

Circuit des Remparts

Slippery when wet..



Run a week after the Revival, it looks like the Circuit des Remparts in Angoulême, which has remained unchanged since cars first raced there in 1939, got a touch of the all-weather vibe from Goodwood this year. Race day started very wet for the first practice but gradually dried up as the day went on.



It was the 53rd edition of this historic event and it celebrated Michel Vaillant, the illustrious fictional racing driver, with special exhibitions and an official poster designed by Marc Bourgne, featuring Michel Vaillant's iconic Vaillante car racing along the circuit. As always, the program was rich and diverse and included a tourist rally – which attracted 200 entrants this year plus 20 entrants for the Rallye des Doyennes for pre-1914 cars - concours d'élégance and concours d'état, a special Bugatti Brescia feature, as well as exhibitions, all leading up to race day on Sunday. It bought out thousands of enthusiasts over the weekend and sold-out grandstands for the racing on Sunday. It has become a tradition for many Brits to go to Angoulême and as usual there were many in attendance and on the race entry lists. There were also drivers from Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and Italy.

The twists and hairpin turns of the 1,279-metre urban circuit that runs alongside the city's ancient battlements rewards driving skill more than horsepower and this year wet weather only amplified the effect. Mark Elder, with one of the least powerful Austin Sevens of the day made pole for the Trintignant Plateau and finished second in the race behind the French Austin of Nicolas Komaroff, driving in a manner that seemed to make his car smile in all weathers. As the weather cleared it left plenty of grease on the track resulting in some interesting handling situations for the spectators to enjoy.

Other race winners included Maverick Gaudart (Lotus Elan Plateau Timo Makinen), Charles de Villaucourt (Bugatti T51 Plateau Marc Nicolosi), Simon Kelleway (Riley TT Sprite Plateau Raymond Sommer), local hero and event regular Damien Kohler (DIVA F10 Plateau Jean-Pierre Beltoise), Jean François Besson (Alpine A110 Plateau Henri Greder). Of note was the third place finish of Eric Hélyary in a Ford Escort in the Plateau Henri Greder.

From Bugatti to Lancia Stratos, all enjoyed the challenge of the tight corners and elevation changes of this historic circuit.

Gun Hill Studios and Austral Images sent us these evocative photos...

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