

Silk Way Rally 2017: IVECO and Team PETRONAS De Rooy IVECO on the ceremonial start podium in Moscow's Red Square

The PETRONAS De Rooy IVECO Team is ready for the 7th edition of the famous Silk Way Rally raid that will take the team across Russia, Kazakhstan and China in the next two weeks.

Three IVECO trucks will face the extreme and varied terrains of the route with the first stage starting yesterday at 13:35 local time.

Gerard de Rooy will depart first on his entirely renewed IVECO Powerstar, followed by Ton van Genugten behind the wheel of his IVECO Trakker and new team member Artur Ardavichus on the second IVECO Powerstar.

Moscow, 8 July 2017

Three Iveco trucks - two Powerstars and one Trakker - took their places in the 2017 Silk Way Rally official start ceremony, which was held in the late afternoon of 7th July in Moscow's Red Square. After the last few days' scrutineering and administrative checks in the Loujniki Olympic Stadium, **Team PETRONAS De Rooy IVECO** finally started its first amazing adventure in the Silk Way Rally, one of the greatest competitions in the world of rally raids with 14 stages covering almost 10,000 km from Moscow to Xi'An in China.

On board his completely renewed Powerstar, Team leader Gerard De Rooy, debuted on the 2017 Silk Way Rally crossing the start line at 18.24h (Moscow time +1 GMT) in front of hundreds of rally fans: *"The engine and cabin on my IVECO Powerstar are the same as in my last Dakar rally, but everything else is new. I'm very happy about going up against the best truck teams and competing in this race – said De Rooy on Red Square – I will start off gently because I really don't want to miss out on the great dunes of the Gobi Desert!"*. Spanish co-pilot Moises "Moi" Torrallardona and Polish mechanic Darek Rodewald, both highly experienced, complete the #302 crew.

Kazakh pilot Artur Ardavichus, the new entry in **Team PETRONAS De Rooy IVECO**, was on the second IVECO Powerstar (#310) with Belgian co-driver Serge Bruynkens and Dutch mechanic Michel Huisman. For Ardavichus, born in 1971 in Almaty, the Silk Way Rally is a precious opportunity to become part of a professional team, having started his off-road racing career in 2012.

Dutchman Ton van Genutgen on his #306 IVECO Trakker completes the **Team PETRONAS De Rooy IVECO** line-up, and joined the two IVECO Powerstars on the podium start on Moscow's Red Square. *"It's my first experience in the Silk Way Rally and I'm really excited to take part in this great adventure".*

On Saturday 8th July the first leg of Silk Way Rally will take the three IVECO crews from Moscow to Tcheboksary with a road section of 572 kms to reach the 61 kms–special stage. The track to Nijni Novogorod will be more technical for pilots in the middle of the section and it will be a good exercise to perfect the last settings on the vehicles.

Starting order for SS1 – 8th July

14.41h Airat Mardeev (Kamaz)

14.43h Maarten Van den Brink (Renault)

14.45 Gerard de Rooy (IVECO)

14.53h Ton Van Genutgen (IVECO)

15.00h Artur Ardavichus (IVECO)

IVECO

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The brand's wide range of products include the Daily, a vehicle that covers the 3 – 7.2 ton vehicle weight segment, the Eurocargo from 6 – 19 tons, the Trakker (dedicated to off-road missions) and the Stralis, both over 16 tons. In addition, the IVECO Astra brand builds off-road trucks, rigid and articulated dumpers as well as special vehicles.

IVECO employs close to 21,000 individuals globally. It manages production sites in 7 countries throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and Latin America where it produces vehicles featuring the latest advanced technologies. 4,200 sales and service outlets in over 160 countries guarantee technical support wherever an IVECO vehicle is at work.

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