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Classics all set for Monte Carlo

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'The Flying Tortoise' – ready for a memorable journey...



A wonderful selection of classics will set off tomorrow (29th January) for a Monte Carlo adventure...

Fifty three years after its success in the 1967 Monte Carlo Rally, the actual Mini driven by rally legend Paddy Hopkirk will be first off the ramp at the start of the Historique event in Glasgow's George Square on Wednesday night.

The car with its classic LBL 666D registration plate has been restored back to its original BMC Competition Department specification by Hamilton-based enthusiast Mike Hyrons who took it to Monte Carlo on the Historique event in 2017 – half a century after it finished 6th overall in Hopkirk's hands.

On Wednesday it will be driven by Mike's co-driver then, Pat Haley with Mike's son Christopher, a former junior footballer with Aberdeen, sitting alongside.

At 7pm, it will lead off an amazing collection of around 80 cars which will gather in George Square over Wednesday afternoon and evening. About 20 of the cars will be doing the epic 1300-mile drive trip to the south of France, while the rest will take part in a series of Heritage runs around Scotland.

The city is the only British start point of seven European cities including Athens, Milan and Barcelona. In recent years, Paisley and Clydebank have also featured as the only UK start locations but it's the third time Glasgow has taken on the role.

This year's start will be the tenth since it returned to Scotland and is being supported by Glasgow Life, the charity that delivers cultural, sporting and learning activities on behalf of Glasgow City Council. Other support has come from Bridge of Weir Leather, Laurie Ross Insurance, Tayprint and Tunnocks.

[For the classic event, cars and crews will compete in three separate categories:](#)

[The Historique class](#) is being run for the 23rd year and is restricted to car models which



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

[The Classique event](#) is for older cars from as early as 1911 to 1965 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.

Among the entries is Dundee GP Colin Levin and his brother Richard who will be driving their late father's 1961 Austin A40, 25 years after he competed in the Monte in the same car.

They are eagerly anticipating the challenge. Said Colin: "It's a great tribute to Dad to attempt the Monte in his car with the added bonus of leaving from Glasgow where he lived for 83 years. Neither of us has been in an event like the Monte - we are a real couple of rookies".

Ian Glass from Denbeigh and co-driver Ray Jones from Skye are old hands at the event. Ian has entered his 1953 Ford Popular - nicknamed the Flying Tortoise - in every one of the Classique Scottish starts and has raised thousands of pounds for charity. The car has just been rebuilt for this year's event and the pair are looking forward to it.

The popular [Heritage Runs](#) link with the full-scale events and take in a series of short classic routes in Scotland including starts from John O' Groats and Aberdeen. Fourteen crews started this morning from the northernmost landmark.

Before the cars set off there will be a free classic car show in George Square during the afternoon along with lively entertainment for spectators who'll enjoy the unique atmosphere of a Monte Start and give the competitors a rousing Scottish send-off.

Bailie John Kane of Glasgow City Council said: "The start of the Monte Carlo Rally will be an occasion to remember when owners and enthusiasts bring their treasured vehicles to



Glasgow to set off on this epic adventure. There are sure to be some of the greatest automobiles ever made at the start line which spectators will be able to see up close. I'm looking forward to welcoming the teams and their vehicles to the city and waving them off this week. "

Event Director Douglas Anderson said: "Glasgow is one of Europe's great cities and everyone involved in the organisation of this event is delighted to be back here for the 2020 start. Once again it will raise the profile of the city to an international audience and I'm sure the competitors' send-off from George Square will be an occasion never to be forgotten. The Monte belongs to Glasgow".

More information can be found at www.monte.scot



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The 1964 Rover 2000 of Ranald White, who'll be taking part, along with wife Marjorie, in one of the Heritage Runs from John o' Groats via Aberdeen to join in the start activities at George Square in Glasgow.