



## **The first mechanicals roared to life...**

The final countdown has clearly begun in Bastogne! In the heart of the town, the Place McAuliffe was dressed in rally attire, ready to see all the competitors of the Legend Boucles @ Bastogne 2025 arrive from one end of the weekend to the other!

On Thursday afternoon, as tradition dictates, a handful of Legend Boucles @ Bastogne's top riders had the opportunity to do a few turns on a small improvised track, looking like a car park, in the immediate vicinity of the town centre. It was an opportunity to get to grips with the local weather conditions, as Stéphane Lefebvre, winner of the 2022 edition, will be one of the favourites along with Thierry Neuville, Cédric Cherain and others...

Being able to take part in the Legend Boucles in an Escort is something that continues to give me great pleasure,' smiles Stéphane Lefebvre. These are lively cars, and this weekend I'll have my best friend Michael by my side. So we're going to have a good time, which is always the aim when you come here. In sporting terms, Thierry Neuville remains the favourite for me. So the aim will be to get the best possible result, without getting carried away...'

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André Lotterer, the reigning FIA WEC World Champion and three-time winner of the Le Mans 24 Hours, arrived in Bastogne late this afternoon but didn't miss the opportunity to get to grips with the superb Porsche 911 Gr.4 August that will be at his disposal this weekend...

"I'm already having fun, it's really cool," commented Lotterer after a few laps on the track. It's been a long time since I drove in Belgium outside the 6 Hours of Spa FIA WEC. The rally culture is very important here. I grew up in this environment through my father's RAS Sport team. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to drive such a car here. Of course, I'll be competing against drivers who do this sport all year round. But I'm going to make sure that I don't go out and that I finish the race having fun..."

Cédric Cherain (Ford Escort Mk2), Christophe Daco (Ford Escort Mk2), Olivier Breittmayer (Opel Manta 400) and Emile Breittmayer (Ford Escort Mk1) were also there this Thursday, enthusiastic about the idea of competing during the weekend with these cars from the past... While the mechanics were roaring for the first time, on the Place McAuliffe side, the technical inspection operations began this Thursday afternoon. Under the gaze of the first curious and enthusiastic. No doubt, the city of Bastogne has entered 'Legend Boucles' mode, and it's only just begun...

Photos libres de droits : J.F. & J. Fiasse

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