



Darvill Racing
 Parkgate House
 Victoria Road
 Castletown
 Monday 9th November 2009

Weekend of Automobile Excellence Reims 2009

The smiles on the faces of the spectators, who flocked to the circuit ready to be thrilled by the high-speed show under the Champagne sun, were proof that the aim had been achieved. And it really was a show: sunshine, beautiful cars, pretty girls... This year the atmosphere at the circuit was once again magical. Of course, there are still some improvements to be made, but let's not forget that the Weekend of Automobile Excellence is still in its infancy, this is just its third year. The aim was certainly achieved in terms of numbers - 40 000 people according to the local authorities, 30 000 entries according to the organizers - as well as in terms of the 5 cars and 2 motorcycles demonstration sessions. This all serves to back up the significance and relevance of the recent classification of the circuit as a historical monument... As M. Taittinger said so eloquently at the opening dinner at the Domaine Pommery, the circuit's heritage value is first class and has a knock-on effect on the whole region's economy. The region can now boast three emblems: the cathedral, champagne and the Reims-Gueux circuit, spirituality, bubbly and speed: a trio of excellence...



This weekend, like many around the track, we believed in Gueux. Some got their stop watches out to time Jabouille and Jaussaud who took turns behind the wheel of the Rondeau Inaltera (which won in Le Mans in 1980). Many spectators were able to meet with the drivers, Pescarolo who was very approachable and Saby who shared anecdotes with his fans gathered here this weekend. What can we say about Jean-François Balde except that he is just as likeable as ever and still as fast on the track. Still on the subject of speed, we mustn't forget Agostini and Read who continue to rule as masters of the Reims track curves. They put on a magnificent show both on their bikes as well as in the paddocks. Without forgetting the magnificent Jaguars on loan from the Coventry Heritage Trust Museum, and our English riders from Peter Darvill Racing who have been regular attendees from the first weekend event delighting the crowds with their formations on the track.

We lived the whole weekend in the Champagne region at 200km/h, four to the floor, with our ears reverberating with the roar of the Honda Jordans, Ford Cosworth Tyrells, Bugatti 35s, or the extremely rare Alfa Romeo tipo 33, Harrington Le Mans and DB Le Mans. We can't list here all the cars which took part, but the demonstrations were quite simply exceptional, with prestige cars such as the Maserati A6 GCS which



took part in the Mille Miglia, the Brabham which won in Gueux in 1967 with Jochen Rindt and François Cevert's Tecno F2. All these four-wheeled fiends provided us with a fantastic show where we almost felt we were witnessing big cats pouncing on their prey rather than cars eating up the chicanes... This 3rd Weekend of Automobile Excellence saw the renaissance of the glory days of motorsports, when drivers were still brave enough to race in a pack rather than in a line... Reims was authentic, popular, elegant, in the image of Angélique Magnan whose

jazz tones transported us all the way to New Orleans.





We were also treated to a flying visit by magnificent aerobatic display teams. 15 000 people stood with their heads in the clouds following the loops, rolls and cuban eights performed by Lieutenant R. Ecalle in his single-seater Extra SC 330 as well as by the "Cartouche Doré" display team.

We must also mention the media coverage of the event. We spotted the cameras of Motors TV, Eurosport, TF1, Canal Plus, FR3, and other foreign TV channels, the microphones of RMC, the journalists from L'Union, L'Equipe, LVA, RétroCourse, RétroPassion as well as the foreign press (Octane, etc.). And of course the magnificent auction by Bonhams which exceeded all expectations according to Mathieu Lamour "Head of the French Department" and Philip Kantor Director "International Director Business Development" of the prestigious auctioneers.

We must thank our media partners who covered the event, on television and radio, (Eurosport and RMC), as well as in the press (L'Union and Le Point). Without forgetting our partners without whom the whole adventure would be impossible, the Champagne houses of Taittinger and Pommery. We also thank the local authorities, the Champagne Ardenne Region, the Departmental Council of La Marne and the City of Reims, who all gave us their precious support and thanks to whom the event now appears to be perennial. Moreover, some exclusive news, the organisers aim to ensure next year's event is made up of 50% cars and 50% motorcycles. Last but not least, we must not forget the Friends of the Circuit of Gueux who have supported us at every stage of the event.

This weekend the soul of Gueux was well and truly present with the races we love and the very special atmosphere which our legends of the past convey. We can be certain that on Saturday and Sunday Toto Roche was in our midst...

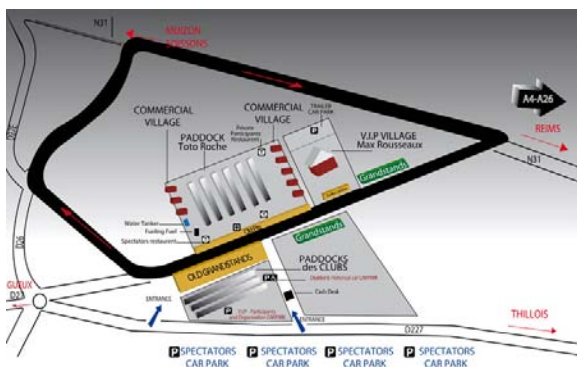
In live from Gueux - Gabriel Rapetti. <http://www.weea-organisation.com/>

WOW... what a write-up...and we were named... which was a bonus....!!!

So what was it like for us...

Well, this is the third year we have been invited and our support for this event shows no sign of abating...! Drew (as part of his European adventures) made the initial introduction and took a chance on the event in its first year, little did we know how successful this was to become.

I asked him to take on the 'reporting reigns' and record some thoughts for you (and instead of my 'take' on things):



The circuit 'Geaux' was a typical French road circuit in much the same vein as Spa used to be in the old days, but Circuit Geaux has not changed very much at all and still has a lot of the old buildings and character, the main grandstand is gradually being painted up and improved, and has now recognised as a historic monument so will not go the same way as Rouen. As the circuit is still part of the French road network the roads are closed for the duration of the event and once again the roar of unsilenced cars and bikes are let loose on the track.



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So the organisers had provided a specific covered area for us to place our collection of motorcycles on display, I very wide range of historic vehicles were already in place so we also set up and then as we had nothing else to do we decided on an impromptu open mega concert of motorcycles, we started each motorcycle up in turn and quickly attracted the camera's of Motors TV, so to keep the interest going we decided to run each bike up and down the main straight between the grandstands. This seemed to be a most welcomed activity, bearing in mind the track was not officially open and the bikes were quite obviously not road legal. The gendarmes were quite amenable to the whole idea. A very nice unscheduled start to the weekend!!!!



Saturday started early as I expected a big problem getting into the circuit, but no, straight in and ready by 8. People were still arriving and unloading vehicles. I still have not got used to the laid back way this event is run, when they say circuit opens at 9am they mean 9am maybe 10am etc, etc. and I keep getting caught out by this. When I was called for my track session I ended up waiting in the collecting area for almost an hour as the sessions in front of us must have dragged on, but I thought I'd be clever as I noticed that Agostini never got ready when we were called so I just followed his lead, this way I just rode up behind Ago and went straight out onto the circuit with him, he would be sent to the front and then we would then be given the green flag, Mind you I got a bit too laid back with this and my last session on Sunday I missed the start altogether. C'et la vie as they say in French.



The Reims event was another opportunity to 'stretch or legs' without the pressure of racing, and it once again lived up to its historic pedigree...

This year saw the introduction of a number of 'Stars' that has given this event a new dimension and new demographic, below are last year's official figures.

The 2008 Weekend of the Automobile Excellence:

	2008
Spectators for the Weekend	30 000
Historical Vehicles in demonstration	210
Club Vehicles in exhibition	250
Ground staff	550
TV coverage	Over 5h
Press accreditations	190
French press mentions	210
Foreign press mentions	80
Website visits in September	30 000
V.I.P Village	1 200 m2
Commercial Village	40 stands
Hotel stays	2 200 nights



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Whats the latest news..?

With the 2009 season now behind us, planning is well underway for 2010. So what have we got lined up so far...?

Endurance Racing

The Deccla Endurance Races in Cartagena dates have yet to be released, however the bike is nearly ready and we have the Team lined-up and ready for this. It will be the first race of the season and with the changes to the Post Classic Manx GP we will make a decision whether we will run this along with the 350cc K4 Honda in the 2010 MGP.



British Championship

The ACU British SuperMono Championship has been under review and whilst the final scope of the Championship has yet to be confirmed, the current understanding is that this will be run with the Thundersport GB series giving us valuable TV coverage and exposure at a number of BSB rounds, this will be a welcome addition to our campaign in 2010.

TT Festival 2010

We have agreed to roll the RS250 out of the workshop and give the TT another try. We have a very long 'Lessons Learned' document from this year's effort and believe we have a chance in 2010.

Pre-TT Classic

We have a number of options for this event and will furnish you all with the final choice in due course.... Watch this space...!!!

Manx GP 2010

Exciting news for the Manx, we can confirm that we will be campaigning a Honda K4 350cc in the Junior event, and if the testing at Cartagena goes well we will also enter the 998cc Spondon Darvill Endurance machine in the Post Classic event.

ThunderBike UK Series

We will be using the open-class structure at the ThunderBike UK series as a way of setting-up the bikes, in addition it is a vessel to allow us to practice Pit Crew configurations and techniques in a live 'race' environment.



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Fun Stuff....

We have been invited again to both the ThunderSprint and will be attending Festival of 1000 Bikes, the Reims event is a must and we have a new social event lined up for next year:

The 'Pageant of Power' 2010 (held at Cholmondeley Castle in Cheshire) will be a major event for us and builds upon our plans to attend 'Blue Ribbon' motorsports events. The Pageant of Power will be in its third year and is sponsored by Breitling and Bentley, its format is comparable the Goodwood Festival of Speed in both its content and attendance.



Conclusion..

2009 was a hard year for everyone involved in motorsport, we are glad that we are still here and in a position to continue, this was only possible with the support of all of our sponsors without whom we would find this untenable.

We look forward to next season and with Darvill Racings expansion this year we are now able to cover an increased number of events/races thus delivering greater coverage for both ourselves and our Sponsors.

Our new brochure is nearly ready and I will be sending copies of these to you in the very near future, this should have further details of our plans and the events we will be attending.

Thank you once again for your support in 2009 and I look forward to working with you again next year.

Yours Sincerely,

Alex Aitchison
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