

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## [This was the 2018 Grand Prix de Monaco Historique](#)

### Lead

This weekend, we were on the glistening shores of the Côte d’Azur for the biennial Grand Prix de Monaco Historique to bring you all the high-octane action from the principality, right here and on our Instagram channel ...

### A fitting tribute to the SuperSwede



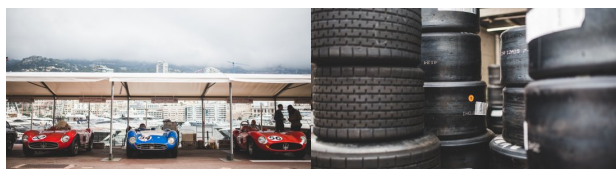
Following Ronnie Peterson’s outstanding German Grand Prix in 1972, Jack Heuer personally awarded the Swede an engraved gold Carrera chronograph. On Friday, at the picturesque Villa La Vigie, located high above the Med, a modern recreation of that very watch, built by Tag Heuer to benefit the Ronnie Peterson Foundation, was sold by Bonhams for 97,750 euros (including premium) — a stunning result for a great cause, and particularly special for Ronnie’s daughter Nina, who was in the audience as the gavel dropped.

### Senna-sational



Just a few lots later, it was time for the most highly anticipated car of the sale to cross the block — Ayrton Senna’s 1993 McLaren MP4/8A, in which he claimed his *sixth* and final Monaco Grand Prix victory. The bidding war that ensued was fraught with tension, with the car eventually going to an in-the-room bidder for 4.198m euros (including premium). Let’s pray that ACM or Liberty let the new owner demonstrate the car on the streets that made it so famous.

### Wakey, wakey



If you happened to be ‘slumming it’ on a yacht in the harbour of Monte-Carlo overnight, you would have been woken up by quite possibly the best alarm clock on earth: some 300 Grand Prix cars — from pre-War voituresses to colourful high-airbox machines from the 1970s — slowly being brought to life and warmed through.

It's 1972!



Early in the morning, we went on to have a wander around the paddocks on the waterfront and it was quite extraordinary to see such a broad and varied selection of cars. If you want a visual representation of the evolution of Formula 1, Monaco is the place to find it. There's also something rather charming about the juxtaposition of slick super yacht facades and the slightly haphazard nature of the paddock. We simply loved the Ferrari racing suit and gloves dangled over the tarpaulin fence — it really could've been 1972.

Drop-dead gorgeous



In the 1950s, sports cars raced in the principality, and a grid had been dedicated to these machines at the historic Grand Prix. And while Jaguar C-types and Aston Martin DB3Ss are all well and good, it was hard not to be bowled over by the row of mostly scarlet Maseratis. If we had to choose just one? Either Alexander Sator's thoroughly original 300S or the ex-Luigi Musso A6GCS — the latter is possibly the most beautiful car we've ever clapped eyes on.

Super seventies



The 1970s really was a fantastic decade for Formula 1, from the legendary characters to the spectacular cars. In today's world of finely tuned aerodynamics and hideous-looking Halo devices, it's amazing to see just how different these cars were — a testament to the audacity, mind-set, and freedom of their designers. Take the Star Wars-like raised front wing of the angular Brabham BT42 or the hilariously tall airbox of the Shadow DN3, for example.

From one legend to another



In fact, that race was one of the most memorable motorsport experiences we've ever had, right up there with Indianapolis at Le Mans and Eau Rouge at Spa. The haunting noise of the Cosworth DFVs, Matra V12s, and Ferrari flat 12s bounces emphatically around the harbour and was so loud that it went into your ears and straight through your feet. We were a little bit speechless, to be honest. We also caught up with Jacky Ickx and his daughter Vanina, whose smile bears an uncanny resemblance to the six-time Le Mans winner.

### Hammer time



On Saturday afternoon, the fast-paced action on the track was matched in the Grimaldi Forum, as the RM Sotheby's Monaco sale got underway. While the headline car, the 1957 Ferrari 250 GT 'Tour de France' failed to find a new owner, there were some fantastic results to note, including the Bugatti Veyron Vitesse (1.72m euros, including premium), the Pope's unique Lamborghini Huracán (809k euros, all of which will go to charity), and a 1960 Chevrolet Corvette. The latter was the opening lot of the sale and smashed its higher estimate of 120,000 euros to sell for 290,000 euros on the hammer — that's 331,250 euros all in!

### Top Cars



On Saturday evening, Tag Heuer threw a party at the Top Cars Collection — H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco's collection of cars — to celebrate its new collaboration with the museum. And it's fair to say His Royal Highness has eclectic taste. From 1990s and 2000s Formula 1 cars — including the Jordan 191, one of the most beautiful racers ever —

to 1970s sports prototypes and GT racers and 1980s supercars.

Relish the challenge



It's hard to appreciate just how technical and challenging the Monaco circuit really is until you're stood slap-bang next to the guardrail. But we spoke to various drivers, including Gregor Fiskien, Ian Nuttall, and Stuart Hall, and they were all conclusive in their thoughts: they absolutely loved it and relished the challenge. Whether it's mastering the blind crest before the casino or getting the perfect line through the swimming pool complex, they all said it's a circuit where you dig deeper and improve with every single lap.

Easy does it



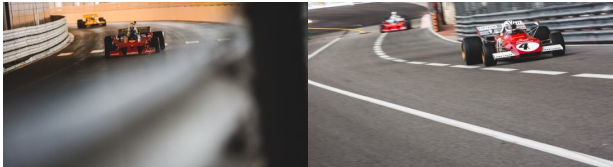
Thanks to a kind invitation from Classic Driver dealer Girardo & Co, we headed to the Fairmont Hotel to watch above the famous hairpin — the slowest corner on the circuit and, perhaps, the entire Formula 1 calendar. It was fantastic to see Joe Colasacco's Ferrari 1512 again, and he drove beautifully, finishing 2nd in Series D, behind Andy Middlehurst's Lotus 25.

Miraculous Monaco



It's remarkable that the Grand Prix de Monaco Historique gives you a better picture of just what motorsport was like in the old days than the Goodwood Revival. Perhaps it's the proximity to the cars or the amplification of the noise by the buildings, but it manages to raise the hairs quicker than anywhere else we've experienced. It's a truly magical place. And our photographer, Mathieu Bonnevie, captured it beautifully — there's such atmosphere in the photos.

Race of the weekend?



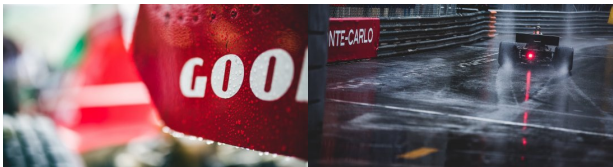
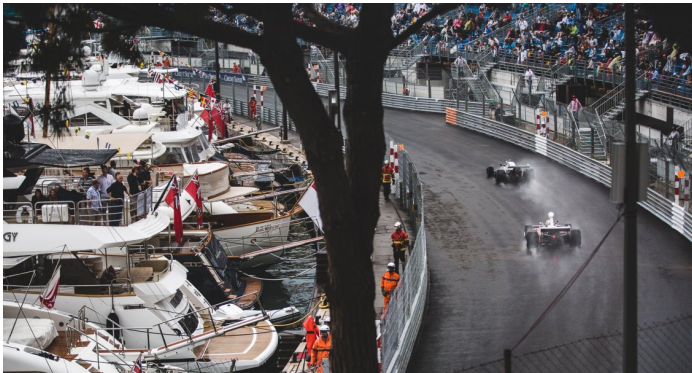
Sunday afternoon's Series E race, for Formula 1 cars built between 1966 and 1972, was arguably the best of the weekend. Second-placed Stuart Hall in his McLaren M19A breathed down the neck of Bjorn Wirdheim's March 711 for the entire race, sliding all over the place and, at several points, almost knocking his front wing off. But Wirdheim stayed true to his lines and claimed a deserving victory. A terrific drive, boys.

### Rain, rain, come and stay



While the deluge of rain on Sunday afternoon was bad news for those seeking sunshine on the various terraces around the circuit, it made for fantastic viewing, especially as it arrived before the later, much quicker, Formula 1 races. The weather change lent an entirely different atmosphere to the principality and the racing was spectacular as a result — we can only imagine how challenging it was for the drivers as they battled their way through the blinding spray and standing water. And we have to commend the organisation of the event, as crashes and spins were dealt with promptly and efficiently and the races weren't shortened.

### Until 2020



So that was that — the Grand Prix de Monaco Historique is over for another two years. As always, we were extremely impressed. Everything, from the setting and the quality of the cars to the organisation and the weather, was perfect. Like the Le Mans Classic or Goodwood Revival, its atmosphere is truly unique, and it's the tangible sense of history — like those other events — that undoubtedly helps to make it so special. Above all, it is a spectacle, and one that will perpetuate in our memories for a long, long time to come.

Photos: Mathieu Bonnevie for Classic Driver © 2018 / Rémi Dargen for RM Sotheby's



















































































































































































































































































































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