



PRESS RELEASE – MONDAY JANUARY 27<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> LEG

## Waiting for the snow to fall

At 7am, everyone in Malbuisson emerged, rather sleepy. Engines started to purr. Wind shields needed scraping. No one could leave the safety of our private parking until the cars were all warmed up. Some of the teams even grabbed a caffeine jolt at Guy's Distillery before hitting the road. The terrain was slick and shimmering: very dangerous! Between the rising sun and the low clouds, the second leg of this year's rally required considerable control. Navigating through the forest on winding, pine tree lined roads, everyone had to look out for the icy patches lurking in the shadows. When day finally broke through, everyone's mood brightened, and the troops followed the wafts of fragrant blue smoke swirling behind our friends the Morteaux. As the sausages roasted to just the right redness, so did the brakes on the R16, swerving with delight in its not so fresh green dress. Yves Deflandre's Porsche, sporting the orange team's colors, set out to hunt down the cute little Italians 'cuz the Autobianchi and Fiat Cinquecento were in the lead by midday. The Sanseigne family stayed close, even during lunch. But after Maïche, sparks would fly. No time for cheese or dessert, not even coffee or a drop of absinthe! With more than three hundred km covered, thirteen regularity tests completed and 97 time checks... it's back to Malbuisson for everyone. Although the snow was missing, there were plenty of penalty points today!

And the so-called 'Jokers' were as serious as any, firmly in the top 5 all morning long. There was no way to avoid Arnaud Euvrard and Adeline Paquiers (BMW 325ix #3) until Maïche, where they lost their compass on the RZ13 and had to swallow 194 points in a single gulp – ouch! Bernard Figuière and Isabelle Godin (BMW 325ix #2) made the most of this mishap, winning the leg and taking the overall lead for the 4WD category! Similar twist of fate for the Historic category and 2WD where Joël and Corinne Sanseigne took the lead in their Autobianchi A112 Abarth #42, just ahead of their nephew Romuald (Fiat Cinquecento Sporting #61). Third place for the day, but also overall, Yves Deflandre and Eddy Gully (Porsche 911 #35) seem to have been ambushed, 20 points behind the leaders!

**Surprise pitstop.** Winners of the opening, nighttime leg, Joël and Corinne Sanseigne (Autobianchi A112 Abarth #42) eventually racked up 8 penalty points for being 23 minutes late on the return to Malbuisson. Why? An unscheduled stop in Pontarlier for a tire change.





**Bad habits die hard.** For the Gabrielle family, Dominique was in the navigator's seat, as usual. But when we think we know the road like the back of our hand, we can forget to think twice and it can cost us dearly, especially when the itinerary is slightly different than expected. An insignificant intersection made them lose six precious minutes on an inconvenient detour!

**Jokers in the deck.** With more than 1,000 km to cover and 40 regularity zones to manage in just 4 days, plus 400 time checks scattered along the way, this year's Snow & Ice Rally is definitely not a walk in the park. That's why the organizers have allowed for a few 'jokers' to erase the three worst times each day (with a max of 60 pts each). And to ease the pain, there's up to 30-minutes leeway on the connecting legs.

**Slow going.** For Célimène Lachenal and Sandrine Arni (Ford Escort RS2000 #33), the main objective is to not stall. After struggling to get started, their Escort had a rough time keeping the engine going. A challenge we hope to have fixed by the end of the night, thanks to the official technicians on site.

**Unquenchable thirst.** The 13th regularity zone was unlucky for the Belgians' Datsun 240Z (Nicolas Pascal and Frédéric Sente). Their water pump burst right in the middle milieu of the RZ, forcing them to head back to Malbuisson on a wing and a prayer. But there's no way they'll give up! A new pump will be sent from Belgium by Tuesday so the team can jump back into the heat of the fight by the last leg on Wednesday.

## INTERVIEWS

**Patrick Zaniroli (French/Event Manager):** *"I would like to congratulate the Sanseigne family for their impressive foray in this year's Rally. The competition is ferocious in both categories and the scores are close. The snow we're expecting tomorrow will play an important role in determining the final rankings, especially since the third leg of the rally takes us up into the Jura mountains where the snow has a better chance of sticking to the roads!"*

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