suitable place to change the wheel. And lost around ten more minutes. We were unlucky, and had a 'good morning', with no time to relax...»

« The road conditions were quite infernal. Carlos drove perfectly. Without this windscreen wiper problem, we would have been on the pace to set a very good time,» Jean-Marie Lurquin commented as he got down from the Navara, his racing overalls covered in mud.

Eventually, the Team Galp Energia team finished 18th in the Special stage, and started the second stage in 14th position, still very motivated to set a good time.

At the start of the afternoon, the sky had its word to say once more, and heavy storms made life even more difficult for the teams, with the route even more difficult, and the potential traps more numerous.

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But it takes more than that to discourage the Team Galp Energia driver, who set the tenth fastest time.

« A race is a race, and nothing is decided in advance. Punctures, and little incidents like the windscreen wiper problem are things that happen. It is certain that after this morning, it would not be easy to fight for the lead. But even if victory is no longer possible, it is important to drive and set a good time. This afternoon, we set off at a good pace, but we soon had another puncture, and then a few worries with the gearbox. But I must say that the Navara gives me confidence for the future. Without these little problems, we would have been very close to the best times.

The car has an enormous potential. Despite its size, it is agile and easy to drive. Some sections were very rough, but its behaviour surprised me, in a positive way. I am really very optimistic. My aim for tomorrow is to set a good time. Driving in this Baja is a very positive experience, which allows me to prepare, over every single kilometre, for the Dakar.»

Jean-Marie Lurquin's comments were very similar : **« We started well, and quickly caught up with those in front of us. Before CP2, we had a puncture and lost around six minutes. Then we lost a bit more time overtaking slower cars, which had not seen us. Around sixty kilometres from the finish line, we lost third gear. Once more, the road conditions were really atrocious. The thing I really appreciate about Carlos is that he drives with his head. It is a real pleasure to be alongside him. I am pleased that he was able to appreciate all the potential of this vehicle today, and that he is now feeling confident.»**

Tomorrow's second and final leg will include a special stage of around 100 km. We hope the sun will finally make an appearance.

CLASSIFICATION SS 1 (175,34Km)

P°	N.º	TEAM	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	MAKE	MODEL	CAT	TIME
1	304	Mitsubishi Motor Sports	Luc Alphand	Gilles Picard	Mitsubishi	Evo	T1	2:18.33
2	306	Volkswagen Motorsport	Jutta Kleinschmidt	Fabrizia Pons	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 1.23
3	305	Volkswagen Motorsport	Carlos Sainz	Andreas Schulz	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 3.05
4	303	Mitsubishi Motor Sports	Hiroshi Masuoka	Pascal Maimon	Mitsubishi	Evo	T1	+ 3.54
5	309	Ramalho Couto Fitagest Team	Rui Sousa	Carlos Silva	Nissan	Pick Up Navara	T1	+ 6.01
6	320	João Ramos	João Ramos	Vitor Jesus	Toyota	Rav 4	T1	+ 10.40
7	301	Volkswagen Motorsport	Bruno Saby	Michel Perin	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 11.40
18	302	Team Galp Energia	Carlos Sousa	Jean Marie Lurquin	Nissan	Pick Up Navara	T1	+ 30.04

CLASSIFICATION SS 2 (222,90Km)

P°	N.º	TEAM	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	MAKE	MODEL	CAT	TIME
1	304	Mitsubishi Motor Sports	Luc Alphand	Gilles Picard	Mitsubishi	Evo	T1	3:14.43
2	306	Volkswagen Motorsport	Jutta Kleinschmidt	Fabrizia Pons	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 3.00
3	301	Volkswagen Motorsport	Bruno Saby	Michel Perin	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+3.53
4	310	Volkswagen Motorsport	Mark Miller	Dirk Zitzewitz	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+4.15
5	320	João Ramos	João Ramos	Vitor Jesus	Toyota	Rav 4	T1	+4.43
6	314	Ramalho Couto Fitagest Team	Filipe Campos	Jaime Batista	Nissan	Pick Up Navara	T1	+6.03
10	302	Team Galp Energia	Carlos Sousa	Jean Marie Lurquin	Nissan	Pick Up Navara	T1	+9.56



GENERAL CLASSIFICATION AFTER LEG 1

P ^o	N.º	TEAM	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	MAKE	MODEL	CAT	TIME
1	304	Mitsubishi Motor Sports	Luc Alphand	Gilles Picard	Mitsubishi	Evo	T1	5:38.45
2	306	Volkswagen Motorsport	Jutta Kleinschmidt	Fabrizia Pons	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 4.28
3	305	Volkswagen Motorsport	Carlos Sainz	Andreas Schulz	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 11.57
4	301	Volkswagen Motorsport	Bruno Saby	Michel Perin	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 15.31
5	320	João Ramos	João Ramos	Vitor Jesus	Toyota	Rav 4	T1	+ 15.34
6	310	Volkswagen Motorsport	Mark Miller	Dirk Zitzewitz	Volkswagen	Touareg	T1	+ 20.04
7	314	Ramalho Couto Fitagest Team	Filipe Campos	Jaime Batista	Nissan	Pick Up Navara	T1	+ 22.34
11	302	Team Galp Energia	Carlos Sousa	Jean Marie Lurquin	Nissan	Pick Up Navara	T1	+ 40.04

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Photos

An internet photo site dedicated to Team GALP ENERGIA is available, where high-resolution photos can be downloaded (copyright-free photos for press use only). This site will be updated every day during the event. To use the site, go to the following address, then identify yourself with the name and password given :

Address : www.nismopress.com

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