



3rd Place for Gerard de Rooy; he increases his lead over the competition. Hans takes the 8th place in a long and fast 7th stage.

“It’s important to stay sharp during these kind of stages and to be careful with your tires and brakes. Every stone you can avoid is an advantage. We saw Marcel van Vliet after 250 km’s with a flat tyre, so we knew it would be a heavy day. If you lose ground in a stage like today, it’s over. Overtaking on such a narrow track is a perilous undertaking for the trucks,” says Gerard who’s quite satisfied with the outcome of the 7th stage.

From the rankings at the waypoints we could already conclude that the Special from Salta to Salta over 524 km’s was a fast one with minor differences. Last year’s winner Nikolaev is on the lead from the first kilometre onwards and during the first 300 km’s Sotnikov and Gerard are only seconds behind him. In the 2nd part of the Special, Nikolaev increases his lead and finally wins the stage, being 2:55 minutes ahead of his team mate Sotnikov. Gerard takes a good 3rd place at 3:49 minutes. Yesterdays winner, Peter Versluis, finished 4th at 8:04 minutes. More important for the general rankings is the disappointing result of Karginov who finished 7th, 8:45 minutes behind Gerard who’s still the leader.

Hans Stacey takes the 8th place, 15:10 behind the winner of the day. The fast service trucks were well matched and finished brotherly at a 15th and 16th place, 19:48 (Jo) and 20:43 (Pep) minutes behind Nikolaev.

In the general rankings it’s the IVECO Powerstar from Gerard de Rooy who defends his position with a great deal of verve. He’s now 37:50 minutes ahead of Karginov. The 3rd place is for Nikolaev who’s 1:03:08 hours behind, followed by another KAMAZ-pilot, Sotnikov at 1:21:46 hour.

Hans Stacey takes the 5th place in the general rankings but feels Ales Loprais breathing down his neck; the difference between them is only 22 seconds, for the time being in favour of the IVECO Trakker.

Pep Vila follows at the 7th place but is almost half an hour behind Hans Stacey and Ales Loprais. Jo Adua keeps the entire team Petronas – de Rooy – Iveco with his 12th place together in the top of the rankings.

If we look at the order of ranking of the truck brands, we see 4 KAMAZ trucks, 3 IVECO’s, 2 MAN’s and a TATRA in the top-10.

After the Salta stage we leave the rally-minded Argentinian country and we are going to cross the Andes, heading for Chile. The 8th Stage goes from Salta to Calama with a total length of 824 km’s. It will be a long liaison of 522 km’s, starting early as they need quite some time at the border between both South American countries. The first day on Chilean grounds starts with a Special of 302 km’s, again across rocky grounds. The trucks will bring up the rear and will start after the cars.

It will be a cloudy, dry day with a temperature of 25 degrees Celsius and almost windless.

Time schedule Special – Day 8 (GMT +1)

Start of the trucks	13:58 hours	(17:58 hours)
Gerard (501)	14:02 hours	(18:02 hours)
Hans (507)	14:09 hours	(18:09 hours)
Jo (520)	14:14 hours	(18:14 hours)
Pep (516)	14:15 hours	(18:15 hours)

To be continued

