

CLASSIC DRIVER

5th Grand Prix de Monaco Historique



Most motorsport enthusiasts have their attention focused on Monaco this weekend ready for the Grand Prix, and it should be a good one. But last weekend also saw Monaco ringing to the sound of Formula One engines with the biennial running of the Historic Grand Prix meeting.

The Automobile Club de Monaco had organised a wonderful weekend of events and there are few other historic meetings that can claim such an impressive provenance. Look back over the history of the Monaco Grand Prix and it reads like a Who's Who of motor racing, and when you look at the programme for last weekend at once the significance of it all is obvious. With an entry list full of historic cars, many of which have raced around the principality's streets in the past, and an almost unchanged circuit since its inception in 1929, you know that you are in for a weekend of historic, and historical, motorsport overload.



As in previous years the event is spread over two days with Saturday for practice and Sunday for racing, using the full Grand Prix circuit. Seven races were staged reflecting Monaco's history, chronologically starting with a race for pre 1947 cars constructed to the Grand Prix Formula, this race saw **Julia De Baldanza** driving a **1929 Bugatti 35B** very similar to the one that British driver **William Grover-Williams** (known as "Williams") took to victory in the very first Monaco Grand Prix, and the last race was for Grand Prix cars constructed between 1975 and 1978. There were also two races for non-Formula One cars, an exciting event for Formula Junior machines of 1959-63 vintage and a sports/sports prototype race. This sports car competition reflects the 12th Monaco Grand Prix weekend of 1952, when due to the lack of Formula One machines the races were staged for two-seaters.





Unlike the main Grand Prix weekend the historic event is very accessible with grandstand seats and basic admission included in one reasonable price. Last weekend spectators were treated to some great racing in all the classes it was unfortunate that several of the races spent some time with the safety car out. But this is Monaco with very few run-off areas so it is to be expected, fortunately with no serious injuries to the drivers. One or two disappointments, one that **Sir Stirling Moss** only managed the first practice session in his **1960 Ferguson P99** before the car gave up the ghost for the weekend and another that **Ryan Delane** went off in practice in his **1972 Tyrrell** damaging the car so badly that it is unlikely to even make Pau this weekend. A personal disappointment is the lack of famous drivers - it would wonderful to see more attend. This year I spotted the aforementioned Sir Stirling, and also **Phil Hill** and **Jacky Ickx** who gave a demo run in the **312B** during the **Ferrari Parade**.



Highlight of the weekend was the fantastic battle between **Martin Stretton (Tyrrell P34)** and **Simon Hadfield (Penske PC3)**, they ran nose to tail for the last part of the race with **Paul Edwards** in another **PC3** in close attendance until a mix-up at the Rascasse put him out of the running.

Altogether a great weekend, the next one will be in two years' time so if the history of Grand Prix motor racing is your thing you would do well to be there.

Full results can be downloaded from www.acm.mc.







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