

Olivier Gomez

Vortex V8 (#701)

2021 GTX Teams' 'Europe' champion

When was you first race together?

Arnaud: "Our first race, it was in 1994. Before Vortex, we have driven for a lot of teams together, in France and Spain, including Formula France [which Arnaud won in 1998] and [Championnat de France] Formule Renault."

Olivier: "At three years old, we started driving."

Arnaud: "In karting, yes."

Olivier: "And we've been doing it ever since."

What would you say is your best moment in the 24H SERIES whilst you have been team owners?

Arnaud: "We've done the [Hankook] 24H DUBAI maybe 10 or 11 times, and for me, the best moment was when we took pole position in 2016."

Olivier: "For me, our best race was the [Hankook] 24H BARCELONA, when we finished in 1st place... I don't know which year that was."

Arnaud: "2013?*"

Olivier: "Yes! I wasn't driving that year, but that was very special."

*Before the debut of 'Vortex V8' in 2016, Arnaud and Olivier ran purpose-built, GC 10 V8 silhouette cars as 'GC Automobile Factory.' Not only did the French team take its first series win in Barcelona in 2013, but also its first 1-2 finish in the SP2 class.

Arnaud, which is Olivier's favourite track? And Olivier, which is Arnaud's favourite track?

Arnaud: "I think it's Spa-Francorchamps" **Olivier:** "Same!"

Which circuit haven't you visited together, but would like to?

Arnaud: "I've never driven in Australia, and in a few months, we will go to Bathurst with Philippe [Bonne] and Lionel [Amrouche]. It will be great to finally compete at the Bathurst 12 Hour. It's been a dream to be a part of that race. Before that, two years ago, we went to Sebring [for the inaugural Hankook 24H SEBRING], and that was amazing."

Olivier: "I would like to drive on an English track, like Brands Hatch: it's old, it's small, and it has a lot of history. I think I'd like to try Zandvoort too."

Arnaud, what is Olivier's best quality as a driver or team owner?

Arnaud: "He's a very experienced driver, and he's one of those drivers who can prove his experience behind the wheel. That's very important for our customers. It means they can learn a lot from him. When you look at the data and [onboard] lap videos, he's very competitive."

And Olivier, what is Arnaud's best quality?

Olivier: "Strategy and Logistics! He's the main guy that 'drives' the team. Arnaud is also a very experienced driver and is very natural behind the wheel."

Arnaud, what is the most embarrassing thing Olivier has done during your time as teammates?

[There's a quick discussion in French as the brothers compare notes...]

Arnaud: "We've done a lot of races. We've driven together for over 30 years and there's a lot of experiences there..." – Just as Arnaud gets going, Olivier, with a smile, starts another quick aside in French. He's

head to head

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thought of something! – "Ah! We are not the best when we are the mechanics during a pit stop! One time, our driver came into the pit box – I don't remember which race this was – and when we changed the rear tyre, we put the same tyre back on! So the driver ended up doing two stints on the same tyre!"

And Olivier, what's the most embarrassing thing Arnaud has done during your time as teammates?

Olivier: "I have a few stories away from the track! But honestly, I can't think of one during a race."

Quick fire round!

12 Hours, or 24 Hours?

Olivier: "24."

Arnaud: "24. Driving at night is fun!"

Coffee, tea or Red Bull?

Olivier: "Nothing. No tea, no coffee, no Red Bull."

Arnaud: "Same."

Petrol or electric?

Both answer together: "Petrol!"

Pineapple on pizza: yes or no?

Olivier: "Yes."

Arnaud: "No."

Max, Lewis, Charles or Fernando?!

Arnaud: "Fernando."

Olivier: "Fernando!"

Arnaud, describe Olivier in one word. And Olivier, describe Arnaud in one word.

Arnaud: "Competent!"

[This may read like damning with faint praise, but there's clearly a lot of affection behind this answer.]

Olivier: "Same. Also, 'fast!'"*

* Speaking of which...

Which one of you is fastest?!

Arnaud: "Ah, well, today, it's Olivier. I'm struggling to get a good laptime!"

Olivier: "Yes, same. But it is dependent on the track. In Barcelona, he's faster than me. Spa too. But me? I like Le Castellet. He doesn't beat me too often there!"

* CREVENTIC caught up with Arnaud and Olivier shortly after Free Practice at the Hankook 12H KUWAIT. As shown on page 94, the Gomez brothers finished a trying, but largely positive, first race with the new Vortex '2.0' on the podium alongside Philippe Bonne and Lionel Amrouche. This was the third consecutive GTX podium for Vortex in 2023, a season that started with class victory in Mugello.