

4L Trophy 2018: 15 – 25 February

Humanitarian action – competition – joint endeavour !

4L
TROPHY

Desert Adventure!



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15 to 25 February 2018

"The Devils in 4L"

For this 21st edition, a new team will represent the colors of ERI, **Guillaume Roth** and **Julien Deffay**, both 22 years old and coming from Stenay in Meuse.

Our team called "The Devils in 4L" has the number **1445** and the 4L is a van model.

In partnership with the Enfants du Désert foundation and the French Red Cross, the rally promises unforgettable memories.



TEAM N° 1445
SPONSORED BY ERI



Julien DEFFAY



Guillaume ROTH

But before memories... preparing the 4L:

The car has had a makeover: it's been painted a bright ERI red and adorned in stickers. To maximise the chances of winning, our drivers have willingly given up their own time to carry out the mechanical checks as well as some of the preparations and repairs:

- 4L sanded down before painting
- Front wheel axle unit repaired
- Front brakes repaired
- Gear box silent block replaced
- New floor and reinforcements welded
- Protective plates fitted on the front underside of the 4L
- Roof rack (for spare tyres) fitted
- LED bar fitted for long-distance lighting
- Seats replaced
- Fuel tank, bumpers, mirrors and door handles checked and refitted.

The replacement of the suspension and rear brakes was left to a mechanic.

The only thing now left to do is race.

○ Sunday 11 – Monday 12 February

We've hit the road!

The starting point is Stenay (a small town in the department of Meuse). We cover about 400 km before spending the night on an Auchan supermarket/Norauto garage car park with a broken idler pulley.



The entire day is spent driving to ERI Bancaire in Geneva. We get there very late. We were meant to meet at midday. After a forced stop the day before for mechanical reasons, we then lose time because of the snow!! (2 metres on both sides of the road in places!!) We visit the ERI offices and pick up the equipment and supplies for the Enfants du Désert foundation. Relaxing evening in a hotel in France. Tomorrow we head for Biarritz!



A full day on the road to cover as much of the not-so insignificant 900 km to Biarritz as possible. An opportunity to visit the south of France a little!

Tuesday 13 – Wednesday 14 February



Arrival into Biarritz, the starting village. Time for a quick look around before the different checks scheduled for the following morning.

However, some of the organisers stop us just as we're setting off at 4pm. They want to do the checks now. After 1.5 hours of checks we're free to go. At least we can sleep longer tomorrow morning! Relaxing evening spent at a hotel.





Back to the starting village for the first in a long series of daily briefings. The cars are counted and then we all take to our 4Ls, ready to cross Spain in just over a day!

Minor scare this morning when we spot one of the rear wheels rubbing against the chassis! If there's a bend in the body of the car, our Raid is over! We stop at a Renault garage in Merida. To our great relief it's just a tyre. The structure has been damaged while on the road. Evening arrival into Algeciras for our first bivouac.



Thursday 15 – Friday 16 February ●

Saturday 17 – Sunday 18 February

We take advantage of today to relax and get to know our bivouac neighbours, who subsequently become our travel buddies! The rest is very important as we'll be up very early tomorrow at 2 am to get the ferry!



We board the ferry at 4 am. Once the customs' and administrative formalities are completed, 4L competitors can be found strewn all over the boat trying to get some sleep. And finally we arrive into Morocco! The evening is spent at altitude as we arrive into Boulajoul, near the Atlas mountain range. Over night, the temperatures drop very very low (Brrr!)



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Monday 19 – Tuesday 20 February

We hit the road to Merzouga and cross the Atlas mountain range. High up, we encounter plateaus and the scenery is spectacular! The 4L is not very fast uphill, but it perseveres and doesn't break down. Arrival into Merzouga in the evening.



First leg in the desert: the programme features orientation and sand pits. Our 4L does not get stuck. We head back to the bivouac to relax with friends before the daily briefing.

Wednesday 21 February

Second leg in the desert. Some crossing challenges not to mention the sand pits! ERI's 4L is invincible! We stop nonetheless to push some fellow racers. Solidarity first and foremost! And even with four wheels in the sand, our car effortlessly rejoins the race, whereas the other teams need people to push! Yes!



● Thursday 22 February

First day of the marathon starting in Merzouga. Sand, rocks and more sand! All the competitors, cars and equipment are covered in sand. The days without showering are beginning to affect moral. Roll on tomorrow! We bivouac in the middle of the desert with our travel companions.



Friday 23 February

We make an early start to finish the marathon leg and in doing so clear the Tichka pass (an exhausting 2-hour journey). We get to Marrakech around 4.30 pm, hand in our beacon and get the address of our 4-star hotel. We get the entry card to our suite which is being paid for by the organisation (THE SHOWER is a dream!!!). A well-deserved evening's rest.



● Saturday 24 February



A rest day in Marrakech. We take advantage of the benefits of our suite and hotel. Later on, there's an awards' ceremony, meal and show, and finally a party at «Chez Ali».

Sunday 25 February ●



Departure from Marrakech. The evening before boarding the ferry we notice that the idler pulley bearing is on the verge of breaking and snapping the drive belt. We get to Tangier taking it very easy. The aim, at all costs, is to make Europe tonight around 1.30. We spend the night in Algeciras, the location of our first bivouac.



Monday 26 – Tuesday 27 February



The idler pulley bearing is replaced at a Renault garage at 8 am. We help some of the other teams on the car parks who need a push to get started. We get to the outskirts of Madrid early evening. Our target: the French border before 2am.



Back to Stenay and some well-earned rest. Our minds are teeming with images, memories and emotions!



The 2018 adventure is over!

Ranking of our team n°1455 on 1500 cars:

471st Boulajoul to Merzouga leg

682nd Erg Chebbi leg

961st Oued Ziz leg

605th Marathon leg

635th in the final standings



SEE YOU NEXT YEAR FOR THE 4L TROPHY 2019!