



Final preparations in Germany

- **Team-Building Days in Germany's Allgäu region**
- **Technical training in the team headquarters in Trebur**

Just 31 more days to go until the Dakar will be started in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Consequently, the entire X-raid team is working flat out to complete the final preparations for the unique event. On 19th November, all the vehicles were taken to the French seaport Le Havre to then be shipped to Argentina. Afterwards, the MINI ALL4 Racing drivers and co-drivers took centre stage. At first they spent several team-building days in Germany's Allgäu region and right afterwards, the pairings travelled to X-raid's workshop in Trebur – to practice working on the cars. There, they trained and practiced on the cars to be able to change some parts of the MINI ALL4 Racing themselves if doing so should prove to be necessary.

You just can't contest the Dakar on your own – and this begins in the cockpit: Driver and co-driver have to cooperate for two weeks. But it also can happen that you need the help of another crew. After all, the competitors are the only ones who may help one another during the special stages. To offer the drivers and co-drivers the opportunity to get to know each other better, the X-raid team organized some 'Team Building Days' in the Allgäu under the guidance of Annett Fischer.

In addition to sports team-building activities such as exercises in a high-rope course, they also had to demonstrate their skills in cooking jointly. So, 60 guests enjoyed a very special evening in the lodge in Pfronten. A part of the drivers and co-drivers created a three-course meal while the others attended to the guests. The crew responsible for cooking the meal was supported by German chef Sten Fischer who also has been looking after the teams during several tests and rallies. But the drivers had to purchase all the ingredients and fixings themselves to then also take them to

the lodge at 1510 m. “I like to cook when being at home,” revealed Nani Roma, the 2014 Dakar winner. “But experiencing the stress and effort to cook and arrange the meals for so many people was really interesting.”

Right afterwards, the pairings travelled to Trebur for technical training sessions in the X-raid GmbH workshop. Here, the crews learned and practiced executing repair works on the MINI ALL4 Racing. “Even if you have been racing the car for years, practicing all the possible repair works again and again is of major importance,” underlined Michel Périn, the navigator of Mikko Hirvonen, “as you tend to forget things, over the course of the year.” All the racing cars are equipped with spare parts and tools to offer the crews to work on the car themselves, in the case of damage. So, they don’t have to wait for one of the race trucks who often follow several hours behind. In addition, the team’s mechanics mustn’t work on the cars during the special stages as this would result in immediate disqualification.

Between Christmas and New Year, the team members will travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina where they may pick up the cars in the harbour in late December. After a short shake down, the cars will have to pass the technical scrutineering and the administrative approval procedure on 31st December and 01st January. And then, on 02nd January, the cars will roll over the start podium to kick off the 2016 Dakar.