**HENNIE’S ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO BACK DAKAR**

*Dakar 2024 proving a tough nut for TreasuryONE Motorsport*

South African Dakar underdogs, TreasuryONE Motorsport duo Hennie de Klerk and Juan Möhr endured another tough day on the 2024 race’s short 118 km fifth stage to Shubayatah deep in the Empty Quarter in the Arabian Desert on Wednesday. An awkward landing over a dune early in the day caused mechanical damage, which saw the Pretoria duo again disconnect the front axle of their 4x4 TreasuryONE Hilux and drive out of the dunes in rear drive only.

“The car landed hard on one side after being flicked as we crested a rise early in the dune stage and the heavy landing hurt a drive shaft,” Hennie de Klerk explained. “So we were once again forced to disconnect the front axle and drive the rest of the day through dunes and thick sand in rear drive only. That’s of course not ideal, so let’s just say it was a struggle, but we made it home and we are here to fight another day!”

The team’s challenges started when they suffered a Prologue penalty to see them start at the back on Saturday. They fought back on Sunday only to drop well back again with a propshaft issue early Monday. Tuesday brought good progress, but Wednesday was once again a fight. “It’s been a bit of a one step forward, two steps back Dakar for us, so the objective has become more one of survival, then performance. Getting through Thursday and Friday’s mad Chrono stage is crucial if we want to start the second week on the front foot.

“The Chrono stage is a huge mystery,” Hennie admitted. “We must stop at the one of seven camps we are closest to in the middle of the desert at 4 pm today and each of us has a tent, a rug and a sleeping bag and a ration pack. There’s no service, but crews are allowed to help each other, and we have zero contact with the other camps or the outside world. We also start on full tanks with 450 litres of fuel aboard and will use more than 100 litres per hundred in the dunes, so this is no ordinary stage!

“We then set off for the balance of the 549 km to the finish of the stage on Friday morning, with the prospect of Saturday’s rest day after that. The plan is to get the TreasuryONE Hilux to Riyadh, where we can regroup. It’s been a huge challenge every second of every day, but we are loving it. See you in Riyadh!”