

What is the FIM RALLY?



The FIM (Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme), founded in 1904, is the world governing body for motorcycle sport: MotoGP, Superbike, Motocross, Speedway, Trial and others. It is an international organisation based in Mies, near Geneva, Switzerland and represents the international interests of 98 nations who are involved in the development of motorcycling in all its sporting and touring aspects.

As well as administering the rules for motorcycle competitions worldwide, the FIM also has a commission that handles international motorcycle tourism. This commission is known as the CML (Commission pour le Motocyclisme de Loisirs – or Commission for Leisure Motorcycling). The CML is responsible not only for the FIM Rally but also for other motorcycle-related touring activities.

The FIM Rally is an international meeting for motorcyclists with about 2000 participants coming from approximately 30 nations. It is held once a year in different countries in order to make the culture of the organising country known to the participants through local folklore performances, regional food, guided tours, etc.

The first time a FIM Rally was organised was in Berlin in 1936 and this event has been held every year since then except for the years between 1940 to 1949.

The FIM Rally is a three-day event. Nowadays, organised tours are arranged before the official opening so early arrival is acceptable and even encouraged. Very often, for practical reasons, participants from the same country arrive together, which makes it a festive part of the whole meeting.



There are 17 different ways of winning a FIM Rally trophy but there are no official individual prizes: only the affiliated country with its team or club can be declared winner.

Each participant applies for participation through his national federation. The registration fee varies from year to year but normally includes 2 lunches and a picnic,

3 dinners, excursions by bus/boat/train and souvenirs. The registration fee usually amounts to around 180 Euros. This fee depends on where the event is being held and the rate of exchange between the host country and the participant's country. The participants pay their fee at the time of application.

As far as accommodation is concerned, approximately 1/3 of the participants choose to stay in hotels and 2/3 opt for camping. The alternative chosen is mentioned on the application form. The cost for camping, which includes breakfast, is added and varies in amount per person per night depending on the quality of the campsite and is also paid upon application.



The same applies for hotel accommodation and the prices vary from year to year according to the standard of the hotel.

What happens during the FIM RALLY?

Many things happen during the FIM Rally. You have to be alert and carefully read all the information you receive.

The FIM Rally is a three-day event and usually takes place towards the weekend, Thursday – Saturday, but there are variations.

The first day

Members of each nation ride together from a fixed meeting place to an Arrival Control - usually escorted by police. There is a fixed time for each nation to pass through this Arrival Control although there are other possibilities for arriving as it is not compulsory to arrive with the group. The registration forms delivered earlier are handed over at this Control in order to officially register all the participants for the final classifications and for them to receive a FIM Meritum* award form.



When all the bikes from a nation have arrived, the participants stop, cut engines and get off their bikes as their national hymn is played. The host country can decide how it organises this Control but the main objective is that it is festive.

After each nation passes the Arrival Control, the motorcycles are directed into a closed park or “Parc Fermé” and normally they have to stay there until 30 minutes after the Arrival Control is over. This is in order to stop anybody from taking their motorcycles and “arriving” a second time and to prevent the bikes from being stolen or tampered with.



At the Arrival Control a cold lunch or picnic is served and time can be spent watching other nations arrive. There is ample time to socialise and make new contacts, perhaps with participants from other countries. Establishing good relations between people from different nations is an essential purpose of the FIM Rally. There is also often the possibility of walking and exploring the city or town. In the evening, dinner is taken together followed by an opening ceremony with entertainment and a party that usually goes on until late into the night. There may also be small individual parties at the campsite.

The second day

On the second day, there is an excursion usually by coach but it could also be by boat or train. The host nation now has the opportunity to share its culture, customs and individuality as well as show things of interest close by.



A packed lunch is provided or lunch is served in a restaurant. It is not compulsory to participate in the excursion - everything is optional. If participants prefer to go somewhere else, that is up to them, but the excursion has already been paid for in the registration fee. In the evening, there is dinner and parties continue in the camping area.

The third day

Usually the morning is free for personal activities. Lunch is normally not included and has to be arranged individually. In the afternoon, there is the Parade of Nations. This is a motorcycle procession through the town and as the route is decided by the organisers and authorities, it does not always pass through the centre of the town. Many people decorate their motorcycles with flags or streamers with their country's colours. The distance ridden varies between 10 to 60 kilometres. Usually the first rider of each "team" carries a board displaying the name of the country and everybody waves or hoots when there are spectators along the streets.



Usually there is a VIP stand especially erected somewhere along the road where the town's dignitaries can watch the parade. It is very festive and there are usually many people watching. Sometimes, the national hymns are played as the nations pass by.

In the evening, dinner is taken together which is followed by the distribution of the various FIM Rally Challenges. Some participants dress up and everyone is in a party mood as it is the final evening.



The original FIM Rally Challenges are not distributed as they have been badly damaged or lost through the years. Only the main trophy - the "Challenge FIM" - will be on display and will be presented symbolically to the winning nation. Each year replicas are made of the 17 FIM Rally Challenges (including the Challenge FIM), which are presented to and kept by the winning team or club.



Finally, "the Torch of Honour" is ceremoniously handed back from the current Rally Director to the CML President or his representative who then presents it to the Director of the Rally whose national affiliated federation has been chosen to host the FIM Rally the following year. After that, the entertainment and dancing starts and people exchange shirts and pendants, etc. Often there are firecrackers and the party goes on until very late on the campsite. This is the end of the FIM Rally. The next day, it is time to return home or continue travelling in Europe, as the participants wish.

Please note

Not everything always turns out as intended but participants should not worry too much. They can either put forward a complaint themselves or ask the national delegate of their country to forward complaints or requests to the organisers during the National Delegates Meetings. Participants should always try to make the best possible use of any situation. Remember: the Rally is organised by motorcyclists for motorcyclists and, for the most part, the organisers and helpers are VOLUNTEERS!

* Regular Rally participants receive "Meritum" awards of various categories. For more information, see the Code for Touristic Gatherings.

Adapted from the original text by SMC_Sweden/June 2007