



CARBON NEUTRAL EVENTS
ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE DRIVING



Syd Stelvio Day Nine

Essaouira to Marrakech - 308 Kms

The attrition is beginning to take affect now, cars bear the scars of 9 days straight of competition, route books are dog eared, relationships strained, and everything hurts, we all hurt. But it's so close now, the finish, it's almost there, but still, not quite. Still so far away. Still over the next pass and the next set of hairpins and still just over a thousand kilometres to go. The closer it gets the further away it seems, but it is out there, just three days away now.

The mistakes are happening, just ask the Woofs, leaders in the classics for a few days now and still holding top spot, but after a malfunction of the mind in the cockpit earlier the clocks went awry, and seconds, 30 of them, were lost. Elsewhere the Cleyndert's continue to hold onto top overall, the best vintage machine in the field, and closing in on the more powerful classics above them.

But, irrespective of any errors made, regardless of any cuts taken or days missed due to mechanical ailments, there is achievement throughout the field. There are the Dippie's, Martin and Fiona, struggling with mechanical problems and towed into base yesterday, but still inside the top ten and flying today with smiles replacing the grimaces. There is Tsuguo Shintani + Sumiko Kokonno, the Japanese pair in the Buick Doctors Coupe with Peking to Paris aspirations, somewhat doing their own thing but finding their way around and always with a smile and wave.

There is Father and Son team Kevin and Cole Bradburn, in a car that young Cole built himself, turning on the style and posting great times, in fact the best of everyone today with just 5 seconds of penalty. Peter Moore + Dan Stellmacher, constantly overcoming mechanical problems in the smallest car in the field, and at the other end of the spectrum Tomas de Vargas Machuca + Josh Thompson in the gargantuan American LaFrance Type 10 overcoming, well, just overcoming. The list goes on, Scott Perekslis + Allan Kersgard, Roland Singer + Gernot Woerle, Neil Lawson-May + Paul Rivlin, Patrick Sommer + Christine Sommer, Paul Dilley + Lindsay Mclean, all pushing, all pressing on and working their way around whatever is thrown at them, pacing themselves against the rally and just getting on with it.

These characters cannot be measured against the clock alone, this rally, this gigantic adventure is much bigger than time. Time falls away in the face of miles, under the strain of distance and all that really matters at the end is, being there.

But the end isn't here yet, the end, no matter how close it seems is still to be discovered and the distance is still king, until that last kilometre clicks over on the odometer. Time to fettle cars, time to make any repairs and time to rest up, take stock and reset the inner trip meter



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ahead of another long day in the saddle tomorrow. Day ten begins tomorrow, and we all will attempt to tick another one off of the list.

Syd Stelvio

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