



SOLIDARITY

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If you could combine in a single experience an unbridled passion for the world of motoring, which encouraged your entrepreneurial ability to live a great adventure through the desert dunes while causing a positive impact on disadvantaged communities, would you sign up? The answer of the Andorran Keanu Rousse and the French Samuel Franken was yes, since they are currently participating in the Rallye Solidaire Uniraid, an adventure trip to Morocco that allows you to live an unforgettable experience on four wheels that (almost) you have built yourself while giving opportunities and resources to disadvantaged people in the African country. The Rallye Solidaire Uniraid is a solidarity rally for students through six stages that complete 3,500 km, making a circle across the country starting and ending in the city of Tangier, routes with two-wheel drive cars and more of 20 years loaded with solidarity material that will be delivered to different communities on the way to developing the territory. Keanu Rousse, founder and driver of the KS Racing Team (KSRT) competition team, tells us what this particular and fast-paced experience is, how a car rally combines with solidarity and development aid and how it was his preparation before traveling to Morocco to live an experience that promises to be unforgettable.

Much more than a rally

This rally is designed for students to harness the participants' passion for motoring to make a positive impact in the less developed communities of Morocco, while encouraging its riders to foster their entrepreneurial spirit. This test, which already has 13 years of existence, encourages its participants to look for a two-wheel drive car over 20 years old, the compilation of solidarity material to give to the different recipient communities and different forms of financing through, for example, sponsors.

Rousse explains that when he decided to sign up, he was in Canada, where he is currently pursuing his MBA in international

When passion for motoring, adventure and solidarity meet

Keanu Rousse and Samuel Franken participate in the Rallye Solidaire Uniraid in Morocco to enjoy the world of motoring and boost their entrepreneurship while helping communities in need



KS RACING TEAM



RALLIE SOLIDAIRE UNIRAID/@MARTIBECH

relations. The Andorran and his friend «we have been passionate about cars since childhood and best friends since childhood, we are always talking about cars. Then, through newspaper social networks, I saw the Uniraid in an advertisement. I informed myself and said to my friend: Yes or what?, and the rest is history. Rousse and Franken began preparations to embark on this adventure.

First, they had to pay a registration fee of 2,000 euros and then get a car that would take them across the difficult Moroccan terrain while meeting a series of requirements from the organization. The vehicle had to be over 20 years old and cannot be a 4x4. After a first attempt with a Peugeot 306 that suffered an engine failure that made it unviable, the KSRT managed to obtain and adapt a 1998 Peugeot 205 which will be its workhorse in this great adventure.

Entrepreneurship as a driving force

In order to be able to gather all the necessary elements involved in participating in this exciting event, it is necessary to awaken the spirit of entrepreneurship in oneself, since it is necessary to look for sponsors and to have to solve all the obstacles that can be found before arriving in Morocco as the great difficulties that are waiting for the pilots in the irregular terrains of the Sahara or the Atlas. In Rousse's words, «they force you to find your own life, to undertake». The KSRT has had to overcome many difficulties to be able to put its Peugeot on Moroccan roads in this search for funding. «We have sent 150 emails (to collect sponsors) and less than half have responded. Then you have to look for everything yourself and I find this spirit of entrepreneurship, which they seek to force you to do, very motivating. And adding the solidarity aspect, which is incredible to be able to help people, especially children among them, and to be able to go there and live this experience with the passion for motoring» is a truly unique adventure and experience and fast-paced, as the KSRT pilot explains. Thanks to their efforts and knowing how to explain the great value of this project, the KS Racing Team has the support of 11 sponsors. Car Center Andorra, Comerci-

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al Pont, DSF Import, Viva La Vie, Anliecarns, Kleos Premium Services, Caritas Andorrana, Illusions Solidaires, Pales Reformes, La Truck Andorra and EcoRentador Les Valls have been the entities and companies that have trusted and committed to this solidarity project of the motoring world and the KSRT team.

The solidarity impact

The combination of passion for motoring, the challenge of solving one's own the acquisition of materials and funds by young students through sponsors, and the exciting adventure of traveling across a whole country through mountains and deserts, results in an important output as is the positive impact on developing communities rooted in the spirit of solidarity that drives this rally. The pilots will travel all over Morocco passing through several Check Points where the teams will deliver the solidarity material to different communities that need more resources in addition to interacting and getting to know their culture and situation better. Rousse explains that «I find it really positive to understand how the people in the communities we will visit live their circumstances. Regarding the cultural aspect, I think it enriches you personally and even professionally and for the country as well. But this notion of being able to help people in this way I find it incredible», because on the one hand, it is fun and exciting for the pilots at the same time as it is useful for disadvantaged people. The communities they will visit on their adventure are far from large urban centers like Casablanca or Marrakesh and «are small towns where access is very limited,

and so are resources. They also experienced the earthquake of 2023 and this also had an impact on this problem. And we are in Morocco and there is a real poverty of the population and people who find difficult to eat". In order to help these communities in need of different types of resources, the KSRT team will contribute 70 kg of different items that will be donated to Moroccan villages. Of these 70 kg, the KSRT Peugeot will carry between 35 and 40 kg during its journey, while the rest will be distributed by the organization of the event. This material is made up of very varied objects such as toys and stuffed animals, to facilitate the leisure of boys and girls, as well as school material such as notebooks so that they can have access to education and have optimal development. This material has been provided thanks to Caritas Andorrana and the Spanish NGO, Il.lusions Solidaries.

Road to adventure

The team is about to start its great adventure through Africa and the motivation to overcome the challenges that this expedition will entail is increasing. Before leaving the Principality to set course for Tangier, Rousse declared that «I know we will encounter difficulties because, obviously, it is a car that is 30 years old. The routes are very complex, we pass through rivers and the snow of the Atlas, we go through the sand of the Sahara and there are conditions that are not optimal. But I think that, with perseverance, and if we apply ourselves and don't basically skimp, we will achieve it». ≡



►► Images of the 2023 edition. On the right, the caravan of participating cars. Below, the delivery of material to boys and girls in Morocco.