

Le 4L Trophy raconté par les équipages

Written by Romain

Wednesday, 06 August 2008 13:05 - Last Updated Friday, 29 August 2008 08:24

Copy of the email sent by Crew 749 of the 11th Rally on 5 August 2008

Hi, Elodie here – driver for Crew 749 in the 2008 Rally.

Just a quick message from students who participated in the Raid 4L Trophy™ 2008.

I really think you ought to put it on the website. Firstly, to conjure up all those unforgettable memories for those who have already done it. And secondly, to let future participants know that once they've done the rally, their life will never be the same again ...

Nearly six months after the 2008 rally, I'd like to thank you again for this amazing and unforgettable adventure!

Elodie

'You know you've taken part in the Raid 4L Trophy™ when:

- you really jam on the breaks the first time you drive something other than a 4L...
- you put the windscreen-wipers on full in your parents' car when in fact you meant to use the indicator... and meanwhile you're trying to figure out how to switch on the headlights!
- you start getting used again to indicators being on the left... and you want to switch them off after the bend!
- you really have been to Larache – you toot your horn madly when you see another 4L + flash your headlights, do the police siren, sing the cucaracha and all the rest of it!

- a pedestrian crossing the motorway no longer surprises you (and neither does a moped or a goat going the wrong way down the road!)
- you know what dust really tastes like – you appreciate the true value of a shower and a bed... (no comment)
- "GIVE ME A PEN" has become a cult phrase which you love using
- you go home and you say: 'What the hell am I doing here? What's with this bloody rain? I wanna go back there. It was all over too quickly'. – you can't believe petrol costs 1.5€ in France
- you know that the briefings never happen on time and that Jean-Jacques is something of a comic
- nasty oued, aim for the antenna, bearing 150°, mind the camel, let's find a better route and a whole load of other directions come back to you when you're daydreaming in a traffic jam
- you suddenly feel the need to get your compass out when you're lost in the middle of the countryside
- you say hello to all the kids you pass in the street when you're driving along...
- you miss mint tea and even waking up in the middle of a 1,000 4Ls and Quechua tents
- you find yourself about to check the oil and fluid levels of your car every morning before you leave...
- you always have a water-pump, a radiator and a few fan belts in the boot of your car
- you haggle for a minimum of 15 minutes before buying (ah! the souk...)
- even after you've washed your hair ten times, there's still sand in it
- you've been desperately looking for a bush for 15 minutes or more...

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- you can show off because you recognise the sound of a fan belt and you've learnt how to change a tyre...
 - there's a tear in your eye when you look again at the photos of the other crews...
 - you know what sleeping on the pebbles in Enjil is like!
 - you search desperately for the gear-stick when you're driving
 - the chickens pecking away on the motorway hard shoulder no longer surprise you...
 - you feel the urge to get out the boards as soon as you encounter an unmade road in the countryside...
 - you never drive anywhere without your jerrycan
 - you put a drop of petrol on your hand and you rub it to make sure there isn't any water in it before you fill up at the petrol station
 - if you scrape the ground or a kerb in a new car, it doesn't bother you – you've seen a lot worse
 - the word cylinder head gasket no longer holds any fear for you!
 - you start cutting all the corners to gain a few kilometres, even though you're no longer in the Moroccan desert
 - sleeping in your car is par for the course
 - driving for 24 hours straight is no longer an impossibility, because you've already done it
 - you really want to do it again next year!!!!!!!!!!!!
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- you've spent 3 hours looking for a pit and an antenna in the desert without finding anything
 - you forget to change up into fifth gear because you've forgotten that newer cars have 5 gears!
 - you've already raced a camel in the middle of the desert...
 - you feel like you're going 200 kilometres an hour when in fact you're doing 80 off-road between Merzouga and Timerzif - you go ONTO the beach in the car and then you look for the sand-boards!
 - you look for the choke on your Clio diesel
 - you've raced along the motorway at 130 kmph with your foot to the floor
 - you sleep in a tent for two seconds and then fold up a hundred in the morning
 - you suddenly accelerate in your lovely car, in a vain attempt to recreate the sensation you had when you were driving at 40kmph over pebbles in your 4L ...
 - not a day goes by without you thinking about it - you notice that far fewer stars are visible in France than in Morocco - it makes you think when a Berber says to you: 'you may have watches, but we have time...'
 - you try telling people about your adventure and you end up saying: 'some things you can talk about and other things you have to experience...'

Elodie, Crew 749 of the 11th rally