

17/03/2024



Pelamourgues opens the season by exacting revenge in Le Touquet



Three hundred sixty-four days after victory eluded him in the final special stage of the Rallye Le Touquet Pas-de-Calais, Arthur Pelamourgues exacted his revenge with his maiden Clio Trophy France Asphalte win on these same roads. Co-driven by Bastien Pouget, the Fun Meca Sport driver won the opening round of the calendar ahead of the duos Yoan Corberand - Pauline Compozieux and Jean-Claude Pietri - Jean-François Muselli. Also victorious in the Juniors category, the Rodez-born driver leads the general classification ahead of the next round, the Rallye Vosges Grand Est (14-16 June).

Thirty-eight crews turned out for the launch of season five of the Clio Trophy France Asphalte. Among them, Nicolas Hebrard, Julien Deslauriers, Enzo Beschet, and Calvin Lucas each won a Michelin tyre in addition to their starting prize thanks to a draw organised by Ceerta, the official Michelin Motorsport distributor in the French Rally Championship.

Arthur Pelamourgues, who led last year's event for a long time, was the first to strike, winning the first special stage in slippery and muddy conditions. Fourth-placed Julien Deslauriers responded by dominating the following two timed sections, taking the lead before returning to the service park at midday with a 9.5s lead. The native of Puy-de-Dôme continued his winning streak in an afternoon marked by the cancellation of SS6 due to spectators. With two more stage wins, Julien Deslauriers ended the first leg with a 30.4s advantage. Behind him, Yoan Corberand's consistency placed him second, 2.8s ahead Arthur Pelamourgues while Samuel Lay, Maxence Potard and Jean-Claude Pietri were in the hunt after a day which saw Benjamin Barnouin, Romain Fostier and Tom Vauclare retire, among others.



The rally changed shape on Saturday as the roads became drier and dustier. Arthur Pelamourgues stepped up his pace to seize second place, 19.9s behind the leader. However, the Jean Ragnotti Power Stage was to upset the order as Julien Deslauriers and Maxime Potard were among the many competitors caught out and forced to retire. Arthur Pelamourgues inherited the lead ahead of Yoan Corberand and Samuel Lay, who took maximum bonus points before suffering a puncture.

Once in the lead, Arthur Pelamourgues pushed hard to pull away from his rivals. With a 43.9s advantage at the start of the final timed sector, the Fun Meca Sport driver drove a controlled stage to seal his first victory and take his revenge one year after his exit in the final test. Symbolically, he won by a margin of 35.6s over Yoan Corberand, exactly equal to the lead he had before the final stage in 2023!

Twelve months after his promising debut in the trophy, Jean-Claude Pietri claimed his first podium finish ahead of Lucas Zielinski, who went from strength to strength throughout the rally. A newcomer this year, Andrea Pelini secured fifth place ahead of Nicolas Hebrard with the fastest time on SS14. Seventh-placed Jérôme Janny finished ahead of Néo Rivallant, who also set a best time, in a top ten completed by Enzo Beschet and Martin Massé. Despite winning two stages, Paul Dachicourt retired on SS12. Lastly, Willy Mathey also began his campaign in style, winning ahead of Philippe Janvier and Franck Giraud in the Gentlemen category.

Arthur Pelamourgues' victory puts him in the driving seat of the Clio Trophy France Asphalte ahead of Yoan Corberand, whose efforts, combined with those of Nicolas Hebrard, put Sébastien Loeb Racing at the top of the teams' leaderboard. Meanwhile, Garage Gilbert Patrick became the first leader of the Renault Network Challenge this season.

Benjamin Stirling made an impressive debut behind the wheel of a Clio Rally3 on the same roads. The Clio Trophy France Asphalte title holder scored his first-ever scratch in the category on his first special stage. After the first stage was cut short by a transmission issue, the Sébastien Loeb Racing driver and co-driver Florence Stirling rejoined the rally on Saturday to monopolise the fastest times in the Rally3 category, which the Clio of Thomas Anacleto and Marie Stirling won. Benjamin and Florence Stirling will be determined to confirm their potential in their next outing on the Rallye Vosges Grand Est.

The Gérardmer-based rally will also host round two of the Clio Trophy France Asphalte. Meanwhile, the Clio Trophy France Terre will debut its season at the Rallye Terre des Causses (5-7 April).

Arthur Pelamourgues: "This first victory is a mix of emotions. There's revenge, about this rally in particular, but also a sense of liberation after so many disappointments and a certain fulfilment after all the hard work I've put in. I think I've improved a lot, both in the way I channel my energy and in the way I drive with the experience I gained last year. I've learnt to be patient and to understand that a rally is never over, thanks in particular to my mistake here 12 months ago. I was able to build up my confidence from SS1 and the times followed as soon as I wanted them to. With a similar lead to last year's at the start of the final stage, I decided that now was the time to prove that history wouldn't repeat itself. The next round takes us to the Vosges. I've never raced in this event, but in 2023, we saw that the first loops of the rallies we were discovering tended to be to our advantage. It will be complicated as Yoan will be at his home rally, and he was super fast this weekend, but it's already shaping up to be extremely interesting!"

Clio Trophy France Asphalte – Rallye Le Touquet Pas-de-Calais

1. Arthur Pelamourgues – Bastien Pouget (J) 1h43:39.4s



2. Yoan Corberand – Pauline Compozieux +35.6s
3. Jean-Claude Pietri – Jean-François Muselli (J) +1m19.5s
4. Lucas Zielinski – Clémence Favy (J) +1m51.4s
5. Andrea Pelini – Jean-Louis Hottelet (J) +2m11.1s
6. Nicolas Hebrard – Amandine Borderie +2m12.9s
7. Jérôme Janny – Aurélien Beaudouin +3m19.0s
8. Néo Rivallant – Nicolas Blanc (J) +3m42.6s
9. Enzo Beschet – Emmanuel Guinchard (J) +3m44.0s
10. Martin Massé – Melvine Pitois (J) +4m07.8s
11. Samuel Lay – Cédric Pirotte (J) +4m21.1s
12. Nicolas Vanderweerde – Thiers Closter +5m26.2s
13. Anthony Diel – Yannis Gosselin +6m01.8s
14. Robin Mercier – Tom Pinchon (J) +6m53.9s
15. Amaury Facchinetti – Léo Lhomme (J) +7m18.8s
16. Calvin Lucas – Manon Perrin (J) +9m13.9s
17. Maxime Dojat – Maxime Passaquet (J) +10m25.4s
18. Willy Mathey – Maëlle Casays (G) +10m50.3s
19. Philippe Janvier – Benjamin Mondière (G) +13m06.4s
20. Franck Giraud – Sylvain Guillaume (G) +16m22.7s
21. David Jeanne – Stéphanie Rivallant +19m13.7s
22. Marc Pompei – Enzo Mahinc (J) +20m11.9s
23. Quentin Roger – Calie Danel (J) +36m37.3s
24. Rémy Narbon – Emeline Vo Dinh (J) +1h04m52.5s
25. Julien Labonde – Emma Bonnemort (J) +1h09m10.5s
26. Frédéric Misiek – Valérie Misiek (G) +1h15m29.9s
- Ret. Jean-Pierre Lejeune – Geneviève Arnavielhe (G)
- Ret. Paul Dachicourt – Adèle Dachicourt (J)
- Ret. Charlotte Olea – Cécile Pages (J, F)
- Ret. Benjamin Barnouin – Romain Garel (J)
- Ret. Julien Deslauriers – Amandine Brunel
- Ret. Maxence Potard – Albin Goutry-André (J)
- Ret. Thomas Santiago – Guillaume François (J)
- Ret. Teddy Turco – Caroline Puel (J)
- Ret. Romain Fostier – Ophélie Abchiche
- Ret. Tom Vauclare – Frédéric Vauclare (J)
- Ret. Maxime Krasnobaev – Pierre Delorme (J)
- Ret. Romain Misiek – Thibaut Misiek (J)

ABOUT CLIO TROPHY FRANCE ASPHALTE AND TERRE

Since its launch in 2020, Clio Rally5 has succeeded on all surfaces, including in France with the Clio Trophy France Asphalt and Clio Trophy France Terre. The two trophies contest five rounds of the FFSA French Tarmac and Gravel Rally Championships, with the two calendars deliberately independent and complementary to maximise opportunities for each competitor. Several internal rankings and the Renault Network Challenge enable all the actors to be involved and to benefit from an unique level of fairness and technical support at this level. As a springboard for the most promising hopefuls, both competitions reward their best Juniors win an official programme.



ABOUT RENAULT

Renault, a historic mobility brand and pioneer of electric vehicles in Europe, has always developed innovative vehicles. With the 'Renaulution' strategic plan, Renault has embarked on an ambitious, value-generating transformation moving towards a more competitive, balanced and electrified range. Its ambition is to embody modernity and innovation in technology, energy and mobility services in the automotive industry and beyond.