



TOTAL

FORCH



SILK WAY RALLY 2016

ALMATY (Kazakhstan) - End of Leg 6 - 14th July

Team DESSOUDE just outside the Top 20!

The day before the well-deserved and traditional rest day, this evening saw the Silk Way Rally caravan reach the former capital city Kazakhstan, Almaty. In the DESSOUDE clan, this first part of the rally has been rich in both lessons and adventures. While the weather disrupted the first stages, and even today reduced the length of the timed stage, the three crews have gradually increased in performance as they have covered the kilometres. The experienced Chinese driver MA Miao, with LIAO Min in the DESSOUDE Proto, is currently the highest placed in the overall classification, currently lying 21st. Frédéric CHAVIGNY and his new co-driver, Igor MOTKO, in the DESSOUDE Atacama Proto, have climbed back up to the 38th position after a few misadventures in the third stage. Finally, after an exemplary start to the rally, the other Chinese crew of ZHONG Lei and WANG Zhaohui, in the second DESSOUDE Proto, dropped out of the 28th place in the overall classification after rolling in the fifth special stage. As authorised by the regulations, he will use a joker today, which, against a number of hours as a penalty, will allow him to get back in the race after the rest day, with China still in his sights...



Having left Moscow and the majestic Red Square, the competitors in this 2016 edition of the Silk Way Rally headed for Kazan. On average, it took 12 hours to reach the first bivouac, due to road works, traffic jams and more importantly, cold and wet weather. During this very long stage, a short, two-kilometre timed special, over soft sand along the Volga, right in the centre of Kazan, allowed everyone to warm up while waiting for the serious battle to begin.

Unfortunately, the very bad weather conditions in the region, with especially heavy rain, saw the route conditions on the next day's stage deteriorate, creating many boggy areas. In order to avoid any safety problems, the organisers took the decision to cancel the second stage, and the caravan headed for Ufa, in Kazakhstan, via a liaison stage.



The arrival in Kazakhstan also saw the arrival of better weather, to everyone's delight. The next day, the third timed stage took place in summery conditions, with temperatures around 28°C, and over terrain with a mix of long grass and forests, with many changes of heading. Over this sort of terrain, ZHONG Lei was the fastest, setting the 27th time, while his compatriot MA Miao, was only 77th after some problems. As for Frédéric CHAVIGNY, although the day started well, the driver of the #117 DESSOUDE Atacama Proto was caught out 30 km from the finish line, and fell into a hole. Stuck, but able to count on the solidarity of others to get out of this bad situation, Fred and Igor lost around thirty minutes and finished the stage in 80th position before reaching Kostanay.



For the fourth stage between Kostanay and Astana, the capital city of Kazakhstan, the tall grass was replaced by swamps and mud, while the sky covered over again, with a few showers. MA Miao put on a fine performance, setting the 6th fastest time in the stage, while ZHONG Lei and Frédéric CHAVIGNY were 38th and 55th respectively. Overall, ZHONG Lei was in the Top 30 (28th) while MA Miao and Fred CHAVIGNY continued to climb back up.

Still in Kazakhstan, the fifth stage between Astana and Balkhash gave Frédéric CHAVIGNY an opportunity to really enjoy driving his DESSOUDE Atacama Proto over ground which alternated between fast sections and very technical terrain. Under intense heat, this special stage over rocky tracks and through relatively dense vegetation was extremely tricky in terms of navigation. Despite just starting off in rally raid competition, Igor MOTKO was able to avoid the traps by showing seriousness and professionalism. The duo finished the day 38th in both the stage and the overall classification.



Determined to continue as they had the day before, MA Miao and LIAO Min's progress was slowed by a puncture. Having only chosen to take two spare wheels with them, the pair lifted off in order to ensure they could reach the end of the stage without problems. Despite a relatively sober pace,

the #121 DESSOUDE Proto reached the bivouac in 21st position, 24th overall.

The pair of ZHONG Lei – WANG Zhaohui were less lucky, having been caught out and made a mistake. After rolling a number of times, the DESSOUDE Proto was nevertheless able to reach the finish line. In order to put the car back to rights and continue the rally, the team decided to use their joker and miss the 6th stage in order to rejoin the race after the rest day. This specific rule allows the maximum number of competitors to remain in the race, despite time penalties, and to continue the adventure towards Beijing.



The sixth stage, just before the rest day, took the competitors to Almaty, the former capital city of Kazakhstan. The weather was playing up again, with the timed stage reduced to 110 km over sandy tracks. On good form, MA Miao set the 14th fastest time of the day, climbing up to 21st in the overall classification, just outside the Top 20. A strategic position for the Chinese driver, who will enter the second part of the rally on home ground, from Friday. Frédéric CHAVIGNY opted to manage the situation, setting the 48th time today, and 36th overall.



The first part of this Silk Way has been hard on men and machine alike, so the rest day will be well deserved. But from Friday, the survivors will head for China and some legendary locations such as the Gobi Desert. There will be new landscapes, new problems to face, and the first dunes. The Chinese drivers could shine on home ground.

No matter what happens, MA Miao, an experienced driver with one of the best Chinese co-drivers as his navigator, hopes to do well over terrain he handles well, behind the wheel of a very competitive DESSOUDE Proto. Fred CHAVIGNY will discover some new tracks and new scenery as his dream continues. The first Chinese bivouac will be in Bortala, after a mountainous special stage... the rally is only just getting under way !





THE ROUTE



DATE	#	LEGS	ROAD SECTION 1	SELECTIVE SECTION	ROAD SECTION 2	TOTAL LEG	ALTITUDE SS mini - maxi	DESCRIPTION
09/07	1	MOSCOW - KAZAN	849,85	2	2	853,85		Exit Moscow, heavy traffic, mainly on a 2-lane-road, many trucks. Caution, numerous riders on the road section, 100% good quality tarmac road.
10/07	2	KAZAN - UFA	36,86	135,78	454,02	626,66	64-188	100 % TRACK: SOIL 90 % - GRAVEL 10 %
11/07	3	UFA - KOSTANAY	343,09	200,43	271,63	815,15	254-467	100 % TRACK: SOIL
12/07	4	KOSTANAY - ASTANA *	144,24	345,33	366,12	855,69	108-378	100 % TRACK: SOIL
13/07	5	ASTANA - BALKHASH	235,76	568,24	16,75	820,75	408-998	100 % TRACK: SOIL
14/07	6	BALKHASH - ALMATY	327,10	411,35	117,43	855,88	336 - 580	90 % TRACK: SAND: SOIL 10 % OFF TRACK: SAND: SOIL
15/07		ALMATY						REST DAY
16/07	7	ALMATY - BORTALA	85,51	76,86	419,2	581,57	1072-2575	100 % MOUNTAIN TRACK 80 % SOIL - 20 % GRAVEL STONES
17/07	8	BORTALA - URUMQI **	513,64	256,93	134,78	905,35	294-471	90 % TRACK: SAND 60% - SOIL 30% 10 % OFF TRACK: SAND - VEGETATION
18/07	9	URUMQI - HAMI	289,72	384,40	45,43	719,55	58-974	55 % TRACK: SOIL - SAND 45 % OFF TRACK: DUNE 10% - SAND, GRAVEL, SOIL 30%
19/07	10	HAMI - DUNHUANG	78,49	340,00	106,75	525,24	553-1916	95 % TRACK: SOIL, SAND 85% - STONES 10% 5 % OFF TRACK: SAND, GRAVEL, SOIL
20/07	11	DUNHUANG - JIAYUGUAN	44,28	220,96	344,42	609,66	1376-2508	95 % TRACK: SOIL, SAND 75% - GRAVEL 20% 5 % OFF TRACK: SAND, GRAVEL
21/07	12	JIAYUGUAN - ALASHAN	183,50	425,00	58,42	666,92	1148-1811	81 % TRACK: DUNE 10% - SAND 61% - SOIL 10% 15 % OFF TRACK: DUNE 10% - SAND, GRAVEL 5%, 4 % TARMAC
22/07	13	ALASHAN - WUHAI	30,94	367,44	326,51	724,89	1159-1792	80 % TRACK: SAND 60% - SOIL 20% 20 % OFF TRACK: DUNE 10% - SAND, VEGETATION 5%
23/07	14	WUHAI - HOHHOT	72,60	261,00	420,68	754,28	1039-1224	70 % TRACK: SAND 60% - SOIL 10% 30 % OFF TRACK: DUNE 25% - SAND, VEGETATION 5%
24/07	15	HOHHOT - BEIJING	507,81	0	0	507,81		ON-HIGHWAY, caution numerous trucks
TOTAL KMS			3743,39	4104,96	2926,35	10774,70		
						6669,74		
							4104,96	

*Time difference: +3h00, at the start in the morning

**Time difference: +2h00, at the start in the morning

Classements / Classification

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