



## PRESS RELEASE

5th January 2015, Villa Carlos Paz

### Martin Fifth and Dandy Thirteenth After Dakar's Opening Stage

This was indeed a very solid start for the crews technically supported by our team at the 37th Dakar Rally. Renault piloted by the Dutch Martin van den Brink came up trumps right at the event's start and finished on fifth place, beating all the winners from the past three years. The truck manned by our mechanic Daniel Kozlovský crossed the stage's finishing line as thirteenth.

*„This was the very first stage, so making any conclusions would be unreasonable. The differences were only minimal. Dakar is very long and exhausting but we can certainly be happy about our technology being able to compete for the top ranks. Anyway, I insist that the main deciding factor here is luck,“* comments our chief constructor Mario Kress in a down-to-earth manner.

The introductory stage led the crews out of Argentina's capital, where they all will struggle to return on Saturday after the next. First, they had to negotiate the 144km long connection stage to reach the 175km measured stage. The fast track suited to the Dutch Hans Stacey, the 2007 Dakar winner, who needed exactly one and half hours to arrive first. His fellow Dutch Van Vliet only lost half a minute on him. Loprais and Kolomý made it to the finish just 47 seconds later. Martin van den Brink, piloting a Renault built in our technology centre, closes the top five, leaving no one in doubt about the extraordinary construction skills of Mario Kress. Artur Ardavichus with his crew mechanic Daniel Kozlovský made it to the finish on thirteenth place four minutes after Stacey. *“This was a very fast stage. It had a typical rally feeling to it, lot of dust everywhere, so we didn't have much view. But for the start, not bad I'd say. Everything's going just the way it is supposed to,“* smiled Daniel.

Ardavichus's turquoise Tatra Jamal with our racing powertrain was the fastest truck of the Bonver Dakar Project team. Following minor complications Tomáš Vrátný's crew finished twenty-first and the Polish pilot Szustkowski's thirty-seventh. Our second Renault with the Dutch pilot Pascal de Baar crossed the finish line on seventeenth. The measured stage continued with a five-kilometre transfer to the bivouac in Villa Carlos Paz, where stage two starts on Monday. Stretching over 646 km in total out of which 331km will be measured, it will take the crews to San Juan.

**Results - trucks – stage 1:** 1. Stacey (NED) Iveco 1:30:43, 2. Van Vliet (NED) MAN +0:00:35, 3. Loprais (CZE) MAN, 4. Kolomý (CZE) Tatra - oba +0:00:47, 5. van den Brink (NED) Renault Trucks +0:00:58, 13. Ardavičius/Kozlovský (KAZ/CZE) Tatra +0:03:49, 15. Macík (CZE) Liaz +0:05:40, 17. ve Baar (NED) Renault Trucks +0:06:13, 21. Vrátný (CZE) Tatra +0:09:21, 37. Szustkowski (POL) Tatra +0:21:54.

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#### MKR Adventure

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