

Dakar Rally drivers applaud Allison transmissions after grueling, off-road endurance race

All four Allison 4500-equipped trucks completed the competition across Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina, Jan. 2-14

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina – Four drivers recently completed the Dakar Rally with an Allison 4500-equipped truck. Following the race, a few team members spoke about the reason their team had selected an Allison fully automatic transmission.

“We knew that Allison was the best option in transmissions for endurance racing – and to participate in a race like the Dakar, you need the best,” said Jos Smink, driver of the 521 truck, a X2222 GINAF. “This is our third year with Allison and we’ve always had excellent experiences. All we have to do is change the oil.”

The Dakar was started in 1978. In 39 editions of the race, 29 countries have been visited. This year’s race featured 316 vehicles across four categories, including 50 trucks, speeding across Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina, Jan. 2-14.

“Thanks to the Allison transmission, a driver can focus only on driving without having to worry about other operational issues,” said Smink, a Dutchman. “We were the first to start using Allison automatics and now others have decided to use them.”

Frank Tilburgs, driver of the 536 truck, a TE 85 XC DAF, said “Using Allison in the Dakar has been the best choice. I feel that the truck has traction at all times and driving is very easy. We are very happy with the support from Allison in Europe and everything went perfect.”

The final results were 11th place for the 509 H51 MAN driven by Peter Versluis; 12th place for the 521 X2222 GINAF driven by Jos Smink; 18th place for the 536 TE 85 XC DAF driven by Frank Tilburgs, who achieved that position with the lowest horsepower in the race; and 26th place for the 512 TGA MAN driven by Artur Ardavichus.

“We chose Allison because we have a small engine with less power than other competitors, only 700 hp,” said Rob Royackers, Tilburg’s team manager. “Therefore, we need the torque multiplication of the automatic transmissions. Additionally, our driver preferred to use an automatic transmission instead of a manual as he can concentrate solely on driving.”

About Allison Transmission

Allison Transmission (NYSE: ALSN) is the world's largest manufacturer of fully automatic transmissions for medium- and heavy-duty commercial vehicles, and is a leader in hybrid-propulsion systems for city buses. Allison transmissions are used in a variety of applications including refuse, construction, fire, distribution, bus, motorhomes, defense and energy. Founded in 1915, the company is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA and employs approximately 2,700 people worldwide. With a market presence in more than 80 countries, Allison has regional headquarters in the Netherlands, China and Brazil with manufacturing facilities in the U.S., Hungary and India. Allison also has approximately 1,400 independent distributor and dealer locations worldwide. For more information, visit allisontransmission.com.

Contacts

Bettina Tevere

btevere@baraldocom.com

Mercedes Barron

ejecutiva@baraldocom.com

ICC Baraldo

(+54 11) 4787-6000

Juliana Abrahão de Barros

Allison Transmission

juliana.barros@allisontransmission.com

(+55 11) 5633-2528

R. Agostino Togneri, 57

São Paulo, Brazil



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Team 521: Jos Smink, Daniel Bruinsma, Peter Nieuwenburg



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Team 536: Gijsbert Van Uden, Marcel Snijders, Frank Tilburg