



2015

Don't call me outstanding!

By Paola Picone / ApPhotoSport

Within the international rally scene, the Transanatolia Rally had so far played the rather shy role of an outsider. In 2015 this definitely changed: The top riders Helder Rodrigues, Laia Sanz, Olivier Pain, Alessandro Botturi, Paolo Ceci and Gerard Farres have joined, as did Francesco Tarricone, Pedro Bianchi Prata, Xavier Moreau and so on and so on...

A real Dakar nest of riders, who were already at least once in Africa or South America: Over 80% of the current Transanatolia pilots are Dakar participants. Sorry, but there are too many that it is impossible to list them all here.

Although most are starting for the first time, there is a spirit of camaraderie, but it shouldn't decide on the fact that they all came here to win. The OC around Burak Büyükpınar, Orhan Çelen and Sönke Bunde is aware of the significance of this year's rally and is well prepared for everything. A good 100 employees take care of the participants. Track marshals and security personnel will watch over the progress, mechanics and technicians will solve minor problems, and finally the audience will rally the drivers along with their enthusiasm and receive the caravan of more than 300 people with great warmth. The experience of the past editions seamlessly flowed into the year 2015 and everything runs like clockwork. The precise and accurate roadbook was developed by Giulio Fantoni and introduces a new track in this breathtaking landscape, characterized by an alternation of different types of terrain and ground.

After Alessandro Botturi finished in second place behind Paolo Ceci in the 2013 Rally and won the 2014 edition, this year he's driven by the will to defend the title. But after a time penalty of ten minutes for fast driving on a section with a controlled speed limit and another four minutes for an early start, he has reduced his chances to a minimum.

Gerard Farres, on the other hand, works his way through the race and the terrain is up to his tastes, too: "I'm very happy about my victory, because I had the opportunity to compete with real champions, the world's elite, so to speak. The Transanatolia is an incredible, wonderful rally, which I enjoyed immensely. The level is very high, with pilots such as Bottu, Heroes and Paolo, who are always at the front. I have no time to celebrate, because at home my new racing motorcycle is waiting, which I have to train with and I have to train hard. At 36, I am in good shape and I want to make the most of it. "

Helder is also very satisfied after seven race days: "For me these long, tricky tracks were a very good workout. The organizers have worked excellently, even if smaller improvements are necessary here and there. I am glad about our participation and see that my team has worked very well. With two stage wins from Alessandro and one of us, we showed that we can be at the front in the Dakar."

The three riders of the Nomade Racing team also want to return. For Olivier Pain, Xavier Moreau and Loic Minaudier it was the first participation. Their impressions are unanimously positive.

Also for Laia Sanz it was the first Transanatolia: "The country surprised me very positively, the stage specials were very impressive. I have tested my new machine in extreme conditions here. In the beginning, this held me back somewhat, but I did a good job and gained more ground day by day - in short, it was a perfect preparation for the Dakar."

Pedro Bianchi Prata comments: "This rally has a huge potential, in this terrain and with this organization a race at the highest level is possible. I was especially impressed by the willingness of the organizers to listen to suggestions of the pilots and to respond to them. I originally came to prepare myself for the Dakar, but the Transanatolia truly deserves a participation just for its own sake!"

