Mars rover finishes a Marathon

42km with maxon DC motors: NASA rover Opportunity has travelled the equivalent distance of a Marathon. After spending 11 years on Mars, what was originally planned as a three-month mission unfolded into an incredible success story - and not least for maxon motor, the Swiss drive specialist.

It may not be setting any records for speed, but it certainly is for persistence: after 11 years and two months, the NASA rover Opportunity travelled a full marathon distance of 42.195km. Achieving this distance during a 46-meter leg on 24 March, 2015, this makes Opportunity the first vehicle to complete this distance on another planet. What's even more astonishing is that the rover was originally designed for only three months of use.

Opportunity's six wheels are driven by 43 maxon DC motors: 35 units with diameters of 20 and 25 millimeters for the rover and another eight motors for the lander. The quality and performance of the motors speak for themselves: the DC motors in the wheels did more than 78 million revolutions each, under extreme environmental conditions and temperature fluctuations from -120 bis +25 degrees Celsius. The results of this successful project are being utilised in the development of new motors that will fly to Mars in the European ExoMars rover.

For more information on the Mars missions involving maxon motors please visit our website or call 02 9457 7477.

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