**Team spirit at work: MEYLE trainees join forces across departments to make participation in the "Dust & Diesel" rally come true**

* **For the "Dust & Diesel" rally the MEYLE junior staff has reconditioned a W124 Mercedes Benz model**
* **Having travelled 3.000 kilometres, the vehicle will be auctioned off to charity at point of destination**

Hamburg, 15 December 2016. The W124 Mercedes Benz model with 200 diesel engine has gone down in the history of German automaking. Designed in the 1990s, this reliable, fuel-efficient and almost indestructible car would keep going for up to one million kilometres and was, at the time, every cab driver's dream come true. "Exactly the car one would need to brave a rally across West Africa" thought 21-year-old Niklas Arndt, business administration trainee at MEYLE – and his idea would soon become reality. He convinced his employer of the project and will be one of the adventurers taking on the "Dust & Diesel" rally challenge to be held 28 December 2016 to 15 January 2017. What makes this project so special is that all trainees at MEYLE have worked together under the expert guidance of the MEYLE engineers to increase the vehicle's robustness using MEYLE premium quality parts. Fitted with particularly durable components, this modern "ship of the desert" is expected to easily meet the challenges along the way from Morocco across Mauritania into Senegal, the final destination, where the car will be auctioned off for a good cause.

For months, the trainees of Hamburg-based family business MEYLE, a manufacturer of premium-grade automotive spare parts, have been buzzing with excitement preparing the "Dust & Diesel" rally project. The trainees in the new central warehouse with its more than 56,000 pallet slots procured the required parts. Then, all MEYLE trainees pitched in to rig the young classic up. Trainees working in the Marketing department at the time produced a video and designed an online communication strategy for social networks, including Facebook. It is, in short, a joint project of the young talents at MEYLE, a family-run business, founded in 1958 and employing some 1000 people worldwide today. MEYLE markets its products in over 120 countries supported by its state-of-the-art logistics centre in Hamburg, Germany, and a worldwide network of local offices and production sites.

"We are very proud of the dedication and the high level of initiative our trainees are showing", admits Marita Schwartze, Member of the Board and Head of HR at MEYLE. "We knew right away that we wanted to give Niklas and his idea our full support and now we can't wait for the rally to start." The company is covering all the costs of the project.

In preparation for the rally, the Mercedes Benz W124 young classic has been fitted with top-grade glow plugs, engine mounts, suspension strut bearings, shock absorbers and control arms – all of which come from the MEYLE product range. But the vehicle also features components from the MEYLE-HD product line, which are engineered in-house to outperform their OE equivalents.

Fitting highest-quality parts is necessary indeed, as the "Dust & Diesel" challenge is considered one of the toughest rallies to tackle. Daily stages range from 100 to 600 kilometres. The bigger cities along the track provide an opportunity to stock up on supplies, get repair work done or just take a break and relax. The rally will be kicked off in the Spanish town of Tarifa, with the teams passing Fès and Marrakesh in Morocco before heading straight for the Sahara desert. Crossing the desert, where the participants can display their off-road driving skills, the route continues on to Nouakchott, capital of Mauritania, on the Atlantic coast. After a total of 18 travel days the field of no more than 25 competing teams will arrive in St. Louis, Senegal, where the sought-after vehicles will be auctioned off for a good cause. The proceedings will go to a German-Mauritanian charity project dedicated to supporting deprived children ([www.aepn.de](http://www.aepn.de/)).

"I'm about to embark on the biggest adventure of my life and I can't imagine what is awaiting me", says Niklas Arndt. "It has been fantastic to see the team spirit grow among us as the project progressed. But above all, I am proud to be part of a company dedicated to supporting and encouraging a project of this kind."

Want to see and hear more from Niklas Arndt and his experiences and thrills along the way? Follow his posts on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/meyle.parts) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/meyle_parts/) where he will be sharing pictures and reports from his journey.

Download our press releases and press pictures from [www.meyle.com](http://www.meyle.com/) or order in electronic file format.

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**About the company**

Under its MEYLE brand, Wulf Gaertner Autoparts AG manufactures and markets a wide range of premium-grade passenger car, van and commercial vehicle spare parts for the independent aftermarket. The MEYLE brand's product lines are **MEYLE-ORIGINAL, MEYLE-HD and MEYLE-PD.**

**Catering for virtually every popular vehicle application the wide range of product supplied by Hamburg-based manufacturer MEYLE features the following products:**

* **MEYLE-ORIGINAL – true to size as the original: This product line includes more than 21,000 top-class parts.**
* **MEYLE PD – taking us to the next level:** This product line features around 1,800 technically refined brake discs and pads distinguished by their enhanced braking performance and cutting-edge coating technology.
* **MEYLE-HD – better than the original: Devised by the company's in-house engineers, the MEYLE-HD line features more than 750 products to cater for thousands of different vehicle models.** Designed to provide **exceptional strength and long service life** MEYLE-HD parts offer **enhanced performance over original-equipment designs.** Unrivalled in quality and durability technically-refined MEYLE-HD parts come with a four-year warranty.

Wulf Gaertner Autoparts AG was founded in 1958 and is headquartered in Hamburg, Germany. The company operates in 120 countries supported by its state-of-the-art logistics centre in Hamburg, Germany, and a worldwide network of local offices and production sites.