

Press release, EVS Viking Rally, April 17, 2009

Crown Prince Haakon of Norway and WRC driver Henning Solberg participates in zero emission rally

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway and international rally driver Henning Solberg will both be on the starting line of EVS Viking Rally 2009. The competition is a road rally from Oslo to Stavanger for zero emission vehicles only, and takes place on May 11-13.

The start list has now been published, and vehicles available from commercial vendors, demonstration vehicles, and research projects will participate in the EVS Viking Rally. The rally finishes at the opening of EVS24 Towards Zero Emission (www.evs24.org), a world congress and exhibition for electric, hybrid and fuel cell vehicles, with participants from 40 countries. EVS24 takes place in Stavanger Forum on May 13-16.

Among the participants in the rally are Mitsubishi (electric), Ford (hydrogen), Think (electric and hydrogen), Lampo (electric), Elbil Norge (electric), Tesla (electric) and a modified Toyota Prius (hydrogen). His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon and Henning Solberg will participate on the first leg of the competition, driving a hydrogen fuelled Ford.

EVS Viking Rally also marks the opening of two new hydrogen fuelling stations in Norway.

- Four hydrogen stations have been opened in Norway this far. This is the beginning of a nation-wide hydrogen infrastructure, says Ulf Hafselid, manager for hydrogen business development in StatoilHydro.

- To limit climate change fossil fuels must be replaced by climate friendly fuels, such as electricity and hydrogen. This rally will demonstrate that electric and hydrogen fuelled vehicles can be used on long distances and under rough conditions. Also, we want to show that environmentalism can be fun, says Bjørnar Kruse from the Norwegian environmental organisation ZERO.

- As a responsible motorist organisation we take global warming seriously. The Royal Norwegian Automobile Club (KNA) organised the first car race for climate friendly vehicles as early as in 1993. Our view is that driving can be both enjoyable and practical regardless of fuel. We are therefore very pleased that our members His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon and Henning Solberg are starting in the race, says director of communications Hallgeir Raknerud of KNA.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon will also participate in the official opening of EVS24 in Stavanger on May 14.

- With this EVS24 celebrates its 40th anniversary (1969-2009) as a congress and exhibition on electric, hybrid and fuel cell transportation. EVS has been a meeting point for the foremost competence communities in the sector for 40 years, says Harald Røstvik, Chairman of the EVS24 International Steering Committee and Organising Committee.

Information on the EVS Viking Rally and the route

The rally starts on May 11 at the new hydrogen station in Oslo. The station will be opened by Norwegian Minister for Transportation Liv Signe Navarsete before the start of the competition. The minister will also open the new hydrogen station in Drammen as the race passes through the town.

There are several special stage en route: auto slalom in Kristansand and Klepp, a hill climb outside Porsgrunn and a drag-race in Lyngdal. Parts of the route follows the 1931 route of Rally Monte Carlo, which started in Stavanger that year. There will also be regularity tests along the route, testing fuel consumption. For cars that lack the capacity to complete the full race, a non-competitive mini rally is staged from Egersund to Stavanger.

ZERO, KNA, the Norwegian Automobile-Sport Federation, Norstart and HyNor are the organisers of the rally. Some of the best and most experienced motors sports organisers in Norway organise the competition.

Announcement of the winners in all classes and the award ceremony will be held during EVS24.

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