SPORT

The 1927 Bugatti Type 37A of Matteo and Martina Belotti was the oldest car competing in this year's event

WINTER WIN GIVES COLD COMFORT

Edoardo Bellini and Roberto Tiberti firmly banished memories of being runners-up in 2020 by winning the Winter Marathon for the second year in a row.

The event's 34th running started and finished in Madonna di Campiglio in Italy's Dolomites, and after more than 300 miles, 16 hours of driving and 15 mountain passes from 20-23 January, the pair won by 30.81 penalty points, heading an all-Fiat 508C podium. The second- and third-placed crews were former winners, too, these being Guido Barcella and Ombretta Ghidotti, and Alberto Aliverti and Stefano Valente respectively.

Conditions were tough and temperatures fell to -15°C as crews descended the Pordoi Pass, but out in front there was never much to choose between the lead runners. After the first leg, Barcella/Ghidotti held a useful three-point advantage over Bellini/Tiberti, with Aliverti/Valente just a point behind. The top three crews were a class apart, with an 11-point gap back to fourth. A post-dinner push for the Fiat Balilla of Bellini/Tiberti on leg two was enough to secure victory.

Of the incredible 126 crews that

Above, left-right: Porsche of Barcella/Vecchi; overall winners Bellini/Tiberti and their Fiat 508C

took the start – the oldest car being a 1927 Bugatti Type 37A – the winners were only 18th best on the regularities. Mauro Argenti and Roberta Amorosa (Porsche 911T 2.2) were joint-best performers here, together with Marco Gatta and Luigi Maffina (Porsche 356A).

As ever with this rally, there was a contest on a frozen lake the following day, this time with two trophies up for grabs. The main rally's top eight Porsches vied for one, with the top 32 finishers competing for the other. It was down to two 356C coupés for the former, as Nicola Barcella and Michele Vecchi prevailed against Domenico Battagliola and Paolo Fredi. In the battle for the sixth

Eberhard Trophy, Bellini/Tiberti were beaten in the final by Vincenzo Bertoli and Alberto Gamba in yet another Fiat 508C.

Argenti/Amorosa took regularity honours in their Porsche 911T 2.2

PIERPAOLO ROMANO

Bertoli and Gamba in trophy-winning Balilla