



Neuville, Lotterer, Lefebvre, Cherain & co!

Let's face it, the 2025 edition of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne boasts one of the finest line-ups in the event's history, courtesy of the Royal Automobile Club de Spa! With the World Rally Champion, a World Endurance Champion and the Belgian Rally Champion crew on the starting grid, as well as a former official WRC driver and former Belgian Champion... from France, the battle promises to be exceptional on the RT bastognards! Much to the delight of fans...

The year 2024 will definitely go down in the history of black-yellow-red motor sport as one of its finest vintages. Nobody is likely to forget a certain Rally Japan, which enabled Thierry Neuville and Martijn Wydaeghe to clinch the coveted title of World Rally Champions! And this same Thierry Neuville has decided to treat himself to a real treat on the first weekend of February, by inviting himself to the start of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne 2025! With the backing of Hyundai Motorsport, he will be driving his personal BMW M3 E30 Gr.A, entered by Livelive Motorsport, with his friend Antoine Cornet in the right-hand bucket! Look no further for the headliner of the Legend Boucles...

Lotterer, who won the FIA WEC alongside Laurens Vanthoor and Kévin Estre, has decided to return to the Legend Boucles after two previous experiences, in Sparta in 2012 and 2013! The operation, organised by Lionel Hansen's August team, will give the most Belgian of German drivers a Porsche 911 Gr.3 in a legendary livery, as the orange car will carry the Jägermeister colours! While Lotterer is unlikely to claim victory, he will be an undeniable attraction at Bastogne!

Belgian rally champions in 2024, Cédric Cherain and Damien Withers are Legend Boucles fans. Clearly the fastest, but not the most polished last year, they will be back to finally add Bastogne to their list of honours! The car will continue to be the Ford Escort Mk2 Gr.4 from the ANDES Motorsport workshops!

Another Ford Escort Mk2, which has become the 'official car' of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne, will be part of the same team, as it is reserved each year for a star crew. Former official Citroën driver in the WRC, Belgian rally champion in 2022, Stéphane Lefebvre from the Nord region is also a former winner of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne. That was also in 2022,

in the company of Xavier Portier. And Lefebvre had a hell of a time at the wheel of the Escort Mk2 'PYB-106'. We look forward to seeing him back in action..

The prestigious group!

The second group is made up of other former winners of the R.A.C. Spa event, whether it was the Boucles de Spa, the Legend Boucles de Spa or the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne!

Renaud Verreydt, winner on Spa soil in 1992, 1997 and 2000, will be taking part with his personal Ford Escort Mk1, and Hugues Lecomte at his side! An atmosphere guaranteed...

Winner of the Legend Boucles de Spa in 2010 with Nicolas Gilsoul in an Audi Quattro, Bruno Thiry has decided to dive back in and discover the thrills at the wheel of a top-of-the-range Ford Escort Mk2, from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and sponsored by Regnier Sport Organisation. He will be co-driven by Xavier Portier, who has already tasted the champagne of Bastogne in the company of Lefebvre.

Now open to cars that made rallying history between 1991 and 2000, the 'Legend' category will see the arrival of Grégoire de Mévius and André Leyh. It's a reminder of the driver's victory in the 1993 Boucles de Spa in the company of Willy Lux, as long as the car chosen is the famous Nissan Sunny GTi-R Gr.A!

Jean-Pierre Van de Wauwer, who won at Spa in 2012 at the wheel of his 'home' Lancia Beta Monte-Carlo with Eric Marnette, is taking on the challenge of a more recent generation car, in this case a Subaru Impreza GC8, with Valery Soret in the right-hand bucket...

Last but not least, Bernard Munster, winner of the 1999 Boucles de Spa with Steven Vergalle in a Subaru Impreza, will be taking part with one of BMA's 'Safari' Porsche 911s. The car is similar to the one in which he won the Legend Boucles in 2016, with his wife Andrée Hansen at his side. This time, it will be his son Charles who will accompany him on this new adventure... and who will take the wheel on Sunday, while his father will be in charge of the RTs on Saturday!

Big outsiders

Behind these big names is a group of very strong outsiders. Including several regular Belgian Rally Championship drivers! Bastien Rouard is back with Dimitri Debuissou in the ANDES Motorsport Escort Mk1, Emile Breittmayer is also in the Breitt Racing Escort Mk1, this time with Alexis Thomas at his side, his father Olivier has chosen the Breitt Racing Opel Manta 400 Gr. B Breitt Racing to put on the show with Pierre Sibille, and Sébastien Incardona will be keen to shine at the wheel of one of the BMW M3 E30s entered by Livelive Motorsport in the colours of Incar Motor, with Christophe Poës in the right-hand bucket. A late entrant, John Wartique couldn't pass up the opportunity to make some big splashes with the Ford Escort Mk1 he'd seen in the past, seconded by Vincent Duchesne.

Although he now favours rally-raid within the family structure G Rally Team, Ghislain de Mévius plays the card of the Mazda 323 4WD Gr.A, the same one driven by his father Grégoire during the 1990 Australian Rally! His co-driver will of course be the inevitable Johan Jalet.

As for our former world champion cyclist Tom Boonen, who was more discreet in the second half of the 2024 season, he will be back in business where it all began for him on the rally side, in Bastogne, still at the wheel of a Porsche 911 BMA! And Erwin Mombaerts at his side.

There are bound to be plenty of specialists in historic competitions at the start! Starting with Guino Kenis and Bjorn Vanoverschelde, double silver medallists at Bastogne, more determined than ever to cover with gold a BMW 325i E30 Gr.A which is still breathing better! The G&A Racing driver will lead a field including Fred Bouvy and Jean-Louis Hottélet, who are loyal to the Escort Mk2, the returning Claudie Tanghe (Ford Escort Mk2), the winner of the Legend Condroz Rally 2024 Christophe De Leeuw (Opel Ascona A), Yannick Neuville (Toyota Starlet), determined to remind everyone that he's not just the other guy's brother, William Reyntiens, who can surprise on the ex-de Hemptinne Escort Mk2, the 'Senegalese of Belgium' Jean-André Collard on his ex-factory Opel Manta 400 Gr. B Safari ex-factory, Julien Elleboudt still flanked by journalist Dominique Dricot in the Escort Mk2 in the colours of Classic 21, Geoffrey Leyon accompanied by Jean-François Elst - winner of the Boucles de Spa 2000 with Renaud Verreydt - in the Escort Mk1 which won the HBRC at the last Spa Rally, Johnny Delhez (Ford Escort Mk2) this time accompanied by Loris Elst, Olivier Cartelle, who is betting on the Opel Ascona A in the company of Didier Jacob, Vincent Prégardien, who will be hoping to get the best out of his Ford Escort Mk2 in the 'Millington' version, and also Jean-Louis Meynart, who will be the first to enter a third-generation Mitsubishi Lancer Evo in the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne!

France invites itself

As in the other categories of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne 2025, French crews will be out in force in the 'Legend' category. The Panagiotis family will be lining up no less than... three cars, with a BMW M3 E30 for Yannick to keep a close eye on with Valérie, a Ford Escort Mk1 for Olivier with Ariane, and a Porsche 911 SC 3.0 for Loïc, seconded by Maxence Mangeot!

It's impossible to ignore the presence of Michel Perin, one of France's great co-drivers, alongside François Abrial in a more modest Citroën Visa Chrono. As for the others, we know them well, with notably Edouard Proffit in a Ford Escort Mk1, Thierry Barjou in a Ford Escort Mk2, Richard Thiéry - Mr GT2i - in the ex-Guy Colsoul Opel Ascona 400, Eric Mauffrey - already twice in the top 10 - in the usual ANDES Motorsport Ford Escort Mk2, Maxime Vilmot (Ford Escort Mk1), etc.

Still in the international ranks, let's note the presence of Spaniard Antonio Dezcallar, in a superb Toyota Celica GT-Four ST165 'Fina', Swiss drivers Laurent Metral (Ford Sierra Cosworth) and Gérard Nicolas (Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4), German Axel Schütt (Ford Escort Mk2), and many others.

At home!

And then there's the group of local lads! Or rather from the province of Luxembourg. The crews are increasingly well-honed, and are now in a position to claim some prominent places in the overall standings, and even the final podium, as we've seen in the past. These include Christophe Daco and Steven Spittaels (Ford Escort Mk2), Frédéric François and Jérémy Penoy (Ford Escort Mk2), Romuald Thirion and Fred Jacquemin (Opel Kadett GT/E), as well

as Loïc Pirot and Jean-Baptiste Bodet, who will be starting with a Lifelive Motorsport BMW M3 E30!

Billy Simoné has joined the ranks of G&A Racing at the wheel of a BMW 325i E30, again with Olivier Beck at his side. Charles Blerot and Antoine Dauby will also be taking on the Bavarians in their familiar BMW 325i E30, while Nicolas Blerot and Olivier Grégoire will be entering a Peugeot 205 GTi. Look out for former Challenger winner Michael Magerotte, with Arnaud Hennuy, in a Ford Escort Mk2. Pascal and Romane Gérard will be sharing the cockpit of a BMW 325i E30, as will Hugo and Stéphane Gérard. As for Samuel Zune and Grégory Fraselle, they are sticking with the DTM-look Mercedes 190 2.3 16S.

Didier Joris, one of the Bastogne traders taking part in the race, is lining up his pretty Ford Escort Mk2 with François Mercy as co-driver, while Mathieu Boeur remains faithful to the Opel Ascona B in the company of Aurélie Leroy. As for Samuel Burnon and Luc Kalmes, they are also betting on the Ford Escort Mk2.

The Glaude family will of course be present with their unmissable Volvo 142/144s, Sébastien with his wife Aurélie Van Audenhove and Guillaume with Raphaël Cop, while father Christian and sister Anne have migrated to the 'Classic 65' category.

An impressive list... but by no means exhaustive! Let's face it...

Who's next in the Challenger category?

With RTs contested at an average speed of 80 km/h, the 'Challenger' category in fact harks back to the foundations of the Legend Boucles. Until 2017, this was the rule for the 'Legend' category, before the Royal Automobile Club de Spa decided to raise the pace at the request of the competitors. However, the average speed of 80 km/h was retained for an intermediate category known as 'Challenger'. Over the years, this category has become a landmark for many regional teams...

In fact, apart from the success of Yves Deflandre and Joseph Lambert the year the 'Challenger' category was created, only crews from the province of Luxembourg appeared on the list of winners! Charles Blerot and Antoine Dauby (BMW 325i E30) in 2019, Dimitri Van Hove and Lionel Windeshausen (Alfa Romeo GTV6) in 2020, Jencome Theis and Laurent Perrée (Ford Escort Mk1) in 2022, Michael Magerotte and Arnaud Hennuy (Ford Escort Mk2) in 2023, then Maxime Jaumin and Pierre-Yves Godfrin (BMW 325i E30) in 2024. Not only is the domination of the 'locals' impressive, but the variety of the prize list speaks volumes about the intensity of the debates...

For this 2025 edition, there are many candidates for a pass of two. While Magerotte-Hennuy and Blerot-Dauby have switched to 'Legend', Jaumin-Godfrin, Theis-Perrée and Van Hove-Windeshausen are more than ever in the running. They will find other strong crews in their path, just as regional, and determined to confirm the eclecticism of the prize list.

These include Mathieu Wuidar and Maxime Les (Ford Escort Mk1), Jonathan Georges and Elisabeth Fagnan (Peugeot 205 GTi), Pierre-Henri Kettels and Romain Sulbout (Ford Escort Mk2), Jean-Pascal Durré and Julien Ernout (Ford Escort Mk2), Bruno and Florent Nielen (2nd last year, BMW 325i E30), Luc Caprasse and Tony Kairis (2nd in 2020, Audi Quattro), Philippe Bai and Catherine Magette (Lada VFTS), etc.

And let's not forget the arrival in this category of Emmanuel Eggermont's superb Toyota Celica 1900 RA20, which has no chance of going unnoticed!

It's a battle that's as fierce as it is friendly, and one that also contributes to the enormous popularity of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne in the province of Luxembourg...

Classic 65: the battle of the leaders!

While the 'Legend' category inevitably catches everyone's attention at the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne, the second largest field is traditionally made up of the 'Classic 65' crews. As the name implies, this is a regularity event with a maximum average speed of 65 km/h, which is by no means easy on a course such as that proposed by the Royal Automobile Club de Spa. What's certain is that the best crews in the discipline will be there once again, promising another battle of the leaders!

Among these regularity experts, there are bound to be a lot of Belgians, since the concept was created in Belgium as part of the Coupe des Sources. But there are also a few Frenchmen, and not the least of them! Starting with Christophe Baillet and Gauthier Brignon (Ford Escort Mk2), masters in the art of getting the better of the competition in black-yellow-red! In Ypres, but also at the last Rallye Neige et Glace, the driver from the Grand Est region won. In Bastogne this year, he will be clearly in the hunt to join his compatriot Christophe Berteloot, winner in 2015, on the winners' list!

The Baillet-Brignon duo are bound to find someone to talk to, with the Deflandre fathers and sons, Yves and Benoit (Porsche 911), never really in vain at Bastogne! Yves Deflandre is obviously aiming to reverse the trend by claiming a second victory, following on from the one he won in 2016 in the company of Patrick Lienne.

As for Michael Bartholemy (Ford Escort Mk1), he is quite simply the latest winner of the 'Classic 65'. Last year, he was backed up by the same Patrick Lienne, this time by Noah Bartholemy, Michael's son. As for Lienne, he will accompany Daniel Peiffer in the cockpit of a Ford Escort Mk1 to keep an eye on!

Among the former winners of the category are Eric Piraux and Catherine Monard, who return with the Renault 11 Turbo. As for Daniel Reuter and Robert Vandevorst (Porsche 911 S), they have enjoyed a string of podium finishes in the past (3rd in 2014, 2nd in 2016, 3rd in 2017). Top 3 finishes were also on the cards for Alain Lamberty and Frank Frankenberg (Opel Ascona B, 3rd in 2024), Claude Ninane (this time with Freddy Cara, Opel Kadett GT/E, 3rd in 2023), Eric Gengou and Didier Gathy (Volvo 142 S, 2nd in 2018), Filip De Munck (this time with Kristof Vermant, Lada VFTS, 3rd in 2012), which says a lot about the quality of the 2025 field!

Also chasing a first top 3 or better will be Geert and Cedric De Jaeger (Porsche 911 E), Etienne Bagnée and Romain Lahaye (Ford Escort Mk1), René Georges and Jean-Marc Piret (Volkswagen Golf GTi), Rudy Jacobs and Ingrid Van Loock (Opel Monza 3.0), Hervé Van Ryckevorsel and Serge Grandy (Volvo 122 S), and so on.

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Also present were Germans Rolf Droste and Fabian Mohr (BMW M3 E30), Volker Scheck and Yves Chantraine (Ford Escort Mk1), as well as Dirk Schauer and Peter Christoph Wolf (Fiat 124 Sport Spider), and Swiss drivers Serge Bigler and Sébastien Richard (Porsche 911 Carrera), Dutchmen Jurgen Ubachs and Harry Mans (Alfa Romeo Giulia 1600 S), and Frenchmen Jean-Louis Herbeth and Thierry Seichepine (Ford Escort Mk2), as well as Samuel Chenier and Ludovic Arnoult (Citroën LNA), all determined to shine in the heart of the Belgian Ardennes.

The DAF Marathon, the Volvo Amazon and the Volkswagen Beetle will also be present, as will former F1 driver, DTM champion and five-time winner of the Spa-Francorchamps 24 Hours Eric van de Poele (with Charles-Albert Henry de Frahan in a Volvo 122), the inimitable 'Chavan', double winner (once as driver and once as co-driver) of the Boucles de Spa, who will be co-driven by René Beyers (Volkswagen Golf 2 GTi), not forgetting the 'flying priest' Jean Dewandre, with his brother Philippe in the famous Talbot Sunbeam Ti, it's easy to see why this 'Classic 65' category is so popular. And this list is not exhaustive...

Total indecision in the Classic 50!

Inaugurated in 2020 and aimed at fans of pure regularity, the 'Classic 50' category is a high-precision affair. Winners in 2022 and 2023, Dominique Dufrasne and Isabelle Dogné were aiming for a third success on 1 and 2 February. A bad crash for the driver decided otherwise. It was enough to completely reshuffle the cards...

With France's Legenne-Legenne, last year's winners in their original Opel Commodore GS, not taking part, and Michael and Noah Bartholemy, the first Classic 50 winners, having long since successfully moved up to the Classic 65, the list of winners in the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne is bound to be enriched by new names.

The favourites are well known to regularity enthusiasts, with Mario Varrewaere and Pablo Cracco (Nissan Sunny GTi-R), Patrice Simon and Christian Bernard (Porsche 924), or that devil Felix Quirijnen, whose Citroën Dyane is breathing very well, partnered by Philip Copmans! At the very last minute, Frenchman Jérôme Ambrosini joined the party in his usual Audi 80 GT, with Montgomery Abel at his side! Not to be overlooked...

Alain Collée and Didrik Mortier (Alfa Romeo GT Junior), Jérôme and Brian Nijs (Lancia Beta Coupé 1800), Rik Dumortier and Paul Van De Velde (Austin Mini 1000), Philippe Vandecandelaere with the very experienced Yves Thirionet (Triumph TR6), Jean-Philippe and Stéphanie Wante (Audi Coupé), Cosmo De Candia and Ken Van Oers (Lada 2103 in the

colours of the future Squadra Abarth & Rally Collection museum), and Bernard Herman and Félix Fabry (BMW 318 E21).

The line-up was as eclectic as you could wish for, and included Trabant P601s (Thonard-Pennartz), Lancia Flavia Coupé 1800s (Rossi-Perlino), Lada 21011s (Gossens-Van Bouwel) and Mazda RX-7s (Pignolet-Louis).

While the Classic 50 crews may not be the most spectacular in the RTs, the variety of cars entered is certainly worth a look...

Cédric De Cecco at the wheel of the #0

Invited to take part in the press conference at Bastogne town hall on January 21, Cédric De Cecco was surprised to discover the original present that his father Loretto and his various partners, including Yacco, had given him for his 40th birthday: the hire of a Porsche 911 RS Group 3, which will be marked with the number #0, and which will therefore go before all the competitors in the 'Legend' and 'Challenger' categories on the RT! Which means that this time, Cédric and Jérôme will actually be in the race!

Happy birthday, champion...

