

TOUR AUTO

2011

Optic 2000

11-16 avril

HERE COMES THE SUN...

The 20th edition of the Tour Auto Optic 2000 was held from 11 to 16 April. A brand new route on the West Coast of France was discovered by the 235 collector cars entered. After a first day in the Jardins des Tuileries for the administrative checks and scrutineering, the official start was taken from the Montlhéry racetrack in the direction of Biarritz via Poitiers, Objat, Bordeaux and Pau. A journey dotted with races on the Bugatti, Val de Vienne, Nogaro and Pau Arnos circuits.

Z FOR ZAGATO

In 2011, the Tour Auto Optic 2000 gave the place of honour to coachbuilder Zagato and his creations by gathering some of his most beautiful models. The occasion to admire fifteen of the designers works including the extraordinary Maserati A6G Berlinetta Zagato of 1955, which took the start of the Tour de France Automobile in 1957. The founder's grandson, Andrea Zagato, came in person to the Tuileries, to participate in the tribute paid to the «Carrozzeria».



A POPULAR SUCCESS FOR THE TOUR AUTO OPTIC 2000

During the whole rally, the public come in droves to encourage the crews. For the second consecutive year, the Parcs Fermés and the circuits were open to the public. Over 50,000 visitors came to the stopover towns, circuits and along the roadsides to admire the incredible Tour Auto Optic 2000 show.



STAGE 1 – MONTLHÉRY / POITIERS

After leaving the Place de la Concorde at daybreak, the five grids, under good escort, took the direction of the Montlhéry racetrack for the official start of the race. A first timed stage which delighted the competitors fond of this track. This stage, the longest of the Tour, continued to the Le Mans Bugatti circuit and ended at Poitiers in the sumptuous Blossac Park. In the town a new activity awaited the youngsters. Budding drivers from 6 to 13 years old were able to inaugurate the Mini Tour Optic 2000. In mini Ferraris, the future talents were able to play at being racing drivers.

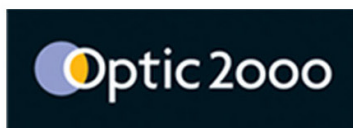
STAGE 2 – POITIERS / OBJAT

A second stage full of novelties. After a first special stage on closed roads, the competitors raced on the Val de Vienne circuit before going to the Château du Fraisse for lunch. A very pleasant moment in the central courtyard of this splendid castle of the Middle Ages. The grids then followed each other to the Arnac Pompadour stud farm for a last timed stage before reaching Objat, a new stop-over town for the Tour Auto Optic 2000.



STAGE 3 – OBJAT / BORDEAUX

The third day of the competition had an appointment with France's 6th town: Bordeaux. After waking up in Corrèze, the participants took on the day's three special stages. The Alpine A110s distinguished themselves, in particular the one driven by very popular Jean Ragnotti. A stage placed under the sign of discovery thanks to a stop in the atypical Villebois Lavalette castle and a route in the heart of the Saint Emilion vineyards to reach the Quinconces Park in the centre of Bordeaux.



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STAGE 4 – BORDEAUX / PAU

On the day before the arrival, competition had the upper hand for the Tour Auto Optic 2000 cortege. The short journey to Pau was strewn by two special stages on closed roads at the «Coteaux Macariens» and «Prayssas» and a race on the Nogaro circuit. A decisive day for classifications during which some leaders such as Ludovic Caron, Paul Knapfield or again Hugo Payen stood out. Before the final confrontation, the competitors enjoyed the Tissier Park in Pau, which many of them will see again in a month's time during the Grand Prix de Pau Historique.



STAGE 5 – PAU / BIARRITZ



Between impatience and nostalgia, the competitors embarked on the last day of the 2011 edition with spirit. Three special stages awaited the crews before crossing the finishing line at the Chambre d'Amour in Biarritz – Anglet. During the morning, the hilly Pau Arnos layout witnessed the last vigorous battles. The participants then went towards the Bois du Bager for the last timed stage. A sequence of bends which delighted all the drivers. The whole grid then took the direction of Biarritz to pass one last time under the Tour Auto Optic 2000 arch.

IN A NUTSHELL

Ffacing the Atlantic, the competitors shared a convivial moment between Gentlemen Drivers during a Gala Dinner in Pays Basque colours. As they should, the winners of each category climbed on the podium to receive their prizes. Afin. In competition, Ludovic Caron signs his third victory in the Tour with his black AC Cobra in front of last year's winner, Jean-Pierre Lajournade and his Lotus Elan. Another AC Cobra, belonging to David Ferrer, completed the podium. The British crew, John Ruston and Jeremy Haylock take first place in regularity with a 1958 Porsche 356 Speedster. Yves Junne wins the index performance behind the wheel of another Porsche 356, in front of Pierre Le Gloahec and his Jaguar Mk1 of 1959. Paul Knapfield's performance allows him to win the scratch classification with his spectacular Ligier JS2 ex-Le Mans, visibly as at home on the roads of France as in the Hunaudières straight line.

Everyone agrees that this 2011 edition blessed with exceptional weather and beautiful scenery was one of the rally's best vintages. An appointment is made in 2012 for the 21st Tour Auto Optic 2000 and a brand new route. In the meanwhile, photos and results are already available on the website www.tourauto.com

VHC	
1	CARON - DAVID
2	LAJOURNADE - BARON
3	FERRER - BENAZET
Groupes G/H/I	
1	KNAPFIELD - NEWALL
2	RAGNOTTI - MERCIER
3	Mr John of B - SIBEL
Regularité	
1	RUSTON - HAYLOCK
2	KOENIG - KOENIG
3	NICOULES - PEYRONNET
Indice de Performance	
1	JUNNE - MAXTED PAGE
2	LE GLOAHEC - DOIZE
3	HAASE - HAASE

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