

Le Var

SPECIAL EDITION
THE FRENCH
F1 GRAND PRIX
AT LE CASTELLET



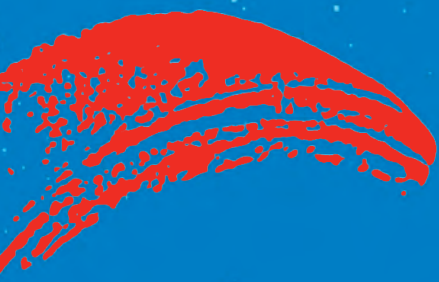
F1 GRAND PRIX

The winning return!

THE VAR, SPORTING EXCELLENCE

Rugby, sailing, triathlon, cycling, rally...

PAUL RICARD



PAUL R

INTERVIEW / Marc Giraud, President of the Conseil Départemental du Var > 2 & 3

THE FIGURES / Motor sports in the Var > 4

5 THE PAUL RICARD, A LEGENDARY CIRCUIT

MEMORIES / 1970-2018 : 49 years of history > 6 - 9

WINNERS / The winners of the French F1 Grand Prix at Le Castellet > 10 & 11

PORTRAIT / The legendary Alain Prost > 12



13 AN EXCEPTIONAL SITE

DRIVING / A very spirited F1 track > 14 & 15

THE STARTING LINE / A special F1 circuit > 16 & 17

MEET / Stéphane Clair, Paul Ricard CEO > 18 & 19

FACILITIES / A modern site > 20 & 21



22 THE FRENCH F1 GRAND PRIX

THE FRENCH GRAND PRIX RETURNS TO LE CASTELLET > 24

QUESTIONS FOR / Chase Carey / Jean Todt > 25 & 26

IN DETAIL / An international event > 27

COMPETITION / The teams and the drivers > 28 & 29

THE HIGHLIGHTS / More than just a race... an event! > 30

EXPERT OPINIONS / Yannick Dalmas / Jean Alesi > 31 & 32

DECRYPTION / Formula 1: 10 points for revision > 33



34 THE VAR - HIGH-LEVEL SPORT

SPORT IN THE LEAD > 35

CALENDAR / Of major sporting events all year > 36 & 37

ELITE CLUBS / Rugby club toulonnais / Toulon Saint-Cyr Var handball /

Saint-Raphaël Var volleyball / Saint-Raphaël Var handball / Toulon Élite futsal > 38 - 47

PERFORMANCE / Champion gala event > 48



Illustration opposite : The straight to the stands on the Paul Ricard circuit

WHERE CAN I FIND THE MAGAZINE "Le Var, special edition French F1 Grand Prix at Le Castellet"? This magazine is distributed free of charge during the 4 days of the French F1 Grand Prix at Le Castellet. It can be downloaded from www.var.fr

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"The Var, the new global destination!"



Marc Giraud, the president of the Conseil départemental du Var

In 2018 the French F1 Grand Prix returned to the Var in the south of France. This is a major event for the department... how can the success be measured in real terms?

The return of the French F1 Grand Prix to the Var last year was a great source of pride and a challenge. It was also felt as a triumph over injustice. And it was a major success!

The Var was very proud that the French Grand Prix was back after 10 years of absence from the Formula 1 world calendar. The French Grand Prix on the Paul Ricard circuit has featured some of the world's best champions including Ronnie Peterson, Niki Lauda, James Hunt, Nigel Mansell double winner in 1986 and 1987, of course Alain Prost, winner in 1983, 1988, 1989, 1990, and Lewis Hamilton, last year's champion. The most prestigious teams have also competed here with their cutting-edge machines: Lotus, Williams, Renault, MacLaren, Ferrari, Mercedes... And the event has a very enthusiastic following. The Var has rekindled strong ties with the history of car racing - ties that should never have been tested.

It was also a challenge. After 10 years of absence from France, and 27 years from Le Castellet, the French Formula 1 Grand Prix had to win back the drivers, teams, and spectators. They had to be convinced that the Var was the most natural - not to mention the most prestigious - place for car racing to be in the world. The result is a great success and a triumph over a two-fold

injustice: the departure of the French Grand Prix from the department, then its total disappearance...

The exemplary synergy of the GIP (group of public interest) unites the Région Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the Département du Var, the Métropole Toulon Provence Méditerranée, the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie du Var, the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie régionale, the Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur, the Métropole Aix-Marseille-Provence and the Communauté d'agglomération Sud-Sainte-Baume, making it possible to bring the French Grand Prix back to the Var. Each organisation made their own contribution to the project with a genuine desire to achieve a resounding success. It's a strong team which went after victory from the outset. They made sure they had what it took to succeed, and did!

The Conseil départemental du Var has made a financial commitment for several years. What motivates the investment?

The department contributes €2M each year and will do so for four more years from 2019. The investment is not as high as it may seem when the financial return, impact on tourism and worldwide exposure are taken into account. The FIA and Liberty Media were looking for committed public partners. We were there!

What are the returns for the Département?

They are significant. Prior to the first edition in 2018, the total economic return was estimated at €65M for the whole region. The result is in fact €78M! Tourism in the department, which is France's second most popular



destination after Paris, is reinforced by the worldwide exposure the event attracts. It's like an enormous projector. 500 million viewers watched the F1 around the world. The comeback of the French F1 Grand Prix to the Var has met all our expectations.

More generally, the Département is a precious partner for the sports sector. What are the main themes of your sports policy?

The department's policy, which I have been promoting since 2015, is based on performance, excellence and quality. Our key priorities are to develop access to high-level and diversified physical and sports activities, to assist sport to develop skills, to reinforce the image of Var sports and to attract more attention to the Var. We started by assisting Var sports clubs. Priority was given to clubs which aim for federal accreditation. This guarantees quality - both in terms of training and facilities. The creation of a Pass'Sport Découverte to ensure the young Var population aged from 10 to 16 has access to sports activities. Hundreds of junior high school students have already enjoyed these advantages. The dynamic and performances of Var sport encouraged us to promote athletes to participate in national, European and world competitions. They act as our ambassadors by representing their disciplines. A financial assistance

programme which awards performance and excellence in amateur athletes for individual or team sports has also been put in place. The Soirée des Champions was created to distribute these awards.

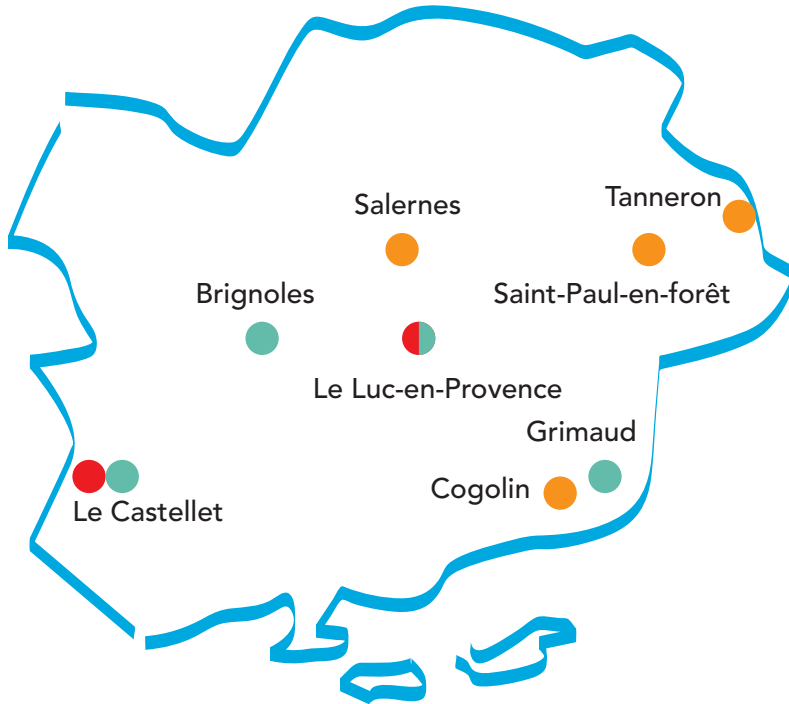
Finally, we encourage the development of an additional offer which promotes the department's high potential for outdoor sports. One of the priorities is to reinforce, to organise and to promote this offer.

The Département is represented in the exhibition area on the Paul Ricard circuit. What can visitors expect to find?

A concentration of Var sporting excellence! A diverse, fun and exciting department for sports, presented as alternatives - but complementary - to motor sports. Some fresh air, some sea air and 3D sun to boot! Microlight flights, motorbiking and kitesurfing are celebrated in three films which give a 360° perspective using virtual-reality headsets for sure fire thrills! This year our VisitVar area will promote our department to tourists over this fun four-day event, showing why our stunning area has become the new global destination. ■

MOTOR SPORTS

in Var



8 circuits in the Var have permanent accreditation (renewable every four years)

- **SPEED***
- **KARTING****
- **MOTOCROSS****

* Over 200km/h: national accreditation (Commission Nationale d'Étude des Circuits de Vitesse)
 ** Less than 200km/h : prefectoral accreditation

4,412

The Alpes Provence Côte d'Azur league of the Fédération Française du Sport Automobile has **4,412 licensees** (cars and karts). It is the league with the highest number of licensees in France (source : FFSA).

27



The number of years it took for the French Grand Prix to return to the Var.

20

Around **20 major motor sport events** are organised each year on the Paul Ricard circuit.

6,000



junior secondary students participate in awareness-raising workshops for road safety.

65

The Var rally, which winds up the French rally championship, celebrates its 65th edition in 2019.

2,900 km



The Conseil Départemental du Var maintains **2,900 km of roads** to ensure they are safe.

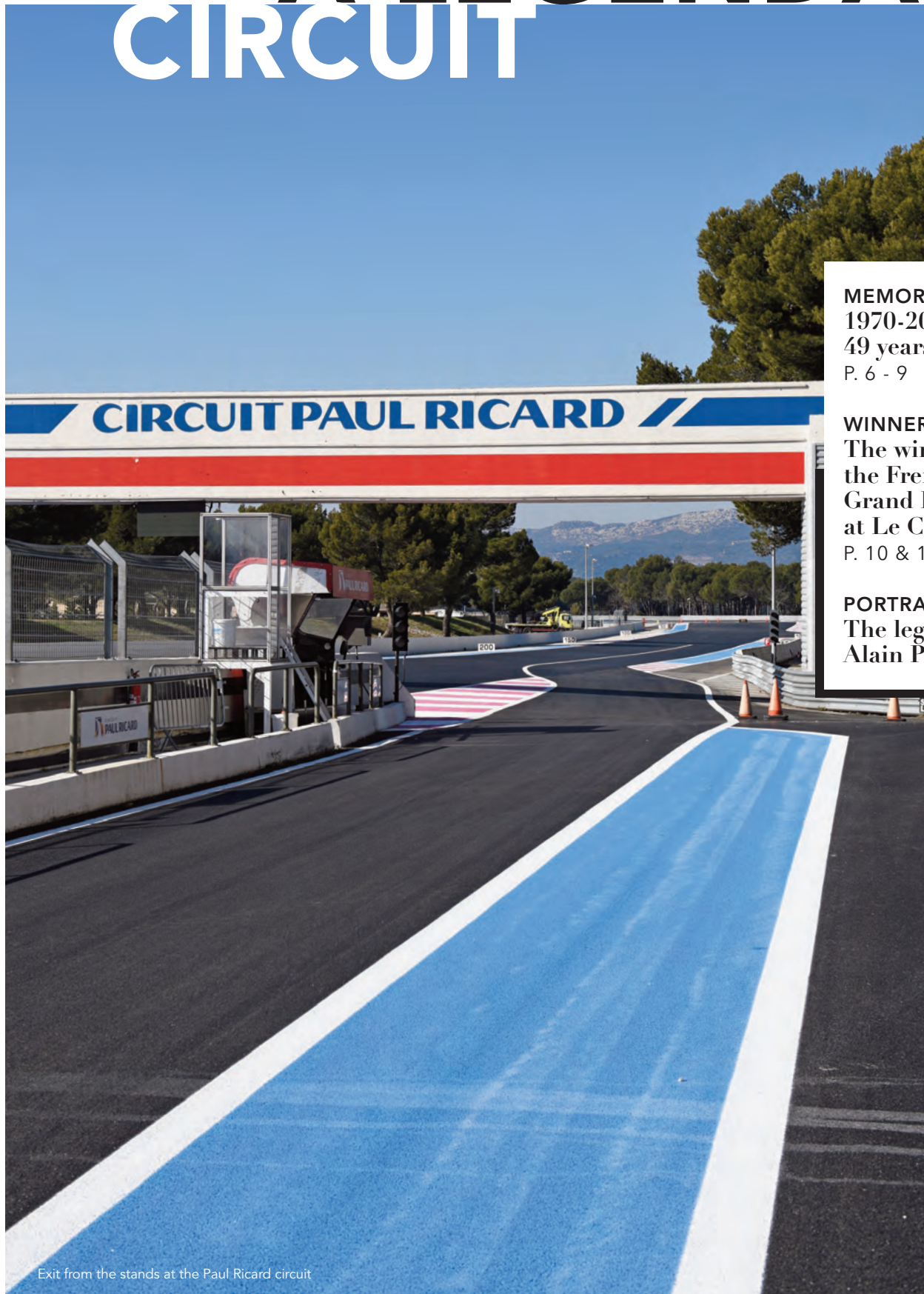
50 companies

About 50 companies in the Var area participate in a range of sectors associated with motor sports including design, manufacturing, driving schools and marketing.

€2,000,000

Every year until 2022, the Département du Var will attribute **€2M** to the sporting association responsible for the organisation of the French Grand Prix on the Paul Ricard circuit in Le Castellet.

THE PAUL RICARD A LEGENDARY CIRCUIT



Exit from the stands at the Paul Ricard circuit

MEMORIES
1970-2019 :
49 years of history
P. 6 - 9

WINNERS
The winners of
the French F1
Grand Prix
at Le Castellet
P. 10 & 11

PORTRAIT
The legendary
Alain Prost

1970-2019 :

49 YEARS OF HISTORY

Some call it Le Castellet but it is more commonly known as the Paul Ricard. The spirit of Paul Ricard, who created the Var circuit in 1970, is still omnipresent. 50 years in the rear-view mirror

THE SPIRIT OF A VISIONARY

It all began in the 1960s. Paul Ricard, the inventor of the famous alcoholic aniseed drink bought a vast plot of land on the Camp-du-Castellet plateau. He wasted no time trying to use the land to promote his brand. His goal was to target a young, dynamic audience and associate popular activities with his product. Jean-Pierre Paoli, the creator then manager of the circuit, remembers Paul Ricard.

He was *"one of the first French entrepreneurs to talk about the leisure civilisation and act accordingly. Today everyone talks about leisure, but it was revolutionary at the time!"* He thought motor sports was the opportunity he was looking for. Paul Ricard loved building even more than he loved doing business. *"He built Les Embiez, Bendor and factories around France. Managing architects and engineers and having them create something durable was very important to him,"* Jean-Pierre Paoli remembers to this day.

A BENCHMARK CIRCUIT

After several meetings where he consulted with experts, Paul Ricard ordered Jean-Pierre Paoli to create the circuit. He later became a very good racing driver, but at the time he knew nothing about motor sports. So he decided to consult with French drivers to use their knowledge to design the layout. He also worked with Johnny Rives, expert journalist at the sports newspaper L'équipe, *"In October 1969, Jean-Pierre invited us to the Camp-du-Castellet plateau : the drivers Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Jean-Pierre Jabouille, François Mazet and myself. There was nothing there - just scrubland!"* the journalist tells. *He said : "Paul Ricard wants to create a circuit here... how do we go about it? We all gave him our advice. But Jean-*



Paul Ricard - constructor



Construction of the Paul Ricard circuit

Aerial view of the Paul Ricard circuit



© Archives Ricard SAS

Pierre Beltoise, the best French pilot at the time, had the most input because he knew all about race safety. All this advice contributed to the plans of what became the circuit in record time. It only took a few months. The first race on the circuit was held in April 1970!" And the circuit was immediately appreciated in the motor racing world! It stood apart from the others with very modern safety concepts. Race fatalities were not rare at the time. And serious accidents were still very frequent. Drivers were beginning to ask questions. *"The ideal circuit had dips, bumps and spectacular bends. But it was also very dangerous. The atmosphere amongst drivers was turning. They wanted things to change! The Paul Ricard circuit was very timely"*, explains Jean-Pierre Paoli. Paul Ricard took inspiration from motorway constructions in progress. *He sent me additional specifications for application, including a wide track of at least 12-metres and no vertical corners which meant no dips or bumps. To improve safety on the track and surrounding areas, we created double safety rails, like those on motorways. The drivers were delighted to finally have a circuit where they could have fun without fearing for their lives. Paul Ricard was also very demanding about facilities for the spectators as well as the stands and paddocks. He wanted everyone to have the best possible conditions".*

THE HEYDAY

On 18 April 1970, the first F2 race was organised as a trial. One year later, in July 1971, the French F1 Grand Prix graced the circuit. The world's best drivers discovered the circuit. Some of them, like Jacky Ickx, already considered it to be the *"number 1 circuit in Europe at every level"*. From that day on, the Paul Ricard circuit was included in the international racing calendar. In 1973, the motorbike Grand Prix was raced there. In 1978, the Bol d'Or was held there. By 1999, the circuit had hosted 14 F1 Grand Prix, 13 motorbike Grands Prix and 22 editions of the Bol d'Or! The circuit also opened to races for trucks, side-cars and passenger vehicles, as well as many other events and concerts in the paddocks. *"All the major names in motor sports came to the Paul Ricard circuit which was a demonstration of the sporting prowess of the circuit. The circuit was also the venue for many other activities and events. And every event was a great success for sport"*, recounts Jean-Pierre Paoli.

But in 1990, after four years in a row at Le Castellet, the



Inauguration of the Paul Ricard circuit

© Archive Les amis de Paul Ricard

Stands - Paul Ricard circuit



© Photothèque Ricard SAS

Paul Ricard circuit lost the French Grand Prix. From 1991, the race was held on the Magny-Cours circuit which had undergone a major overhaul. Why? *"What was considered modern and cutting-edge security in 1970 was outdated by 1990"*, explains Johnny Rives. *"Heavy investment would have been required to make the necessary changes"*, he explains. And the French Grand Prix at Le Castellet wasn't as successful as was originally hoped. A rumour also spread that François Mitterrand, French President at the time, had something to do with the change of location. For Jean-Pierre Paoli, who was also part of the team which renovated the Magny-Cours circuit, *"that hypothesis is overly exaggerated. Don't forget that the Le Castellet circuit was old and having financial problems"*.

A HIGH-TECH CIRCUIT

By Bernie Ecclestone, the circuit was bought from the heirs by the company Excelis. Philippe Gurdjian was recruited as director. Major work began to make it an exceptional circuit reserved for private trials, but closed to the public. In the 2000s, it became a modern and cutting-edge centre for design and safety. Important modifications were made, particularly to the clearings on the bends. The gravel traps and wire fencing were removed and strips of colourful asphalt were added to slow vehicles leaving the track. It was renamed the Paul Ricard HTTT (High Tech Test Track). In 2006, the track received accreditation from the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and in

2007, the circuit was named first centre of excellence by the FIA for motor sport safety. *"The circuit was once again an international benchmark"*, explains Jean-Pierre Paoli. *"All circuits built since are widely inspired by the Paul Ricard!"*

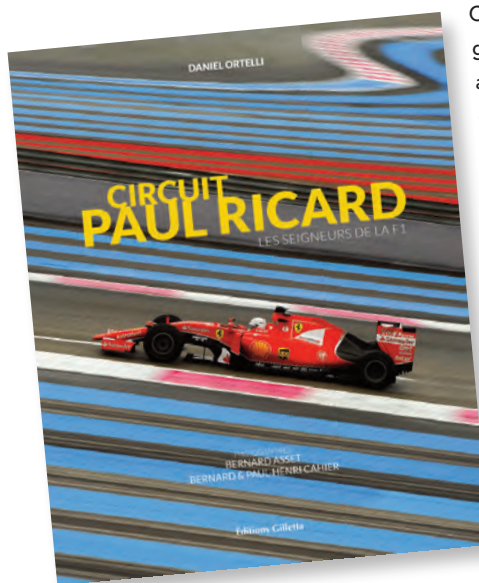
REOPENED TO THE PUBLIC

After being closed to the public for 10 years, the new management team reopened the doors of the Paul Ricard circuit in 2009. New facilities were created to welcome up to 10,000 spectators. A first race, the LMS (Le Mans Series) treated many enthusiasts to the first show on the circuit in a decade. 2010 was even more eventful with international competitions and the 40th anniversary celebration! All the major figures who had been part of the circuit's life were there.

It was the beginning of a new era! A strategy to diversify activities was launched with the return of the truck Grand Prix and the Bol d'Or after 16 years away, music festivals and the creation of the Xtrem Park. With the organisation of the French F1 Grand Prix for the next three years, the Le Castellet circuit is once again an international circuit in the spirit intended by its creator. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CIRCUIT

Lovers of the Le Castellet circuit will enjoy the book by Daniel Ortelli,



Circuit Paul Ricard, les seigneurs de la F1, which covers all the epic moments on the circuit. It also covers the 14 F1 GPs held there. Featuring photos by Bernard Asset and Bernard and Paul-Henri Cahier, the book, published by Editions Gilletta, is on sale for €29.90. www.editionsgilletta.com



LMS (Le Mans Series) race at the Paul Ricard circuit

© Circuit Paul Ricard

The winners of the **FRENCH F1**



1971 / Jackie Stewart

the first winner of the French Grand Prix on the Paul Ricard circuit was Scotsman Jackie Stewart with Tyrrell. He beat François Cevert, also with Tyrrell, causing quite a sensation in the crowd!



1973 / Ronnie Peterson

Victory of Ronnie Peterson with Lotus-Ford. François Cevert (Tyrrell) was in second position on the podium once again.



1975 / Niki Lauda

Niki Lauda won at the wheel of his Ferrari 312 T, beating Hunt by 1.5 seconds (Hesketh Ford Cosworth).



1976 / James Hunt

James Hunt, who had just made it into the McLaren team when the Hesketh team was shut down, won the French Grand Prix just a couple of months before his world victory.



1978 / Mario Andretti

Lotus made first and second place with Mario Andretti at the top of the podium and Ronnie Peterson in second place. The team had just invented the ground effect for their cars, giving them amazing aerodynamics. All the other constructors quickly followed suit.



1980 / Alan Jones

French pilot Jacques Laffite started in pole position, but it was Alan Jones (Williams-Ford) who won the race. He won his 3rd Grand Prix for the season before winning the world title.



1982 / René Arnoux

to the crowd's delight the podium was 100% French for the first time in history. Alain Prost (Renault) was beaten by René Arnoux, also with Renault. Didier Pironi (Ferrari) was in third place. And in fourth place another French driver, Patrick Tambay.

GRAND PRIX *at Le Castellet*



1983 / Alain Prost

Alain Prost's first victory (Renault) on the Paul Ricard circuit. It was his 6th Grand Prix title.



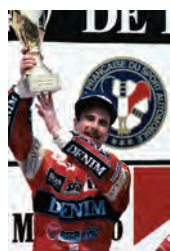
1985 / Nelson Piquet

Brazilian Nelson Piquet (Brabham) won the French Grand Prix. A computer error put Alain Prost (McLaren) second, in front of Keke Rosberg (Williams) but the error was corrected. The Finn finished 6 seconds behind Piquet.



1986 / Nigel Mansell

due to a fatal accident the layout of the circuit was changed and reduced by 2 km. Nigel Mansell won with Williams, finishing in front of Prost and Piquet.



1987 / Nigel Mansell

The Williams-Honda team with Mansell and Piquet literally throttled their opponents. Alain Prost (McLaren) finished third in front of Ayrton Senna.



1988 / Alain Prost

The two best drivers, Prost and Senna raced with the same team (McLaren). In the middle of the race, after a very complicated halt in the pit, Prost overtook his opponent coming out of the Signes turn. It was his second victory at Castellet.



1989 / Alain Prost

The rivalry between Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna, both still racing for McLaren, is at its peak. Prost won first place with a 25-millisecond lead. Senna had to abandon at the end of the first lap. Prost had a comfortable victory.



1990 / Alain Prost

Alain Prost won his third successive victory on the Castellet circuit. But this time with Ferrari. It was the team's first win in a French Grand Prix since 1975! It was also the last race on the Paul Ricard circuit. It was officially decided that the French Grand Prix would take place at Magny-Cours from 1991.



2018 / Lewis Hamilton

Marks the return of the French Grand Prix when Lewis Hamilton won on the Le Castellet circuit. He led the race from the first to the last lap after his two main opponents collided on the first turn.

The legendary **ALAIN PROST**



© Bernard Asset

Quadruple world champion, Alain Prost is undoubtedly France's best driver. He remains the only Frenchman to have won four titles in the Formula 1 (F1) World Championship. He is also the only person in the world to have won the French Grand Prix in Castellet four times, and three of them in a row!

Born in 1955, Alain Prost, who came to be known as “The Professor”, was attracted to automotive sports early in life. In 1973 he was French junior karting champion and went on to become European champion. In 1974 he was French senior champion. He began his single-seater

career in 1975 with the Formula Renault, then moved on to Formula 3 (F3). He met with dazzling success every time, becoming French champion of Formula Renault and European F3 champion. He raced his first F1 competition with McLaren in Argentina in 1980. He had just signed with Renault-Elf when he won his first French Grand Prix title on the Dijon circuit in 1981! He won on the Paul Ricard circuit for the first time in 1983. He led the race after starting in pole position. He returned to the McLaren team in 1984. He had to wait until 1988 for another victory at Le Castellet despite two world championship titles in 1985 and 1986. On 5 July 1988, he started in pole position once again. His team mate - the best he ever had - was none other than Ayrton Senna. He was also his toughest adversary! Prost finished the race with a brilliant feat, overtaking Senna leaving a long bend. In 1989, he had the best qualifying time and was once again in pole position of the French Grand Prix on the Paul Ricard circuit. Senna was obliged to abandon after the first lap, giving Alain Prost an easy win. At the end of the season he won his third world title but nevertheless announced he was changing teams. In 1990, he was at the wheel of his Ferrari when he had his third successive win at Castellet, and the fourth of his career. He won his fourth world championship title in 1993, after a season commentating rather than driving. The French driver has recorded 51 victories in 199 Grand Prix participations.

When he won the 2018 French Grand Prix, Lewis Hamilton succeeded Alain Prost, who was the last driver to have won on the Le Castellet circuit. ■

AN EXCEPTIONAL SITE



DRIVING

A very spirited F1 track

P. 14 & 15

THE STARTING LINE

A special F1 circuit

P. 16 & 17

MEET

Stéphane Clair

P. 18 & 19

FACILITIES

A modern site

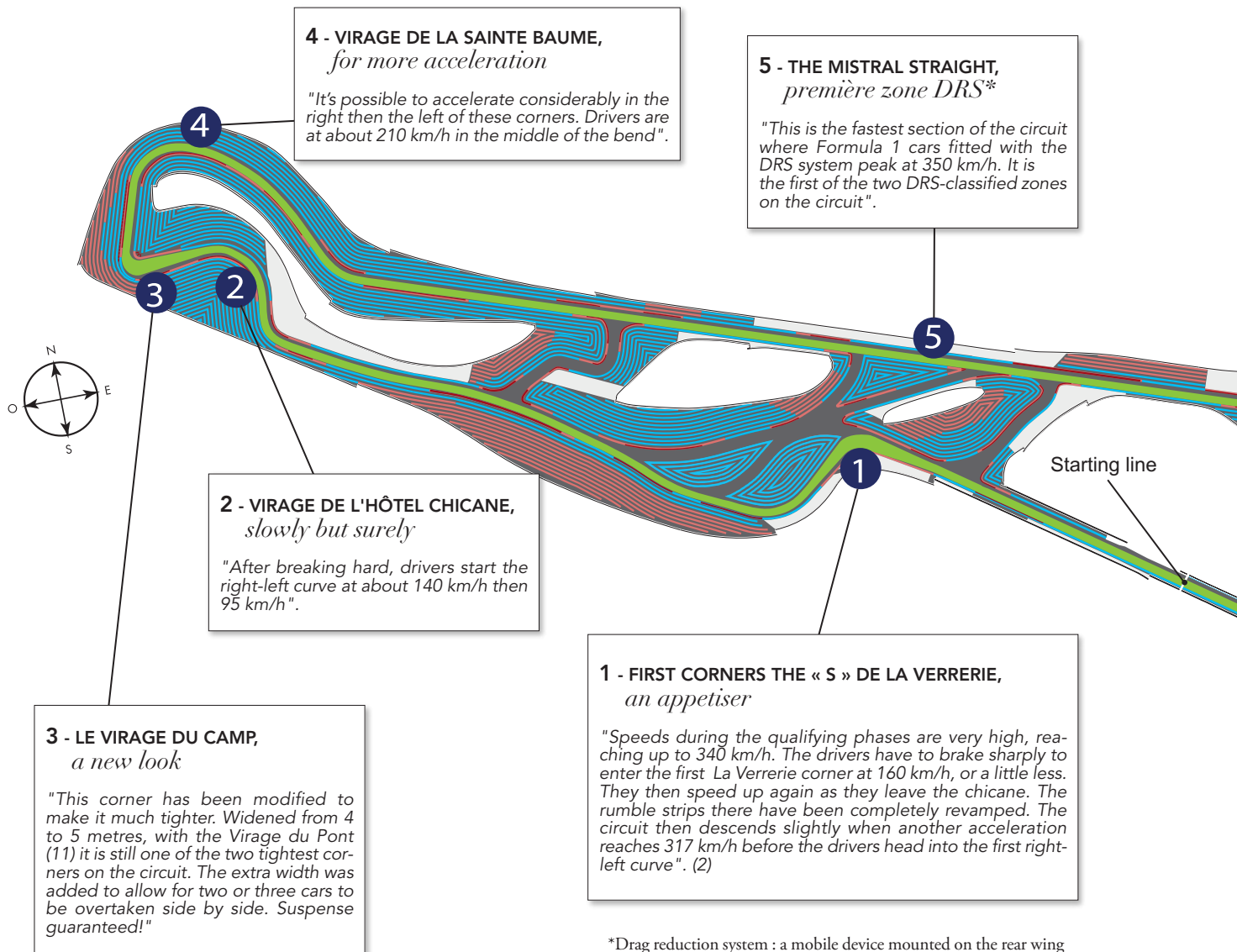
P. 20 & 21

Paul Ricard circuit today

A VERY *spirited F1*

From 95 to 345 km/h! Stunning accelerations on the two straights...pacey, technical corners with, for example, the powerful Courbe de Signes... Paul Ricard track manager, André Rey, tells us about the F1 track layout approved by the FIA*.

* Fédération internationale de l'automobile



*Drag reduction system : a mobile device mounted on the rear wing of a Formula 1 which reduces aerodynamic drag to the detriment of grip on the track.

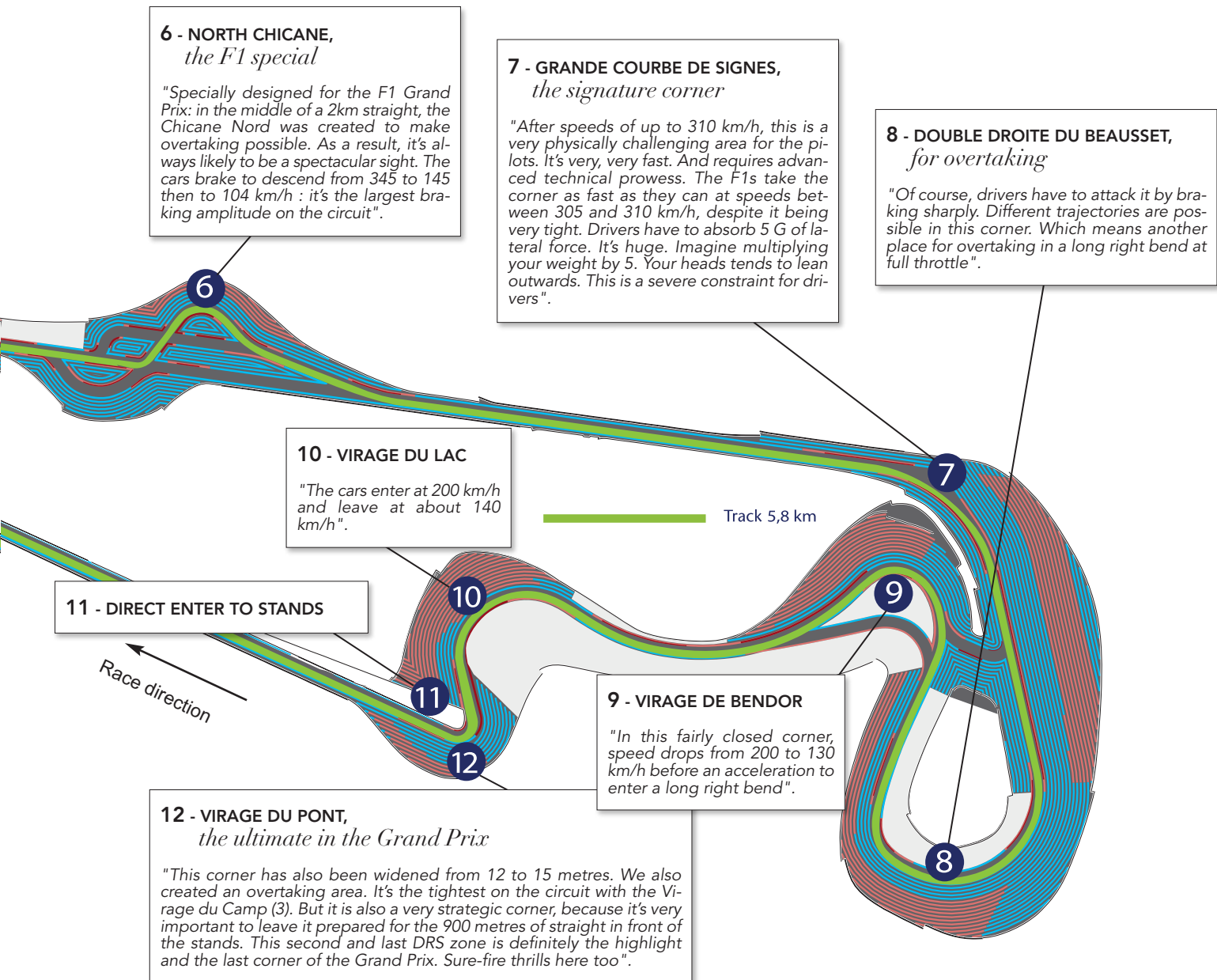


André Rey
Track manager of
the Paul Ricard circuit for 6 years.

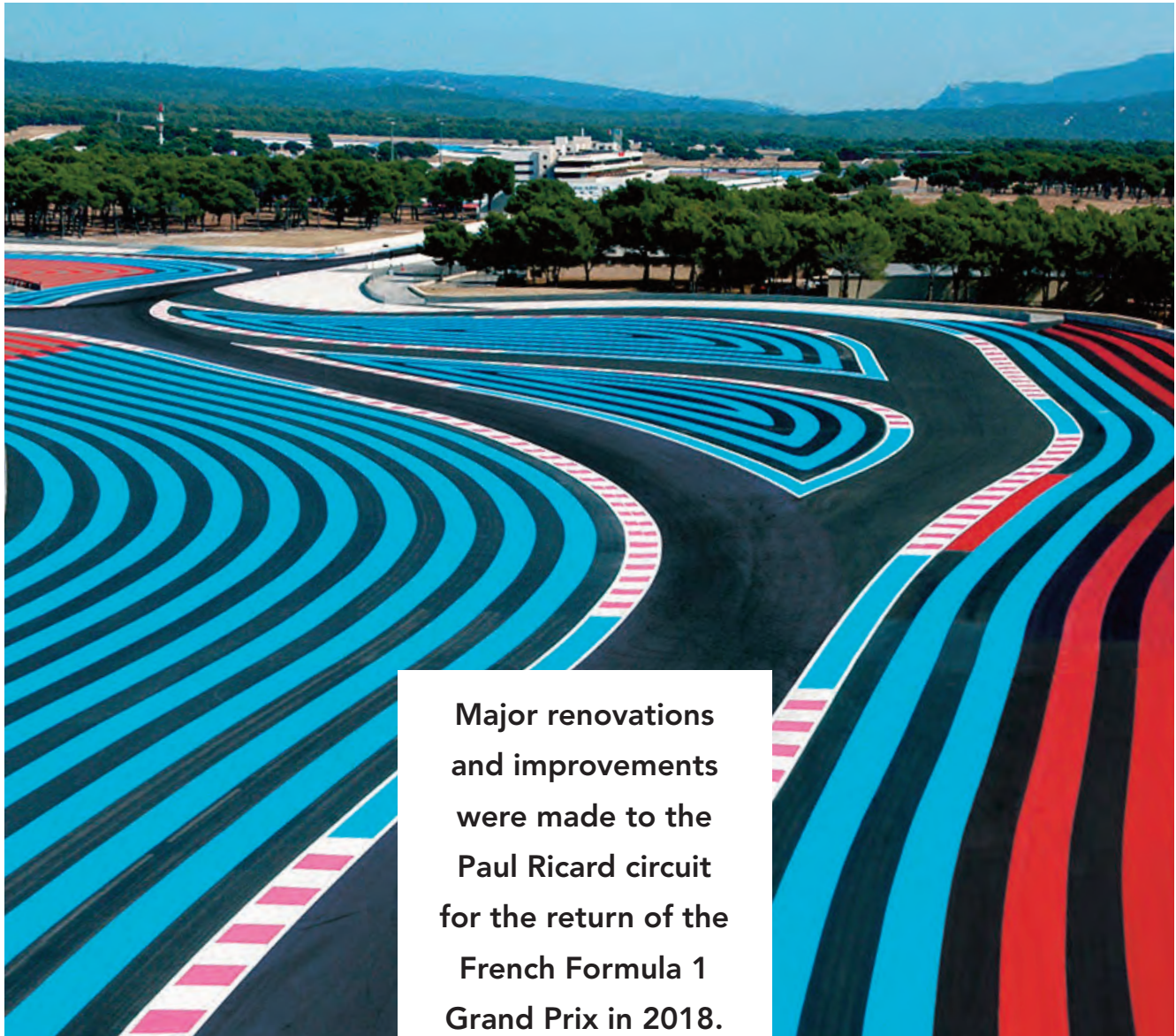
His mission: oversee safety and technical issues for the track. He adapts the circuit to the different regulations required, for example for cars, motorbikes or trucks. During the competition, he manages all the teams including the marshals* who he briefs for the races. He also organises all the necessary emergency services including firemen and ambulances. On the day of the French F1 Grand Prix race, he is right-hand man to race director Charlie Whiting. His team of 350 is dispatched between the stands and around the track.

"IT WAS A CHALLENGE TO ADAPT THE PAUL RICARD CIRCUIT TO CURRENT F1 REQUIREMENTS WITHOUT CHANGING IT COMPLETELY."

* Marshal, commissaire de piste



F1 . A SPECIAL *circuit*



Major renovations and improvements were made to the Paul Ricard circuit for the return of the French Formula 1 Grand Prix in 2018.

ONE TRACK WITH 180 OPTIONS

It took several months of work on the circuit to create areas for braking, accelerating and overtaking. The new challenging features of the 5.8 km cir-

But that's not all. Many infrastructures had to be modified before the starting signal.

cuit were subject to the approval of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA). One of the 180 options proposed by the Paul Ricard circuit - alternating tight corners, two straights and a sweeping bend - stood out immediately. Three corners were

changed for the new track: La Verrerie was widened to facilitate the start. The very slow Virage du Camp and Virage du Pont corners were also widened to increase speeds and provide opportunities for overtaking during the Grand Prix (see the circuit with comments pp.14 & 15). Finally, the Mistral Straight was broken by a chicane to create new possibilities for overtaking.

THE BLUE AND RED RUN-OFFS : THE RICARD BRAND

It may not be a recent invention, but the blue and red colour scheme created in 2000 was a world first.

The Paul Ricard run-offs are still there...more vivid than ever. They are designed to provide safety for drivers who lose control. *"If a vehicle is going too fast, they pass through the first blue zone which has grip almost identical to asphalt. This gives the driver the chance to correct their trajectory. Cars at even higher speeds can pass through the red zone which slows the car"*, explains André Rey, Paul Ricard track manager.

THE "TECPRO", AN ELASTIC BARRIER

Tecpro barriers are made by a local company. Placed one behind the other, they create a plastic barrier with internal straps. In the event of a collision, *"the barrier is deformed but not pierced. The barrier absorbs the shock and catches the elements like a net"*, explains André Rey. Given their success, Tecpro barriers are now used on circuits around the world. FIA-compliant wire fencing and tyre barriers were added to improve security around the track.

A NEW TRACK

The track had not been repaired since it was overhauled in the 2000s. Planed down by 5 cm, the track was then completely resurfaced. More durable - racing cars being very fast and with a lot of aerodynamic surfaces - it is compliant with F1 specifications which mention that *"driver pleasure should be preserved. This means that it must be as smooth and as regular as possible with absolutely no flaws. But driver pleasure also means it must not be too slippery or too abrasive"*, explains André Rey. The pit-lane was also renovated in the same way. A total of 10,000 tonnes of surfacing was required to refurbish the 90,000m² track.



THE SAFETY TEAM PREPARES FOR THE BIG DAY

The race director and assessors are in the control room on the ground floor by the paddocks. Amongst them, Paul Ricard track manager André Rey interfaces between Charlie Whiting of the FIA and other people working on the track. As Charlie

Whiting's right-hand man, he must be able to meet all his requirements during the competition such as removing broken-down or crashed cars and clearing the track and surroundings. He prepares with his team. *"We have tried to test the maximum number of possible scenarios"*, That said, he is also conscious that on the day the unexpected is inevitable... but not insurmountable.



A REVAMPED SPECTATOR AREA

With 65,000 spectators every day for three days, apart from race conditions, the challenge for the Paul Ricard circuit included reworking the public areas. A new press centre for 500 people was built and a new 16,000m² paddock created. Many events are also held on the fringe of the French F1 Grand Prix race. *"We have installed temporary stands with 51,000 seats. And three new entrances have been opened to the west of the circuit with new pedestrian overpasses to improve spectator access"*, explains Stéphane Clair, Paul Ricard CEO. ■

Stéphane Clair,

CEO OF THE PAUL RICARD CIRCUIT

You worked hard to bring the French Formula 1 Grand Prix back to the circuit for several years.

Tell us about it?

I arrived in 2011. The dream to see F1 back on the Paul Ricard circuit was already in place. I always believed it would happen, even if no one else did. I was always considered to be a silly dreamer, a crazy guy on his plateau. This led us to proceed very furtively to avoid problems we had met in the past. When we signed our contract with the FOM* nobody else knew. It was a great result. We were criticised for that. But the reaction wasn't negative.

Do you know what made the difference?

As they say...when the planets are aligned. That's exactly what happened. There was local motivation and the F1 and FOM were developing and needed France, recognised for their strengths in the discipline. And the Paul Ricard circuit was still one of the most popular.

Did support from local authorities play an important role in the Grand Prix coming back to France from 2018-2022?

It was vital. Our application depended on support from local authorities. We took a business plan backed by a GIP (group of public interest) to Formula One Management who are responsible for promoting the event. Until then, the application was backed by national authorities but lacked local support. When I took over, we worked on both the sporting and financial aspects. The Var department and chamber of commerce have always been in favour of the return of the Grand Prix.



What is the mission of the GIP which was created for the return of Formula 1 to the Paul Ricard circuit?

The GIP has signed to run the French Grand Prix for five years. The mission is to promote the Grand Prix for that period. To make it thrive... via spectators, partners, promotion campaigns and ticket sales. And a mobility service was created to address problems for accessing the site and improve the flow around it.

What makes the Paul Ricard circuit one of the most beautiful in the world? What's so special about it?

Firstly, it's not far from the coastline, at the foot of the mountains in the countryside in a sunny region. The Paul Ricard circuit is like a park. The facilities are attractive. There is a view over the sea. The design of the circuit is original... both visually and graphically. The blue and red lines are famous around the world. They are both our signature and a model for other circuits. Lastly, and unlike more recent circuits, it has a magical history.

Major renovations have been undertaken since 2001. Which changes were made for the return of the French Formula 1 Grand Prix?

We had to improve safety measures on the track because F1 cars are going faster now. We had to add safety measures to the edges, such as FIA-compliant wire fencing, tyre barriers and Tecpros (see page 17). We also had to revamp a certain number of paddocks. Because a F1 Grand Prix is more than just an F1 race. Three other races are organised during the event. We rebuilt spectator facilities to receive 65,000 people and as a result, all the amenities. In 2018 the Paul Ricard circuit invested €6.9M to prepare for the French Grand Prix. And we continue to invest. After the first Grand Prix, we observed, with the FIA, that the entrance to the paddocks was a problem. We decided to rework it. As a result, a new entrance was added with a bridge before the corner in front of the paddocks. For the sport, this improves safety but it also adds a bit more zest to the race because the time spent in the stands is reduced.

Have you been able to calculate the financial results for our department?

We estimated that it would be €5 for every €1 invested. The first year we were on target and even exceeded our estimations. Calculations show we reached over €6. This was due to the increase in foreign spectators who spend more. That's where the potential lies. And there's still room for improvement.

Now the F1 Grand Prix is here, the challenge for the Paul Ricard circuit is to succeed long term. What is your strategy for the future?

We are already heading in the right direction. The circuit is booked 300 days per year. The other days the track is closed to respect a regulatory 50-day period for accreditation. There aren't enough dates! It's a simple calculation. F1 lasts 3 weeks including mounting, delivery and dismounting. When we added it to our calendar, we had to move our existing clients to other dates and find ways to balance the year's activity. Because it's the ongoing activity throughout the year that keeps the circuit going, not the F1, which has required a lot of work so far. That said, the effect on our image is fantastic. It attracts amazing international media attention. Many international car manufacturers contact us to organise presentations on our site, for example to film videos and ads...

Do you think the arrival of a very large American group like Liberty Media* at the helm of the F1 has changed things?

Yes, Bernie Ecclestone invented the F1 economic model. He was an amazing businessman who created value from nothing. That said, he didn't want to develop the model any more. In his opinion it worked. He recognised that with the arrival of the Americans, the F1 would move in a direction he wasn't prepared to take, with social networks, stars, mass media, etc. The American model focuses on the spectators. Their F1 show is a fabulous demonstration. They wanted to show F1 to the general public on the street. Our 2018 product with all the events we organised around the race was very popular with the Americans. In their opinion, we were top of the class. They suggested other Grand Prix organisers take inspiration from us. For them, a vibrant show around the track is essential. Air shows, the French regional touch with the typical southern village, sophisticated hospitality, locally inspired catering, regional produce tastings...the Americans love all that. France was their choice for Europe. Their focus is now on attracting a younger spectator base: the 15 to 35s. They are introducing connected technology with, for example, the distribution of tablets so spectators can follow the race with an application.

* Formula One Management (FOM): the group of companies responsible for promoting the Formula 1 world championship. It was bought out by Liberty Media in January 2017 and renamed Formula One Group.



A modern SITE

150 hectares of green spaces, a 3* to 5* hotel complex, a 3* Michelin restaurant, an air club transformed into an airport, an Xtrem Park...the Paul Ricard circuit has undergone many changes over the last few years. This modern site is managed with a fervently ambitious sustainable development approach. Visitors discover a site where tourism and recreation are priorities.

It's true. Paul Ricard took pleasure in sustainable creation. Today, 49 years after its creation on the Camp-du-Castellet plateau, the site is even more modern than ever. "The circuit is a model for many other sporting facilities for its strong environmental ethic", confirms Stéphane Clair, circuit CEO. The Paul Ricard circuit adopted a sustainable approach 10 years ago, giving way to a range of actions such as the installation of a beehive system to measure air quality. Green spaces and fire posts are supplied with rainwater from the 60,000m³ artificial lac. "All our re-usable waste is sorted and recycled. For example, 2,358 litres of used oil per year and 2,273 tyres in 2017", details Nathalie Reitzer, site coordinator for sustainable development. Noise pollution is a major concern for the company. "Four devices have been installed to measure noise pollution 24/7. We have invested heavily to reduce the problem. An earth hillock measuring 8 metres high and 800 metres long was created in the Courbe de Signes. Very dense hedges have also been planted near the karting track and around the stands", explains Stéphane Clair.

And as part of the energy transition movement, "98% of office and road lighting have been converted to LED technology. And we have installed 20,000 m² of solar car shelters in one car park", adds Nathalie Reitzer. Furthermore, charging stations have been installed for visitors with electric vehicles. We have also, "added 12 electric vehicles to our own in-house fleet. And an area will soon be reserved for hydrogen technology". ■

FROM AN AIR CLUB TO AN AIRPORT

With over 11,000 movements annually, Le Castellet private airport receives aircraft from around the world. "Visitors come for the circuit and our hotels. It is also used for helicopter transfers for the Golfe de Saint-Tropez, Nice and Monaco", explains Stéphane Clair. A luxury concierge service is on call to meet the most demanding client's requests. "Thrill seekers can enjoy an extreme aeronautical experience from our airport aboard the L-39 Albatros, a military training aircraft which is for hire."





THE FRENCH F1 GRAND PRIX



**THE FRENCH GRAND
PRIX RETURNS TO
LE CASTELLET**

P. 24

**QUESTIONS FOR
Chase Carey,
president of Liberty
media / Jean Todt,
president of the FIA**

P. 25 & 26

IN DETAIL

**An international
event**

P. 27

COMPETITION

**The teams
and the drivers**

P. 28 & 29

THE HIGHLIGHTS

**More than just a
race... an event!**

P. 30

EXPERT OPINIONS

**Yannick Dalmas /
Jean Alesi**

P. 31 & 32

DECRYPTION

**Formula 1: 10 points
for revision**

P. 33

© Adobe Stock



The French **GRAND PRIX** **RETURNS** *to Le Castellet*

After a 10-year absence, the F1 Grand Prix has been back on French soil since June 2018... and in the Var no less! The French race is back on the legendary Paul Ricard circuit and until 2022.

In 2012, the return of the French F1 Grand Prix to the world championship calendar was thwarted by political and financial problems. But that all changed in 2018! The instigators of the project in 2012 : Eric Boullier, racing director for the McLaren team, Arnaud Péricard, lawyer and Gilles Dufeigneux, former interministerial delegate for major sporting events, in association with Stéphane Clair, CEO of the Paul Ricard circuit, Christian Estrosi, then Mayor of Nice and future President of the Sud Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region and other local representatives including local authorities did their utmost to bring the French F1 Grand Prix home. A GIP (group of public interest) named "Grand Prix de France - Le Castellet" was created at the end of 2016. The Département du Var immediately joined this body which included all the actors concerned by this major international event. The Conseil Départemental du Var has already made important contributions with €219,200 in 2017 and €2M in 2018. By 2020, their contribution will reach €2M each year. The economic and tourist benefits of the 2018 French Grand Prix are estimated at €78M, 20% above initial expectations. 550 jobs were created or funded near the Paul Ricard circuit. And it was a success for the general public audience, with 74,000 tickets sold and over 500M television viewers. The event was also a resounding sporting success. The entire Département du Var and all its residents benefit from these fabulous results. ■

* Members of the GIP "Grand Prix de France - Le Castellet": Région Sud Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, Département du Var, Métropole Toulon Provence Méditerranée, Nice Côte d'Azur and Métropole Aix-Marseille-Provence, Communauté d'Agglomération Sud Sainte Baume, the regional Chambre du Commerce et d'Industrie, the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Var the the company Excelis, owner of the Castellet circuit.

Chase Carey & Jean Todt,

THE MEN AT THE HELM OF F1

Respectively Executive Chairman of the Formula One Group and President of the FIA, the duo Chase Carey and Jean Todt gave the image of F1 a new boost throughout the world.

Chase Carey,

PRESIDENT OF LIBERTY MEDIA AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF THE FORMULA ONE



© Liberty media

What is Liberty Media's strategy now they have acquired F1?

The Liberty Media group decided to invest long term in what we consider to be the greatest show on earth. Liberty Media is a group of people, with Sean Bratches on the commercial side. They all work hard to constantly improve our sport, to increase the number of fans, to get the most out of it... That wasn't the case in recent years. Another group, on the sports side, is led by Ross Brawn who has immense technical and racing experience. He works with the FIA on short- and long-term development within the framework of technical and sports regulations. At the same time, he works with promoters to find the best way to improve the tracks and make the race constantly more spectacular. Reaching these and other targets is fundamental for our goals for Formula 1.

You want to take Formula 1 even further. More precisely, how do you intend to develop the F1 brand?

We want to exploit Formula 1's potential to the fullest. This hasn't been the case over the last decade, particularly at a digital level. We firmly believe that Formula 1 is an excellent entertainment sport. We want to develop both sides, by recognising that the Grand Prix is a show and trying to attract a larger and more diverse fan base. The show takes place when the Grand Prix is organised in the different countries. At the same time, we want to make the sport more spectacular. We are working with all the stakeholders, the teams and the FIA to make that possible. Always keeping in mind the fans' priorities because they are essential to Formula 1. It's with that mindset that we worked hard to discover who they are from the beginning: what they like about the sport and what else they'd like to see. It's an area that has never been closely analysed in the past. Yet it's crucial in our opinion.

You hadn't arrived at the helm of F1 when the FOM accepted France's application. What do you think about the race coming back to our country?

France has played an important role in the history of Formula 1. We are delighted that the Grand Prix is back on the calendar after a 10-year absence. We think a lot of people are interested in the sport in France and that they deserve to celebrate with these two major events: the Grand Prix itself on the fabulous Paul Ricard circuit in Le Castellet. ■

Jean Todt,

PRESIDENT OF THE FIA



© FIA

How do you feel about F1 returning to France on the Paul Ricard circuit in Le Castellet?

As President of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, of course I'm delighted that the French Grand Prix is back on the Formula 1 world championship calendar after a 10-year absence. France and motor sports have a common history from the outset. It's not a coincidence that the term still in use today is "Grand Prix". The French F1 Grand Prix is one of the greatest international races, as is the 24 Hours of Le Mans. What's more, the choice of Le Castellet circuit in the Var, one France's most beautiful areas in Provence, one of our most stunning regions, is a reminder of the glorious years in the 70s and 80s. This will also be a major factor for its success.

Do you know the circuit?

I saw it being created and watched the first race held there. It has a unique atmosphere. I appreciate the original layout with the legendary Mistral straight and the famous Courbe de Signes, but I also salute the work undertaken to modernise the circuit, with bigger stands and a new press room.

The FIA, the circuit, the GIP, the FOM (bought out by Liberty Media at the beginning of 2017) and other specialists have been carefully reflecting on the 2018 French Grand Prix in Le Castellet. Does the Federation impose certain criteria?

Of course, safety is a major priority for the FIA - for the drivers, stewards and the spectators - during the trials and the race. Safety on the tracks is one of the main issues. We have made a lot of progress on that subject over the last few years.

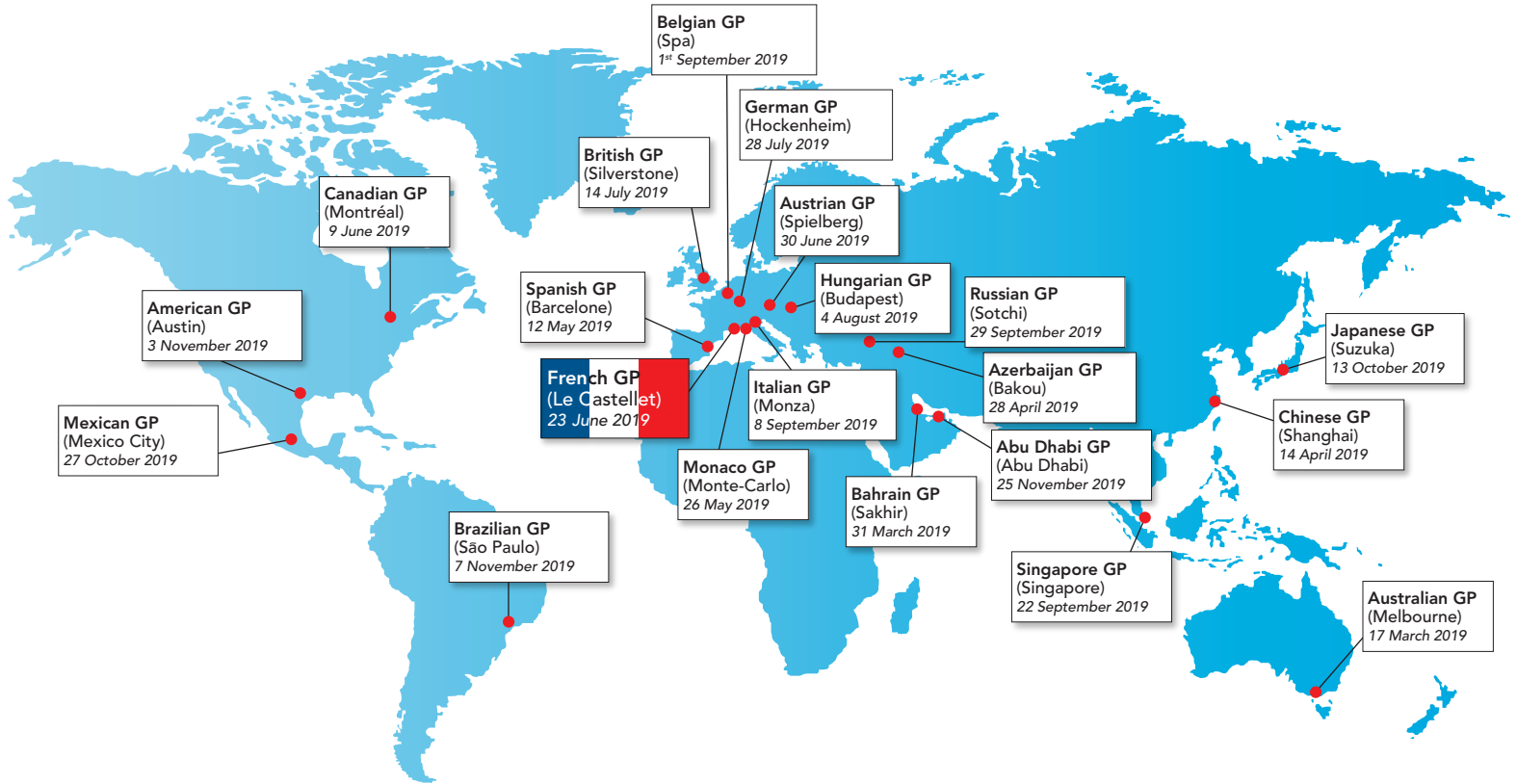
What is your relationship with Liberty Media which is responsible for organising and promoting F1 races?

Excellent. We each have our own role: the FIA is the motor sports regulator, responsible for the rules and long-term development. Liberty Media is the promoter responsible for financial and commercial sides. This distinction is necessary...but more importantly it doesn't prevent us defending shared objectives like improving the show, reinforcing security and cost control.

In 2015 you were named Special Envoy for Road Safety by the United Nations. How are you going about it?

I promote safety both on the track and the road. In my mind, racing is like a laboratory for advancing the quest for safety. 3,500 people die on the road around the world every day. 500 of them are children. In one year there are 1,250 million fatalities and 50 million are injured. We must combat this unacceptable situation. That starts by applying the basic rules which protect each of us throughout the world: speed restrictions, seat belts and helmets for bikes and scooters, no alcohol or telephone at the wheel. The combat is vital for me. ■

AN INTERNATIONAL *event*



5.8 km

The length of the Paul Ricard circuit which is the site of the French F1 Grand Prix



8

The French F1 Grand Prix is the eighth F1 world championship in 2019

4,000 P

park-and-ride spaces are available this year to ensure smooth traffic flow to Le Castellet

160,000

spectators attended the French F1 Grand Prix in 2018

€6M

The estimated average cost of an F1 racing car

5

The number of on-board cameras on one Formula 1 car

500 million

people watched the F1 Grand Prix around the world



500

journalists, writers and photographers cover the F1 at each Grand Prix

€78

economic and tourist impact from the French F1 Grand Prix 2018

THE TEAMS, *and drivers*

The 2019 Formula 1 Grand Prix season began in Melbourne, Australia. Enthusiasts discovered the new models created by the constructors. They got to know the new driver duos. This year only two teams have kept the same drivers. The current world champion, Lewis Hamilton continues at Mercedes with Valtteri Bottas. The French driver, Romain Grosjean is still wearing the Haas helmet with Kevin Magnussen. All the other teams have new drivers. Presentations.

MERCEDES



44  77 

Lewis Hamilton aged 34 Valtteri Bottas aged 29

© Mercedes

FERRARI



5  16 

Sebastian Vettel aged 30 Charles Leclerc aged 21

© Ferrari

RED BULL RACING



33  10 

Max Verstappen aged 21 Pierre Gasly aged 23

Thomas Butler / Red Bull Content Pool

Dustin Sripes/Red Bull Content Pool

RACING POINT



18  11 

Lance Stroll aged 20 Sergio Perez aged 29

© Racing Point F1

17

The FIA removed this driver number as a homage to Jules Bianchi, the Var local who died in 2015 aged 26. No drivers can race wearing number 17.

RENAULT





3 27

Daniel Ricciardo aged 29 Nico Hulkenberg aged 21

© Renault Sport Formula One

WILLIAMS





88 63

Robert Kubica aged 34 George Russell aged 21

© Williams racing

HAAS





8 20

Romain Grosjean aged 33 Kevin Magnussen aged 26

© 2019 Rich Energy Haas F1 Team

MCLAREN





55 4

Carlos Sainz aged 24 Lando Norris aged 19

© McLaren Racing

© Dom Romney / LAT Photographic

ALFA ROMÉO








36 7

Antonio Giovinazzi aged 25 Kimi Räikkönen aged 39

© alfa Romeo

TORO ROSSO

23 26

Alexander Albon aged 23 Daniil Kvyat aged 25

© Guido De Bortoli/Red Bull Content Pool

© Dustin Snipes/Red Bull Content Pool

MORE THAN JUST A RACE... *an event!*

THE PROGRAMME DAY BY DAY*

► Thursday 20 June

Ready, set... go! For lucky three-day pass holders, the weekend starts on Thursday. It's the day the teams finish setting up their "motorhomes": temporary structures mounted on each Grand Prix circuit for the teams and their guests. The drivers are also hard at work. They walk the track to inspect every minor detail.

► Friday 21 June

After a day setting up and getting their marks, it's time to warm up the engines! **The Formula 1 practice sections** are the exciting part of this day. During these two sessions all the pilots finally come into contact with the French Grand Prix track. After this first phase, the teams check their cars, adjust them and test new equipment. It's a vital stage before the second practice session in the afternoon. That's when any changes made after the first tour are approved. The drivers also assess the performance of their tyres and analyse their conduct for the race. Other competitions are organised all day to entertain spectators who have their eyes glued to the track.

► Saturday 22 June

It's time for the third practice session when the teams focus on performance and prepare **the qualifying round of the French Formula 1 Grand Prix** which also takes place on the same day. It consists of three stages and determines the line up on the starting grid. Other races are also programmed, aside from the main competition.

► Sunday 23 June

All the spectators are in the starting blocks, ready to watch **the French Formula 1 Grand Prix**. The adrenalin starts to climb with **other races and activities and entertainment during the morning**. The spectators are ready for **the drivers' parade before the race starts at 3.10 pm**.

*When this magazine goes to print, the complete programme has not yet been confirmed.

WELCOME TO THE VAR



The Conseil Départemental du Var, home to the French Formula 1 Grand Prix, member of the GIP and financial manager of the event, is present on the Paul Ricard circuit at Le Castellet throughout the weekend. The activities and entertainment begin on the Thursday on the department's stand. After a first success last year, and the success of the microlight flight simulation, two other films are shown. Young and old can enjoy a 360° experience with virtual reality headsets. A microlight flight

from the Vinon-sur-Verdon aerodrome, descent on a mountain bike in the Massif des Maures in Collobrières and kite-surfing in Hyères-Palmiers... thrills guaranteed!

The local tourist board, VisitVar, showcases the area with the Conseil Départemental du Var in their outdoor stand in the Village Sud, a southern-France themed area. The objective is to promote the Var - the new global destination.



SENSATIONAL *concerts*

After David Guetta last year, this year two DJs will entertain the Paul Ricard circuit track! On the decks this year: **Bob Sinclar**, Saturday 22 June then **Martin Solveig**, Sunday 23 June. On the Friday - World Music Day - there will be many other artists to provide a show. Fabulous concerts are programmed every day early in the evening to the delight of all the spectators.

Free and open to all spectators with a three-day pass or a Sunday ticket.
Official ticket sales: www.gpfrance.com

Yannick Dalmas

"PRECISION IS ESSENTIAL"

Yannick Dalmas's passion for cars was born on the Paul Ricard circuit. Past Formula 1 driver and quadruple winner of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the Var local is now driver-advisor to the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile.

Yannick Dalmas is one of those humble athletes who, despite amazing victories and an international career, knows how to keep their feet on ground. The former F1 driver and quadruple winner of the 24 Hours of Le Mans is very attached to his native Var. Yannick Dalmas grew up in Beausset, near the Paul Ricard circuit and now lives in La Cadière-d'Azur. When he was younger he watched this legendary track emerge, and he later drove it several times. *"The first time I was a real kid. It was the 1973 French Grand Prix. My dad participated in a vintage car race at the wheel of a 1918 Ford with me as passenger. That day we didn't do more than 80km/h but we did receive a little trophy and I crossed paths with François Cevert in the paddocks. Our eyes met - and let me tell you - that was a trigger. It inspired me to become an auto racer"*.

Yannick's first trip around the track was on a motorbike. He then went on to single-seaters, from Formula 3 to Formula 1 - the ultimate category in which he contested several Grand Prix races. Then the local Var boy changed direction. *"It was difficult for me to refuse the challenge of the endurance world championship"*, he explains. *"t was a wonderful project with human values and very technical"*. So he tried the



new challenge. Thanks to his quest for endurance and speed, he won the 24 Hours of Le Mans four times with four different constructors. Regularity, hard work and perseverance paid off and he enjoyed his "best years". He is proud of his success but willingly shares it. *"Throughout my life and my sporting career I have been lucky enough to meet people who I made good choices with and we got good results. You never win or lose on your own in endurance competitions"*.

Today Yannick Dalmas is part of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) as driver-advisor to the race manager and sport stewards An

expert in the field, he assesses the different changes made to the Paul Ricard circuit to ensure driver safety is optimized. *"The circuit was one of the pioneers in the field with large clearings and a colourful, highly abrasive coating"*. A model for security, it is a well-known fact that drivers greatly appreciate the Var track and site. *"It might look flat but the gradient is actually very varied"*, he explains. *"There are constant curves, sloping curves and high-speed curves...areas which require harsh braking and a winding section. You really need to be sure of your trajectory and the position of the steering wheel. "Precision is essential". ■*



Jean Alesi

"LEGENDARY CORNERS"

Jean Alesi, former driver and winner of the 1995 Canadian Grand Prix, made sure he was present for the return of the French Formula 1 Grand Prix. What's more, it takes place on on the Paul Ricard circuit for which he is ambassador and where he started his career 30 years ago...

Ten years after the last French Formula 1 Grand Prix, the competition is back. In 2018, the race returns to the Paul Ricard circuit in Le Castellet in the Var region of France. *"It was almost getting embarrassing as the years passed without a French Grand Prix... No one anywhere in the world understood why we didn't have a Grand Prix in France"*, remarks Jean Alesi. For the former French driver, the announcement of the return was *"excellent news"*. *"What's more the Grand Prix was coming back to Paul Ricard where I started out"*, he adds. That was in 1989. That year, Jean Alesi participated in his first Grand Prix on the Var track as part of the Tyrrell team. Sixteenth on the starting grid, he had a fabulous race and finished fourth. It was a promising start for the boy from Vaucluse. *"The memories are still so fresh. Every time I'm on the road heading back to Le Castellet the images come flooding back..."* Winner of the 1995 Canadian Grand Prix for Ferrari, Jean Alesi brought his career to an end in 2001 after racing for 6 different teams and having 32 podium places.

Despite his international experience, he is particularly attached to the Var for which he is now ambassador. His mission is to ensure *"hat everything runs smoothly before, during and after the race"*. Many arrangements and modifications have been made to the circuit to optimise the event. *"There have been a great number of changes...not to the layout because le-*

gendary corners like Signes, the double right of Beausset and the "S" of La Verrerie were preserved. The circuit is completely different when it comes to safety. In the past it was already ahead of its time for safety. But the difference now is like day and night. You really feel safe on this circuit".

"A lot of work went into making sure drivers have top facilities", adds the Paul Ricard circuit ambassador. This means the new generation of drivers takes pleasure in racing, and they can in turn give pleasure to the spectators. *"The pace on this circuit means drivers can never relax. The corners, like Signes, require a lot of physical energy. The centrifugal force is enormous. You need to be very fit and very precise"*. Last year, Jean Alesi relived the thrills felt on the Var circuit via his son, Giuliano who is also a driver. *"I'm a bit like his guardian angel"*, he says, smiling. *"When I started out, I asked myself the same questions as he does now. I understand his concerns and stress so I can help to alleviate the pressure. But I never try to teach him how to drive"*. ■

FORMULA 1, *10 points for revision*

You have never attended a Formula 1 Grand Prix?

You don't know what the terms "pole position" or "paddocks" mean?

The qualifying stages are a mystery to you and it is beyond you how they attribute the points to drivers?

Here's a quick overview of what you need to know to impress your friends before and after the Grand Prix.

TEAMS



10 teams compete in the 70th Formula 1 world championship. They are: Mercedes, Ferrari, Red Bull, Renault, Haas, McLaren, Racing Point, Alpha Romeo, Toro Rosso and Williams. Each team has 2 drivers on the starting line.

PADDOCKS



This is the zone reserved for the racing teams, where the single-seaters are parked and prepared. The teams have gigantic motorhomes which are mounted and dismounted at each Grand Prix for the staff members and their guests.

QUALIFICATIONS



The qualifying races take place the day before the race. It unfolds in three phases: Q1, Q2 and Q3. The first lasts 18 minutes. At the end of this qualifier, the 5 slowest drivers are eliminated. For the second, the 15 remaining drivers have 15 minutes to give it their best shot. Once again, the 5 slowest are eliminated. In Q3, the 10 remaining drivers compete for pole position which is given to the fastest.

TYRES



Pirelli is the only tyre supplier for Formula 1. In 2019, the equipment manufacturer reduced their range, withdrawing the rainbow of colours proposed the year before. Now only three colours indicate the type of rubber: white for the hardest, yellow for medium softness, and red for the softest.

POLE POSITION

1

The first place on the starting grid.

WEIGHT



The single-seaters plus their driver must weigh between 733 and 740 kg. According to current regulations, the driver plus their bucket seat must weigh at least 80 kg. Lighter drivers have to add weights meaning they no longer have an advantage over their heavier competitors which was previously the case.

FLAG



Our apologies to Formula 1 fans, but the chequered flag no longer has any official regulatory value. It is no longer shaken to indicate the end of the race which is now shown by a light signal on the main straight.

POINTS

2 1 3

At the end of each Grand Prix the first 10 classified drivers win points. The winner receives 25 points, the second driver 18 points and the third 15 points. The others receive: 12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 and 1 point. For the championship, teams accumulate the points won by their 2 drivers.

HALO



A sort of arc fixed above the cockpit. It received much criticism for being ungainly, but it was made compulsory by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) in 2018 in order to optimise protection of the driver's head in the event of an accident.

AERODYNAMIC



In physics, this is the study of any relative movement between a body and the air surrounding it. Applied to F1, this science allows for the conception of single-seaters to go very fast and stay close to the ground. Different elements like the wings help to increase the aerodynamic performance of F1 cars.

THE VAR HIGH-LEVEL SPORT



SPORT IN THE LEAD
P. 35

CALENDAR
Of major sporting
events all year
P. 36 & 37

ELITE CLUBS
Rugby club toulon-
nais / Toulon Saint-
Cyr Var handball /
Saint-Raphaël Var
volley-ball / Saint-Ra-
phaël Var handball /
Toulon Élite futsal
P. 38 - 47

PERFORMANCES
Champion gala event
P. 48

The "Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series" in the bay of Toulon

© Annabelle Lhuillier-Bonnal (Ville de Toulon)

SPORT *is a top priority, for the* VAR DEPARTMENT!

The Conseil Départemental du Var is a major player in the area for sports. Sport everywhere and for all - that is the department's sports policy. There are two main priorities. The first is to develop physical and sporting activities by encouraging access to a wide range of disciplines and helping the sports sector to develop skills. The second is to establish the Var's sporting image by showcasing sporting performance by Var locals and promoting the advantages of the area in the sector. Providing access to physical activity to as many people as possible is the Conseil Départemental du Var's ambition. In tandem, they also aim to provide quality facilities to high-level athletes. The Var sports clubs have almost 230,000 licensees. Nearly half of

them are aged under 18. An important ingredient for education and integration into society, sport can also play a roll in reducing school drop-out rates and social inequality. That's why the Conseil Départemental du Var created the Pass'Sport Découverte. The pass gives young Var residents access to a range of sports activities during the school holidays. The department supports the Union Sportive de l'Enseignement du Premier Degré (USEP) which targets primary school students, and the Union Nationale du Sport Scolaire (UNSS) for junior and senior secondary school students. The department also works with organisations* to promote sport to people with a physical or intellectual disability and ensure they have access to their chosen sport (*Comité

Départemental Handisport and Comité Départemental du Sport Adapté). Recognised for their role as ambassadors for promoting Var sport, high-level athletes, elite clubs and national and international sporting events also receive support from the Conseil Départemental. All other clubs also receive the department's support, particularly those with national accreditation which guarantees quality instructors and facilities. In 2017, the Département du Var created an awards event, the Soirée des Champions, where young athletes from the Var are rewarded for their excellent results. Financial support is attributed to young athletes between 12 and 25 to encourage excellence and performance. Elite clubs also received €1.374M in funding for the 2018-2019 season. In exchange, their professional athletes participate in promoting sport in the area, providing training, conferences and meetings for the younger Var population. Finally, the Département du Var spreads their sporting image by supporting events which go beyond local borders such as the Rallye du Var, the Boucles Cyclistes du Haut Var, the Natureman Var, the Golfe de Saint-Tropez international marathon and of course, the French Formula 1 Grand Prix. ■



MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS *all year round*



THE VAR VERDON CANYON CHALLENGE IN JUNE

In the great outdoors, with the Gorges du Verdon as a backdrop, the Var Verdon Canyon Challenge celebrates its 27th edition. To be held on 22 et 23 June, this race has four courses on natural trails: a 60km ultra-trail race with 4,000 metres of deviation, a long 30-km trail race with 1,700 metres of deviation and two other races of 17 km and 10 km. Many runners participate in this extreme sporting event which takes place in a breathtaking setting.

www.verdoncanyonchallenge.com

THE GOLFE DE SAINT-TROPEZ INTERNATIONAL MARATHON IN MARCH

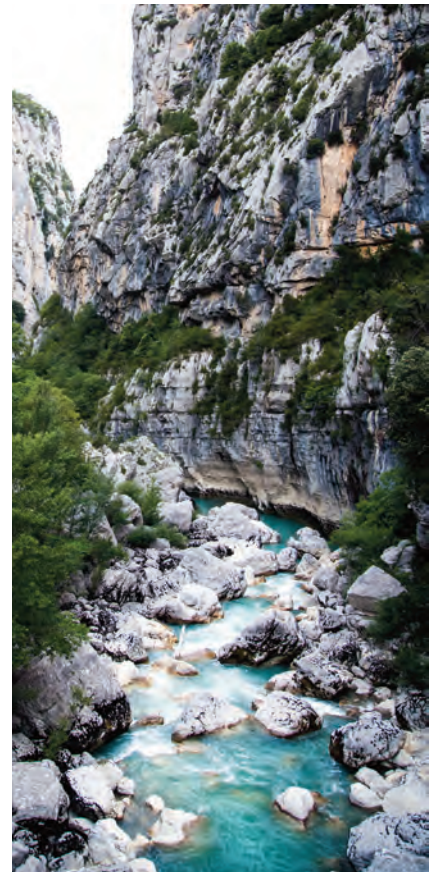
On the 31 March last year the second Golfe de Saint-Tropez international marathon took place. Over 4,000 runners participated in the race in a fun and friendly atmosphere! The marathon is a new way for participants to discover the stunning landscape of the Golfe de Saint-Tropez. The event included four races: The individual marathon, the 2 x 21,1 km, the Transgolfe (new in 2019) and the relay marathon for teams of 4, 6 or 7 team members. The second edition was such a great success that the next Golfe de Saint-Tropez international marathon is already programmed for March 2020.

www.marathondugolfedesainttropez.com

TOUR CYCLISTE DU HAUT VAR NICE MATIN IN FEBRUARY

The only professional cycling race in the Var area, the Tour Cycliste du Haut Var Nice Matin is also one of the oldest! The 51st edition is supported by the Département du Var and takes place 22 to 24 February. The 2019 course is once again very demanding with over 491 km in 3 days. Next edition : 14 to 16 February 2020.

www.tourduhautvar.com





© Duc d'Albe

THE DUC D'ALBE IN SEPTEMBER

The Duc d'Albe adventure began in 2000. The multihull race, organised by the Club Multicoques d'Hyères (CMH) has since become the greatest European concentration in the Mediterranean of racing multihulls. See you in Hyères on Ayguade beach on 21 and 22 September to admire about the hundred-odd teams at the start.
<https://ducdalbe.com>



© Natureman Var

THE NATUREMAN VAR IN OCTOBER

Organised by the association Verdon Oxygène since 2012, Natureman Var has become a major event on the triathlon calendar. The 2019 edition will take place from 4 to 6 October in the stunning Verdon. 1,400 participants get together in Salles-sur-Verdon for this is race with a fun and family-friendly atmosphere. The programme includes several races, with a long distance race in 3 stages: 2 km swimming, 90 km cycling and 20 km running.
natureman-var.fr



© Rallye du Var

THE RALLYE DU VAR AND THE VINTAGE CAR RALLY IN NOVEMBER

This is one of the largest sporting events in the department with hundreds of participants, including major motor sport stars like Sébastien Loeb and thousands of spectators. The 65th edition of the Rallye du Var will take place from 21 to 24 November. It will once again wind up the French rally championship for the year. The race starts and finishes in Sainte-Maxime. The very technical course is greatly appreciated by drivers, criss-crossing through 15 towns in the Golfe de Saint-Tropez and the Massif des Maures. The 35th vintage car rally, held at the same time, showcases old racing cars.
var-rallye.fr

And,...

**BOUCLES CYCLISTES DU
HAUT VAR IN FEBRUARY**



www.velosporthyerois.com

**SEMAINE
DE PORQUEROLLES IN MAY**



www.semainedeporquerolles.com

**10 KM
DE TAMARIS**



www.csmseynoie.fr

**50TH CROSS
DE LA SEYNE-SUR-MER**



www.facebook.com/cross.laseyne

The Rugby Club Toulonnais, AN IDENTITY

They won it all in the European championship in the Top 14. With their colours: red and black, their lily of the valley emblem, their “pilou-



pilou” song, their father Félix Mayol... the Rugby Club Toulonnais team has been stirring the hearts of loyal Var supporters for 110 years.

Created in 1908 thanks to their sponsor, the singer Félix Mayol, the RCT has had its ups and downs. It was the first European club to win the European Cup 3 times in a row in 2013, 2014 and 2015, followed by a fourth French championship title in 2014, giving them a record European Cup and Top 14 Championship duo. The increasing number of supporters is always there - laughing and crying. The atmosphere is always amazing with 18,000 fans in the recently renovated stadium singing the “pilou-pilou” song, a rousing war cry that motivates the team to terrorise their competitors. Playing at the Mayol is like entering the arena. The club’s constant ambition is to win, but their president, Mourad Boudjellal adds *“winning is important but our goal is also to ensure the next generation through our training programme which supports young Toulon players”*.

We have been able to recruit high-quality players for this season *“inclu-*

ding some young international players”, assures the president. Both a president and business man, he has boosted the RCT since his arrival in 2006, making increasingly ambitious recruitments like Tana Umaga Pro D2, and organising the arrival of English rugby star, Jonny Wilkinson. This success has encouraged many vocations amongst the young Var population. The RCT also now has a women’s team, created in 2016. And in 2018-2019, Bernard Lemâitre joined the club as shareholder. *“I want to breath new life into the club. We are going to build a new high-performance centre to provide the best conditions for young players training with the club and to help them reach new heights. Both for professional players and the younger teams”*, concludes the president. ■

► **PRESIDENT** : Mourad Boudjellal

► **SPORTS STAFF** :

- Manager : Patrice Collazo,

- Trainers : Juan Martin Fernandez Lobbe, Sébastien Tillous-Borde.

THE TEAM FOR THE 2018-2019 SEASON

Xavier Chiocci (France), Bruce Devaux (France), Florian Fresia (France), Jean-Baptiste Gros (France), Emerick Setiano (France), Sébastien Taofifenua (France), Marcel Van Der Merwe (South Africa), Anthony Etrillard (France), Guilhem Guirado (France), Bastien Soury (France), Juandré Kruger (South Africa) Jacques Potgieter (South Africa), Swan Rebbadj (France), Romain Taofifenua (France), Corentin Vernet (France), Mamuka Gorgodze (Georgia), Facundo Isa (Argentina), Raphael Lakafia (France), Liam Messam (New Zealand), Jean Monribot (France), Charles Ollivon (France), Stéphane Onambélé (France), Yoan Cottin (France), Eric Escande (France), Anthony Meric (France), Rhys Webb (Wales), Anthony Belleau (France), Louis Carbonel (France) François Trinh-Duc (France), Mathieu Bastareaud (France), Malakai Fekitoa (Nouvelle Zélande), Mathieu Smaili (France), Antoine Zeghdar (France), Daniel Ikpefan (France), Filipo Nakosi (Fiji), Jon Paul Pietersen (South Africa), Julian Savea (New Zealand), Josua Tuisova (Fiji), Hugo Bonneval (France), Jonah Placid (Australia).

www.rctoulon.com



© Olivier Pastor / TPM



Toulon Saint-Cyr *Var Handball,* **100 % WOMEN!**

The Toulon Saint-Cyr Var Handball club (TSCV), created in 2007, is a shining light for women's handball in south-east France. Today the club's training practices are a model for the sport.

The Toulon and Saint-Cyr handball clubs began working together in 2005 when they united their Élite Division 1 and Nationale 2 teams. Despite the team being relegated to D2, the clubs merged in 2007, creating Toulon Saint-Cyr Var Handball. As soon as 2008 they quickly got back to the top national level and have never been relegated since. Between 2010 and 2012, they even won a French championship title and two successive French cups. Today this exclusively female* club, except for the coach and some staff members, has nearly 250 licensees. Over 1,000 one-off licenses are also distributed each year for events. The TSCV has teams in all categories from as early as the under 10s to the first division. All the teams are high performers. Training is fundamental to this success. That's why the club created a training centre in 2011. As

a result, 8 players join a high-level 3-year training programme each year. They work with the professionals who share their experience and advice with the trainees.

The best go on to join the top team. The training centre is recognised as one of the most successful in the country. For the 16-18 category, a preliminary training centre has also been created. These days, half the team playing in first division is trained by the club. The team has found a balance between women with experience elsewhere and women trained here. After the arrival of French world champions, Siraba Dembélé and Laurisa Landre last summer, 5 new recruits will reinforce the Var team next season including 3 international players: Marie-Paule Gnabouyou (silver medal at the 2011 world championship for the French team), Chloé Bulleux (2016 Olympic runner-up for the French team) and Charris Rozmalen (Netherlands international team). All members defends the club's strong values of pushing your limits, respecting yourself and your opponent, team work and work

ethic. But the players are committed to a second very important role: promoting and defending women's sport, particularly at a high level. The TSCV is one of France's best women's handball clubs. Next year's goals: finish in the top 5 of the French championship, win a third French cup and compete in the European cup once again. Supreme challenges for a fighting team! ■

* Coed teams allowed for under 11 teams. The club's youngest teams include boys and girls.

► **PRESIDENTS** : Jeanne-Marie De Torres et Perrine Paul

► **D1 COACH** : Sandor Rac

THE PLAYERS FOR THE 2018-2019 SEASON

Camille Depuiset (France), Marie-Charlotte Rittore (France), Eden Julien (France), Jessy Kramer (Netherlands), Emma Puleri (France), Laurie Puleri (France), Laurisa Landre (France), Léa Serdarevic (France), Siraba Dembélé-Pavlovic (France), Laurène Catani (France), Jasmina Jankovic (Netherlands), Dounia Abdourahim (France), Marie-Hélène Sajka (France), Olivera Jurisic (Denmark), Sabrina Zazai (France), Lisa Poissenot (France, training centre), Meryle Crevel (France, training centre), Ilana Richardson (France, training centre), Mariam Eradze (Islande, training centre), Lidija Cvijic (Serbia, training centre), Cidgie Leroux (France, training centre).

www.tscvhb.fr



© Pierre Violet

Saint-Raphaël Var Volleyball,

**WINNER
OF THE
FRENCH CUP
2018-2019**

The French championship title, won in 2016 against Cannes, is engraved in the memories of all the club's members and supporters. For the Saint-Raphaël Var Volleyball team, which was not destined to play in League A that season, it's needless to say this

victory was unexpected. But so well-deserved! *"I can still see the girls' faces when they won the semi-final"*, remembers Christine Girod, the club's president. *"Congratulated them then, because it was already an exceptional feat. But I had a feeling they weren't going to stop there and that they wanted the title! They are fighters"*.

The Saint-Raphaël Var Volleyball women's team proved it again this year in the French cup final. The Var team did their utmost to take the victory from the favourites, Nantes, giving the club the first French cup in its history. A reward for the team which had reached a constant level for several seasons. After the highs and lows, the Var team is definitely recognised as a force to be reckoned with. But this recognition did not happen by chance. It is the result of many long years of investment, tenacity and of course, hard work. Their coach, Giulio Bregoli, assistant to the Italian team manager, pushes the players to give their very best technique and game. He makes them repeat



exercises over and over again until they have perfected the movement. He also uses videos to show the players their errors and weak points to push them to improve. The goal? Bring home as many titles to the Var, like they did last year.

**Created in 1947, the Saint-Raphaël
Var Volleyball club became
exclusively female in 1976.**

**One of France's best, the club
attracts many international players.**

**They contribute their individual
talent to the team which won
the French cup this year.**

The Saint-Raphaël Var Volleyball was created in 1947, but only became exclusively female in 1976. The club has about 200 young licensees aged 6 to 20. The most gifted and aggressive will probably join the professional team one day. ■

- ▶ **PRESIDENT :**
Christine Girod
- ▶ **COACH :**
Giulio Cesare Bregoli

**THE PLAYERS FOR THE
2018-2019 SEASON**

Karolina Goliat (Belgium), Symone Abbott (USA), Megan Viggars

(Great Britain), Dominika Drobnakova (Slovakia), Amber Rolfzen (USA), Lucie Dekeukelaire (France), Marija Milovic (Montenegro), Julie Mollinger (France), Michaela Abrhamova (Slovakia), Natalia Valentin (Porto Rico), Alissa Coulter (Canada), Charlotte Schiro (France).

<https://www.srvvb.fr>



Saint-Raphaël Var handball, **A CLUB WITH STRONG VALUES**



Ranked amongst the best French clubs, the Saint-Raphaël Var handball club (SRVHB) is a regular contender in the EFH European cup. As a result, it attracts many French and International players.

Humility. A fighting spirit. Team work. Generosity. Courage. The men who make up the Saint-Raphaël Var handball (SRVHB) club are very attached to these values - both in their culture and in their game. These values are also displayed in the Saint-Raphaël Palais des Sports where players train and defend their club's colours. *"Respect for others is the fundamental value of our club which we continue to cultivate and question"*, insists Jean-François Krakowski, president of the club for over 30 years and who the Palais des Sports is named after. *"It's thanks to this attitude and an attractive sporting programme that we remain at the top of the table"*. The SRVHB team has been playing in the first French division since 2006. Regularly ranked in the top French four, the club has played in the EFH European cup several years and plans to continue playing at that level. *"The club is part of the French championship elite. We absolutely must keep up the momentum"*, explains Raphaël Caucheteux, left wing for the team for 11 seasons. *"That's why we train so hard. We give it our all"*.

Coached by Joël da Silva, players who join the SRVHB never want to leave. Some of them even began at the SRVHB training centre where conditions are optimised for preparing future handball professionals. As a result, the team remains stable each year. The club also has several players who were selected for the French national team such as Adrian Landivisiau, Xavier Barachet and Raphaël Caucheteux, selected for the first time in 2018. *"This first selection at age 32 was well deserved"*, remarks Jean-François Krakowski. *"It's important for him above all, but it's also important for the club"*. A club which - in the Saint-Raphaël sunshine - dreams of adding a European star to their jersey one day. ■

► **PRESIDENT** : Jean-François Krakowski

► **COACH** : Joël da Silva

PLAYERS FOR THE 2018-2019 SEASON

Xavier Barachet (France), Raphaël Caucheteux (France), Alexandre Demaille (France), Adrian Landivisiau (France), Miroslav Jurka (Czech Republic), Nicolas Krakowski (France), Alexander Lynggaard (Denmark), Mihai Popescu (Romania), Daniel Sarmiento (Spain), Alexandru Simicu (Romania), Arthur Vigneron (France), Aleksa Kolakovic (Serbia), Jérémy Toto (France), Vadim Gayduchenko (Belorussia), Hampus Jildenback (Sweden), Jonathan Mapu (France), Alexian Trottet (France).

www.srvhb.com



Toulon Élite Futsal, IS THRIVING

Nicknamed "the little reds and blacks", the Toulon Élite Futsal team plays in first division where they already have a stunning list of victories in just 10 years of competition. This club, created by a few football mates, has a promising future in a budding discipline.



There was potential for something new, to explore a new discipline... The founders of the Toulon Élite Futsal hit the bull's eye. And they go on proving it. I took them barely 3 years to reach first division. The club has been a member of the Fédération Française de Football* (FFF) for 7 years. Before becoming a well-known team supported by loyal fans, "we were a group of mates who liked to play football. That said, we had more fun on our own on small fields and in small numbers. The game was faster and you had more contact with the ball. In reality, we loved playing futsal without really knowing the discipline existed", tells Sassi Ben Naceur, founding president. Then in 2008 he took an interest in the sport and created a club called the International Saint Roch with Farah Gouled, his friend and team member. "We became members of the Union Nationale des Clubs de Futsal which complies with the world futsal association rules. As we accumulated good results, the District du Var de Football invited us to join them. Be-

cause the FFF was ordered by the Ministry for Sports to develop and unite futsal". The players had to get used to a new federation and hence new rules "because the FIFA only allows for play with the feet, whereas the AMF allows hands", explains the athlete. The club changed their name and became, "tout simplement, Tous ensemble". simply united. That's when they began to play serious matches and have good results. The president and former player recalls the memories of the match when "the club moved up to D1 in 2011-2012". Here in Toulon at the Palais des Sports, we beat Port-de-Bouc 3-2. That night we were sure we had our chance in the French championship". In D1, the team was named Toulon Élite Futsal. They competed with experienced teams with international players. The club grew, recruiting 2 good Brazilian players in particular. Then arrived Italian coach Felice Mastropierro, "who helped us enormously. He contributed his experience". Today Karim Deman is the manager of this team considered to be "one of the best in France and ready

to win the French championship title", concludes the president. The new women's team, created for the 2018-2019 season, also has a very promising future. ■

* A particularity of Futsal : 2 international federations have been disputing for responsibility of the discipline since the 1980s. The Fédération Internationale de Football (FIFA) wants to take control of what they consider to be a by-product of football and the World Futsal Association (Association Mondiale de Futsal : AMF), formerly the FIFUSA which claims paternity of the game.

- ▶ **PRESIDENT** : Sassi Ben Naceur
- ▶ **COACH** : Karim Deman

THE TEAM FOR THE 2018-2019 SEASON

Gomez Serjio (Spain), Da Silva William (Brazil), Anthony Cazalas (France), Valentin Albertini (France), Kennedy Ofong (Spain), Nilton Tavares (Cape Verde), Pupa Furtado (Portugal), Thiago Souza (Brazil), Farah Gouled (France), Raymond Santiago (France), Soufyan El Hafyani (France), Kerroumi Maarouf (France), Ramada Hugo (Portugal).

m.facebook.com/ToulonTEF



© Sassi Ben Nasseur / Toulon Elite Futsal

Champion gala event, **REWARDING EXCELLENCE**

The Var has many famous top athletes who win high-level competitions throughout the year. In 2017, the Département du Var decided to create an event to reward them with the *Soirée des Champions* which now takes place every year in December.



PRIZE-WINNERS IN THE 2017/2018 SEASON INCLUDED :

- ▶ champions in the individual sport category
- ▶ 24 teams

Committed to developing sport alongside the Var population, in 2017 the Département created financial prizes for excellence and performance. The awards recompense young licensed athletes aged 12 to 25 residing in the Var who have won a French, European or world title during the last season or who have become Olympic or Paralympic champions. The competition must be organised and accredited by the national sports association concerned. The prizes range from €500 to €3,000. They target both individual and team sports. For individual disciplines, the prize is awarded to the athlete personally. For team sports, the team receives the prize. Medals and prizes are awarded to young Var champions by Marc Giraud, the president of the Conseil départemental du Var at a grand prize-giving ceremony in December. In 2018, almost 180 young Var athletes received prizes for individual and team sports. They represented 46 sports disciplines. 113 had won a French championship title, 7 a European title, and 14 had won an international title during the 2017/2018 sports season. The Département attributed €110,000 to their champions' awards. ■

26.9 °C



ICARD



LE DÉPARTEMENT

Le Var

THE NEW
GLOBAL
DESTINATION

THE VAR, VOTED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BEACH IN THE WORLD 2018, BY THE TIMES MAGAZINE®