

Pre start & scrutineering Ypres town centre

13 June 2022

Since the chequered flag was stowed safely in Santander last month, *Rally the Globe (RtG)* has moved on, swapping the sweet tang of sangria for the more earthy tones of Belgian beer, the clacking castanets of Castille for the folksy Flandrian fiddle and the crazy cacophony of Plastic Bertrand.



We're in Ypres, a Belgian city with an illustrious and sometimes tragic past. Famous for being a cultural and economic hub, as well as the scene of some intense fighting during the First World War, and now the home to the impressive yet sobering Menin Gate Memorial.

Today 26 rally crews descended on the town to begin their rally to the Edge of the Orient but, before they could hit the road there were certain formalities to undergo. These included signing-on and scrutineering, where paperwork and rally gifts were distributed, and the cars were checked for both safety and compliance. In the calm of the courtyard of the Yperley restaurant, Loren Price, Gill Cotton and Sarah Ormerod dealt with the former whilst, only a short drive away and alongside the moat behind the Menin Gate itself, Andy Inskip, Jack Amies, Charlie Neale and Russ Smith stood ready with their clipboards and toolkits to give the cars a thorough going over and to right any wrongs which may have developed on the journey here.

Graham and Marina Goodwin's Bentley, for example, needed a bit of soldering to bring a faulty rear light back to life. Michael Kershaw's Range Rover inexplicably shed a wing mirror. As it was waiting in line it gave Charlie Neale all the excuse he needed to whip out his drill and quickly



improve upon decades of British Leyland's engineering. Philip and Lyndy Blunden's MGB GT needed a bit more attention though and it saw Andy Inskip deep inside the ignition system for most of the afternoon.

Once documented and accounted for the cars were taken to a reserved section of the medieval town square in front of the cloth hall to rest for the night and give some of the thousands of visitors who pass through every year a chance to enjoy the spectacle.

There are some great cars with us for this trip and ranging from the sublime to the, possibly, less sublime; a vintage selection of WO Bentleys, a stable of thoroughbred Porsche 911's and range of Mercedes Benz classics. The 602cc Citroen 2CV however must surely be the star of this particular show and its Australian crew, Phil and Laurette Macwhirter, are keen to show what this, largely original, 1982 007 Special can do. They've "spent a day and a quarter preparing the car". As well as checking that the tow ball fittings are good and tight, they have given it new tyres at each corner, along with two in the boot and replaced all four shock absorbers. After four years in a barn in the south of France these particular *deux chevaux* must surely be champing at the bit. Thanks to 'the pandemic', this is the longest RtG event so far

and it includes 80 competitive sections over the twenty days for them to get their teeth into.

Once the excitement of scrutineering was over the rest of the day was free and, after an easy afternoon of visiting coffee shops and some fine chocolatiers, an early evening drivers briefing was held. Mark Appleton and Fred Gallagher welcomed the crews to the event and allowed any novices or newcomers to get more of a handle on what they were about to embark on.

Pre-dinner drinks were served in the courtyard of the Yperley restaurant ahead of a late dinner. Fred has considerable personal history with the Ypres Westhoek Rally, founded by Frans Thévelin in 1965, with his score



sheet listing two wins alongside Tony Pond in 1978 and 1980. And, after seeing the cars lined up in the town square he finished by raising a glass to Alain Penasse, our local fixer / rally supremo and to the town itself saying "thanks Ypres, you've done us proud".

The 48 hour car crew missed all this however, Dick Appleton and Chris Mills were already ploughing their lonely furrow eastwards ready to send back valuable intelligence on the state of the roads.

Finally, it was lovely to be joined this evening by two gatecrashers, our old friends from the Carrera España, Dirk Van Lerberghe and Hilde Vanhove, who popped in to re-live a little of the pre-rally excitement.



Day 1 Ypres to Ypres, Flanders loop (144.5 km)

14 June 2022



Today's *prologue loop* might have been a short one but, with six Regularities to tackle, it was a busy one. Luckily, on a day as hot as this, there were a few well placed refreshment stops set into the schedule and a good lunch to ease the crews into the rhythm of the rally.

For the first day of the *Ypres to Istanbul Challenge* a leisurely, very civilised, 10.01am start had been planned. Fred Gallagher waved the distinctive Vlag van België sending the cars into the intricate network of minor highways and byways that make the Flanders Fields such a magnet for rally cars - and cyclists. Our passage today was punctuated by neat rows of war graves, with place names straight out of the pages of the history books, chronicling the darker side of the European story.

Having cleared the medieval town square - adjacent to the slightly less medieval beach volleyball court - the first Regularity at Hollebeke soon arrived. It was a great surprise to find two *RtG* stalwarts, Mick and Grace de Haas running the start control whilst Dr John Llewelyn and Andrew Kellitt were on duty at the finish. In between were almost 6km of short straights, sharp turns and beautiful scenery leading immediately into the second Regularity at Heuvelland, which was just as pretty and just as tricky.

By now the rally had earned a break and the Time Control in Mesen gave the crews the chance to grab a quick coffee, or perhaps an ice cream, before the third Regularity, Jeux avec Frontières. As the name implies this section gave us the opportunity to play along the sinuous and permeable

Franco / Belgian border. Schengen at its very best, where only the street names gave any hint of which country we were in.

Soon after, the road book drew our attention to a stretch of road made famous by the airborne antics of the WRC, illustrated by the deep sump guard shaped grooves cut into the landing zone. With all four wheels safely on the ground, Fred Gallagher's Passage Control in Boonaert was all that stood between the crews and their lunch at the Time Control in Watou, where we were served some hearty fare on the terrace of the St Bernardus Brewery. Although, wisely, their self proclaimed heavenly nectar was left off the menu.

With just enough time allowed to digest the excellent cold meats and beef, the fourth Regularity of the day at De Helleketel began within metres of the car park. Once again the rally found itself quickly switching between left



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Licence to Thrill, Phil and Laurette Macwhirter, 1982 Citroën 2CV



Phillip and Patricia Monks, 1961 Jaguar Mk 2

and right through a maze of singletrack roads. Hard on the heels came the fifth Regularity outside of the village of Zoutenaai before we pulled into the tranquility of the Time Control in the Oude Abdij in the village of Lo-Reninge.

Light refreshments were once again the order of the day setting the rally up nicely for the final timed section of the day, the sixth Regularity in Hazewind. This section featured a little tree cover, stretches of kasseien and a run along one of the many canals which drain the Flanders region. Some neat route planning left the crews with slightly less than twenty easy kilometres to go before they rolled into the centre of Ypres and clocked in at the Main Time Control (MTC).

The day finished with attendance at the daily Last Post Ceremony under the Menin Gate, before the crews went their separate ways to enjoy whatever dinner they fancied in one of the many fine eating establishments.



Daniel and Barbara Wiedemann, 1970 Mercedes-Benz 280 SL



Mick and Grace de Haas clock-in Enrico Paggi and Federica Mascetti



Clint and Dawn Smith, 1925 Bentley 3/4

Day 2 Ypres to Aywaille (376.3 km)

15 June 2022



Renate Hanselmann and Lukas Ospelt's 1939 Ford Model 91A shed a wheel on a track Test today

There was more distance to cover today. Consequently, immediately after reveille and breakfast, the crews reported for duty at Andy Inskip's MTC and by 9am the square was emptied of rally cars. But, with umpteen tonnes of sand to remove from the beach volleyball courts, the earth movers quickly filled their spaces.

We were heading south and east today, through the Ardennes to Aywaille. A journey which would in itself be epic, but had the added interest of four Regularities and four Tests to keep the crews on their mettle and enable Andrew Kellitt to put more scores on the doors by the day's end. And, by the time we rolled into the night halt, not only

had the leaderboard changed, but so had the landscape. As the day rolled on the hills got longer and steeper and the woodland closed in around us.

The first timed section was an old friend from yesterday, Hollebeke Reversed. With its wide open and flat roads, it proved to be an excellent warm up for - and an easy route into - the morning's star attraction. At the first Test, in Mesen, the centre of the town had been closed for us to run a figure of eight section against the clock over tarmac and cobbles. Dozens of local marshals and police were on hand to keep everybody safe the rally roared and squealed its way through the narrow streets and the bales of hay that Jim Smith had borrowed from a local farmer.

A long motorway run led the still excited crews to a Time Control in Froyennes which gave both man and machine a chance to take on some fuel and wash windscreens. Briefly

joining the autoroute once again the rally headed to the Second Regularity around Bertincroix.

It had already been a busy morning, but there was still the third Regularity from Rouveroy to deal with, before there was any time to think about taking our foot off the gas and relaxing. So, when the rally pulled into the Time Control in Hantes Wihéries for lunch, the crews were definitely ready for it. The hot buffet was exactly what was needed to set everyone on the right track for the afternoon which was going to be as action packed as the morning.

Three Tests and a Regularity carried the 'press-on' theme of the day. Two Tests at the Circuit de Chimay and one at the karting track in Fagnes gave the crews more than enough opportunity to push themselves and their cars to whatever limit they felt was appropriate. Most of them got away with it, but Renate Hanselmann and Lukas Ospelt's Ford shed a wheel on its second lap and needed some attention from the sweep crews before they could continued to the night halt.

With the track action done and dusted for the day, the rally made its way across the Meuse to a well deserved break at the Time Control in Blaimont. The *Route du Fromage* took us into the Fourth and last Regularity into Aywaille via a remote Passage Control in Gendron. The roads around here were dark, narrow, and steep. The drivers of the pre-war cars were given a good upper body workout, whilst the navigators of whatever type of car needed to keep a sharp eye on the tripmeter and road book. A missed turning on these roads would have been quite an inconvenience.

After a long, but satisfying, day on the road almost everyone had made it safely into the night halt without too much drama. David and Jo Roberts were the notable absentees. Their illustrious little Triumph broke down this morning and, despite the best efforts of the sweeps, it couldn't be repaired. As we sat down to eat though, we heard that they were already halfway back to Barnsley to collect another car and rejoin us as soon as they could.



The Triumph TR250 of David and Jo Roberts bowed out today



John and Nicole Whitelock, 1968 Mercedes-Benz 280 SL



Bertie and Charlotte van Houtte, 1965 Porsche 911



Jean Vincent and Marcel Peumans, 1934 Bentley Speed Six

Day 3 Aywaille to Koblenz (263.3 km)

16 June 2022



Clint and Dawn Smith, 1925 Bentley 3/4½



Otakar Chládek and Jindřiška Žemličková, 1973 Mercedes-Benz 350 SL

There was something for everyone today in what turned out to be an action packed blast from the Ardennes to the Moselle Valley. We took in our first proper border crossing and, whilst we didn't see any infrastructure or have to hand over any paperwork, we were rallying the globe once again and were one small step closer to Istanbul.

We weren't wishing our time away though, there's still much to enjoy and today the Organisers had piled on the fun beginning with the first Test, held at the small, but perfectly formed, Peugeot Malmedy track. Lying in the shadow of the mighty Spa Francorchamps Circuit, there's no sense of small track syndrome here. What this punchy little facility lacks in size and status, it more than makes up for with attitude. Used as a motorsport training ground, there are long corners, short corners, rough sections, smooth sections, sharp turns and easy turns. Two laps were allotted to each crew but, from the look on some of their faces when they clocked into the finish control, it was obvious that they'd have been happier with more.

The first regularity in Büllingen cooled things down a little, a tricky section that brought its own challenges with gravel tracks, short off road sections, tight turns and steep climbs to be negotiated under a confusingly thick tree canopy. Tripmeter accuracy was paramount as the crews found that, without visual references, they were pretty much flying on instruments.

After a busy morning the Time Control in Café Schroeder in Losheimergraben came not a moment too soon. As the crews reached for suitable refreshments, some of them were heard comparing notes as to where exactly they'd either lost time or chosen the wrong track.

Our break for the border came within metres of the car park exit. Before the crews had time to change from second to third gear we found ourselves in the Federal Republic of Germany, the land of Oktoberfest, and set a course to the second Regularity around the village of Duppach. Another section requiring concentration as the crews were led across two long laps of wide open farmland on some beautiful gravel before rolling up to Fred Gallagher and Uwe Schmidt, our friendly German rally fixer and FIA Commission Chairman, to have their time recorded.



Barry Nash and Malcolm Lister, 1969 Rover P5B



Phillip and Lynda Blunden, 1974 MGB GT



Michael Kershaw and Elizabeth Comstock-Smith, 1981 Range Rover

The Landart Hotel in Beim Brauer hosted the midday Time Control and also an excellent lunch, after which the crews embarked upon two Regularities in quick succession. Eifel Festival One and Two which were hill climb circuits around the Vulkaneifel district of the Rhineland-Palatinate.

A long and very relaxed road section followed through kilometres of well tended vineyards and bustling riverside villages along the beautiful Moselle riviera dotted with some impressive “castles in the air” eventually bringing the rally into the night halt in Koblenz. We’re pleased to report some news which reached us late in the day. David and Jo Roberts are well into their return journey and expect to be with us tomorrow evening in Weimar.



Andrew and Ann Boland, 1936 Ford V8 Convertible

Day 4 Koblenz to Weimar (404.9 km)

17 June 2022

From our sunny breakfast table high above the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle rivers, rally life looked good this morning. It was going to be another busy day and we had some fantastic countryside to enjoy in between three Tests and two Regularities. Finally, we'd be spending the night in Weimar, one of the most vibrant and culturally important cities in Germany.



Richard and Catherine Phillipson, 1933 Alvis Firefly Special



Keith and Norah Ashworth, 1927 Bentley 4 1/2 Le Mans

Once we'd dealt with the hotel car park and crossed the Rhine, an easy drive from Koblenz soon saw the rally pulling into the first Time Control in Brechen. Here we were treated to a picnic style pit stop in the garden of the most excellent Blütezeit Café and given a small bag of healthy treats to see us through the day.

Another hour of sun soaked tarmac got us into the first Test. Two laps of a set of switchbacks around the Motorsportarena Stefan Bellof required everyone to buckle up and hold on tight. This was a karting circuit moonlighting as a drift track, somewhere the usual suspects could open the taps and give it everything before skidding to a halt on a dusty track just outside the perimeter fence.

Soon afterwards a Passage Control on the Schottenring, the site of the 1954 German motorcycle GP, made sure that everyone was on the right road with Uwe Schmidt once again lending a helping hand and stamping his authority neatly onto the timecards.

With the ink drying quickly in the midday heat we set off towards the day's big attraction, two Tests and lunch at Stehr. This manufacturer of agricultural machinery are also rally enthusiasts and they kindly gave over part of their complex for our entertainment. This generous bunch of folks had also laid on a simple BBQ lunch between the two sections and the Time Control. In total there were four laps to be dealt with which included a bridge, an underpass and some neat chicanery, before Sarah Ormerod stopped the clock just short of the factory doors.



Anthony and Sonja Verloop, 1968 Mercedes-Benz 280 SE



Museum Automobile Welt Eisenach



The pace dropped a little once we'd left the rusting hulks in the goods yard and began the first of two Regularities around Kirchheim and Mundershausen. A Passage Control outside of the Auktionshaus Hess kept everyone on the right road, along which there was plenty to see as we rolled effortlessly through well tended farmland, short stretches of forest and picture postcard villages.

As the day neared its end though, there was a slight change to the usual way of things, with the MTC situated, not in the hotel lobby, but in the Museum Automobile Welt Eisenach (AWE). A former motor vehicle manufacturing factory just inside of the old East German border, the museum pays tribute to decades of German automobile manufacturing, with an emphasis on those models which were actually built on the site, such as Wartburg, EMW and IFA.

Bringing the day's timing to an end here gave the crews an opportunity to look around, enjoy exhibits - and to take on a little refreshment. 85km of the very best German Autobahn then delivered the rally to the night halt in the most excellent Hotel Elephant in Weimar where, much like the museum we'd just left, we found ourselves in



Ean Lewin and Alison Lewin, 1973 Ford Escort Mexico



For Your Eyes Only? Phil and Laurette Macwhirter, 1982 Citroën 2CV

something of a time capsule. Tracing its origins back to 1696, the hotel has an impressive history which includes time as a Red Army staff college and a teacher training institute whilst in the old East Germany. Now it's stuffed full of impeccably tasteful furniture and artworks and, from what we saw tonight as we dined on the terrace, it's got a pretty good kitchen as well.

We were expecting David and Jo Roberts to rejoin us this evening but, fate has dealt them another blow and they're currently still somewhere west of us, with an old Chrysler to deal with. More follows!

Day 5 Weimar to Prague (395.5 km)

18 June 2022

Our last day in Germany and another border to cross as we press on eastwards through the magnificent landscapes of Central Europe. Germany has been good to us and so has our friend Uwe Schmidt, but today we say goodbye to both on what has been the hottest day so far.



Enrico Paggi and Federica Mascetti, 1971 Fiat 124 Spider BSI



We left Weimar in the relative cool of the morning and, through fields peppered with poppies and cornflowers, soon arrived at a Passage Control high above Bibra where Jack Amies and Russ Smith were well placed to take in the impressive views over the valley. A relaxing start but, when the first Regularity from Weira began, the crews began to feel the heat. This was part gravel, part tarmac, but the boundaries between the two were sometimes blurred.

With a myriad of farm tracks to choose from, the trip meter came into its own through this section, as well as a pair of sharp eyes to better read the road book and plan ahead for the next instruction. Dust hanging in the air meant at least someone else had been along the track, whether it was the right way remained to be seen, until the next tulip was ticked off.

The day's Test, in Schleizer Dreieck, was at least a little easier for the navigators, although the drivers had their work cut out. This, the oldest street circuit in Germany, had given Jim Smith and Sarah Ormerod a section of its outfield to design two laps of short straights and 90° turns in and around the paddock. With loose stuff where you really could have done with some more grip, the results

of this subtle blend of horsepower and traction - or lack thereof - were impressive. And entirely predictable. But it was a lot of fun for both the onlookers and the competitors and certainly had the effect of sharpening the appetite of the latter group.

The Time Control and lunch halt was some 85km down the road in the town of Pivovar Kynšperk. Fortunately plenty of time had been scheduled to allow both man and machine to cool down as now the mercury was nudging 31°C. The recently issued *Rally the Globe* sunhats were working hard on the heads of the slowly roasting open car crews.

The day's second Regularity offered some respite, the so called Lazy Saturday Afternoon actually finished in a village of the very same name. Sat at the end of a thickly wooded road it offered some welcome shade for a few kilometres at least.

A Passage Control outside of Tisová came and went without drama, as did the Time Control in Nečtiny, where cold drinks could be found. The day was coming to an end, though there was still one more Regularity to deal with along Berounka River, after which the pull into Prague and the rest day proved irresistible.



1965 Porsche 911s of Steve and Jenny Verrall (left) and Bertie and Charlotte van Houtte (right)]



Michael and Marcus Eatough, 1965 Mercedes-Benz 230 S Fintail

It's been a great first week of the Ypres to Istanbul Challenge, and tonight in the Hop House bar, which we'd taken over for the evening, everyone seemed to have something to say and a story to tell. It seems that this area brews beer and, ever keen to immerse themselves in the local culture and cuisine, it seemed churlish not to accept the odd glass or two from the attentive bar staff.



Michael Kershaw and Elizabeth Comstock-Smith, 1981 Range Rover



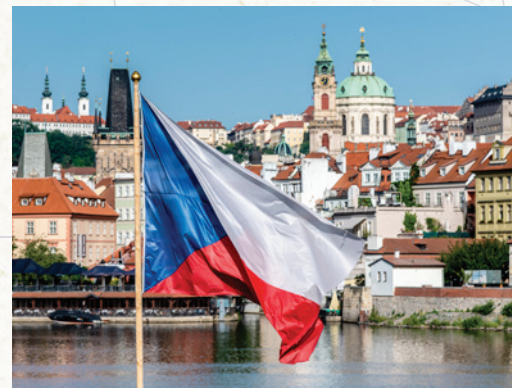
Phillip and Patricia Monks, 1961 Jaguar Mk 2



Daniel and Barbara Wiedemann, 1970 Mercedes-Benz 280 SL

Day 6 Rest day in Prague

19 June 2022



We celebrated Mother's Day on our *Generations Rally* and today, in a neat twist of fate or a lovely piece of symmetry, we find it's Father's Day. And, for those amongst us who qualify, what better way to spend it than tinkering with an old car in the middle of a long distance rally.

Rest days follow a certain pattern and it's a brave crew who try to buck the trend with any ideas of their own. The first job is to get another hour or so in bed and then it's time to enjoy a slightly more leisurely breakfast after which, one of two things can happen. Laundry needs to be done and the car will need some attention. This is often, although not always, where a division of labour kicks in.

When the morning's chores are finished there's time for a long lunch, some sightseeing and shopping, and dinner at your time and choosing. There's much to do in Prague and there's plenty to see but, on a day as hot as this, most people were looking for shade.

The sweeps were on duty as usual and, down in the relative cool of the garage, we found them doing their best to stay hydrated, and helping out with all manner of problems. Andrew Boland and Andy Inskip were looking to making the Ford V8 stop more efficiently, there'd been some trouble with the brake servo yesterday afternoon. Andy had rigged the system to get it to the night halt but, this morning it was time to make good on the repair for two more weeks of rallying.

Lukas Ospelt and Russ Smith were giving another Ford a good torquing to. After losing a wheel on the track on day

two, they've fitted new brakes and a new wheel to the Model 91A. Today was the perfect opportunity for a precautionary session with the wrench. Tony Rowe and Mark Delling, another crew with a Ford, were waiting patiently in line for some help to adjust the travel of their clutch pedal.

Jack Amies was in the footwell of Bertie and Charlotte van Houtte's Porsche 911 doing the tricky job of refitting some gear linkage bushes. Charlie Neale, meanwhile, had his head deep inside the rear wheel arch of Enrico Paggi and Federica Mascetti's Fiat, looking to cure a wheel bearing oil leak.

Daniel Wiedemann was wrapped up in paperwork, concentrating hard in the seat of his Mercedes. He'd borrowed a set of instructions for his Monit tripmeter which needed recalibration and there was also a slight speedo issue to deal with. Barry Nash and Malcolm Lister, inveterate tinkers and Rover aficionados, were "just playing and checking. There's nothing wrong with the car, but we like to keep an eye on things... You know how it is".

It's Jack's last day on the tools today. He's flying home today as part of a planned crew rotation and is being replaced by Owen Turner. Another true wizard of the spanners, although we hope that he doesn't have to work too much of his magic over the next two weeks.

Day 6: Rest day in Prague, 19 June 2022

