



*team*  
*el essoude*



## PRESS INFO - DAKAR 2015

**Leg 4 : Chilecito (Argentina) - Copiapo (Chile) - 01/07/2015**

**Liaison: 594 km - SS: 315 km**

### Welcome to Chile...and into the Atacama !

Today saw the Dakar change country, sliding from Argentina into Chile by crossing the majestic Cordillera of the Andes. The long, 594-km, liaison section was mostly at high altitude, over 4000 metres, in the heart of a lunar landscape slightly closer to the sun. A fascinating spectacle. But for those competitors still in the race, there was no time to admire the scenery, as they had to continue with a 315 km timed stage.



Today's special included a variety of difficulties, winding trails at the start of the stage, followed by very fast tracks, fesh-fesh and finally sand and dunes before diving down into the Copiapo bivouac.



Over this relatively fast stage, Thierry Magnaldi, at the wheel of the Juke Buggy, managed to avoid all

the potential traps to set the right pace. Thierry and his co-driver, Guy Leneveu, today set the 31st fastest time, and are currently 49th overall.

"Since the start of this rally, this must be our first relatively calm day. The special stage was fine, with some nice dunes at the end. We drove very well up to CP3, then dropped the pace a bit when we reached the sand, which most probably cost us some places. But overall we tried to drive 'clean', without doing anything extraordinary. The aim is to set a good time while sparing the vehicle as much as possible. It has already suffered a lot, and if we want to reach the end of the rally, it is essential to take care of the mechanical parts.

We went through a really daunting second stage, which cost us dearly. I think that in 19 editions of the Dakar, I have never seen such a string of problems. But that's racing and that's the Dakar. But for the overall classification, it will be very complicated..."



The two Chinese crews also had a problem-free day, with the 315 km having been covered without any particular problems. Even if the fesh-fesh remains a serious handicap when overtaking, the first dunes did not take Zhong Lei and Liu Kun by surprise. China has gigantic dunes, and our two friends were not daunted. Navigation was not a problem either, and by setting a good pace the two Dessoudé Proto cars finished in 45th and 46th positions. Their stated aim is clearly to finish the event, so in order to reach Buenos Aires, each day completed successfully is a small victory.

Tomorrow's stage will run parallel to the Pacific Ocean, heading to Antofagasta. This is a well-known stage to the regulars of the South American Dakar, where fesh-fesh is the main enemy. Omnipresent, it will make overtaking difficult and will force the teams to be extra-careful. But the arrival at the bivouac makes it all worthwhile...

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