

Jean-Pierre Jacobs

# Full-Throttle Through Central Europe

**This man is unstoppable: Brenntag employee Jean-Pierre Jacobs from the Netherlands, who as *together* readers will recall has participated twice in the Dakar Rally, competed in the Central Europe Rally 2008 in late April. We hope you enjoy his exciting report.**

"As a result of international political tension and direct threats against the race from terrorist organizations, the 2008 Dakar Rally had to be completely cancelled for the first time in its history. This was a major disappointment for the Bison Rally Team, especially considering that the race car bearing the number 1, in which I ride as navigator, had already been approved for start by FIA experts. The Bison Rally Team consists of ten persons, two race cars, one service truck and an additional all-terrain assistance vehicle.

We decided to participate in the 'Central Europe Rally 2008' through Hungary and Romania instead. The technically demanding route leads from the Hungarian capital of Budapest to Lake Balaton, occasionally crossing over into Romania. Nearly half of the total distance of 3,000 kilometers was run in special stages.

After the first stage we arrived in Romania, where weather and road conditions were much more extreme than in Hungary. Stone pavement alternated with mud along the narrow roadways, and we even encountered snow. We also faced technical problems, including two flat tires, electrical problems and, of greatest

concern, serious issues with the brakes. Due to the continuous problems with our brakes, we landed in a river on day three of the rally. It took us until 8 p.m. to recover the car and return to camp. We worked the entire night repairing the car and finished just one hour before the next day's start!

The following three days our performance was above average. During the six specials we consistently finished among the top amateurs. This is a strong indication of how competitive the team and our car are."

## Preparing For Dakar 2009

The team will work very hard in the coming months to prepare the car, a Desert Warrior with a BMW diesel engine, for Dakar 2009. In contrast to previous years, the 2009 event (January 3-18) will take place along an alternative route in South America (Argentina & Chile). The start and end will be in the Argentinean capital of Buenos Aires. Drivers must negotiate a distance of some 9,000 km, including a crossing of the Andes. The return trip will then lead them across the Atacama Desert and through the Argentinean provinces of Catamarca, Rioja and Córdoba.

The together editorial team looks

forward to the next edition of this report and wishes good luck to Jean-Pierre and his team! ♦

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**Further information:**

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Brenntag engineer Jean-Pierre Jacobs in his racing suit.

The Bison Rally Team put the pedal to the metal in the Central Europe Rally 2008.