

Adriatic Adventure 2019

Day Two – Ljubljana to Maribor – 319 kms

This morning's exit from Ljubljana, on day two of the Adriatic Adventure, was far less fraught than the journey out of Trieste and, at the relief of all crews I'm sure, was much faster than our entry to the city the previous evening. Crossing over the famous Dragon Bridge as we left for a day's adventuring through the hills and mountains, it would be the serpentine roads of the Slovenia that would be the reptiles first and foremost in everyone's minds today.

Snakes they were as well, mis-leading and treacherous to those caught under their spell and whilst we had been eased in gently on day one, from the outset this morning the regularities were much tougher to both drive and navigate, with many a mistake witnessed as we began the climb up the first section of the day. The competitors would merely tell you they were performing brake tests, of course, and I can confirm that they all work fantastically well, especially those fitted to the beautiful Lancia Aurelia of Catherine Janssens and Anne Rotthier, who spies report may not even have made it to the first regularity, had it not been for some stunning stopping power.

Brakes aside, today was definitely an adventure for the drivers, as whilst this is a regularity rally, maintaining the set average speed on the gravel and rock-strewn surfaces that made up many of today's roads is no easy task, particularly with so many trees close at hand. After such dry weather recently the dust clouds engulfed everything in the rallies wake and with trees dropping their leaves all around us as well the atmosphere was lit up with a peculiar light show as the sun shone through the airborne flotsam. Regularity four in particular was no place for those struggling with respiratory issues, and as we whipped through like the Bora wind that had been left in Trieste, I felt especially sorry for the media teams covering the event and now covered in dust.

The sympathy didn't last long though, as more smiles were raised with another slippery corner and another stunning view as the route took us to the very edge of the Steiner Alps and up through the ski resort of Rogla. Many a pretty village lined the road as well, and whilst locals went about their business of tending the fields or chopping wood they made time to wave each of us through and stared in wonder at the myriad of fabulous machinery that had, for some reason unbeknownst to them, driven through their little hamlet today.

Tonight we rest in Maribor, home to the world's oldest grapevine, and whilst this evening some will no doubt swap their vintage motor cars for a vintage of another type it won't be long before the motorcars are fired up again in the morning and the expedition towards Croatia can begin.

Until tomorrow evening,

Syd Stelvio