



Dakar 2012, Stage 5

Chilecito – Fiambala

416 km in total, 265 km special test (shortened to 186)

## Team result keeps improving

Overnight rain before the start of stage five gave the organisers extra work. Some areas in the second part of the special test were flooded and made the course dangerous. The special had to be shortened to 186 kilometres. Not all went perfect today for the Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, but altogether the German-Italian squad had a decent Thursday, with Paulo Goncalves improving to fifth in the standings and Joan Barreda earning the team's third podium.

The stage itself was tricky, as Goncalves found out at the beginning of the special test. The Portuguese crashed at a section where a new road is being built. The course was not well marked with deep ditches.

Goncalves crashed into one of them and was lucky not to injure himself. His bike was okay also. Fellow competitor Frans Verhoeven was less lucky and damaged his machine. The following riders were able to take advantage because they now got warned. Paulo Goncalves: "I was lucky not to get hurt. Thanks God I was able to continue."

He later had to search for Checkpoint 2 like other riders. Goncalves still managed to finish the day in tenth position and improve in the standings. Teammate Joan Barreda was one of many riders who struggled with the navigation. The young Spaniard rode error-free almost all day. He only had some trouble at a checkpoint after taking the wrong way. Barreda had to lift his bike over a fence with difficulty. He still took his second podium of the rally.

Brasil's Zé Hélio enjoyed another solid stage. He only had to deal with early dust, following those who started before him. Zé Hélio improved to 16th in the ranks. Jose Manuel Pellicer had one minor crash, and finished the day around the top twenty.

The coming night asks for a spectacular Andes crossing. The riders will climb up to 4,700 metres altitude and are certain to face temperatures below the freezing point. Right now it's unusually cold in the region and there might even be snow. A contrast awaits the field once in Chile, namely the Atacama desert. First the ground will be hard, then sandy through the dunes of Copiapó. Tomorrow's special test is 247 kilometres long.





1. Cyril Despres (FRA) KTM, 2:28:33 hrs
2. Marc Coma (SPA) KTM, 1:41 min behind
3. Joan Barreda (SPA) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 12:42
4. Stefan Svitko (SVK) KTM, 13:55
5. Jordi Viladoms (SPA) KTM, 14:17
10. Paulo Goncalves (POR) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 19:31
19. Zé Hélio (BRA) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 28:20
21. Jose Manuel Pellicer (SPA) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 30:47

## Overall standings

1. Despres, 14:19:00 hrs
2. Coma, 9:51 min behind
3. Helder Rodrigues (POR) Yamaha, 47:56
4. Francisco Lopez (CHI) Aprilia, 49:00
5. Paulo Goncalves (POR) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 54:47
16. Zé Hélio (BRA) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 1:44:17
30. Jose Manuel Pellicer (SPA) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 3:00:56
32. Joan Barreda (SPA) Husqvarna Rallye Team by Speedbrain, 3:13:26

more information: <http://racing.speedbrain.de>

