

Le Mans Classic in the firmament

The opinion is unanimous: this fifth edition of Le Mans Classic is one of the major events of the year. 96 000 spectators, 460 racing cars, over 1000 drivers, a hundred apprentice drivers... and an average temperature of 32°C all week-end long! A year of all records for Le Mans Classic. Le Mans Classic. Fifth. Action.

THE COMPETITION

The heat, very trying for both drivers and mechanics, didn't spoil the show offered by the six grids over 24 hours. This year, the first grid to begin on Saturday was the grid 3, with cars from 1957 to 1961. The Le Mans style start is always THE highlight moment of the week-end and the drivers ran towards their cars to thunderous applause after the signal given by Gérard Larrousse, ex winner of the 24 Hours. Once again the public was not disappointed: the most beautiful racing cars in the world were at Le Mans Classic. From pre-war Bugattis in Grid 1 to fiendish Porsche 935s in Grid 6, all the history of motor racing flashed by on the mythical 13 kilometre long layout of the Big Le Mans Circuit. More than forty 24 Hour drivers were present; including Henri Pescarolo, René Arnoux or Richard Attwood behind the wheel of his Porsche 917 of the time. Ex Le Mans chassis were also back: Factory Talbot, D-type Jaguar, Ford GT40, Ferrari 512 BBLM... The owners of these works of art did not hesitate to put them back on the track for the spectator's pleasure.

And since Le Mans Classic is a real competition, battles between the drivers could be admired. Finally, the team 21 made the difference, with Ludovic Caron in Grids 3, 4 and 6, Bernard Thuner in Grid 5 (1ST in scratch), Nicolas and Henri Chambon in Grid 2 and François Cointreau and Frédéric Novo in Grid 1. In the general scratch, a repeat performance for Jean-Marc Luco and his Porsche 936, already winner in 2008 with the same car.

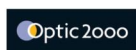
The Artcurial Motorcars Auction

To a full house in a monumental marquee in the heart of the mythical circuit, Hervé Poulain, who was celebrating 40 years of automobile auctions, sold 71% of the 60 cars presented at Le Mans Classic on Friday 9 July. The sound of the cars participating in the test sessions added to the heat and effervescence of the auction.

6, 4 million euros for nearly three quarters of the cars sold: a real success for the new Artcurial Motorcars team, manager Matthieu Lamoure and his collaborators Pierre Novikoff and Iris Hummel. 4 cars went over the 500,000€ limit whereas 15 others went easily over the 100,000€ limit.

RICHARD MILLE

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LITTLE BIG MANS

A childhood dream for many adults became reality for the 80 children who moved and amused spectators who wouldn't have missed the budding drivers Le Mans style start for anything.

From the track side, children from all over the world ran and jumped into their ½ scale racing cars. The parade for its second edition has certainly aroused vocations... Gentlemen, the relief is assured!

THE CLUBS AND CONCOURS

8 000 club cars from France, Europe and even further gathered from Thursday on the Le Mans circuit. A record for what has become the biggest car club meeting in the world. This year, the theme of the Club Concours (Cars and Cinema) rewarded the TVR Car Club de France for its tribute to the film *Opération Espadon*. The Lagonda Owners Club, wins the Club Prize.

As for the ex-Le Mans chassis, gathered in the heart of the Le Mans Heritage Club, the 1937 Adler Super Trumpf wins the Best of Show Prize and the Ferrari 312 P wins the Design Prize. The prize-winner Prize was awarded to Olivier Leclere's Rondeau M379, for the thirtieth victory of the car at Le Mans. The Authentic Prix is won by the Aston Martin DB2 (VMS 64) which seduced the Jury, presided by Jean-Pierre Ploué. The Citroën Concept Cars escorted these 24 cars on the big circuit for a lap on honour, preceded by a world first preview: the Survolt, new electric concept car of the French manufacturer which did its first spin in front of the astounded public!

LIFE ON THE CIRCUIT

With record temperatures during the whole week-end, the public of this fifth edition lived the « Le Mans Fever » in the literal sense. From the Village tribunes to the clubs, crowds were everywhere and a convivial and festive atmosphere reigned for three days ... and two nights. With 20% more spectators than in 2008, the success of the event created in 2002 is more than ever confirmed. For those who were not there, more than 7 ½ hours of images will be broadcasted on Motors TV France and Europe, and will be rerun during the summer.

For the rest, patience until 2012!

All the results of the race and concours, videos and photos, on line on our website:

www.lemansclassic.com

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