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COLIN MCRAE TRIBUTE: A MOVING, HISTORIC MOMENT WITH TEN DRIVERS AND FOUR NAVIGATORS, WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS, AT THE WRC CONFERENCE ON SATURDAY, THE CHAMPIONS FOR A CHAMPION PARADE AND THE COLIN PARADE ON SUNDAY.

MARCO BIANCHINI (LANCIA 037) WINS THE HISTORICS, SIMONE ROMAGNA (LANCIA DELTA 4WD) FIRST AMONG THE MYTH COMPETITORS, LUCIANO COBBE (FORD FOCUS WRC) HEADING WRC KIT. THESE ARE THE VICTORS AT RALLYLEGEND.

Republic of San Marino. Two extremely demanding days. Amid the passionate commitment and a welter of emotions, the memory of a true champion like Colin McRae was re-evoked for us all, a decade after his untimely death. It was an event that will be long recorded in the annals of rally history (and recorded equally indelibly in the hearts of the thousands of rally fans attending). The **Colin McRae Tribute** was a great success. An event to be treasured by all rally lovers.

Rallylegend is rally, and rally is excitement and exhilaration. True to form, Rallylegend, the champs and the teams delivered the goods. The immense crowd of spectators from all over Europe was most impressed, judging from the applause!

COLIN MC RAE TRIBUTE: TWO UNFORGETTABLE DAYS IN RALLY HISTORY

A fantastic group photograph with ten drivers and four navigator who wrote stunning pages in the annals of rally history, unprecedentedly all together on Saturday 21 October on the **WRC Conference** stage at the Rallylegend Arena. An absolute first, and an amazing opportunity then to see them all together at the wheel in the cars that, thanks to their prowess, have become the stuff of legend!

Stig Blomqvist, Ari Vatanen, Timo Salonen, Juha Kankkunen, Miki Biasion, Didier Auriol, Marcus Gronholm, Petter Solberg and the two current champs, Sebastien Loeb and Sebastien Ogier, plus Hans Thorszelius, Bjorn Waldegaard's navigator, and Luis Moya, representing Carlos Sainz, and Colin McRae's co-drivers, Derek Ringer and Nicky Grist, making for a gala 'cream-of-the-crop' assembly for the Arena homage to Colin McRae – a rally ace adored even by his direct 'foes'. The Scots champ was represented by his family, too – mum and dad Margaret and Jimmy, daughter, Hollie, and brother Alister (also an impressively experienced driver). The large public, made of moved and attentive spectators, also included many drivers and champions competing at Rallylegend, including Kris Meeke (who was something of a 'disciple' of Colin McRae's in his early days) and Thierry Neuville, awaiting his Sunday performance at Rallylegend (not to mention Sandro Munari and Simo Lampinen two legendary figures from rally's 'pioneering' era).

The WRC Conference honouring the memory of Colin McRae, compered by Claudia Peroni, included video testimony from Carlos Sainz, sorry for being unable to be with us, David Richards and Malcom Wilson, two team managers whose belief in McRae's qualities was unshakeable and Valentino Rossi, who considers Colin McRae an idol in the rally world.

During the evening the **"Champion Legend"** award went to Colin McRae, the World Champion with the highest Media accredited votes at Rallylegend. The prestigious award – from Eberhard&Co., the watchmaking maison celebrating its 130 years of activity this year – was received by Hollie McRae, Colin's nineteen-year-old daughter.

On Sunday 22 October, after the amazing World Champions group photo session, together with the cars in which they won their colours (all on display at Rallylegend Village), came the **Champions for a Champion Parade** with a special stage called "The Legend" before a delightful (and delighted) public. World Champions at the wheel in the vehicles in which they reached the pinnacles of renown. Masses of "rotund" countersteering and dizzying sprints before a most appreciative audience. The world of rally paid homage to McRae also with a **Colin's Parade**, with ten cars driven by the Scot during his career.

With this event and the rally, Rallylegend found it had a new (and important) fan in Kris Meeke: *"I'm used to driving with maximum concentration because in WRC competitions, the gaps are always a question of some tenths of a second. Being at an event like Rallylegend, which I'd only heard about but nothing more, brought me into contact with something incredible – just driving for the pleasure of driving, strutting our stuff before an amazing public from all over the world and in such numbers! And remembering Colin, who I carry in my heart. Driving his car with his family present. It was really great!"*

Thierry Neuville agrees. Neuville distinguished himself at the wheel during the morning. To amaze the public, this Belgian driver added the spice of special "numbers" in his HMI team's Hyundai i20 WRC.

MARCO BIANCHINI (LANCIA 037) WON THE HISTORICS, SIMONE ROMAGNA (LANCIA DELTA 4WD) FIRST AMONG THE MYTH COMPETORS, LUCIANO COBBE (FORD FOCUS WRC) HEADING WRC KIT.

San Marino teams dominated the **Historics**, following three Rallylegend legs, with Marco Bianchini and Daiana Darderi, in a 1985 Lancia 037, first in after an inspiring duel with Calzolari for much of the second leg. Giuliano Calzolari, with Costa at his side (1981 Ford Escort Rs) provided a fine place of honour, plus Davide Cesarini, with Gabrielli, in a 1973 Ford Escort Rs, and Stefano Rosati, with Toccaceli, in a 1979 Talbot Lotus, making for a truly impressive turnout 'made in San Marino'. Absolute fifth for Claudio Covini, with Brega, in a 1985 Lancia 037, donning Shell Elix Ultra.

Simone Romagna triumphant once more, with Dino Lamonato, in a 1990 Lancia Delta 4WD, in the **Myth** category, truly remarkable speed and heading the way for the entire race, with, hailing from San Marino, Loris Baldacci, and Magnani, in a 1998 Renault Clio Williams coming in second. Qualifying third for the Myth event was Gustavo Trelles from Uruguay, with Del Buono, in a 1990 Lancia Delta 4WD. Trelles is a big international name and a Rallylegend 'aficionado'.

Luciano Cobbe, with Fabio Turco (2002 Ford Focus WRC) triumphed for the WRC-KIT category, before the Dane, Kristian Poulsen, with Niels Iversen, in a 1998 Toyota Corolla WRC, which, during the rush, overtook Nico Signorini e Leonardo Marraccini's 1993 Renault Clio Maxi, topping the Kit category. Martin Prokop, a prestigious international figure, fourth to the finish, was essentially particularly keen to provide a spectacle for his public pitched out along the special stages.

From the very start, Kris Meeke (official driver for the Citroen team in the World Rally Championship) understood what Rallylegend was really all about. A hydraulic problem denied him an easy victory in his D-Max team 2003 Citroen Xsara WRC, with Brannigan. But he wanted the spectators to enjoy the show anyway, which was something the spectators greatly appreciated.

"This has been perhaps the most spectacular, most sporting and most historic of the Rallylegend editions," said Vito Piarulli, General Manager of the organising staff. *"And seeing all those people at the special stage and at the "Village" tells us all that effort was really worthwhile. It goes without saying that we reached a truly high point in this edition with the Colin McRae Tribute and the rally. So let's immediately work on yet another amazing get-together for 2018 ..."*

See this link for the classifications:

INFO POINT WEB SITE WWW.RALLYLEGEND.COM

The web site www.rallylegend.com is the official info point for news on everything that has to do with this San Marino event. We update the site constantly to provide you with the latest Rallylegend notices, addresses and news.

Facebook: Rallylegend Official Facebook Page.

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