



PRESS RELEASE – TUESDAY JANUARY 28th – 3rd LEG

Welcome to Jura ski park!

And then the skies opened, and our prayers were answered: ‘Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!’ After a full night of incantations and supplications in all different languages, the miracle we needed came at last! A thick blanket of snow fell on our 66th Snow & Ice Rally, beneath the dark skies of Mouthe. A flash of lightning lit up the heavens. A crash of thunder roared over Malbuisson. A genuine blizzard engulfed our little Siberia. And the hailstorm gave way to soft snowflakes. A white carpet was rolled out for our teams: after you, onward and upward!

On the road to the Jura mountains for this 3rd leg of this year’s event, studded tires were a must. And the sign read, ‘Welcome to Jura Ski Park!’ Some decided to carefully snow plow their way forward, while others took a daring slalom approach. At times it was smooth sailing but at others it was literally rock ‘n’ roll! The leaders of the pack were, of course, the 4WD vehicles – although it was still tough for them to navigate amidst the shades of grey and white. Amongst the two-wheel transmissions, the whiz kids opted for a snowball fight! Meanwhile, the elusive Sanseigne family stole the show with Italian flair, leaving the Belgians a sad choice of weapons. The poorly shod cobblers did the best they could. And when we reached Arbent, for lunch, it was raining penalty points all around! Before heading back to Malbuisson, Rochejean also sported a white robe. A few last slips ‘n’ slides, and avalanches boosted the intrigue. On the night before the final rankings, the two-wheel transmissions were neck and neck as the Sanseignes prepared a heart-stopping finale. But fear not, with more than ten cm of snow expected overnight, the fight for the winners’ podium in the 4WD category will be just as captivating!

Rockin’ & a reelin’! For Gaëtan Biolley and Thomas They (Mini Special #64), this 66th Snow & Ice Rally ended in a flip during the day’s first Regularity Zone. Luckily the team was unscathed after pulling their car out of the hole, where they opted to throw in the towel. Christian Badoz and Gaëtan Charmoille (BMW 2002 #47), on the other hand, decided to wait for the day’s last RZ and the spectacular circuit run in Rochejean to execute their dazzling pirouette. Uninjured but perhaps a bit razzled and without a windshield, they decided to call it quits.

Deflandre busted a cable! After starting the day’s first RZ with snow tires, Yves Deflandre and Eddy Gully switched to Sisterons for the rest of the morning. Bad idea! The event’s four-time champions racked up more than 50 penalty points by lunch, at which time the support team fitted their Porsche with Burzets. Although the Belgian experts had hoped to make up for their losses during the afternoon, they got stuck in





Saint-Claude where they broke a clutch cable, costing them quite a bit of time on the connecting leg to the day's last three Regularity Zones.

Look out for the Zanirolade! On the morning's fourth RZ (22), Patrick Zaniroli and Alain Lopes had concocted a little surprise for the navigators. A Belgian style 'breakdown', also known as a 'Zanirolade' in France, which forced the teams to make three consecutive sharp left-hand turns. Needless to say the first few 4WD vehicles who opened the road had a devil of a time figuring out the trap that had been laid for them under the fresh blanket of snow that covered nearly the entire road.

Did someone say skiing? You can imagine how stunned the organizers were when they saw the Piron father & son team's BMW 323 slide off the 23rd RZ, and onto a cross country ski trail! An unusual side-step danced with grace by our Belgian friends, who we met up with a few miles down the road.

Kenis loves the powder. During his second year in the Snow & Ice Rally, the former Belgian race car driver, Guino Kenis, had an absolute ball on the 3rd leg in the Jura mountains. Thrilling the spectators with spectacular arabesques at the wheel of his BMW 325, he made an impressive climb up the overall ranking, making it into the top 5.

Sanseignes: keep an eye on their ascension! Winners of the event's 3rd leg, Joël and Corinne Sanseigne (Autobianchi A112 Abarth #42) wrapped up yet another perfect day and overall lead (19.2 pts) in the overall ranking, well ahead of their nephew Romuald, who has partnered with Florin Fournassier (Fiat Cinquecento Sporting #61) and taken second place for the day, and overall. Coming in fourth for the day (due to their poor choice of tires and clutch issues), Yves Deflandre and Eddy Gully (Porsche 911 #35) maintain their 3rd place ranking overall, despite accumulating 80 penalty pts in one day!

4WD Duel it out. By nightfall in Malbuisson, just five little points are all that separate the day's 4WD winners, Arnaud Euvrard and Adeline Paquiers (BMW 325ix #3), from the overall category leaders, Bernard Figuière and Isabelle Godin (BMW 325ix #2). As you can imagine, the final leg will be a dual beyond compare. A sword fight in three loops around Malbuisson with several wild rides around the natural racetrack in Rochejean!

INTERVIEWS

Patrick Zaniroli (French/Event Manager): *"We promised you snow and ice and I am happy to report that we kept our word. It spices up the event and makes for a slew of memorable moments. More snow is expected tonight, which will make for an unforgettable ride to the finish line!"*





Joël Sanseigne (French/Autobianchi A112 Abarth #42): *“Corinne and I have been thoroughly enjoying ourselves since the very beginning of this rally. Competing with the youngsters is really fun. We don’t calculate or contemplate our lead. We simply focus on our own performance without checking to see where everyone else is at.”*

Yves Deflandre (Belgian/Porsche 911 #35): *“At lunch, I knew we couldn’t make up the points we had lost during the morning due to our poor choice in tires. The Sanseigne’s lead is very impressive. They haven’t made a single mistake. They’re perfectly at home! It might be different if they were headed to a Spa. Our busted clutch cable cost a few more precious points this afternoon. Now our goal is just to keep our third place on the winner’s podium.”*

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