



Local teams ready to race the Rock this September

September 11, 2024 ... For over two decades, Targa Newfoundland has attracted racers from all over North America and across the globe as well as plenty of local talent. This year is no exception with teams travelling from British Columbia, Florida, Ontario, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, PEI, and across Newfoundland and Labrador to experience the challenging, world-famous tarmac rally, which runs Sept. 12-19.

Spectators along the route, which stretches over 2000 kilometres from St. John's to Leading Tickles and many points in between, support all the teams but they cheer loudest for homegrown heroes.

Popular Targa veterans Justin and Erin Crant from Paradise – known as **Husband + Wife Racing** – return this year with their wild, winged 2009 BMW 135 in Targa 1. They came so tantalizingly close to winning the division in 2023. Maybe this will be their year. They were the top team in Targa Bambina twice before. Justin and John Hume Jr. won the competitive Targa Modern division in 2017 and 2018. He was the co-driver in the winning entry in Targa Modern in 2012 and drove to victory in GT in 2010 and 2011. Justin works as a BMW Master Technician at BMW/MINI St. John's. When the Crants are not in a race car, they love to spend time with their senior chocolate Lab, Lou.

Team **Newfoundland MotorHead Racing** features driver Rob Thompson and co-driver Justin Ronayne, who both live in St. John's. Rob has been dreaming of Targa since the first time he saw the cars race past his house years ago. His parents were Targa volunteers in the early days and still have memorabilia in their Point Leamington home. Justin, a talented driver in his own right, is a Targa veteran and champion autocross racer. Both belong to Vinland Motorsport club. The pair will race a street legal, track-prepped 2020 Subaru WRX STI.

Team **WSP Motorsports** features two avid autocrossers from the west coast of the island. Driver Cameron Combdon and co-driver Andrew Keeping from Corner Brook are trying their hand at rallying, and they are pumped about it. Both are big motorsports fans and active in their club, Western Speedpark. Cameron bought a 1998 Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution V to build and race it in Targa. That's commitment.

Another pair from the west coast is new to Targa in **Knight Motorsports**. Devon Knight of Corner Brook and co-driver Logan King-Gaudon of Black Duck Siding will bring some American muscle in a 2015 Ford Mustang GT. Devon has dreamed of racing in Targa since

he was a kid watching Targa on television and seeing the cars in person as they raced around Gander years ago. Both are dedicated autocrossers with Western Speedpark. Logan brings skills as a mechanic too which will prove useful during the grueling rally.

Targa Newfoundland wouldn't be the same without the **Faster Pastor**, who has been a fixture since the rally began in 2002. The Rev. Dr. Edison Wiltshire of Clarendville is back again this September with his granddaughter Olivia as co-driver. The pastor once performed a wedding ceremony during Targa. He's previously raced in a Citroen, a Porsche 911 and a Subaru Outback. This year he's bringing a 2007 Saab 93 V6 Turbo.

Even the Florida-based team of **M2 Strategies**, with brothers Sam and Rick Marshall, has a connection to the Rock. Their granddad came from St. John's. He emigrated to the States in the early 1900s. They learned about Targa during a family reunion in Newfoundland and have been hooked ever since. Now they look forward to reuniting with their Targa family too. They're shipping their modified 2016 Subaru STI from Fort Myers to race the Rock.

Plus, a couple of wily Targa vets from Newfoundland, Paul Abbott of St. John's and Wayne Lorenzen of Gander, will be providing co-driving duties for other teams. Paul will share his classic 1989 Porsche 911 Targa with American sportscar superstar driver Randy Pobst, who added the Targa 1 title last year to his impressive list of racing victories. They've named themselves **Team Targa Tackles Targa**. Say that five times fast.

Targa Newfoundland

Owned and operated by Newfoundland International Motorsports Limited, Targa Newfoundland is one of only three internationally recognized Targa motorsports events in the world. Since 2002, Targa Newfoundland, the ultimate tarmac rally in North America, has attracted professional and amateur racers from around the world. This year's event runs Sept. 12-19, 2024. Competitors will cover over 2000 km (about 1240 miles) across the island of Newfoundland including about two dozen towns and outports.

[2024 Route Map and Road Closures - Targa Newfoundland \(targanfld.com\)](https://targanfld.com)

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