

Smallest Entry Plans to Make Biggest Impression at The Great Race

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June 18, 2022 (FPRC) -- The 2022 Great Race kicked off its cross-country journey on Saturday, June 18 with 130 entries. What is likely the smallest vintage car to attempt this more than 2,300-mile monumental road rally is a 1964 Morris Mini piloted by Don Racine of Grass Valley, CA, and James Stiehr of Evergreen CO.

Most recently their historic British car competed on the race track in such events as the 60th Anniversary Mini Race at Portland International Raceway and the Mini vs. Mustang Endurance Challenge at Laguna Seca. The 4 -cylinder, 1275 cc Mini has been returned to street-legal trim but will be converted back to racing specifications for this November's Challenge.

"This has been on my bucket list for many years," explained Don Racine who has raced Minis all over Europe and North America. "The Great Race is a most extreme event testing both machine and driver in sometimes very challenging conditions. Instead of preparing for a 30 or 60-minute race on a closed race circuit, we'll be traversing over 2,300 miles in all kinds of weather and road conditions."

The 1964 Mini that Don and James are piloting is one of the best-selling marques in history with the first model appearing in 1959 and the last of the small "classic" format in 2000. MINI sales continue through today in the current larger design beginning in 2001. Theirs is the only Mini entered.

First run in 1983, The Great Race consists of five divisions starting in Warwick, RI on June 18 and finishing in Fargo, ND on June 26 having covered ten states with 130 cars and 260 drivers. The oldest car is a 1916 Hudson Hill Climber and the newest is a 1973 Chevrolet Camaro and Jensen Interceptor. Entries hail from the UK, France, Germany, Holland, Canada, Australia, and the USA.

The Great Race is an antique, vintage, and collector car competitive controlled-speed endurance road rally on public highways. It is not a test of top speed but a test of a driver/navigator team's ability to follow precise course instructions on a cross-country trip. The course instructions require the teams to drive at or below posted speed limits at all times.

Each day the driver and navigator team receives a set of course instructions that indicate every turn, speed change, stop, and start that the team must make throughout the day (usually 220 to 250 such instructions per day). Along the course route, there will be from four to seven checkpoints recording the exact time that the team passes that point. The objective is to arrive at each checkpoint at the correct time, not the fastest. This format is much more mentally demanding than a flat-out cross-country race. Also, GPS or computers are not permitted and odometers are taped over. The top prize, which is \$50,000, with smaller prizes scattered throughout various categories.

About Don Racine

Don Racine is the founder and former owner of Mini Mania in Nevada City, CA. He has raced almost

every type of sports car since the 1970s, including formula cars, sports racers, and sedans at more than thirty tracks in the USA, Japan, Australia, United Kingdom, and Canada.

Like many, he began by volunteering at events and autocrossing before graduating to a variety of racing cars while developing a love for Mini Coopers. Sourcing parts for the growing numbers of Minis he owned led to founding an import business that flourished into Mini Mania, the leading restoration and performance parts supplier for both Classic Minis and the new BMW MINI.

Don has won numerous Classic Mini races in recent years, including events at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and California's Sonoma, Laguna Seca, and Coronado racing circuits, to name a few. He is one of the organizers and competitors in the Mini vs. Mustang Endurance Challenge held at the Velocity Invitational and WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca.

Their adventures in The Great Race can be followed on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/don.racine>, on Twitter @IntrepidAutoist, and at Miniology.com.

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