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NEW SEASON, NEW CHALLENGES IN THE CLIO CUP



The Clio Cup makes its return this week to kick off a 2022 season that promises to be more spectacular, intense and undecided than ever. From Friday, nearly thirty drivers will be in action at the Circuit Paul Armagnac in Nogaro for the first of fourteen Clio Cup Series meetings.

After bringing together more than 100 competitors across Europe for its 30th anniversary, the heir to the R8 Gordini Cup returns to the track for more exciting races. Faithful to its values of performance, reliability, fairness and affordability, the category will welcome 28 protagonists to start this new campaign, which will see the reintroduction of regional series' alongside the Clio Cup Europe. For this first round of 2022, Clio Cup France will have the honour of kicking off the season, but several drivers will also be on hand to fine-tune their preparations for their upcoming meetings!

The tenors return

Nicolas Milan, David Pouget, Marc Guillot was last year's Clio Cup Europe trifecta. Although competitors entered in Clio Cup France at Nogaro are the only drivers eligible to score points in this opening round, the three tenors of the discipline will indeed be present behind the wheel to reaffirm their ambitions.



Nicolas Milan (Milan Competition), who has won the title in the Clio Cup Europe, Group B and D (now Clio Cup Spain and Clio Cup France), will be once again a contender for victory. With thirteen titles to his credit, he will also have the advantage of competing without pressure, as he has decided to focus on Clio Cup Europe and Clio Cup Eastern Europe, as drivers can now only enter a maximum of two series of their choice. His team-mate Marc Guillot, who won the Group A and C crowns (now Clio Cup Italia and Clio Cup Eastern Europe), will be in the same situation as he prepares for Jarama, the Clio Cup Europe and Clio Cup Spain season-opener next week at Jarama.

David Pouget (GPA Racing), who was at the sharp end of the order before losing out in the final stretch, has other intentions and is more vengeful than ever as he aims to win his first title in France. Winner of the Clio Cup Spain in 2019 and already victorious at Nogaro, the Frenchman will try to score maximum points from the outset despite the emergence of some quality contenders!

A new wave?

The Clio Cup, which has played a key role in the development of young motorsport talent, saw Kévin Jimenez make the jump to the French FFSA GT Championship following his success in the Challengers last year.

The race to succeed him looks set to be extremely open, but Alexandre Albouy (GPA Racing) and Poland's Jerzy Spinkiewicz (Uniq Racing) should logically be among the favourites thanks to their category titles in Group D and C (now Clio Cup Spain and Clio Cup Eastern Europe). However, they will be joined at Nogaro by some top rivals, including Julien Baziret (Vic'Team), Guillaume Maio (GM Sport), Antoine Bordagaray (Team Borda Rally) and Léo Jousset (Milan Compétition), all determined to raise their game. There will also be some ambitious newcomers like Cédric Delcroix and Alexandre Finkelstein in the category, who join the field with GPA Racing, as well as Aurélien Renet and Joran Leneutre with JSB Compétition.

Lastly, three drivers are serious contenders for victory or even the overall podium despite their ineligibility for points in Clio Cup France. The third best Challenger in Europe last year, Mathieu Lannepoudenx (Milan Compétition) will be keen to excel on home soil. After a learning season, the Kazakh Yeraly Ospanov (Milan Competition) will also show how much he has improved, while Lin Chen Han (Uniq Racing) from Taiwan will hope to spring a surprise in his first appearance in Clio Cup.

Gentlemen Drivers out for revenge

Already fiercely contested last year, the battle among the Gentlemen Drivers promises to be just as intense at Nogaro. Crowned within the Clio Cup Europe last year, Lionel Viguier (T2CM) will be one of the favourites, but his rival "Horn" (GPA Racing) is set to get his revenge. The two men shared the spoils last year in the Gers, but they will have to keep close eyes on Laurent Dziadus (Team Lucas), who is aiming for another title after winning the Group B (now Clio Cup France) title in this category.

These three protagonists will face some familiar faces, including Jérémy Bordagaray (Team Borda Rally), Michel Faye (GM Sport), Mathieu Rigoulet (Vic'Team) and Michel Leal (Milan Compétition). After discovering the Clio Cup in 2020, Gaël Rostant and Yann-Maël Navillod return to GPA Racing, where they are joined by Pierre Monmaneix and Benjamin Cauvas, both of whom are new to Renault but well-known in French road-racing circles.

The field will be completed by a special guest driver, Julien Fébreau (GM Sport). Soon up to speed in his Clio Cup debut at Le Castellet in 2020, the French voice of F1 will put on the gloves again and could prove to be a serious challenger after his win in the Gentlemen category of the Alpine Europa Cup three years ago!

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After the practice sessions on Friday and Saturday, the two races on the Nogaro Easter Cup programme will be streamed live on the Renault Clio Series Facebook page and the Renault Clio Series YouTube channel.

TIMETABLE

Friday 15 April

9:45-10:15 am: Private Practice 1

2:40-3:10 pm: Private Practice 2

Saturday 16 April

8:15-8:45 am: Free practice 1

11:15-11:45 am: Free practice 2

6:05-6:25 pm: Qualifying 1

Sunday 17 April

12:40-1:10 pm: Race 1 (25 minutes + 1 lap)

Monday 18 April

8:15-8:35 am: Qualifying 2

12:40-1:10 pm: Race 2 (25 minutes + 1 lap)

Clio Cup Series – 2022 Calendar			
16-18 April	Nogaro	Clio Cup France	FFSA GT
23-24 April	Jarama	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Spain	RFEDA
7-8 May	Imola	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Italia	ACI GT
14-15 May	Magny-Cours	Clio Cup France Clio Cup Spain Clio Cup Eastern Europe	GT World Challenge
4-5 June	Misano	Clio Cup Italia	ACI GT
11-12 June	Valencia	Clio Cup Spain	RFEDA
18-19 June	Zandvoort	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup France Clio Cup Eastern Europe	GT World Challenge
9-10 July	Hungaroring	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Eastern Europe	GT Open
16-17 July	Mugello	Clio Cup Italia Clio Cup France	ACI GT
3-4 September	Hockenheim	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Eastern Europe Clio Cup France	GT World Challenge

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10-11 September	Red Bull Ring	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Eastern Europe Clio Cup Italia	GT Open
8-9 October	Monza	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Italia Clio Cup Eastern Europe	ACI GT
15-16 October	Le Castellet	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup France Clio Cup Spain	FFSA GT
12-13 November	Barcelona	Clio Cup Europe Clio Cup Spain Clio Cup Italia	RFEDA

ABOUT THE CLIO CUP

Since the launch of the R8 Gordini Cup in 1966, Renault has maintained a continuous presence on circuits around the world. Several thousand Clio Cups have been sold since 1991, and all five generations have been recognised for their performance, reliability and affordability. With its experience in promotional formulas and one-make series, Renault provides its savoir-faire and expertise to professionals and amateurs by offering a modern product adapted to their needs. In 2022, the Clio Cup will be in action in the Clio Cup Europe but also in Clio Cup France, Clio Cup Spain, Clio Cup Italia and Clio Cup Eastern Europe, thanks to an innovative calendar opening up numerous opportunities for competitors from all backgrounds: experienced drivers, Challengers and Gentlemen Drivers!

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.

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