

Dakar 2015: scarce visibility holds up Iveco Trucks in fifth stage

Stage five of one of history's toughest rallies took place in Chile between Copiapó and Antofagasta. The route of the fifth special stage proved complicated for Team Petronas De Rooy Iveco, leaving the drivers exhausted. Visibility was a challenge from the start as team trucks were situated in the middle of the convoy.

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After Gerard de Rooy's mishap in the fourth stage the Iveco trucks had yet another tough section to overcome on the Dakar's precarious roads. De Rooy's teammate Pep Vila foresaw that catching up to the other competing trucks would be difficult given the scarce visibility conditions. There was plenty of dust, fesh fesh and hard stones that rendered the drivers' tasks even more difficult.

Stage five covered a timed section of 458 kilometres between the northern Chilean towns of Copiapó and Antofagasta. Hans Stacey was Iveco's best-positioned driver to start due to his strong performance in the previous stage. He started fifth and experienced a good first half in the special stage. He then moved up to fourth position, but then incurred a half hour delay that set him back for the rest of the stage. Pep Vila, with his Iveco Trakker Evolution II, and Gerard de Rooy, with his Iveco Powerstar, reached Stacey after having started in the 23rd and 26th positions respectively.

The obstacles they had to overcome throughout the special's 458 kilometres consisted of endless slopes that took competitors from 1,000 up to 3,000 metres above sea level. Despite this, De Rooy was able to surpass his teammates, but remained half an hour behind the trucks from Team Kamaz whose improved visibility conditions had allowed them to take the lead. De Rooy arrived 40m01s behind Russian driver Nikolaev, who won stage five of the 2015 edition at the wheel of a Kamaz. De Rooy was Iveco's best performer today, but the time lost due to the accident suffered yesterday means that he won't have a chance at making the podium as he is now 7h23m57s behind the leader.

Hans Stacey followed his teammate, closing the stage nearly an hour behind the leader. The time lost by Stacey today puts him in 7th place in the general classifications at 1h13m08s from the leader. Pep Vila arrived right before Stacey and now stands in 15th position at 56m28s from the leader. The Spanish driver lost 40 minutes and the opportunity to start off further ahead in the fifth stage due to having stopped to provide assistance to Gerard de Rooy in stage four.

More info available at www.iveco.com/dakar

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