

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Monaco Grand Prix Historique 2004



**Every two years, the streets of Monaco are closed for two weekends to motor racing with the Grand Prix Historique taking place a week before the F1 circus is in town.**

This year, the Automobile Club de Monaco had gathered together a fabulous entry of historic racing cars to race on the most glamorous of circuits. There were six races mostly for Grand Prix cars divided into periods ranging from 1926 to 1976. One Sports Car race was on the programme - to be in keeping with the period when two-seaters did race around those narrow streets.



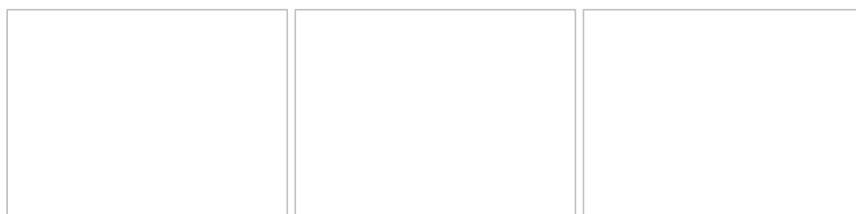
At lunch-time on both days there was a Ferrari celebration, just to get us in the mood for the following week, with 20 F1 Ferraris circulating around the track. Jo Vonlanthen's 1955 ex Trintignant 500F2 being the oldest, through to Schumacher's F2000 championship model.

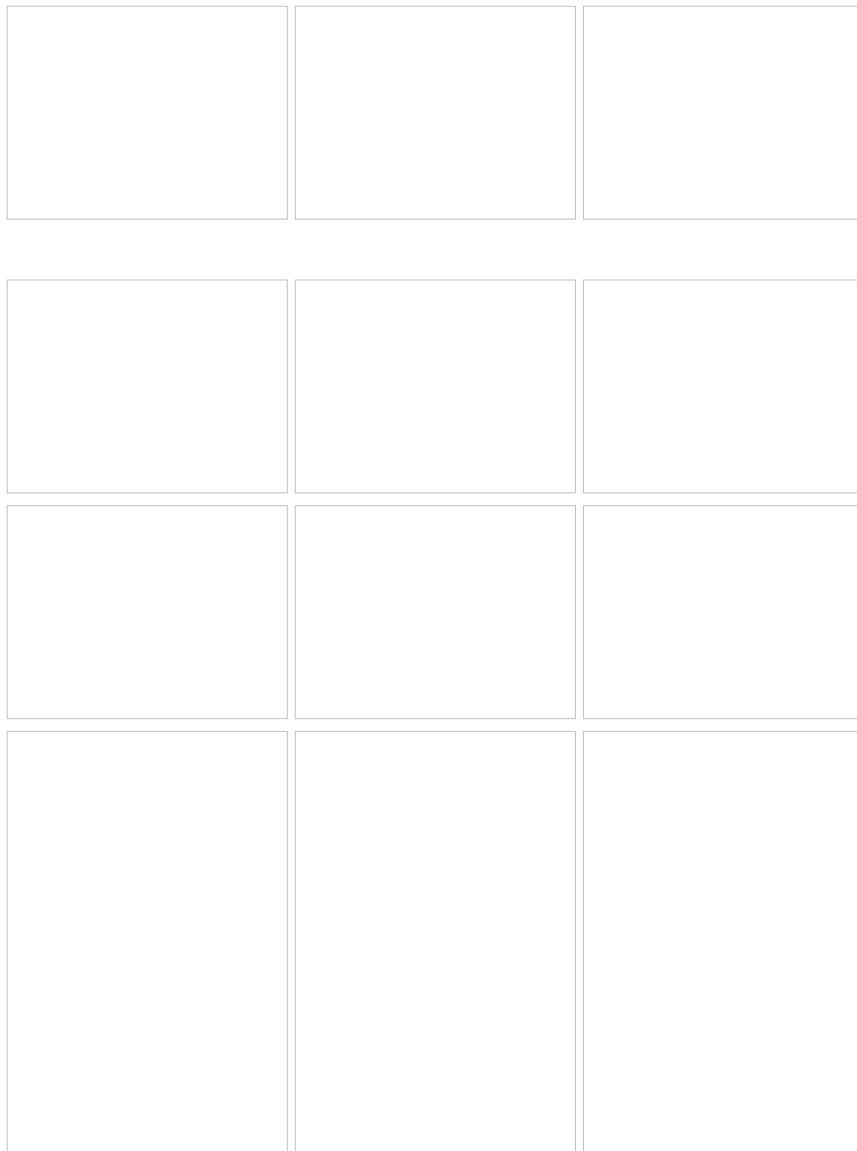
On Saturday evening Bonhams held one of their mouth-watering auctions. This took place in the Collection de Voitures Anciennes of S.A.S. Prince Rainier of Monaco, with no less than 71 highly desirable cars on the catalogue plus some very interesting Automobilia .

Sadly, unlike Goodwood, the grandstands did have some room in them on both days, although the turn-out looked to be better than two years ago. Perhaps we can see why, if you take a look at the driver numbers. No less than 78 came from the U.K., with the U.S.A coming second with 33, and Italy, which is only a few kilometres down the road, third with 18. So that seems to prove that the "Brits" do like old cars.

The racing was spectacular, noisy and nostalgic with Stirling Moss, Phil Hill and Jacky Ickx taking part. Martin Stretton had a very successful weekend and at one point looked in danger of toppling into the harbour under the weight of one trophy. Barry "Whizzo" Williams was driving his Connaught in sideways fashion as usual, although a valve problem meant a head-rebuild on Saturday afternoon so Barry's grid position was not quite as good as usual. Lorina McLaughlin was one of the few lady drivers, but managed to get her ex-James Hunt McLaren M23 well up on the grid for the 1966 -1976 F1 race. Sadly the McLaren expired a few laps before the end of the race.

The last race finished at 6.15 pm, and by 6.30 the paddock was being dismantled to make way for the "new boys" this coming weekend. They need to watch out though, because as we all know retro is the thing of the future. So make a date in your calendar for two years time, have a week in Monaco with motor racing from start to finish.





*Text & Photos - [Roger Dixon](#)*

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