



Royal Automobile Club hosts The Beaujolais Run® departure



The Royal Automobile Club, Britain's oldest motoring organisation, has been chosen as the starting point for the 2014 Beaujolais Run, an unconventional event which has grown from a race into bringing samples of wine back to the UK in the quickest time possible.

Every year, the third Thursday of November is a very special day for the inhabitants of the little French town of Beaujeu, just north of Lyon. At one minute past midnight, the Nouveau Beaujolais wine is released and the locals can start celebrating their year of labour by drinking the results of their endeavours. Initially a race to get the first bottle back to England, now with patron John Surtees OBE behind it, the Beaujolais Run has become a navigational shootout through a cryptic checkpoint course that begins in the UK and ends in Burgundy, France, with sponsorship funds going to the Henry Surtees Foundation.

The concept for the Beaujolais Run was created in 1970 at the Hotel Maritones, when Joseph Berkmann and Clement Freud were sharing a dinner of Coq au Vin. Owner of eight London restaurants - Berkmann also ran his own wine distribution company and wrote a weekly column for The Sunday Times. Clement Freud was Director of the London Playboy Club, a respectable Member of Parliament and wine correspondent for The Sun. Motivated by an evening sampling the gastronomy of Romanèche and a fierce competitive streak, the wine merchant and politician laid down a challenge; a race to see who could be the first to return several cases. For a couple of years that followed, the race was a purely private affair between Berkmann and Freud. Having taken pot-shots at each other through their respective wine columns, word got around, and The Beaujolais Run® was born.

In 1973, Alan Hall, columnist for The Sunday Times, published an article and threw down the gauntlet to Fleet Street to 'Bring Back the Beaujolais' offering a bottle of Champagne for the first to deliver a bottle of the new vintage to his desk. At that time, the object of the exercise was speed and this was brought to an end by the RAF, who later took up the challenge in a Harrier and broke all records!

Since then, The Beaujolais Run® has evolved beyond private one-upmanship with a focus on speed and bragging rights into something far larger in scale and honourable in intention. The Run has become a navigational shootout through a cryptic checkpoint course that begins in the UK and ends with a lavish dinner with the mayor of Beaujolais, where the teams join winemakers of the region to carry a lit vine clipping to witness to official release of the Beaujolais.

The Beaujolais Run® is open for all classic cars, supercars, four wheel drives and touring motorcycles to enter with each team competing for the honour of achieving P1 on the grid the following year (highest fundraising team) and P2, the team that covers the shortest distance on the navigational trial between

Rheims and Macon after visiting 'secret' way-points en route. Throughout the Run, participants are treated to an extraordinary selection of 'money can't buy' experiences.

In 2010 John Surtees OBE was appointed the event patron; with all sponsorship funds going directly to The Henry Surtees Foundation; a UK charity inspired by the memory of John Surtees' late son Henry who was tragically killed in an accident at Brands Hatch in 2009.

Media Press Call:

Monday 17 November 2014: 11.00am – Champagne reception sponsored by Taittinger, drivers briefing and interviews.

All cars taking part will be on display outside the Royal Automobile Club's clubhouse, Woodcote Park, Epsom.

12.00noon - Participating cars will be flagged away from the official start at Woodcote Park by John Surtees OBE

To find out more about the event and make a donation to qualify for participation, visit www.beaujolaisrun.com

Notes to Editors:

The Royal Automobile Club

The Royal Automobile Club was founded in 1897 and its distinguished history mirrors that of motoring itself. In 1907, the Club was awarded its Royal title by King Edward VII, sealing the Club's status as Britain's oldest and most influential motoring organisation.

The Club's early years were focused on promoting the motor car and its place in society, which developed into motoring events such as the 1000 Mile Trial, first held in 1900. In 1905, the Club held the first Tourist Trophy, which remains the oldest continuously competed for motor sports event. The Club promoted the first pre-war and post-war Grands Prix at Brooklands in 1926 and Silverstone in 1948 respectively, whilst continuing to campaign for the rights of the motorist, including introducing the first driving licences.

Today, the Club continues to develop and support automobilism through representation on the Motor Sport Association (MSA), Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and RAC Foundation, while continuing to promote its own motoring events, such as the free-to-attend Regent Street Motor Show and the Bonhams London to Brighton Veteran Car Run held on Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd November 2014.

The Royal Automobile Club also awards a series of historic trophies and medals celebrating motoring achievements. These include the Segrave Trophy, the Tourist Trophy, the Simms Medal, the Dewar Trophy and the Torrens Trophy.

www.royalautomobileclub.co.uk/motoring



A Royal Automobile Club Event

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