

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Australian Off-Road Racer Faces His Greatest Challenge Yet**

While most people are celebrating on New Year's Eve, Albury based motorcycle racer Andrew Houlihan will be leaving Australia to embark on the toughest challenge so far in his international off-road racing career.

Andrew will be travelling to Europe and then on to Africa to compete in the 2020 Africa ECO Race, a gruelling 6,000 km rally held over 14 days in early January.

He will be competing as part of the Swiss based Nomadas team, and for the first time will be racing on his Coca Cola Energy **KTM 450 Factory Rallye** bike.

His recent successes - 27th overall in the 2019 Hispania Rally and 9th in the 2019 Rally Du Maroc Enduro Cup - have also attracted some new sponsors.

Despite his extensive off-road racing experience, Andrew says this rally is going to be his toughest challenge yet.

*"Whilst the Dakar Rally is the best known rally in the world, the Africa ECO Race is often referred to as the REAL race to Dakar as it retraces much of the old Paris-Dakar route and finishes at the original end point in Dakar, Senegal."*

*"And we travel through some of the toughest terrain in the world on the way."*

The Africa ECO Race started in 2009 after fears of a terrorist attack in Mauritania caused the cancellation of the 2008 Dakar, and the subsequent move of that event to South America.

The idea was to create a new event for those who wanted to live the real Dakar spirit.

Now in its 12th edition, the Africa ECO Race is recognised as a prestigious international rally. This year, it has attracted record entry levels including many of the top international rally teams.

Starting under lights in Monaco on the 4th January 2020, competitors will travel to the port of Savona in Italy to board a ferry.

For 2 days and nights they will be able to socialise with other teams before arriving in Tangier in the early hours of the 7th of January 2020.

Then the hard work begins – racing through the mind-blowing landscapes of Morocco, Western Sahara, Mauritania and Senegal where the finishers will stand proudly on the famed podium at "Lac Rose" on the 19th of January 2020.

Information about the event and daily reports on Andrew's progress will be posted to his new website - [roadtodakar.com.au](http://roadtodakar.com.au).

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