

PRESS RELEASE for the **50th Anniversary of the London-Mexico World Cup Rally 1970**
On Sunday 1st May 2022 at the British Motor Museum



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Daily Mirror London-Mexico World Cup Rally 1970 50⁺² Anniversary.

At long last, due to the Covid restrictions, the Historic Marathon Rally Group (HMRG) are able to go ahead with the planned reunion and 50th celebration of this iconic event on Sunday 1st May, at the British Motor Museum, Gaydon. This will be 52 years after the competitors left Wembley Stadium on their 16000+ mile adventure through Europe, South and Latin America.

Although originally 106 teams entered, only 96 started from Wembley and there were just 23 finishers, with the works Ford Escort of Hannu Mikkola and Gunnar Palm, FEV 1H, taking first prize. Only 1hr 18m faster than the 2nd placed team of Brian Culcheth & Johnstone Sayer in a works Triumph PI over the rugged and dangerous 16,179 mile route. One speed test across the Andes was over 500 miles long.

Some 35 of the surviving cars will be there including FEV 1H (1st) and the Triumph 2.5 PI (2nd). Plus surviving drivers and navigators including Brian Culcheth, Gunnar Palm, Paddy Hopkirk and Rosemary Smith. Also other cars from some great Marathon events, including the Hillman Hunter from the 1968 London-Sydney Marathon. And films, memorabilia, talks and interviews from the competitors themselves, team personnel and like-minded enthusiasts.

"After a two-year delay, we're all excited to finally be meeting up again, and for some of us, it will be the first time in over half a century that we've seen each other," said Bron Burrell, one of the HMRG organisers and who was part of the team campaigning the Austin Maxi known as Puff the Magic Wagon on the 1970 rally.

"The event is going to bring a fantastic selection of classic rally machines to the British Motor Museum, and it will be a wonderful opportunity for enthusiasts to see so many of the World Cup Rally cars together again. We're so looking forward to meeting visitors and talking about our experiences with them. It's going to be quite a day."

The brand new London-Mexico book by Robert Connor, '16000 Miles to Mexico City', is launched at the event relating stories of some of the lesser known entrants. Plus other memorabilia will be on show.

This is a free to attend event, although there will be the usual charges for anyone wishing to visit the main museum. HMRG can assure all visitors that they will have a memorable day out, so please make sure it is in your diary.

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Contact info@historicmarathonrallygroup.co.uk for more information.

Pictures are available at: <https://historicmarathonrallygroup.co.uk/press-pack/WCR1970-photos>

Pics attached as:-



19 April 1970 – Wembley Start



Leaving Wembley Stadium



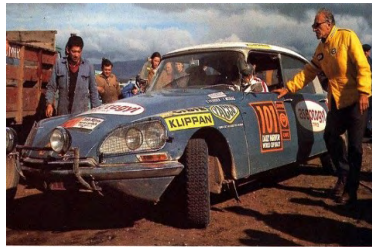
London departure



RAC signage on A2



San Remo Prime



Works Citroen



Parc Ferme at Lisbon



Control in Uruguay



Ferry to BA – Citroen



Dust clouds in Argentina



BL service area



- and in the deserts of high Andes -



off loading at Panama



Car 96 - Red Arrows - Austin Maxi
at Control in Nicaragua



FEV 1H, Mikkola & Palm
1st at Fortin, Mexico



27 May 1970 - Ford finish 1,3,5

FOOTNOTE (from a Daily Mirror report at the 45th Anniversary in 2015)

It was the longest, the toughest, the fastest and the highest – and after 45 years it is **STILL** considered the greatest car rally ever staged.

Back in 1970 the Daily Mirror World Cup Rally covered 16,000 miles across 25 countries in just 24 days. A total of 262 pros and amateurs in 96 cars tackled raging rivers, dangerous deserts, steamy jungles and perilous 15,000ft mountain tracks.

Among them was newly retired footballer Jimmy Greaves in a Ford Escort, partnering rally star Tony Fall, and Prince Michael of Kent, then a young Army officer. Setting off from Wembley Stadium, scene of England's 1966 World Cup triumph, they were bound for Mexico to mark the start of the 1970 tournament where the team would defend their crown.

And The Daily Mirror stumped up £250,000 – worth £4.46 million today – to stage the unprecedented event.