

MotoGP facts & figures

■ The Le Mans MotoGP race has had the wet weather flag to flag rules applied for the last three years: in 2007 a light shower started in the early laps which turned into heavy rain forcing the riders to stop and change bikes. In 2008 the wet weather flag was shown mid-way through the race after a sprinkling of rain, but only Melandri took the gamble of stopping to change to wet weather tyres (Stoner also took the opportunity to change bikes, but this was due to a mechanical problem). Last year's race at Le Mans had the reverse scenario, starting out with a wet track which dried out during the race.

■ **Valentino Rossi** has had six podium finishes in the premier-class at Le Mans, including three victories; in 2002 riding a Honda, 2005 riding the 990cc Yamaha and in 2008 on Yamaha's 800cc machine. Last year Rossi finished in 16th place, after suffering a crash on his out-lap on dry tyres and a ride through penalty. This was the first time he had ever failed to score points in a race when reaching the chequered flag and also the first time he had ever finished last in a GP race.

■ **Jorge Lorenzo's** single victory at Le Mans when riding in the smaller classes, came in 2007 in the 250cc race after he had qualified on pole. In his first MotoGP season of 2008 he arrived at Le Mans still suffering with injuries from his crash during practice in China, but finished 2nd even though he was down in 11th place at the end of the second lap. Last year he led every lap of the race and won by a margin of 17.7 seconds.

■ **Dani Pedrosa** had great success at Le Mans riding in the smaller classes, having won the 125cc GP there in 2003 and the 250cc race in both 2004 and 2005. He also started from pole and finished on the podium at Le Mans on his first visit riding a MotoGP machine in 2006. He was 4th and the top Michelin rider in the wet race of 2007 and was 4th again in 2008 year after starting from pole. Last year he once again qualified on pole, but dropped back during the wet part of the race, but set the fastest lap of the race as the track dried, to eventually finish 3rd.

■ **Casey Stoner's** third place finish in the MotoGP race in 2007 is his only podium in any class of racing at the Le Mans circuit. In 2008 Stoner finished 16th at Le Mans, his first non-scoring ride on Ducati, after his bike slowed with mechanical problems and he came in to change to his second bike (on different tyres) as the race had been declared "wet". Last year he qualified on the front row for the third successive year and finished 5th in the race. Stoner has never had a pole at Le Mans in any class of GP racing.

The historic French GP

The French Grand Prix is one of the most historic events on the current Grand Prix calendar. The first French GP was held in 1951, in just the third year of the motorcycling world championship series. In total there have been 52 Grand Prix events held in France and below are some facts and figures from these:

In the 59 years since the first French Grand Prix there have only been seven years when there has not been GP at a French circuit (1952, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1968, 1971 and 1993).

The first ever French GP was held in 1951 at the 8.9 km Albi circuit. This was the one and only time this circuit was used for motorcycle Grand Prix racing.

In Addition to Le Mans there have been seven other circuits that have hosted the French GP (the figure in brackets is the number of times each circuit has hosted the French Grand Prix): Le Mans (21), Paul Ricard (13), Clermont-Ferrand (10), Nogaro (2), Reims (2), Rouen (2), Albi (1), Magny-Cours (1).

The Le Mans circuit also hosted the Grand Prix "Vitesse du Mans" in 1991, which is the only year that two Grand Prix events have been held in France in the same year.

Le Mans was first used for a Grand Prix event in 1969, when the 500cc race was won by Giacomo Agostini, who lapped all the other riders in the race on his MV-Agusta. The highlight of the event for the home crowd was the victory in the 125cc race by Jean Aureal, the first ever victory in the class by a French rider.

The only French rider to win in the premier-class at his home Grand Prix is Pierre Monneret, who won in 1954 at Reims riding a Gilera. He also won the 350cc GP race at the same event on an AJS.

In addition to Jean Aureal, there have been three other French riders who have won at home in the 125cc class; Guy Bertin at Le Mans in 1979 riding a Motobecane, Jean-Claude Selini at Nogaro in 1982 on a MBA and Mike di Meglio in 2008 riding a Derbi.

Three other French riders have won at their home Grand Prix: Jean-Louis Tournadre in the 250cc class at Nogaro in 1982, Patrick Fernandez in the 350cc class in 1979 at Le Mans and Jean-Francois Baldé in 1982 at Nogaro also riding a 350cc machine.

The three riders who have had the most victories at the Le Mans circuit are Dani Pedrosa (2 x 250cc, 1 x 125cc), Freddie Spencer (2 x 500cc, 1 x 250cc) and Valentino Rossi (1x 500cc, 2 x MotoGP).

Since the introduction of the four-stroke MotoGP formula in 2002, Honda has been the most successful manufacturer at Le Mans with four victories. Yamaha riders have had three MotoGP wins at this circuit and Suzuki one.

Chris Vermuelen's victory at Le Mans in 2007 is the only win for Suzuki's 4-stroke MotoGP machine.



#03 Monster Energy Grand Prix de France

Le Mans

■ **Andrea Dovizioso** had considerable success in the smaller classes at the Le Mans circuit, twice finishing on the podium in the 125cc class including a win in 2004 and also finishing on the podium three times in the 250cc class. In his first MotoGP race at Le Mans in 2008 he finished 6th after dropping down to 14th early in the race following a clash with James Toseland. Last year he finished 4th after being passed on the last lap by his team-mate Pedrosa.

■ Le Mans has been one of **Nicky Hayden's** least successful circuits, with a best result of 5th in 2006. At the Spanish Grand Prix, Hayden finished in front of his team-mate Stoner for the first time since joining the Ducati factory squad.

■ **Randy de Puniet** had great success in the 250cc class at Le Mans with four successive podium finishes from 2002 to 2005. His 9th place in 2008 is his only top ten finish in the MotoGP class at Le Mans; in 2006 he was the innocent victim of a first corner collision and in 2007 he fell on lap nine after briefly leading the race. Last year he had difficulties with the changing conditions and finished 14th.

■ Le Mans is one of **Colin Edwards'** more successful circuits, having twice finished on the podium – in 2005 and 2008. He also started from pole at Le Mans in 2007 – his first ever pole in Grand Prix racing. Last year he lost out at the start and dropped down to finish the first lap in 16th place before fighting his way back to finish the race in 7th.

■ **Ben Spies** retirement from the race at the Spanish Grand Prix brought to an end his 100% point scoring record which he had achieved at his previous five GP starts. Spies will be racing at the Le Mans circuit for the first time.

■ Le Mans is one of **Marco Melandri's** most successful circuits during his time in the premier-class, with several good results including; 4th in 2005, a victory in 2006, 2nd in 2007 and last year he was 2nd again, which was his only podium of 2009.

■ **Marco Simoncelli** has had great results for the last two years in the 250cc class at Le Mans; he was second in 2008 and won the race last year.

■ **Mika Kallio** had a couple of podium finishes on a 125cc machine at Le Mans. His 5th place in 2008 was his best result at the circuit in the 250cc class. Last year he crashed out of the MotoGP race at Le Mans on lap twelve when battling for 10th place with Hayden. Kallio qualified in 17th and was in last place on the grid at the Spanish GP, but fought his way through to finish 7th to equal his best re-

Jorge Lorenzo reaches new milestones with Jerez victory

Jorge Lorenzo's win at Jerez was significant in him reaching a number of new milestones in his Grand Prix career:

This was his first victory in the MotoGP class at a Grand Prix held in Spain.

The win took him into a four point lead in the championship standings – the first time he has had sole leadership of the title chase since he won the French GP last year.

This was the 27th win of Lorenzo's GP career across all three classes – taking him equal in Grand Prix victories to Casey Stoner, Freddie Spencer, Eugenio Lazzarini and Pierpaolo Bianchi.

It is the first time he has finished in front of his team-mate Valentino Rossi, when both have finished on the podium, since the Italian GP last year.

This is the first time he has made a pass on the final lap to win a MotoGP race.



Alex de Angelis misses out in Jerez

Alex de Angelis failed to start the race at Jerez after crashing in Sunday morning warm up session. This is the first time that he has missed starting a race since his first race as a full-time Grand Prix rider at the opening 125cc race of 2000 in South Africa, an unbroken sequence of 165 successive Grand Prix starts. Only three riders have a longer sequence of successive Grand Prix starts, as shown in the following list that is headed by Valentino Rossi who has never missed starting a race since making his Grand Prix debut:

RIDERS WITH LONGEST SEQUENCE OF STARTS AT SUCCESSIVE GP EVENTS

Rider	Number of successive GP events	First race in sequence	Last race in sequence
1. Valentino Rossi	229 (125cc, 250cc, 500cc, MotoGP)	125cc/Malaysia/1996/Shah Alam	MotoGP/Spain/2010/Jerez
2. Max Biaggi	201 (250cc, 500cc, MotoGP)	250cc/GB/1992/Donington	MotoGP/Valencia/2005/Ricardo Tormo
3. Randy de Puniet	184 (125cc, 250cc, MotoGP)	125cc/Malaysia/1999/Sepang	MotoGP/Spain/2010/Jerez
4. Alex de Angelis	165 (125cc, 250cc, MotoGP)	125cc/South Africa/2000/Welkom	Moto2/Qatar/2010/Losail
5. Alex Barros	158 (500cc/MotoGP)	500cc/Brazil/1992/Interlagos	MotoGP/Dutch TT/2003/Assen

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sult since moving up to the MotoGP class.

■ Le Mans is one of just three current circuits where **Hiroshi Aoyama** has not had a podium finish during his years of racing in the 250cc class. The other two circuits are Mugello and Valencia.

■ **Loris Capirossi's** only podium finish from nine premier-class starts at Le Mans is 2nd in 2006. He won the 250cc GP at Le Mans back in 1994 on a Honda.

■ **Hector Barbera** has not had a podium at Le Mans in his years racing in the smaller classes. Last year he finished 11th in the 250cc race at the French GP, after crashing and re-starting.

■ Le Mans is the only current circuit used previously for the 125cc and 250cc classes, where **Alvaro Bautista** has not had a podium finish.

■ **Aleix Espargaro** did not compete in the Grand Prix at Le Mans last year as he was without a GP ride.

Moto2 facts & figures

■ Early championship leader **Shoya Tomizawa** had an unsuccessful first visit to Le Mans last year when he crashed out at the Dunlop Chicane on the first lap. He managed to re-start his machine only to enter the pits at the end of the lap to retire from the race.

■ **Toni Elias** twice finished on the podium at Le Mans when competing in the 250cc class, including victory in 2003 riding an Aprilia.

■ **Thomas Luthi** won twice at Le Mans in the 125cc class, in 2005 and 2006. His win in 2006 was the last in the 125cc class by a Honda rider. He had less success at the circuit in the 250cc class, with a best result of 11th in 2008.

■ **Jules Cluzel** has not managed a finish at his home Grand Prix. He crashed out of the 125cc race in 2005 when making his GP debut, he crashed in the 250cc race in both 2006 and 2007 and in 2008 he did not start as he was still recovering from his crash in China. Last year he crashed in the qualifying session and broke his right collarbone and once again was unfit to start.

■ **Alex Debon** took his first ever GP victory in 2008 at Le Mans, in his 112th Grand Prix appearance at the age of 32.

■ **Sergio Gadea's** win in the 125cc race at Le Mans in 2007 was his first ever Grand Prix victory. He also qualified on pole at the circuit in 2008 and had another good result last year finishing 3rd.

Toni Elias joins elite club

At the Spanish Grand Prix Toni Elias won the Moto2 race to join an elite club of riders who have won in four different categories of Grand Prix racing. The other riders who have achieved this are:

- VALENTINO ROSSI (125CC, 250CC, 500CC, MOTOGP)
- LORIS CAPIROSSI (125CC, 250CC, 500CC, MOTOGP)
- CHAS MORTIMER (125CC, 250CC, 350CC, 500CC)
- PHIL READ (125CC, 250CC, 350CC, 500CC)
- JIM REDMAN (125CC, 250CC, 350CC, 500CC)
- MIKE HAILWOOD (125CC, 250CC, 350CC, 500CC)

Valentino Rossi and Loris Capirossi are the only two current riders who won riding 500cc two-stroke machines before they were replaced by the current four-stroke MotoGP bikes.

British rider Chas Mortimer competed in Grand Prix racing as a privateer between 1969 and 1984 making a total of 233 Grand Prix starts. His single win in the 500cc class was at Montjuich Park in Barcelona in 1972 and was the first win in the class for Yamaha.

Phil Read won his first world championship race in the 350cc class at the Isle of Man TT in 1961, before going on to become a factory rider for Yamaha competing in the 125cc and 250cc classes. At the age of 34 he took his opportunity in the 500cc class riding for the factory MV Agusta team. Read is the only rider other than Valentino Rossi to have won world titles in the 125cc, 250cc and 500cc categories.

Jim Redman was a mainstay of the factory Honda effort from the early days of their entry to Grand Prix racing, in the early 60's. He won six world titles in the 250cc and 350cc classes and was the rider selected to lead Honda's first entry to the 500cc class in 1966. After winning first time out on the 500cc Honda at Hockenheim and then repeating the victory at the second race of the year at the Dutch TT, he crashed in practice for the Belgian Grand Prix and suffered injuries that ended his career.

Mike Hailwood was considered the greatest rider of his generation and became the first teenage rider to win a Grand Prix, in the 125cc class of the Ulster Grand Prix in 1959, riding a Ducati. After winning the 250cc world title in 1961, he then went on to win four successive 500cc world titles with the MV Agusta factory team before moving to Honda and winning both the 250cc and 350cc title in successive years. Hailwood was the first rider to have won three Grand Prix races at one Grand Prix event, when he took victories in the 125cc, 250cc and 500cc classes at the 1961 Isle of Man TT races.



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Le Mans

■ **Gabor Talmacsi** did not take part in the French Grand Prix last year after a disagreement with his team.

■ **Yuki Takahashi** took his first Grand Prix victory in the 250cc race at the Le Mans circuit in 2006.

■ **Kenny Noyes'** 7th place finish at Jerez is the best GP result achieved by a rider from the USA in the intermediate class since **Kenny Roberts** finished 5th at the Catalunya circuit in 1995.

■ **Julian Simon** won the 125cc race last year at Le Mans by a massive 27 seconds.

■ **Hector Faubel** finished second in the 250cc race last year at Le Mans – his only podium finish in the 250cc class.

■ **Ratthapark Wilairot** finished 5th last year in the 250cc GP at Le Mans equaling his best result of 2009.

125cc facts & figures

■ **Nico Terol** has shown great form and consistency since the French Grand Prix last year and in this 14 race period he has finished in the top six twelve times, had six podium finishes including two victories. In treacherous conditions last year, Terol was leading the race in the early stages only to crash and re-start in 25th place. After fighting his way back up to 5th he crashed again but re-started again to eventually finish 9th.

■ **Pol Espargaro** did not have much success at Le Mans last year; he qualified down in 15th and then crashed out of the race and retired after completing just five laps.

■ **Esteve Rabat's** third place finish at Jerez equalled his best ever Grand Prix result which he achieved at the Chinese GP in 2007.

■ **Bradley Smith** scored his first ever GP podium at Le Mans in 2007 finishing in 3rd place and in 2008 he went one better to finish 2nd. Last year he set the fastest lap of the race on his way to finishing 4th.

■ **Marc Marquez** qualified on pole last year at Le Mans to become the second youngest rider ever, after Marco Melandri, to start a Grand Prix from pole. He fell, in a tangle with Olive, which eliminated him from the race.

■ **Jonas Folger** finished second in the 125cc race at the French GP last year to become the youngest ever German rider to finish on a Grand Prix podium.

Grand Prix racing numbers

997 – Casey Stoner has accumulated 997 points during his career in the MotoGP class. If he finishes 13th or better in France he will become the 17th rider to reach the milestone of 1000 points in the premier-class of Grand Prix racing.

150 – At the French GP Dani Pedrosa is scheduled to become the youngest ever rider to reach the milestone of 150 Grand Prix starts across all classes, taking the record from Marco Melandri.

34 – Qualifying day at Le Mans will be the 34th anniversary of Jim Redman winning the West German Grand Prix at the Hockenheim circuit, riding the new four-cylinder Honda. This was the debut for the 500cc factory Honda and the companies first ever win in the premier-class.

14 – At the Spanish Grand Prix, Dani Pedrosa scored his fourteenth pole position in the premier-class, which is one more than achieved by the next best Spanish rider, Sete Gibernau.

5 – In the 125cc race at Jerez, Spanish riders filled the top five places on the grid for the first time ever in any class of Grand Prix racing.

3 – Le Mans is one of just three circuits on this year's calendar (that have been used previously) where Ducati have not had a MotoGP win. The others are Indianapolis and Estoril.

3 – Spanish riders won all three races at Jerez. This is just the fourth time that Spanish riders have taken the victory in all three GP on the same day. The other occasions this has occurred are: Le Mans in 2003, Donington 2006 and Valencia 2009.

0.89 seconds – The first three finishers in the MotoGP race at the Spanish Grand Prix were separated by just 0.89 seconds, which is the second closest podium finish of the 800cc era after the Catalan GP of 2007 when 0.39 seconds covered the first three riders across the line.

