

Dakar 2015: poor 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 proved physically challenging for the Team Petronas De Rooy Iveco drivers, leaving them exhausted. Visibility was a challenge from the outset as the team's trucks were situated in the middle of the pack.

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After Gerard de Rooy's mishap in the fourth stage, the Iveco trucks faced yet another tough section which they must overcome on the Dakar's precarious roads. De Rooy's teammate, Pep Vila, predicted that catching up to the other competing trucks would be difficult given the poor visibility. The dust and stones made the drivers' tasks even more challenging.

Stage five covered 458 km between the northern Chilean towns of Copiapó and Antofagasta. Hans Stacey was Iveco's best-positioned driver at the beginning of the stage due to his strong performance the previous day. He had started the day in fifth position and after a strong morning moved to take fourth, but then incurred a half hour delay which set him back for the rest of the stage. Pep Vila, in his Iveco Trakker Evolution II, and Gerard de Rooy, in his Iveco Powerstar, reached Stacey, after starting in 23rd and 26th respectively.

Throughout the stage, which saw competitors climb to 3,000m above sea level, they had to overcome multiple obstacles. Despite this, De Rooy was able to overtake the rest of his team, but remained half an hour behind the trucks from Team Kamaz which were benefitting from the improved visibility conditions, which had let them take the lead. De Rooy arrived 40 minutes behind Russian driver Nikolaev, who won stage five.

De Rooy was Iveco's best performer during stage five, but the time lost following the accident he suffered the previous day means that he won't have a chance at making the podium as he is now more than seven hours behind the leader.

Hans Stacey followed his teammate, finishing the stage nearly an hour behind the leader. The time lost by Stacey today puts him in 7th in the general classifications at 1 hour 13 minutes from pole position. Pep Vila finished before Stacey and now stands in 15th position. The Spanish driver lost 40 minutes and the opportunity to start further ahead in the fifth stage after stopping to provide assistance to Gerard de Rooy on stage four.

More info available at www.iveco.com/dakar

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The brand's wide range of products include the Daily, a vehicle that covers the 3 – 7 tonne vehicle weight segment, the Eurocargo from 6 – 16 tonnes, the Trakker (dedicated to off-road missions) and the Stralis, both over 16 tonnes. In addition, with the brand Iveco Astra, builds mining and construction vehicles, rigid and articulated dump trucks and speciality vehicles.

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