

Land Rover-Sponsored Race2Recovery Team Ready for Start of World's Toughest Rally: The Dakar

Lima, Peru. 4th January 2013. Race2Recovery, the group of predominantly injured soldiers who formed a rally team to raise funds for Forces charities, were today in South America ready to begin their challenge to become the first ever disability team to complete the world's toughest race - the Dakar Rally.

The Land Rover-sponsored team's four Defender-based Wildcat race vehicles will take to the start line in Lima, Peru on Saturday 5th January, signalling the start of 15 days of racing 8500km over extreme mountain and desert terrain that will take them through southern Peru, Argentina and across the border into Chile, where they hope to cross the finish line in Santiago on Sunday 20th January.

Race2Recovery has also received Royal backing when, in November, it became the first ever recipient of a grant from the Endeavour Fund, set up by the Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry.

The Race2Recovery team has rapidly risen to become a fully functioning rally raid team in only 18 months. Originally beginning their campaign with one Land Rover Freelander and a handful of members, the team now totals 28 people with four Wildcat race vehicles and a fleet of support vehicles including a 4x4 truck that will race the course in order to support the race cars, plus 8x8 support trucks and Land Rover Discovery vehicles to help move the support team and mechanical equipment.

In November and December 2012, Race2Recovery underwent training in the Sahara desert delivered by Land Rover's team of off-road experts, providing essential knowledge and experience in the type of terrain the team will be facing over the next 15 days.

The team operates to the motto 'Beyond Injury - Achieving The Extraordinary', and set up its Dakar Rally challenge in order to inspire people who may be injured, ill or facing adversity. Through its racing activity, Race2Recovery has been raising money for Tedworth House Personnel Recovery Centre, one of six Personnel Recovery Centres that have been established as part of the Defence Recovery Capability. The Defence Recovery Capability is an MOD-led initiative in partnership with Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion to ensure wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women have access to the key resources they need as they recover. Donations to the Race2Recovery fundraising campaign can be made at www.race2recovery.com

Speaking from Lima ahead of start of the race, Captain Tony Harris, 31, one of Race2Recovery's rally drivers who is a below-the-knee amputee as a result of injuries suffered while serving in Afghanistan, said: "Having been part of Race2Recovery right from the beginning and having put in so much work, along with the rest of the team, it

feels surreal to finally be in Lima and be hours away from revving up on the start line. There were times this year when we were working day and night on the vehicles, with team members sleeping on the workshop floor before getting up and starting all over again. The way the team has developed in only eighteen months, from a few guys with one Land Rover to a team of 28 with a fleet of race and support vehicles is phenomenal.

"We really want to make all the people who have supported us proud, whether that's family and friends, our sponsors, our extended team and all the public and media who have been so encouraging and have backed us all the way. We're here to enjoy the experience but we're also here as a serious team with a serious goal of getting our four race cars across that finish line. We're proud that our efforts have been able to fundraise for Tedworth House Personnel Recovery Centre, a cause close to mine and the team's hearts, and we urge people to log on to our website and donate."

Race2Recovery Team Manager, Warrant Officer Andrew Taylor, who suffered a serious back injury after being caught in a suicide bomb attack during active service in the Royal Medical Corps, said: "To have been able to see this team grow and progress, in such a short space of time, fills me full of pride. It's been a privilege to work alongside every single one of the team, be they the injured soldiers or the civilian volunteers. The Race2Recovery team is out here in Peru, to start the world's toughest rally raid race, because it deserves to be. We're here amongst the professional, experienced teams and we've been getting a huge amount of attention. It's a very positive message that team are communicating through this challenge - that people can achieve extraordinary things beyond their injuries. Whilst we're getting a huge amount of support out here in South America, we know we're also continuing to get a massive amount of support from back home. It means a lot and the whole team, from race crews to the support crew, will be doing our utmost to complete our challenge of being the first ever disability team to finish the Dakar Rally."

The Race2Recovery team will start the 2013 Dakar on the 5th January and aim to cross the finish line 20 days later covering in excess of 8500 miles. Live updates from the team during their endeavour can be found at: www.race2recovery.com and www.media.landrover.com, on Facebook via searching for "Race2Recovery" and www.facebook.com/landrover or on Twitter: [@race2recovery](https://twitter.com/race2recovery), [@landrover](https://twitter.com/landrover) and [@landroverukpr](https://twitter.com/landroverukpr).

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Editors Note:

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