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## THE FIRST WIN OF THE YEAR GOES TO DAVID POUGET



**The new Clio Cup season kicked off with victory for David Pouget (GPA Racing) at the Circuit Paul Armagnac in Nogaro. Starting from pole position, the Frenchman emerged victorious from a hard-fought battle to win the first race of the campaign, as he did twelve months ago. Marc Guillot (Milan Compétition) and Challenger Alexandre Albouy (GPA Racing) joined him on the podium while Mathieu Rigoulet (Vic'Team) controlled the proceedings in the Gentlemen Drivers Cup.**

The first meeting of the thirty-first season of the Clio Cup saw twenty-seven competitors compete in the traditional Easter Cup weekend. While Nicolas Milan (Milan Compétition) and Marc Guillot shared the top spot in the four practice sessions, the gaps progressively narrowed in the field, and David Pouget took advantage of it in qualifying to claim the pole by a scant 0.063s. Nicolas Milan and Marc Guillot were next on the grid in front of two Challengers determined to fight at the front of the order, Mathieu Lannepoudenx (Milan Compétition) and Alexandre Albouy.

While David Pouget made a clean getaway to keep the lead, Marc Guillot moved past Nicolas Milan during the first lap marked by the spin of Julien Fébreau (GM Sport). The leading trio quickly escaped from the chase group despite the tooth and nail battle between David Pouget and Marc Guillot. Marc Guillot found an opening and took the lead of the race just before the safety car entered the track as Pierre Monmaneix (GPA Racing) retired on lap four.



The order remained the same at the restart between the three Clio Cup leaders. Meanwhile, Mathieu Lannepoudenx lost several positions after a small mistake on the double-right at Caupenne just before a second safety car period after Gaël Rostant (GPA Racing) went off.

The race resumed for a five-minute sprint to the chequers. Marc Guillot still led, but his rivals stayed in his slipstream. With two laps to go, David Pouget and Nicolas Milan managed to overtake Marc Guillot, who was now under pressure from Alexandre Albouy, Joran Leneutre (JSB Compétition) and Alexandre Finkelstein (GPA Racing), who were all fighting for the Challengers Cup honours.

On the last lap, Nicolas Milan tried to catch David Pouget but the Clio Cup Europe title holder locked under braking and let David Pouget pull away and go on for the win ahead of Marc Guillot and Challengers winner Alexandre Albouy. Nicolas Milan settled for fourth place, followed closely by Alexandre Finkelstein and Joran Leneutre after a heated duel until the chequered flag. Mathieu Lannepoudenx was seventh, while Léo Jousset, Jerzy Spinkiewicz (Uniq Racing) and Guillaume Maio (GM Racing) completed the top ten. In twelfth place, Mathieu Rigoulet won the Gentlemen Drivers' category ahead of "Horn" (GPA Racing) and Laurent Dziadus (Team Lucas).

As the Nogaro meeting only offers points to drivers entered in Clio Cup France, David Pouget leads the general classification ahead of Alexandre Albouy and Nicolas Milan. Alexandre Albouy also became the first leader of the Challengers Cup in Clio Cup France, as did Mathieu Rigoulet in the Gentlemen Drivers Cup.

The Clio Cup competitors will be back at it tomorrow morning for qualifying at 8.15 am, followed by the second race of the weekend, which will be streamed live on the Renault Clio Series Facebook page and YouTube channel beginning at 12.40 pm.

## 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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