

MINI + LAP MOTORSPORT RALLY IN MINNESOTA



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MINI USA AND JOHN COOPER WORKS RACE TEAM COMPETE AT “OJIBWE FOREST RALLY,” SIXTH ROUND IN THE 2026 ARA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

– *MINI’s two-car factory-backed team are in Bemidji, MN for the “Ojibwe Forest Rally” round six-of-eight in the 2026 ARA season.*

Woodcliff Lake, NJ – August 27, 2026 – Today [MINI USA](#) and the John Cooper Works Race team kick off the next competition in the 2026 [American Rally Association](#) (ARA) National Championship at the 2026 “[Ojibwe Forest Rally](#)” August 27-29, in Bemidji, Minnesota. Competitors face fast-paced, twisting roads in the 10,000 Lakes region of the state.

Covering 143 competition miles, the rally is known for its quick, and free flowing stages with competitors spending much of their time in higher gear. Yet, several times during the event, the rally route gets complicated as the surface runs through narrow access roads barely wider than a car. These sections also depart from the smooth racing surface, presenting competitors the technical challenge to navigate large rocks and deep ruts.

MINI USA and long-standing partner [LAP Motorsports](#) are campaigning this year’s ARA season with two rally-prepped vehicles: a MINI John Cooper Works Countryman ALL4 in the Limited 4 Wheel Drive class (L4WD), and an iconic MINI John Cooper Works 2-Door in the Open 2-Wheel Drive class (O2WD).

MINI USA and the John Cooper Works Race Team recently secured a class podium finish at the “[Rally Colorado](#),” July 18-19 in Rangely, Colorado. The team kicked off the American Rally Association’s (ARA) 2026 season opener [Sno*Drift Rally](#) in February, securing a podium finish at its season debut in ARA National competition.

For the Ojibwe Forest Rally, the John Cooper Works Race team will feature the team of David and Drew Quillen in the MINI John Cooper Works 2 Door and the team of Luis Perocarpi and Carlos Schrunder in the MINI John Cooper Works Countryman ALL4.

"We're excited to compete at the Ojibwe Forest Rally this weekend," said [Luis Perocarpi](#), team owner, LAP Motorsports. "Both the John Cooper Works 2-Door and the John Cooper Works Countryman ALL4 have consistently demonstrated their performance and toughness throughout the ARA season, securing a few class podiums along the way, and we look forward to carrying that momentum through the stages in Minnesota."

MINI Models Show Competitive Stripes

The two MINI vehicles competing in the 2026 ARA season include the [John Cooper Works Countryman ALL4](#) in the Limited 4 Wheel Drive class (L4WD) and the iconic [MINI John Cooper Works 2-Door](#) in the Open 2 Wheel Drive class (O2WD). With initial safety-oriented modifications and ARA classes allowing minimal modifications from factory components, MINI's core performance capabilities shine through.

Underscoring MINI's adventurist spirit, the 2026 MINI Countryman is larger, offering new levels of versatility and all-road capabilities in the compact SUV category. The MINI John Cooper Works 2-Door represents MINI's iconic appearance, size, and performance, with a short wheelbase and "go-kart" handling.

Dealer Technicians Join the Pit Crew

A unique aspect to the program, the LAP Motorsports team will be supported by highly skilled technicians from the MINI dealer network who will be given the exciting opportunity to serve as pit crew at select races throughout the season.

To recognize top performing technicians from within the dealer network, four (4) MINI Dealer Technicians will be given the opportunity to join the excitement and crew for each race alongside the LAP crew. This hands-on involvement brings MINI's retail network directly into the competition, reinforcing the brand's commitment to performance and the enthusiastic community that supports it.

A Heritage Rooted in Rally Success

MINI has a storied rally history defined by the iconic Mini Cooper S dominating the 1960s with its agile handling and surprising wins over more powerful cars. Key successes include victories in the Monte Carlo Rally in 1964, 1965, and 1967, and dominance in the 2010s with the MINI ALL4 Racing in the Dakar Rally.

The classic Mini, originally designed to be both a space-efficient and fuel-efficient city car by Alec Issigonis, was transformed into a rally powerhouse by John Cooper. Its small size, front-wheel drive, and "go-kart" handling allowed it to outperform much more powerful V8 rivals on tight, icy mountain passes.

MINI and LAP Motorsports

MINI USA has had a long-standing relationship with LAP Motorsports, founded and operated by Luis Perocarpi. Since 2015, LAP Motorsports and MINI USA have collaborated with the MINI John Cooper Works Race Team competing in IMSA ST and more recently in SRO and TC Americas class of the World Challenge series.

With a winning legacy behind the wheel of MINIs on the track, LAP Motorsports and MINI USA have set sights on new racing opportunities with rally, which offers the thrill of competition to new audiences, while remaining authentic to MINI's motorsport heritage.

The 2026 ARA Season

The 2026 ARA season includes a full competitive calendar of eight events from February through October 2026. The American Rally Association (ARA) is the largest rally organization in the United States and promotes the country's only cohesive, nationwide competition for the sport of stage rally.

Following Ojibwe Forests Rally August 27-29, the 2026 ARA National Championship season continues with the remaining two events:

1. **Overmountain Rally Tennessee** September 18-19, 2026, Newport, Tennessee
2. **Lake Superior Performance Rally** October 9-10, 2026, Marquette, Michigan

To learn more about the ARA and its partners, go to

www.AmericanRallyAssociation.org, and follow live, up-to-the-minute race updates at <https://www.americanrallyassociation.org/live>.

About MINI in the US

MINI is an independent brand of the BMW Group. In the United States, MINI USA operates as a business unit of BMW of North America, LLC, located in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey and includes the marketing and sales organizations for the MINI brand. The authorized MINI USA dealer organization is represented by a network of 104 MINI full passenger car sales and service dealers located throughout the US. MINI USA began selling vehicles in the U.S. in 2002 with the introduction of the MINI Cooper and MINI Cooper S Hardtops. Since then, the MINI Brand in the U.S. has grown to encompass a model range of five unique vehicles.

Journalist note: Media information about MINI and its products is available to journalists on-line at www.press.bmwgroup.com/usa.

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