



Eifel Rallye Festival (August 15-17, 2024)
 Press release 10

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Eifel Rallye Festival: Rally history at your fingertips

- **The Volcanic Eifel reverberated to the rally museum on wheels**
- **Inspiring variety featured from the 1960s into the 21st Century.**
- **International reunion of the historic rally scene in Daun**

The twelfth edition of the ADAC Eifel Rallye Festival (August 15th to 17th, 2024) is now history. It was another weekend on which the largest rolling rally museum of over one hundred and sixty cars from rally history brought the Volcanic Eifel around Daun to life. Tens of thousands of enthusiastic fans from all over Europe celebrated alongside the crews. The atmosphere was fantastic, with participants and fans beaming in the sunshine. As the head of Slowly Sideways, Reinhard Klein (Cologne), is responsible for putting together the entry list. He draws a positive conclusion from this weekend: "With this twelfth edition of our Festival, we have taken another big step towards modernisation. For example, we now also have Super2000 and WRC vehicles included, despite the fact that it is often not easy to keep their technology ready to drive. As a result, our field of participants is even broader and completely covers the period from the 1960s to the recent past. With ninety-five different vehicle types from thirty different car brands and one hundred and thirty different team liveries, we were once again able to present a unique range of cars from the history of rally sport."

Speaking on behalf of the organising MSC Daun, its chairman and head of organisation, Otmar Anschütz, said: "A major event like this is only possible with the help and support of many people and institutions. Our co-operation with the local licensing authorities, the Vulkaneifel district administration, the associations and local municipalities and the town of Daun is completely problem-free and goal-oriented. Thank you to the emergency services, the volunteer fire brigades and anyone else that I may have forgotten. Thank you also for the good cooperation with the police, who have just confirmed once again how level-headed and cooperative the many fans were. Personally, I would also like to thank our fifteen-strong organisation team, who spend

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Contact for international media
 John Davenport (UK)
 Tel: +44 7973.334297
 Tel. during the event: +49 175 8121246
 Email: john.davenport@eifel-rallye-festival.de

Contact for international media
 Jürgen Hahn (Germany)
 Tel: +49 172 80 90 443
 Email: presse@eifel-rallye-festival.de





ten months a year working intensively and putting in a lot of time to plan the Festival. Then there are over six hundred helpers who work on our behalf before and during the weekend. It is simply amazing that so many people are willing to sacrifice their free time to support this Festival. As organisers, we are very grateful for this. I think I am also speaking on behalf of the participants and fans.”

Jörg Hennig, Sports Director of ADAC Mittelrhein e.V., visited the Rallye Festival in the Vulkaneifel for the first time. “But this was certainly not the last time that I will visit this immensely high-quality event, which is unique even beyond the borders of Germany.” He adds: “There is here an incredible atmosphere with tens of thousands of fans coming from all over Europe. Even on the way to the stages, people sit at the side of the road and cheer on the cars. Although there is no time classification, the sport here is sensational. I am totally thrilled and filled with euphoria since you won't find anything in the organisation here that doesn't work. Everything is done with ease and extreme friendliness – but that is the result of excellent preparation.”

Open-air cinema and welcome evening with lots of interesting stories

In addition to the old rally cars, a large number of their former drivers and co-drivers also gathered in Daun. Film legend Helmut Deimel transformed the Welcome Evening on Thursday into an open-air cinema in the middle of Daun with his recorded images of rallying and rally cars. Presenter Markus Stier once again elicited many stories – with sometimes very explicit details – from the VIPs in attendance.

Here are some voices and information from the VIP lounge:

Stig Blomqvist, who celebrated the fortieth anniversary of his World Rally Championship title in an Audi: “Oliver Solberg is currently the only hope for a new World Champion from Sweden after I was the last one in 1984. He has made progress recently, perhaps also because he no longer listens to his father so often !”. [Oliver’s father is Petter Solberg who was a very successful rally driver who between 1998 and 2019 drove one hundred and ninety WRC rallies, winning thirteen of them.]

Marcus Grönholm, double World Rally Champion in 2000 and 2002, revealed the reason for his retirement on the first WRC outing of the 1997 Toyota Corolla WRC in Finland in 1997 admitting, only after intensive questioning by Markus Stier, that they had gone out on the second day while leading due to a lack of fuel. In order to save weight, the mechanics had filled up a few litres of petrol too few.

For **Harald Demuth**, Daun was characterised by the memory of his second German Rally Championship title with Audi. He had started his career as a privateer in a BMW 2002 and finished in the top ten several times in the DRM rounds. Prior to that, he





raced in slaloms and in hill climbs. He received enthusiastic applause for his statement that: "But the real motorsport is rallying." Privately, he plays bass with 'Harald und die Kellerband'. Perhaps a performance by the Kellerband could be an additional item on next year's programme in Daun?

Belgian **Bruno Thiry**, the 2003 European Rally Champion, said: "I have been able to turn my hobby into a profession and I go to the office every day. But my office has a steering wheel and is mounted on four wheels".

Kalle Grundel is best known in Germany for his DRM title in 1985. He revealed the secret of his success: "My mum is Finnish," explained the Swede. "You need a few of these Finnish genes to be able to rally quickly, that's a basic requirement."

Harri Rovanperä, the long-standing WRC driver [he drove over a hundred WRC rallies between 1993 and 2006] as well as being a WRC winner, revealed: "My sacking from Seat and the consequent switch to Peugeot in 1998 was in fact a real stroke of luck for me". After his first participation in the festival, he added: "I am thrilled by this event with so many great cars. I promise I'll be back."

Ruben Zeltner, the 2014 and 2015 German Rally Champion, was in Daun for the first time: "I'm completely blown away as the Festival has exceeded all my expectations. I knew that a great event awaited me here – but what's actually happening here is simply gigantic. I'm so happy that I finally made it here on what was my third attempt. And now I want to become a regular."

Nicky Grist co-drove Juha Kankkunen to the World Rally Championship title in 1993 with a Toyota. However, he has a special memory from the 1997 Safari Rally, where he was together with Colin McRae in a Subaru. Before the one hundred and fifty-kilometre 'Road to Hell' stage, described as 'starting badly and getting worse and worse', McRae needed to pee urgently. "However, we were late and so we went straight to the start." During the stage, McRae's discomfort increased and, at the beginning of a six-kilometre stretch of tarmac, he said to Grist: "I can't go on, you take the wheel". Grist took over, steering with his left hand, while McRae unbuckled his seatbelt and, at a good one hundred and fifty kilometres per hour, tried in vain to open the driver's door. Of course, the planned relief did not go at all to plan and everything ran off the door panels into the footwell. "I had switched off the inboard camera beforehand, otherwise we would have been disqualified," explained Grist. Shortly before the end of the tarmac section, McRae slid back fully into his seat and took command of the steering wheel. At the finish, they were a good three minutes faster than their nearest rival, whereupon Grist said to McRae: "In future, you'd better let me steer, I evidently do it better!" At the end





on stage, Grist surprised the fans in German with the words "I'm a Dauner and I'd love to come back". He enjoys coming to this great event with the incredible number of fans.

Kenyan co-driving legend, **Yvonne Mehta**, who recently celebrated her eighty-first birthday said: "It's always so great here at the Festival, I love coming back."

Austrian **Franz Zehetner** who was driving an Renault Alpine A310 V6 prototype from 1977 simply said: "Daun is the showcase event in historic rallying."

Get your camera ready: a photo competition with attractive prizes

There is also chance for the fans to get directly involved in an active way ! With ninety-three participants from a total of eight nations, the 2023 photo competition proved to be a great success. Reason enough, then, for the organisers of the Eifel Rallye Festival to continue this competition for the twelfth edition. The conditions of participation and the registration form are now available at <https://www.eifel-rallye-festival.de/de/Fotowettbewerb.html>.

As in previous years, the prizes will be provided by the RallyWebShop (www.rallywebshop.com). We owe them many thanks for this generosity.

Eifel Rallye Festival 2011-2022 - The official book

If you want to bridge the time until the next Festival in an entertaining way, you can do so with the official book about the first ten editions of the Eifel Rallye Festival: The highlights of each year are described on more than three hundred pages. There are rally cars that have never been seen since they last competed. In addition, there is a unique cross-section of rally history with the classics from Mini and Volvo PV544, to Group 4 legends like the Stratos and Ascona 400, then the unforgettable Group B monsters, the stars of Group A from Lancia to Subaru and finally the spectacular World Rally Cars. The book's bilingual text (German and English) and the many photos are completed by numerous tables and overviews of starters and rally cars. The Festival's long-time patron, Walter Röhrli, summarises his impressions of the Festival in a foreword. Here is the ordering link to obtain copies of this remarkable book from the RallyWebShop:

<https://www.rallyandracing.com/mcklein-store/buecher/eifel-rallye-festival-2011-2022-das-offizielle-buch?c=1194>

More info can be found at: www.eifel-rallye-festival.de

The Eifel Rally Festival in social media:





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