



CARBON NEUTRAL EVENTS
ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE DRIVING



Lima to Cape Horn 2022 Day One | Lima to Paracas – 285 Kms

South America, a land of contrasts and extremes. Deserts, mountains, salt flats and rain forests, occupying an 18 million square metre area of land, bordered by the Atlantic to the east, the Pacific to the west and the Antarctic to the South and cut off from North America by the infamous Darien Gap. Most of its population live in sprawling, rambling cities, which often carry fearsome reputations, sometimes deserved and sometimes not. Elsewhere it is remote, unspoiled, and beautiful, a hub for adventure motorsports and perhaps the perfect location for an endurance rally. An endurance rally like the Lima to Cape Horn, which began this morning in the animated streets of Lima, Peru.

This is no ordinary rally though and has statistics that would go some way to matching the mighty Peking to Paris Motor Challenge. This event, no, this escapade, this experience, is 12,500 kilometres in length and 30 days long. An entire month on the road, 5 weeks away from the toil and tedium of desk jobs, weekly shops, and normal life. This is an escape from the drudgery of everyday routine, an opportunity to say, 'I can't believe I did that' rather than 'I wish I had' and a chance to cast aside fear and step out of one's comfort zone.

From the lowlands of the coasts of Peru, to the mighty heights of the Andes, through Bolivia, Patagonia, Chile and Argentina and eventually to Tierra del Fuego and the southern most tip of this incredible continent, this is a rally of some magnitude. But, before any thoughts can turn to what is to come, the first, and sometimes hardest steps must be taken to get the trip underway.

Excitement and some trepidation filled the air as the competitors readied themselves and their machines for the off first thing this morning. The mist may have engulfed Lima, but the atmosphere in these always vibrant streets was a rarefied one and enthusiastic onlookers gathered to see the 37 classic and vintage cars pass under the starting arch and get going on this tremendous adventure.

First away was the number 2 machine of Mike Velasco + Maria Garcia Fernandez, the 1935 Bentley Derby giving a glimpse of the incredible cars that will no doubt delight the residents of these lands. Into the mele of the early morning traffic they went, one by one, standing out against the grey of the morning and causing sleepy commuters to rub their eyes and double take on just who they were sharing the clogged city highway with this morning.

It wouldn't be the most exciting of days in terms of the route, although a test at the Kartodromo la Chutana would add a bit of pigment to the otherwise uninspiring highway drive, but the adrenalin of finally getting going was no doubt masking the transit nature of the concentration run out of the clutches of Lima.

For some though the drive was a little bit more exciting than for others, as the local Police rubbed their hands and filled their pockets as our band of fresh-faced foreigners trickled down the road. All had been warned of the perils of speeding during the drivers briefing, but it wasn't overzealous use of the loud pedal at the heart of those in mischief today, but actually the lack of powered up headlights that had caused the bother with the Bobbies. After this illuminating lesson in the local traffic laws, all were on their way again, no doubt buoyed by their charitable donations to the Policeman's Ball.

Speaking of balls, elsewhere Filip Engelen and Ann Gillis had seemingly swapped their battery for a basketball, or at least that was about the size of the thing after a morning of suspected overcharging, that they had discovered at the mid-morning time control. Thankfully, the integrity of the cell hadn't

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been pushed past its limit, or this may have had more serious consequences, and being so early in the rally the Mechanical Assistant crews were of course feeling fully energised to help.

The day finished under the bright skies of Paracas, the brilliant blue Pacific flickering and dancing under the sun that had failed to pierce the thick cloud all morning, but a sun that was now beating down on this coastal region with genial warmth. All crews would be wise to spend some time gazing upon the sea, for tomorrow we will leave it behind as we leave the desert coastal regions and climb up to 4000 metres to play in the back gardens of the Angels. The Andes beckon, and as the altitude climbs the adventure will accelerate, and the heavens will be within touching distance. What an incredible prospect to have in store.

Syd Stelvio

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