

NISSAN MOTOR CORPORATION



Red-Lined Adventure Nissan Navaras take on Dakar

Three purpose-built extreme off-road trucks, built by Nissan marketing partner Red-Lined Adventures, compete in the Dakar rally in Peru

Peru (Jan. 28, 2019) – Dakar, one of the most challenging off-road rally event in the world, wrapped its tenth and final stage on January 17. During the grueling 12-day event in Peru, three FIA Dakar specification T1 Nissan Navara trucks – built by Nissan’s South Africa-based marketing partner Red-Lined Adventures – competed.

The three Red-Lined entries included German father-and-son duo Jurgen and Daniel Schröder who competed under the PS Laser Racing banner (No. 329). Jurgen brought plenty of knowledge and experience to the table, as this year marked his ninth Dakar.

From Dubai, Thomas Edward Bell, team owner, and Patrick McMurren, Bell’s friend and navigator, competed under the Sabertooth Motoring Adventure banner (No. 419). Although this was their first Dakar, they came well prepared with a season's training in the South African Cross-Country Series under their belts.

From South Africa, businessmen Shameer Variawa and Zaheer Bodhanya competed under the Shameer Variawa Racing (SVR) banner (No. 429). This was their first Dakar. Although they are an experienced cross-country team, they had limited experience with desert terrain prior to this year’s race. The video below shows Red-Lined support crew assembling the SVR team’s Navara at a Nissan dealer in Peru ahead of the race:

The 2019 Dakar began with technical and administrative scrutineering for 541 competitors and 334 vehicles – 137 motorbikes, 26 quads, 130 cars and 41 trucks.

Red-Lined CEO Terence Marsh followed this year’s Dakar in a Nissan Pathfinder support vehicle, providing management and technical assistance through the 12-day event. Red-Lined technicians provided administration, logistical and technical support for both the Sabertooth and SVR teams.

“After nine grueling hours, we eventually managed to complete the Dakar documentation and scrutineering process,” said Marsh. “I’m looking forward to see what this Dakar will throw at us and have no doubt it will once again be an incredible adventure with many highs and lows.

Together, with the traditional curve balls thrown in here and there. Either way we will embrace it, as we are blessed to be able to experience it.”

All three teams started strong and successfully finished the first stage. After a clean run, debutants Bell and McMurren climbed from 112th to 81st overall. Veterans Schröder and Schröder also had a clean run, finishing at 71st. Variawa and Bodhanya started at 122nd and finished at 45th. However, a 20-minute penalty for a missed waypoint moved them back down to 101st for the start of the second stage.

Stage one’s route was in the Pisco region of Peru over a sand-packed, 84-km course characterized by a fine, powdery sand referred to as “fesh-fesh.”

“You have no idea what is underneath it,” said Marsh.

With some difficulty, all three cars finished marathon stages two through four. The extreme heat, sandy conditions and churned up route from earlier cars and trucks resulted in some distress for two of the teams. Conditions did not improve for stage five. Excessive fog led to a delayed start and a cancelled second racing section, leaving both Bell and Schröder stranded overnight in the desert.

“It means not much of a rest day for them,” said Marsh. “I know that would be the last thing that they would be worried about. The technicians have taken the gap to recharge their batteries and are geared up for an all-nighter if that’s what’s required to get the race cars refreshed and prepared for week two.”

<https://www.facebook.com/dakar/videos/1107431119437253/>

From Stage 3, this is the “Best Epic Story by Motul” of the Dakar 2019, voted on by fans on the Dakar Facebook page. This clip shows the danger of Dakar, and how competing teams help each other when needed. Thomas Bell was in the middle of this situation in the “canyon of disaster.”

Only Bell and Variawa progressed to stage six. However, suspension damage to their truck prohibited Variawa from progressing past stage eight.

The start of stage nine was marked by a major road accident for Bell and McMurren. After a quick hospital visit to declare Bell fit to continue, and a repair to the right wheel and upright, they took a late start. They finished the ninth stage dramatically, with only one headlight and one front

brake caliper functioning – not enough to stop them. Bell and McMurren made it to the finish, placing in the top 30% of the auto category.

"As the dust eventually starts to settle here at the 2019 Dakar I managed to take some time out to reflect on our journey," said Marsh. "Our proudly South African built T1 Nissan Navara, which is regarded as one of the best-manufactured solid axle race cars in the world, has competed in the Dakar, the toughest motorsport event on the planet, a total of eight times. We've successfully finished this grueling event six of these occasions, with an incredible record of completing 99 of the total 104 stages started, and at all times behind the wheel of amateurs – businessmen with a sense of adventure. I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of our team at Red-Lined Motoring Adventure. We are a small business that, together with the Nissan brand, has helped amateurs from around the world make their Dakar dreams come true."

<https://www.facebook.com/thomas.bell.14811692/videos/2202233013366120/>

"As it all starts to sink in that Dakar 2019 is done and dusted, and we won that finish, this short clip shows how it feels, despite all odds, to fulfill a dream and live the hard journey of the bitter sweet Dakar adventure." – Thomas Bell

<https://www.facebook.com/terence.marsh.94/videos/1276358812504315/>

Thomas Edward Bell and Patrick McMurren during the final stage of the grueling 2019 Dakar as they powered their way to a debut finish of the world's toughest motorsport event in their Red-Lined Motoring Adventure built T1 Nissan Navara.

<https://www.facebook.com/dakar/videos/360482258082561/>

A competition of extremes, the Dakar is an off-road race that brings together leading rally raid drivers and adventurers from around the world. Racing alongside professional teams, amateur competitors also come to experience one of the world's greatest adventures on either a bike or a quad, or in a car or truck. Formerly known as the Paris-Dakar, the race began in 1977 with the motto: "A challenge for those who go. A dream for those who stay behind!"

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