

ALPINE WINS ANOTHER FRENCH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

30/10/2023

- FIA R-GT Cup title-holder Raphaël Astier has won the French Two-Wheel Drive Rally Championship in the Alpine A110 Rally.
- The native of Ardèche dazzled with his fifth win of the season at the Critérium des Cévennes, where he took third place overall ahead of several four-wheel drive Rally2s.
- Since the brand's return to the discipline in 2020, the Alpine A110 Rally has won three French Championship titles, plus two international crowns in the FIA R-GT Cup.
- This title crowned a prolific weekend for Alpine, with Armand Fumal's WRC success on the Central European Rally and Sergio Pinto's success on Rallye International du Valais.



Already boasting four wins and three more podiums from seven starts, Raphaël Astier had the chance to seal the French Two-Wheel Drive Rally Championship in the penultimate round of the calendar at the Critérium des Cévennes.

With co-driver Valentin Suchet, the Ardèche-based driver immediately took command of his category. Displaying an impressive speed against the best Rally2 drivers on

the national scene, the CHL Sport Auto team driver avoided the hazards of the course to build up a strong lead over his pursuers in the first day. Raphaël Astier was one step closer to the crown when Styve Juif, his main rival in the title race, retired in SS12. With his fate in his hands, the Pikes Peak hero controlled his pace in the final kilometres to seal his second overall podium of the season, but also his fifth victory and the two-wheel drive crown.

As Alpine celebrates the 50th anniversary of its World Rally Championship title this year, this latest triumph adds to the A110 Rally's long list of successes since the brand's return to the discipline in 2020. Designed and developed by Signatech, it has won 27 of the 28 events it has contested in the French Rally Championship over the last four seasons. After Manu Guigou in 2020 and Cédric Robert in 2022, Raphaël Astier becomes the third driver to win a championship with a model which also boasts two international titles in the FIA R-GT Cup with Pierre Ragues in 2021... and Raphaël Astier last year!

This victory crowns a busy campaign for Alpine, which monopolised the two-wheel drive podium in seven of the eight rounds contested in 2023. The same success was achieved at the highest level of the sport, with Armand Fumal winning the FIA World Rally Championship's Central European Rally last weekend. The brand founded by Jean Rédélé also lived up to its name by dominating its category with Sergio Pinto in the heart of the Alps on Rallye International du Valais.

Raphaël Astier will celebrate his title by concluding his campaign on the Rallye du Var (24-26 November). The last round of the season will also host the season finale of the third edition of the Alpine Elf Rally Trophy.

Raphaël Astier

"After we won the FIA R-GT Cup last year, I set myself the challenge of coming to the French Rally Championship to dethrone Cédric, the benchmark because of his knowledge of the rallies and the Alpine. That materialised this weekend as we had hoped. The Critérium des Cévennes was demanding and lived up to its reputation. We didn't have to finish ahead of Cédric, but we wanted to take advantage of this second-overall podium of the season. We made the right tyre choices to optimise the car and gradually open up the gap before managing to secure the title. We've had a fantastic car all season, so I'd like to thank the CHL Sport Auto team, as well as all the co-drivers, drivers and partners who have supported me this year."

ABOUT ALPINE

Founded in 1955 by Jean Rédélé, the brand has set itself apart with its French-style sports cars. In 2018, the brand presented the new A110, a sports car faithful to Alpine's timeless principles of compactness, lightness, agility and driving pleasure. The Alpine Business Unit was created in 2021 and thus became the brand dedicated to innovative, authentic, exclusive sportscars of the Renault Group, benefiting from the heritage and craftsmanship of its historic plant in Dieppe and the Alpine Racing and Alpine Cars teams engineering mastery.

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