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Rallye Monte Carlo Historique gets under way from Paisley

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The 1936 Chevrolet Coupe of Albert de Mey leaves the start line at Paisley, en route for the south of France...

Classic cars from through the years have departed from Scotland on this year's Rallye Monte Carlo Historique event...

A party atmosphere in the centre of Paisley last night (31st January) gave a big send-off to the cars and crews in this year's start of the 2018 historic rally run to Monte Carlo.



Some of the line-up of entrants line up in front of Paisley Abbey.

A total of 70 cars left the start ramp – the largest number of entries so far – with the first 24 of them now on the 1500-mile trip to the South of France.

But for 10 year old Emilia Kozlowska, of St John Ogilvie Primary School in Paisley, it was a really special occasion.

She won a Renfrewshire-wide competition for a pupil to design the flag to be used to wave off the drivers and she joined Renfrewshire Provost Lorraine Cameron on the start ramp with her flag to send the cars on their way.



Emilia Kozlowska with Renfrewshire Provost Lorraine Cameron, seen here with a Triumph Herald that is about to depart for Monte Carlo.

It was the fifth time the town – the sole shortlisted Scottish entry for the title UK City of Culture 2021 – was the only British start point of six European cities.

There are three separate categories:

The Historique class is being run for the 21st year and is restricted to car models which

competed in the Monte Carlo Rallies between 1955 and 1980. It runs over eight days on open public roads with the cars and crews having undertaken a series of fourteen demanding test stages in the mountains of southern France.



Aston Martin Tourer of Ian Thompson departs from Paisley.

The Classique event is for older cars from as early as 1911 to 1969 and follows the same route to Monte Carlo but does not include any test stages, the goal simply being to finish in Monte Carlo after checking in at a series of control points on the way, including Dumfries in the south of Scotland, Barnby Moor in Nottinghamshire and Banbury in Oxfordshire.

Once again the event featured the popular Monte Heritage Runs which followed on from the full-scale events and motoring enthusiasts in a range of interesting cars from over the years are taking in a series of short classic routes in Scotland, including Aberdeen, Dumfries and Stirling.



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A crowd of thousands gathered in the centre of Paisley with the magnificent backdrop of the Abbey to wave off the crews in a party atmosphere with lights, music, street food and pyrotechnics.....and working with staff from Renfrewshire Council and volunteers from many motorsport clubs in Scotland, the organisers made sure this year's start was even bigger and better.

Renfrewshire's Provost Lorraine Cameron said: "We are thrilled to be welcoming the Monte Carlo Classic Rally back to Paisley for a fifth year – the sight of the cars gathered outside Paisley Abbey always makes a fantastic spectacle, and brings a great turnout.



Escort RS2000 of David Glen leaves the start ramp.