



**Press release  
23 February 2006**

## **A Gaulois village discovered at Gif-sur-Yvette**

A team from the Institut national des recherches archéologiques préventives (Inrap) has made an important find at Gif-sur-Yvette: the remains of a village dating from the late 6th – early 5th century B.C., unparalleled in the north of France.

The Greater Saclay Authority (CAPS), wishing to improve its knowledge of the local heritage, asked the DRAC - Regional Archaeology Service to undertake an archaeological evaluation, to be followed, if necessary by full excavation.

Twelve Inrap archaeologists, directed by Olivier Blin, have been excavating 3 hectares since November 2005. They have found a settlement dating mainly from the end of the First Iron Age (Hallstatt) characterised by plots of land each enclosed by small shallow ditches.

In each area can be found dwellings, silos, granaries and other practical constructions. Sunken featured buildings have yielded numerous spindle-whorls whose presence indicates weaving. Abundant archaeological finds (ceramic vases for cooking or storage, some decorated or painted, bronze fibulae ...) have been found in backfilled pits. The examination of the numerous animal bones will give an idea about the eating habits of the time. The work of palaeo-botanists will help us to grasp the environmental conditions, to identify the different crops grown, and to imagine the landscape.

In the western part of the site, an area enclosed by a ditch, dating from the same period, probably had a building at its centre. This would be the residence of someone of high rank.

What has been found is a "Gaulois village", a major discovery for the North of France. It is to be compared with the strongholds and princely dwellings known in the East and the South of France.

## **Inrap**

With more than 1,800 collaborators and researchers INRAP is the largest French archaeological organization and one of the foremost in Europe. A public research establishment, it carries out most of the archaeological evaluations and excavations in France. Within the framework of national and regional planning policy, it acts on behalf of private and public property developers (local and regional authorities, Motorway companies, French railroad system . . .). Almost 2,500 excavation sites are undertaken every year in mainland France and in the D.O.M. (French overseas departments).

[www.inrap.fr](http://www.inrap.fr)

Developer : Communauté d'Agglomération du Plateau de Saclay (CAPS)

Curation : Regional Archaeology Service (Drac Île de France)

Archaeological Research : Inrap

Site director : Olivier Blin, Inrap

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