

Fiat for African adventure

Poles have little trouble with car

IAN LITTLE

RESPONDING to the challenge of having passion, determination and a good car, the Polish long distance enduro team of Dominik Stoktosa and Jolanta Czupik left Krakow Poland three months ago to undertake a 70000 kilometre journey of Europe and the African continent.

Driving a diesel powered Fiat 1.3 Cross 4x4 sponsored by Fiat Poland, Benefia Insurance, Kleen-Flo and Selandia Motor Oil, the couple set-off towards Morocco and then on to Mauretania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Angola, Namibia and finally South Africa.

In covering the distance of 32 000 kilometres to Cape Town, Stoktosa who did the driving and Czupik had to cope with 2 000 kilometres of desert and sand conditions not using a navigational system or back-up service team, but working directly from road map calculations.

During their 466 hours of driving on unpa-ved and rutted roads, the couple had to conti-

nually change tyre pressures on the Fiat Panda, only once suffering a puncture, while mechanical gremlins were limited to a starter motor change after the unit got covered in water while crossing one of the many streams encountered outside of Brazzaville in the Congo.

Roads became so impossible to negotiate in Angola that thought was given to calling off the expedition, the combination of flooded roads, mud and loneliness being a difficult experience to overcome, and having to rely on the assistance of helpful truck drivers to pull the small Panda through when bogged down in muddy conditions.

Averaging 67kp/h the Panda recorded a fuel consumption figure of 5.8 litres / 100km, in which time 1831litres were used in 74 days, while total average distance covered per day worked out at 421kilometres.

The couple who resigned their jobs to undertake the marathon journey, left Cape Town earlier this week to complete the second half of their objective which takes them up the East Coast of Africa and on to Europe with another 38 000 kilometres still to come.

