



## The Gallic War

The 68th Neige et Glace is on! After a day of technical and administrative checks at the Peugeot Adventure Museum in Sochaux, the starting podium of this 19th regularity event launched the 80 crews in the early evening on the first Regularity Zones (ZR), which were already challenging, in the direction of Malbuisson, the event's headquarters for four days. On the program for this 2023 edition, four stages, covering some 1000 kilometres of a selective route, traced on the borders between France and Switzerland. With no less than six former winners at the start, the sporting battle promises to be intense from the Doubs to the Jura, between the various favorite crews from France, Belgium and elsewhere.

**The day at the Museum.** Faithful to its partnerships, the organisation of the Neige et Glace Rally has once again chosen the site of the Peugeot Adventure Museum as the starting point for this 68th edition. Here, more than two centuries of French industrial adventure await you. The history of the epic of the lion brand, which took root at the beginning of the 19th century on these very lands, is certainly expressed through 130 cars from all eras, but also through the fifty or so cycles and motorbikes. It cannot be stressed enough: Peugeot was the first manufacturer of motorised two-wheelers in the world.

**Stratos fairy tale.** Among the 80 cars entered, one in particular sparkles in the imagination. The Lancia Stratos entered by Philippe Vandromme and Fred Vivier, his long-time partner, has this power of attraction over rally enthusiasts. Born from the genius of Nuccio Bertone and the intuition of Cesare Fiorio, the Stratos is the combination of a revolutionary design for its time and a mythical soul with a Ferrari engine. The extraordinary talent of legendary heroes such as Mike Parkes, Gian Paolo Dallara, Nicola Materazzi and Sandro Munari, allowed the Stratos to dominate a long period of motor sport, especially in rallies! *"This extraordinary car has given me emotions, anguish, suffering and joy"*, said Cesare Fiorio at the time.

**The 40th anniversary of the Peugeot 205.** No less than three Peugeot 205s will take the start of this 68th edition of the Neige et Glace Rally. This is the opportunity to celebrate, a few days ahead of time, the 40th anniversary of the emblematic little saloon car that left the Sochaux workshops to conquer the world of rallies and rally-raids with its famous 205 Turbo 16 and its drivers, as mythical as Finnish as Juha Kankkunen, Timo Salonen and, of course, Ari Vatanen.

**The Doubs in all its splendour.** After a first night stage to reach Malbuisson in 5 ZR, the second stage of the rally will be run 100% in the Doubs. A loop of almost 300 kilometres, divided into 11 ZR with lunch in Maîche before the return to Malbuisson. It should also be noted that all the competitors will stop at the Distillerie Guy, partner of the event, between the first two ZR of the day.





**France-Belgium: the eternal rivalry.** This Neige et Glace Rally is preparing for a new battle between 'Gallic brothers'. And if, as Julius Caesar himself said, of all the peoples of Gaul, the Belgians are the bravest, it is still our friends from the north who dominate the prize list with no less than 13 victories in 18 editions. But for the last two years, Yves Deflandre, still the record holder of the event with 4 victories, Daniel Reuter, Dirk Van Rompuy and Guino Kenis, have had to face the enthusiasm and the verve of a young local team formed by Romuald Sanseigne and Florin Fornasier, whose 'small' Cinquecento benefits from a favorable coefficient, considering its small engine size. On the other hand, in the 4x4 category, created in 2016, the French have left no room for doubt, winning each of the six editions contested since.

**Randonnée : record broken!** Never since the creation of the Randonnée category, designed to allow participants to discover the event and the very special discipline of regularity, have there been so many entries. No less than 20 crews will enter the ZR following the competitors in the race, to taste the sensations of the event. Amongst them, some well-known names and even former winners, wishing not to put too much pressure on themselves. This is how we will find the Lancia Delta HF of Joël and Corinne Sanseigne, winners in 2016 and 2017, accompanied by Patrick and Sylvie, Romuald's parents. Lucien Guitteny, a former circuit driver who took part in the 24 Hours of Le Mans on eight occasions, will also be present for a great comeback.

## INTERVIEWS

**Philippe Vandromme (Lancia Stratos n°38/Fra):** *" We have been wanting to take part in this Snow and Ice Rally for a long time, and we have had very good feedback. Our Stratos has been adapted for the Rallye du Maroc, so we had to close off all the air intakes to prevent the car and crew from freezing. It's an amazing car, but I call it my diva. It just does what it wants to do! "*

**Patrick Zaniroli (Organiser/Fra):** *"The sporting line-up is of high quality. There are about ten crews competing for victory in the different categories. Our Belgian friends have come back in force, which promises us a superb battle, especially as the roads will be black on the links but particularly slippery in the ZR. The terrain will be variable with dry conditions, but also a lot of ice and snow in places. The choice of tyres and, above all, the size of the studs, will be essential."*

## INFO, PHOTOS & RANKINGS :

<http://www.zaniroli.com/rallye-neige-et-glace/live-edition-2023/>

