

VareseNews

In Cassinetta we work to make “Dakar dream” come true

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Cagiva and Husqvarna are brands that are not related anymore: the former stayed under the aegis of the MV Agusta group, whereas the latter passed to the BMW family. Cagiva is based in Schiranna (VA), Husqvarna in Cassinetta but many years of sports history cannot be washed away by the latest commercial events.

Husqvarna's recent success at the Pharaohs' Rally has revived the memories of Cagiva's victories in the Paris-Dakar rally in the 1990s among the people from Varese (and all Italians). The Dakar rally moved from Africa to South America a few years ago, but it is still the world's most important raid.

And this is indeed the aim of Team Husqvarna, which will try to win the Moroccan Rally in the next few days to prepare for the South American event. Martino Bianchi (pictured in the middle), Husqvarna sports director, confirms this. He is going to follow the three bikes of German team Speedbrain which is going to work together with Husqvarna.

“The victory at the Pharaohs' Rally is something absolutely new for our brand. We had already won some rallies in Europe, but African races are different,” Bianchi said. The Egyptian rally is the second most important event after Dakar. The Moroccan one is just as important, because it is the nearest to the South American event. This is why we will try to make our best and to test our bikes as much as we can.”

In Morocco, all the three Husqvarna pilots will be given the TE 449 RR Dakar model, the bike that in the Pharaohs' Rally was only given to Joan Barreda (photo on the right) that won the rally under the shadow of the pyramids. “Now also Paulo Goncalves and the Australian Mathew Fish will have them: their trials will be fundamental for verifying the reliability of the tools”. Bianchi reveals also on which parts of the motorbike technicians have intervened to better prepare the TE 449 RR on dunes and desert tracks. “We have worked on the bike, trying to optimise as best as possible the centre of mass but also adding some horsepower to the engine. Additionally we have retouched the aerodynamics: from the windscreen to the less visible parts, such as the ducts. The final version of the motorbike will be presented in Milan, the 13th November and also in Cassinetta at the start of December”.

The Dakar Operation has already begun, also if we are lacking new pilots: “It is true,” continues Bianchi, “because to Barreda, Goncalves and Fish we will add another man of high level, his name however is top secret. Joan should be the main point also because of the results that he has achieved, but Paulo and this new member can play important cards. Mathew instead will be the classic “water bearer”, a luxury that has to

be ready in case of need.”

In Dakar the adversary to beat will be the KTM the dominated the race in 2001 (here [the golden dawn](#) amongst the motors): “The Austrian squad is without doubt the main rival and the favourite, but also Honda has returned to furnish an important squad with a motorbike that is new from top to bottom. I believe that the objective of Husqvara, for this year, is to stand on the podium: in 2012 Barreda was 11th and won a stage. Now we will try to point higher despite the high competitiveness that, on the other hand, is a good sign in a moment that isn't simple for our sector.”

On the personal level Bianchi has already lived winning experience on the mythical rally at the start of the year. His experience closes the circle that we opened at the start of this article, considering that Martino works in the Cagiva team that won in 1994 with Edi Orioli (in the photo): “It was an enormous satisfaction, because we managed to bet the giant Japanese rivals with a motorbike Made in Italy and Made in Varese. I was in Yamaha during the times of the first success of Edi and Cagiva, then I worked with them and it was stupendous. The memories that I have of Africa are splendid: the Dakar was a true adventure to fight for in a country with an incredible charm. I don't know if in South America it will be the same, the nostalgia for African remains stuck to you.”

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