



## BARNOUIN SCORES MAIDEN VICTORY IN ANTIBES



**Fourth in the Clio Trophy France Asphalte on his debut last year, Benjamin Barnouin claimed his maiden win in the category by avoiding the challenges of a Rallye Antibes Côte d'Azur run in mixed conditions. The 23-year-old 3P Racing by GMC Compétition driver capitalised on the misfortunes of teammate Valentin Ascenzi to win ahead of Benjamin Stirling and Arthur Pelamourgues. Thanks to his runner-up result, Benjamin Stirling is the new leader in the general classification, but the gaps remain extremely narrow heading to the mid-season point at Rouergue.**

The Clio Trophy France Asphalte and its impressive field of 46 Clio Rally5 crews were welcomed by mixed weather in Antibes. Before the hostilities kicked off, Yoan Corberand, Pascal Bérard, Christophe Gouville and Franck Giraud each won a tyre in a draw organised by Ceerta, the official Michelin Motorsport distributor in the French Rally Championship. This prize is in addition to the two-tyre starting bonus for all Clio Trophy France Asphalte competitors.

Winner in the opening round of the calendar at Le Touquet, Valentin Ascenzi set the pace on home soil on Friday before Patrick Magnou replied on SS2. The 3P Racing by GMC Compétition driver fought back in the rally's longest stage, Puget-Théniers - Ascros - Toudon to retake the lead by 5.3s at midday. Benjamin Barnouin led the chase group, more than 25 seconds behind the leader in third place.

The duel for the lead was short-lived after Patrick Magnou got a puncture in the second pass of Levens - Duranus - Saint-Jean-la-Rivière. Valentin Ascenzi added SS5 to his credit to finish the first leg with a 40.4s lead over Benjamin Barnouin. With four top-three finishes in



six stages, Benjamin Barnouin returned to the Cagnes-sur-Mer service park with a 15.3 seconds advantage over Arthur Pelamourgues, who went crescendo to overtake Benjamin Stirling and Romain Fostier in a trio covered by only five seconds.

The partly wet conditions complicated tyre choices on Saturday morning as Valentin Ascenzi increased his lead to 44.8s before retiring due to a technical problem on the iconic Col de Bleine and venue for the Jean Ragnotti Power Stage. Benjamin Barnouin inherited the lead ahead of Arthur Pelamourgues and Benjamin Stirling while Patrick Magnou scored the maximum ten bonus points by dominating SS8 with a 15.4 advantage to accelerate his comeback after his puncture the previous day.

However, everything was still to play for in the decisive loop as Benjamin Barnouin saw his lead over Arthur Pelamourgues reduced to 13.4s while Benjamin Stirling was still waiting in the wings. Despite the pressure, the leader started the afternoon perfectly with his first stage win in SS10, leaving his pursuers to fight for second place. Benjamin Barnouin kept a cool head to claim the win, 24.4s ahead of Benjamin Stirling, who overtook Arthur Pelamourgues in the final timed sector. The three Juniors finished ahead of Romain Fostier and Patrick Magnou, who moved up to fifth place at the expense of Corsican drivers Pierre-Paul Baltolu and Jean-Claude Pietri. Jordan D'Agostino, Yoan Corberand and Yannick Francisci completed the top ten. Pascal Bérard took top honours in the Gentleman category ahead of Franck Giraud and Frédéric Perrard, whilst Manon Massarotto dominated the Women's category.

The top three are only eight points apart in the general classification. Benjamin Stirling's second podium result of the season puts him in the lead ahead of Benjamin Barnouin and Yoan Corberand. Meanwhile, Patrick Magnou now leads the Jean Ragnotti Power Stage classification, while Sébastien Loeb Racing and Groupe Bertrand retain the lead in the Team and Renault Network Challenge classifications.

In addition to Clio Trophy France Asphalte, Tom Pieri led Clio Rally3 to victory in his category and finished in the overall top ten, with a sixth fastest time on SS5. Clio Rally4 was also successful, with Julien Brégeon winning the RC4 class and Allison Viano taking the top step of a podium monopolised by Renault in the French Women's Rally Championship.

Clio Trophy France Asphalte now focuses on the Aveyron Rouergue Occitanie Rally (6-8 July), which will mark the season's midway point. In the meantime, the Clio Trophy France Terre will head to the Rallye Terre d'Aléria (1-3 June).

#### **Clio Trophy France Asphalte - Rallye Antibes Côte d'Azur**

1. Benjamin Barnouin – Enzo Mahinc (J) 2h31:25.2s
2. Benjamin Stirling – Florence Stirling (J) +24.4s
3. Arthur Pelamourgues – Alizée Pottier (J) +44.7s
4. Romain Fostier – Ophélie Abchiche +1:06.1s
5. Patrick Magnou – Anthony Vilanova +1:59.8s
6. Pierre Paul Baltolu – Margot Dupuy (J) +2:14.6s
7. Jean-Claude Pietri – Kylian Sarmezan (J) +2:35.1s
8. Jordan D'Agostino – Florian Chardon (J) +2:51.0s
9. Yoan Corberand – Manon Deliot +3:20.4s
10. Yannick Francisci – François-Marie Ghelardini (J) +3:33.8s
11. Tobias Laurence – Florian Duthu (J) +3:35.5s
12. Tom Vauclare – Frédéric Vauclare (J) +3:37.5s
13. Mattéo Chatillon – Brice Ricou (J) +4:21.3s
14. Samuel Lay – Geoffrey Brion (J) +4:44.3s
15. Nicolas Hebrard – Amandine Houry +5:44.8s
16. Enzo Baraccani – Yann Ferrier (J) +6:51.1s
17. Pascal Bérard – Caroline Berard (G) +7:25.8s



18. Matthieu Fassio – Eddy Jabeneau +7:43.1s
19. Romain Perrin – Albin Goutry-André (J) +8:02.9s
20. Julien Anthérieu – Faustin Frutoso (J) +8:08.6s
21. Nicolas Paviet-Roche – Mélodie Bellavarde +9:44.1s
22. Alexis Delorme – Angeline Ravier (J) +10:40.9s
23. Sylvain Janny – Mireille Guy +11:11.8s
24. Manon Massarotto – Patrick Chiappe (J, F) +12:24.7s
25. Franck Giraud – Sylvain Guillaume (G) +14:14.3s
26. Frédéric Perrard – Francis Leclercq (G) +14:28.5s
27. Dominique Patenotte – Julien Loiseau (G) +15:35.5s
28. Ugo Girardeau – Julien Bichon +16:11.7s
29. Théo Apchie – Aurélie Vedrine (J) +17:48.1s
30. Carla Gaffayoli – Manon Perrin (J, F) +18:11.3s
31. Jérémy Rieu – Léa Hiroux-Figari +18:27.5s
32. Patrick Favre – Clément Certano (G) +20:17.5s
33. Quentin Roger – Alysée Poillon (J) +21:30.9s
34. Christophe Gouville – François Heer +21:44.6s
35. Willy Mathey – Mathieu Favreau (G) +25:31.6s
36. Julien Charnay – Charlotte Baille +35:43.5s
- Ret. Arthur Roche – Quentin Proust (J)
- Ret. Matthieu Suzzarini – Sonny Postel
- Ret. Jean-Pierre Lejeune – Geneviève Arnavielhe (G)
- Ret. Valentin Ascenzi – Marine Lacruz (J)
- Ret. Tom Pellerey – Hervé Faucher (J)
- Ret. Enzo Beschet – Romain Gandre (J)
- Ret. Julien Deslauriers – Amandine Brunel
- Ret. Mike Souvigné – Yoan De Mol (G)
- Ret. Gabriel Conti – Maxime Cruard (J)
- Ret. Dylan Gagnière – Maryne Bonne (J)
- DNS. José Da Cunha – Magalie Da Cunha (G)

## ABOUT THE CLIO TROPHY FRANCE ASPHALTE AND TERRE

After a successful launch, Clio Rally5 is now taking on all surfaces with the Clio Trophy France Asphalte and the Clio Trophy France Terre. With two calendars intentionally independent and complementary to maximise the opportunities for all, each trophy consists of five rounds of the FFSA French Tarmac or Gravel Rally Championship. Junior, Gentlemen, Female and Teams categories allow all the contenders to be valorised while enjoying unrivalled technical support and a unique level of equity at this level of the pyramid. A real springboard for the most promising hopefuls, the best Juniors on each surface at the end of the year will be offered 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.