



CROSS COUNTRY RALLY
| WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

419_MAGGIO_08 SAN TEODORO_SARDEGNA_ITALY

One stage to go: David Casteu is the today's winner and Despre is still leading the race. But...

San Teodoro, 8 maggio 2008.

One more beautiful stage, still very difficult, mainly because of the navigation problems that the rider encountered. Same damned navigation, but at this time, consequences can inspire the development of different strategies. That's one of the exclusivities of this first Cross Country Rally date. The facts: almost 300 kilometers, between the village of Fonni and the city of Arbatax. From the deep central valleys of Sardinia to the fresh calmness of the sea. And two special tests, 39 and 51 km long.

Two winners, two "admirals" in the difficult job of navigating the today's new world route: Chilean Francisco Lopez and French David Casteu. Casteu is also the winner of the stage, and Cyril Despres is still the leader of the race. But something has changed today, something that can foresee a completely different situation at the end of the race.

Look at the leader. Today Despres was a little nervous. Maybe because of his high sense of responsibility (but maybe because of the problems he had to face with his trip computer). Anyway he has to confirm his leadership of the "last" Dakar, and also that of this one never done. To win the Sardegna Rally Race could be a good opportunity for him to renew his high class reputation.

But. Behind the French, now the situation is a little bit different. Until yesterday his main competitor was a rider, even if strong, almost completely unknown on the international scene, Italian Alex Zanotti. Tomorrow the first two riders at the start will be David Casteu, as the winner of the stage, and Matteo Graziani. The Italian is undoubtedly one of the best specialist in this kind of "nervous" races. Together with Casteu, the two could make a big difference, if only they will decide to face the long stage as a team, and cooperate in order to recover the six minutes of gap and successfully fight Cyril Despres. By the same way, some pressure could occur, and the French, even if alone, will be forced to attack. Maybe not the best way to afford the final leg of the Sardinian Rally.

Finally we only have to wait for some hours more, for the "verdict" of the "forum" of San Teodoro, and the "judge" is still the same, the timekeeper. Which one of the three talented champions will be the winner? An answer that requires a presuppose. That one of this great, uncertain and thrilling six days race named Sardegna Rally Race.