

PRESS INFORMATION

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International Renault Finals (October 22nd-25th 1998)

Renault reveals the 24-valve V6 'Trophy' version of the Renault Sport Clio

At this weekend's International Finals meeting of Renault's promotional racing formulae (Paul Ricard - Le Castellet, October 22nd-25th), Renault will be taking the wraps off its latest circuit challenger, the new 'Trophy' version of the Renault Sport Clio. Developed from a Clio II base, it will take over in 1999 from the Trophy Spider as the model used in the marque's celebrated international single make race series.

A long-standing pioneer and leader in sports promotion ever since the creation of the Renault 8 Gordini Cup in 1965, Renault has created a new race series for 1999 which will be known as the Clio Renault Sport Trophy. Built exclusively for circuit use, the new car will take over from the Spider Trophy in Renault's European single make promotional championship.

A specially designed mid-engined structure

While Renault Sport expertise has gone into the development of both the chassis and engine, input from Renault Design has ensured that the new Clio Renault Sport Trophy fully lives up to the spirit of the legendary Renault 5 Turbo. The new mid-engined car has been designed from a Clio II base and employs the same overall structure as its illustrious predecessor. Power is from a 3-litre, 24-valve V6 unit (285 bhp) which has been centrally mounted with a view to optimising both weight distribution and handling performance.

Inbred dynamic and sports performance

The design of the Clio Renault Sport Trophy exudes racing. Wider than the production car, it features distinctive rear- and front-end looks and special sideskirts. The headlights have been masked by a composite plate, while the deep front airdam and widened rear wheelarches contribute to the machine's distinctive robe.

The bodyshell, bonnet, roof and hatch are shared with the Clio II, but all other body parts have been specially designed and produced in association with French composites specialist MOC, a member company of the FINUCHEM Group and whose expertise has already been seen on the recent Espace F1.

Only the barest essentials inside

The interior of the Clio Renault Sport Trophy has been kept voluntarily uncluttered. Mounted behind the three-spoke steering wheel, the carbon-Kevlar dashboard has been stripped to the strict minimum, while the instrument panel itself is inspired from the Formula Renault single-seaters and only the key sources of information (rev counter, oil pressure gauge, water temperature gauge and gear ratio indicator) have been tucked under the anti-glare shield.

Safety is a further important feature of the car. The space vacated by the removal of the engine from the front has been filled by two struts located either side of the front chassis rails. Inside the cockpit, the multipoint roll-cage contributes to the overall rigidity of the shell as well as to the protection of the driver who is held firm in his or her bucket seat by a 6-point harness. The cockpit is entirely isolated from the engine bay by a composite bulkhead which includes a window to permit rearward vision.

A 285 bhp engine and six-speed sequential gearbox

The mid-engined Clio Renault Sport Trophy is powered by Renault's 3 litre, 24-valve V6 unit which has been mounted transversely. Numerous modifications have been made to the six cylinder unit to adapt it to competition use, including:

- an inlet housing two plenum chambers controlled by independent throttle valves,
- specific camshaft overlap and increased valve lift for optimised filling of the combustion chambers,
- different pistons for higher compression ratio.

The specially developed exhaust also contributes to the overall power gain, as well as ensuring that the car complies with the noise limit regulations enforced at circuits.

Compared to the standard engine from which it is derived, maximum power has been boosted from 194 bhp to 285 bhp at 7,000 rpm, while an ignition and injection cut-off switch limits maximum revs to 7,200 rpm. Performance is compounded by the optimised torque curve which has been carefully tailored to achieve close to 307 between 5,000 and 7,100 rpm.

The new six-speed, straight-cut, non-synchro gearbox features sequential gearshift control and is coupled to a hydraulic, twin-plate dog clutch dimensioned to handle the considerable constraints imposed on it by the engine. Transmission is via a limited slip differential.

Racing suspension and brakes

The mid-engined structure of the new Clio Renault Sport Trophy has necessitated a complete rethink of the Clio II chassis on which it is based. New chassis rails and cross-members have been engineered to house the power block and suspension pick-up points. Compared to the original Clio II, wheelbase has been increased by 38 mm, while front and rear track have been upped by 108 mm and 125 mm respectively. For optimum dynamics, the wheels have been placed at the four corners of the car.

Although calling on certain components from the standard car, front and rear suspension have been uprated for competition use. The front employs MacPherson-type technology complete with anti-roll bar, while a specially developed three axis multibar system has been chosen for the rear where the lower suspension pick-up points are located on a specific subframe located under the engine.

A common feature on racing cars, both the front and rear suspension are fully adjustable, enabling drivers to fine tune handling by modifying such parameters as ride height, camber, wheel alignment and castor angles to suit individual circuits and driving styles.

The competition brakes use ventilated 320 mm diameter discs and Brembo 4-pot callipers. Drivers have the possibility of adjusting front-rear balance from inside the car to optimise braking performance during the race.

Racing tyres

The large diameter (18"), light alloy wheels also make a positive contribution to handling. Tyre dimensions are 21/65x18 for the 7.5" wide front wheels and 24/65x18 for the 8.5" rear wheels.

Michelin has developed two types of racing rubber for the new car: slicks for use in dry weather and patterned, wet weather tyres for damp conditions.

Built in Dieppe

The new Clio Renault Sport Trophy will be built in Dieppe where the staff boasts a long tradition in the production of competition and sports cars.

The 1999 Renault Sport Clio Trophy

Established in 1975 to provide the top drivers in the various national Renault 5 Cups of the day with an opportunity to compete internationally, Renault's European single-make series has gone from strength to strength over the years and has become a valuable breeding ground for fresh, emerging talent.

Following on from the original European Renault 5 Turbo Cup, which boasted entries of up to 50 cars, the Alpine Turbo Europa Cup, the Renault 21 2 litre Turbo Cup and the Renault Sport Spider Elf Trophy, next year's Renault Sport Clio Trophy was greeted with enthusiasm the moment it was announced.

The provisional 1999 calendar includes ten races, some of which will serve as curtain-raisers to such prestigious events as the Monaco Formula 1 Grand Prix and the Le Mans 24 Hours.

TECHNICAL DATA

Characteristic	Renault Sport Clio 'Trophy'
Engine	V6 L7X, 24-valves
Capacity	2,946 cc
Bore x stroke	87 mm x 82.6 mm
Compression ratio	11.2:1
Maximum power	20.6 kW (285 bhp) at 7,000 rpm
Maximum torque	307 Nm (32 mkg) at 5,800 rpm
Transmission	
Gearbox	Mechanical, 6 speeds
1 st (speed at 1,000 rpm)	13.0 kph
2 nd	17.3 kph
3 rd	21.6 kph
4 th	25.7 kph
5 th	30,0 kph
6 th	34.3 kph
Tyres	
Front	21 x 65 x 18
Rear	24 x 65 x 18
Suspension	
Front	MacPherson type with adjustable springs

Rear	Multibar with adjustable springs
Brakes	
Front	Ventilated 320 mm diameter discs with 4-pot Brembo callipers
Rear	Ventilated 320 mm diameter discs with 4-pot Brembo callipers
Dimensions/capacities	
Fuel tank	70 litres
Length	3,770 mm
Width (front/rear)	1,740 mm / 1,760 mm
Wheelbase	2,510 mm
Weight	1,100 kg
Performance	
Top speed	230 kph
Price	Approximately FFR 250,000 (before VAT)