



News

15th – 21st June 2013

September 12

When the first Pirelli Classic Marathon was flagged away from London's Tower Bridge on a bright and sunny Sunday in June 1988, it was the start of something very special. The ambitious plan was a drive across Europe to Cortina - the Jewel of the Dolomites - and all the way back again for a prize giving at the RAC Club in Pall Mall. As the promotional brochure at the time put it, "This event is rather unique - there is nothing as long, demanding or as challenging in the world calendar for classic cars". It was a plan that captured not only the imagination of countless enthusiasts, but also many of rallying's past heroes – Stirling Moss, Roger Clark, Timo Makinen, Paddy Hopkirk, Paul Easter and Willy Cave to name but a few were all keen to come out of retirement to relive former glories.

The spirit of that memorable week - great driving experiences, breathtaking scenery and unforgettable moments - was captured by a BBC documentary called "The Great Chase". Shown in over 70 different countries, this film helped put the world of classic rallying well and truly on the map.



Since then, the Classic Marathon has built upon the success of that pioneering first event and has given some 1800 crews over 60,000 km's of competitive motoring in 21 different countries. Throughout this period, the event has remained true to its original spirit, providing classic car enthusiasts with an unrivalled mix of varied driving challenges and superb hospitality combined with the camaraderie born from the spirit of competition. Having explored the length and

all the hurdles that were put in his way has provided us with the International historic rally scene that we now have. Events from the 50's have been re invented as historic rallies and totally new events have been created but none can claim such a true heritage as the Classic Marathon. We all look fondly back at the early years of the Marathon but without detracting from the pioneering spirit of the early events when you actually look at the quality of the route design and the detail planning of the



breadth of Europe and North Africa during the last twenty four years, it is only right that for its 25th Anniversary year, the Classic Marathon should return to its spiritual home in the Dolomites and revisit the famous passes that gave the event its place in history.

The foresight and bravery of Philip Young to proceed with the organisation of the event despite

organisation there has been much improvement over the years including adaptations to reflect the increased traffic that now uses all our roads. Route designers now work that much harder to find largely traffic free roads for the majority of the route.

Our route for the Silver Anniversary event will reflect the



spirit of the 1988 event but take into account the different expectations that competitors now have and the need to fit the event into a shorter timescale but we will still be visiting many of the locations from that event.

We'll start from Ypres, the Belgian capital of rallying. This enables UK crews to cross the Channel in their own time and continental crews will not have to cross the Channel only to return a day or so later. Scrutineering will be on Saturday afternoon and in the evening we'll have a welcome dinner where newcomers will be able to mix with those recalling tales from the first and no doubt many other events.



On Sunday morning it's destination Cortina d'Ampezzo via night halts in Luxembourg, Mulhouse, Lake Zurich, Bormio and Trento. This time though when we get to Cortina we won't be driving back but staying on to celebrate Italian style.

Some things though have not changed and as in 1988 the

winner of the event will be driving a car that is of a type that was produced prior to the end of 1967. We are often asked why the date does not move forward but as you will be aware car design moved forward rapidly in the late 60's and we are keen to continue to promote events that attract cars from the 50's and 60's. There will also be a special category for pre war cars and post 67 cars (up to 1981) will be able to compete for Class awards.



As in the first event navigation will be by tulip style road book with clear test diagrams and additional information when needed.



We like to run as closely as possible to the ethos of the classic rallies of the 50's so although we do use some electronic technology we still think it's important that control points are manned rather than rely on gps timing. The rapport that develops between competitors and officials during the week is very important – yes, it is a competition and run accordingly but for many crews

it's also their holiday and we want it to be a social as well as competitive experience.

Another worry for some crews is mechanical problems – after all most of the cars on the event will be at least 30 years old but as usual we will have teams of the most experienced rally mechanics on hand to provide assistance, it's amazing the number of problems they are able to resolve, both with parts carried in their vehicles and what they manage to obtain en route.

The Classic Marathon entry fee will be inclusive of hotel accommodation and the majority of lunches and evening meals. We try wherever possible to get all the competitors into one hotel, where this is not possible rooms are allocated on receipt of completed entry forms and deposits. Hotels will generally be 4 star rating but for we also have to take into account the geographical location of hotels and that they have sufficient parking .



With only 75 places available on the start list for this commemorative event, entries are likely to be at a premium so do not hesitate, get your entry in now to secure your chance to relive that original Marathon magic and celebrate 25 "Classic" years of rallying....



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