

ADAC Eifel Rallye Festival (July 21-23, 2016)
Press Release 08

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Group B record and a world premiere

The ADAC Eifel Rallye Festival held from July 21-23, 2016 was an event that not only celebrated the history of rallying, it also made history itself. With more than sixty Group B and Group S cars lining up in the Rally Mile in Daun, the demonstration event saw the biggest collection of those supercars ever collected in one place. And it was also home to a world premiere since, 30 years after it was built in 1986, Audi fired up the engine of its Group S prototype in front of the public for the very first time. Taking part in the "Festival Parade", it tackled two stages successfully.

The driver taking the wheel of the mid-engined Audi was none other than two-time World Rally Champion Walter Röhrl. "It was a great experience for me to drive this unique prototype during its world premiere on the stages of the Eifel Rallye Festival", said Röhrl. Timo Witt who is in charge of Audi Tradition's collection added: "The Eifel Rallye Festival and its Group B and S theme was perfect for us to celebrate the public debut of the Group S Audi. On this event, our prototype has done more mileage than it did in total over the previous 30 years. But we had to be careful. The car is a unique piece and nearly all parts of it are irreplaceable."

A total of six Group S cars found their way to the Eifel Rallye Festival. Thus nearly all available prototypes from the category that was banned even before it was really born were there. At the same time, the Festival saw a re-incarnation of the Group B days. "This is simply great. I could never have dared to believe that the Group B could be revived in such a dimension", said Walter Röhrl who was also the patron of the event.

Peter Schlömer, chief organiser of the Eifel Rallye Festival, was thrilled by the audience: "The number of spectators was once again higher than before. This is a fantastic reward for the organising team which works for several months to get the Eifel Rallye Festival running." Reinhard Klein, head of the Slowly Sideways group, was especially impressed by the large number of Group B cars. "I had always hoped to get such a good entry but I did not believe in it in the first place. I am especially pleased to see so many Group B cars –



originals and replications – side by side on this event.” Christian Geistdörfer, former co-driver to Walter Röhrl and nowadays part of the organising team, says: “We have once again set new standards – the only thing that we still have to work on is the weather.”

The Autostadt in Wolfsburg, a long-term partner of the Eifel Rallye Festival, was equally pleased. Otto F. Wachs, CEO of the Autostadt, said: „The Autostadt is a platform for all brands within the VW Group and here we could show the rally history of the brands Audi, Porsche, Seat, Skoda and VW. Thousands of national and international spectators are the evidence that these historic rally cars remain unforgotten.”

Apart from the 150 plus cars entered in the Eifel Rallye Festival there were also some legendary drivers present thus making it an authentic journey in time. Walter Röhrl was joined by another two-time World Rally Champion. This was Miki Biasion who drove a real Group B supercar, a Lancia Delta S4, with his daughter Bettina as navigator. “This is simply fantastic, and there were so many spectators.” Stig Blomqvist, 1984 World Rally Champion, also turned the Festival into a family affair. The Swede drove a Ford Sierra Cosworth with his wife Åsa in the co-driver’s seat and commented in his typical chatty way: “It was okay”. But the smile on his face said more than hundred words could have done. Harald Demuth was re-united with a Audi Sport Quattro S1 prepared by Audi Tradition and said: “This event only deserves superlatives.”

Awards for Mazda, Audi, Peugeot and John Davenport

There might be no sporting competition in the Eifel Rallye Festival, but there were still winners crowned during the Rally Party on Saturday night. A jury of experts had the difficult task of awarding winners in four different categories. After intense consultation, the jury awarded the Mazda RX-7 driven by Yves Loubet as “Best Replication”. The prize for the “Best Original” was presented by Bosch Automotive Tradition and given to Wolf-Dieter Ihle and his Audi Sport Quattro. For the “Champion’s Choice” award, Walter Röhrl, Miki Biasion, Stig Blomqvist, Yves Loubet and Harald Demuth selected their favourite rally car and this was the Peugeot 205 T16 of Fernando and Dario Garrido. The “Rallying Ambassador” prize was awarded to former co-driver, team manager and author of rallying books, John Davenport.



More than €9,000 for a good purpose

Eberhard Riedel received an early and very special birthday present from his wife Anette and daughter Franziska. For the shakedown of the Eifel Rallye Festival, three days before his birthday, the German was allowed to jump into the co-driver's seat of an Audi Sport Quattro next to Walter Röhr. The Riedel family had won this ride in a hard fought battle for the highest bid on eBay ending with a record sum of €4,565.11 (£3,800). And since Wolf-Dieter Ihle, the owner of the Audi, then doubled this amount, the local organisation „Bürger für Bürger e.V.“ received a cheque of no less than €9,130.22 (£7,600).

Side stories

World-wide interest

While the participants entered for the Eifel Rallye Festival came from 17 different countries, the journalists were even more international. There were nearly 140 reporters, photographers and film cameramen accredited for the event who came from 21 countries and from four continents. Only the Australian continent was not represented by a journalist, but nevertheless there were spectators coming all the way from Down Under to Daun to watch the event.

Jürgen Stehr paves the way for the Bosch Super Stage

Jürgen Stehr is not only a long-term participant in the Eifel Rallye Festival with his Mercedes rally cars, but this year he was also a helping hand in the background. A few days before the Festival, Jürgen Stehr's fleet of contractor's vehicles set out to prepare the loose-surfaced Bosch Super Stage for the event.

Exchange with France

At the end of August, a new event for historic rally cars will see the light of day. The Vosges Rallye Festival will export the successful format of the Eifel Rallye Festival to France. In addition to members of the organising team of the Vosges event, the mayor of the host town, La Bresse, also came to the Eifel. Raymond Marchal was delighted by the concept and the crowds it attracted. „It is crazy how many people came here and how enthusiastic they were. There were more people than I had ever expected. It is impressive to see that the organisers have blocked the whole town, which is a plus for both the rally



and the local enterprises. Now we are looking forward even more to hosting a similar event.”

Wanted! The best pictures of the 2017 Eifel Rallye Festival

Have you captured a spectacular action shot, a funny moment in the Rally Mile or the beauty of the Vulkaneifel region? Then send us your pictures and secure your chance to win a prize in our photographic competition. As in 2015, the competition will be held in co-operation with the magazine “Oldtimer Markt”. This means that the editors of Europe's biggest classic car magazine will select, award and also print their favourite images taken by you, the spectators, at the 2016 Eifel Rallye Festival. And of course, they will always publish the photographer's name with them. The top prize in the competition is a once in a lifetime experience: The winner will become the co-driver of multiple German Rally Champion Matthias Kahle in a Škoda 130 RS for one stage of the 2017 Eifel Rallye Festival. The closing time for the submission and receipt of photos is midnight on July 31st, 2016. Further information on all the prizes and how to take part can be found on our web site: www.eifel-rallye-festival.de/en/Photo_Contest.html

More information on: www.eifel-rallye-festival.de

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