



LEG 12 - AREQUIPA / NAZCA (Peru)

DAKAR 2012 - Friday 13th of January

Liaison : 412 km - Special Stage : 245 km

The Oryx Buggies stay on course !

After a sensational entry into Peru yesterday, and a first stop in Arequipa, this evening the 2012 Dakar caravan has its bivouac in one of the country's most historic locations : Nazca, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site due to its famous « lines ». Lines and drawings, some of them many kilometres long, they were made around 1000 years ago by the Nasza civilization, and their significance, despite many theories, remains a mystery. However, finding their meaning was not the top priority for the Dakar competitors, who were keen to get to the bivouac as quickly as possible and to get out of the nightmare dunes of the 12th stage...

This second Peruvian stage kept all its promises in terms of the level of difficulty. Some of the ergs were very difficult to cross, where the slightest mistake could prove very costly, turning rapidly into long hours of problems. Although the zones with the dunes were 'balanced' out over the day, towards the end of the stage, a particularly hard section created havoc among the ranks of those remaining cars. Through luck or extreme skill behind the wheel, it was virtually a case of all or nothing. Although some got through the dunes without serious difficulties, others were caught out on many occasions before reaching the finish line. Depending on the sand, there was still an opportunity to gain some places in the overall classification before reaching Lima...



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As far as Team Dessoude's crews were concerned, the Oryx Diesel buggy of Thierry Magnaldi and François Borsotto put in an excellent performance, finishing 16th fastest on this infernal stage, despite having lost 40 minutes beached in the dunes. Less fortunate, the Chinese crew of Zhou-Liao had to make an impromptu stop at the 99 km mark, after a broken hub, while Isabelle Patisier lost time at the end of the route and was classified 27th in the stage.

N° 331 Thierry Magnaldi - François Borsotto / Buggy Oryx (Diesel)

16th of the stage at 1:15.21 - 16th overall at 11:07.52 - 3rd on 2WD category



At the wheel of the diesel Oryx Buggy, Thierry Magnaldi did not have time to enjoy the scenery. Starting off at an excellent pace, the driver from the Var region saw his lead melt away when he got stuck in the sand, losing precious minutes. Despite everything, the crew finished 16th on the stage, and is lying 16th overall.

« I was not really in great shape when we left this morning, feeling somewhat queasy... All day long, the sand was extremely soft and the wind did not spare us either, sometimes from the front, sometimes from the side. I did not push too hard on the first part of the special stage, knowing that everything came down to the dunes. And when we arrived in the 'critical' zone, I could see that some of the leading cars were already stuck. Everything was going well until we got to a depression, where we needed another two metres to get out. With a Buggy, the penalty is immediate; you need at least 30 minutes to get out. We fought for over 45 minutes to get ourselves out, to put the Buggy in the right direction and get going again. Then we drove without problems to the finish line. It was quite annoying as we were driving with Ronan Chabot, who is leading the two-wheel drive category, and who set a fine time today. On tomorrow's stage we will have to keep on our toes - we're not in Lima yet ! »

N° 320 Isabelle Patissier - Thierry Delli Zotti / Buggy Oryx (Ess)

27th of the stage at 1:53.00 - 26th overall at 17:52.35 - 5th on 2WD category



From the start of this 12th stage, Isabelle Patissier and Thierry Delli Zotti were on the pace. The crew of the nr 320 Buggy were running with the leaders of the two-wheel-drive category, and the first section of dunes gave them no problems whatsoever. But when they reached the more difficult terrain, their fine performance was slightly slowed down...

« This 'excursion' into the Peruvian dunes started off well... but later, things got complicated. I think that perhaps I was not concentrated enough when we reached the more difficult section. At the end of a long descent, there was a dip... and we were caught in the trap. The advantages and disadvantages of a two-wheel-drive... you must not get stuck, or you will lose a lot of time, and that is what happened ! The first time we got stuck, we lost around 30 minutes, and then rather less on each of the subsequent times. Unfortunately, at the end of the day, all these stops add up. We still have to keep going for two more days ! »

N° 335 Zhou Jihong - Liao Min / Proto Dessoudé 05

52nd of the stage at 2:47.55 - 22nd overall at 16:04.37



Quite frankly, this stage did not smile on the pairing of Zhou and Liao. After a good start, setting the right pace, the Proto Dessoudé 05 stopped at the 99-kilometre mark having broken a rear hub.

Luckily, the T4 fast assistance truck was not too far away, and was able to intervene on the vehicle quite quickly. After the repairs, the Proto 05 rejoined the route, having lost around one hour and 40 minutes in this misadventure. The rest of the track was quite difficult, due to the many backmarkers, scattered throughout the dunes.

But it takes more than that to discourage Zhou Jihong who, more than ever, is determined to visit Lima at the weekend, and to finish as the leading Chinese driver in this 2012 edition of the Dakar, his very first (a position which he currently holds)...

TODAY'S STAGE



Classement Etape
Leg Classification

Classement Général
Overall Classification

Tomorrow, Pisco and the Pacific Ocean. Until the very end, the 2012 Dakar will be giving those competitors still in the race sand and more sand. Although the finish line is now almost within sight, they still have to face 76 km of liaison and 276 km of timed stage, crossing quite a few chains of sand dunes while remaining careful where the navigation is concerned.



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