

2005 Paris Dakar
KTM Web Site
Daily Rally Reports

Table of Contents

1	Scrutineering.....	3
2	1 st Stage.....	5
3	2 nd Stage.....	7
4	3 rd Stage.....	10
5	4 th Stage.....	13
6	5 th Stage.....	15
7	6 th Stage.....	18
8	7 th Stage.....	21
9	8 th Stage.....	24
10	9 th Stage.....	27
11	Rest Day.....	30
12	10 th Stage.....	32
13	11 th Stage.....	35
14	12 th Stage.....	41
15	13 th Stage.....	44
16	14 th Stage.....	49
17	15 th Stage.....	54
18	16 th Stage.....	59

1 Scrutineering

DAKAR 2005: SCRUTINEERING

30.12.2004

The 27th Dakar – KTM about to make history

That has never happened in the history of the Dakar before: One motorbike brand could be taking over the lead for the fifth time in a row - KTM. Up until now, Richard Sainct, Fabrizio Meoni and Nani Roma were able to win the most difficult rally in the world on KTM. The bikes from Mattighofen are now in the position to pass BMW and Yamaha, which have also won four times. Due to the best drivers riding on KTM, the chances are looking great!

However, one of the best drivers is missing: the three-time Dakar winner Richard Sainct. In autumn, Richard was killed in an accident during the Pharaoh's-Rally in Egypt. Though, he is always on the other drivers minds and his spirit rides with them. "Every single one of us misses him", says Claudia Patuzzi, manager of the Team KTM Gauloises. "Not a single day passes without thinking of Richard. Losing him has made us develop a great deal of team spirit. All of us are motivated to win the Dakar. This Dakar is dedicated to Richard!"

Moreover, the organizers of the rally have decided to not approve the starting number one this year. Since last year's winner Nani Roma is riding in a car this year, Richard as second-best, would have been entitled to this number. Because of him passing away, Cyril Despres would have been the third to be authorized to ride as number one. But Cyril does not want to. "It would have been Richard's right", claims the young French driver, who starts the race as one of the favorites.

After his second and third place in the last two years, Cyril Despres wants to finally win it. However, he has strong competitors. Meanwhile, Fabrizio Meoni is dreaming of his third Dakar win. He actually ended his career in January in order to spend more time with his family. Nevertheless, the "matador" is back. And if Meoni races he does not simply race for fun. But maybe Alfie Cox is able to be up front. Or will there be an unexpected win? For instance, Isidre Esteve Pujol from the Spanish team KTM Repsol-Red Bull has set him self the following goal: I do have real chances to win. I am well prepared, my bike is super. Last year I helped Nani to get through. I think now it is my turn."

This is how the KTM factory pilot teams are put together:

The Frenchmen Cyril Despres and Jean Brucy, the Italian driver Fabrizio Meoni and the South-African Alfie Cox will run for the **Team KTM Gauloises**.

For the **Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull**, the Spanish drivers Marc Coma, Isidre Esteve Pujol and Jordi Duran as well as the Italian old hand Giovanni Sala will be riding.

For the second time, the **Team KTM Red Bull USA** takes part in the race with the following drivers: Scott Harden, Kellon Walch and Chris Blais.

Brand new is the **Team KTM Motorex Australia**, which Andy Caldecott and David Schwarz are riding for.

Carlo de Gavardo has set up the one-man-**Team KTM de Gavardo**.

All factory pilots are riding on one cylinder bikes. A change in the regulations which is no problem for KTM. Team manager Hans Trunkenpolz claims: "It is no surprise to us that the two cylinder bikes are no longer accepted within the regulations. In fact, there would have been time until 2006, but we already decided voluntarily to take back the twins at the beginning of 2004. In return, we expect the organizers to keep the open class. Therefore, we speak up and wanted to set a sign with the renunciation of the two cylinder bikes. Next to the class of the 450, which we participate in as well, there should still be an open class with more than 450 ccm. That is what we, KTM, stand up for."

For the last three days, the technical scrutineering has been taking place in Barcelona. The motorbikes are checked to find out if they correspond to the regulations, whether their emergency equipment is complete, whether the GPS functions properly. Drivers have to proof that they have all their papers with them: registration, driver's license, insurance card, ticket for the passage on the ship, and so on. The KTM team proofed to be well prepared: "Our motorbikes are all fine.", said Hans Trunkenpolz. "We prepared our selves for the Dakar very effectively and thoroughly. All teams passed the final test together. The bikes meet the drivers expectations."

For the fourth time the Dakar starts in Spain and for the first time in Barcelona. A belated present for Nani Roma. The Catalan won the Dakar in January on a KTM as the first Spanish driver. Meanwhile, Roma has switched to a Mitsubishi.

The 27th sequence of the rally is about 3000 km shorter than in the previous year. The course was planned the way that not only the power of the bikes should decide over win and defeat but also driving skills as well as navigation and orientation



Cyril Despres and Alfie Cox/Team KTM Gauloises



Fabrizio Meoni



In Memory of Richard Sainct

KTM Web Site

knowledge, claimed the organizers. The 16 stages comprehend 5431 km of special scrutiny going through Spain, Morocco, Mauritania, Mali and Senegal. The longest stage will be the one on New Year's Day starting in Barcelona going to Granada with a total of 920 km. The longest ranking stage with 660 km will go from Zouerat to Tichit. The shortest stage and shortest special stage is the prologue special tomorrow: 6 out of 50 km will be judged.

In any case, we keep at it for you daily. Stay tuned!



Team KTM Red Bull USA: The Bikes



Isidre Esteve Pujol, Marc Coma and Jordi Duran

2 1st Stage

DAKAR 2005: 1ST STAGE BARCELONA – BARCELONA

31.12.2004

7:00 p.m.

Hot prelude at the cold beach of Barcelona

"If we cannot manage to bring home the first five places in Dakar, it would be a huge disappointment to us," said KTM-long-established Heinz Kinigadner. Because of this statement, Kini set the tone for the KTM-teams.

All the pointers are in favor of winning. Despite of looking so undemanding, the six kilometers of this first racing day at the beach of Barcelona challenged everyone. An old hand like Fabrizio Meoni has his own recipe: "One needs to keep a cool head and one should, by no means, already use all power to risk a thing on this first short sand stage." Thus, Meoni managed well on his 47th birthday. He finished only 30 seconds behind the winner.

The Frenchman David Fretigne, who rode on Yamaha, was able to gain the opening victory just like in the year before. Someone, who is seen as the favorite of the this year's Dakar by many people, was hard on his heels: Cyril Despres. "The ride today was a lot of fun. Finally it is happening. But I see no favorite in this race. Something unexpected can happen every day. I know what I am talking about." Dakar newcomer Chris Blais had a lot of fun as well: "The ride in the sand was brilliant." Blais (38th), he and his teammate, Kellon Walch (5th) made a big impression on KTM- team manager Hans Trunkenpolz. "These guys are hotheads. They cut an excellent figure in the sand. We can follow with keen interest of what there is ahead."

Not all KTM- pilots had a good day. Particularly, Giovanni Sala stayed far behind. "My clutch stopped working about 100 m close to the finish line. I was also incapable of starting the bike and had to push it into the finish." And even through deep sand and over a hill, set up just in front of the finish. His teammates Marc Coma and Isidre Esteve helped Sala on the last meters. "I don't see it as a big drama for the rally, yet.", claimed Sala. "It is only annoying that I have to start in the dust of the others in Africa."

Alfie Cox came into the finish with a swollen neck. Only 50 m after just having started the race, did Alfie bang into a sand covered concrete block and fell. Fuming with anger and with pain in his shoulder, he came into the finish. "I fell right on the ball-and-socket joint. Every move hurts right now." The doctors will have a closer look at the joint during the evening. Let's hope the Dakar isn't over for Alfie before it even started.

For tomorrow, the drivers can expect a long connecting stage going from Barcelona to Granada. The course with a length of 920 km runs solely on highways. Even for this seemingly easy task, does the long-established Dakar driver Fabrizio Meoni have a hint:

"Ride with your head and keep cool so that no mistakes happen – even if it is only asphalt. But above all, stick to the speed limit so that you don't land any penalties, yet."

Therefore: Have a good trip in the new year!

3:30 p.m.

This is a rather unusual New Year's Eve for the Dakar: Because the first ranking, the prologue at the beach of Barcelona, still took place in the old year. The 237 motorbike pilots had to manage 50 km. The prologue was, just as always, a very special race. The drivers really have to pay attention that nothing happens to them and their bikes. No crash is being risked in order to avoid any physical or mechanical damage. Though, the fans are expecting a show at the same time. Thousands of people lined up next to the course to be able to watch their favorites.

6 km were judged and, just like in the previous year, the Frenchmen David Fretigne was able to be the fastest in this "show-race" on a Yamaha right at the beach. He raged along the course in 4 minutes and 11 seconds. Cyril Despres, Team KTM Gauloises, only needed 8 seconds longer in order to finish. The Dutch amateur driver Eric Verhoef came in third on a KTM (+0'13).

Further placements of KTM team-riders:

- 5. Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) +0'27
- 7. Fabrizio Meoni (Team KTM Gauloises) +0'30
- 11. Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'43



Kellon Walch



Jean Brucy



Carlo de Gavardo



Cyril Despres

KTM Web Site

- 12. Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'43
- 14. Jordi Duran (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'45
- 38. Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) +1'23
- 39. Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) +1'24
- 42. Carlo de Gavardo (Team KTM de Gavardo) +1'27
- 44. Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) +1'28
- 49. Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) +1'40
- 61. Scott Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) +1'57
- 87. David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) +2'51
- 183. Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +8'27

Especially Gio Sala will be pretty mad about being so far behind. Due to a technical defect on the last kilometer he was thrown off his track. He pushed his bike over the finishing line. This means a lot of work for the assistance crew just before the long connecting course tomorrow.

Sala will be particularly mad, because for the first time, the clocked times gained in the prologue are counted into the ranking. Additionally, the results of today are determining the start order of the next judged stage going from Granada to Rabat on January 2nd.



Isidre Esteve Pujol and Marc Coma



Gio Sala

[Download Results 1st stage.pdf](#)

3 2nd Stage

DAKAR 2005: 2ND STAGE BARCELONA – GRANADA

01.01.2005

4:50 p.m.

The sun is shining and the sky is bright blue above the south of Spain - the weather gods are in favor of the rally pilots. A small compensation for the fact that the first day of the race in the new year cannot quite be called exciting. Neither driving skills nor navigation skills are being asked of the drivers. The drivers need to cover a course of 920 km which run from Barcelona to Granada almost completely on highways. Nevertheless, this monotony can also be exhausting.

Thus, there is enough time to talk about the ambitions the KTM- factory pilots have. Dakar master Fabrizio Meoni has thoroughly thought about the withdrawal of his resignation: "I am physically as well as mentally in great condition. Due to knowing what is important besides driving, I am able to show the young drivers a lot: reading the road book, navigating, reducing the speed in villages to avoid penalties, always having enough fuel in the tank. With the experience I gained, I am in on the race for the lead. One surely also needs a lot of luck but I would be more than happy to stand on the podium at the end."

The rookies who are driving for KTM this year have a complete different position. For instance, Jordi Duran, team KTM Repsol-Red Bull: "It is my first Dakar. The opening race accompanied by so many fans combined with a home audience was magnificent. My primary goal is, of course, to arrive in Dakar. Additionally, I want to help my three teammates if, at some point, they have any problems." And that is exactly the team spirit the Spanish team manager, Jordi Arcarons, is working for. The goal the Spanish team has is pretty clear. They want another victory. "We do not have a new Nani within our team", said Arcarons. "But we do have chances to repeat the triumph we had last year. Therefore, we work together and my job is to make sure the team goes together well."

The Americans Chris Blais and Kellon Welch are also new in the Dakar. Their team manager, Joe Baker, is very enthusiastic about the sunny boys. "These two are the right ones for the Dakar!" Last year we took part in order to learn and to have a closer look at the mother of all desert rallies. From now on we are working on our big plan: With one of our US- pilots we want to be on the podium in three years the latest." That is the goal Chris Blais is working for: "I am well prepared for the Dakar, drove several races in the desert and am in great condition for this huge rally. I manage my KTM 660 Rally well. The motorbike is new for me but we go together well. And within three years I want to be under the top three drivers."

Carlo de Gavardo can't wait this long. The Chilean is riding a KTM 450 this year. "This is a new experience for me after having been on a big bike for 9 years. And the feeling I have when my friends are going by on big bikes isn't great. But my bike is top and I have great ambitions. I want to win within the 450 ranking and be within the top 5 in the overall standing. I am in great physical and mental condition."

Condition, by the way: Alfie Cox had his shoulder x-rayed last night. The good news: Nothing is damaged, neither bones nor ligaments. The bad news: The ligaments at the right shoulder have become inflamed. Alfie takes painkiller and needs to see how his shoulder gets by from day to day. Let's wish him all the best!

Before the followers of the rally reach African ground tomorrow, the drivers will have to ride a 10 km ranking just before Granada. Taking a short farewell of Europe!



Alfie Cox



Roland Bruckner, Mechaniker Cyril Despres



Chris Blais



Cyril Despres



Jordi Arcarons, Teammanager KTM Repsol-Red Bull



Fabrizio Meoni



Gio Sala

4 3rd Stage

DAKAR 2005: 3RD STAGE GRANADA – RABAT

02.01.2005

2:30 p.m.

Drawing a deep breath after the short special

Whoever stood close enough to Alfie Cox in the finish was able to feel how much this was a load off his mind. Everything went well for the South-African today. Not only because he came in second but above all because his injured right shoulder didn't cause any problems. "I am so happy and relieved that all goes on for me" said Alfie after finishing the special. "Just before the start I was pretty nervous after all. I didn't know whether I could step on the gas without constantly feeling the pain. But the shoulder didn't bother me. I am truly more than relieved." Only Yamaha-pilot David Fretigne was faster than Alfie Cox on his KTM 660 Rally today. Cyril Despres ranked just behind them on 3rd place. Thus, the Frenchman was able to defend his second place in the overall standing.

All in all, did all KTM- factory pilots manage the 10 km of the special pretty well, which were not completely new to the rally pilots. A ranking on the military base nearby Granada had already taken place in 1999. Certainly under quite different conditions. "Then we rode in deep mud", said Jean Bruzy. "Today there was a lot of dust we had to cope with. But I feel more comfortable with that."

Scott Harden, the "old-timer" within the team KTM Red Bull USA, was satisfied as well. Not only is he going on his second Dakar but he is also team manager for the two youngsters Chris Blais and Kellon Walch. "It was important to me that my boys would not be within the top today. They like to step on the gas but that wouldn't have been good tactics today. For the first stage in Africa tomorrow, it is better if Chris and Kellon drive in the tracks of the others. They still have to learn a lot." Kellon, by the way, has his 22nd birthday today. Happy Birthday!

With sunshine and high temperature did Europe say good-bye to the rally followers. From tonight on the hearts of the rally pilots will swell on. Because whoever wants to get involved into the adventure of the Dakar, dreams of stages in Africa, of dunes, ergs, stony tracks and camel grass. With a ferry they get from the Spanish city of Granada to the Moroccan city of Tangier. The divers and their bikes will still have to go on 557 km from there. The bivouac is set up on the outskirts of the Moroccan capitol Rabat, which is stage base of the Dakar for the fourth time.

Encompassing 123 km, the fourth stage tomorrow is not very long but is asking for the driver's navigation skills. Stage destination is Agadir in the south of Morocco.

12:40 p.m.

With a very short test does the Dakar take its farewell of Europe. The special on a military base nearby Granada had a length of only 10 km but was really demanding and did not only offer a lot of fun to the spectators. The pilots were also able to indulge their vice, meaning to really speed up their bikes. It was an exceptionally fast race which the Frenchman David Fretigne managed to win again. He finished the 10 km on his Yamaha in 7'57 minutes. Only 2 seconds later did Alfie Cox, team KTM Gauloises, cross the finish line. This is a good sign which shows that Alfie's injured shoulder obviously doesn't bother him that much. Cyril Despres, team KTM Gauloises, made it on the third place only 3 seconds behind Fretigne.

Further rankings of KTM – factory pilots:

- #4 Jordi Duran (team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'09
- #5 Marc Coma (team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'10
- #6 Andy Caldecott (team KTM Motorex Australia) +0'11
- #7 Carlo de Gavardo (team KTM de Gavardo) +0'14
- #9 Fabrizio Meoni (team KTM Gauloises) +0'20
- #10 Kellon Walch (team KTM Red Bull USA) +0'20
- #13 Isidre Esteve Pujol (team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'25
- #14 Scott Harden (team KTM Red Bull USA) +0'26
- #15 Chris Blais (team KTM Red Bull USA) +0'27
- #18 Jean Bruzy (team KTM Gauloises) +0'29
- #25 Giovanni Sala (team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +0'39
- #49 David Schwarz (team KTM Motorex Australia) +1'00

A quite exciting moment is ahead of the drivers: They are going to reach Africa. Exciting, because most of the drivers see the European stages as a kind of a warm-up.

Not before Africa, the Dakar really seems to start. The first section on the black continent is also truly something to get used to. Going out of the harbor of Tangier, a highway runs to Rabat, the Moroccan capitol where the followers of the rally will set up their bivouac.



Kellon Walch



Carlo de Gavardo

The drivers still have a total of 557 km ahead of them.



Marc Coma



Jean Brucy



Alfie Cox

5 4th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 4TH STAGE RABAT – AGADIR

03.01.2005

Where in the world are they driving? This was the question of today because nothing was to be seen of the pilots on their two wheels. Africa in fog! Although, the drivers were heading towards Agadir, the special was cancelled by the organizers. The reasons: The helicopters of the stewards were incapable of taking off. The safety of the drivers was therefore not guaranteed anymore. Additionally, the A.S.O. claimed that the stage would not be proceeded under legitimate conditions. That is why the drivers were asked to not speed along the course. After the first checkpoint, the drivers left the race track and are currently riding the 500 km to Agadir on asphalt.

So, there is not going to be a fight for the lead within KTM- factory pilots today. But the KTM assistance team will have to fight a hard battle. Many private KTM pilots have had problems with the batteries of their bikes since the beginning of the rally. The defects are all of different natures but are mostly concerning the 450 bikes. The technicians haven't found the cause for the damage of battery after battery.

However, KTM is working feverish in order to provide the service the private drivers are used to. "It means a lot to us to solve this problem as quickly as possible.", promises KTM team manager Hans Trunkenpolz. "Yesterday, the attempt to send one of our electronics engineers from Mattighofen to Rabat failed. He was delayed at the airport in Munich because his tools and some spare parts didn't make it through the security check. Meanwhile, the man is on his way to Agadir. Additionally, there is a plane with new batteries and regulators on its way there. The factory teams also provide the amateurs with their equipment until the problem is solved." Thus, there will be a lot of work in the bivouac in Agadir tonight.

Last but not least, some good news: The American Dakar newcomer Chris Blais, team KTM Red Bull USA, celebrates his 24th birthday today. Happy Birthday!

Hopefully, the motorcyclists will have a clear view again tomorrow. The first long special is up next. 381 km will be judged on the way from Agadir to Smara. The course is initially hard and fast but will then be very stony and in the second section be quite winding. The second part is completely new and ends in a tried out river valley. Thus, the old hands will have little chance to bring to bear their experience. An exciting day if the weather gods are in favour of the rally.



Happy Birthday Chris Blais



Mechaniker Manel Salinas und Marc Coma



Cyril Despres und Mechaniker Roland Bruckner in Agadir



Andy Caldecott, Team KTM Motorex Australia



Teammanager Hans Trunkenpolz

6 5th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 5TH STAGE AGADIR - SMARA

04.01.2005

8:35 p.m.

Australian triumph and Spanish tears

There she was, the first African stage. And she was quite cruel. One of the young Spanish matadors had to already give up today. Jordi Duran's dream of arriving in Dakar suddenly vanished in the Moroccan sand. Going high speed, Jordi happened to fall really hard off his bike just before CP 1. He broke his thigh and additionally has an open fracture in his forearm. Because of this, he was flown to a hospital in Agadir right away.

It is a sad moment for Jordi who had planned so much more. Also a great shock for his teammates Marc Coma, Isidre Esteve and Gio Sala. "It was a typical Moroccan stage", said Marc Coma later in the bivouac. "Stones everywhere. If you don't pay attention for one single moment, then this is it. I know exactly how Jordi must feel now. Last year I dropped out after falling badly as well. Not only am I really sorry for Jordi because he is my friend but also because he is a great teammate. He has always lived things up and always smiled. It is such a pity."

Coma himself did great on the rocky track. He came in second in today's ranking. Only 3 seconds faster than him was the Australian Andy Caldecott. Caldecott had been on a few top places in the previous year already. But today he was quite surprised of his success. "Actually, I drove very carefully due to the sharp stones. Additionally, there was an instruction in the road book every couple of meters, therefore one needed to be very concentrated. That's why I really didn't expect this result." Andy Caldecott had to give up the race after falling down and breaking his ankle a year ago in Atar. This year he definitely wants to reach Dakar. "That's my first priority. And if everything goes well, I would like to be under the top 5."

Alfie Cox was just as satisfied with his race as Andy Caldecott today. Coming in almost six minutes behind Caldecott he ranks 4th place. But: Everything still went well. My shoulder doesn't hurt anymore which was most important on this first real stage. I also had to slow down 40 km before the finish line. The mousse in the back wheel was damaged."

Scott Harden was fighting against the material-consuming course, too. 160 km before the finish he had a stone flying into his back break disc. Thus, he couldn't use the break anymore. "That obviously was a huge drawback", as claimed by the American team manager. "I wasn't able to risk anything anymore and I lost almost half an hour."

Although he came in third, Cyril Despres walked through the bivouac really unsatisfied. His two trip masters played a trick on him and indicated different data which didn't quite facilitate the orientation on this rather fast track. And then he felt he was put at a disadvantage by the organizers. Claudia Patuzzi, team manager, explains: "Cyril claims to have been at the CP 2 one minute before Marc Coma and to have gotten gas just as everyone else. But the commissioners supposedly put him back on track together with Marc. We will now check this on the basis of the course records."

Nevertheless, due to his fast speed Marc Coma took over the lead in the overall standing today. On the following places are Andy Caldecott (+ 0'43) and Cyril Despres (+2'45).

Tomorrow there will be a very difficult and also long course of 492 km waiting for the drivers. Zouerat, Mauritania, is the destination. Whoever loves dunes and knows how to navigate quite well will love that challenge. The others could be losing a lot of time within the dunes...

5:00 p.m.

Finally there is a real testing in Africa! The special with a length of 381 km was a very fast course with a few tough bits. The drivers had to hellishly pay attention in order to be able to deal with the change between hard ground, stony tracks, rocks and soft sand. Additionally and for the first time in the this year's Dakar, the drivers were asked for their navigation skills. All of these reasons turned this particular stage in Morocco into a real Dakar-testing. The field of drivers has been mixed up quite well.

For KTM, the day was full of ups and downs. Andy Caldecott, team KTM Motorex Australia, proved to be the fastest driver in the desert. The 40-year-old Australian needed 4 hours and 9 seconds to ride the 381 km. Caldecott had been able to catch up with Marc Coma at the CP 1 after only 101 km, although Coma had started 2 minutes before him. But Marc Coma was able to counterattack and came in second only 3 seconds behind. Therefore the man, team KTM Repsol-Red Bull, was



Jean Bruy und Scott Harden



Im Bivak von Smara



KTM-Ing. Hans Schiffer



Andy Caldecott

decisively faster than Despres and Cox, who had started before him. At least, Cyril Despres was able to rank third, being 3'30 behind Caldecott. He surely couldn't have been satisfied with this result particularly because Cyril had to deal with a technical problem: He has two mileage indicators on his bike. But both trip masters showed different data and were naturally quite confusing to Cyril. In the finish though, it turned out that one of the trip masters had been broken.

Further rankings of KTM- factory pilots are:

- #4 Alfie Cox (team KTM Gauloises) + 5'59
- #5 Isidre Esteve Pujol (team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 6'40
- #6 Fabrizio Meoni (team KTM Gauloises) + 7'44
- #8 Chris Blais (team KTM Red Bull USA) + 13'35
- #9 Carlo de Gavardo (team KTM de Gavardo) + 14'30
- #14 Jean Brucy (team KTM Gauloises) + 17'36
- #15 Giovanni Sala (team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 17'37
- #18 Scott Harden (team KTM Red Bull USA) + 26'08
- #33 David Schwarz (team KTM Motorex Australia) + 50'43
- #56 Kellon Walch (team KTM Red Bull USA) + 1'06'41

The Spanish driver Jordi Duran, team KTM Repsol-Red Bull is missing on this list. Unfortunately, the Dakar is over for him. The 25-year-old fell really badly just before the first check point. The diagnosis of the doctors is: break in the head of the femur and broken collarbone. Jordi is already taken care of in a hospital.



Start in Agadir



Cyril Despres

[Download Ergebnisse 5.Etappe-Standings 5th stage.pdf](#)

Tageswertung 5. Etappe: Agadir - Smara

Daily results 5th stage: Agadir - Smara

Speciale: 381 km

- 1 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 4h 00' 09" 00' 00"
- 2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 00' 12" 00' 03"
- 3 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 03' 39" 03' 30"
- 4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 4h 06' 08" 05' 59"
- 5 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 06' 49" 06' 40"
- 6 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 07' 53" 07' 44"
- 7 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 4h 10' 39" 10' 30"
- 8 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 4h 13' 44" 13' 35"
- 9 DE GAVARDO CHI Team KTM De Gavardo 4h 14' 39" 14' 30"
- 10 DABROWSKI POL KTM 4h 15' 14" 15' 05"
- 11 CASTEAU FRA KTM 4h 16' 25" 16' 16"
- 12 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 4h 16' 43" 16' 34"
- 13 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 4h 17' 20" 17' 11"
- 14 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 17' 45" 17' 36"
- 15 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 17' 46" 17' 37"
- 16 CZACHOR POL KTM 4h 19' 45" 19' 36"
- 17 GORRARA SUI KTM 4h 25' 23" 25' 14"
- 18 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 4h 26' 17" 26' 08"
- 19 DUCLOS FRA KTM 4h 30' 13" 30' 04"
- 20 ALGAY FRA KTM 4h 36' 42" 36' 33"
- 31 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 4h 50' 52" 50' 43"
- 34 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 06' 50" 1h 06' 41"

Gesamtwertung nach der 5. Etappe:

Overall standings after 5th stage:

- 1 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 13' 13" 00' 00"
- 2 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 4h 13' 56" 00' 43"
- 3 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 15' 58" 02' 45"
- 4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 4h 19' 58" 06' 45"
- 5 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 20' 05" 06' 52"
- 6 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 20' 51" 07' 38"
- 7 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 4h 22' 47" 09' 34"
- 8 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 4h 27' 42" 14' 29"
- 9 DE GAVARDO CHI Team KTM De Gavardo 4h 28' 28" 15' 15"
- 10 DABROWSKI POL KTM 4h 28' 42" 15' 29"
- 11 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 4h 30' 34" 17' 21"
- 12 CASTEAU FRA KTM 4h 30' 39" 17' 26"
- 13 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 4h 30' 43" 17' 30"
- 14 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 31' 46" 18' 33"
- 15 CZACHOR POL KTM 4h 33' 53" 20' 40"
- 16 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 4h 40' 48" 27' 35"
- 17 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 44' 00" 30' 47" 05' 00"
- 18 DUCLOS FRA KTM 4h 44' 18" 31' 05"
- 19 GORRARA SUI KTM 4h 48' 29" 35' 16" 09' 00"
- 20 ALGAY FRA KTM 4h 51' 22" 38' 09"
- 30 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 5h 06' 51" 53' 38"
- 34 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 19' 45" 1h 06' 32"

7 6th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 6TH STAGE SMARA - ZOUERAT

05.01.2005

9:00 p.m.

It came like a real whopper for all the participants of the Dakar in the evening: The service tent of the bivouac burned down completely. Thank god no one was hurt. How high the damage is and what effects this has on the ongoing Dakar is still unknown.

8:00 p.m.

Day of the cunning old desert devils

There were two words that were heard everywhere in the bivouac in Zouerat today: fucking wind. The strong wind on the course was quite difficult for the drivers. Whenever a driver left prints in the sand, they were gone within seconds. "From time to time one wasn't able to see a thing", said Chris Blais. The young American who has never driven in Africa before, has drawn the right conclusions for himself. "The course was really fast and my bike worked wonders. But now and then I wasn't sure which track to chose. Thus, I let the number 11 (Marek Dabrowski, KTM –edit. comment) pass and followed him afterwards. That's how I learn best. And I am satisfied with my ride today." Chris Blais came in 10th and lost 17 minutes on the winner of the day. A respectable result.

This first Mauritanian stage has definitely mixed up the rankings. It was the first long stage through endless fields of dunes. The wind didn't facilitate this task. Those, who know the Mauritanian desert like the back of their hand were able to deal with the challenge best. Today, no one was faster than Fabrizio Meoni. Whoever thought the 47-year-old was going on this Dakar to only take part in it, was wrong. Fabrizio showed off his skills. "For me, it was a test today to see whether my brain still functions. Whether I can go fast and at the same time be able to navigate. I am quite satisfied. I could have been even faster. But 80 km before the finish my mousse broke at the back tire and it started this rolling motion in the rim. That's why I had to reduce speed. But other than that it went well.

Alfie Cox (today 3rd place) and Cyril Despres (4th) were satisfied with their race and navigation skills, too. By contrast did Jean Brucy (12th) and Carlo de Gavardo (15th) have bad luck. Carlo almost lost half an hour on Meoni. He fell and overturned his bike during the stage. His ride went on a little slower. At the moment, Carlo is limping through the bivouac but wants to be in the race tomorrow again. Jean had his bad luck already on the liaison at the start. "Yes, this stage today was longer for me than for the others. My front break stopped working 15 km into the stage. I turned around and went back to the bivouac to wake my mechanics. Marc fixed it and I went back to the start. Unfortunately, I was three minutes late at the start." Jean is now waiting for whatever penalty the organizers will impose.

Cyril Despres took over the lead in the overall ranking, followed by Marc Coma (+0'35) and Fabrizio Meoni (+1'16).

During this 27th Dakar, we also want to spend some time looking at the men and women again, who go on the toughest rally of the desert and are the real heroes often wrongfully forgotten:

The secret heroes

He is an impressive guy, Kevin Heath. Born in South-Africa, he was later drawn to California, U.S.A.. Building electronic go-karts he managed to pay for his living. With his earnings he tries to get over his creative crisis. The 46-year-old giant blinks an eye and says: "I have my midlife crisis. In this difficult period of life some buy their selves a Porsche to impress young women. Others are looking for a challenge in order to proof something to their selves. I am one of them." Kevin Heath wanted three of his dreams to come true: participating in the International Six Days Enduro (ISDE), in the Baja 500 and 1000 and in the Dakar.

ISDE and Baja he has already done. Now he is at his biggest dream, the Dakar. Heath is going on this rally with a KTM, supported by the KTM Costumer Service. But the man with the starting number 118 is not only a pilot. As many others, Heath likes to screw onto his motorcycle at night in the camp so that his bike is ready for the next day. "I need this challenge. But it would be too difficult without any help. That's why I decided to work with the KTM Costumer Service", claims Heath.

His goal is to reach Dakar. Which place? Doesn't matter as much as simply arriving. And when he crosses the podium at Lac Rose, then, his third wish has come true as well.

Whether his midlife crisis is over then? The answers might be found on www.kevinsmidlifecrisis.com.

From the beginning on, there was one problem that took a lot of energy out of the private divers: the batteries.

There is another statement of the KTM team management about that:

"The batteries of several private riders have been discharging during the motorcycle downtime. An immediate check of KTM on the spot has resulted in the conclusion that all power supply components, as well as the security devices which have been newly specified by the organiser, have no negative influence on the batteries. Due to the fact that models of the last three years of manufacturing seem to be affected, the reason of these problems comes primarily from individual installation issues.

Irrespective of fact finding, the point is now to help the private riders. KTM assists all competing pilots to the highest possible extent with spare parts and batteries from the factory teams. The two "KTM Racing Trucks" are integrated in the assistance and may support private riders also during the stages.

Moreover, additional replacement batteries have been delivered by airplane two days ago. Onboard the plane was an electronic engineer of KTM, who has been and will be assisting the riders in correcting the

problem."

Tomorrow, there will be the first part of a difficult marathon stage waiting for the drivers. 660 km will count for the ranking – the longest special of the rally! Big parts of the course are new to the old hands as well. Additionally, the start will be in a line up of 20 drivers at a time. The stage of tomorrow has it all: the difficult pass El Ghallaouiya surrounded by rock formations, far reaching dunes, many little ergs, tricky camel grass and at the end only a small possible path into the oasis of Tichit. There is no service allowed in the bivouac. The drivers have to take care of the bikes alone.

4:00 p.m.

The real cunning old devils of the desert were able to come out on top against the others in the first Mauritanian stage. Today, the ability "to read the sand" and having a nose for the right track won over reckless courage and youthful carefree attitude. The two time Dakar-champion Fabrizio Meoni, team KTM Gauloises, turned out to be the fastest on the special with a length of 492 km, which, by the way, was part of a marathon stage last year. Meoni crossed the finish line after 4 hours 37 minutes and 14 seconds. A staggering speed in this difficult stage!

Meoni steadily took over the lead: 3rd place at CP 1, 2nd place at CP 2 and after the last difficult part with a lot of dunes he managed to be today's winner.

Additionally, this stage will go down in history, just as typical for the Dakar: An amateur made it on the podium. The cunning old devil Pal Anders Ullevalseter came in second, only 1'38 minutes behind Meoni. Quite respectable of the Norwegian KTM pilot!

Alfie Cox is another old hand who came in third. Alfie had lost 2'58 minutes on his teammate Meoni.

Further rankings of KTM- factory pilots are:

- #4 Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) + 4'37"
- #5 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 6'57"
- #6 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 8'50"
- #7 Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 9'01"
- #10 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 17'20"
- #11 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 17'48"
- #12 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 18'16"
- #15 Carlo de Gavardo (Team KTM de Gavardo) + 27'06"
- #17 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 32'59"
- #18 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 37'16"
- #37 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 1'20'40"

To reach the bivouac in Zouerat, the rally pilots will now only have to go another 9 km.

Tageswertung 6. Etappe: Smara - Zouerat

Daily results 6th stage: Smara - Zouerat

Speciale: 492 km

- 1 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 37' 14" 00' 00"
- 2 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 4h 38' 52" 01' 38"
- 3 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 4h 40' 12" 02' 58"
- 4 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 41' 51" 04' 37"
- 5 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 44' 11" 06' 57"
- 6 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 4h 46' 04" 08' 50"
- 7 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 46' 15" 09' 01"
- 8 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 4h 47' 17" 10' 03"
- 9 DABROWSKI POL KTM 4h 50' 18" 13' 04"
- 10 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 4h 54' 34" 17' 20"
- 11 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 55' 02" 17' 48"
- 12 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 55' 32" 18' 18"
- 13 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 4h 56' 54" 19' 40"
- 14 CASTEAU FRA KTM 4h 57' 31" 20' 17"
- 15 DE GAVARDO CHI Team KTM De Gavardo 5h 04' 20" 27' 06"
- 16 CZACHOR POL KTM 5h 06' 07" 28' 53"
- 17 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 10' 13" 32' 59"
- 18 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 14' 30" 37' 16"
- 19 MARCHINI FRA KTM 5h 32' 12" 54' 58"
- 20 CROQUELOIS KTM 5h 34' 02" 56' 48"

Gesamtwertung nach der 6. Etappe:

Overall standings after 6th stage:

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 8h 56' 49" 00' 00"
- 2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 8h 57' 24" 00' 35"
- 3 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 8h 58' 05" 01' 16"
- 4 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 9h 00' 00" 03' 11"
- 5 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 9h 00' 10" 03' 21"
- 6 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 9h 06' 20" 09' 31"
- 7 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 9h 09' 26" 12' 37"
- 8 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 9h 10' 04" 13' 15"
- 9 DABROWSKI POL KTM 9h 19' 00" 22' 11"
- 10 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 9h 22' 16" 25' 27"
- 11 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 9h 27' 18" 30' 29"
- 12 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 9h 27' 37" 30' 48"
- 13 CASTEAU FRA KTM 9h 28' 10" 31' 21"
- 14 DE GAVARDO CHI Team KTM De Gavardo 9h 32' 48" 35' 59"
- 15 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 9h 39' 02" 42' 13" 05' 00"
- 16 CZACHOR POL KTM 9h 40' 00" 43' 11"
- 17 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 9h 51' 01" 54' 12"
- 18 DUCLOS FRA KTM 10h 20' 21" 1h 23' 32"
- 19 CROQUELOIS KTM 10h 27' 45" 1h 30' 56"
- 20 ALGAY FRA KTM 10h 29' 44" 1h 32' 55"
- 23 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 10h 34' 15" 1h 37' 26"

8 7th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 7TH STAGE ZOUERAT - TICHIT

06.01.2005

9:25 p.m.

A.S.O. pulls emergency brake

A dramatic evening. 80 percent of the rally's participants are still out in the desert. The officials of the rally have therefore decided that only 130 km of tomorrow's 2nd part of the marathon stage will be judged. The starting time is delayed to 10 a.m. With that A.S.O. allows drivers who arrive late at night the bivouac to rest at least for a few hours.

9:20 p.m.

An extreme stage between dunes, grass and wind

Today's heroes lie and sit totally exhausted in the bivouac and a sandstorm battles above their heads. This stage was one of a kind, even for the more experienced competitors. "It was a true Dakar day. Strenuous, with low vision and tons of camel grass," exclaims Alfie Cox. He celebrated his birthday today and it seems he enjoyed the 660 km nevertheless. He came in 7 minutes behind the leader and was able to claim a 4th place. He seems to be comfortable with that. Cyril Despres reached the finish line just before him. "I had a hard time seeing anything. Never before have I crossed a 400 km stretch which constituted completely of camel grass. It was extremely difficult." Cyril lost the overall lead to Marc Coma, the second fastest on the day. Coma is 16 seconds ahead of Despres. Andy Caldecott and Alfie Cox came in tied (+5'40) in 3rd place.

The second part of the special proved to be selective today. Until CP 2 at kilometer 397 the young American Kellon Walch led the pack. A miracle since he started off relying on pain killers. He too, took a dig into the sand yesterday, falling twice off his bike. But it was yet to happen again. "Right after CP 2 I fell several times," explains Walch, "It cost a lot of time. It was also extremely difficult to find the tracks. I clung to a rider in front of me and I followed him. I was lucky that my bike ran flawlessly."

Joe Barker, deputy US team chief, was satisfied with his boys. "Kellon and Chris race very well. Undoubtedly it was a difficult stage today. The dunes at home have a totally different structure. I'm satisfied that the boys made it across the finish line. It is a plus that they achieved such extraordinary placements." This was also due to the services of John Edwards, doctor of the team. This morning he was working hard. "I mixed protein and electrolyte drinks. The guys have to survive the next two most strenuous days. I need to give them all the help I can." The wellness package also included a relaxing and refreshing back massage for each of his boys. His help was successful as one can see.

Gio Sala also showed team spirit during the race. He provided Isidre Esteve with desperately needed gasoline. The Spaniard took along less than he needed. Anyone who still needed to repair the bike had to tackle these problems on the course of the stage. After crossing the finish line only refueling was possible. For the night the motorcycles are kept in Parc Fermé, which is placed a few hundred meters away from the bivouac. Last night the team managers advised their riders to pay attention to their equipment. Claudia Patuzzi, Team KTM Gauloises, explains, "All of them are taking along a few spare parts. For example: one or two tubes. And they certainly also carry along a few personal items for the night. The service trucks bypass this bivouac and are already continuing on to the next bivouac in Tidjikja."

One of the teammates could not continue on with the race this morning: Carlo de Gavardo. After yesterday's bad crash he bruised his back that he couldn't move at all this morning. He father states, "Carlo felt like an old guy of 100 years. He was in pain with every move he made." Pulling out of the race is tough for Carlo. After several injuries during the previous years he is mentally in great shape again. KTM team manager Hans Trunkenpolz is equally disappointed, "Carlo's retiring from the race takes away our chance to document the efficiency of the 450 KTM. The day before yesterday, Carlo took care of Jordi Duran and stayed with him after his severe crash. And yesterday Carlo suffered a bad crash as well and finished the stage very cautiously. For sure he would be leading his class, if these two things hadn't happened. No matter what, we will continue on with our concept. It is the right way to keep on going with this motorcycle."

After a short night the competitors head for Tidjikja early tomorrow morning. 520 km out of the 538 km will be judged. Once again the participants will face the vastness of sand. Between the dunes, passages are hidden, which lead to the finish. It will be a challenge for navigational fans!

7:45 p.m.



Fabrizio Meoni und Cyril Despres



Chris Blais

What a day! It will certainly find its way into Dakar history. The best of the drivers needed more than 9 hours to finish the 660 km special. Today the conditions were extremely tough!

A heavy sand storm awakened the rally competitors this morning. First change: The officials didn't go through with their plan to start off 20 competitors at once. They claimed it was too dangerous due to low vision. Therefore the racers started one behind the other, each with a 2 minute delay. What followed was a gigantic task. Even well experienced Dakar participants had to find a new way dealing with these conditions. The bigger part of the special has never been used in the Dakar Rally so far. The special was lined with several highlights, for example the crossing of the difficult El Ghallâoulya, which was embedded within steep mountains. The track continued through seemingly endless plains, fields of dunes, which drained the strength, and treacherous camel grass. At the end of the 660 km ride navigation became important. The riders had to find a crossing which opened them the way into the oasis Tichit.

The Frenchman David Fretigne (Yamaha) proved his skills in the Mauritanian desert. He clocked the fastest time of 9 hours, 16 minutes and 26 seconds. Marc Coma, a Spanish potential, from Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull came in second. He needed 4'31 minutes longer to finish the track. Cyril Despres from Team KTM Gauloises came in third; he lost 5'22 minutes to the leader.

Further rankings of KTM team rider:

- #4 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 7'25
- #5 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 7'35
- #6 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 8'10
- #8 Fabrizio Meoni (Team KTM Gauloises) + 11'22
- #9 Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 13'45
- #10 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 19'45
- #12 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 37'26
- #19 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 1'21'20
- #25 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 1'48'35

David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) are still expected at the finish line.

This morning Carlo de Gavardo did not push his 450 KTM to the start. Carlo suffered a severe crash yesterday. This morning, his back was aching so bad that he could hardly move. Unfortunately he was forced to retire from the race. Too bad – get well soon, Carlo!

At the finish line the riders have also reached the bivouac in Tichit. The motorcycles have to be parked at Park Fermé tonight. Anyone who still needs to fix something minor or who needs to change a tube will have to do so before the bivouac. Some additional information about the fire in the kitchen tent last night: Nobody was hurt and all kitchen utensils work perfectly. The supply of food and beverages is safe for the next bivouac.



Parc Fermé



Kellon Walch



Happy Birthday Alfie Cox



Marc Coma

[Download Ergebnisse 7.Etappe - Standings 7th stage.pdf](#)

Tageswertung 7. Etappe: Zouerat - Tichit

Daily results 7th stage: Zouerat - Tichit

Speciale: 660 km

- 1 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 9h 16' 26" 00' 00"
- 2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 9h 20' 57" 04' 31"
- 3 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 9h 21' 48" 05' 22"
- 4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 9h 23' 51" 07' 25"
- 5 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 9h 24' 01" 07' 35"
- 6 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 9h 24' 36" 08' 10"
- 7 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 9h 26' 11" 09' 45"
- 8 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 9h 27' 48" 11' 22"
- 9 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 9h 30' 11" 13' 45"
- 10 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 9h 36' 20" 19' 54"
- 11 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 9h 52' 44" 36' 18"
- 12 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 9h 53' 52" 37' 26"
- 13 LEPAN KTM 10h 16' 10" 59' 44"
- 14 CZACHOR POL KTM 10h 19' 17" 1h 02' 51"
- 15 CROQUELOIS KTM 10h 21' 08" 1h 04' 42"
- 16 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 10h 25' 23" 1h 08' 57"
- 17 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 10h 32' 03" 1h 15' 37"
- 18 CASTEAU FRA KTM 10h 36' 45" 1h 20' 19"
- 19 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 10h 37' 46" 1h 21' 20"
- 20 DABROWSKI POL KTM 10h 40' 21" 1h 23' 55"
- 25 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 11h 05' 01" 1h 48' 35"

Gesamtwertung nach der 7. Etappe:

Overall standings after 7th stage:

- 1 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 18h 18' 21" 00' 00"
- 2 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 18h 18' 37" 00' 16"
- 3 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 18h 24' 01" 05' 40"
- 4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 18h 24' 01" 05' 40"
- 5 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 18h 25' 53" 07' 32"
- 6 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 18h 26' 30" 08' 09"
- 7 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 18h 35' 37" 17' 16"
- 8 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 18h 36' 31" 18' 10"
- 9 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 19h 03' 38" 45' 17" 05' 00"
- 10 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 19h 16' 08" 57' 47"
- 11 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 19h 20' 21" 1h 02' 00"
- 12 CZACHOR POL KTM 19h 59' 17" 1h 40' 56"
- 13 DABROWSKI POL KTM 19h 59' 21" 1h 41' 00"
- 14 CASTEAU FRA KTM 20h 04' 55" 1h 46' 34"
- 15 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 20h 05' 04" 1h 46' 43"
- 16 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 20h 10' 35" 1h 52' 14"
- 17 CROQUELOIS KTM 20h 48' 53" 2h 30' 32"
- 18 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 20h 56' 02" 2h 37' 41"
- 19 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 20h 59' 16" 2h 40' 55"
- 20 MARCHINI FRA KTM 21h 14' 49" 2h 56' 28"

9 8th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 8TH STAGE TICHIT - TIDJIKJA

07.01.2005

2:00 p.m.

8th stage – Gone with the wind

The wind is continuously raging in the Mauritanian desert and the 7th stage of the Rally Dakar is still going on. Several motorcyclists, cars and trucks are still trying to reach yesterday's bivouac in Tichit. Therefore, A.S.O. has decided to cancel the 8th stage from Tichit to Tidjikja. Meanwhile the drivers out in the Mauritanian desert are supplied with food via helicopters. Most urgently they need gasoline. A.S.O. has made a crucial mistake during the preparation for this 660 km special. Claudia Patuzzi, manager of Team KTM Gauloises explains, "All of the drivers who reached the finish yesterday were almost out of gasoline and only barely made it. Supply of gasoline was a major problem. At CP 2 each of the competitors was given 20 liters only. A.S.O. had not warned about it at their briefing the day before yesterday. Keeping the advantages of a light bike in mind, at CP 1 our motorcyclists refueled just enough to make it to CP 2. Even cars and trucks ran into problems because of that. Many participants ran out of gas in the middle of the desert."

All of the KTM factory riders arrived at last night's destination. At the bivouac in Tichit KTM had pitched up a huge, white Berber tent for the riders. There they all spent the night. Nobody had to pitch up his own tent during the sandstorm. Both KTM service trucks, which take part in the race as well, made it safely to the bivouac. Their main function is to provide rapid assistance to the riders. The truck with Peter Reif, Gunther Pichlbauer and Stefan Huber came in 7th and the truck with the crew: Karl Sadlbauer, Franz Maier and Martin Mayer crossed the finish line 11th. A great success! In the overall both MAN trucks from KTM rank in 8th and 9th position.

Early this afternoon Park Fermé was opened up. The bicyclists were allowed to repair their bikes. All mechanics are already in Tidjikja, therefore the teammates had to make repairs themselves. Both, Fabrizio Meoni and Alfie Cox, changed the air filter on their bikes. Fabrizio was not in such a good mood. "I suffered two low blows yesterday. At first the officials canceled the mass start and then I had to navigate myself to allow the others to follow my tracks. I rode very carefully to be easy on my equipment. This would allow me to attack the next day, but now they canceled today's stage!"

Cyril Despres was indifferent about the decision. "It really does not make a difference if I race the 130 km or none at all. Nothing is going to be decided on 130 km anyways. Why should I get all upset about it, that's racing! Safety is most important! Right now, no helicopter can start and no medical assistance can leave."

The American team seemed to be relieved. "Yesterday's stage was extremely tough," said Joe Barker, "That they canceled the second part of this strenuous stage is good for us. The chances that all three teammates will arrive in Dakar are rising."

Right now, the team managers and their motorcyclists work on a new tactic for the next stages. Jordi Arcarons from Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull explains, "Today we would have had a great chance to attack. Marc Coma's time margin on Cyril Despres is not all that big. Now we need to rethink it."

Let's just hope that it will be possible to race tomorrow's stage from Tidjikja to Atar. 361 km are going to be judged. The special is extraordinary fast. Only at the end of the dunes of the Erg Chinguetti demand special riding skills.

At the moment the weather forecast looks bad. A sandstorm raves around Tidjikja which makes it impossible to land the airplanes of the assistance crews with the managers and journalists etc. They are going straight on to Atar. The motorcyclists however are riding the liaison to Tidjikja.



Giovanni Sala



Alfie Cox und Andy Caldecott



Cyril Despres



Isidre Esteve



Peter Reif und Gunter Pichelbauer, Service Truck Nr. 543



Privatiers werden ausgeflogen nach Tichit
Private riders fly to Tichit

10 9th Stage

DAKAR2005: 9TH STAGE TIDJIKJA - ATAR

08.01.2005

6.05 p.m.

Chasing to catch up for the big dream

Fabrizio Meoni has proven his worth! Keeping in mind to attack the overall standings, the desert fox had started on the first part of the marathon stage on Thursday morning. He rode his bike smartly and was easy on his equipment. As we all know the second part of the marathon stage was cancelled yesterday. Thus, Fabrizio postponed his attack until today. The result: stage victory! He even managed a time margin that helped the Italian matador clinch the overall lead. Fabrizio was thus able to gain a bit over 10 minutes on yesterday's leaders Marc Coma and Cyril Despres. Quite satisfied the Italian strolled to take a shower shortly after arriving (the first in days)...

Isidre Esteve Pujol was quickest over the stage. He, just like Meoni, is driven by a dream – a Dakar victory. "I am glad to have won the stage. But I'm even more excited that I was able to gain a few minutes. I am now one of the top riders and I was hoping to accomplish that before the rest day. I didn't plan on being in the lead, but I didn't want to be too far away from it either." The Spaniard claims a 6th place in the overall with a time margin of just about 9 minutes. On Monday Isidre will continue his chase for the leadership. The Spaniard believes that the second Dakar week is going to be even tougher than the first one. "The fight for the victory is entering a decisive phase. I have five KTM professionals ahead of me. I'm expecting anyone of them to win. It is going to become a tough race," he claims. When talking about competition between the teams one should not forget about the Frenchman David Fretigné. The Yamaha motorcyclist ranks about 15 minutes behind Meoni. He could be the only reason that a 5th KTM victory becomes impossible.

Marc Coma lost his leading position in the overall standings today. The young Spaniard seemed to have been expecting something was off when left the bivouac in Tidjikja this morning. "I'm feeling really tired today – physical as well as mental. I didn't get much rest during the previous days. And today one needs to be extremely concentrated." During the stage Marc's tripmaster failed and he thought it best to keep to a group. His summary after the stage: "It was difficult today and one had to pay much attention to find the accurate way. The dunes at the end cost a lot of energy; the sand was extremely soft."

In the same group as Marc Coma were Cyril Despres, Alfie Cox, Andy Caldecott and David Fretigné. At least until CP 1. After another 30 km the Yamaha rider left the group. As they were to find out later, he had found the appropriate route. The four KTM teammates had made a mistake in their navigation and had to run back part of the way. They lost about four minutes. Cyril Despres was definitely mad about the faux pas. After reaching the bivouac, he did not want to answer any more questions about the how and why. His attack on the leadership has gone amiss today.

Andy Caldecott has done surprisingly well in the race. The Australian clinched a 4th place today and is in 3rd in the overall. Thus, he is ahead of several established KTM factory pilots. "It is a comfortable feeling to have arrived in Atar and to be healthy. Last year after this stage I had to pay the doctors a visit because my hand was broken. I'm more than satisfied with this year's race. Everything runs well. Although I got to admit that it was incredible strenuous today. We had to navigate a lot and the sand in the last stretch was unbelievably soft."

At the moment the sky turns dark in Atar. It seems that the sandstorm is following the rally.

Tomorrow's rest day is long expected from many. However "rest day" is not exactly correct. By no means will this be a full day of rest for the teams – but hopefully a peaceful day. There is much to do. We'll tell you more about it tomorrow from the bivouac.

3.10 p.m.

They are on their way again, finally! After yesterdays canceled stage the KTM motorcyclists can open the throttle wide again today. Finally they can prove their skills and fight for a place on the podium.

The sandstorm is still raging in Tidjikja, but it seems the wind grows less strong the further they move to Atar.

The biggest part of the stage offered the best possibilities for a brisk pace (no camel grass to be seen!). The last 20 km proved to be difficult again. The competitors had to cross the Erg Chinguetti. Only after tackling the gigantic mountains of sand did the finish in Atar move in sight.

The participants had to race 399 km, but only 361 km were judged. Isidre Esteve Pujol from Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull was victorious on the day, his first time victory in this year's Dakar. He clocked a time of 5 hours 14 minutes 10 seconds.



Rallypause in Atar



Marc Coma und Isidre Esteve Pujol



Isidre Esteve Pujol

KTM Web Site

With that, Isidre was able to make up considerable time to the other KTM riders ahead of him. Just like Fabrizio Meoni (Team KTM Gauloises); he finished second on the day. He was 1'29 minutes back of Esteve Pujol. Both accomplished a wide gap between the "rest" of the KTM team riders. Pal Anders Ullevalseter, KTM amateur, clinched a great 3rd place (+4'09).

Further rankings of KTM team riders:

- #4 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 8'10
- #5 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 9'45
- #6 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 11'32
- #7 Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) + 11'40
- #9 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 13'12
- #12 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 13'52
- #13 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 14'03
- #14 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 15'02
- #27 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 56'44
- #44 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 1'28'52

In the bivouac in Atar the competitors will stay until Tuesday morning.



Kellon Walch und Chris Blais



Andy Caldecott

[Download Ergebnisse 9.Etappe-Standings 9th stage.pdf](#)

Tageswertung 9. Etappe: Tidjikja - Atar

Daily results 9th stage: Tidjikja - Atar

Speciale: 361 km

- 1 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 14' 10" 00' 00"
- 2 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 5h 15' 39" 01' 29"
- 3 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 5h 18' 19" 04' 09"
- 4 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 5h 22' 20" 08' 10"
- 5 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 5h 23' 55" 09' 45"
- 6 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 25' 42" 11' 32"
- 7 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 5h 25' 50" 11' 40"
- 8 DABROWSKI POL KTM 5h 27' 19" 13' 09"
- 9 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 27' 22" 13' 12"
- 10 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 5h 27' 40" 13' 30"
- 11 MARCHINI FRA KTM 5h 27' 46" 13' 36"
- 12 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 28' 02" 13' 52"
- 13 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 5h 28' 13" 14' 03"
- 14 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 29' 12" 15' 02"
- 15 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 5h 30' 32" 16' 22"
- 16 DUCLOS FRA KTM 5h 39' 43" 25' 33"
- 17 CASTEAU FRA KTM 5h 41' 11" 27' 01"
- 18 CZACHOR POL KTM 5h 42' 21" 28' 11"
- 19 TERRANOVA ARG KTM 5h 43' 29" 29' 19"
- 20 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 5h 46' 14" 32' 04"
- 27 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 6h 10' 54" 56' 44"
- 44 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 6h 43' 02" 1h 28' 52"

Gesamtwertung nach der 9. Etappe:

Overall standings after 9th stage:

- 1 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises 23h 41' 32" 00' 00"
- 2 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 23h 44' 27" 02' 55"
- 3 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 23h 46' 21" 04' 49"
- 4 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 23h 46' 23" 04' 51"
- 5 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 23h 47' 56" 06' 24"
- 6 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 23h 50' 41" 09' 09"
- 7 ULLEVALSETER NOR KTM 23h 53' 56" 12' 24"
- 8 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 23h 57' 02" 15' 30"
- 9 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 24h 29' 20" 47' 48" 05' 00"
- 10 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 24h 43' 30" 1h 01' 58"
- 11 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 24h 48' 01" 1h 06' 29"
- 12 DABROWSKI POL KTM 25h 26' 40" 1h 45' 08"
- 13 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 25h 33' 17" 1h 51' 45"
- 14 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 25h 39' 47" 1h 58' 15"
- 15 CZACHOR POL KTM 25h 41' 38" 2h 00' 06"
- 16 CASTEAU FRA KTM 25h 46' 06" 2h 04' 34"
- 17 MARCHINI FRA KTM 26h 42' 35" 3h 01' 03"
- 18 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 26h 45' 30" 3h 03' 58"
- 19 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 27h 06' 56" 3h 25' 24"
- 20 DUCLOS FRA KTM 27h 11' 00" 3h 29' 28"
- 34 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 30h 36' 37" 6h 55' 05"

11 Rest Day

DAKAR 2005: RESTDAY IN ATAR

09.01.2005

5:30 p.m.
A restless bivouac

Anything but peaceful! Early this afternoon a sandstorm raged through the bivouac in Atar. And some of the KTM teams are certainly not in a good mood. The reason for that were penalties handed out by the race organizers. Due to them the overall standings were changed around completely.

Fabrizio Meoni was punished because he had left the allowed space, which runs along both sides of the route, on the first part of the marathon stage on Thursday. "I am really mad. What a funny regalement. I had – unfortunately - left the given path alongside the track and therefore had missed two of the so called waypoints, virtual GPS point. I was punished with a 10 min penalty; five minutes for each waypoint." Thus Fabrizio lost his lead in the overall standings.

Alfie Cox described this new rule as out-of-touch. According to it, competitors are allowed on a 3.3 km wide path, only. "Yesterday I wanted to ride on a route which seemed promising to me. It was Fabrizio who held me back and told me that I would be leaving the allowed path by doing so. That's when I asked myself – what nonsense. If I cannot decide which route I want to take - soon it's no longer a race."

In the bivouac in Atar discussions erupted between the team managers and the A.S.O. Claudia Patuzzi, manager for the teams KTM Gauloises, "Okay, Fabrizio had left the allowed path, but it would only be fair if the GPS equipment of all the riders are checked. Further, I think, it isn't right if competitors like Fabrizio get themselves lost, due to a mistake they make, loose time and then get an additional time penalty for it. A regulation where everyone has to ride on the very same track from A to B surely isn't according to what the Dakar is all about. The great challenge to find the optimal route by precise navigation is totally annulled by that." The A.S.O. insists on the regalement, but has changed the penalties. Instead of punishing the offender with 5 min for each left-out waypoint it is now one minute. With that Fabrizio Meoni grabs the overall leadership again. He has a one minute margin on Cyril Despres and about three minutes on Marc Coma.

Andy Caldecott dropped from 3rd to 8th place. He was punished for exceeded speeding. "Four days ago I must have been speeding on a liaison. It was 5 a.m. in the morning and the vision was terrible when I headed towards a village. I knew there must be a speed trap, but it wasn't located within the village. It was set up right in front of it. When I passed it I was still a bit over the speed limit. Due to the 17 min penalty I have lost my tight grip on the top riders. That's bitter."

Some facts about life in the bivouac: Mechanics have a field day today. They take the bikes carefully apart, check each individual part and prepare them for the second part of the rally. For Team KTM Repsol Red Bull all engines are changed. "The complete team made the decision; it wasn't for the mechanics to decide this," explains Manel Salinas, mechanic for Marc Coma, "Safety is most important. Otherwise we also change wearing parts, like the chain, the air and oil filters as well as prepare an oil change." Service for Team KTM Gauloises works totally different. Marc Weber, mechanic for Jean Bruzy, states, "I'm not going to change the engine. It runs flawlessly. We've engaged a pressure-loss check, changed the sparks and checked the carburetor. I'll probably also renew the clutch."

Fabrizio Meoni is going to take off with a new engine tomorrow. His mechanic Romeo Feliciani explains, "I'd rather change the engine. If there is a brake down I will be the one to be blamed. One never knows exactly just where or why parts might be worn or cracked."

Team manager Hans Trunkenpolz claims, "Each team work autonomously from one another. It's what we have wanted them to do. That is a very positive development in my eyes. One feels a healthy distance between Team Gauloises and Team Repsol-Red Bull."

All riders are healthy. "All riders are offered a massage to loosen their muscles," explains physiotherapist Ralph Pariasek, "Fabrizio always demands a special massage for his back. Alfie's shoulder has to be bandaged again; it helps to stabilize it. All truck drivers are treaded for sore backs."

The crews of the T4 trucks from KTM have done fantastical so far.

Silent heroes

They sit in their MAN trucks and race across the track: two trucks, which carry spare parts for KTM on board. In case they are needed they can provide fast assistance. Peter Reif, Gunter Pichlbauer and Stefan Huber make up the crew for the race truck with the starting number 543. Stefan Huber, in charge of the motorcycle repair, talks



Manel Salinas, Mechaniker Marc Coma



Roland Bruckner, Mechaniker Cyril Despres



Tobi Goldbacher und Peter Reif (MAN Service Truck Nr. 543)



Physiotherapeut Ralph Pariasek

KTM Web Site

about his effort, "It is the first time I'm part of a truck crew and I think it is great. Both of the others are old hands and know exactly what they are doing. Peter chases the truck across the tracks, just as others run a car. And Gunter is an excellent navigator." So far the crew's help during the race hasn't been needed much. Nevertheless the specials weren't easy. "Oftentimes we are on the road until late at night," claims experienced Dakar member Peter Reif, "Sometimes you don't know what is going on just a few meters in front of you; what obstacles are hidden." The guys were lucky with their fuel on the marathon stage. While others run out of fuel on the way to Tichit their MAN truck made it, but barely. Peter Reif remembers, "I looked at my fuel gauge and it was almost empty. I was driving almost at a walking pace, but luckily we made it."

The same is true for the second KTM race truck as well. It is driven by Karl Sadlauer, navigated by Franz Maier, with Martin Mayer as the third member aboard. They chase after the motorcycle riders and provide help especially for the KTM amateurs. The private rider's angles were a blessing for anyone being stranded in the desert on the 7th stage. But the crew (starting number 542) has more to offer than just gasoline. "The guys out there sometimes just need someone to talk to," explains Karl Sadlauer, "I guess one could call us a psychological aid on four wheels." Sadlauer, Reif and Co. – everyone on the trucks, accomplishes great things day after day. When they aren't racing they help where they can. And when they don't help they are racing. It is certainly true that the spare part supply trucks should be up front as well. Because the faster they are the less time the motorcycle riders lose in case of a brake-down. The motorcyclists are full of gratitude and this is the pay for the undergone drudgery.

Tomorrow the competitors have to challenge a 483 km and extremely tough special. It loops around the bivouac in Atar. The organizers call it the most difficult dunes of the rally. They are located in the Erg El Beyyed. Before they are reached the participants will have to climb the Thanga crossing. The weather in Mauritania makes the stage even more difficult. There is still a strong wind blowing and the vision is extremely low. This afternoon the desert faced another phenomenon: It started to rain!



MAN Service Truck



Karl Sadlauer, MAN Service Truck Nr. 542

[Download Gesamtwertung 9.Etappe - Overall 9th stage.pdf](#)

12 10th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 10TH STAGE ATAR - ATAR

10.01.2005

7.15 p.m.

Due to bad weather conditions (strong winds, vision below 300 m) the officials have decided to reduce the length of tomorrow's stage from the original 656 km to 400 km.

7.10 p.m.

Despres dominated dune stage

After a well deserved rest day on the Dakar usually follows a rather easy stage. For the previous years, the day after was designed to help the participants getting accustomed to their bikes and used to the desert again. But this year the organizers had something different in mind. The 483 km special looping around Atar can surely be called one of the toughest stages, which was crossing through dunes, in the history of the Dakar. But one person was meant to conquer it all, without much trying as it seemed. Cyril Despres has made his imprint on this stage. He dominated it in a cunning way, won the day and has made his clear claim on the victory of this 27th edition of the toughest desert rally. When passing the finish line the Frenchman had a 10 minute and 8 seconds lead on Fabrizio Meoni, which his teammate clearly admired. "Early in the stage I caught up with Isidre Esteve. I had the impression that I was moving at a brisk pace. But when Cyril caught up with us I realized just who was riding fast today. This morning he had left 10 minutes after me."

His joy about leading the overall standings was therefore short-lived. Now Despres has a clear 9'13 minutes lead. "Now the rally has really started," he smiled, "I have found my rhythm. My bike tipped over twice in the dunes, but I believe that has happened to everyone today. I didn't run into any problems. I'm simply just happy!" We'll have to wait and see what prints the pleasant young man will draw in the sand during the next days. It looks that he finally talks business.

The dunes of today's stage have left a great impression on many. One of them is the man in third place, Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull, + 12'24). He claimed, "The dunes after the second CP were gigantic. Crossing them was very difficult for me." Another competitor, Alfie Cox, who came in 6th today (+16'62) was deeply moved, "I have been riding the Dakar for quite some time now, but never before have I seen dunes like these. The sand was unbelievably deep and it surely was not an easy task to cross them!"

Marc Coma, a young promising talent from Spain, had to pay toll for his temperament today. Attacking had been on his agenda. But he had lost track of his fuel gauge. "In the beginning I really opened the throttle and was riding at a brisk pace, but I ran out of gasoline another 4 kilometers before the refueling spot. Luckily Jo Sala caught up with me quickly. It was for his help that I could ride on." In the end he claimed a 5th spot (+ 14'06). In the overalls he is in third (+ 16'02). It is worth a thought to imagine where Coma could rank now...

Andy Caldecott (place 7, + 18'51) learned the hard way today. "I'm still missing a great deal of experience riding the dunes. But that is why I'm here. I want to learn." Scot Harden started riding with a handicap this morning. He explained, "Already on the last stage I had to make a wide step; to almost spread my legs to a complete split. I pulled the muscle in my thigh and it tore." The doctors have done a maximum to treat it most efficiently. "They did a great job. I still cannot walk all that well, but it is okay to sit and ride on a motorcycle." Therefore the guy from the US was satisfied arriving in Atar in the 20th spot (+ 1h23'57). After all he'll still be able to keep on going.

Pal-Anders Ullevalseter on the other hand had to retire from the rally. The KTM private rider crashed at kilometer 410 and broke his left shoulder. He had to be transported via helicopter to the finish in Atar.

Today's stage was overshadowed by sad news. José Manuel Perez died of severe inner injuries in the hospital at Alicante. On January 6th he had crashed just before CP 1 on the difficult stage from Zouerat to Tichit. The medical emergency staff transported him to the next bivouac at Zouerat immediately. An emergency operation followed. Still on the same day he was transported via Dakar to Alicante. Hans Trunkenpolz, KTM team manager, stated, "After Richard Saint's fatal accident we all know how it feels to loose someone. It is a very painful experience. We offer sympathy to the relatives."

A 656 km stage is on tomorrow's agenda. Until the participants reach the finish line in Kiffa (Mali) they will have to cross plenty of dunes and deep sandy passages. Marc Coma and the others will have to keep an eye on their fuel gauge! Also Cyril Despres will have to pay close attention especially to the first part of the



Sand in Atar



Andy Caldecott



Scot Harden und Jonathan Edwards (Doc Team KTM Red Bull USA)

stage. Last year a crucial navigation mistake happened here and he ended up losing more than half an hour. It is a mistake which shouldn't happen again if he wants to stay ahead of the pack. They'll cross through the valleys of the massive Tangat and ride along the rocky road to the Naga crossing.

4.20 p.m.

Slowly but forcefully he gets down to business. Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) superbly dominated the 10th stage looping around Atar and claimed the stage's victory. He seems to have spent yesterday's rest day most efficiently. His attack on the leadership was successful and his opponents were declassified, at least for now. He reached the finish line with a great 10 minutes and 8 second lead on Fabrizio Meoni (Team KTM Gauloises), previous leader of the overalls. Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull, + 12'24) clocked the third fastest time.

Right at the beginning of the 499 km stage (483 km were judged) the competitors had to challenge an Erg which stretched for 40 km. After that the route led challengingly uphill over the top of the Thanga crossing and continued on through successive dune fields. Among them the competitors probably found the most challenging dunes ever to be crossed in a Dakar rally. And finally the track led through the 200 km Sebket Chemchâm Schott. Despres managed all of these tasks flawlessly.

Further rankings of KTM team riders:

- #5 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 14'06
- #6 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 16'26
- #7 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 18'51
- #8 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 27'38
- #10 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 44'44
- #11 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 52'56
- #13 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 55'29
- #20 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 1h 23'57
- #46 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 2h 36'06



Cyril Despres



Cyril Despres und Claudia Patuzzi (Teammanagerin KTM Gauloises)



Marc Coma

[Download Ergebnisse 10.Etappe-Standings 10th stage.pdf](#)

Tageswertung 10. Etappe: Atar - Atar

Daily results 10th stage: Atar - Atar

Speciale: 483 km

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises **5h 28' 26" 00' 00"**
- 2 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises **5h 38' 34" 10' 08"**
- 3 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull **5h 40' 50" 12' 24"**
- 4 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 5h 41' 17" 12' 51"
- 5 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull **5h 42' 32" 14' 06"**
- 6 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises **5h 44' 52" 16' 26"**
- 7 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia **5h 47' 17" 18' 51"**
- 8 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull **5h 56' 04" 27' 38"**
- 9 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 6h 04' 34" 36' 08"
- 10 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA **6h 13' 10" 44' 44"**
- 11 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA **6h 21' 22" 52' 56"**
- 12 DUCLOS FRA KTM 6h 21' 39" 53' 13"
- 13 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises **6h 23' 55" 55' 29"**
- 14 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 6h 31' 00" 1h 02' 34"
- 15 DABROWSKI POL KTM 6h 31' 33" 1h 03' 07"
- 16 CZACHOR POL KTM 6h 34' 34" 1h 06' 08"
- 17 CASTEAU FRA KTM 6h 43' 03" 1h 14' 37"
- 18 QUINONERO FRA KTM 6h 43' 39" 1h 15' 13"
- 19 GORRARA SUI KTM 6h 48' 49" 1h 20' 23"
- 20 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA **6h 52' 23" 1h 23' 57"**
- 43 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia **8h 04' 32" 2h 36' 06"**

Gesamtwertung nach der 10. Etappe:

Overall standings after 10th stage:

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises **29h 12' 53" 00' 00"**
- 2 MEONI ITA Team KTM Gauloises **29h 22' 06" 09' 13" 02' 00"**
- 3 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull **29h 28' 55" 16' 02"**
- 4 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull **29h 32' 31" 19' 38" 01' 00"**
- 5 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises **29h 32' 48" 19' 55"**
- 6 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 29h 39' 19" 26' 26" 01' 00"
- 7 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia **29h 50' 38" 37' 45" 17' 00"**
- 8 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull **30h 25' 24" 1h 12' 31" 05' 00"**
- 9 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 30h 52' 35" 1h 39' 42"
- 10 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA **31h 05' 52" 1h 52' 59" 01' 00"**
- 11 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA **31h 53' 57" 2h 41' 04" 01' 00"**
- 12 DABROWSKI POL KTM 31h 58' 13" 2h 45' 20"
- 13 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises **32h 07' 12" 2h 54' 19" 10' 00"**
- 14 CZACHOR POL KTM 32h 16' 12" 3h 03' 19"
- 15 CASTEAU FRA KTM 32h 29' 09" 3h 16' 16"
- 16 DUCLOS FRA KTM 33h 34' 39" 4h 21' 46" 02' 00"
- 17 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 33h 40' 16" 4h 27' 23" 01' 00"
- 18 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA **33h 59' 19" 4h 46' 26"**
- 19 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 34h 25' 47" 5h 12' 54" 01' 00"
- 20 QUINONERO FRA KTM 35h 45' 37" 6h 32' 44" 11' 00"
- 31 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia **38h 41' 09" 9h 28' 16"**

13 11th Stage

DAKAR 2005: DEATH OF FABRIZIO MEONI

11.01.2005

10.00 p.m.

A tough decision

After Fabrizio Meoni's death the KTM factory teams decided not to ride tomorrow's stage to Bamako. The A.S.O. respected their decision. They will transport the bikes by airlift to Bamako. The 12th stage is therefore cancelled for the motorcycles. The factory riders will start racing again on Thursday.

7.00 p.m.

Official statement from KTM, Mattighofen

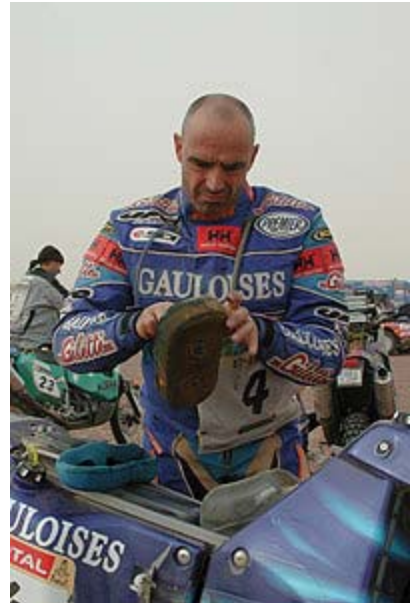
Fabrizio Meoni's fatal accident

Fabrizio Meoni was in a serious crash during the 11th stage of the Dakar Rally. Despite immediate medical attention, it was not possible to save Fabrizio Meoni's life and he died of his injuries at the scene of the accident.

Due to this tragic incident the KTM management explicitly urges all KTM teams and factory riders to break off the Dakar Rally.

KTM is however leaving it up to the individual drivers, teams and their sponsors to decide whether or not to continue the Rally.

Since KTM lost two of its best rally pilots, Fabrizio Meoni and Richard Saint, in fatal accidents within a period of only a few months, the manufacturer will be contemplating its future support for the rally sport.



Rally Dakar 2005 in Tichit



Rally Dakar 2004

Our thoughts go out to Fabrizio's wife and children.

7.25 p.m.

Rally world mourns for Fabrizio Meoni

For years he has had a formative influence on the motorcycle events in the rally scene. Twice he won the toughest rally in the world, in 2001 and 2002. For a short while he took leave from the Dakar already last year, but his passion for it won once more. Fabrizio Meoni took off for yet another Dakar Rally on New Year's Eve, his 47th birthday. Today he died during the stage. With Fabrizio Meoni the rally scene loses one of its most fabulous riders.

About the accident: Fabrizio crashed right after CP 1. At the checkpoint at kilometer 175 he was leading. The crash happened 15 minutes later. It had to have been a brutal crash. When the helicopter with the medics arrived 20 minutes later, Fabrizio lay stretched out in the sand, blood everywhere. His heart had already stopped beating. The doctors tried in vain to revive Fabrizio. His death was officially diagnosed at 11.11 a.m. His death was caused by a broken neck.

The whole KTM team is in shock.

Claudia Patuzzi, Team KTM Gauloises, remembers, "How should I describe this man? Fabrizio personified this rally; he lived it. Everyone looked up to him. Fabrizio was always looking for challenges, he wasn't satisfied with the simple, he wanted to fight. He was such a nice guy, a friend. Fabrizio was a true Italian, who knew how to live."

Jordi Arcarons, Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull, adds, "Fabrizio was a great motorcycle rider and an extraordinary man. He was always open-minded and honest. Everyone who knew him just had to like him."

Joe Barker, Team KTM Red Bull USA, tells, "Although



Rally Dakar 2003



Rally Dakar 2004



Rally Dakar 2003



Rally Dakar 2005

I hadn't yet known him for a long time, he was a hero for me. It was incredible to see someone who was 47-years-of-age in such a fantastic physical condition and in such high spirits."

Romeo Feliciani, mechanic for Fabrizio, claims, "He was just like a big brother to me."

Heinz Kinigadner explains, "With Richard Saint and Fabrizio Meoni we have lost two of the best and most experienced rally riders on their jobs within the previous four months. It is very tragic and it hurts so much. At first we need to come to terms with these terrible blows. Fabrizio had personified our idea of rally racing. He won many rallies; one of them the Dakar on a single-cylinder as well as on the twin from KTM. Just before the start of this years Dakar I talked to Fabrizio in Barcelona and asked him if he wanted to manage the KTM rally teams.

I personally believe that all KTM factory riders should go home. This is not just a question of piety, but also of safety. The riders have a lot on their minds after two such tragic blows. Nobody can forget it this easily. We also need to think about the people on our KTM assistance teams. Many of them are faced with a tragic like this for the second time within a short timeframe. The Dakar is certainly no walk in the park. Therefore in my eyes it is impossible to go on because it is no longer safe. Further no one will be able to enjoy further victories. However I like to stress that this is my own personal opinion. Those responsible for the teams and the sponsors are now asked to make a decision.

I believe the entire KTM engagement is put up for question after these two deaths. However this decision will take time."

His 13th Dakar Rally should become his last. Already one year ago he had promised his family to stop racing altogether. He wanted more time for his wife and his two children. His small daughter is barely two



Rally Dakar 2003



Rally Dakar 2005 in Barcelona



Fabrizio Meoni
1957-2005

years old. But once again he wanted to endure the pain. Rallies were his absolute passion. When he was only 15-years-of-age Fabrizio began to take his hobby serious. He became a member of a motor sport club. Since 1987 he rode a KTM on the races. In 1988 Fabrizio became the Italian Junior Champion in the 250 ccm class. This victory became his stepping-stone to the rally scene. He rode his first rally in 1989. Three years afterwards he made his debut at the Dakar and claimed a 12th place on the first try. During his career he won several rallies: five times in Egypt, four times in Tunisia and one time in Dubai. But without a doubt, his largest successes were the two Dakar victories in 2001 and 2002.

Fabrizio is the eleventh motorcycle rider ever who got killed on a Dakar Rally. We are going to miss him. Our thoughts are with his family. Many friends and fans mourn together with them for Fabrizio.

At the finish line of the special the participants of the rally were informed about the tragic accident by Patrick Zaniroli, head of the organizer A.S.O. Here the results of the KTM factory riders on the 11th special from Atar to Kiffa for the sake of completeness.

- # 1 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) 5h 58'59
- # 2 Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) + 1'12
- # 3 Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 3'57
- # 5 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 4'45
- # 6 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 11'37
- # 8 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 12'50
- # 9 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 13'16
- # 12 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 15'41
- # 22 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 1'06'53



Rally Dakar 2004



Rally Dakar 2004

87 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) +
3'59'13
101 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) +
5'01'34

Tageswertung 11. Etappe: Atar - Kiffa

Daily results 11th stage: Atar - Kiffa

Speciale: 400 km

- 1 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 58' 59" 00' 00"
- 2 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 6h 00' 11" 01' 12"
- 3 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 6h 02' 56" 03' 57"
- 4 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 6h 03' 04" 04' 05"
- 5 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 6h 03' 44" 04' 45"
- 6 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 6h 10' 36" 11' 37"
- 7 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 6h 11' 20" 12' 21"
- 8 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 6h 11' 49" 12' 50"
- 9 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 6h 12' 17" 13' 18"
- 10 DUCLOS FRA KTM 6h 12' 24" 13' 25"
- 11 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 6h 14' 02" 15' 03"
- 12 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 6h 14' 40" 15' 41"
- 13 CASTEAU FRA KTM 6h 23' 18" 24' 19"
- 14 DABROWSKI POL KTM 6h 24' 07" 25' 08"
- 15 CZACHOR POL KTM 6h 29' 52" 30' 53"
- 16 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 6h 42' 02" 43' 03"
- 17 GORRARA SUI KTM 6h 43' 20" 44' 21"
- 18 QUINONERO FRA KTM 6h 51' 21" 52' 22"
- 19 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 7h 00' 43" 1h 01' 44"
- 20 BASTOUILH KTM 7h 01' 57" 1h 02' 58"
- 22 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 7h 05' 52" 1h 06' 53"
- 87 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 9h 58' 12" 3h 59' 13"
- 100 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 11h 00' 33" 5h 01' 34"

Gesamtwertung nach der 11. Etappe:

Overall standings after 11th stage:

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 35h 13' 04" 00' 00"
- 2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 35h 27' 54" 14' 50"
- 3 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 35h 35' 27" 22' 23" 01' 00"
- 4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 35h 37' 32" 24' 28" 01' 00"
- 5 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 35h 53' 21" 40' 17" 01' 00"
- 6 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 36h 02' 27" 49' 23" 17' 00"
- 7 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 36h 40' 04" 1h 27' 00" 05' 00"
- 8 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 36h 55' 39" 1h 42' 35"
- 9 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 37h 18' 09" 2h 05' 05" 01' 00"
- 10 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 38h 17' 48" 3h 04' 44" 10' 00"
- 11 DABROWSKI POL KTM 38h 22' 20" 3h 09' 16"
- 12 CZACHOR POL KTM 38h 46' 04" 3h 33' 00"
- 13 CASTEAU FRA KTM 38h 52' 27" 3h 39' 23"
- 14 DUCLOS FRA KTM 39h 47' 03" 4h 33' 59" 02' 00"
- 15 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 40h 22' 18" 5h 09' 14" 01' 00"
- 16 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 40h 37' 07" 5h 24' 03" 01' 00"
- 17 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 41h 05' 11" 5h 52' 07"
- 18 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 41h 54' 02" 6h 40' 58" 01' 00"
- 19 LEPAN KTM 42h 04' 36" 6h 51' 32" 01' 00"
- 20 QUINONERO FRA KTM 42h 36' 58" 7h 23' 54" 11' 00"
- 21 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 42h 54' 30" 7h 41' 26" 01' 00"
- 37 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 48h 39' 21" 13h 26' 17"

14 12th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 12th STAGE KIFFA - BAMAKO

12.01.2005

9.00 p.m.

The followers move on

It is a quiet day for the KTM- factory pilots. Only last night, they pushed their bikes, which were all ready, over to the airplanes. Leaving, mentally as well as physically, tough days they had in Mauritania behind them, the drivers left Kiffa at noon.

In the bivouac of Bamako, they are now slowly starting to look into the next stage, the race to Dakar. The decision to go on with the rally was not easy for the pilots. Nevertheless, of their own accord, they want to go on - no one has forced them to go.

Jean Bruzy, Team KTM Gauloises, says with tears in his eyes: "By all means, we want a "blue one" to be on the podium in Dakar. In respect of Richard did we go on this rally and we will finish in respect of Fabrizio as well. That is our way of remembrance." Team mate Alfie Cox adds: "We have been working for this Dakar for one year. I have invested a lot of energy to be within the top drivers. It is our decision to finish the rally. And I am sure that Fabrizio would have accepted this due to him being a great sportsman."

The drivers of the Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull are thinking likewise. Gio Sala: "I believe that is what he would have wanted us to do – to drive to Dakar. We cannot change it by stopping. Nothing. The only thing that is not working a 100 % properly anymore is the head. The head is not clear anymore. But every rally driver has to live with the risk of something being able to happen. We suppress it though. Until it happens to someone, who one knows well."

Scot Harden from Team KTM Red Bull USA talks about the reasons why his team will continue the rally, "Chris, Kellon and I came here to reach Dakar. It is our goal. The boys still need to learn a lot. Among the things they need to learn is how to manage difficult situations.

For us Fabrizio symbolized the ideal racing driver. Personally I will always remember his birthday on New Year's Eve. The room was full of balloons and he burst all of them. He was just like a little boy. One wasn't enough for him. He had to burst them all. Whatever he did, he did it properly."



Team KTM Gauloises, Camp Kiffa



Assistance Car in Kiffa



David Schwarz

This day was a tough one for the mechanics. Due to today's marathon stage the bikes couldn't be touched tonight in the bivouac at Bamako. Therefore the men had to make necessary repairs and preparations already last night. This morning they started on their long tour through the Sahara. Surely, this trip wasn't an easy one for any of them. Their thoughts were with Fabrizio, with his family and centering on the question: Why? But everyone had to stay focused and concentrated. Wasn't it Heinz Kinigadner's who explained yesterday? "The Dakar is no walk in the park."

Tomorrow is the second part of the marathon stage. It leads for 668 km from Bamako to Kayes. The special runs for 370 kilometers. The riders will need to proof flexibility on the stage. At first speed is important, then the small track crosses through bush land and towards the end of the special a rugged and rocky scenery demands cross-country skills from the drivers.

12.30 p.m.

Just like a heavy burden does the mourning lie on the bivouac of Kiffa. After the death of Fabrizio Meoni, the feelings cannot be repressed. Cyril Despres put a sticker with the name of his big idol on the wind shield of his KTM and wrote the number 4 on it. That is how Meoni will accompany him on his last stages of the Dakar. Today's stage was cancelled for the motorbikes. The drivers pushed their bikes to the planes of A.S.O.. From noon on, men and bikes are going to be airlifted to the bivouac of Bamako.

The mechanics of the KTM- assistance crew were quite busy last night. They had to get the KTM- factory bikes ready for tomorrow's stage. The bikes will be send to the Parc Fermé in Bamako immediately due to the ranking stages of today and tomorrow being part of a marathon stage.



Jean Brucy



Cyril Despres in Bamako



In Memory Fabrizio Meoni: Identification Sticker auf Cyril's Bike



Kiffa - Parc Fermé

15 13th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 13th STAGE BAMAKO - KAYES

13.01.2005

7.00 p.m.

Course with obstacles through Mali's bush land

Alfie Cox couldn't believe it. He was pissed off when he arrived at the finish in Kayes. Today he couldn't find his rhythm. "There was one speed trap behind the other," he claimed, "I constantly had to reduce speed so I wouldn't receive any penalties. There was no fun in it." The desert fox wasn't alone with this opinion. Many of the others thought alike, for example Chris Blais. Although he was more than satisfied about his 3rd place, he nevertheless was mad about having to use his brakes all the time. "I actually counted 30 speed traps today. We did pass through many villages, but that was just too much. Accelerating and braking, accelerating and braking – continuously. It was really difficult to find a satisfying rhythm."

The Australian Andy Caldecott claimed the best result today. But he too had to overcome an obstacle, a typical one for this country. "I hit a cow in its rear. Luckily I was just tumbling a little. I hope the cow is doing well, too." Caldecott clinched his second stage win today. "At the beginning I was pacing along," he claimed, "After the accident with the cow I reduced the speed a little. I didn't want to risk too much. In all it was good that we had a day to rest



Jean Brucy



Chris Blais



yesterday. I must say, I was able to really concentrate on the track today.”

Marc Coma was feeling similar. “Bit by bit I’m getting back into the racing. The stage required a lot of attention,” he explained, “I had to sternly concentrate on my road book; there was no time for other thoughts today.” Coma started in the first position this morning. He led the pack from the start until the finish. “To start off in first position this morning took a lot of effort. But everything went well and I was making good pace. The only trouble was the many animals on the track – this was dangerous.”

Cyril Despres had to endure a different moment of shock. “I overlooked a large rock on the ground and my exhaust crashed. Afterwards the exhaust pipe was squashed. I needed a few minutes to repair the damage. I bent the exhaust with pliers until the fumes could escape again. Afterwards I continued riding a bit more careful.”

However, Cyril was fast enough to hold on to the overall leadership. He has a 16’06 minute lead on Marc Coma. But the Spaniard has not yet given up his hopes for the victory. “Tomorrow will be another long day. Many things might happen,” supposed Coma, “But if Cyril continues at the same pace it will become more and more difficult to overtake him.” Alfie Cox is third overall. Him and Isidre Esteve Pujol battle for a place on the podium. Isidre is only about half a minute off the pace.

Thousands of kilometers away from Kayes a group of people assembled to mourn for Fabrizio Meoni. The double Dakar

Alfie Cox



Marc Coma



Andy Caldecott



kaputter Auspuff Motorrad Cyril Despres

champion was buried in his hometown Castiglion Fiorentino this afternoon. Stefan Pierer, head of KTM, and Heinz Kinigadner, head of sports at KTM, represented KTM at the funeral and paid their last respects to Fabrizio.

Tomorrow the final spurt begins. The route leads towards Senegal, to Tambacounda. The race is on for 529 km. It is the last long stage in this year's Dakar. It leads through a savannah landscape. The competitors will have to cross through several rivers. And again there will be numerous villages along the way.

2.35 p.m.

The competitors have left behind the sand and the dunes. Today's special had a totally different character. At first a firm track allowed to ride at a brisk pace. Then it became necessary to properly navigate on twisty trails through the Malian bush land and to find an appropriate riding rhythm through the bizarre Tambaoura mountain scenery.

The Australian Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) clinched today's stage. He was fastest on the 370 km special and clocked a time at 3 hours 51'41 minutes. He beat Yamaha pilot David Fretigné by 2'16 minutes. Chris Blais, the young American from Team KTM Red Bull USA, was third at 3'32 minutes.

Further rankings of KTM team riders:

4 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 4'29

6 Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 7'01

7 Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) +



Assistenz-Nissan Team KTM
Gauloises



Cyril Despres

8'18

8 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) +

8'57

9 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red

Bull) + 9'34

10 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red

Bull) + 14'47

24 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull

USA) + 40'46

38 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex

Australia) + 55'50

48 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull

USA) + 1'10'59

Cyril Despres, who claimed a 7th spot today, was able to keep the overall leadership. Another 93 km are still ahead of the competitors until they reach the bivouac at Kayes.

At the same time Fabrizio Meoni's casket is buried in his hometown. Stefan Pierer, head of KTM, and Heinz Kinigadner, head of sports, represent the company at the funeral of the great Italian sportsman.

Ciao, Fabrizio.

Daily results 13th stage: Bamako - Kayes

Speciale: 370 km

1 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 3h 51' 41" 00' 00"
2 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 3h 53' 47" 02' 06"
3 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 3h 55' 13" 03' 32"
4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 3h 56' 10" 04' 29"
5 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 3h 57' 13" 05' 32"
6 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 3h 58' 42" 07' 01"
7 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 3h 59' 59" 08' 18"
8 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 4h 00' 38" 08' 57"
9 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 01' 15" 09' 34"
10 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 4h 06' 28" 14' 47"
11 DUCLOS FRA KTM 4h 10' 22" 18' 41"
12 CZACHOR POL KTM 4h 12' 12" 20' 31"
13 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 4h 14' 38" 22' 57"
14 DABROWSKI POL KTM 4h 16' 00" 24' 19"
15 CASTEAU FRA KTM 4h 16' 07" 24' 26"
16 BASTOUILH KTM 4h 20' 05" 28' 24"
17 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 4h 20' 20" 28' 39"
18 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 4h 23' 27" 31' 46"
19 ALGAY FRA KTM 4h 23' 50" 32' 09"
20 DE URIARTE MEX KTM 4h 28' 15" 36' 34"
23 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 4h 32' 27" 40' 46"
38 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 4h 47' 31" 55' 50"
48 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 02' 40" 1h 10' 59"

Gesamtwertung nach der 13. Etappe:

Overall standings after 13th stage:

1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 39h 13' 03" 00' 00"
2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 39h 29' 09" 16' 06"
3 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 39h 33' 42" 20' 39" 01' 00"
4 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 39h 34' 09" 21' 06" 01' 00"
5 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 39h 47' 08" 34' 05" 01' 00"
6 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 39h 54' 08" 41' 05" 17' 00"
7 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 40h 46' 32" 1h 33' 29" 05' 00"
8 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 40h 52' 52" 1h 39' 49"
9 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 41h 13' 22" 2h 00' 19" 01' 00"
10 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 42h 18' 26" 3h 05' 23" 10' 00"
11 DABROWSKI POL KTM 42h 38' 20" 3h 25' 17"
12 CZACHOR POL KTM 42h 58' 16" 3h 45' 13"
13 CASTEAU FRA KTM 43h 08' 34" 3h 55' 31"
14 DUCLOS FRA KTM 43h 57' 25" 4h 44' 22" 02' 00"
15 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 44h 36' 56" 5h 23' 53" 01' 00"
16 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 45h 00' 34" 5h 47' 31" 01' 00"
17 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 45h 37' 38" 6h 24' 35"
18 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 46h 14' 22" 7h 01' 19" 01' 00"
19 QUINONERO FRA KTM 47h 05' 45" 7h 52' 42" 11' 00"
20 BASTOUILH KTM 48h 03' 19" 8h 50' 16" 01' 00"
21 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 47h 57' 10" 8h 44' 07" 01' 00"
36 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 53h 26' 52" 14h 13' 49"

16 14th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 14th STAGE KAYES - TAMBACOUNDA

14.01.2005

5.10 p.m.

The final spurt is on!

When two or three professional riders watch each other closely it is for a daring amateur rider to get the better of the pros. Jean de Azevedo managed to do so today. On his 660 KTM the Brazilian private rider overtook the factory riders and claimed today's stage. Jean was incredibly happy, "I'm thrilled! For the first time I have won a stage on the Dakar. A dream has come true. This is also a victory for my service team. Before the rally, my mechanics worked on my bike for nights on end. Now their hard labor has been rewarded. Also I like to add that the support I receive from KTM is excellent. I'm so happy now."

Chris Blais was in a similar mood. It is his first Dakar and his first rally through the African desert – and the young American is doing a great job. Just like yesterday, Chris clinches a third place. "I am very satisfied," he claimed, "The route and the terrain were to my liking. This year I am here to learn and so far things have worked out very well. I got a bit closer to Dakar today. I definitely want to participate next year again." In the overall Blais claims a 9th spot.

Andy Caldecott rode along in the leading group until CP 2. It was then, that the mousse in his rear tire melted. "I had to



Teammanagerin Claudia Patuzzi,
Team KTM Gauloises



Giovanni Sala, Marc Coma, Isidre
Esteve Pujol



Isidre Esteve Pujol in Tambacounda

replace the inner tube,” explained the Australian in the bivouac, “A few precious minutes slipped away. But I’m not really disappointed to have lost time and a few spots in the rankings. I did well and I’m closing in on Dakar, the final destination.”

Alfie Cox who ranks in fourth today, 34 seconds adrift, described the difficulties of the stage, “There were a lot of tracks from the trucks on the road today. One had to be extremely careful. But it was for the large potholes on the track that were really dangerous. Most of them were filled with dust and therefore it was tough to see them and in the worst case one didn’t see them until it was too late.”

Cyril Despres didn’t want to take any risks, like some of the others as well. He was riding well thought out and restrained and was thus able to defend his leadership in the overall standing. But he lost a few minutes today. “I did my best today, but I’m having trouble focusing. I’m riding careful now. We want to keep our promise that a “guy in blue” will claim the victory and will stand on the podium in Dakar. Therefore I’m not going to risk anything.”

It was already visible during today’s race, the rally is coming to an end and the same can be said about the strength of the competitors. Everyone tries to rearrange one’s strength for the final few stages. Nobody likes to ruin what he has accomplished so far by making a stupid mistake. Tomorrow’s special runs for 225 km. But the riders will need to mobilize their spirit as well as their powers once more. The route passes through a savanna



Chris Blais in Tamabounda



Chris Blais und Mechaniker Thomas Mc Donald



Jean de Azevedo



Cyril Despres in Tambacounda

landscape and navigation is not quite that simple. At the end of the stage the riders will reach Dakar, the final destination.

3.10 p.m.

Today's exciting question was: Would any of the competitors, who rank behind Cyril Despres, try to ride fast enough to attack his lead and therefore force the young Frenchman to react? And in doing so would he end up making mistakes?

The special was 529 km long and had a firm and therefore fast track in store. But it also offered lots of diversity, like small rivers, many villages which forced to riders to go slow as well as numerous winding paths through the African bush land.

Jean de Azevedo claimed a surprising stage victory today. The Brazilian KTM private rider had slowly and secretly inched his way up front. Until CP 3 at kilometer 416 David Fretigne, who finished in second, Chris Blais and Alfie Cox had been in the first group. The 30-year-old Azevedo overtook them on the last few kilometers of the special. He clocked the time at 5 hours, 10'56 minutes. David Fretigné on Yamaha was barely 10 seconds adrift. Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) clinched a great third spot with only 23 seconds off the pace.

Further rankings of KTM team riders:

4 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 0'34

5 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 3'10

6 Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 6'11

7 Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) + 7'00

8 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 12'04

9 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 12'34

10 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 20'22

19 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 50'45

20 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 52'56

26 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 1'01'48

The bivouac at Tambacounda is now just 9 km away.

Tageswertung 14. Etappe: Kayes - Tambacounda

Daily results 14th stage: Kayes - Tambacounda

Speciale: 529 km

- 1 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 5h 10' 56" 00' 00"
- 2 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 5h 11' 06" 00' 10"
- 3 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 5h 11' 19" 00' 23"
- 4 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 5h 11' 30" 00' 34"
- 5 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 14' 06" 03' 10"
- 6 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 17' 07" 06' 11"
- 7 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 5h 17' 56" 07' 00"
- 8 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 5h 23' 00" 12' 04"
- 9 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 5h 23' 30" 12' 34"
- 10 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 5h 31' 18" 20' 22"
- 11 DUCLOS FRA KTM 5h 34' 42" 23' 46"
- 12 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 5h 39' 54" 28' 58"
- 13 CZACHOR POL KTM 5h 43' 14" 32' 18"
- 14 DABROWSKI POL KTM 5h 43' 34" 32' 38"
- 15 CASTEAU FRA KTM 5h 47' 32" 36' 36"
- 16 RIVERA ESP KTM 5h 51' 10" 40' 14"
- 17 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 5h 54' 09" 43' 13"
- 18 BASTOUILH KTM 5h 54' 39" 43' 43"
- 19 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 6h 01' 41" 50' 45"
- 20 GORRARA SUI KTM 6h 02' 36" 51' 40"
- 21 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 6h 03' 52" 52' 56"
- 26 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 6h 12' 44" 1h 01' 48"

Gesamtwertung nach der 14. Etappe:

Overall standings after 14th stage:

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 44h 30' 59" 00' 00"
- 2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 44h 43' 15" 12' 16"
- 3 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 44h 45' 12" 14' 13" 01' 00"
- 4 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 44h 51' 16" 20' 17" 01' 00"
- 5 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 44h 58' 14" 27' 15" 01' 00"
- 6 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 45h 25' 26" 54' 27" 17' 00"
- 7 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 46h 03' 48" 1h 32' 49"
- 8 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 46h 09' 32" 1h 38' 33" 05' 00"
- 9 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 46h 24' 41" 1h 53' 42" 01' 00"
- 10 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 47h 41' 56" 3h 10' 57" 10' 00"
- 11 DABROWSKI POL KTM 48h 21' 54" 3h 50' 55"
- 12 CZACHOR POL KTM 48h 44' 30" 4h 13' 31"
- 13 CASTEAU FRA KTM 48h 56' 06" 4h 25' 07"
- 14 DUCLOS FRA KTM 49h 32' 07" 5h 01' 08" 02' 00"
- 15 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 50h 16' 50" 5h 45' 51" 01' 00"
- 16 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 51h 13' 42" 6h 42' 43" 01' 00"
- 17 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 51h 41' 30" 7h 10' 31"
- 18 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 52h 08' 31" 7h 37' 32" 01' 00"
- 19 QUINONERO FRA KTM 53h 11' 22" 8h 40' 23" 11' 00"
- 20 BASTOUILH KTM 53h 57' 58" 9h 26' 59" 01' 00"
- 22 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 53h 58' 51" 9h 27' 52" 01' 00"
- 36 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 59h 39' 36" 15h 08' 37"

17 15th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 15th STAGE TAMBACOUNDA - DAKAR

15.01.2005

4.55 p.m.

Cyril Despres gets ready

He had no other choice today. Cyril Despres had to attack in order to ward off a possible attack from Marc Coma, his strongest opponent for an overall victory. The Frenchman focused with all his strength and will and he was successful. Cyril Despres claimed his second stage win; maybe the most important one in his career. He increased his overall lead on the Spaniard Marc Coma by more than six minutes. This time margin should be sufficient to claim the overall victory and stand on the podium at Lac Rose. Cyril's emotions were torn in different directions. "I am certainly glad to be so close to victory," stated Despres, "I can conquer the leadership relying on my own strength. Tomorrow I will have to focus for a last time so that nothing unexpected will happen. It should actually be a pleasure to race tomorrow. But on the other hand I am so sad because I have lost a dear friend. My conscience tells me that I have done a great job and that I will be winning in consequence of what I have worked for the previous year. But my heart is sad." Cyril Despres has an almost 9 minute lead on Marc Coma and 12 minutes on Alfie Cox.

Marc Coma, the young Spaniard, ranked in 8th place today. He is by no means sad that he cannot compete with Cyril now. "If someone had told me in Barcelona that I'm going to arrive in the second place I would have told him, 'You are crazy.' I am very satisfied."

Each of the competitors, who have reached Dakar today, is desperately looking forward for one simple



Scot Harden



Cyril Despres



Marc Coma

thing: a shower. The rally followers have abandoned their tents; they all sleep in hotels. Tomorrow they will start on the last special which stretches for 31 km. As any other year the route leads around Lac Rose, the lake with the red tint to it a bit outside of Dakar. It is an exhibition for the audience, team members, friends and families who have followed to Dakar. The start is already a spectacle. The motorbike riders will line up by 20. Everyone will need to highly focus because a crash in result of the mass start would be fatal for the leader. Once again the competitors will have to conquer dunes.

Everyone who crosses the finish line at Lac Rose is a hero. It doesn't matter where he ranks.

1.10 p.m.

Last night Cyril Despres definitely added a bit of excitement. On his way to Tambacounda he didn't keep to the speed limit while passing through one of the villages along the way. For that he was given a 9 minute penalty. Thus in the overall his lead on Marc Coma shrunk to 3'16 minutes.

For today, Cyril had to stick to one tactic: He had to mobilize all his strength to ward off a possible attack from Marc Coma, the Spanish talent. But the Frenchman from Team KTM Gauloises prepared everything for his first Dakar victory. Cyril Despres took the last but one special and clocked a time of 2 hours 27'37 minutes on the 225 km course. Marc Coma came in six and a half minutes behind the winner.

An amateur claimed a 2nd spot and surprised everyone. The Frenchman Alain Duclos on his 450 KTM arrived only 1'24 minutes off the pace. Andy Caldecott from Team KTM Motorex Australia showed another excellent performance in this year's Dakar. He clinched a 3rd place (+ 1'54).

Today's route suited Cyril Despres. Over the last few years he has gained a lot of experience navigating and the many paths through the savanna didn't lead



Cyril Despres und Winfried Kerschhaggl (KTM Marketing)



Chris Blais



Jean Bruzy

him astray.

Further rankings of KTM team riders:

4 Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull)

+ 2'20

7 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) +

5'36

8 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 6'29

9 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 6'56

10 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 9'23

11 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 9'39

21 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 18'16

32 Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) +

28'41

33 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) +

30'05

Now the competitors will have to travel another 236 km to Dakar. The bivouac is located in the center of Senegal's capitol.



Alfie Cox



Isidre Esteve

Tageswertung 15. Etappe: Tambacounda - Dakar

Daily results 15th stage: Tambacounda - Dakar

Speciale: 225 km

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 2h 27' 37" 00' 00"
- 2 DUCLOS FRA KTM 2h 29' 01" 01' 24"
- 3 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 2h 29' 31" 01' 54"
- 4 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 2h 29' 57" 02' 20"
- 5 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 2h 31' 14" 03' 37"
- 6 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 2h 32' 01" 04' 24"
- 7 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 2h 33' 13" 05' 36"
- 8 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 2h 34' 06" 06' 29"
- 9 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 2h 34' 33" 06' 56"
- 10 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 2h 37' 00" 09' 23"
- 11 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 2h 37' 16" 09' 39"
- 12 DABROWSKI POL KTM 2h 38' 02" 10' 25"
- 13 CZACHOR POL KTM 2h 39' 02" 11' 25"
- 14 GORRARA SUI KTM 2h 39' 43" 12' 06"
- 15 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 2h 40' 32" 12' 55"
- 16 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 2h 41' 38" 14' 01"
- 17 BASTOUILH KTM 2h 41' 39" 14' 02"
- 18 CASTEAU FRA KTM 2h 43' 09" 15' 32"
- 19 BROUWER HOL YAMAHA 2h 43' 15" 15' 38"
- 20 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 2h 43' 33" 15' 56"
- 21 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 2h 45' 55" 18' 18"
- 32 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 2h 56' 18" 28' 41"
- 33 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 2h 57' 42" 30' 05"

Gesamtwertung nach der 15. Etappe:

Overall standings after 15th stage:

- 1 DESPRES FRA Team KTM Gauloises 47h 07' 36" 00' 00" 09' 00"
- 2 COMA ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 47h 17' 21" 09' 45"
- 3 COX AFS Team KTM Gauloises 47h 19' 45" 12' 09" 01' 00"
- 4 ESTEVE PUJOL ESP Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 47h 21' 13" 13' 37" 01' 00"
- 5 FRETIGNE FRA YAMAHA 47h 42' 45" 35' 09" 13' 30"
- 6 CALDECOTT AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 47h 54' 57" 47' 21" 17' 00"
- 7 DE AZEVEDO BRA KTM 48h 35' 02" 1h 27' 26"
- 8 SALA ITA Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull 48h 42' 45" 1h 35' 09" 05' 00"
- 9 BLAIS USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 49h 01' 41" 1h 54' 05" 01' 00"
- 10 BRUCY FRA Team KTM Gauloises 50h 19' 12" 3h 11' 36" 10' 00"
- 11 DABROWSKI POL KTM 50h 59' 56" 3h 52' 20"
- 12 CZACHOR POL KTM 51h 23' 32" 4h 15' 56"
- 13 CASTEAU FRA KTM 51h 39' 15" 4h 31' 39"
- 14 DUCLOS FRA KTM 52h 01' 08" 4h 53' 32" 02' 00"
- 15 GRAZIANI ITA KTM 53h 00' 23" 5h 52' 47" 01' 00"
- 16 VERHOEVEN HOL YAMAHA 54h 13' 14" 7h 05' 38" 20' 00"
- 17 HARDEN USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 54h 27' 25" 7h 19' 49"
- 18 CHARBONNEL FRA KTM 54h 50' 09" 7h 42' 33" 01' 00"
- 19 QUINONERO FRA KTM 56h 07' 56" 9h 00' 20" 17' 00"
- 20 BASTOUILH KTM 56h 39' 37" 9h 32' 01" 01' 00"
- 22 WALCH USA Team KTM Red Bull USA 56h 55' 09" 9h 47' 33" 01' 00"
- 37 SCHWARZ AUS Team KTM Motorex Australia 62h 37' 18" 15h 29' 42"

DAKAR 2005: KTM PRESS RELEASE

16.01.2005

KTM starts safety initiative

Due to the incidents of the previous months, KTM, as the leading motorcycle manufacturer in Rally Raid, is under the obligation to actively support the reduction of risks.

Involving all those concerned – riders, organizers and manufacturers – it is time to openly discuss which measures will be necessary and appropriate to ensure more safety.

We like to invite all those affected, especially A.S.O., the organizer of the Dakar Rally, to join this initiative.

Together we want to shape the future rally sport.

Still being in a state of shock about the previous event, KTM will announce how the future Factory Racing Engagement will look like in an adequate time. For sure this decision will also strongly depend on the results of the safety initiative.

It is a fact that KTM will keep up as it was the support for amateurs and private riders and that KTM's Rally Service will continue to exist.

18 16th Stage

DAKAR 2005: 16th STAGE DAKAR - DAKAR

16.01.2005

6.30 p.m.

A bitter victory for a "blue" guy from KTM

Just how often does a sportsman imagine the moment when he will actually claim a victory he has desired for years? For sure, Cyril Despres must have imagined this moment a lot different. For the first time he won the toughest rally in the world; he won the 27th Dakar Rally. But it is a bitter victory. "I am very happy to have won," claimed Cyril Despres. "But I believe I won't cope with what I have accomplished for yet another few weeks. At the moment I'm just relieved and satisfied that I could keep my promise which Fabrizio and I had given each other during the test runs in Tunisia. We wanted a "blue" rider to stand on top of the podium in Dakar. We wanted to do this for Richard. Now that I have managed it, the victory is also dedicated to Fabrizio."

It is understandable that all victory celebrations on the podium were cancelled – no champagne, no cheers. It was a time of remembrance of Richard Saint and Fabrizio Meoni. "January 11th was a black day," stated Cyril Despres, Dakar champion. "It had hurt so much to lose Fabrizio. Afterwards my head was empty. First we lost Richard, then Fabrizio. It will take a long time until we comprehend all of this. Nevertheless, I believe it was the right decision to continue the rally. I love racing, just as Fabrizio did. He too, got back on a motorbike after Richard's accident. My motorcycle was exactly the place to find myself again."

Fabrizio Meoni died on January 11th on the special



Cyril Despres



Team KTM Gauloises



Team KTM Red Bull USA



Team KTM Gauloises

from Atar to Kiffa. It is still hard to grasp that the double Dakar winner will never again ride a bike through the desert. "I have learned so much from Fabrizio and Richard," explained Cyril Despres. "I had the same troubles they had in the beginning of my career. They learnt to go fast thanks to guys like Peterhansel, Magnaldi and Orioli. When I started they were my guides. Trying to follow them, understanding how to cope with navigation helped me improve. I don't know if I ever really had an idol, but that I am here today is thanks to Fabrizio and Richard." Fabrizio Meoni is the eleventh motorcycle rider in the history of the Dakar rally who has lost his life.

With Cyril Despres' victory KTM has also reached its actual goal in this year's Dakar. For the 5th time a rider won the toughest rally in the world on a motorcycle from the manufacturer in Mattighofen. With that KTM outdid the manufacturers Yamaha and BMW. But no one is getting overly excited about this. "At the moment the sporting success is totally pushed in the background," explained Winfried Kerschhagl, KTM marketing director. "We are thinking about the future right now. If we cannot find some common ground about the safety, we will have to think about or engagement in the future. The motorcycles have not become that much faster over the previous few years. But the density of great riders has definitely increased. We would like the rally to become more sporting again and this means more navigation." Fabrizio Meoni was able to claim the first victory on a KTM in 2001. In 2002 the Italian was able to repeat this success. In 2003 Richard Sainct gains his 3rd Dakar victory – his first one on a KTM. As the first Spaniard, Nani Roma won the Dakar on a KTM last year. And now Cyril Despres is the winner. It should have been an incredible day for all those, who work in Mattighofen to further the rally sport. But surely no one is in the mood to celebrate now.

Claudia Patuzzi outlined the sporty resume of the



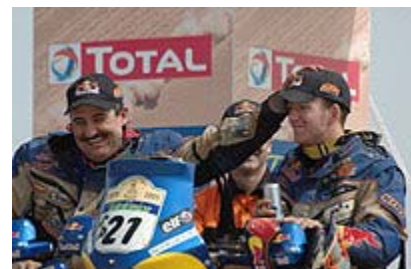
Cyril Despres: Gewinner Rally Dakar 2005



Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull



Marc Coma



Scot Harden und Kellon Walch

[Download Ergebnisse 16.Etappe-Standings 16th stage.pdf](#)

successful Team KTM Gauloises as follows: "Until the stage Atar-Kiffa everything was working out perfectly. In the end I'm proud of the riders and my team. Actually I'm proud of all the teams which managed to finish the Dakar under such difficult circumstances. After January 11th the race and winning was totally pushed into the background. But we were also able to feel the spirit of the Dakar again. It is the incredible feeling when people support each other and we all become a large family. I am also happy for Cyril and Alfie."

Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull missed its goal by a small margin. Just like the last year they had set out to provide a champion, a second Spanish Dakar winner. Isidre Esteve Pujol had been expecting a lot before the start in Barcelona. He missed a place on the podium not by much; he finished in 4th. Another rider, Marc Coma, was also almost in reach of the ultimate triumph. He is in 2nd in the rankings on his 2nd Dakar. It is a gigantic success. On the 8956 km rally Marc was barely 9 minutes adrift on Cyril. "I am more than satisfied with my second place," claimed Marc. "For us it was very important to perform as a team with potential this year, after Nani had left us. And we are a strong team. Unfortunately Jordi had to pull out of the race rather early. But Isidre, Gio and I had a great rally." Isidre Esteve Pujol and Marc Coma are two potential riders for the Spanish. Both are worthy successors of Nani Roma. "I am very glad about my team," so Jordi Arcarons, team manager. "We have worked extremely hard and have finished excellently. It is an accomplishment we can work with in the future."

The debut of the American factory riders Chris Blais and Kellon Walch was very promising. Scot Harden, team manager and rider, has obviously found two diamonds which have undergone some major grinding in their first desert rally. The young rookies from the US would like to return. "It is the toughest race that I

have ever participated in," explained Kellon Walch. "But I've got to admit that I also had a lot of fun. I had no problems concerning my physical condition and navigation got easier with every new stage. But most important of all is that all three of us have reached Dakar. Everything went very well for us." His team manager seems to think alike. "To reach Dakar was our most important goal," stated Scot Harden. "Chris and Kellon were further able to rank in excellent positions. We have worked very hard here and we have learnt a lot. Therefore I like to claim that we have accomplished the first part of our three-year plan. Next year we'll ride for a place on the podium. We'll come back here!"

Other than Fabrizio Meoni's and Jose Manuel Perez's (KTM amateur) deaths the rally was especially influenced by one thing: the weather. Troubles already started in Morocco when the 4th stage between Rabat and Agadir had to be annulled. A sandstorm in Mauritania which lasted for days added to the already tough stages. The storm completely mixed up the rally calendar. The first part of the marathon stage from Zouerat to Tichit lasted for two days. The second day had to be cancelled so that the riders and drivers could gather again.

Some more statistical facts: Nine of the twelve stages for motorcycles were won by KTM pilots. Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) claimed two stage wins, just like Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia). Fabrizio Meoni (Team KTM Gauloises), Isidre Esteve Pujol (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull), Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull), Kellon Walch (Team KTM Red Bull USA) and the KTM private rider Jean de Azevedo each were able to clinch one stage win.

Alfie Cox, who always ranked among the best riders, moved along well-balanced. He never managed to claim a top spot, but he won the 3rd place in the

overall. The South African thinks about his future now. "Most probably I'm going to stop racing rallies. I'll need to think about it during the next few weeks and I'll need to talk to my family about it. I like my bike and I perform great on it. But a lot of things have happened during the previous months."

His teammate Jean Brucy has already drawn his conclusions. "This was my last rally on a motorcycle," he claimed. "I had decided that this was going to be my last Dakar on a motorbike a long time ago. Maybe I'll return racing in a car. It all depends if I'm able to find a sponsor." With Jean leaving the motorbike rally scene someone who had a standing as the fastest mechanic in the world will be gone. With his handiwork he had already helped Richard Saint to win the Dakar and this year he has helped Cyril Despres. Jean is someone one could always depend on. He will be missed by KTM.

230 motorcycles left Barcelona more than two weeks ago. 104 of them have reached Dakar today. We all have great respect for them.

KTM likes to thank everyone who has worked for uncountable hours to contribute to the success in the 27th Dakar. However, it is difficult to celebrate this victory because two riders are missing.

1.25 p.m.

For every rally participant who made it to Dakar a dream came true. It is especially for this last special at Lac Rose just outside Dakar's gates that the competitors endure two strenuous weeks. It is a joyful ride. Everyone is celebrated by an audience of several thousands of people. Everyone who participates in this last stage is a Dakar hero.

There was one question left open: Would Alfie Cox defend his place on the podium against Isidre Esteve Pujol? Or would the Spaniard from Team Repsol-Red

Bull challenge the South African in the overall? Alfie Cox has won the match, but by close margin!

Kellon Walch from Team KTM Red Bull USA won the stage. He clocked a time of 17'17 minutes on the 31 km special. It was an excellent ending for the American KTM team which rode an incredible rally. Isidre Esteve Pujol claimed a 2nd place. He had started the final attack in third and came in 52 seconds behind Walch. The Netherlander Eric Verhoef, KTM amateur, arrived 0'55 seconds adrift.

Further rankings of KTM team riders:

- # 7 Giovanni Sala (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 1'22
- # 8 Chris Blais (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 1'43
- # 10 Alfie Cox (Team KTM Gauloises) + 1'58
- # 13 Marc Coma (Team KTM Repsol-Red Bull) + 2'10
- # 16 Cyril Despres (Team KTM Gauloises) + 2'38
- # 17 Jean Brucy (Team KTM Gauloises) + 2'41
- # 24 Andy Caldecott (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 3'28
- # 28 Scot Harden (Team KTM Red Bull USA) + 3'49
- # 56 David Schwarz (Team KTM Motorex Australia) + 7'31

Thus Cyril Despres has won his first Dakar Rally. Congratulations Cyril! Marc Coma claims a 2nd place; his first time on the podium. Old hand Alfie Cox has experienced this success several times now. He is in 3rd.

The podium is located right at the finish line. At the moment the presentation ceremony is going on. It is a rather quiet celebration. More about the atmosphere and the resume of the KTM teams you can read here shortly!