

JUNE 2019

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THE ORIGINAL RACING MAGAZINE

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A close-up, low-angle photograph of a Jaguar Evolution E-Type. The image focuses on the engine compartment, showing the intricate mechanical parts of the XK engine. In the foreground, a large, multi-spoke alloy wheel is visible, with a Continental tire mounted on it. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the metallic surfaces and the texture of the tire. The overall tone is dark and sophisticated.

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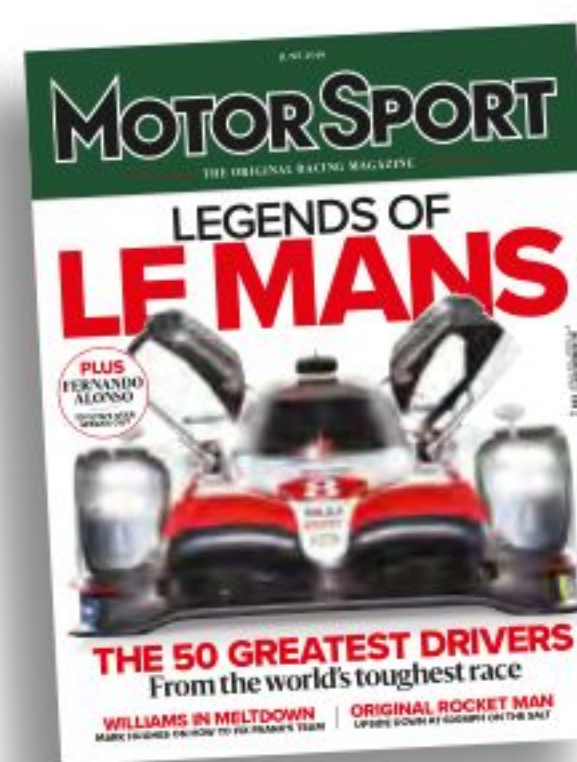
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**90** Aston Martin's DBR9 scored a Le Mans class victory in 2007. We sent Sam Hancock to try it

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## THE EDITOR

# “No other design object has impacted the world more than the automobile”

**F**OR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS ILLUSTRIOUS HISTORY the Victoria & Albert will be putting on an exhibition about cars. It seems extraordinary that the museum - which has had its finger on the pulse of fashion since 1852 and has had exhibits on everything from ceramic tiles to kitchen gadgets, ocean liners to the history of plywood, could have overlooked automotive design classics such as the Mercedes 90, the Plymouth Barracuda, E-type - and Nissan Cube. But there you go.

In any case the new exhibition, which is due to open in November but had its launch event at the end of April, is set to right old oversights with a delicious sounding show, covering the evolution of the car and its impact on the world. It will include, among its 250 objects, an autonomous flying car, a converted low-rider, and a 1950s concept car as well as the first production car manufactured, the 1887 Benz *Patent Motorwagen*, although it is unclear whether this is the actual original car, or one of the replicas that Mercedes lends out for exhibitions.

Over bacon-and-egg sandwiches at the wonderfully decorated Michelin House in Chelsea, with its murals of pioneering motor racing, the curator of the show Brendan Cormier told us: “The V&A’s mission is to champion the power of design to change the world, and no other design object has impacted the world more than the automobile. This exhibition is about the power of design to effect change, and the unintended consequences that have contributed to our current environmental situation.”

There is an irony in the fact that the V&A, known for its focus on fashion, will be celebrating cars at a time when they have never been more unfashionable. Certainly the team behind the exhibit will be breathing a sigh of relief that the show isn’t opening this month, when members of the so called Extinction Rebellion staged a “lie-in” under the blue whale skeleton of its neighbour the Natural History Museum. And as Tristram Hunt, the director of the V&A admitted, it hadn’t been an easy decision to give the go-ahead to the exhibition. Still, credit where it is due: perhaps cars are finally being accepted into polite society.

For readers of *Motor Sport* the best part of *Cars: Accelerating the Modern World* is set to be the section dedicated to racing. According to Cormier, this area will examine how - almost as soon as the car itself had been created - so too was the spark of competition. The two things happened almost in unison: no matter how fast your horseless carriage could go, someone somewhere else reckoned they could go faster. The same is clearly still true today.

The element of competition also fuelled innovation which, according to Cormier, who has spent a year and a half researching and curating the exhibition, found its apotheosis in the slippery shape of the streamliners of the pre-war years, such as the rear-engined Tatra T77, and rapidly filtered down into every area of life from fashion to household appliances.

Competition, of course, still fuels innovation: witness not only the drive towards electric power we are seeing across all forms of motor sport and the development of ingenious hybrid powertrains, but also tyre technology, carbon fibre, digital engineering and car connectivity. Perhaps the next car-themed exhibit to grace the V&A will come sooner than 2186.



OUR FEATURES EDITOR SIMON ARRON RAISED an interesting question about Formula 1’s commercial rights-holder Liberty Media branding

the recent Chinese Grand Prix as F1’s 1000th race. It was certainly the 1000th event to count towards the world championship for drivers since its inception in 1950 but, he argued, only 974 of those were for F1 cars. Of the others, 11 were Indianapolis 500s while the remaining 15 were qualifying grands prix that ran to F2 regulations in 1952-53.

Of course, such figures take no heed of the many non-championship Formula 1 races (many of them titled ‘grand prix’ solely on the grounds of involving F1 cars) that took place between 1946 and 1983, when Brands Hatch’s final Race of Champions (won by Williams driver Keke Rosberg) marked the end of such practice - something still missed by many racing enthusiasts.

In 1962, there were 22 F1 races that did not count towards the world championship to complement the nine that did. In fact, the calendar was so congested that on June 11 there were clashing F1 fixtures in the UK. John Surtees (Lola Mk4) won the 2000 Guineas at Mallory Park while Innes Ireland (Lotus 24) swept to victory in the Crystal Palace Trophy, 125 miles away.

Different times.

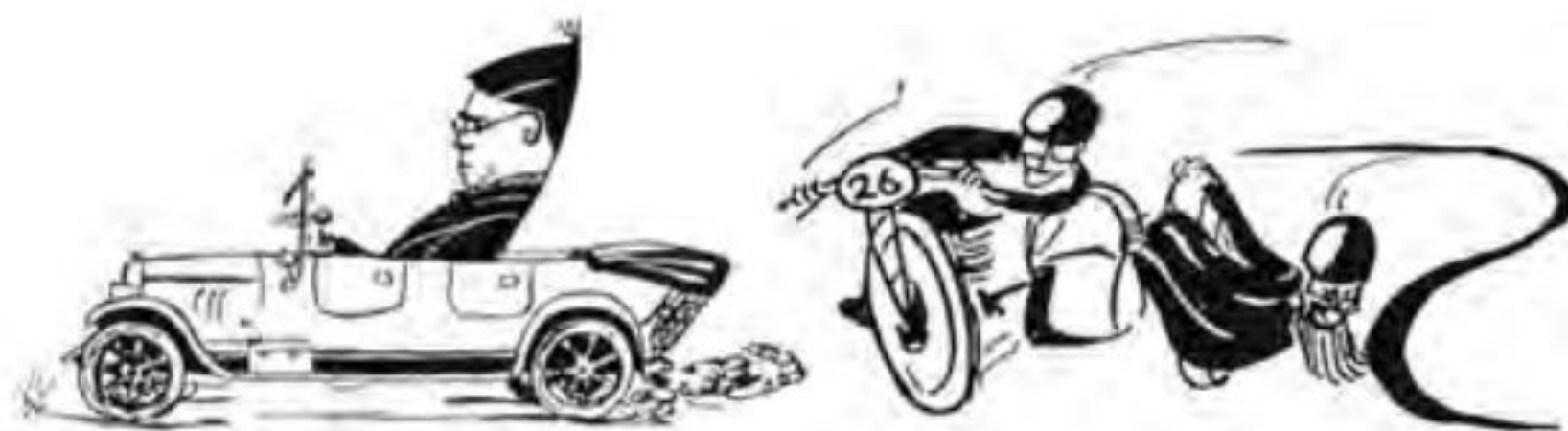
Joe Dunn, editor

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NEXT ISSUE: OUR JULY ISSUE IS ON SALE FROM MAY 29

# MOTORSPORT

IN THE SPIRIT OF BOD AND JENKS



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**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR HELPING WITH THIS ISSUE**  
Tim Samways' Sporting & Historic Cars for access to the DBR9.  
Superformance's Nigel & Oliver Hulme for the keys to the Shelby

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## Details matter.



More than just bonnet decoration. Aston Martin's DBR9 GT1 challenger, which we tested for this month's Le Mans special, was built with sheer performance in mind. So it's surprising to see the Aston badge stand proud from the bodywork, instead of recessed within it. According to the Prodrive engineers that built it, however, the badge actually helped with directing airflow over the car when it was exposed. No details are too small at Le Mans.

Motor Sport (ISSN No: 0027-2019, USPS No: 021-661) is published monthly by Motor Sport Magazine GBR and distributed in the USA by Asendia USA, 17B S Middlesex Ave, Monroe NJ 08831. Periodicals postage paid New Brunswick, NJ and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Motor Sport, 701C Ashland Ave, Folcroft PA 19032. UK and rest of world address changes should be sent to 18-20 Rosemont Road, London, NW3 6NE, UK, or by e-mail to subscriptions@motorsportmagazine.co.uk. Distribution: Marketforce, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. Colour origination: All Points Media. Printing: Precision Colour Printing, Telford, Shropshire, UK. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the Publisher. Copyright © 2019 Motor Sport Magazine Limited, all rights reserved. We take every care when compiling the contents of this magazine but can assume no responsibility for any effects arising therefrom. Manuscripts and photos submitted entirely at owners' risk. Advertisements are accepted by us in good faith as correct at the time of going to press. Motor Sport magazine is printed in England.

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# MATTERS *of* MOMENT

## Monaco still magic at 90

**A** RIGHT-HANDER LEADING ON to the pit straight, the Virage Antony Noghès is not the most celebrated corner at the Monaco Grand Prix Circuit - although it is perhaps the most significant because it bears the name of the businessman who founded the event.

Won by Bugatti T35B driver William Grover-Williams, the first Monaco GP took

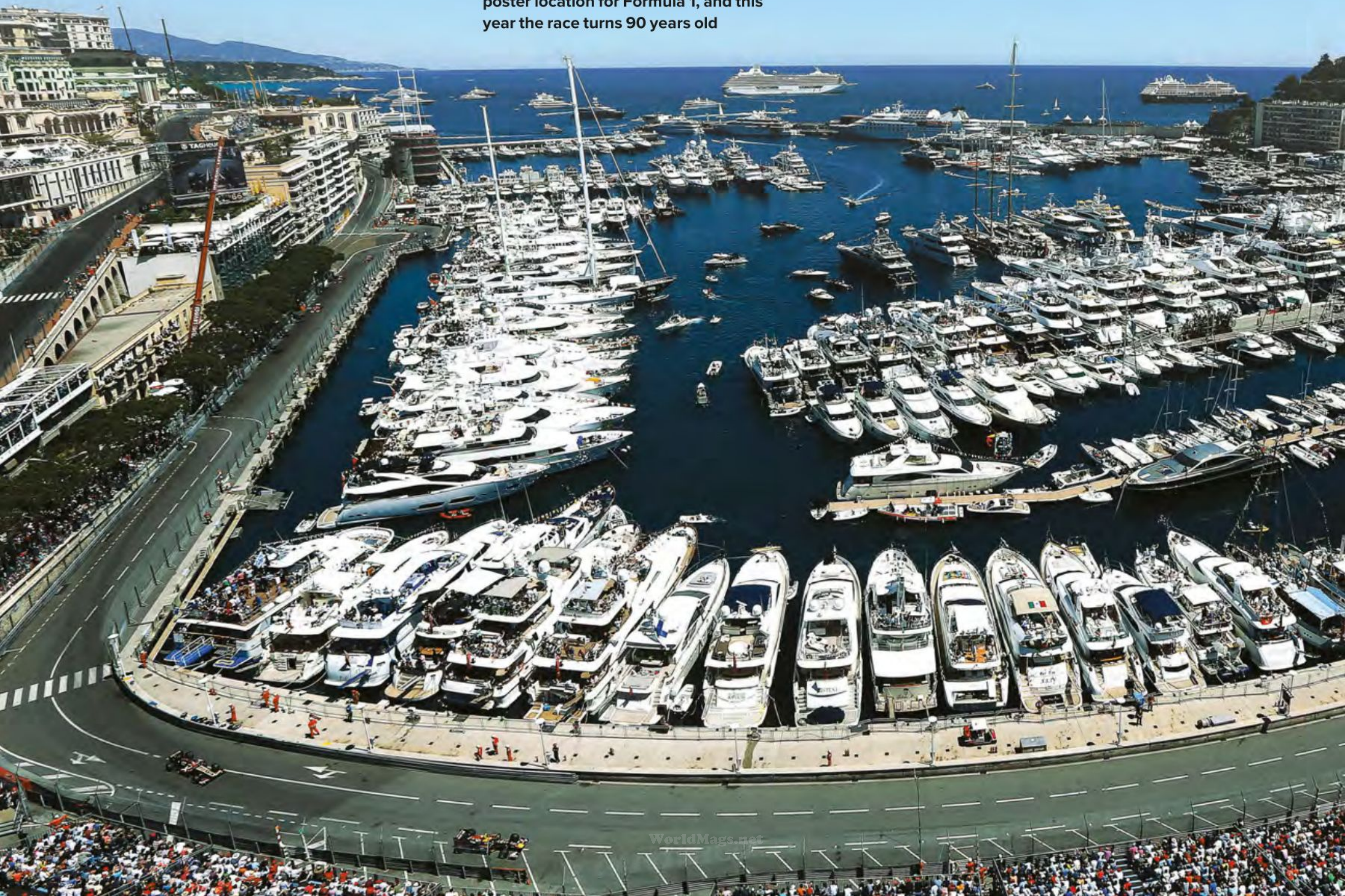
place on April 14, 1929 and this year's race, on May 26, marks the 90th anniversary of a motor sport institution that has changed remarkably little with time's passage. There have been some alterations - notably in 1973, with the addition of the swimming pool complex and the deletion of the old Gasworks hairpin to make way for the new Rascasse loop - but most of the updates have been subtle. Incessant urban development hasn't changed the circuit's original essence.

The Monte Carlo circuit has become a poster location for Formula 1, and this year the race turns 90 years old

Of the current F1 tracks, only Monza (b1922) has been in service for longer.

Some feel F1 no longer has any business in Monaco, because overtaking borders on the impossible, but as a spectacle the race has few peers. It might be the slowest venue on the calendar, but proximity embellishes the sense of speed - and from trackside you'd swear it was among the fastest.

It has also become symbolic of the conspicuous consumption that envelops contemporary Formula 1. Parts of the circuit are fringed by the Mediterranean, upon which are parked everything from elegant, nimble sailing boats to billion-dollar superyachts. Between the chicane exit and the swimming pool complex, the immediate trackside area is lined with plush vessels, mostly controlled by tour operators charging a handsome stipend for boarding privileges (about £3000 per head for a weekend pass, sustenance and champagne included).



Monaco once had a reputation for lavish after-race parties, but nowadays most drivers have apartments in nearby Fontvieille where they can grab an isotonic drink and an early night.

Grover-Williams was the first of 46 drivers to have won the Monaco GP, Nuvolari, Moss, Caracciola, Fangio, Brabham, Schumacher, Häkkinen, McLaren, Lauda, Prost and the original Villeneuve being among those to have followed. Only four active F1 drivers have Monaco victories on their CV - two each for Sebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton, one for Daniel Ricciardo and Kimi Räikkönen - so Ayrton Senna's record of six won't be challenged any time soon.

Monaco hasn't always been on the world championship calendar, though it has featured every season since 1955 and shows no sign of fading.

*Merci, Antony...*



MOTORSPORT IMAGES



JAKOB EBREY

Close, and clean, competition made the BTCC a real crowd-pleaser at Brands Hatch

## BTCC is back with a bang

IT HAS BECOME A TRUISM THAT THE British Touring Car Championship was never finer than during the 1990s Super Touring era. But the buzz around the start of this year suggests that Britain's premier race series is actually better now than it ever has been.

In March, thousands of fans from all around the country skipped work to get their first glimpse at this year's cars and drivers, and packed out Brands Hatch's pitlane for an impromptu autograph session during the championship's pre-season test day.

One of the reasons for the excitement is that there is a lot that is new about this season. Toyota is back as a manufacturer team for the first time since 1995, with the hugely popular Tom Ingram handling the new Corolla. Reigning champion squad Team BMW - operated by Dick Bennetts' WSR concern - brought the iconic 3-series back despite having only received the bodysells for the three

cars just before Christmas. There's a brand new team in the form of Excelr8 - running the two MG6 GTs - and also a smattering of star names in the form of ex-F1 driver Mark Blundell and Nicolas Hamilton - whose five-time world champion brother even turned up to watch the season-opener and seemed suitably impressed with what he saw.

The opening races at Brands Hatch produced three different winners from as many different teams and two marques, and the complete absence of a safety car period across the three races - held in tricky conditions - shows the BTCC is shaking off its 'bumper car' reputation.

Okay, so the drivers might not yet be earning the reported £700,000 salary that Nissan's Laurent Aiello was paid during the Super Touring era, but with all the races being live on free-to-air TV - those big-money days may yet return. It appears other forms of motor sport could learn a fair bit from the BTCC. ◻



Lewis dropped by to support brother Nicolas in his Ford Focus

**I**N THE MOTOR RACING LEXICON, JIM Russell's name will forever be attached to the racing school that launched countless careers - so much so that it's easy to overlook his own driving achievements.

Russell, who died recently at the age of 98, was in his 30s when he was gripped by racing, following a 1952 visit to his local circuit, Snetterton. He began competing in 500cc F3 and established himself as a front-runner against drivers such as Stirling Moss, Stuart Lewis-Evans, Don Parker and Ivor Bueb. He went on to become BRSCC F3 champion in 1955 and retained the title for a further two seasons. He made his F1 debut in 1957, taking Gilby Engineering's Maserati 250F to fifth place in the non-championship Glover Trophy at Goodwood. Although his racing horizons were expanding, however, he continued to compete in F3 until the end of 1958 and notched up more than 60 wins in the category before he bid it adieu.

A works Cooper driver in the late 1950s, he competed with distinction in F2 and sports cars. He finished fifth against a strong F2 field at AVUS in 1958, just ahead of fellow Cooper T45 driver Jack Brabham, and a fortnight later the pair took first and second at Montlhéry, with Russell once again ahead.

Although he began his 1959 campaign strongly, not least by leading a Cooper clean sweep of the top 15 places in the British Empire Trophy at Oulton Park, an accident at Le Mans that June left him seriously injured and he didn't return to the cockpit until 1961, racing a Lotus 20 in Formula Junior. That lengthy absence hadn't affected



Russell (left) instructs his 1967 intake aboard their Lotus 51s at Snetterton

GETTY

## Jim Russell: farewell to a star in his own right

his speed - he recorded podium finishes, despite now being in his 40s, but after beating all the youngsters at Silverstone in May he decided to step away from racing to concentrate on developing the racing school he'd opened at Snetterton in 1957.

As well as giving many youngsters their start, it created a template that schools around the world would adopt. In that much Russell will always be remembered as a pioneer, but it should not be forgotten that he was also a driver of significant ability.

## A tribute to Nicky Hayden



HONDA

**M**OTOGP HAS HONOURED THE LATE Nicky Hayden by retiring his number from the sport.

The number of the former MotoGP champion - also known as 'The Kentucky Kid' - was retired in a ceremony during the Grand Prix of the Americas at Austin. Hayden, who died at the age of 35 after a cycling accident in 2017, rode with the number 69 for his whole career.

Carmelo Ezpeleta, CEO of MotoGP organiser Dorna, explained the decision for number 69 to ride no more: "We thought it's something we must do. Nicky was someone special to all of us."

Hayden's brother Tommy paid tribute to the 2006 world-beater on behalf of his family: "The number 69 is special in our family: my dad raced with it, and we always raced with it - Nicky carried the number

through his whole career, so it has a lot of meaning. To have it retired from MotoGP, the pinnacle of the sport, it means a lot to us. It keeps Nicky's legacy alive."

Hayden started racing in the Central Motorcycle Roadracing Association (CMRA) before moving to the MotoAmerica Superbike Championship, winning the title in 2002. He was then approached by Repsol Honda to race in MotoGP, winning Rookie of the Year in 2003. His first race win came in 2005 at Laguna Seca, and he finished third overall in the championship, before he claimed the world title the following season.

This isn't the first time a racer's number has been retired in tribute, following the 74 of Daijiro Kato, who died in 2003, and 39 of Luis Salom in 2016. It has also occurred in Formula 1, with the FIA retiring Jules Bianchi's 17 after his death in 2015.





77th MEMBERS' MEETING

Drivers were warned ahead of the Members' Meeting, and the standards at this year's event improved

# Goodwood gets tough on driving standards

**D**RIVERS AT ONE OF BRITAIN'S PREMIER historic racing events have been handed a ban for dangerous driving. According to a leaked letter ahead of the Goodwood Members' Meeting in April, four drivers were told they may not compete after being involved in incidents at previous meetings.

The letter, authored by the Duke of Richmond and sent to competitors, will be seen as the latest in a series of crackdowns on unsafe driving amid fears that a major accident could kill off the events entirely.

According to the letter, which has been seen by *Motor Sport*, organisers have studied footage of the 2018 Revival where there were several on-track incidents and taken advice from driving standards advisors about who was to blame. It states: "We were all deeply

concerned by some of the driving that went on at the Revival last year and saddened that this theme dominated too many of the conversations that went on for many weeks after.

"With regret, given the serious nature of some of the incidents, we feel we have no alternative than to take the unprecedented step of making public the punishments we imposed following the 2018 Revival. This is not about shaming those involved, but rather showing that we will simply not tolerate unsafe driving at Goodwood."

Four drivers - Pete Chambers, Chris Jolly, Bernhard van Oranje and Adrian Willmott - have been excluded from Goodwood events

for "at least 13 months", while another dozen have received reprimands or else been warned about their future conduct.

**"It's showing that we will not tolerate unsafe driving at Goodwood"**

"I can appreciate why they've done it," said Ben Mitchell, winner of the Derek Bell Trophy F3 race at the Members' Meeting. "It's a quick track, without a great deal of run-off, and there was *lots* of contact at the Revival last season. From what I've seen this weekend the message seems to have got through, because there have been far fewer incidents."

Leading Mini driver Bill Sollis added: "I think it needed saying, because one or two people can sometimes be a bit desperate to win." ◀

# Copycats must knock it off



**T**HE ERA OF THE CHINESE 'COPYCAT' car may be set to end after Jaguar Land Rover won a landmark court case that could open the floodgates for other European manufacturers to pursue legal action against the fakers.

JLR won its long-running case against Chinese brand Jiangling Motor Corporation over the distinct similarities between its

## Back is the future for Corvette

**C**ORVETTE'S NEXT-GENERATION Le Mans challenger will mark a huge departure from the American firm's tradition by becoming mid-engined.

Since Corvette began in the 1950s its cars have abided by a few main principles: have a whacking great engine in the front, be rear-wheel drive and be largely made of lightweight plastic bodywork. Throughout the firm's history at Le Mans, which began with a class win in 1960 with its five-litre C1 Coupe, its cars have retained that format, however a rework of the road car range will necessitate a new direction on track.

The forthcoming C8 will be revealed in July and, while little is known about the final spec, parent company Chevrolet has confirmed the move to a mid-engined layout, most likely with a turbocharged powerplant.



This year's Le Mans could be Corvette's last campaign with a front-engined car

RICHARD PRINCE

Corvette currently enjoys the longest active participation record for a works team at Le Mans, having begun its current run in 2000 with the C5.R and enjoyed eight class wins since. This year will mark its 20th consecutive appearance, and the last for the current C7.R, which has raced since 2014.

In road-car terms, the move to a mid-engined C8 is intended to position Corvette better against rivals such as Ferrari, Lamborghini and McLaren. In race terms it

will be built by long-term constructor Pratt & Miller and has already been spied testing at Road America ahead of its planned 2020 debut. It's confirmed to compete in the IMSA WeatherTech series and, given Corvette's strong history of running at Le Mans, it is likely to lead the line for the Americans at La Sarthe too.

Corvette has dabbled with mid-engined concept models before, the first being the 1970 XP-882, or Aerovette.



Spot the difference: The LandWind, below, and the Evoque, left... we think?



British-built Evoque model and the Chinese LandWind X7 SUV.

A court in Beijing ruled that five design features of the £14,000 LandWind were direct copies from the Evoque, which retails for three times the price, and demanded that production of the LandWind ceased.

It is the first time that a Chinese court has found in favour of a foreign car company

in such a case. The verdict has caused a stir in the industry and could lead to a host of fresh copyright claims being launched against Chinese firms, which have long been accused of aping western designs.

BMW has a history of taking action against copyright issues in China. Back in 2008 it lost a case against Shuanghuan over the design of its CEO model, which strongly

resembled that of an X5 SUV. BMW did, however, win a claim in 2016 over the fashion brand BMN, which was using a very similar blue and white segmented logo to that of the Munich brand.

Porsche has also been considering legal action against Zotye after its SR9, revealed in 2016, emerged as a near-clone to the Stuttgart firm's Macan model.

## Silverstone plays down track concerns

**T**HE HOME OF BRITISH RACING HAS reacted to concerns about the suitability of the track ahead of what could be the final British Grand Prix. Silverstone Circuit bosses say they have no fears about this year's race suffering, despite it being scheduled as the first event to take place on the circuit after planned resurfacing work has been carried out.

Silverstone will close the grand prix circuit following the British GT meeting on June 8-9 for the maintenance, with the British GP scheduled to be the first event to run on the new asphalt on July 10-12.

The complete overhaul follows the cancellation of last year's MotoGP round, which was flooded off when the original resurfacing, which was completed in early 2018, failed to cope with drainage.

The mid-season downtime has already taken its toll on club events, with two meetings having to be cancelled. Re-opening

with the British GP - Silverstone's biggest event of the year - appears a risk, but Silverstone's managing director Stuart Pringle disputed this: "The slot we've deliberately chosen for the resurfacing is actually safer for the British GP, because within our F1 contract there's a set period of time before the event when the track has to be given over to F1, and that actually gives us much longer to correct any potential issues or 'slippage' that may arise. It's not as risky as it may look from the outside and we don't foresee any trouble."

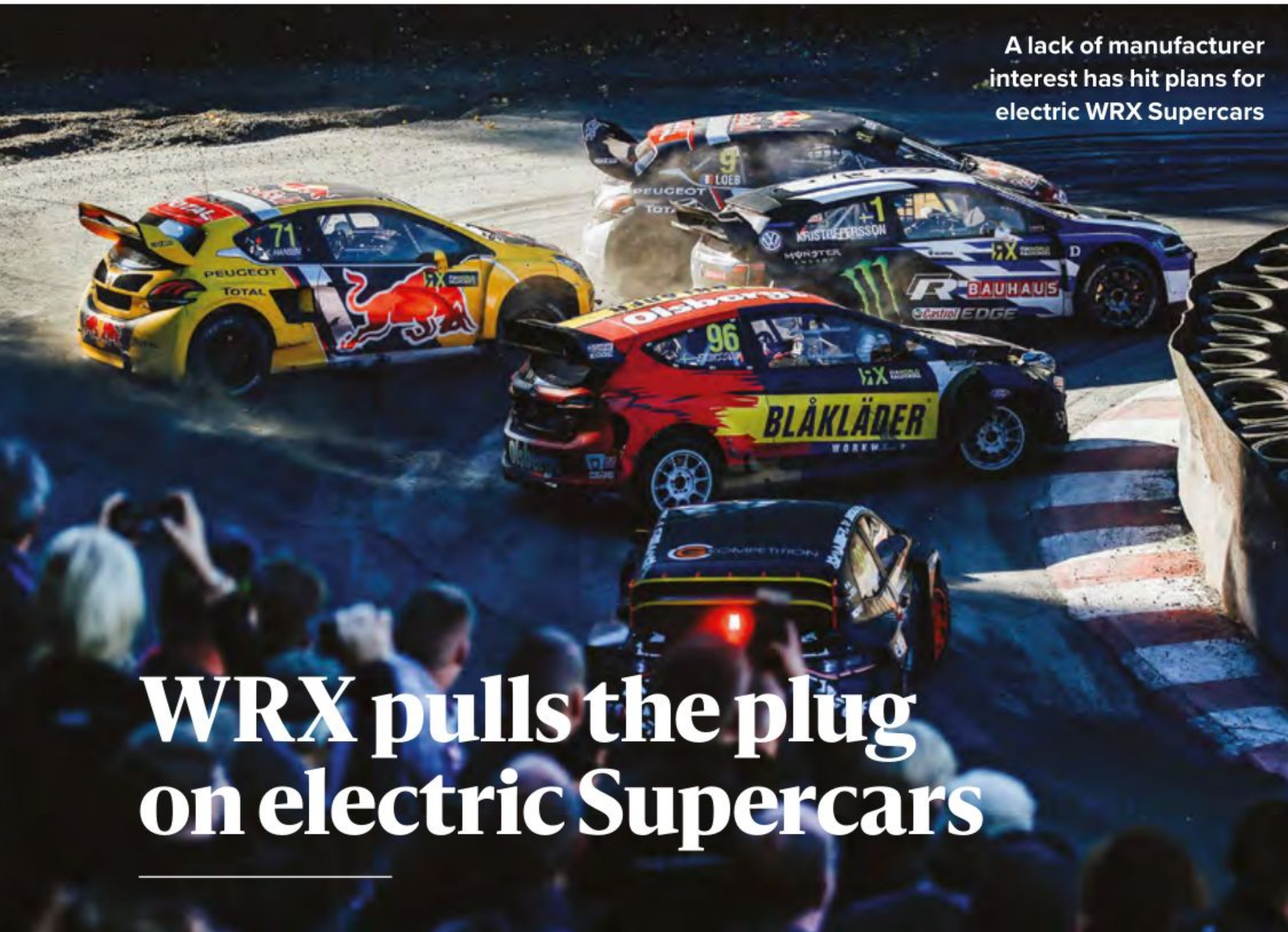
Silverstone launched an investigation into the events that led to the venue having to cancel last year's British MotoGP round on race day, forcing it to refund ticket



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

holders. Pringle declined to comment on the progress or outcome of that investigation. The current surface was also criticised by F1 drivers last year for being bumpy.

This year's British GP is also the last under the current contract, after Silverstone opted to activate its break clause citing the spiralling costs of staging the race. There has yet to be any word on the progress of renegotiation with Liberty Media to keep the race on the calendar from 2020 onwards. ●



A lack of manufacturer interest has hit plans for electric WRX Supercars

## WRX pulls the plug on electric Supercars

THE WORLD RALLYCROSS Championship has failed to attract sufficient manufacturer interest for its electric Supercar format and has instead created an all-electric support series called 'Projekt E', which is set for launch in 2020.

While Formula E will enjoy the presence of nine manufacturer teams next year, (Audi, BMW, DS, Jaguar, Mahindra, Mercedes, NIO, Nissan, Porsche) and other series such as the British Touring Car Championship are welcoming electrification in the future with

hybrid technology, WRX's planned electrification has hit a major obstacle.

"It emerged that the manufacturers were not yet ready to commit in sufficient numbers to make a fully-electric World Championship a reality," said WRX head Torben Olsen. "However, we believe that Projekt E is a positive step forward to deliver on our 2017 pledge [to electrify WRX]."

Ford Motorsport boss Mark Rushbrook explained that the Blue Oval witnessed manufacturers pull out of meetings to decide WRX's electric future - and followed suit. Ford bowed out of WRX at the end of 2017 but expressed interest in returning to an electric series. He told *Motor Sport*: "We saw, through the technical working groups, a lot of manufacturers started to drop out, and it was clear that [WRX] was not being set-up for something with a lot of manufacturers."

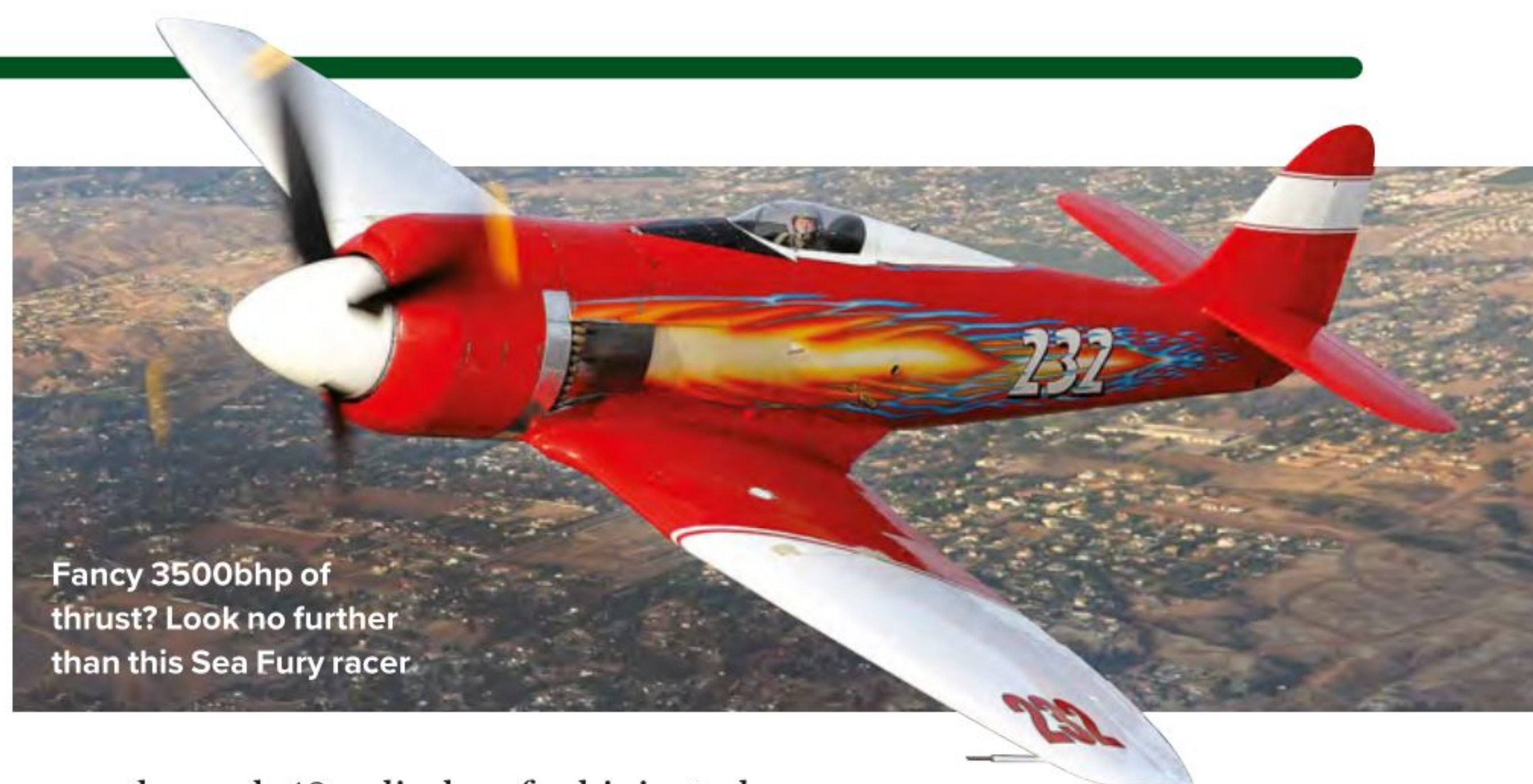
"I don't know that any automaker wants to be in that position of being the first, hoping that others come. We're not going to go compete by ourselves only against one other manufacturer."

Ford also confirmed it will cease its factory GT programme in both IMSA and the World Endurance Championship at the end of this season. The cars are expected to run with customer teams instead. However, Ford has expressed interest in evolving the GT to fit the WEC's new Hypercar rules from 2020.

## Winning warbird up for grabs

NOT ALL COMPETITION MEANS TYRES on asphalt - air racing is blisteringly quick and demands split-second reactions. Toughest of all is unlimited class racing, where WWII warbirds are pitted against each other around an 8.5-mile course at speeds of up to 500mph. If it's your thing, one of the fastest piston-engined racing aeroplanes in the world is for sale in the USA.

Clocked at 481mph while winning the Gold Unlimited Class at the 2006 Reno air races - the Monaco of aero competition - the Hawker Sea Fury was radically modified in 1998 to aim for maximum speed. It was reskinned, air vents and inlets closed off and a racing canopy and propeller fitted, with a



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Designed in 1942, these brutally powerful machines exemplify the peak of propeller-powered design before the jet engine, and the Sea Fury carrier variant served into the 1950s with Britain's Fleet Air Arm. Civilian owners prized them for their speed and converted many for racing, and some still compete. This 1947 aircraft was found in a farmer's field in Canada in 1962 and restored to flying shape with a Bristol engine, but was

rebuilt after a crash, racing successfully in the US until new owners decided to turn it into the world's fastest Sea Fury. However, the changes are all reversible, says specialist dealer Platinum Fighter Sales in America.

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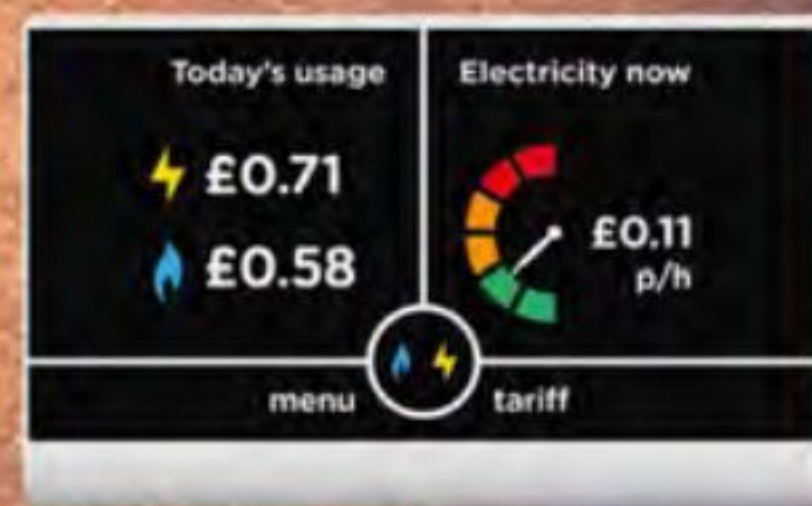
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## MARK HUGHES

# “Leclerc’s performance means Vettel is actually fighting for his career”

**T**HE HEADLINE-GRABBING performance of Charles Leclerc in Bahrain in just his second race for the Scuderia confirmed the 21-year-old’s place at the top table. Pace enough to be on pole by 0.3sec, to quickly, calmly repossess his way to the front after a poor start and, most crucially of all, the instinct of taking matters into his own hands during a moment of indecision from the team. This is no support driver, and within seconds of being forced to fight his corner on that matter, he did so.

Before we get too carried away, let’s acknowledge that Sebastian Vettel, even before his spin while dicing with Hamilton, was never happy with the feel of his car throughout the Bahrain weekend. His singular driving style has always demanded something very specific from the car, and this proved elusive on that particular weekend. He followed it up in China with a Leclerc-eclipsing performance. In other words, Leclerc was beating a below-par Vettel in Bahrain, not peak Vettel.

But let’s just allow ourselves a ‘what if’ question at this point. What if weekends like Bahrain came to be the norm in the Vettel-Leclerc dynamic? What if, furthermore, Ferrari emerges as the dominant team over the season, courtesy of power unit technology that Mercedes doesn’t match?

In such a situation Vettel, a proud multiple champion, would be placed eventually in the support role. Not by team choice, but just by the simple mathematics of the situation. If Vettel continues to be outperformed by his younger team-mate, it’s difficult to see where his career would go other than to honourable retirement.

Vettel’s friend Bernie Ecclestone has been reflecting on the situation. “Seb is so desperate to win another world championship,” he recently told PA, “and

for Lewis not to win another. [Because of this], when they are side by side Seb suffers from a mental block...”

But Hamilton might no longer be Vettel’s biggest problem. Race errors would only be compounding his situation if he were to be regularly outpaced by his team-mate.

What happens late season, if the numbers insist that Leclerc is the team’s best title chance? It’s difficult to disagree with Ecclestone’s opinion on that. “If Charles is going to be the top driver, and Seb will have to support him, he won’t move over. He won’t let that happen.” And if the decision is taken out of his hands? “Sebastian would stop, and I don’t think it would take an awful lot for that to happen.”

That is the sort of pressure Vettel is under every time he steps into the car this year. Despite his massive achievements, Leclerc’s performance means Vettel is actually fighting for his career. He’s contracted until the end of 2020, but too many races like Bahrain and it’s quite conceivable he’d stop sooner. It’s not an idea about which he’s publicly dismissive.

In China he said, “I don’t know at the moment... I feel on top of my game. I am very self-critical and very ambitious. I love driving, I love the sensation of speed and I love fighting these guys. There are a lot of things I like at the moment and things I would miss, so that is why it is not an option to quit tomorrow. But the contract is just a piece of paper. We will see what happens.”

There is a near-parallel situation at the other end of the grid. Robert Kubica is fighting hard to keep his historic comeback on course against a starring rookie, George Russell. Since we discussed this topic here last month there have been further developments. As you may have read on our

website, it was found in Bahrain that there was a difference in the aero shift between the two cars, despite identical settings. On Kubica’s car the aero would shift forwards by an extra eight per cent over Russell’s as they braked, giving a car that was way too much ‘on the nose’ on corner entry, with an acute lack of rear grip from turn in to apex. There was no obvious explanation for it - and for the post-race test it was decided to use Kubica’s chassis for both drivers. Russell found the exact same trait as Kubica and was in fact marginally slower in the test.

In Shanghai, Russell’s floor and front wing were transferred onto Kubica’s car for practice. Kubica was faster in both sessions. For Saturday, these components were transferred back onto Russell’s car - and, like a switch, Russell reverted to being the faster Williams driver. If Kubica’s comeback is to be successful, unspecified component problems aren’t going to cut the mustard.

But there is one driver who so far this season seems to be reacting positively to the pressure: Valtteri Bottas. The perception of him being Hamilton’s support has not gone away after two seasons at Mercedes, but it’s not a status he’s prepared to accept. He will never see himself as Eddie Irvine to Hamilton’s

Michael Schumacher. But he has just a one-year contract, with the team’s reserve driver Esteban Ocon sitting ostentatiously at Toto Wolff’s shoulder. That’s a lot of pressure - and yet at the time of writing he’d delivered that flawless victory in Melbourne and a Hamilton-beating pole in Shanghai.

**“Component problems must be solved if Kubica is to be successful”**

Since he began covering Grand Prix racing in 2000, Mark Hughes has forged a reputation as the finest Formula 1 analyst of his generation. Follow Mark on Twitter @SportmphMark



## MAT OXLEY

# “The seven-mile straight was so bumpy the Gileras couldn’t use full throttle”

**M**OTORCYCLING’S WORLD championships celebrate their 70th birthday in June. The first racing season that awarded world titles ran from June to September 1949, taking in rounds on the Isle of Man, at Bern, Assen, Spa-Francorchamps, Clady and Monza.

In fact, that’s not strictly true: the first ‘motorcycling track championship of the world’ took place at a 1903 cycling event in Paris. But this doesn’t really count, as the event was contested by Frenchmen riding French motorcycles around a French track. The winner was Maurice Fournier, riding a 1500cc V4, manufactured by Clément Cycles.

Plans for the creation of the world championships were first discussed at a FICM (Fédération Internationale des Clubs Motocyclistes) meeting in Italy in April 1946, eight months after WWII. The leading light in these talks was Count Giovanni Lurani, who also worked with the FIA, initiating GT racing.

Motorcycle racing changed significantly as a result of the FICM meetings, which concluded at the RAC club in London in 1948. The supercharged machines that had dominated racing in the late 1930s were banned, because the only available ‘pool’ petrol wasn’t up to the job. Everyone had to drastically reduce compression to suit the 75-octane fuel, which Norton technical director Joe Craig declared “little better than paraffin”. German riders and manufacturers were also banned, so no BMW or DKW, which had been major pre-war forces.

Four manufacturers contested the premier 500cc class, the only category that ran at all six rounds (supported by 350s, 250s and 125s): Norton, AJS, Gilera and Moto Guzzi. Except that Gilera didn’t turn up for the first race on the Isle of Man, because the expense of a two-week event 1200 miles and two boat rides away was too much in those hard times.

The Senior TT - 264 miles of hellishly bumpy 1940s Manx roads - was dominated by RAF pilot Les Graham, until his AJS broke its magneto with less than two miles to go. Thus Harold Daniell became the first winner of a premier world championship race, on an updated pre-war factory Norton single.

Round two was hosted by the city of Bern, around the lethal Bremgarten circuit. Gilera arrived in force, with its four-cylinder Quattro, much-changed since it won the 1939 European championship in supercharged form. Ferrari was also present with its first F1 car, the supercharged V12 125. Ferrari’s Alberto Ascari won the car race, while Graham and AJS took victory in the bike event, ahead of Gilera’s Arciso Artesiani and Norton’s Daniell, who kept his place at the top of the championship.

Artesiani’s team-mate Nello Pagani won next time out at Assen, after a last-lap dogfight with Graham, who took the championship lead. The following weekend at Spa a split fuel tank did for Graham, which put Pagani ahead. It didn’t matter. Graham ran away with round five at Clady in Northern Ireland, where the seven-mile straight was so bumpy that the Gilera riders couldn’t use full throttle to exploit their top-speed advantage.

Les Graham was now world champion, with his best three scores already unbeatable. Pagani won the finale at Monza, leaving him one point behind Graham in the riders’ championship and Gilera just one point behind AJS in the constructors’ championship.

Norton won the crown two years later, the last British marque to win a premier-class world title. The British industry seemed overcome by post-war lethargy, with AJS directors refusing the budget to improve the E90 Porcupine (nicknamed for its spiky engine fins) and Norton management

unwilling to move beyond its unstreamlined single-cylinder machine, because that’s how the company sold its road bikes.

Gilera assumed dominance in the next few years by redesigning the Quattro’s chassis, copying many features already used by AJS and Norton; its girder front forks and friction rear dampers were replaced by hydraulic forks and rear shocks. As soon as Gilera riders had the handling to match their horsepower there was no stopping them.

Frustrated by Norton’s reluctance to progress, Geoff Duke signed with Gilera in 1953 and won motorcycle racing’s first world-title hat-trick. British riders were a favourite with Italian brands for the next decade; MV Agusta signed Graham in 1952 and four years later lured John Surtees away from Norton.

Germany was allowed to race from 1952 finding success in the smaller classes, but in 1955-60 the Italians asserted their dominance, winning all 24 constructors’ titles.

In 1959 the series moved into its next phase, when Honda turned up on the Isle of Man. The company won its first world titles two years later and was quickly joined by Yamaha, Suzuki and Kawasaki. By the mid-1970s Japanese manufacturers had all but taken over, a situation which continues today, although Spanish, Italian, German and

Austrian manufacturers have also enjoyed occasional days in the sun.

At the end of the inaugural 1949 season the federation’s British representative claimed that the FIA was inspired by motorcycling’s example to create drivers’ and constructors’ categories for Formula 1’s first season in 1950.

**“Gilera didn’t turn up due to the expense of a 1200-mile trip”**

**Mat Oxley has covered motorcycle racing for many years – and also has the distinction of being an Isle of Man TT winner**

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## DOUG NYE

**“Does historical accuracy matter if it makes a good story? Of course it does!”**

SOMETIMES TRYING TO PRESENT the truth of a bygone event, much more so of a bygone project, can become tricky as one tries to reconcile sometimes conflicting accounts from witnesses, judging what memories truly reflect bygone deeds. Occasionally one gets it wrong. Does it matter? For most writers, perhaps, as long as it's made a good story, nah - not really...

But for those of us who really care about this peripheral historical stuff, of course it matters. That's one reason why I can spend years trying to get a book manuscript right (yet still, in some details, fail) and why this month I'll offer some additional input on my Cosworth 4-wheel-drive story in the April issue. It needs it.

We always seek the accuracy that this magazine's knowledgeable readership expect, and fortunately many of you have worked right there at the true coalface of motor racing endeavour - and really help. Alastair Lyle was a Cosworth draughtsman and project engineer from 1967-79. He produced many of the detailed drawings from which the components of former McLaren designer Robin Herd's 4WD F1 car were manufactured. Uniquely, to offset the added weight of the 4WD transmission, the Cosworth used one of the company's 3-litre DFV V8 engines for which the block and heads had been cast not in the standard aluminium, but in lightweight magnesium. Alastair recalls: “It always had low oil pressure as the block and sump were cast from the standard aluminium pattern equipment. Magnesium is lighter, but has the same strength-to-weight ratio, so you will need a larger section for the magnesium main bearing housings to get the same strength as if they had been aluminium. The thick-wall main bearing shells expanded the magnesium housing more than the aluminium one, resulting in chronic lower oil pressure.

“The car also started out with Hewland/ZF type limited differentials at both ends, which proved to be horribly snatchy at the front, which gave it the nasty handling described by Mike Costin. As a first attempt to cure it, we did run a test with a free front diff, which cured the wandering on the straights and also made braking into corners stable with no intermittent front wheel locking after the brakes were applied. Sadly, when the car tried to accelerate hard out of corners, it would then try to spin its inside front wheel and lose traction, which was self-defeating. So the free diff experiment was abandoned - after which we tried a Salisbury ‘Powr-Lok’ diff as it had a more progressive action than the cam-and-pawl ZF type. It was better, but not good enough...

“I think that Keith [Duckworth] actually designed three different ratios for the torque-splitting diff, mounted on the gearbox. There was a 40:60 front/rear torque split as a starter, and then he also did 35:65 and 30:70. It was a six-speed gearbox, and the transmission was fully dry sumped, which was unusual for that era, but good for minimising transmission losses. We used Hewland gears for the pump.

“I don't ever remember a 20:80 torque split for the Cosworth car, but Matra had one on their 4WD MS84, which Jackie Stewart tested, but decided he would rather have a 0:100 split - rear-wheel drive alone.”

“Trevor Taylor did much of the testing. He wasn't impressed. We told him that if it might rain he should drive it slowly back. He said that if it rained he'd park the thing and walk back.”

I had mentioned that the six-spoke cast-alloy Cosworth wheel design later became familiar on Robin Herd's March cars. Alastair Lyle: “March wheels are not identical to the

DKD Cosworth ones. On the inside the March drive pegs are in line with the spokes while the Cosworth pegs were between them...”

He also contends that while two Cosworth 4WD entities survive today, only one tub “...was ever made in the Cosworth workshops, as also confirmed by John Thompson, who built it and did all the fabrication. The original car was sold to Tom Wheatcroft after the project was cancelled, and all the spares went with it. The second tub was made by the engineers Crosthwaite & Gardiner, built up from factory parts, according to Bill Brown. This car was in the York Museum in Perth (Western Australia).”

Dick Crosthwaite confirms that Peter Briggs “...bought a load of Cosworth bits from Wheatie and asked us to assemble them into the second car - as a non-runner - for his York Museum. His bits included wishbones and castings, uprights and transmission bits, many of them un-machined. But there was also a part-completed monocoque chassis. We certainly did not build it.” In fact I recall that second tub in Tom's ownership when we were putting the Donington Collection together. We understood it to be either a Cosworth pilot for the one-off ‘proper job’, or the basis of a

second team car for 1969-70 had the car shown promise. And if John Thompson didn't build it at Cosworth then who did?

Once one starts a project, and then digs deeper - as many questions emerge as do answers. And that, of course, is what Cosworth discovered when it began testing the 4WD car back in 1969...

**“If Cosworth didn't build the second 4WD F1 tub, then who did?”**

Doug Nye is the UK's leading motor racing historian and has been writing authoritatively about the sport since the 1960s



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# ANDREW FRANKEL

## “Lister only made 19 Knobblys, which is why many more exist today”

**T**HERE IS A LOVELY STORY about Brian Lister attending a dinner held in his honour, when owners were encouraged to bring their cars. Looking around an impressive acreage of Lister machinery, he felt inclined to open his remarks with, “It is so good to see that of the X number of cars I built, Y have been brought here today” - the point being that ‘Y’ was a larger number than ‘X’. If true, it was a good gag, because like all good gags it sought to use humour to make a point.

The Lister-Jaguar, especially in ‘Knobbly’ form, must be one of the most recreated racing cars of all, because the strengths that made it the most feared weapon in domestic sports car racing of the late 1950s endure today: it was simple, easy to maintain and devastatingly quick. Problem was, Lister only made 19 Knobblys and not all survived.

Which is why so many more than that exist today, including those made by Lister Cars itself, which contracted George Lister Engineering to build a run of 20 new Knobblys, near-identical cars that, because they are made by the original manufacturing company using the same jig, can credibly claim not to be recreations at all, but “continuation” cars.

Built to precise Appendix K period specification, they are as eligible to race as a car built in 1958, although that in itself is no guarantee of entry to any given series.

Why this now? Only because I’ve been driving the first new Knobbly to gain Individual Vehicle Approval and which can therefore be driven on the road. Having track tested a Knobbly and raced the similarly powered Lister Costin coupé, I thought it would be a ridiculous device to deploy in public. And in many ways, it is: the cockpit is cramped, the noise a trifle anti-social and the plugs liable to oil up in villages. But find

a decent stretch of clear road and it will teach you lessons that many modern manufacturers would do well to learn. It feels tiny, and there’s never any doubt where its extremities lie, so you can commit to any gap with confidence. It weighs less than a Fiat Panda, so it has the feel and agility to make most supercars seem like commercial vehicles and even with ‘just’ 340bhp it’s quicker than all but the very fastest of them. £300,000 is a lot of money, but it’s no more than people pay for mainstream supercars and a fraction of what you’d need to provide to secure one of the original 19. No wonder then, that the waiting time for a new Knobbly is 18 months and counting.

AS THOSE WHO HAVE DRIVEN ME KNOW, I’M a terrible passenger. I hate not driving and am not exactly knocked out by typical driving standards, so I tend to try to find displacement activities, like working, falling asleep or fiddling with the less vital controls. None of which is possible when you’re being hurled across a frozen lake by some chassis engineer in some dog-eared prototype. And these are the kind of passenger rides I hate most.

It’s not that I fear death in such circumstances, because these drivers are exceptional talents who know that terminating journalists does nothing for career advancement; what I loathe is having to write about it as if I have some kind of meaningful insight. You can no more know what a car is like to drive from the passenger seat than you can know what it is like to be Mick Jagger just because you have a front row seat at a Stones concert. Which is why I never do ride-along stories. Well almost never.

But if you get the chance to be one of a literal handful of hacks to go in - their words

not mine - the most important Porsche since the 911 was launched? Well even the best rules have their exceptions.

So, what can I tell you about the Taycan, the first of what will be an increasing number of all-electric Porsches? I can’t even say for certain that it’ll be fast because - even with 600bhp, winter tyres and four-wheel drive - a car can only accelerate so fast on snow. It can maintain a slide at 90 degrees to the intended direction of travel but that might say as much about the skill of my driver as the balance of the car. There’s really not much, except that in the context of what Porsche is today - an SUV manufacturer with a side-line in sports cars - it is surely as worthy of the badge as any Cayenne, Macan or Panamera. That and the fact that I’m now far more excited about getting that steering wheel in my hands than before I went.

**“Surely Bloodhound is poorer without Richard Noble?”**

EVERY LAND SPEED RECORD enthusiast will be glad that the Bloodhound project has apparently been brought back from the brink of oblivion complete with its original driver, chief engineer and a new HQ. My only sadness is that Richard Noble is no longer involved. I don’t know why - too many chiefs, I guess - but to me he is the very embodiment of the

spirit of the Land Speed Record and not to retain him even in some kind of ambassadorial role seems a shame. The project surely has more to gain than lose from him being on the strength in some capacity and, therefore, it follows that the team is weaker without him.

**A former editor of *Motor Sport*, Andrew splits his time between testing the latest road cars and racing (mostly) historic machinery**  
Follow Andrew on Twitter @Andrew\_Frankel

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## JENNIE GOW

# “In the eye of the storm, Mick Schumacher cut a remarkably calm figure”

**I**N SPORT THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE who have big shoes to fill. When Lalia Ali picked up her boxing gloves, when Frank Lampard first put on a pair of football boots or when Stuart Broad first aimed a cricket ball at the stumps... All felt the pressure of having a famous sporting father, but managed to carve out their own success along the way.

Now, it's time for Mick Schumacher to do the same.

You might have seen last month's photograph of him after the announcement that he would be testing for Ferrari. Surrounded by the press pack, microphones thrust in his face, the story went global. 'Son of seven-time world champion set for F1 drive' was a shoo-in for sports editors.

In the eye of the media storm, Mick cut a remarkably calm figure. And he handled the inevitable questions about his father, who as we know suffered brain injuries in a terrible skiing accident more than five years ago, with maturity. "Being compared to my father was never a problem for me," he said. "Being compared to the best driver in Formula 1 history is the goal you want to achieve - and that it is my idol and my father is very special."

But questions remain about how well he will handle the step in his father's shadow, not least because Mick has always been an intensely private person.

From the moment he was born, between the Australian and Brazilian Grands Prix in 1999, Mick (like his sister Gina) has been protected from the world by a loving family who valued their personal space. When Mick began racing he used his mother's maiden name Betsch, rather than Schumacher, and then switched to Mick Junior in his later karting years.

Interestingly, if you look for photos of Michael and Mick together, there aren't any. A few months ago, Mick posted on social

media to point out that he wasn't actually in either of the two pictures most commonly used to depict him at racetracks with his father. It was something he clearly wanted to voice, something that had been annoying him for some time.

I first met Mick in 2017, in the F1 paddock at Spa-Francorchamps, just before he drove his father's 1994 Benetton B194 to celebrate 25 years since Michael's maiden F1 win. It was a slightly disarming moment: he has his dad's eyes.

Afterwards, Mick was greeted by the world's media jockeying to ask the young German about what must have been an emotional moment, but he made his way towards me and - surrounded by about 30 microphones from other news outlets - told me of his delight at being asked to drive the car: "When I heard which car I would drive here, I was immediately up for it and just wanted to do it. I am happy to have done it now. There is a lot of history attached and I'm really happy I was able to drive it."

The next time I saw Mick, he told me that he wished he'd been able to really open up the B194 at Spa, but there had been a delay getting the car fired up and that left time only for him to complete an 'out' lap, so he wasn't able to push quite as hard as he would have liked. In that much he's a typical young racing driver...

What isn't typical about Mick is his manner. He isn't into glitz or glamour and shies away from the limelight. He lives in the small town of Gland, Switzerland, where his family moved in 2007. It is remote and stunning, but not a place for partying or living a wild life. "I could never imagine being based in Monaco," he told me recently.

Since that meeting in Gland things have

progressed quickly for Mick, with a deal to race for the crack Prema team (with whom he won last year's FIA F3 title) in F2, followed by F1 tests for Ferrari and Alfa Romeo following the Bahrain GP. Long gone are the days when he could float around paddocks in relative anonymity, hiding behind his mother's maiden name.

What amazes me is that nobody - not a single member of the press - asks about his father's condition. We dance around the subject talking about influences and following in footsteps, but never directly about health matters. There is now an unwritten rule among the media that Michael's current situation is off-limits.

Since the skiing accident very little news has been released by the Schumacher family and Michael's condition is a closely guarded secret. When people find out what I do, the two questions I am asked most often are,

'What's Lewis really like?' and 'What's really going on with Michael?' The first I can answer, the second I can't.

It says something about the esteem in which Schumacher Sr is held that the family's desire for privacy has been respected.

Can Mick Schumacher handle the pressure and scrutiny that will inevitably

follow any move into F1?

Despite him being a particularly private person, my gut feeling is that the answer is 'yes'. But it will be tough for him: following in a great father's footsteps is difficult enough *without* simultaneously having to maintain a veil of secrecy.

**“There's an unwritten rule that Michael Schumacher's situation is off-limits”**

Jennie Gow has formed a staple of the BBC's Formula 1 broadcasting team since 2011, working across both TV and radio

Follow Jennie on Twitter @JennieGow

# Welcome to the future

Despite three one-two finishes so far, Mercedes was slower than Ferrari in Bahrain, which highlights a dilemma for the Italian team, says **Mark Hughes**

**T**HE SPOTLIGHT COULD NOT have been any brighter upon Charles Leclerc as he stood adjacent to his pole position-sitting Ferrari in Bahrain, the 21-year-old calm in the eye of the hurricane as TV crews jostled to speak with him while Scuderia personnel became stressed and animated as they struggled to reach him. They needn't have worried; he had it all under control. Just as he had since the wheels began turning on Friday. In contrast to Melbourne, the Ferraris were faster than the Mercedes in Bahrain and Leclerc was quicker than Sebastian Vettel. There was no ambiguity about either of those things. Which had potentially profound implications, not only upon the season but even for the future of the four-time champion.

Vettel's Ferrari sat alongside that of the new sensation, having qualified 0.3sec slower and only barely ahead of the two Mercedes W10s of Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas. The Ferraris were taking 0.6sec out of the Mercs down the straights and clawing only half of that back to Leclerc through the corners. GPS analysis suggested that whatever Ferrari's engine problems had been in Australia, they were now sorted. A basic combustion advantage was not only punching them through the corners better but feeding the battery more efficiently and allowing them to deploy the ERS-k for longer. The aero imbalance was also gone - at least for Leclerc. For Vettel things were not so serene; with his more specific demands of the car's rear end, he was never truly comfortable with the SF90, especially in the downhill sweeps of sector one, where Leclerc took most time out of him.

It looked as though Vettel had put all that behind him as the gantry lights went out in the floodlit dusk and he made a beautiful getaway to lead, as Leclerc struggled for a few corners to get his tyres up to temperature and briefly lost a place to Bottas before re-passing at the end of the opening lap, as gusty winds caused the Merc to lock a wheel. With the Ferraris running 1-2, Vettel ahead, it might ordinarily have been assumed that was that, even as Leclerc quickly closed up onto the tail of his team-mate. But Leclerc's speed advantage from qualifying was still there and this was the moment he made specific his intention not to fall into any notional support role.

Bobbing around in Vettel's mirrors was the talent and ambition of an aspiring champion a decade younger than the leader, the driver Sergio Marchionne had singled out for the future. Well, the future had just arrived on Vettel's tail and now the team was faced with a situation that had always been coming. "Guys, I'm quicker," Leclerc advised the team. "Stay behind for next two laps," he was advised.

He wasn't much interested in complying with that as the opportunity to pass presented itself three-quarters of a lap later, Leclerc getting DRS onto the pit straight and passing cleanly before Turn 1. Disobeying a team instruction but also grabbing hold of his destiny, he sailed off into the night.

This was a fascinating dynamic. Rather than become embroiled in a discussion with the team, Leclerc had simply transcended the situation. It was also the first test of Mattia Binotto's leadership and, as befitting his calm demeanour, he let it ride. In **◀**



Ferrari has a tough task to juggle the relationship between star driver Vettel and newcomer Leclerc

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Ferrari's future world champion? Charles Leclerc has already shown that he's the real deal, and we're only three races into his maiden Ferrari campaign

public, at least. The fire had been put out before it had even started, which in as combustible an environment as Ferrari was significant. There was no public censure later, Binotto emphasising that the drivers were allowed to race.

Leclerc's dream ended with a control electronics failure that cut an injector out, putting him a cylinder down in the late stages. But Vettel wasn't there to take advantage, having spun (again!) when dicing with Hamilton. Hamilton took the victory for Mercedes - but very much against the run of play - as Leclerc limped home third, behind Bottas, helped from running out of fuel in the misfiring engine by the race ending under a safety car. Hamilton, who'd offered an

almost apologetic gesture as he'd passed the sick Ferrari, commiserated with the young Monégasque, his body language suggesting respect above all else. This one is strong.

TWO WEEKS LATER IN SHANGHAI, BINOTTO was throwing his support behind his senior driver, without admonishing Leclerc. "Sebastian has won four championships and certainly for us he's the driver who has most probability to challenge for the title... he will be prioritised if there is any 50-50 situation where we need to make a decision. But on the track, they're free to fight. On the track I think if there is one driver who is certainly faster, he will get the advantage."

Leclerc said an equally smart thing: "I

understand. We need a number one and a number two, but I will be sure to change these things as soon as possible. It is not easy. I have to stay in front for qualifying. Seb is extremely quick. My job? I have to do it in the car."

"[In Bahrain] I wasn't happy with my performance," said Vettel, "not yet happy about my feeling with the car. I know that I can be better and I know we have lots of races to show and prove that. But at least when I'm not at the top of it, it's good that he is."

For Vettel, a lot was riding on his performance in China. It was good for him that there'd been a Bahrain test after the race there. "That was very helpful. We learned some things about car behaviour that we couldn't in Barcelona, where we were

# Trackside View

Turn 11, Sakhir, Bahrain



This uphill left is "a fascinatingly awkward jumble of complexity...", and a Red Bull speciality

Bahrain's Turn 11, the long uphill left-hander at the end of the short squirt out of the hairpin and past the support race pits, is a fascinatingly awkward jumble of complexity. The track is a rear-tyre killer and so the cars tend to be set up with a measure of

understeer... which stifles lap time in this long sequence.

The turn begins on the flat, at the end of a DRS zone, and getting from there to the first apex is all about getting rotation on the car quickly enough to minimise front



tyre scrub. But that limitation is merely a pinch point, because thereafter, between the apex and the long exit kerb on the right, the corner opens up and begins a steep ascent, with a favourable camber into which the car can lean. So the less understeer you suffer on the way in, the more speed you can carry all the way through.

After hanging on to the extreme right of the track by that exit kerb, the cars then dive farther left while still climbing uphill and at that point the drivers get back on the gas, the right-rear particularly tortured at this moment as it transmits torque as well as absorbing cornering load.

The lesser cars give a niggly little twitch at this moment, but a Red Bull is happy to change up a gear, still accelerating. This in fact is a Red Bull corner even though this is not their weekend or track. They consistently have the highest apex speed here, a best of 101mph achieved by both Verstappen and Gasly, with Bottas's Mercedes at 98mph and Vettel's Ferrari at 97.5mph.

To give some perspective, the midfield is represented by Renault at 96mph while Williams trails at the back at 89mph.

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looking at other things. Hopefully I have a better feeling in the car this weekend, with the rear end in particular.”

That was the good news for China, the 1000th race counting towards the world championship. The bad was that Mercedes was clearly quicker around a layout very different to that of Bahrain. Vettel outqualified Leclerc by a couple of hundredths of a second for third on the grid - a good 0.3sec adrift of the Mercedes pair. He beat him in the race, too, but not in a straightforward way.

The tension was very evident as Vettel - having lost out to Leclerc in the first corner jostling behind the Mercs - cruised up to the back of his team-mate and returned Leclerc's Bahrain serve. "I'm quicker," he related. He didn't force it as Leclerc had, but waited - and waited - for Ferrari to tell the youngster to move aside. He did so, but not particularly gracefully. "What now?" he asked as he sat close behind Vettel, whose tyres had degraded running so long in Leclerc's dirty air.

A little while later, Leclerc offered the following: "I'm losing quite a bit of time here. I don't know if you want to know. Just letting you know." It was all smoothed over post-race by Mattia Binotto and Leclerc himself accepted, "It's difficult to see the full picture when you're in the car."

Vettel delivered a solid third place behind Hamilton and Bottas - the best the car could deliver around a circuit where its downforce deficit to Mercedes was too much to be offset by its qualifying power advantage. Leclerc was a distant fifth, compromised further by Red Bull's Max Verstappen undercutting himself past at the first stops. This flustered Ferrari, which put Leclerc into a strategic no man's land that cost further time.

"I want to be ahead of Charles, he wants to be ahead of me," said Vettel. "Obviously, that's the name of the game. I'm not keen to expand much further."

If Leclerc's inexperience showed up anywhere in these two races, it was in how he reacted to the reality check of China after the beautiful - albeit broken - dream of Bahrain. Vettel might have reasserted himself in Shanghai, but this partnership is clearly going to be rather harder work for him than his last one with Kimi Räikkönen. ●

# Word on the beat

## Rumour, gossip and news from the F1 paddock

● Changes are being considered for Melbourne's **ALBERT PARK** track layout, around Turns 1-3, with the intention being to create more overtaking.

● **ROSS BRAWN** said in a Sky TV interview with Martin Brundle that he's confident all the existing venues will retain their grands prix - and that maybe there will be more than 21 races in future. This sounds like potentially good news for **SILVERSTONE**.

● In response to criticism by McLaren and Renault of Liberty's apparent support for the satellite team model, Toro Rosso's **FRANZ TOST** and Haas's **GÜNTHER STEINER** were vociferous in Bahrain. With McLaren's **ZAK BROWN** alongside, Tost also referred to how fantastic Honda's engine is. Steiner said of Renault and McLaren: "They created the problem by not performing enough and spending too much money."

● British racing prospect **DAN TICKTUM** tested the Red Bull RB15 on the second day of the Bahrain tests and reportedly impressed the team.

● **ALEX ALBON** ran a Prince Bira tribute helmet in the Chinese Grand Prix, in recognition of the previous Thai to compete in the championship.

● **KIMI RÄIKKÖNEN**, asked if he was doing anything different with his helmet design to mark the 1000th race, replied, "No. I wanted an open-face helmet but there were some regulation issues." Kimi again, this time on his approach to

racing. "It's more of a hobby for me lately - probably that's why it's fun again."

● After making his F2 debut, **MICK SCHUMACHER** (left) drove for Ferrari and Alfa Romeo in the Bahrain tests, going second-fastest in the Ferrari.

● **GEORGE RUSSELL** drove the slowest and fastest F1 times in Bahrain, bringing up the rear in the **WILLIAMS** on Tuesday and setting fastest time in the **MERCEDES** next day, 4.6sec faster.

● **RACING POINT** is expanding its Silverstone factory, and has agreed to share time in Mercedes' wind tunnel from next year onwards, instead of Toyota's tunnel in Cologne.

● After the FIA gave **WILLIAMS** dispensation in the first two races to run with a size discrepancy on the front wing endplate, **RED BULL** and **MERCEDES** responded with matching wings before an FIA technical directive was issued between the Bahrain and China races banning it. All three cars had wings meeting the new directive in Shanghai.

● **FERNANDO ALONSO** reported the 2019 McLaren a significant improvement in Bahrain testing. "The car has more grip, is less draggy on the straights, the engine is a big step better. We saw in the first two races that there's more to do to compete with the top three. But hopefully [McLaren can] consolidate as the fourth team or lead the midfield. I felt that potential." He's not expected to race it, however, as he concentrates on his Indy 500 plan.



  
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# The dangers of perfection

Is there such a thing as a Ferrari that's a little too good? **Andrew Frankel** finds out

**B** EING SOMEWHAT TRADITIONAL and having grown up fascinated by Ferraris, I've come to know what I like about them. I like them to have two seats. If it's going to have a V8 engine it must be mounted behind the driver, just as a V12 must be up front. And I like Ferraris to have closed roofs. Convertible supercars exist only to help their occupants draw attention to themselves, a curious pastime of which I'm not a fan.

By rights, I should care little for this convertible 2+2 Ferrari Portofino with its front-mounted V8. All Ferraris have twin roles: to provide a certain sort of driving experience, and to illustrate the apparent success of the driver (though as I prove all too well, this rule is not entirely foolproof).

The Portofino replaces the old California T and is a genuinely new car, said to be both stiffer and lighter than the machine it replaces. Its twin-turbo 3.9-litre V8 is derived from that in the 488GTB and, while less powerful, still puts out 592bhp, enough to cannon it to 62mph in 3.5sec, despite the traction limitations of having the power generated at a different end of the car to the wheels that are required to transmit it to the Tarmac. And anyone who complains about the top speed being an entire mile per hour below 200mph really ought to re-evaluate their priorities in life.

The Portofino tries hard to get you onside from the very start. It's a fine-looking car. It's also easy to get in and see out. The heated seats are extremely comfortable and, while the major instrumentation is not exactly attractive, the electronic clocks do their job well. The minor controls are quite scattered and not in the least intuitive to operate, but it's easy enough.

Of course, this is not a mass-produced luxury car, so if you were expecting instant clearing of a foggy windscreen, world-class navigation mapping or concert hall acoustics, you're going to be disappointed. But when I think back to the almost wilfully clunky Ferraris I drove in my early days as a hack, I marvel at how far the company has come and the efforts it has made to make its cars easier to use without rendering them more boring to drive. Even the folding roof works beautifully, rising and falling without you needing to slow if you're in town and, once raised, sealing you in so well anyone unaware of the Portofino's party trick would simply assume they were in a coupé.

But that's not the Portofino's big surprise. That comes when you drive it. It seems ridiculous to say I wasn't expecting much from a Ferrari with almost 600bhp, but the only other Ferrari to place a derivative of this engine in its nose - the GTC4 Lusso - left me cold. Not so the Portofino.

Its chassis is its real trump card, but I'll deal with the powertrain first. It's certainly

Ferrari's design department has excelled itself with the gorgeous Portofino, and it has performance to back up its looks, too

fit for purpose, albeit a million miles from those magnificent normally aspirated V8s and V12s that would populate the vast majority of any book of great Ferrari engines. There is some low rpm lethargy and it doesn't rev as high as a McLaren motor, but once on song lag is vestigial and thrust prodigious. It's a shame that song couldn't be more tuneful. Others who heard it and the rifle cracks Ferrari arranges for it to make on full-throttle upshifts in Sport mode were much impressed by its sound, but there's no music to it and, given it's a twin-turbo V8 with a flat-plane crank, I'd have been amazed if there were. But despite the sometimes less





## “Ferraris have traditionally forced you to accept compromise. The Portofino doesn’t”

than instant shifts of its seven-speed double-clutch transmission, few would say this powertrain did not get the job done.

Yet I liked the way it rode and handled far more. It still seems strange to be writing about a Ferrari where the engine plays a supporting role to the chassis, but that’s where we are in 2019. For a start, on the broken country roads near where I live, it rides really well. Coupled with low levels of road and wind noise and those excellent seats, the Portofino’s long-distance credentials are clear. Yes, the rear seats are nearly (but not completely) useless, and luggage capacity is very limited with the roof down, but for two people heading for the continent who’d never drop the top on the motorway anyway, it would be a very accomplished Grand Tourer.

It handles accurately too, albeit not in a see-how-sideways it goes way (though it will if you must). Yes, I’d prefer more steering feel, but it has a less aggressive rack than mid-engined Ferraris and it can be driven with confidence in difficult conditions.

The Portofino struck me as being a very carefully planned and thoughtfully executed car, one that knows exactly who the target customer is, but which nevertheless exceeds

expectations in most important respects. The more I drove it, the more I liked it.

The only thing I remain unsure about is whether it feels like a Ferrari. The Grand Touring Ferrari is almost as old a concept as Ferrari itself and this is its best in years. But it’s so good at so many things regarded as hallmarks for other traditionally more luxurious brands - like ride and refinement - that they actually risk obscuring the brand identity of its creator.

Should this matter? Almost certainly not. To almost everyone, the fact that it looks so unmistakably like a Ferrari will tick the credibility box. Any remaining doubters will likely be won over by its acceleration.

To me however, the Portofino does not have the character of a Ferrari - in part because it is such a rounded, nuanced performer. To me Ferraris have always had a wild side, have always been a challenge to drive fast, have always forced you to accept compromise as part of that character. And the Portofino doesn’t. It’s just a bloody good car, irrespectively of the badge on its front. 🟢

### FERRARI PORTOFINO



- **Price** £166,241
- **Engine** 3.9 litres, 8 cylinders
- **Power** 592bhp@7500rpm
- **Weight** 1664kg
- **Power to weight** 356bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** seven-speed double clutch, rear-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 3.5sec ● **Top speed** 199mph
- **Economy** 26.4mpg ● **CO<sub>2</sub>** 245g/km
- **Verdict** Disappointingly excellent

# The TT's swansong?

Rumour suggests its days are numbered, and with just cause

**I**F THE RUMOURS ARE TRUE - AND I suspect they probably are - this facelifted TT will be the last of them all. Production is due to end in 2022, when it is unlikely to be replaced.

It's a strange fate for a car that, 20 years ago, seized the public imagination. It was absurdly successful and seemed, like the Mazda MX-5 and Porsche 911, likely to just go on forever.

A drive in a 2-litre turbo TT reveals where the problem might lie. Then as now it is a startlingly undemanding car: it's as easy to drive as an A3, quite quick, quiet enough and comfortable. Its handling is reasonable.

But that's it: the original TT was a design icon, full of stylish flourishes. To a certain image-conscious punter, it made the car stand out a mile. Now it's just terribly familiar. It still looks good, but no longer daring - the interior is largely generic Audi parts bin components. That sense of occasion that even a fashion vacuum like me



The TT has been a class leader for so long, but the latest model is lagging behind

could see lay at the root of the original's success, has gone. And once that's gone, so too does the argument for buying one.

Because the truth is we're living in a golden era for relatively affordable drivers' cars. In cars like the Alpine A110 and Porsche 718 Cayman we have coupés of outstanding dynamic ability. Stuck somewhere between them the TT is lost, slipping slowly away and unlikely to be missed.

## AUDI TT COUPE 45 TFSI QUATTRO

- **Price** £37,405
- **Engine** 2.0 litres, 4 cylinders, turbo
- **Power** 241bhp@5000rpm
- **Weight** 1365kg
- **Power to weight** 177bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** seven-speed double clutch, four-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 5.2sec ● **Top speed** 155mph
- **Economy** 34.9mpg ● **CO<sub>2</sub>** 160g/km
- **Verdict** Capable, but losing its charm

# The commuters' solution

Merc's new hybrid solves a problem, but only for select people

**T**HE RECENT BANNING OF OLDER diesels from the centre of Stuttgart and the introduction of charges for such cars in central London lead us to believe that diesels are being slowly exorcised from city centres.

But what if your diesel produced no emissions at all in town? What if it could drive into and cruise around the London ULEZ without so much as a particle of particulates issuing from its exhaust?

A plug-in diesel hybrid appears to be the answer to these questions: it delivers the zero tail-pipe emissions of a fully electric car in town, and the outstanding range, fuel consumption and power delivery of a modern diesel in the countryside. The E300 DE I've been driving does indeed answer a lot of questions. It'll cover around 24 miles on electrons alone, hit 62mph from rest in under 6sec, and you don't need to try that hard to get a genuine 50mpg from it. It is very clever, and in normal use, the flaws are very hard to spot. But flaws there are: you

lose a sizeable chunk of the boot to the batteries and the weight gain is close to 400kg. So the handling is more ponderous and if all you're going to do is slog along the motorways, the same engine in an E220d without all the electrics will be more frugal, whatever the official figures may claim.

So, like all even partly electric cars, this too is a niche model likely to appeal only to those whose lifestyles it fits very precisely. ●

## MERCEDES-BENZ 300 DE EQ POWER AMG

- **Price** £50,195
- **Engine** 2.0 litres, 4 cylinders, turbocharged
- **Power** 302bhp (combined output)
- **Weight** 2060kg
- **Power to weight** 147bhp per tonne
- **Transmission** nine-speed double clutch, rear-wheel drive
- **0-60mph** 5.9sec ● **Top speed** 155mph
- **Economy** 166.2mpg ● **CO<sub>2</sub>** 41g/km
- **Verdict** Clever, but only for the few







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# A chronicle from the heart

This story from a Maserati insider drips with detail, says **Gordon Cruickshank**

**E**RMANNO COZZA'S CHOICE OF the word 'heart' to title his autobiography is apt: he fell in love with Maserati instantly on seeing them test at Monza in his teens, determinedly worked his way in at 17, and was at the very centre of the firm, especially the racing department while it existed, for his entire career - and since. Although he joined in 1951 he seems to remember every name and job title so we assume his is a reliable source of information. (On the other hand he and his colleague Colotti both tell a tale of the first 250F test and give completely different quotes from the driver. It's a journalistic lesson: just because someone was there doesn't mean they remember it accurately...)

To carry you through this book you ought to have at least some knowledge of the whirly bits within the engine - a chapter headed 'The A6GCM Valve Control Finger' hints at the technical detail. But don't be put off: there's another one called 'Fangio's Rant' to let you know that if you're not restoring a 300S or writing a Maserati history there's also a good deal of colour on the characters, the politics, and life in Italy after the war.

Cozza was dedicated to the mechanics of a car and even though he was for years part of the racing department and a major contributor to the Trident's successes, he was more interested in milling machines than the Mille Miglia, though he was sent as pit crew on that event. He even says: "I didn't like attending the races, I preferred working a 12-hour shift in the experimental department". That's devotion. Yet he went to many a race, hence overhearing Fangio's rant at Pescara, aimed at a sleepy Jean Behra



**MASERATI AT HEART**  
Ermanno Cozza  
Published by  
Giorgio Nada, £39  
ISBN 978 88 7911 716 6

who arrived at the track somewhat fragile after a night partying. "I would never have thought such a cool calm individual could become so aggressive," Cozza says, shining a light we don't often see onto one of racing's gentlemen.

Engines are his thing: he is less excited about the many grand prix and sports car triumphs than about the careful tweaks that extracted vital extra horsepower. He also worked on the Eldorado Special which Moss drove in the Race of two Worlds and on record powerboats, the engines of which apparently triggered the idea of building a saloon. More importantly, Cozza examines the Centro Sud Cooper chassis for which Maserati supplied engines. "Observing that very simple frame in narrow gauge tubes, Ingegnere Alfieri asked what could be done to counter the British technology". Their answer would be to go lighter; enter the famous Birdcage designs.

Another British connection was the later Cooper-Maserati V12 project, and Cozza sheds a light on this fractious relationship which even John Surtees' Mexican victory did

The 250F - in action at Monza - put Maserati on the Formula 1 winners' list, securing two world championships and contesting 46 races. Stirling Moss in a 450S in 1957, below

MOTORSPORT IMAGES



little to heal. As this coincided with the development of the Ghibli coupé the firm's skills were clearly too thinly spread to provide reliable racing engines to customers: through the 1960s Cozza himself was tasked with everything from engine tests to setting up motor show stands to assembling brochures.

These were truly different days: Italian police closed an autostrada so they could photograph the 151 Le Mans coupé with wool tufts to check the airflow, and when speed limits were later introduced the firm had permission to exceed them if the car carried special stickers!

Like Ferrari at the time, Maserati was not interested in its racing past, but Cozza and some others began to collect items from the



## “When Italy introduced speed limits, Maserati’s cars had permission to exceed them”

defunct race department, from flags and tools to engines and complete cars, which would turn into a Maserati Museum. When Citroën took over they tried to bin all the old drawings and patterns and again Cozza saved a lot. You have to wonder how much history disappeared into skips before attitudes changed. Since he had worked on so many models, Cozza also assisted restorers, and the material he saved would be a foundation for today’s Maserati Classiche operation.

Despite the author’s passion for the marque things sound often stressful, especially in 1975 when the firm folded without warning. Unions went onto “a war footing” to protect the 900 jobs, but new boss Alejandro de Tomaso was hardly a calm influence: “he liked to humiliate people” and “brought chaos at every level”. At the first

meeting with the unions he laid a gun on the table. Still, Cozza got away with shouting “Up yours” at him. However, the volatile Argentinian was responsible for the Biturbo which kept the firm afloat in the 80s, despite major reliability problems. (When I had a Biturbo on test I noticed one rear wheel sat further back in its arch than the other, but when I called the then importer they more or else said “they’re all like that, sir”.)

Although Cozza took early retirement he found himself busy helping collectors and restorers - and refusing hearty bribes to fudge chassis numbers or assist with replicas.

In his career he met many characters - Count Johnnie Lurani, Maria de Phillipis, Peter Ustinov, Gigi Villorosi, and champion driver Fangio, who didn’t fancy the fuel injection system for the 250F and said “I prefer

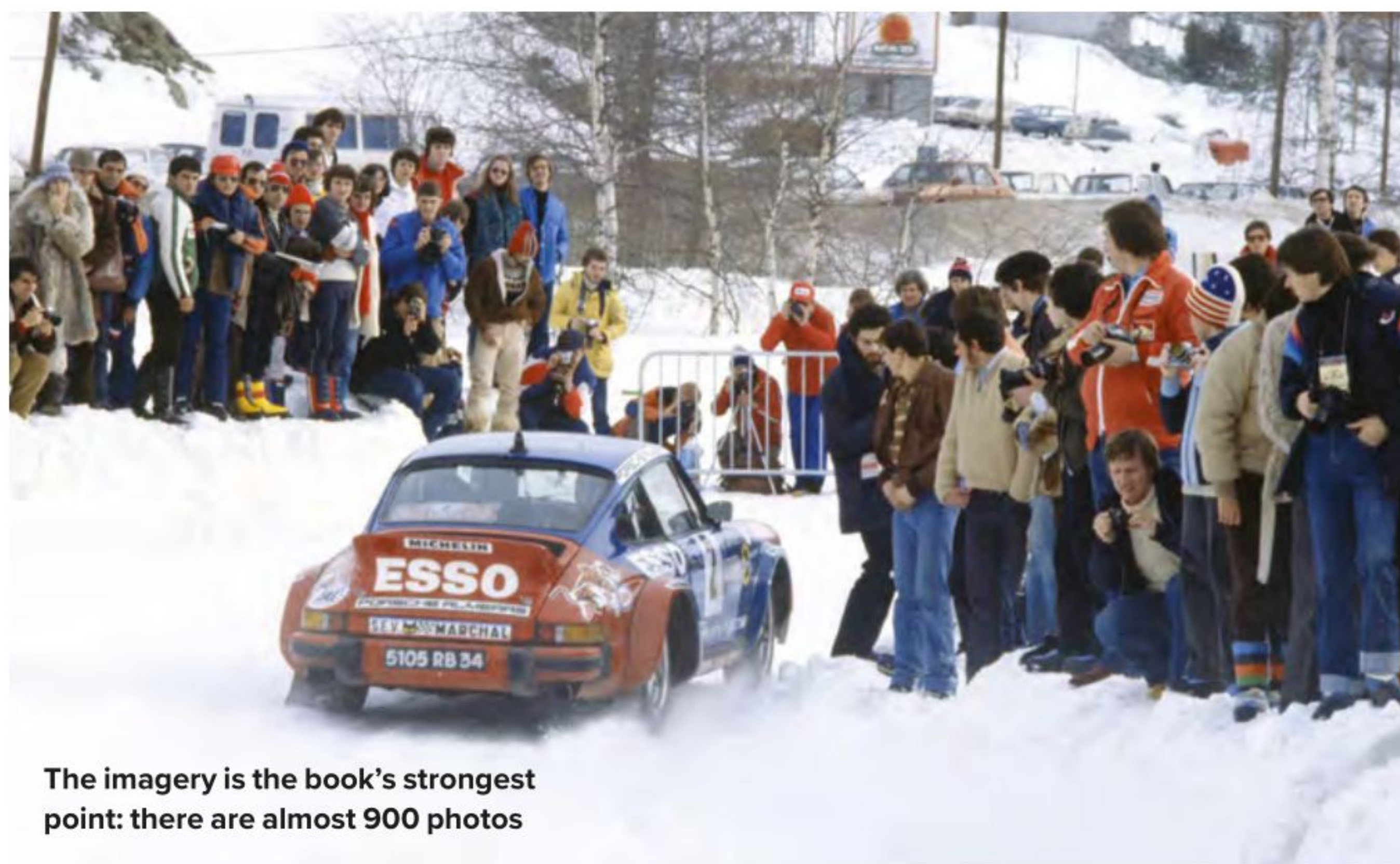
carburettors - I’ll make up the other 15bhp!”. They also had to alter the 250F diff after “certain problems with the arrival of Moss, due to different driving styles from Fangio”.

It’s hardly a handsome book, with a couple of picture sections of no great beauty to leaven its 500 pages, and there are minor editing slips in an otherwise smooth translation, but it’s a useful record of a remarkable career devoted to one marque.

A minor disappointment: I looked for recriminations over the broken brake pedal which ended Moss and Jenks’ 1957 Mille Miglia run after a feeble 20km. There’s just the merest mention... ◀

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[www.hottonbooks.co.uk](http://www.hottonbooks.co.uk)



The imagery is the book's strongest point: there are almost 900 photos

## A devotee of the Monte

There have been many books on the subject of Porsche, but **Simon Arron** asks if any have been quite so restricted in scope?

ONE MARQUE, ONE EVENT, TWO HUGE volumes stretching across 912 pages and embracing 883 photographs. Last year marked the 50th anniversary of versatile Vic Elford's Monte Carlo Rally victory in a Porsche 911... and this followed by way of weighty commemoration.

Porsche has a thorough rally pedigree, of course, its endeavours embracing everything from national championships to the WRC, via Dakar, but this eschews the bigger picture and focuses purely on what has traditionally been the first major European event of the season: Monte Carlo.

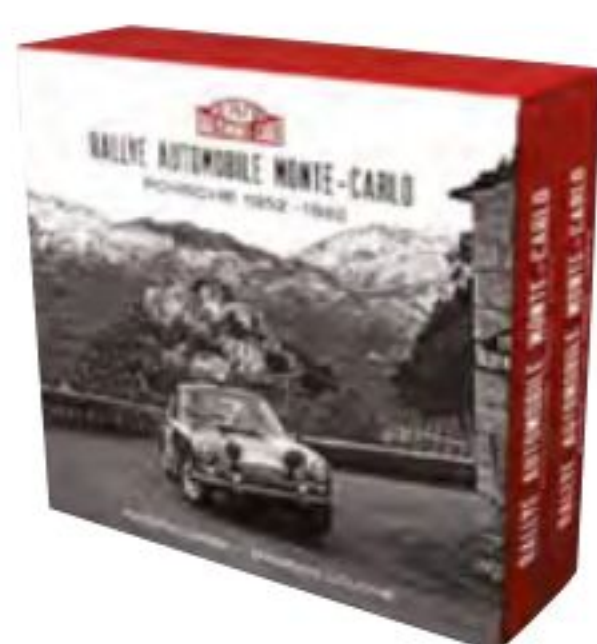
The tale commences in 1952, when period minnow Porsche was represented by seven 1.3-litre 356s (only one of which finished, in 45th). Given the scratchy nature of some 1950s photography, the images here are wonderfully crisp - a theme reprised through both volumes. The first is naturally mostly monochrome, but colour makes its bow from 1964. The photos, indeed, are the book's strength. If you have a particular interest in Porsches slithering around the Alps, then the trilingual text (French, English and German) might well hold your attention, but much of the imagery is absolutely gorgeous - particularly that from the mono era. And there are a few interlopers among the Stuttgart armada, such as a Citroën DS being pursued by a 911 around the Monaco hairpin in 1962...

Diversity is key here. There are a few close-up action shots that could have been taken almost anywhere, but for the most part we see context as well as competition, with engaging landscapes, service area activities (where there are folk smoking in the vicinity of refuelling, obviously) and portraiture.

I started out by thinking, 'How many people will be interested in this?' - then glanced up to notice that I still appeared to be in the office, engrossed in shots of sideways 911s, after official kicking-out time.

The price might be high, but that reflects the quality. In the publisher's own words, "We are delighted to be able to reproduce photographs from every Porsche team that has immortalised itself in the classification of the Monte Carlo Rally between the years of 1952 and 1982."

That's a much better slice of marketing spiel than you might imagine.



**RALLYE AUTOMOBILE MONTE-CARLO PORSCHE 1952-1982**  
 Patrick Dasse & Maurice Louche  
 Published by Dingwort  
 €175.00 (£150)  
 ISBN: 978-3-871-66-108-2

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[www.hotwheelsbooks.co.uk](http://www.hotwheelsbooks.co.uk)

## THE GENTLEMAN DRIVER

Netflix can be a goldmine of content, if you can drag yourself away from star attractions like *The Crown*, *The Punisher* or *Orange is the New Black*. Dig a little deeper and you'll find a decent smattering of motor racing content, with *The Gentleman Driver* being well worth a watch.

It follows four bronze-graded amateur drivers during the 2015/2016 FIA World Endurance Championship season - Ed Brown, Mike Guasch, Ricardo González and Paul Dalla Lana.

The 90-minute documentary delves into each driver's sporting and business life and explores how they manage multi-million-pound global companies while trying to race at world-championship level.

The access is brilliant, as are the level of insight and production values. It's also refreshing to see a WEC documentary that isn't dominated by Audi, Porsche and Toyota works teams. This proves that shining a light on the little guy brings some great stories to the surface. **RL**

Available on Netflix

## INTERMECCANICA

Andrew McCredie

The most cogent line in this book comes in Karl Ludvigsen's Foreword: "The cheapest investment in a car project is the fee of a competent designer". He's quite right - if you wouldn't be seen dead in one it just won't sell. That's one area where the *Intermeccanica* marque soared: its power came from humdrum Yankee V8s and they didn't win races, but they always looked a million dollars.

When Hungarian-born Frank Reisner set up a firm to build cars he based himself in Turin where he had access to top designers and *carrozzerie*, including styling hero Franco Scaglioni. The resulting Italia was a handsome brute, but I've never known the rest of the IM story. Here it is, showcasing a welter of Reisner projects, few successful but mostly attractive - and there were dozens of designs including amazing one-offs. Now IM is making electrics in Canada, but it's Reisner's past creativity that is illuminating. Well illustrated, with drawings and chassis listing. **GC**  
 Published by Veloce, £45  
 ISBN 978-1-787112-53-7



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**£1500**

# THE POLAROID COLLECTIONS

The Ecclestone Heritage Grand Prix Collection: for the first time this prestigious Grand Prix car collection has been photographed. Opus were the chosen partners and brought the largest Polaroid camera in the world to capture these cars in a truly unique way. The giant Polaroid 20x24 camera has photographed many icons, from world leaders to Hollywood stars. But never in its 40-year history has it photographed iconic grand prix cars. Each print within the collection includes the stylish patterning around the edge of the prints - a unique DNA, formed during the trademark Polaroid development process.

**Two Polaroid Collections are available, each limited to 199 box sets:**

**The Ferrari Grand Prix Polaroids: The Ecclestone Heritage Collection • The Ecclestone Grand Prix Heritage Polaroid Collection**



[shop.motorsportmagazine.com/category/polaro](http://shop.motorsportmagazine.com/category/polaro)

The sleek Alfa Romeo 308 is among the models offered by Shadowfax



## Product of the month Scaled classics

Scalextric's catalogue not enough? Try these

**W**ANT TO EXPAND YOUR STABLE OF HISTORIC slot cars? Niche maker Shadowfax has pushed back to the pioneer era with a range of detailed racer kits from the 1900s to the 1930s. Its early 'Titans' range, with steering and working leaf springs, offers Fiat S74, Ballot L76 and Lorraine-Dietrich while later offerings include Alfa P2 and P3, Mercedes W25 and Maserati 4CM - even the 4WD Bugatti and streamlined AVUS Auto Union, complete with Rosemeyer. Run your own VSCC event - there's also a pit crew in flat caps and brown overalls. Cars suit Scalextric systems. Kits from €39.95, [shadowfaxslotcars.com](http://shadowfaxslotcars.com)

### BENTLEY SPEED 8 BRONZE STATUE

Bentley's most important car of the modern age, the Speed 8 brought the British brand back to Le Mans after 68 years. Now, in the firm's centenary year, you can bring the spirit of the Speed 8 straight to your mantelpiece with this sculpture. Cast in solid bronze and mounted on a black granite plinth, the 9.5in x 3in piece of art is a homage to Bentley's one-two finish at La Sarthe back in 2003. £2450, [shop.bentleymotors.com](http://shop.bentleymotors.com)





### GANT LE MANS T-SHIRT

No longer are endurance racing fans resigned to difficult to obtain and often cheaply produced merchandise. Swedish designer Gant is continuing its range of racing-inspired clothing. Our pick would be this driver T-shirt. €59, [www.boutique.lemans.org](http://www.boutique.lemans.org)

### SEETROËN ANTI-SICKNESS GLASSES

Whoever in Citroën's marketing department came up with the 'SeeTroën' title deserves a medal. There's more to these specs than their bizarre appearance. They're designed to thwart off motion sickness, caused by the brain not being able to match the sensations of movement with the visions of it. The blue liquid inside sloshes about, giving your eyes something to match to the movements. You only wear them for about 10 minutes – so you don't have to look like an extra from a Lady Gaga video for long. €99, [lifestyle.citroen.com](http://lifestyle.citroen.com)

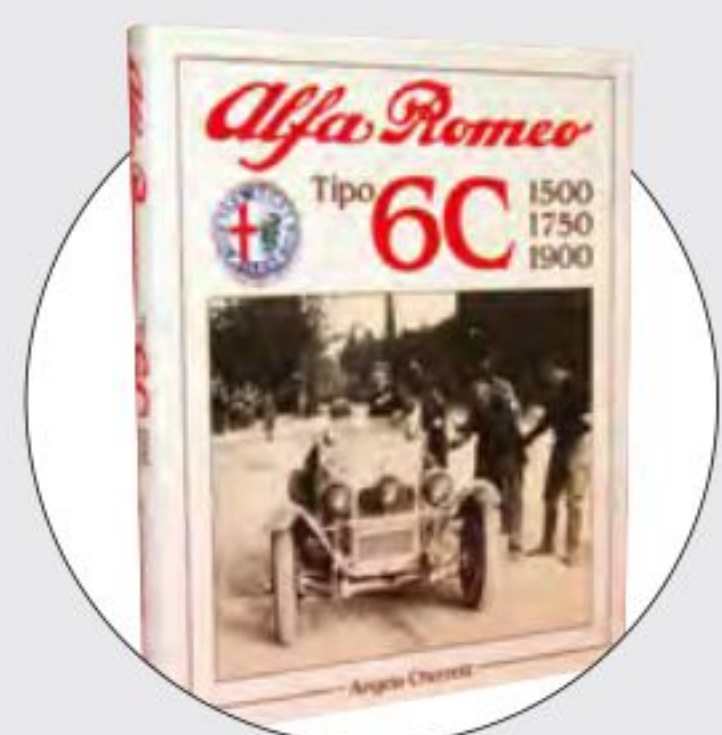


### CANDYLAB TOYS

Ever play the game *Frogger*, where you had to guide your blocky amphibian sprite across the road dodging similarly blocky automotive obstacles? That game always had a charm, and the same is true of these CandyLab models. All of the designs are inspired by the geometric shapes of classic and racing cars – and even lorries and trucks in some cases – and are fashioned from solid beech wood. We love the classic hotrod-inspired range and their accompanying retro flatbed truck display stand. From \$9.50, [candylabtoys.com](http://candylabtoys.com)

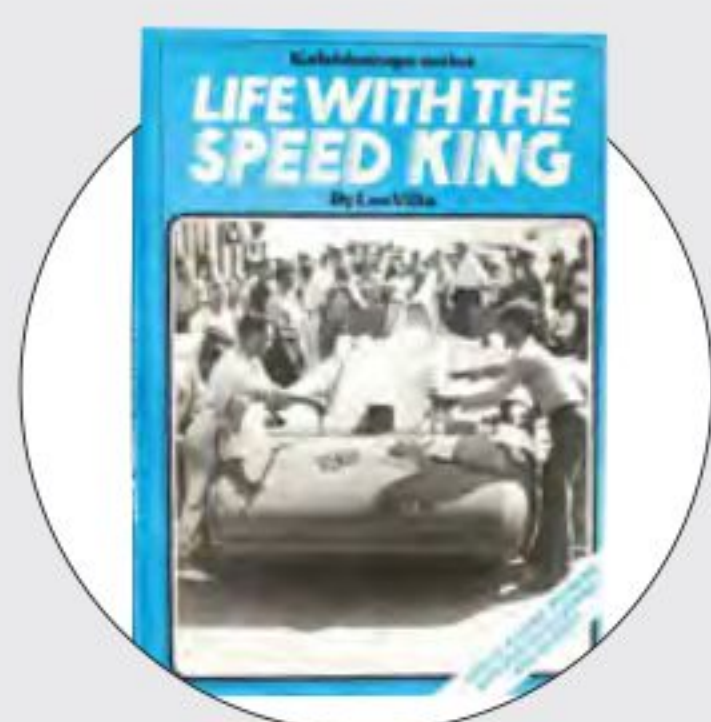
## MEMORABILIA

Antique motoring books that have become part of the history they document



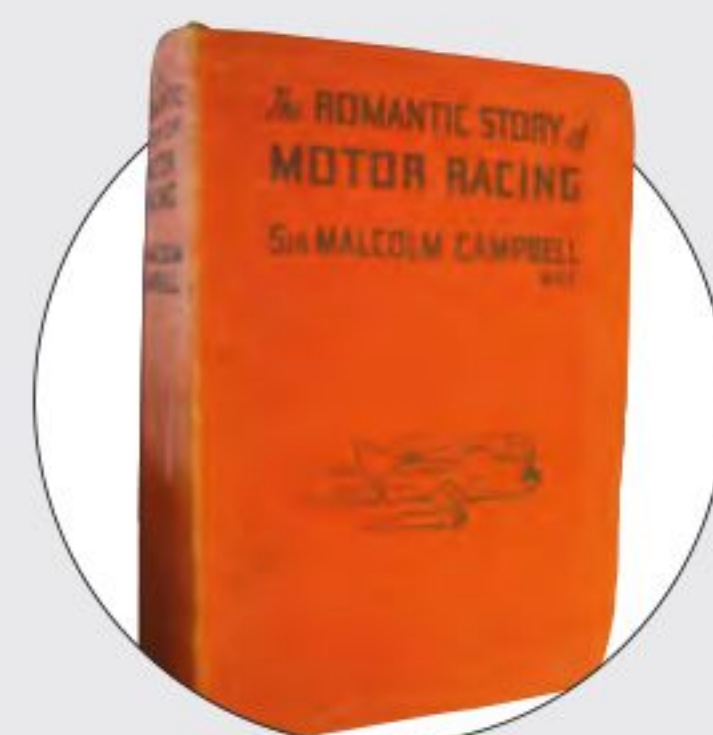
### ALFA ROMEO TIPO 6C

Sought-after history by Angela Cherrett covering the 1500 and 1750 cars between the wars. £295, [shop.simonlewis.com](http://shop.simonlewis.com)



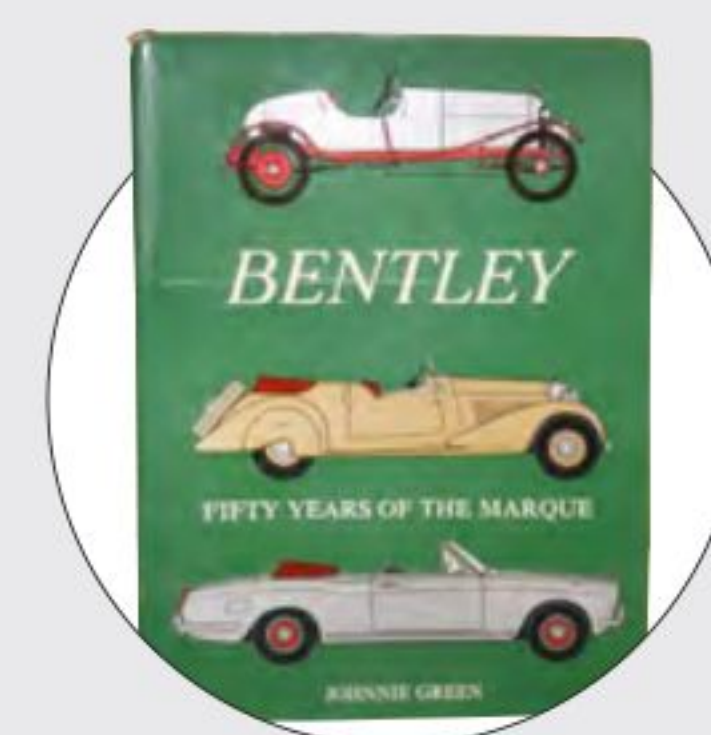
### LIFE WITH THE SPEED KING

Memoirs of Leo Villa, Campbell's right-hand man during LSRs. £32 [shop.simonlewis.com](http://shop.simonlewis.com)



### THE ROMANTIC STORY OF MOTOR RACING

Published in 1937 by speed ace Sir Malcolm Campbell. £50 [motorbookworld.com.au](http://motorbookworld.com.au)



### BENTLEY: 50 YEARS OF THE MARQUE

Fine history from when Bentley was half as old, by Johnnie Green. £95 [alexrade.net](http://alexrade.net)



Over 100 riders will compete on the road course, with four classes on offer

# North West wonder

Over 200mph on Northern Irish streets. This iconic road race reaches 90 this year and shouldn't be missed

May 12-18, Northern Ireland

## MINI BREAK

FIRST HOSTED 90 YEARS AGO, the International North West 200 is one of the most spectacular motorcycle racing events in the world.

The 8.9-mile circuit, a triangle with its corners located at Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine, has riders tearing down the stunning Causeway Coast reaching speeds of more than 200mph.

And this isn't a time trial, for those new to the NW 200... this is a full-blown race with more than 100 riders over four classes. This is one of the world's fastest road races.

Of course, things get dangerous too, with three riders - Tom Herron, Brian Hamilton and Frank Kennedy - losing their lives 40 years ago in 1979. That race on the triangle is known as the darkest day in its history.

There are road-based 650cc Supertwins; modified Supersport bikes with engines up to 675cc; 1000cc Superstock bikes; and the top-tier Superbikes with engines up to 1200cc in capacity. Bruce Anstey holds the current speed record, having clocked 209.8mph in 2016 on a Superbike.

Big-name drivers like Joey and Robert Dunlop, John McGuinness, Carl Fogarty and Phillip McCallen have all competed in the past.

The 90th anniversary will be celebrated

## LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

- **HOW TO GET THERE** Many airlines fly to Belfast Airport or George Best Belfast City Airport, or you can take a Stena Line ferry to Larne, which is an hour away from the circuit.
- **ALSO GOING ON** The race week is a festival. Vintage and classic car and bike runs will be held, with chances to meet the riders, walk the paddock, catch live music and enjoy fireworks.
- **DON'T MISS** See the Giant's Causeway and ride or drive part of the coastal route. Also visit the Joey and Robert Dunlop Memorial Garden.

with classic displays of motorcycles, while past winners will make appearances - as will a number of special guests. More announcements will be made closer to the event's mid-May date.

With three days of action including practice on the Tuesday and Thursday before races on Thursday evening and throughout the day on Saturday, 100,000 spectators show up over the week, making it the largest sporting event in Northern Ireland and one of the largest in the British Isles.

Saturday Grandstand tickets start from £30 (excluding booking fees) with racing taking place from 9.15am - 7pm.

For more information, plus a schedule, visit [www.northwest200.org](http://www.northwest200.org)

## FORMULA E: ROUND 9

May 11, Monte Carlo, Monaco

A shortened version of Monaco hosts this round of the 2019 Formula E Championship that has offered no shortage of drama. The first five races boasted five different winners.

## HAPPYFEWRACING

May 17-19, Normandy, France

Fathers and their daughters compete in this unusual classic rally that is open to Grand Tourers of different periods. It takes place on the Normandy roads with food and accommodation included in the entry cost.



## STONOR SUPERCAR SUNDAY

May 19, Henley-on-Thames, UK

Entries are open for supercars, sports cars and hypercars to take part in the second Supercar Sunday at Stonor Park. Win a family ticket plus a picnic on [www.motorsportmagazine.com](http://www.motorsportmagazine.com).

## WORLD RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP: ROUND 4

May 25-26, Silverstone, UK

Silverstone replaced Lydden Hill as the host of the British WRX round and turned it into a mini-festival. Live music will complement the on-track action led by the 600bhp supercars.

## INDYCAR: ROUND 5

May 26, Indianapolis 500, USA

Does this race need an introduction? Fernando Alonso returns to America's most famous race, with McLaren taking on the banks of Indy against a very strong grid for double points. Will he get his 'Triple Crown' this year?

## MORE MAY EVENTS

May 4	WEC, Spa-Francorchamps
May 10	WRC, Chile
May 11	NASCAR, Kansas
May 12	FORMULA 1, Spain
May 26	NASCAR, Charlotte
May 26	FORMULA 1, Monaco



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HISTORIC  
PROMOTIONS

# Quartet in French racing yellow

This year's Bell & Ross offerings boast a colour scheme reflecting its partnership with the Renault F1 grand prix team

**P**ARIS-BASED FIRM BELL & ROSS became known mainly as a producer of aviation-inspired watches with the introduction of its BR-01 Instrument back in 2005, which was a 46mm square horological behemoth intended to look as though it had been ripped from the cockpit of a military aircraft.

Numerous variations on the BR theme have emerged, from chronographs in the original 'tool watch' aesthetic to tourbillon versions, slim dress models and scaled-down, gem-set women's pieces.

Among the more interesting takes on the BR theme, however, are the automotive-inspired pieces that have flowed from the pen of the brand's designer Bruno Belamich, who launched Bell & Ross in 1992 with entrepreneur Carlos Rosillo.

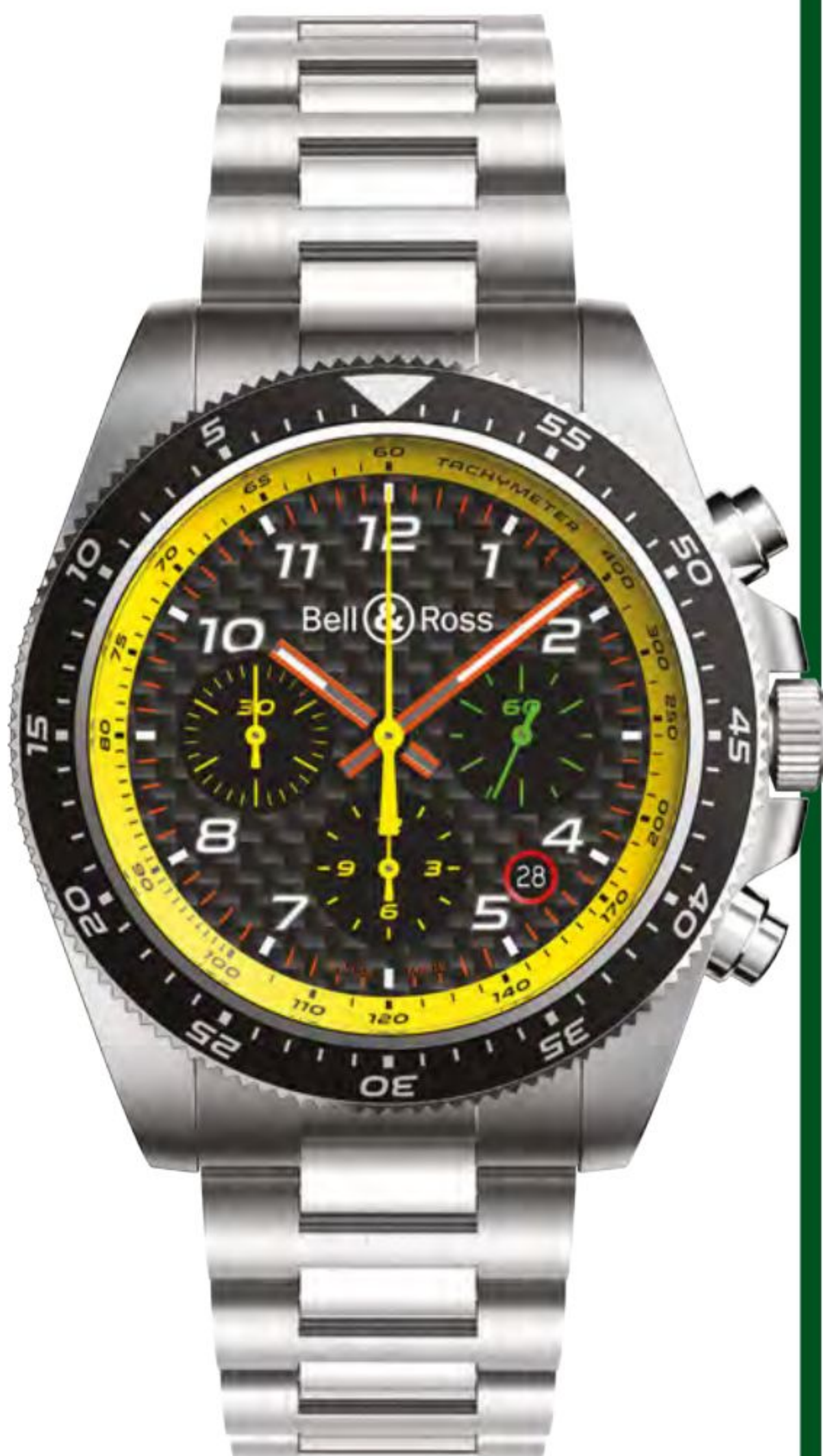
The first of these appeared in 2011, through a collaboration with the Speed and Custom division of UK motorcycle dealer Shaw Harley-Davidson, a unique machine commissioned as a promotion. Belamich contributed by integrating a watch into the bike's fuel tank and, in 2014, designed a pair of limited-edition timepieces to complement a second one-off bike called the B-Rocket.

Next he moved to four wheels by working with automotive designers on the Aero GT car concept which, while not intended for production, had a plausible specification. It would (theoretically) be powered by a twin-turbo V8 of 610bhp for a top speed of 195mph.

After completing the designs, Belamich produced two associated watches, 500 of each being produced.

In the same year Bell & Ross became the official watch of Renault F1, initially producing a skeletonised chronograph called the BR-X1 RS16 that was made in 250 examples and could only be bought at grand prix locations.

The Renault partnership continues, and has this year resulted in a new quartet of Bell & Ross RS19 models, inspired by the livery and design aesthetics of the cars. Three are based on square-cased watches, with the



highlight being the 20-piece BR-X1 tourbillon featuring a skeleton dial, a hand-wound movement - and a price tag of €152,000. Next comes an automatic chronograph version of the BR-X1 priced at €16,900 and limited to just 250 examples, followed by a 999-piece carbon-dial automatic chronograph costing €4900.

But it's the least expensive RS19 model that most appeals to us - the BRV3-94 is a traditional round-cased watch with an automatic chronograph movement and a steel bracelet or rubber strap. Based on B&R's vintage model range, it combines a classic aesthetic with the racy twist of Renault livery; 999 will be available. Quite simply, *c'est bon*. *Bell & Ross BRV 03-94 RS19, €3500 (rubber strap), €3650 (bracelet), bellross.com*



**A**UTOMOTIVE-INSPIRED WATCH brand Meccaniche Veloci was founded in Milan in 2006, its first product being the radical-looking Quattro Valvole featuring four individual sub-dials, reflecting the pattern of the inlet and exhaust valves of an engine's combustion chamber. MV watches have attracted a cult following in many places, especially in Japan. The new Icon Mud's sub-dials can show different time zones, with the watch being named after the brown DLC finish of its 49mm titanium case. *Meccaniche Veloci Icon Mud, €9900 meccanicheveloci.com*



**I**F YOU WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED to former Morgan designer Matthew Humphries, the answer is he has been running his own watch brand, MHD, for the past five years, while turning his automotive experience to the electric car world as the pen behind the Alcraft GT project. He combines both jobs in this good-looking Alcraft-inspired watch featuring a 316L stainless steel case and Japanese Miyota self-winding movement. Just 100 examples of the AGT Steel will be made. Pre-ordering now saves £59. *MHD AGT Steel, £590. matthewhumphriesdesign.com*

*Precision* is written by renowned luxury goods specialist Simon de Burton

# FARER

(Noun) Explorer  
Wayfarer, Seafarer, Farfarer.



## Different by design

Chronographs have a legendary status in the horological world - from racing iconic cars, to scaling the highest peaks and most famously landing on the moon, it's a watch built for adventure. The new Mechanical Chronograph collection has been developed with the Swiss Made ETA 2894-2 Elaboré movement at its heart, to produce a refined and shallow-profiled 39mm case.

Our watches are inspired by the halcyon era of watchmaking, when interesting colours and contrasting textures were combined with the very best craftsmanship. Each of the dials is rich in three-dimensional detailing to accentuate the Farer design aesthetic, whilst the use of unique colour combinations create a bold and contemporary statement.

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20  
19

BRANDS HATCH



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Ari (left) is a veteran of 101 WRC events and has made 13 Dakar starts. Max has appeared in the WRC 18 times so far, at the wheel of both R2 and R5-spec cars

McKLEIN

**M** RACING LIVES

# Ari & Max Vatanen

**T**HE VATANEN NAME HAS MADE a sizeable impact in the world of rallying, and latterly also the world of politics. While most know Ari Vatanen as the 1981 World Rally champion and four-time Dakar Rally winner, he was also a Member of the European Parliament for a decade until 2009. His son, Max, is focused on forging his own rallying career, with a handful of WRC outings across both the junior R2 and R5 categories already. He's without a seat this year, but soon to return. Plus, politics hasn't interested him just yet...

**ARI:** It's not false modesty on my part when I say I would have liked to have been a better father than I think I have been. When Max speaks so warmly of me, I feel that I barely deserve it.

You can have all the glory, fame and money in the world, have achieved incredible things in sport, or within the European Parliament, but life is about your family. That's what matters. If you fail there, and empty walls are waiting for you when you come home, there is no substitute for that.

There can be no doubt that there were times that the relationship between Max and I became strained. I didn't want to go to too many of his rallies, because I didn't want to put that pressure on him. But when I eventually did, there were problems.

One time, I was waiting at the end of the first stage, and counting the cars through by their number, and he wasn't there. He'd

crashed, but there was more to it. He was driving with a new co-driver - who wasn't a top-level co-driver - and he had only called the notes for a fast right-hand corner, and unfortunately immediately afterwards there was a tight left-hand corner, so Max arrived far too fast and never made the corner.

I couldn't understand it. So I kept on at him, 'Why did you crash on the first stage? You should have been going more carefully! Why didn't you make the corner? What were you playing at?'. On and on I went. Poor Max was shattered by the experience.

Later we watched the onboard footage of the accident, and I could appreciate what had happened - that it wasn't Max's fault. I tried to beg his pardon but it was too late, because I'd knocked his confidence, and to this day, I feel very bad about my reaction and I have asked him to forgive me, as I know the impact it had on him. ◀

That's the problem for parents. You can never say you did everything as you should have done. There's a special relationship between a father and his son, so when your father tells you off, it hurts you a lot more than when your team manager tells you off.

I was amazed at his speed and talent, though. I used to ask myself, 'Where has this come from?' Because I never coached Max, and he was so late in expressing an interest

I was driving a Peugeot 207 RC, with Max alongside me, and there was a fault with the brakes that meant the pedal went solid, as the piston in the brake cylinder had jammed, and so there was no braking power. We left the road and dropped with a nose-first, hard landing. I immediately felt pain in my neck; at the hospital in Bastia, doctors discovered a vertebra had slipped and nearly hit my spinal chords. I had to be stabilised then flown to Marseille hospital for an operation to put things right. The surgeon said I was lucky not to be paralysed from the neck down. I have four screws and a plate in my spine.

After that, Rita and I decided that there would be no more competitive events for me!

However, I still hold a pilot's licence. To this day, it's as exciting for me as it is for someone climbing into a helicopter for the first time, and I probably average 50 hours a year. Flying around Provence, over the mountains, is magical, and whenever I go

to the 1000 Lakes Rally I'll hire a helicopter in Sweden and enjoy two or three weeks of buzzing over the fjords around Finland.

The human side to rallying used to be so much fun. During the recce times, it was more relaxed and very social, with all the families travelling with drivers, lots of practical jokes being played on one another and a feeling that life was good. All of that has gone away now.

With Max's driving career on hold, we need a plan. Who knows, perhaps the Vatanen name could be used to create a world-class driving school, and give something back to

the sport and aspiring rally drivers? It's too early to say for sure, but what I do know is we'll never be far from the sport we love.

**MAX:** We were in the sauna when I told Dad that I wanted to get into rally driving. It was a total surprise for him. He'd never pushed me in that direction, and I'd never shown an interest in my young age.

So when I asked him whether he thought I was too old to start rallying, he was quite emotional; I don't think he'd expected me to ever ask.

I genuinely didn't know what he'd say, but of course he said: "Max, it's never too late in life to do what you want to do."

Mum, on the other hand, was anxious. Not against it, because like Dad she encouraged all her children to live their lives to the full, but she'd been through so much with Dad and knew the risks very well.

In a way, I'd been a little cunning. I had been studying at a business school, in France, and we had to do an exchange as part of the course. So I spoke with my professor, ruled out Miami and Sydney, and told him I wanted to go to this tiny place called Mikkeli, in Finland.

Why? Because it was three hours from my Dad's home village, Tuupovaara, where my Uncle still lived. We had a Ford Escort MkII stored there, so on a Friday afternoon I'd drive three hours to Tuupovaara, so I could spend all my weekend learning how to drive properly - without my parents knowing what I was up to.

My first rally car was a Renault Clio, in the [SC6] V1600 class, which is basically a Clio with a roll cage and race seats, and few modifications allowed. By the time that I made it to my first rally, I'd finished my exchange for my bachelor of business administration the day before, so my head was clear for rallying!

Dad came to that first rally. In general terms, you'd imagine that having a world rally champion on your team, so to speak, would be an advantage. But if anything, it's more of a disadvantage. In my experience, it made it more difficult to find sponsors, because there was always the underlying feeling that people would say to themselves, 'He doesn't need any sponsorship money. He's the son of a world rally champion.'

There were other issues, too. If I crashed, he'd be disappointed because he knows you can do better. But it's not like a team manager being disappointed, it's your father, which is a more complicated relationship, and the tension it created meant it took me many more rallies before I found my pace again, because I was so worried about upsetting him. Ironically, it was coming from a good heart, but we soon agreed that he would take a back seat, so there was no danger of him crossing the line between a professional and emotional response. And I should add, I couldn't have got to where I am without his support.

The sad thing for today's rally drivers is that there are so few competitors who can make a living out of it. Take tennis; the top 100 players can make a living out of it. If you counted the number of drivers that can make



**Baggy trousers and short trousers: A young Max looks up to his rally superstar father, Ari**

in becoming a rally driver. No question about it: he had natural talent.

What I also appreciated during Max's time in rallying is that it is the most awful feeling, waiting for your loved one to finish, safe and sound.

My poor wife, Rita, has had to endure so much. Most people know all about my near-death experience, after cartwheeling at around 120mph, during the 1985 Argentina Rally. Rita only found out by watching the news on the television, as the team didn't have the phone number for where she was staying at the time. I can't comprehend what she went through.

Even after my experiences, some mothers might have said to their son, 'No, my dear son, you shouldn't go rallying' but Rita is too wise for that. She knows that life is greater than we are.

What few know is that in 2011, driving the course car at the Corsica Rally, I had another bad crash that came close to leaving me paralysed.

**"I was close to being paralysed by a crash in Corsica"**



MCKLEIN



Ari, top, has 10 wins to his name across a 24-year WRC career. Max, above, has competed in WRC2 and also in the Drive DMACK Trophy series for Ford Fiesta R2s

their living out of rally driving, it's not a lot compared to the scale of the sport.

It's become so much more expensive since Dad's day, too. Which means that teams are much more risk-averse now. Dad would never have got away with all the accidents he had back then, now.

I have no drive for this year, and am working away on new projects, including driver coaching, and perhaps Dad and I will be able to share some news about this soon. Coaching is satisfying, but a lot of drivers need, well, a lot of help when it comes to driving on snow and ice. And where better to take them to learn than Finland?

Am I proud of Dad? Of course I am. He started his life in a small village in Finland, without a father, went after his dreams and achieved so much.

Yet it's not so much these achievements, in motor sport or as a politician, that make me proud. It's who he is as a person, and the kind of father he has been for me. Whether you are successful, have a lot of contacts, or are rich, you're no better than somebody who lives a simple life, out of the spotlight. It's about your qualities as a human being. *James Mills* ◉

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Never content to settle, Breedlove set a total of five land speed record benchmarks

**M** LUNCH WITH

# Craig Breedlove

Most racing drivers live for wheel-to-wheel action, but this one lives to break records. **Colin Goodwin** meets the first man to achieve 400, 500 and even 600mph land speed benchmarks

**C**RAIG BREEDLOVE HAS GIVEN us a choice. Either a smart restaurant in a winery, or Hozy's, a cheap and cheerful eatery. "Hozy's," explains Breedlove, "is where all the local racers go to hang out and eat." Clearly there is no real choice here.

Hozy's is in Santa Paula, a 20-minute drive from Breedlove's beautiful waterfront home in Oxnard, California. He's got a place

in Mexico and a workshop in Rio Vista in Northern California. Breedlove and his wife Yadira have driven up from Mexico to meet us. They have a dog, so air travel is avoided. Breedlove, 82, looks well after the three-day drive in his Toyota pick-up.

Breedlove was the first man to hold the land speed record at over 400mph and first to 500mph, and also first to 600mph. There were two racing drivers that I knew all about in the late 1960s: one was Graham Hill and

the other was Craig Breedlove. People today bang on about Steve McQueen being the king of cool, but for me Breedlove occupies a far lower point on the thermometer. Unless my musical knowledge is lacking, Breedlove is the first of our lunch guests to feature in a pop song. George Harrison's *Faster* was about Jackie Stewart, but his name isn't in the lyrics. The Beach Boys' *Spirit of America* namechecks Breedlove, and his car.

So, let's go back to Los Angeles in the **►**

1950s, hot rodding and the teenage years of the man who dominated land speed record breaking in the early 1960s. What upbringing or influences inspire a man to risk death to be the fastest man in the world?

"I was really interested in cars, boats and aeroplanes. I built model aeroplanes when I was a kid and used to be a member of a club called 'Sky Kings'. I designed and built my own control line aircraft and took part in contests. You couldn't buy those planes, so you had to build them yourself. I learned a lot, many of the older people there were really good on aerodynamics.

"My mum and dad had divorced and my mother had remarried to a man who was very intelligent and into horticulture and symphony music. He had been in military intelligence during the war and was some kind of professor. We were like oil and water, so I had to find my own entertainment and hobbies. There was a guy over the road called Ed Rourke who worked at Hughes aircraft and he taught me a lot and helped with my aeroplanes."

Ed Rourke had a son called Roger who was older than Craig and Roger's thing was building hot rods. "The first time we went to Bonneville we took this 1929 Ford roadster with two flatheads in it. The one in the back had fuel injectors on it and the one in the front was smaller but had a McCulloch supercharger on it. I think we went about 179mph or so with it.

"It was the same sort of guys who went to Bonneville; hot rodders and drag racers. They'd organise a kind of end of season gathering. There was a lot of space so you could go a heck of a lot faster and the course conditions were good. I was very familiar with John Cobb's record, Malcolm Campbell and George Eyston, which I'd read about in school books and this all blended in with the aircraft modelling, aerodynamics, hot rodding and streamliners.

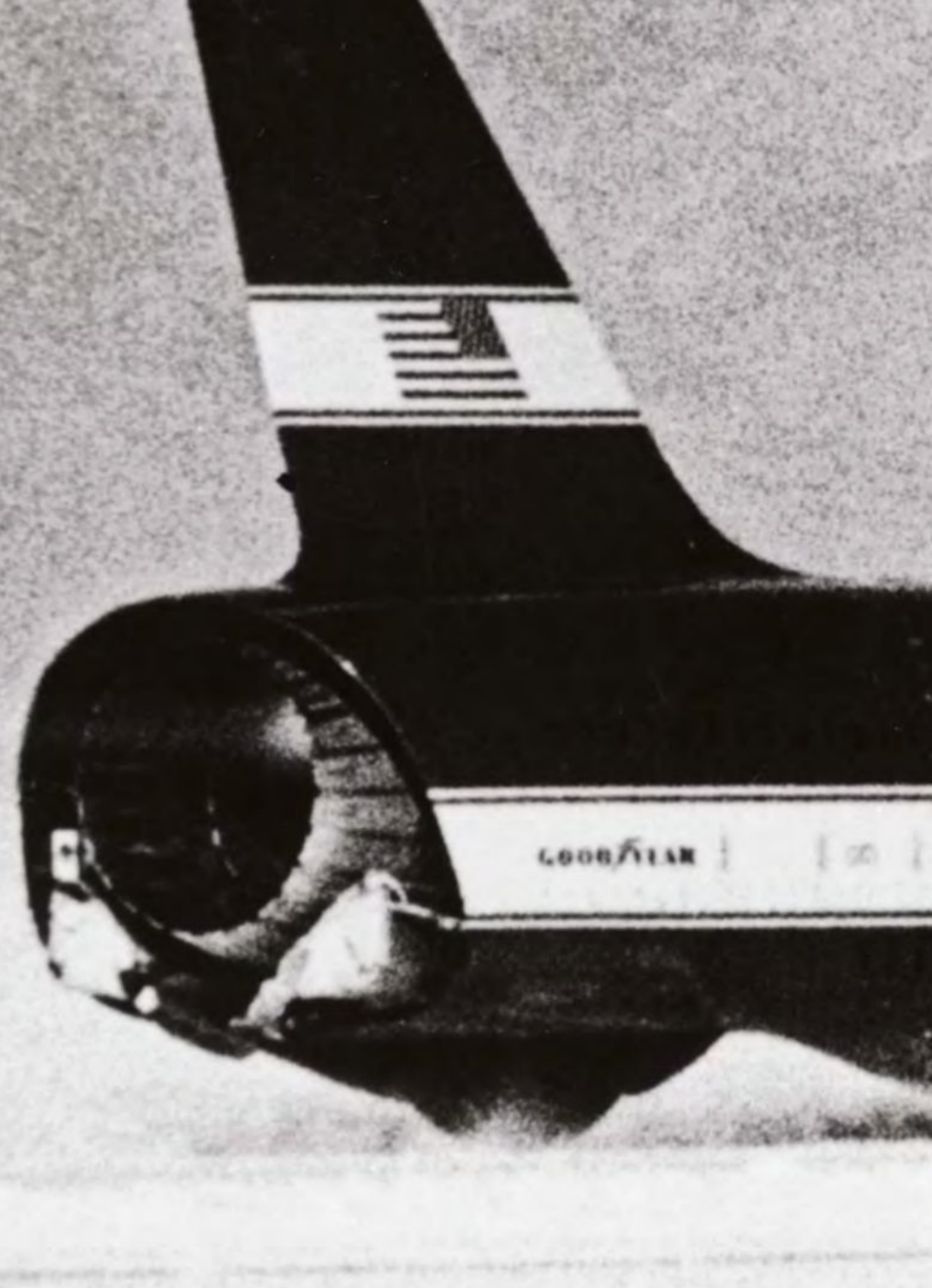
"I left high school and like any kid you're wondering what you're going to do with your life. I got married at 18 and by the time I was 21 I had three kids and I'm still trying to pay for the first one and buy a house. I had a decent job as a fireman at the Costa Mesa fire department. I read about Mickey Thompson building his Challenger land speed record car, which was featured in almost every issue of *Hot Rod* magazine."

Breedlove had started building his own

hot rod, a '34 Ford Coupe, with help and inspiration from Roger Rourke, when he was 15 years-old. He'd street raced, nearly killing himself in the process, and drag raced the car throughout his teens. Now with his steady job in the fire department he concentrated again on racing. His wife Marge, however, was not quite so pleased about his renewed focus on racing.

To pacify her he agreed to have himself and his kids baptised into her faith: Mormonism. The Mormon bishop who baptised them was Ed Perkins, owner of Perkins Machine Company, manufacturer of specialist nuts and bolts. Breedlove managed to persuade Perkins to sponsor his Coupe and then his next project, a belly tank racer. Together with the Rourkes, Breedlove built a racer in which he managed an impressive 234mph at Bonneville. But his

**A pioneer of speed: Breedlove, now 82, went from building cars in sheds, to the world's fastest man**



**Spirit of America Sonic I broke the land speed record twice in 1965, recording an astounding 600.601mph, just 13 days after hitting 555.483mph**

ambitions were way ahead of those speeds.

Mickey Thompson had taken his four-engined Challenger to Bonneville in 1960 and managed to beat John Cobb's 394mph with a pass at over 400mph, but the trouble was that one of the Pontiac engines had blown and Thompson wasn't able to make a return run and therefore hadn't officially broken the record. Breedlove had taken note.

"We'd had enough trouble with our belly tank racer blowing clutches and that was just with one engine. Four engines meant four clutches and way too much complication. We had also realised that wheelspin was becoming a real issue and that it was unlikely that a wheel-driven car was going to go much beyond 400mph.

"Plus I simply couldn't afford the expense of putting all those gear trains together. Or doing what Donald Campbell was doing [with Bluebird-Proteus CN7] and taking a turbojet and harnessing all of the gear train and everything like a turbo prop. That was just something that was prohibitive for me to do. I had to look at "how can I do this" and the answer was to pick up one of the surplus jet engines that were coming onto the market back then. Guys were already running jet engines on the dragstrip and it seemed like the right way to go for the LSR.

"I got hold of a surplus J-47 engine [as used in the F-86 Sabre] for \$500 and immediately called the FIA and asked them if they'd sanction a record using a jet engine



and they said no. We then went to the FIM who were really interested, but to comply with their sanctioning the vehicle had to have two or three wheels. Which is why we built Spirit of America with three wheels.

"I'd originally designed a car in which you sat next to the engine, like Art Arfons' Green Monster, but when we had to go to three wheels that was out the window. I went to a guy we went to school with called Bill Moore, who now worked at Hughes Aircraft. He'd won the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild and was into hot rodding and on the side had become an automotive artist for *Car Craft* and *Hot Rod* magazines. Another friend was Art Russell who'd also won the Fisher Body prize and like Bill had been at the Art Center in Pasadena. They were good modellers."

**O**UR FOOD HAS ARRIVED. Breedlove has ordered a tuna melt with an iced tea and I go for the same minus the iced tea. He's in terrific shape, lean and fit-looking. Just an older version of the film star good-looking guy at Bonneville in the '60s. Just as we tuck into our food a larger man with a goatee arrives and says hi to Breedlove. "This is Stan Goldstein. My best friend." Goldstein has been with Breedlove from the start, from Spirit of America through to Breedlove's later projects. And they're still cooking up plans together over 60 years later.

"We were just a bunch of guys with like minds, you know, trying to focus on building this experimental machine to go to Bonneville and try and get the unlimited speed record for the United States."

A group of friends, many highly qualified in their fields, but the Spirit of America was still built like a hot rod in Breedlove's dad Norman's garage in Culver City. The neighbours suffered all-nighters and the closest neighbour Mr Tuchen lost his hedge when they moved the nearly complete and very wide Spirit of America out from the garage.

The finished machine was launched at the Wilshire Country Club in July 1962. In this early configuration Spirit of America didn't have its tall tail fin and there were other under the skin differences, too. "Rod Shapel, one of Spirit's principal designers and an engineer at Task Corporation [which made wind tunnels], couldn't work out how to steer the front wheel so he came up with this novel system of steering the car aerodynamically using a rudder or fin underneath the car behind the front wheel.

"When we went to Bonneville that year the car was virtually impossible to drive. I just couldn't steer the thing and we never got beyond 300mph. We discovered that the fin wasn't actually moving. We were really


worried that we'd lose our Shell sponsorship. Over the winter and before the next Bonneville season we called in some engineers and really went over the car.

"We solved the problem of the fin and also managed to work out a way of steering the front wheel. Rod had said that was impossible but we were in a meeting with a bunch of engineers, one of whom worked at Hughes Aircraft and specialised in helicopter systems. He said: 'You guys tried a focusing link?'. We all looked at each other

and said 'what the hell's a focusing link?' This guy gets out a pencil and draws one for us and it solved the problem."

Breedlove, the Spirit of America and the team were back on the salt in July 1963. "I'd been pretty depressed after the previous summer but one of our team, Walt Sheehan, who worked at Lockheed, said:

'Look Craig, there's never been an airplane in history that went through flight testing without things going wrong and having to be changed. That's why we do testing. That's the whole point.' He was right.

"Walt was responsible for the data acquisition system that we had on Spirit of America and later on [Spirit of America] Sonic 1 in 1965. It was the first such system used in motor racing. Walt had worked on the F-104 Starfighter's time-to-climb records and he 

**"When you hit 600mph, you're on the verge of disaster"**

adapted the data logging system on the Starfighter to work in Spirit.

“Having that data was a huge advantage. The surface at Bonneville is far from smooth and at speeds approaching 400mph the wheels don’t have time to fall into the ruts and depressions so you’re literally skimming along. It feels like you’re driving on ice.”

And presumably somewhat exciting? “Yeah sure, it’s a combination of many elements: you’re trying to manage everything that’s going on with the car at that sort of speed. The wind, course conditions, how much downforce you’ve got. It’s just like any form of motor racing, there are always many factors to monitor. Going 400mph blows your mind, but when you get to 600mph you’re absolutely on the verge of disaster, which is not too much fun.”

The mid-1960s was an incredible period in land speed record breaking and never more so than in October 1964. Breedlove was on the salt flats with Spirit of America looking to hit 500mph. With him were brothers Walt and Arthur ‘Art’ Arfons. The Arfons brothers (they were actually half-brothers) were from Akron, Ohio and had been building aero-engined and latterly jet-powered dragsters throughout the ’50s and early ’60s. On October 2, Tom Green, driving Walt Arfon’s Wingfoot Express nudged the world record up to 413.2mph and then three days later Art Arfons took it away from Walt with a 434.03mph. It was ultra-high-speed ping-pong with Breedlove

fighting back with 468.719mph on October 13. The magical 500mph mark was close. Breedlove cracked that barrier only two days later, having broken another record at the same time with the world’s fastest crash and longest skid marks in history. And nearly drowning in a lake.

That’s when the famous “and for my next trick I’m going to set myself on fire” quote was uttered by a remarkably unflustered Breedlove. Spirit of America was written off. Worse, Art Arfons went 536.719mph on October 27.

“That was really bad news because we had a movie deal and a merchandising deal for Spirit of America toys that were

going to be out for Christmas. Once we’d lost the record all that was cancelled.”

No car and more financial uncertainty. Breedlove responded by building Spirit of America Sonic 1, a four-wheeled machine fitted with a J-79 General Electric engine, the same afterburner-equipped unit that Art was using in his Green Monster.

“I got on really well with Art. He was a really nice guy, facing the same challenges as we were. He had his hands full. He approached me one evening outside the Stateline Hotel in Wendover [favoured base for LSR teams at Bonneville] in November 1965 when we’re trading places with the record beyond 500mph, and he said ‘You just went 555mph and my car’s in Vegas and now I’m going to have to go get it and try to beat you. What’s

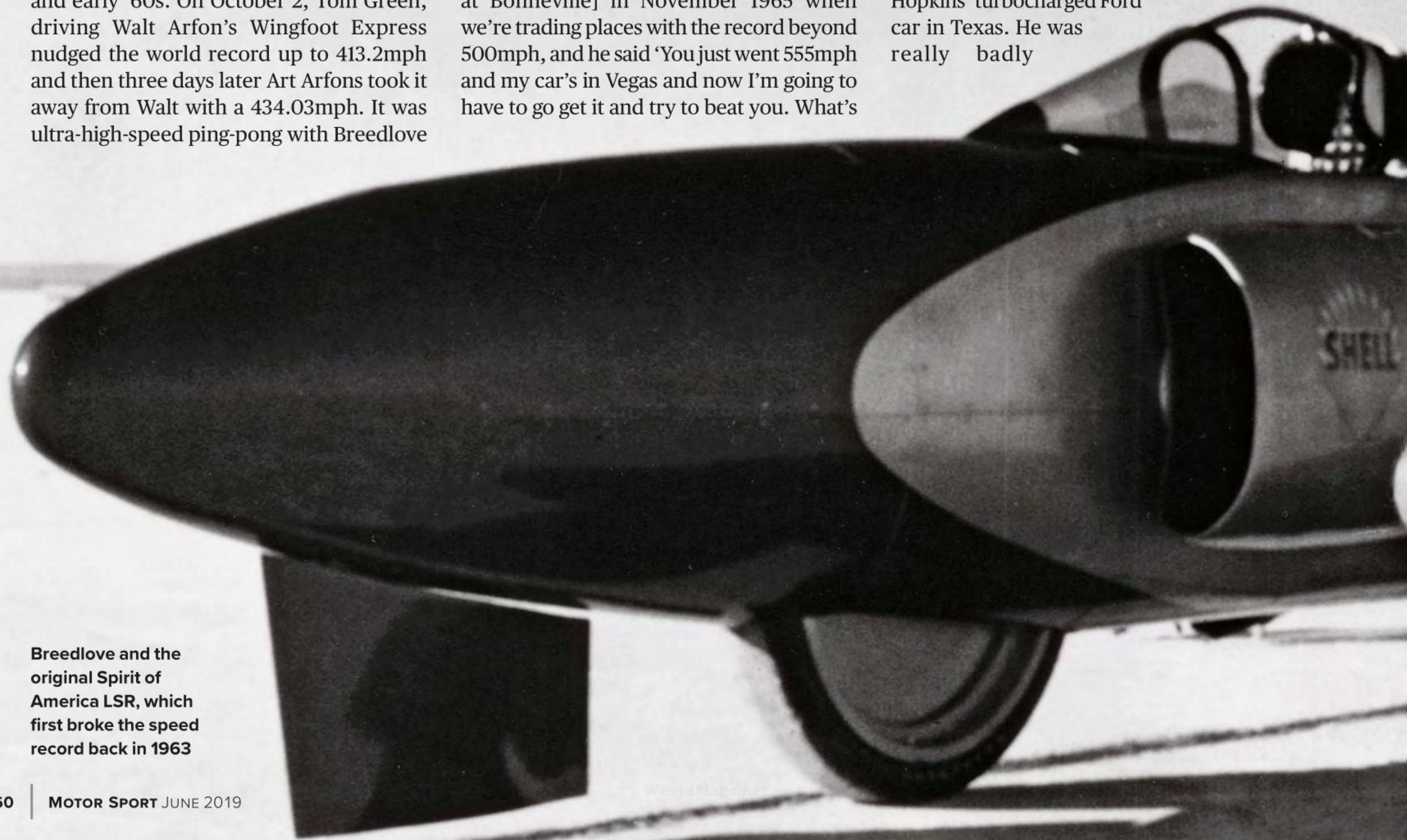
going to happen? Are we just going to go back and forth until one of us gets killed or what? What’s going on?’ and I said ‘Well, I’ve never thought about it in those terms, but I suspect that’s what we’re dealing with’. Art replied: ‘Well that’s OK, I just wanted to know...’

Art Arfons did come back from Vegas and pushed the record to 576.553mph. This in a car that cost him \$10,000 to build. The car crashed at the end of the run and so Arfons was unable to respond to Breedlove’s incredible 600.601mph on November 15. “Like I said earlier,” says Breedlove, “at that speed we saw from the telemetry that the front wheels were barely on the ground. Sonic 1 was flying.”

**K**KNOWN GLOBALLY AS THE fastest man on wheels, did Breedlove consider the more conventional and slightly slower forms of racing? Or relatively slower, like racing at Indianapolis? “Yeah, I had done a deal with this guy called Lindsey Hopkins who was running a driver called Bobby Marshman. The idea was that I was going to drive the number two car at the Indy 500 in 1965 and that Bobby would tutor me on driving these cars. My first race was going to be at Sacramento on the mile dirt track but a week before Bobby crashed testing Hopkins’ turbocharged Ford car in Texas. He was really badly

**“And for my next trick, I’m going to set myself on fire...”**

Breedlove and the original Spirit of America LSR, which first broke the speed record back in 1963



burned and died from his injuries. Lindsey withdrew from racing so that was that. But I'd also been at the Indy 500 earlier that year and watched as Dave MacDonald and Eddie Sachs were killed, which shook me up a lot."

How did he think he'd have done on the ovals? "Well, I was young and healthy and could drive my cars well enough. Stan [Goldstein] always said I had pretty big *cojones*, so I guess I'd have done OK. Certainly, the road racing guys were encouraging and always pretty good to me. Looking back though, I'm glad I didn't do it. Later I got to know Parnelli Jones really well and all those guys were really concerned about getting killed or badly injured.

"I was starting to get a bit concerned about running some of the really fast stuff. Even the little rocket dragster. Man, when that thing lit off it was like being hit in the back by a semi doing 300mph." The rocket dragster that Breedlove refers to has an interesting tale attached to it that is another link to Donald Campbell.

"In around 1969 I'd got the idea to restore Donald's Bluebird CN7 car and go for the wheel-driven record. I mentioned it to Tonia Campbell [Donald's widow], who told me that Campbell

had said before he was killed that the only people he ever wanted to drive the car were Dan Gurney and Craig Breedlove. I didn't manage to raise the sponsorship, but while

I was in England I stayed with Tonia in Surrey and was looking through Donald's library where I found a book about jet and rocket engines. It mentioned TRW Energy Systems, which had built the rocket engines for the Apollo programme. They were down the road from me in Redondo Beach, so when I got home I went to see them.

"They put me in touch with a guy called Jerry Elverum Jr, who'd designed the rocket motor for the Apollo Lunar Excursion Module that had just put Neil Armstrong on the moon. Jerry agreed to help me with a rocket engine for a dragster. He designed me a simple motor with a six-second burn that would produce 35,000lb of thrust and be good for 900mph in 32 seconds.

"We built the motor and I took the car to Bonneville where I could test it without having the worry of having to stop at the end of the quarter mile. I dialled in 5.5sec of burn time that I had on the fuel and when

I came out of the quarter mile it was doing 377mph and by the time

I'd burned off the fuel load I had an ET of 465mph. That

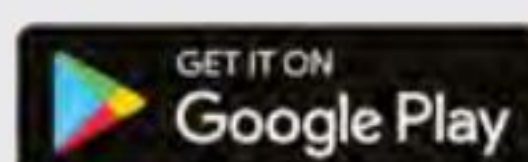
thing gained so much speed in a second it was unbelievable. By the time the fuel ran out I was pushing 500mph. Trouble was as soon as the engine shut down I lost the rocket ◀





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## When Breedlove met Bluebird

Speed hunters from both sides of the pond met in 1963



Campbell (left) with Breedlove

On August 5, 1963 Breedlove made a pass at 388.47mph at Bonneville. The rules stated that he needed to make his return run within an hour. Spirit of America was refuelled, parachutes re-packed and J-47 engine checked out. His return run was at 428.37mph to make an average of 407.45mph. After 34 years the land speed record was back with America and 26-year-old Breedlove's life changed forever. Suddenly he was famous, with a 38-city tour organised by sponsors Shell and Goodyear. Plus a trip to Great Britain.

"Donald Campbell had arranged a reception for me at his house. I travelled down in a Mini Cooper with a bunch of guys from the press. They were relishing this whole idea of a confrontation, which freaked me out. But Donald was this really classy guy, very well educated, very sharp and a very nice guy too. The press were just salivating at the thought of this confrontation and Donald stood up, took the microphone, and he couldn't have been more complimentary about everything that we'd done. They [the press] asked him what he thought about me using a jet engine and three wheels and he said that if he'd thought of it, he'd have done it. 'These young guys just outsmarted me.'

"Donald and I became quite good friends. He had his own aeroplane and flew me around England in it. He'd come to LA and stay with his friends in Hollywood and we'd go to Trader Vic's. Donald loved drinking Mai Tais. He was just a lovely guy who supported what I was doing."

blast that stabilises the car and acts like a rudder because of the density of the thrust plume. It turned 90 degrees in a millisecond, the nose came up and the car started to spin in the air and when I got the parachute out it ripped the back of the car off." Another high-speed crash - this one at 500mph - to go with this 400mph crash in 1964 in Spirit of America. Breedlove would add to that later.

Meanwhile, Breedlove had to get through the tricky business of a post racing adrenaline-free life. "In the late '70s and '80s I was in a real mess. I was broke, I owed the taxman money that I didn't have and my back was against the wall. I had to get a real job to earn some money."


So, Craig Breedlove, first man to 400, 500 and 600mph became... an estate agent.

"A friend owned Harbour Realty in Manhattan Beach, so I went to work for him. I did some good deals and earned enough commission to get the IRS off my back and re-establish myself. I even invested in some properties in Northern California I still own."

**S**O, NOW FINANCIALLY STABLE AND back on his uppers, does Breedlove take up golf and join a country club? Not quite.

"I had gone up to Utah to pick up a couple of J-79 engines and on the way back stopped off at Bonneville where I bumped into Richard Noble. Richard saw the engines on the trailer and said: 'What the hell are you doing with those?' and I said: 'well, I'm going to build another LSR'. Richard went back to the UK saying to people: 'We're going to lose breaking the sound barrier on land to the Americans just like we lost it in the air.'"

Breedlove's new car was christened Spirit of America Sonic Arrow and just like in the old days it was powered by a trusty J-79 engine. The car wasn't a three-wheeler, but it looked like one because the front wheels were so close together. Richard Noble's Thrust SSC was a much fatter and beefier machine powered by a pair of Rolls-Royce Spey jet engines. Breedlove was first to have his car ready in 1996, at Black Rock Desert in Nevada where in October 1983 Richard Noble had broken Gary Gabelich's 622.407mph record set in 1970 with his Blue Flame rocket car.

"The whole experience with Sonic Arrow was frustrating. I'd put a lot of my own money in, but we were still operating on a very tight budget with not enough money for any CFD work. Our spare J-79 was ruined by a company that did special coatings and then they sued us. I spent so much time 



Sonic Arrow was the final iteration of Spirit of America, but was damaged during a 675mph crash in 1996

PETER FARNSWORTH

sorting that mess out that I took my eye off running the project and then we had morale issues in the team. The one thing that we did have was a very fast car.

“We were at Black Rock in 1996, the year before Richard [Noble] came out with Thrust SSC. Black Rock is a harsh environment and is notorious for high winds and that’s not what you need with a relatively light car. Anyway, because we were under so much pressure on time, I made a really simple mistake. On one of the runs I had assumed, when I heard it over the radio, that one-five knots meant 1.5kts of wind because that’s what it had been all day. But no, I was actually being told it was 15kts. That car was so fast: by the time I went through the start of the measured mile I was doing 675mph and the car hadn’t stopped accelerating. According to the data if I’d stayed in the throttle for six more seconds we’d have come out the other end at 920mph. That thing just did not slow down. But a gust literally blew the car onto its side. It happened in a fraction of a second. I don’t think anyone has survived a crash at that speed. We fixed the car and came back to Black Rock in 1997 to join Richard and his

**“I don’t think anyone has survived a crash at over 675mph”**

team. I have to honestly tell you that when I went over to their camp and saw Thrust SCC I was so excited. I thought I was going to go by them like they were tied to a telephone pole. I was so confident that we were going to blow the doors off that thing. I thought if they get to Mach one [717mph] that will be amazing. And they did. It taught me a few things, I learned a lot.

“I tell you one thing though, if they hadn’t have had Andy Green driving they wouldn’t have got the record. That thing was terrible to drive and Andy told me that after their test in the Al-Jafr desert in Jordan he was almost ready to quit because the car was so bad to drive. When I saw the in-car video of Andy driving on his

record run I was blown away by the amount of opposite lock and inputs he was putting in. I wouldn’t have driven it.

“We couldn’t fight back that year; we didn’t know it but Sonic Arrow’s frame had been bent in the crash the year before and not repaired properly, and our spare engine - the one that had been damaged by the coatings company - wasn’t producing enough power. We managed only

630mph and the car was all over the place.”

For the 60-year-old grandfather of five it was all over. No good engine, no money. Twenty-two years ago now, but Breedlove has never stopped thinking about the business of breaking speed records.

Somewhere in Hollywood a filing cabinet holds a film script about the life of Craig Breedlove and his epic battles with Art Arfons at Bonneville over the late summers of 1964 and ’65.

It’s a great story that should be told. ◉



**CV**

**BORN: 23/3/37, LOS ANGELES, USA**

- **1963** First land speed record, achieving 407.45mph aboard the Spirit of America at Bonneville Salt Flats
- **1964** Breedlove improves to 468.719mph at Bonneville in Spirit of America to reclaim the land speed record

- **1964** Breaks his own record, and the 500mph barrier, by running at 526.277mph at Bonneville
- **1965** Reaches 555.483mph in Spirit of America Sonic I at Bonneville, again reclaiming the record

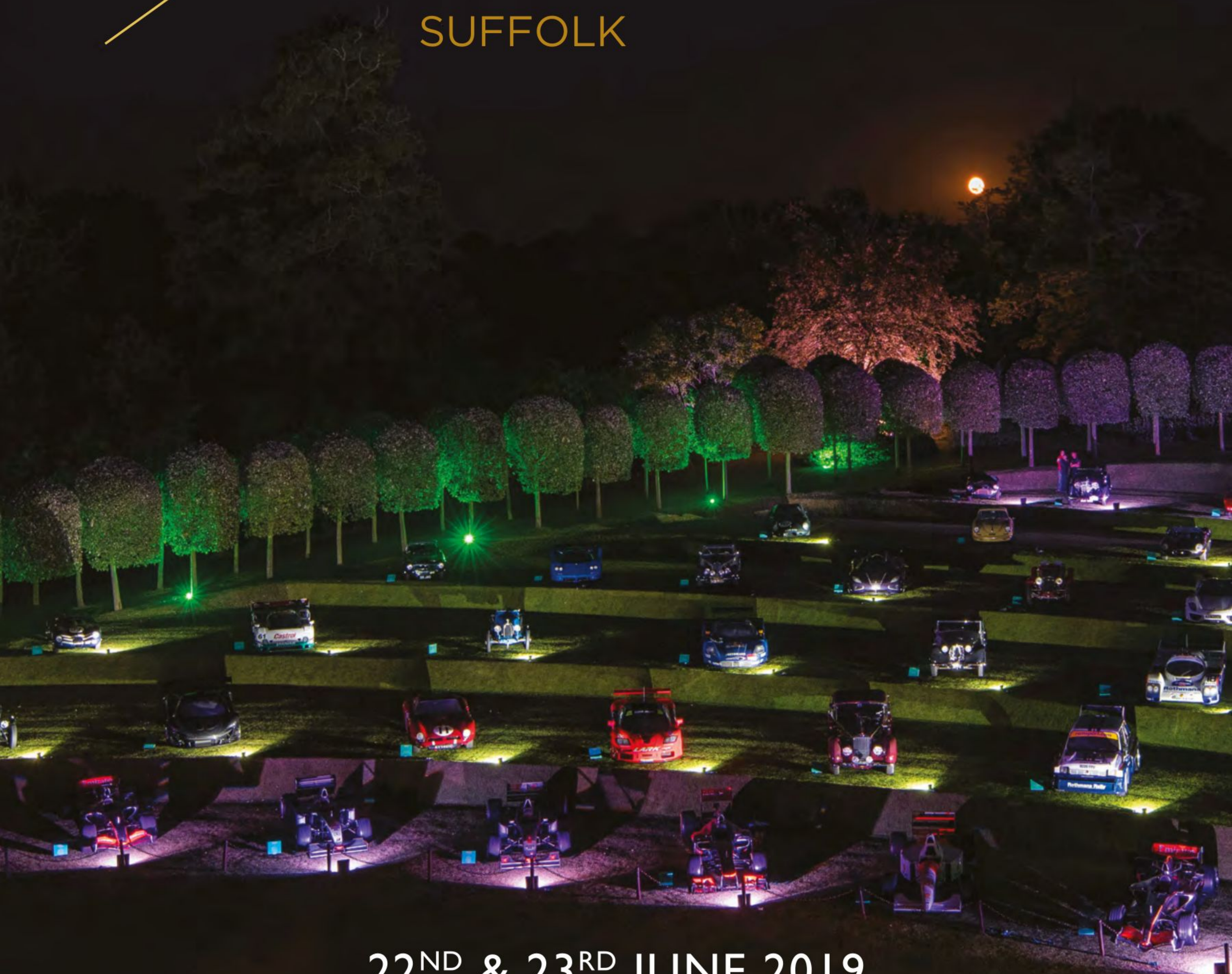
- **1965** Reaches 600.601mph in Sonic I
- **1993** Inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America
- **2000** Inducted into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame





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## LETTERS

BY SHEER COINCIDENCE MY WIFE AND I HAVE HAD PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THREE of the drivers remembered in the current edition of *Motor Sport*.

Mark Donohue was the first. He was due at Silverstone for the F1 Drivers' Forum the Marshals' Club (BMMC) had arranged for the 1975 British GP marshals. Two hours in his company soon showed us why he was known as "Cap'n Nice" in US motor sport.

He quietly corrected my slightly disparaging comments on "roundy-roundy" NASCAR racing. "NASCAR is all about entertainment," he explained. "If drivers turn up and Bill France tells them they are racing on the rims, no tyres, they're racing on the rims - 'cos Mr France knows what puts bums on seats and that pays our wages".

Paul Newman was next, at the last F1 GP around the streets of Detroit. My wife and I attended as visiting officials. I got to 'shadow' the Chief Steward, during which time I was introduced to Mr Newman, who was racing in Trans-Am at the time. As mentioned in the article, he is not a film star when he is racing and likes just to get on with it. For me, it was a great pleasure.

Roland Ratzenberger's girlfriend was next, on a flight from Chicago. This was not such a happy experience. She was sitting across the aisle from us and seemed to want to engage us in conversation. Once she learned we were involved in motor sport, we got a lengthy discourse on the aftermath of Roland's death. It was not that long after Roland's accident and she was clearly still grief-stricken.

GEORGE COPELAND, WOKINGHAM

**R**EALLY ENJOYED READING THE ARTICLE on Paul Newman - The Racer and Adam Carolla's collection. There is a Paul Newman car here in the UK which was driven by Rob Huff at last year's Le Mans Classic - a 1989 Spice SE with a Chevy V8, which was originally a Spice works IMSA car, sold to Bob and Linda Lee and driven by Paul Newman and Michael Brockman at Watkins Glen at Road America in 1990.

He was also on the driver line up for the Daytona 24 Hours in February 1991 the following year but there's no record of him actually driving. From the records it seems to be the only Group C/GTP car he actually raced, although happy to be proved wrong.

RICHARD MEINS, CHIDDINGFOLD

**I**VERY MUCH ENJOYED YOUR FINE ARTICLES on Paul Newman in the May issue.

Back in 1979, I went along as a helper with the Dick Barbour Racing team at the Le Mans 24 Hours, and ended up at the signalling pits just after Mulsanne Corner, timing the cars from Saturday night until the end of the race.

What shone out was not just Paul Newman's consistency - as good as Rolf Stommelen's - but his speed. From the lap times, you just couldn't tell who was driving.

STEPHEN CANSICK, LONDON



The UDT Lotus 19 in Innes Ireland's hands in 1963. Photo sent in by Chris Beach.

**I**ENJOYED READING THE FEATURE ON THE UDT Lotus 19. How wonderful it will be to see this very historic car racing again.

When our family lived in Buxton in the early '60s we went to Oulton Park whenever we could and your article reminded me of seeing this car twice, both times at the National Spring meeting.

In 1963 it was raced by Innes Ireland, who led for the first 10 laps before retiring. Jim Clark won in a Lotus 23. The following year our disappointment that Clark was a non-starter in the Lotus 30 turned to excitement when he took over George Pitt's Lotus 19 and led all the way from Jack Sears

in the Willment Cobra. My father took photos of the car in both years (*below, left*). I shall look out for the car at Shelsley in May some 55 years since I last saw it win.

CHRIS BEACH, VIA EMAIL

**I**N REFERENCE TO THE ESTORIL CLASSICS listing, Ian Fleming wrote the James Bond novels in Jamaica, not Portugal. But he did develop the plot for his first Bond novel, *Casino Royale*, from his experience gambling in the casino when he and his boss at British Naval Intelligence stayed in Estoril for a few days in 1941. Estoril and other parts of Portugal do feature prominently in the film version of one of the last Bond novels, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, although Fleming had set those parts of the novel elsewhere.

PAUL FALON, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

**O**N JULY 25 1921 A DUESENBERG driven by Jimmy Murphy won the French Grand Prix at Le Mans.

On June 18 1967 an AAR Eagle driven by Dan Gurney won the Belgian Grand Prix at Spa-Francorchamps. I respectfully suggest that Penske was not the only American team to win a (world championship) grand prix!

DUNCAN MACNAB, VIA EMAIL

*Quite right - and apologies for the mistake; we meant to say Penske was the last American F1 team to win a GP. Ed*

**I**AM A LIFELONG SUPPORTER OF MOTOR sport, horse racing and cricket. F1 has become so predictable, I wondered in my simple way how it might be improved.

In horse racing they use handicapping, so why not in F1? If cars are so sensitive to weight, perhaps a system of penalties could be introduced quite cheaply?

I also think it would be a good idea to translate qualifying times into distances. What does 0.326sec look like at the speeds they cross the line?

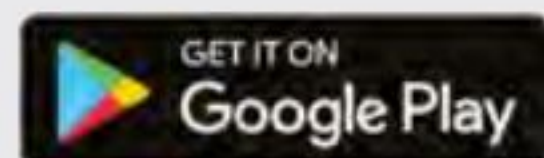
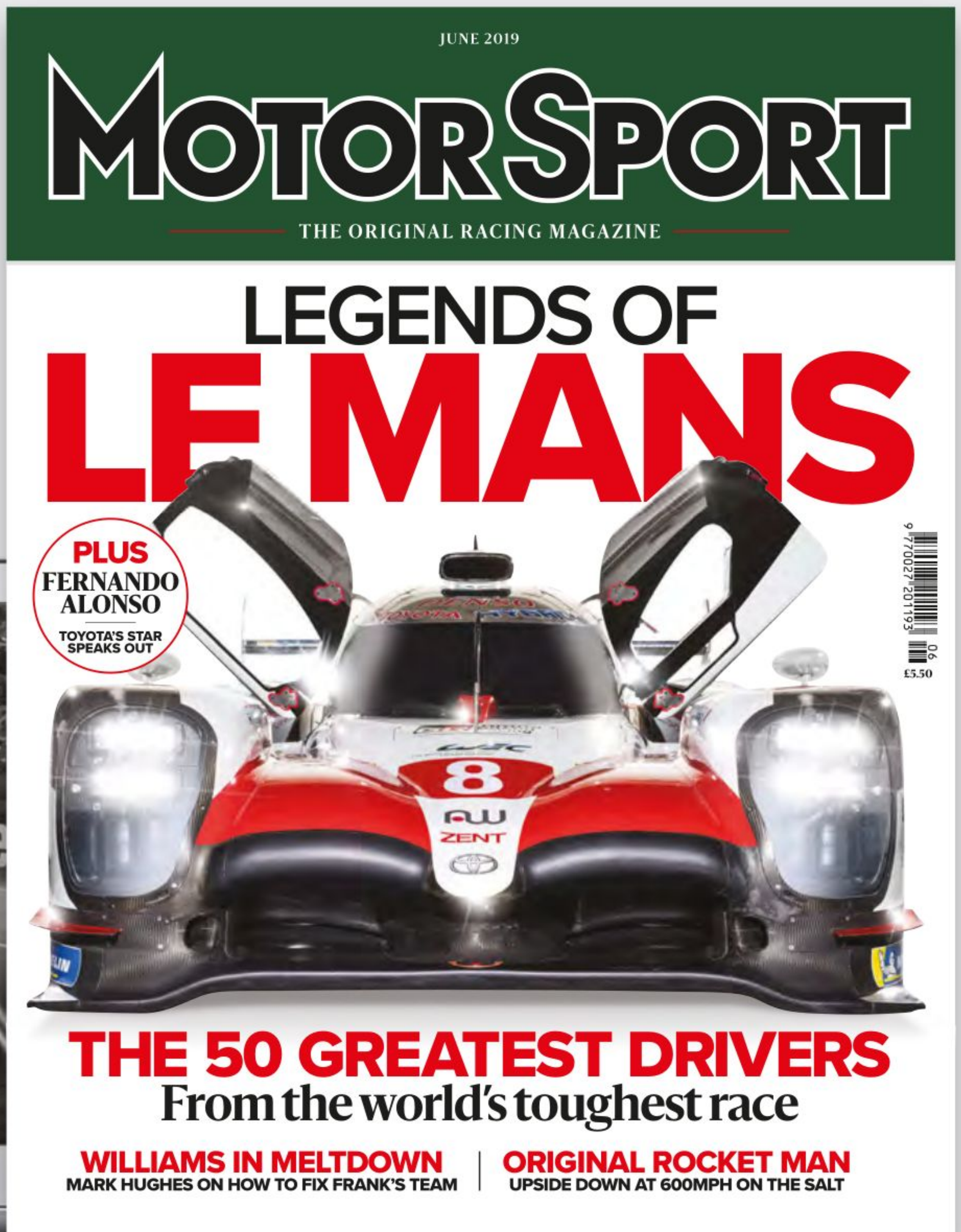
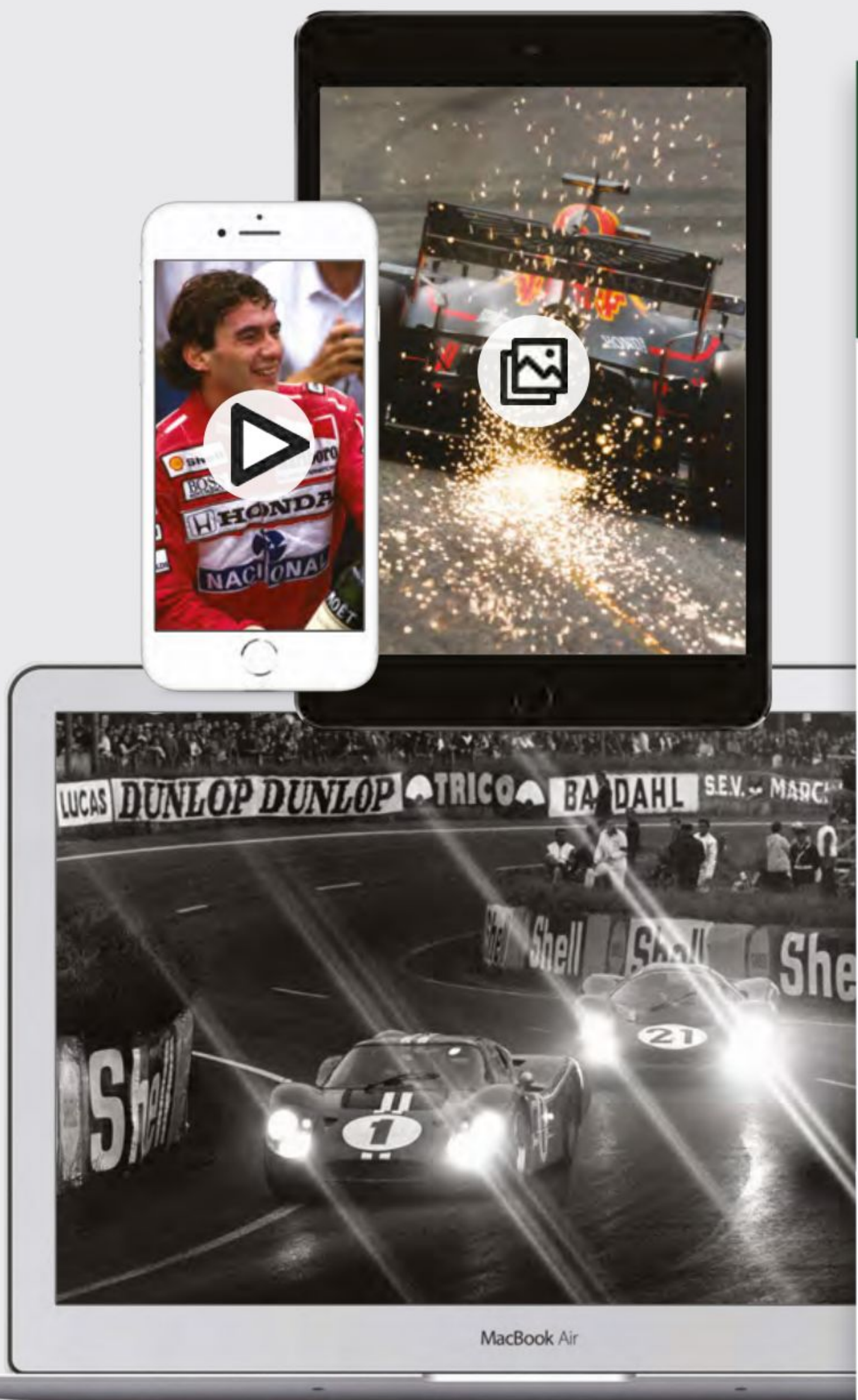
JOHN ML BROWN, BEDFORD

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# Heroes of Le Mans

Le Mans is the ultimate test of endurance and skill and it attracts the world's best drivers, bent on risking it all to stamp their names into history. But who is the greatest? Ahead of this year's race **Motor Sport** ranks its top 50

**RULES OF ENGAGEMENT** Motor Sport's Le Mans top 50 owes a little to statistics but this is not a list of drivers with the most wins. There are other places where that information can be found. Instead, together with key contributors Gary Watkins, Paul Fearnley and Andrew Frankel, the editorial team rated drivers for heroic endeavour as much as outright speed. As so often in life, courage and flair trumped bald stats in the final reckoning.

# ES

## 50 TOMÁŠ ENGE

**Years:** 2002-10 **Starts:** 9

**Best result:** 4th 2009; 1st in class 2003

He has only a single class win to his name, but makes this list for serial qualifying heroics. The apotheosis? In 2004 he crashed his Prodrive Ferrari heavily, but jumped back in the hastily repaired car to secure the second of five straight GTS/GT1 poles and break main rival Corvette's heart.

## 49 JOHNNY HERBERT

**Years:** 1990-2007 **Starts:** 8

**Best result:** 1st 1991

Herbert's career could have ended after his F1 sacking by Benetton, but he proved his mettle in the toughest race of all, sharing a Mazda 787B – Japan's first Le Mans winner – with Bertrand Gachot and Volker Weidler. He missed the podium ceremony through dehydration, but his point was made.

## 48 EDDIE HALL

**Years:** 1950-51 **Starts:** 2

**Best result:** 8th 1950 (driving solo)

He'd entered his Bentley in '36, but that year's Le Mans was cancelled due to the economic climate. He returned 14 years later, with Tommy Clarke listed as co-driver, but official results list him as driving single-handed – a unique feat.

## 47 NICK TANDY

**Years:** 2011-18 **Starts:** 6

**Best result:** 1st 2015

Tandy and Earl Bamber were from Porsche's GT roster, Nico Hülkenberg a welcome visitor from the planet F1. As the regular Porsche crews hit trouble, ditto the Audis, the outsiders moved to the fore – and Tandy's twilight pace was a key factor.

## 46 FRANCK LAGORCE

**Years:** 1994-2003 **Starts:** 10

**Best result:** 5th 1998

A driver who briefly reached F1 deserves hero status for his efforts to get his stricken Courage back to the pits in 1995. The car conked out at Arnage and, with the safety car out, Lagorce pushed it as far as the Porsche Curves before he was stopped.

## 45 JOHN NIELSEN

**Years:** 1986-2008 **Starts:** 18

**Best result:** 1st 1990

As much a part of La Sarthe furniture as the Dunlop Bridge, his reputation was forged partly by his status as his nation's first Le Mans winner, partly by cameos such as being able to drive a McLaren quickly in the wet... without working windscreen wipers. 🏁



For biographies of the drivers here visit the *Motor Sport* database and archive

**44 HENRY 'TIM' BIRKIN**  
Years: 1928-32 Starts: 5  
Best result: 1st 1929 & '31

While it was clearly a privilege to be one of Bentley's Le Mans pioneers, to qualify for the role it helped if you were privileged. That certainly applied to Birkin, born into a family that made its fortune through lace manufacture, but he was also blessed with exquisite determination at the wheel.

**43 STÉPHANE SARRAZIN**  
Years: 2001-18 Starts: 17  
Best result: 2nd 2007, '09, '13 & '16

June 11, 2009. Midnight was approaching and the advantage lay with Audi, but there was tangible anticipation as Sarrazin's Peugeot emerged during qualifying's final moments. Chances are that the hairs have yet to settle on the necks of those watching. He took pole for the third straight season.

**42 LAURENT AÏELLO**  
Years: 1998-2001 Starts: 4  
Best result: 1st 1998

After his single-seater career faltered, Aïello became a serial touring car champion... and then received a last-minute Le Mans call-up from Porsche, to replace the injured Yannick Dalmas (who had fallen over while shopping). Despite lacking any relevant experience, he won.

**41 IVOR BUEB**  
Years: 1955-59 Starts: 5  
Best result: 1st 1955 & '57

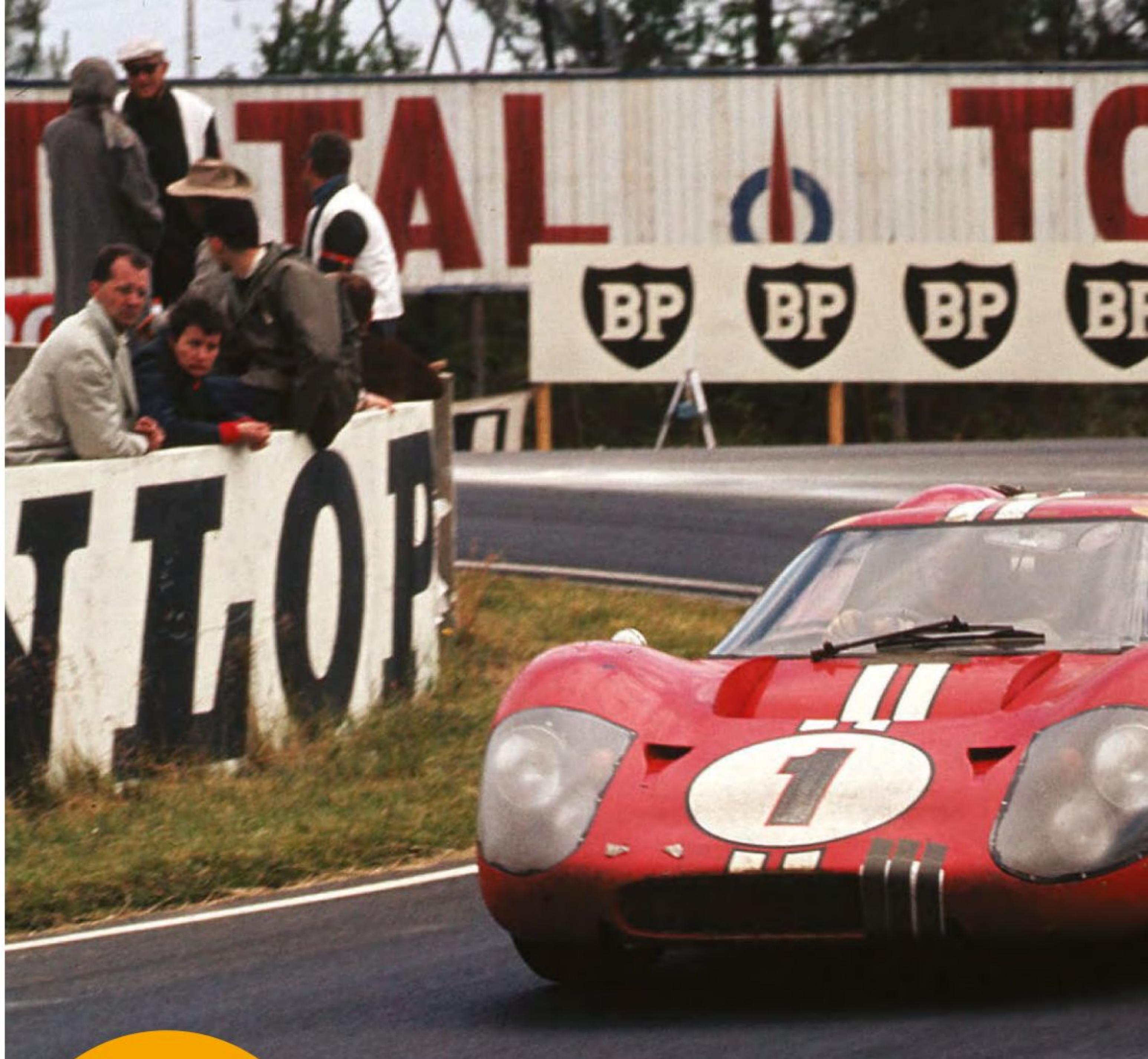
"He stood up extremely well to his first important race with a fast car..." The headlines focused elsewhere in 1955, for obvious reasons, but DSJ appreciated the effort of Mike Hawthorn's winning co-driver.

**40 ROY SALVADORI**  
Years: 1953-63 Starts: 11  
Best result: 1st 1959; 1st in class '62

A true daredevil and racing gladiator, known for his aggressive approach, his crowning glory was to share Aston Martin's only Le Mans victory (60 years ago, sharing a David Brown Racing-run DBR1/300 with Carroll Shelby).

**39 MARK BLUNDELL**  
Years: 1989-2003 Starts: 7  
Best result: 1st 1992

Nissan wasn't sure its R90CK would last and wanted Blundell to abort his qualifying lap. His response was to rip out the radio cable. The car hadn't run in this spec, so guesswork was required, but Blundell was committed enough to take pole... by 6sec.



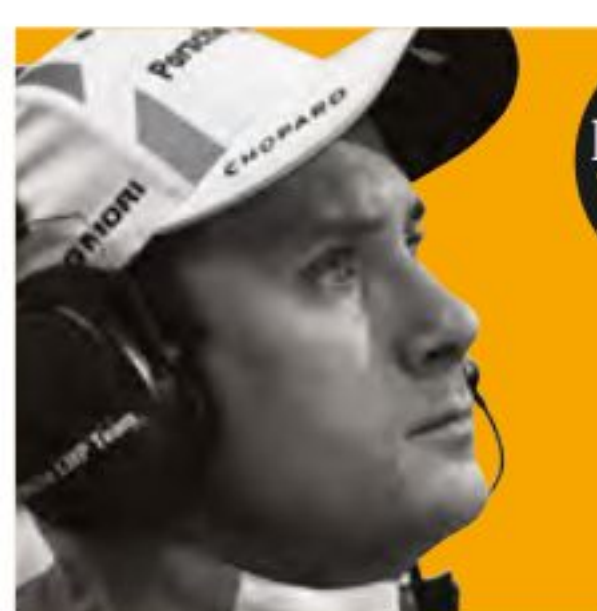
**DAN GURNEY**

Years: 1958-67 Starts: 10 Best result: 1st 1967; 1st in class 1964

Le Mans wasn't always a happy hunting ground for the gifted American. Prior to '67 he'd finished only once in nine attempts, taking a Daytona Cobra to a class-winning fourth three years beforehand. He and rookie co-driver AJ Foyt weren't tipped to go the distance this time, either, as both had a reputation for hard-edged racecraft that flew in the face of period endurance racing's essential delicacy, but they took the lead in the early stages... and stayed there.

Of perhaps greater significance was Gurney's spontaneous post-race reaction, when he popped a champagne cork and took aim at all and sundry - creating a motor sport custom that endures. It would be Foyt's only Le Mans and Gurney's last; one week later Dan took his own Eagle F1 car to victory in the Belgian GP at the 8.7-mile Spa - to cap an unforgettable week.

**NICK TANDY PORSCHE WORKS DRIVER**



MY  
LE MANS  
HERO

"Three things: Derek Bell, Porsche 962 and Rothmans. That does it for me. I grew up watching Derek wrestle the 962 and he was a master at it. His record speaks for itself. Plus, that car was amazing, with the best livery."





Gurney and Foyt triumphed in the Shelby American-entered Ford GT40 MkIV in 1967



Siko took seventh place aboard this Bugatti in 1930, and improved to fourth two years later

37

**AL HOLBERT**

**Years:** 1977-87 **Starts:** 7  
**Best result:** 1st 1983, '86 & '87

If there were a record for the slowest Le Mans finish, Holbert has a claim. In 1983 he, Hurley Haywood and Vern Schuppan were treated as the Porsche factory juniors, but consistency put them in front when others hit trouble. Holbert was at the wheel when the engine failed on the last lap, but he managed to limp to victory at about 20mph.

36

**MARTIN BRUNDLE**

**Years:** 1987-2012 **Starts:** 8  
**Best result:** 1st 1990

Speed with mechanical sympathy made Brundle a sports car star – and never more so than in 1990. When his car suffered water pump failure on Sunday morning, Jaguar team chief Tom Walkinshaw parachuted him into the sister entry alongside John Nielsen and Price Cobb. Despite transmission trouble, Brundle nursed the car to the flag.

35

**EMMANUEL COLLARD**

**Years:** 1995-2017 **Starts:** 23  
**Best result:** 2nd 2005; 1st in class '03 & '09

Collard is one of the most versatile drivers of recent years, having competed in virtually every modern class at Le Mans: LMP1 with Pescarolo, GT1 with Porsche, GT2 with Corvette, LMP2 with Porsche and GTE-Am in both Porsche and Ferrari machinery.

34



**ODETTE SIKO**

**Years:** 1930-33 **Starts:** 4 **Best result:** 4th 1932

Le Mans hasn't always been fair-handed with women. It banned them completely following Annie Bousquet's fatal accident in the 1956 Reims 12 Hours and it took until 1971, courtesy of persuasive arguments from aspiring Corvette driver Marie-Claude Beaumont, to get the decision reversed.

There have been several distinguished performances since - it's an oft-overlooked stat that Michèle Mouton shared a class win with Christine Dacremont and Marianne Hoepfner in 1975 - but the finest overall result for a female racer remains Odette Siko's class-winning fourth place in 1932, at the wheel of an Alfa Romeo 6C shared with Louis Charaval. Two years earlier, she and Marguerite Mareuse had taken their Bugatti Type 40 to seventh - Siko's first class win at La Sarthe.

33

**GRAHAM HILL**

**Years:** 1958-72 **Starts:** 10  
**Best result:** 1st 1972

In the eyes of the wider world, Hill's best days were behind him. He hadn't raced at Le Mans for several years and was 43 by the time Matra paired him with Henri Pescarolo, but his pace at night – in the wet – was among the contributory factors to their eventual victory. Monaco, the F1 title, Indy... now he had the full set.

32

**JAN LAMMERS**

**Years:** 1983-2018 **Starts:** 24  
**Best result:** 1st 1988

They say the best drivers have a sixth sense – and Lammers certainly did during his run to victory in 1988. Having heard Jaguar team-mate Raul Boesel describe how it felt when his car's gearbox imploded, Lammers recognised the signs during his final stint and completed the last 40-odd minutes – including pitstop – in fourth gear alone. 🏁

## 31 OLIVER GAVIN

**Years:** 2001-18 **Starts:** 18  
**Best result:** 4th 2006; 1st in class 2002, '04, '05, '06 & '15  
 Corvette presently has the longest unbroken factory participation record at Le Mans, having competed every year since 2000, and Gavin has been part of the team for all but two of those years. A safe – and very successful – pair of hands.

## 30 JEAN-PIERRE JAUSSAUD

**Years:** 1966-83 **Starts:** 13  
**Best result:** 1st 1978 & '80  
 He won the Monaco F3 race in 1968, but never made it to F1 – beyond testing – and feared his chance of major honours had gone. But when the fastest Renault broke in 1978, he and Didier Pironi were on hand to score the company's lone Le Mans victory. Two years later, he also won with Rondeau.

## 29 OLIVIER BERETTA

**Years:** 1996-2018 **Starts:** 23  
**Best result:** 4th 2001 & '06; 1st in class 1999, 2000, '04, '05, '06 & '11  
 This year the Monégasque will join Jan Lammers on 24 starts in the world's most famous 24-hour race. The big distinction between the two, however, is Beretta's stunning strike rate, having taken six class wins and five podium finishes.

## 28 PAUL FRÈRE

**Years:** 1953-60 **Starts:** 8 **Best result:** 1st 1960; 1st in class 1953, '55 & '58  
 For an automotive journalist, Frère was a versatile helmsman. He took several Le Mans class wins, won the event outright for Ferrari with Olivier Gendebien in 1960... and tested an Audi R8 at the track aged 86...

## 27 EMANUELE PIRRO

**Years:** 1981-2010 **Starts:** 13  
**Best result:** 1st 2000, '01, '02, '06 & '07  
 Pirro's Le Mans career was almost over before it began – he departed the 1981 event early, disturbed by a string of serious accidents. He finally returned 17 years later and played a pivotal role as Audi rewrote the history books.

## 26 PEDRO RODRÍGUEZ

**Years:** 1958-71 **Starts:** 14  
**Best result:** 1st 1968; 1st in class 1965  
 Just 18 when he made his Le Mans debut at the wheel of a Ferrari 500 TR in '58– and that at a time when racing teens were scarce, especially at the top level. A Le Mans perennial thereafter, but won only once (with a JWA Ford GT40 in '68).



MY  
LE MANS  
HERO

## ALEXANDER SIMS BMW WORKS DRIVER

"I looked up to David Brabham a huge amount. I was influenced by him in single-seaters and always took his advice. He was hugely successful in sports cars and I admire his ability to be so focused and determined."

Winning the race didn't really matter to WM, but breaking 250mph did. Dorchy hit 251.7mph in 1988



# 25

## ROGER DORCHY

**Years:** 1974-88 **Starts:** 13 **Best result:** 4th 1980

French team WM had a peculiar obsession with being fastest on the original Mulsanne Straight. As one of its alumni Didier Theys told *Motor Sport* in 2001, "They would keep trimming the car for top speed, but that left us with no downforce - and it was terrible everywhere else. It was scary to drive, so unstable."

During the 1980s a terminal speed of 400kph became the team's focus - actually finishing the race appeared secondary, at best. Favoured son Roger Dorchy had done exactly that (fourth overall, second in class) when first he contested Le Mans with WM in 1980 - and thereafter he became a perennial fixture.

Eight years on, in the cool of a Saturday evening, he left the pits with Peugeot V6 turbo wound up to the max... and triggered the speed trap at 405kph (251.7mph). Job done. WM couldn't match that the following year... and the subsequent installation of two chicanes preserved his record, in all likelihood forever.

## 24 JACKIE OLIVER

**Years:** 1968-71 **Starts:** 3

**Best result:** 1st 1969

In 1971 Jackie Oliver managed 386kph (239.8mph) on the Mulsanne, though he wasn't chasing WM-type targets. It's just that a Porsche 917 was naturally brisk in a straight line. Oliver didn't race often at Le Mans, but he mastered two of its most cherished icons – the 917 and the GT40.

## 23 HANS HERRMANN

**Years:** 1953-70 **Starts:** 14 **Best result:**

1st 1970; 1st in class 1958, '62, '67 & '69

Only ever raced for Porsche at Le Mans, starting with a 550 coupé in '53 and ending 17 years later with the 917. He shared the marque's first outright win with Richard Attwood... one year after he'd lost out by just 120 metres. Victory accomplished, he kept a promise to his wife by retiring.

## 22 RINALDO CAPELLO

**Years:** 1998-2012 **Starts:** 14

**Best result:** 1st 2003, '04 & '08

Often considered the quiet man of Audi, Capello's consistency complemented the fiery Allan McNish and Tom Kristensen. From 1999 until his retirement in 2012, Capello was no lower than fourth when he finished, with seven outright podium finishes (plus those three wins).

## 21 HANS STUCK

**Years:** 1972-98 **Starts:** 18

**Best result:** 1st 1986 & '87; 1st in class '96

Ford Capri RS2600, BMW 3.0 CSL, BMW M1 & V12 prototype, Porsche 962C, 911 Turbo & GT1... Hans Stuck raced many of the things you'd want in a private Le Mans collection – and did so very effectively.

## 20 LOUIS ROSIER

**Years:** 1938-56 **Starts:** 8

**Best result:** 1st 1950

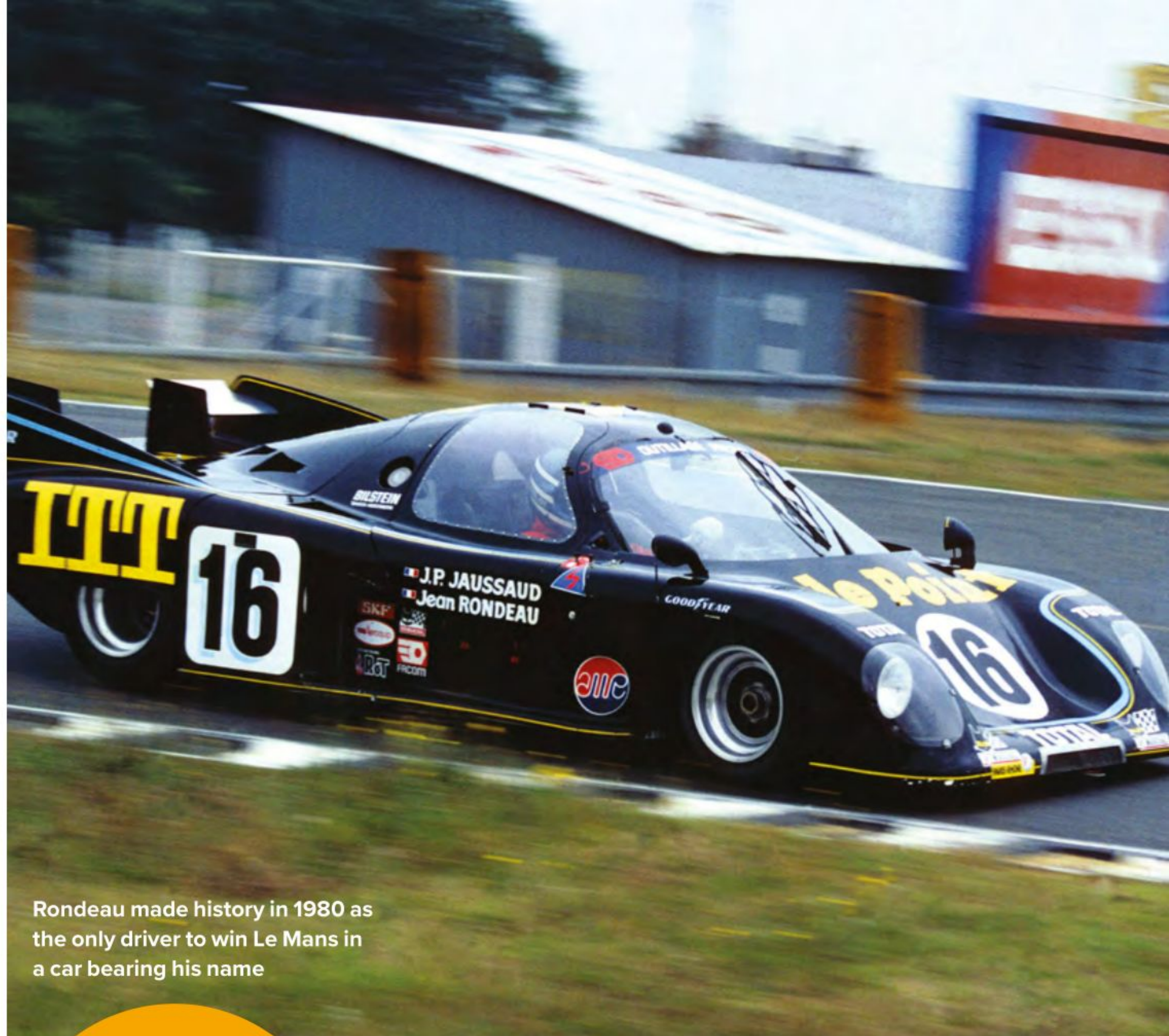
How many laps did his son Jean-Louis Rosier complete in the winning Talbot-Lago T26 they shared in 1950? One, two? Reports vary – *Motor Sport* didn't mention it at all – but Louis drove almost the whole race, pausing only for a wash and breakfast.

## 19 BENOÎT TRÉLUYER

**Years:** 2002-16 **Starts:** 12

**Best result:** 1st 2011, '12 & '14

After some middling years with Pescarolo and a disappointing stint with Peugeot, Tréluyer found his calling as part of Audi's dream team alongside André Lotterer and Marcel Fässler. His fearless style made him fantastic to watch, especially in traffic.



Rondeau made history in 1980 as the only driver to win Le Mans in a car bearing his name



## 18 JEAN RONDEAU

**Years:** 1972-85 **Starts:** 13 **Best result:** 1st 1980; 1st in class 1977 & '78

On paper the Porsche 908/80 of Jacky Ickx and Reinhold Joest had been pre-race favourite, but the open prototype was a less comfortable proposition than closed coupés in the foul rain that coincided with the start.

As the race settled, the Porsche moved to the front... but wasn't quick enough to build a defence should trouble strike. Which it did, promoting to the lead the eponymous M379 Jean Rondeau shared with Jean-Pierre Jaussaud. The Porsche closed again in the closing stages, but Jaussaud decided – correctly – to stay out on slicks when rain returned, while Ickx lost time with a tyre change.

There was one more twist, when Jaussaud spun without hitting anything, he recovered to ensure that Rondeau – a local whose racing workshops were but a stone's throw from the Dunlop bridge – became the only driver to win the Le Mans 24 Hours in a car bearing his own name. 🏁



MY  
LE MANS  
HERO

## NICKI THIIM ASTON MARTIN WORKS DRIVER

“I don't have a Le Mans hero, but my Dad Kurt Thiim raced a C11 for Mercedes there in 1991 and he has always been an inspiration for me in my career. It would have been cool to have raced one of those Group C cars at their height.”

## 17 STIRLING MOSS

**Years:** 1951-61 **Starts:** 10  
**Best result:** 2nd 1953 & '56; 1st in class '56

Le Mans rarely features in chats about Moss's gift, perhaps because he never won. But he and Peter Walker led in '53 until problems struck their C-type, triggering a stellar recovery. And in '56 he and Peter Collins couldn't have driven Aston's DB3S any faster, given their limited fuel allowance.

## 16 ROLF STOMMELEN

**Years:** 1965-82 **Starts:** 13 **Best result:** 2nd 1979; 1st in class '66, '76 & '79

His studious exterior masked inner steel. Brian Redman once said: "Nobody could drive a Porsche 935 quite like Rolf" – and he was equally at home in other cars of similarly unruly potential. The 917 was far from fully sorted on its Le Mans debut in '69, yet he put his on pole by more than 3sec...

## 15 JJ LEHTO

**Years:** 1990-2005 **Starts:** 10  
**Best result:** 1st, '95 & '05; 1st in class '03

A bright young single-seater hope for whom the stars never quite aligned beyond F3, his career is best defined by a horribly damp Sunday morning in north-west France, 1995. As conditions caught out all and sundry, he seemed barely to have noticed the rain as he coaxed his McLaren towards victory.

## 14 JEAN-PIERRE WIMILLE

**Years:** 1937-39 **Starts:** 2  
**Best result:** 1st 1937 & '39

Wimille won twice in Type 57 Bugattis, his second victory coming just a few months before Europe was consumed by WW2 during which Wimille was embedded with the French Resistance. A remarkable man, on and off the track.

## 13 KLAUS LUDWIG

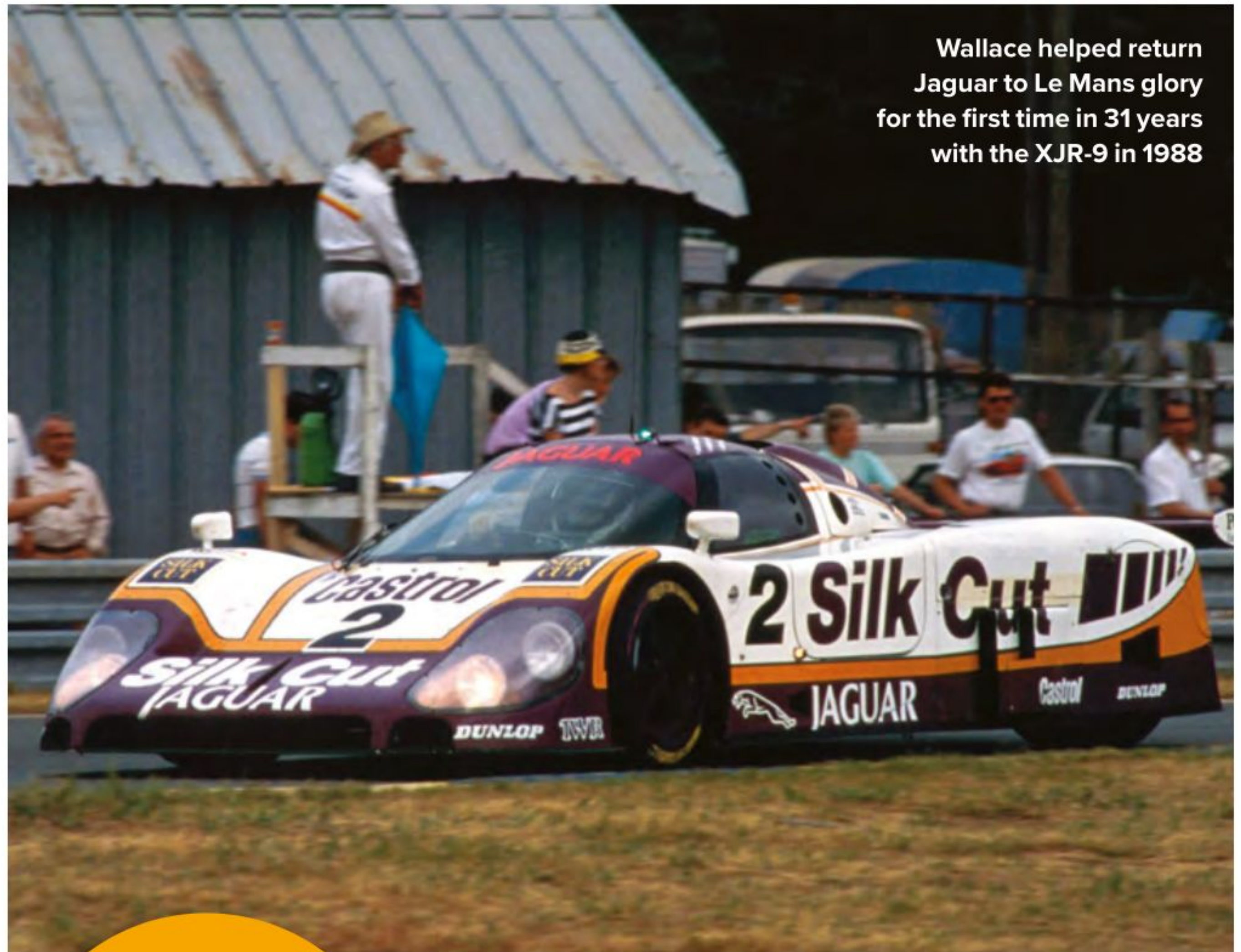
**Years:** 1979-98 **Starts:** 8  
**Best result:** 1st 1979, '84 & '85

The pick of his three victories? Probably 1979, when the Kremer brothers' modified Porsche 935 K3 overcame rain, faltering prototypes and a broken fuel injection drive belt... but still won by six laps.

## 12 YANNICK DALMAS

**Years:** 1991-2002 **Starts:** 12  
**Best result:** 1st 1992, '94, '95 & '99

A national F3 champion whose F1 career was cut short by legionellosis, Dalmas rediscovered his mojo in sports cars. With a knack for being in the right place at the right time, he ended up taking four wins with as many different manufacturers.



Wallace helped return Jaguar to Le Mans glory for the first time in 31 years with the XJR-9 in 1988



## ANDY WALLACE

**Years:** 1988-2010 **Starts:** 21  
**Best result:** 1st 1988; 1st in class '01, '02 & '06

Here was the driver you wanted in your car when the chips were down. The determination and resourcefulness that Wallace showed over his Le Mans career was never more apparent than in 2001 when he claimed a place in Bentley Boy folklore. The British brand had Wallace to thank for its third position on its return to the 24 Hours. When his Bentley EXP Speed 8 jammed in fourth gear, he coaxed it back to the pits, taking to the grass on the outside and then inside at the slow Arnage right-hander to keep the revs up.

Then there were his heroics in dragging recalcitrant machinery through the old pre-qualifying day – a Panoz in 1997, an Audi in '99 – not to mention his wet-weather performance in the Harrods McLaren in '95.

Wallace deserved more than his solo Le Mans win.



MY  
LE MANS  
HERO

## MIKE CONWAY TOYOTA WORKS DRIVER

"I worked for AJ Foyt for a year and he told me when he did Le Mans, he turned up and won it with Dan Gurney in a Ford GT40. AJ ended up driving 16-18 hours as Dan was sick towards the end. Foyt was one of those guys who would get in and wrestle with anything."



McNish thrived in sports car racing – and at Le Mans. His second of three wins came in the diesel Audi R10 in 2008



**ALLAN McNISH**

**Years:** 1997-2013 **Starts:** 14 **Best result:** 1st 1998, 2008 & '13

By his own admission, he'd always considered Le Mans to be "a race for old men". It hadn't been even slightly on his radar as he carved a winning route through junior single-seater racing, but then his career stalled through little fault of his own. His first Le Mans opportunity (Rooock Porsche, 1997) ended badly - more 24 minutes than 24 hours, following an accident - but it opened his eyes.

He was back the following year, in a works car, and victory set the seeds for an enduring sports car career (interrupted by a somewhat belated F1 campaign, with Toyota in 2002) and more than a decade as one of the out-and-out quickest blokes at the Circuit de la Sarthe. He retired at the end of the 2013 season, with a third Le Mans victory - and a first motor racing world championship title - still very fresh in his memory.



**JONATHAN ADAM**  
**ASTON MARTIN WORKS DRIVER**

"Allan McNish. A fellow Scot who for me was the benchmark for what an endurance racer should be. Fast, consistent, clever in traffic and a massive team player."

**9 HENRI PESCAROLO**

**Years:** 1966-99 **Starts:** 33  
**Best result:** 1st 1972, '73, '74, & '84;  
1st in class 1976 & '92

Has started the 24 Hours more times than anyone else – and once done with driving (he was 56 when he appeared for the final time) he continued as an entrant. Four times a winner, but there's more to him than that.

**8 ANDRÉ LOTTERER**

**Years:** 2009-18 **Starts:** 10  
**Best result:** 1st 2011, '12 & '14

One of the most consistent drivers of the LMP1 era. His debut didn't exactly go to plan – team-mate Narain Karthikeyan fell off the pitwall just before the start and dislocated his shoulder, so Lotterer and Charles Zwolsman Jr shared duties in the Kolles Audi R10 TDi and still finished seventh.

**7 DEREK BELL**

**Years:** 1970-96 **Starts:** 26  
**Best result:** 1st 1975, '81, '82, '86 & '87

Derek Bell and Porsche are indelibly linked at Le Mans. Whether a 917, 936, 956 or 962, Bell tamed them all and built a reputation for being 'Mr Dependable' in moments of extreme pressure. Britain's answer to Jacky Ickx or Hans Stuck, he won alongside both during his distinguished career.

**6 PHIL HILL**

**Years:** 1953-67 **Starts:** 14  
**Best result:** 1st 1958, '61 & '62

History usually logs him as America's first world champion driver, a simplistic truth that masks broader talents. He was a quick and reliable endurance racer, witness pedigree victories at such as Sebring, Riverside, the Nordschleife, Daytona... and Le Mans.

**5 OLIVIER GENDEBIEN**

**Years:** 1955-62 **Starts:** 8  
**Best result:** 1958, '60, '61 & '62

A racing giant who remains largely unknown, despite a fine body of work (three Targa Florio victories, for instance). Le Mans required equal parts sensitivity and speed in his day, but he was an absolute ace – and the first driver to win the event four times.

**4 BOB WOLLEK**

**Years:** 1968-2000 **Starts:** 30  
**Best result:** 2nd 1978, '95, '96 & '98;  
1st in class 1977, '92, '95 & '96

Nicknamed 'Brilliant' Bob – and with good cause. His distinguishing feature? He's perhaps best known for *not* winning Le Mans, despite running at the front many times in 30 starts, but the fact it never quite happened should not dilute his legend. ▶



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## Adrian Hallmark — on — Woolf Barnato

Heir to a diamond fortune, proficient cricketer, amateur boxer, athlete, an accomplished serviceman and a regular race winner at Brooklands, Woolf 'Babe' Barnato remains the only person to have raced in the Le Mans 24 Hours three times and yet preserve a 100 per cent winning record. He dominated the event between 1928 and 1930, firstly with Bernard Rubin in a Bentley 4½-litre and then with Sir Henry Birkin and Glen Kidston in the even more powerful Speed Six.

His love for the marque extended to his purchase of the company in 1926, keeping it financially secure for more than five years and establishing Bentley as the aristocrat's motor vehicle of choice. His racing endeavours established Barnato as one of the first generation of Bentley Boys, achieving global notoriety and fortifying the legacy of both the cars and a new racing pedigree.

As famous for his post-race parties as his impeccable driving talent, Barnato epitomised the spirit of the Bentley Boys and is the cornerstone of Bentley's early brand history at Le Mans – helping to build a motor sport heritage that Bentley continues to develop in its centenary year.

**Adrian Hallmark is the current chairman & CEO of Bentley Motors**



Woolf Barnato played hard and raced hard, garnering a third victory in 1930 in his Speed Six



## WOOLF BARNATO

**Years:** 1928-30 **Starts:** 3 **Best result:** 1st 1928, '29 & '30

Barnato liked his 3-litre Bentley – and enjoyed racing it so much that he bought the company. His acquisition translated into a remarkable winning streak that remains unprecedented to this day.

The diamond scion had only been racing for three years when in 1925 he purchased his 3-litre, the design that had given Bentley its first Le Mans victory the previous year. Firstly he invested in the company and then became the firm's chairman as part of a restructuring plan, facilitating development of both the 4½-litre and the Speed Six.

It was aboard these cars that he claimed his record-breaking hat-trick in 1928-30 at Le Mans. But he was part of the team on merit: WO Bentley considered him the best driver among all his 'Boys'. He was fast, but his armoury also included deep reserves of resolve. He nursed the 4½-litre he shared with Bernard Rubin to the line with a cracked chassis.

Following the Wall Street Crash, the economic crisis spelt the end of the Bentley factory's racing exploits and drew a line under Barnato's racing career. His record thus stands at three Le Mans victories from as many starts. ▶

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## Derek Bell

— on —

## Jacky Ickx

Jacky was just bloody good in whatever he jumped into. He should have been Formula 1 world champion to my mind, but his grand prix successes don't get talked about because of his Le Mans record. He had that same star quality as greats like Jim Clark or Jochen Rindt.

There was a serenity about him and his driving, and that's what made him so good at Le Mans. He never put a foot wrong, no matter how bad the conditions were. I can't remember us ever having a delay through some kind of on-track incident in all the years we drove together. He was ultra-calm, and I think that's something I learned from him.

But Jacky wasn't just a safe pair of hands; he was always electrifyingly quick. He had an ability to dig out an even quicker lap, which was something I didn't have. I have the greatest admiration and utmost respect for him. Respect was what our relationship was based on when we were driving together. I can't say we were particularly good friends back then, because ultimately I think he was shy.

But that was part of his make up and perhaps explains why he was so good, so focused.

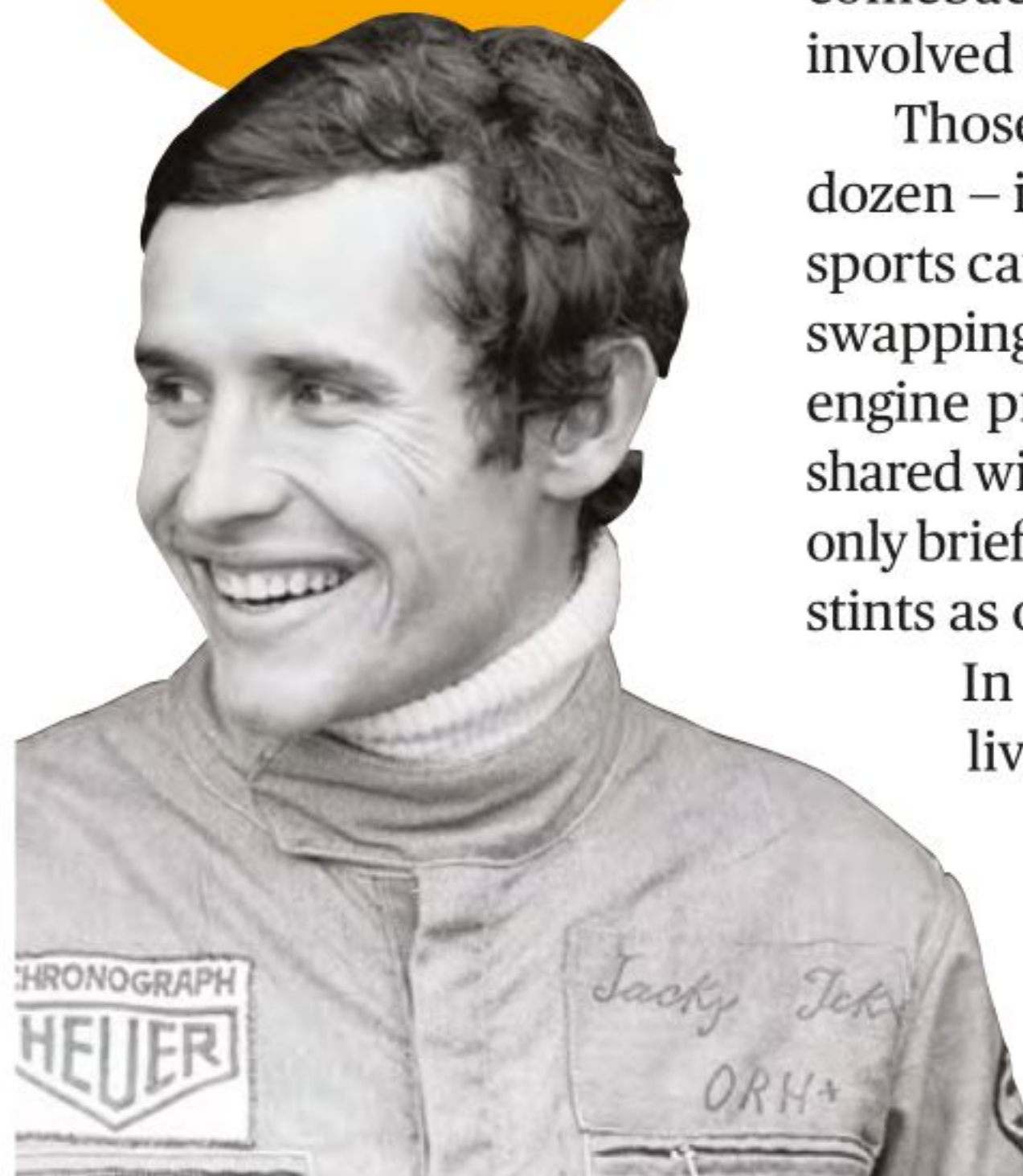
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Derek Bell shared with Ickx at Le Mans four times: first with Mirage in 1975 and then Porsche from 1981-'83



Ickx's sixth, and final, victory at La Sarthe came aboard a Rothmans Porsche 956 in 1982

# 2



## JACKY ICKX

**Years:** 1966-85 **Starts:** 15 **Best result:** 1st 1969, '75, '76, '77, '81 & '82

The Le Mans legend of Jacky Ickx is born of much more than his six victories with three different marques over the course of three decades. He led the most amazing comeback in the history of the race in 1977 and was involved in one of its closest finishes in 1969.

Those two victories – the first and fourth of his half dozen – illustrate why the Belgian was one of the all-time sports car greats. The depths to which he dug in '77 when swapping cars after his own Porsche 936 had retired with engine problems was remarkable. He hauled the car he shared with Jürgen Barth and Hurley Haywood – who drove only briefly – into contention through a series of gargantuan stints as one by one the Renault Alpine A442s faltered.

In '69 he'd shown a cool head aboard the Gulf-liveried JWA Ford GT40. Slipstreaming was all important in the days before the Mulsanne was cut in three by chicanes, and he played a masterful strategic race in his battle against Hans Hermann's Porsche 908. Cool, calm and collected with unknown depths of determination, Ickx had the full armoury. ◀



## Allan McNish — on — Tom Kristensen

The biggest skill that Tom had was his adaptability. He had an amazing ability to adapt to the car under him and the track as they changed through the race. You never have the same car at the beginning of Le Mans as you do at the end: the balance changes and you might lose a diveplane or wear the splitter.

That's where Tom came into his own. He wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth so he was always jumping around early in his career. He raced single-seaters, touring cars and sports cars, and that gave him an ability to adapt to whatever car he was driving. We still see it today with his historic racing.

Tom had an unbelievable commitment to doing well at Le Mans. The first time we drove together in 2006, he shook my hand on the grid... he almost broke my fingers — and I was starting! I remember thinking that this guy wants to win this race as much as I do.

He had amazing levels of commitment and fitness, most importantly on the mental side. Our two Le Mans wins together in 2008 and '13 came down to the final hours on Sunday. That's when you need to be mentally strong, and Tom really was.

McNish, Kristensen & Rinaldo Capello formed a formidable trio together for Audi from 2006-2012

“He set a sequence of track records during a quadruple stint. At night”

Only called up the week before the 1997 race, Kristensen made his mark early with a stunning night-time stint in the Joest Porsche



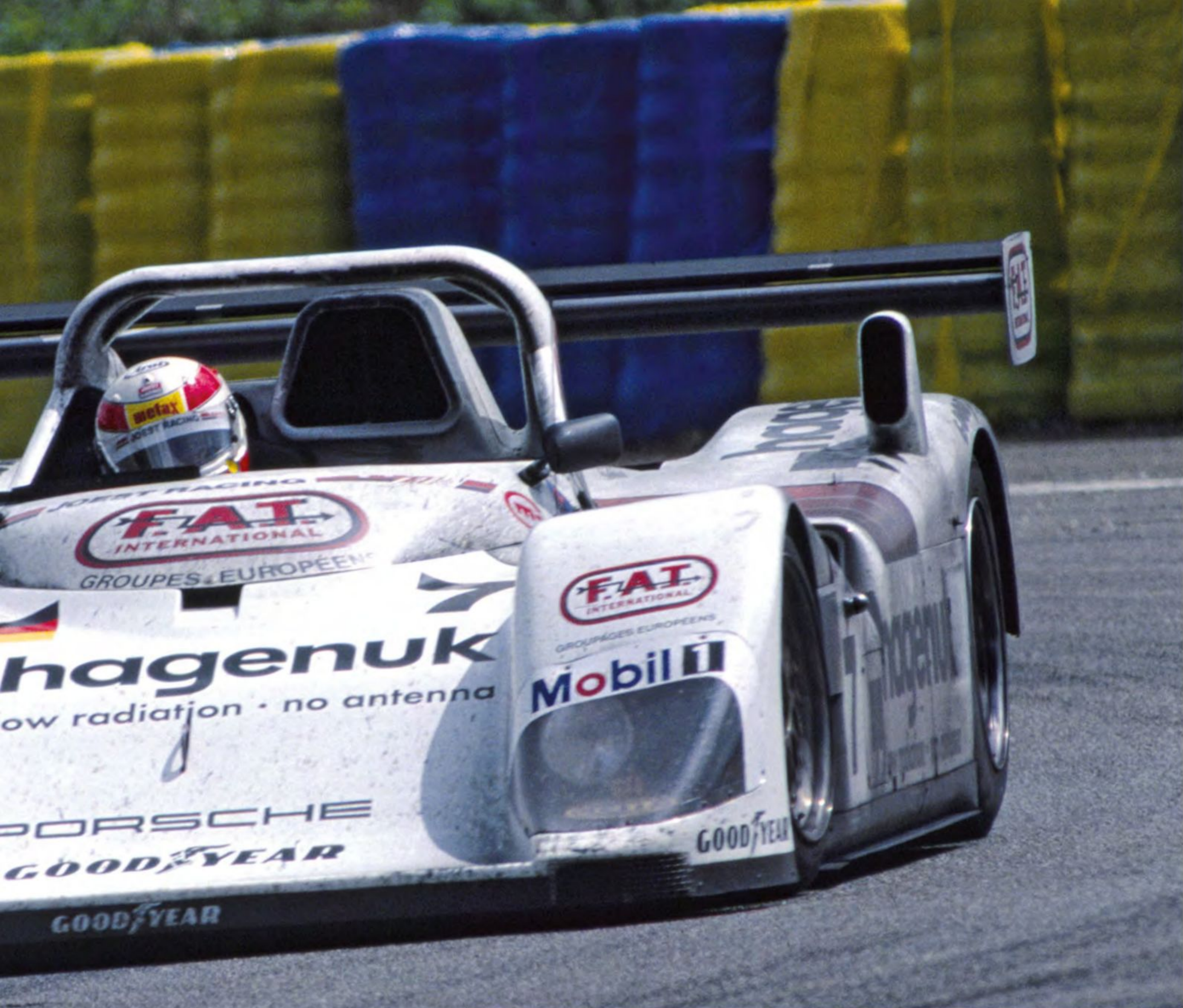
## TOM KRISTENSEN

**Years:** 1997-2014 **Starts:** 18

**Best result:** 1st 1997, '00, '01, '02, '03, '04, '05, '08, '13

A multiple F3 champion, Kristensen was leading the FIA F3000 series early in 1997 and still had his eyes fixed on F1 in the long term. But then came a last-minute call-up from Joest, to join Stefan Johansson and Michele Alboreto in that summer's Le Mans 24 Hours. He'd never driven there before, and completed only 17 qualifying laps, yet during the race he set a stirring sequence of track records during a quadruple stint. At night...

The Dane took to Le Mans like a duck to water, ended up loving the place and tore up the history books. He recorded nine wins and five outright podium finishes from 18 starts and lost at least two more victories: on the occasions that he enjoyed his biggest



lead at the front of the field – four laps in 1999 with BMW and again in 2007 with Audi – his car crashed out with freakish problems.

Kristensen was undoubtedly at his best in 2008, when he and team-mates Allan McNish and Rinaldo Capello triumphed over Peugeot with the ageing and outclassed Audi R10 TDI. Victory from pole with Bentley in 2003 is a personal highlight, while his role in turning around the fortunes of the Goh Audi team in 2004 is an oft-overlooked high.

In 2013 he'd like to have dedicated his ninth win to his late father, but instead used it to honour compatriot Allan Simonsen – killed during the race. He said he'd have to win again for his dad, but there would be no fairytale 10th victory on his Le Mans swansong in 2014. The fire still burned, though – as he proved with a stunning turn of speed under cover of darkness. ●



Kristensen triumphed in 2004 in the Team Goh Audi R8, making the squad only the second Japanese entrant to win Le Mans at the time



**"I did Suzuka, Austin,  
Fuji, Mexico, Brazil,  
China and Abu  
Dhabi in one hit...  
with one bag!"**

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# Alonso's quest for perfection

Frustrated in Formula 1, the double world champion is branching out and trying his hand at just about everything – and success seems to follow wherever he goes. Could back-to-back Le Mans wins be next? **Samarth Kanal** spoke to him

**A**LL EYES ARE ON FERNANDO Alonso, fresh off the plane from Bahrain having just tested the McLaren MCL34 Formula 1 car. Now he's sitting trackside at Paul Ricard with the buzz of the number 8 Toyota TS050 in the background, turning lap after lap in a private test.

In the 12 months previous, Alonso has entered 20 grands prix, six World Endurance Championship rounds - including being part of Toyota's victorious Le Mans 24 Hours crew - the 2019 Daytona 24 Hours (which he also won...) and driven the 2019 Dakar Rally-winning Toyota Hilux.

"It's been a very intense year," he says.

"I was looking back on the plane here at some of last year's calendar and I remember

doing Suzuka, Austin, Fuji, Mexico, Brazil, China and Abu Dhabi in one hit. With one bag!

"That was a big challenge. Those kinds of things and those efforts summarise the last year for me; a lot of travelling, tests, racing and simulators: full dedication."

And one of the busiest drivers in world motor sport has no time to relax in France. Toyota, already trimming its WEC spending from previous years having run at 70 per cent of the budget of rivals Porsche and Audi, has rented out Paul Ricard at great expense - and a couple of hours of running have already been lost due to heavy rain and fog.

"When I jump into the car this afternoon we'll be in the middle of an endurance run, so there's no time to prepare or do some slow laps to adapt," explains Alonso. "I'll jump into the car in a pitstop so I need to

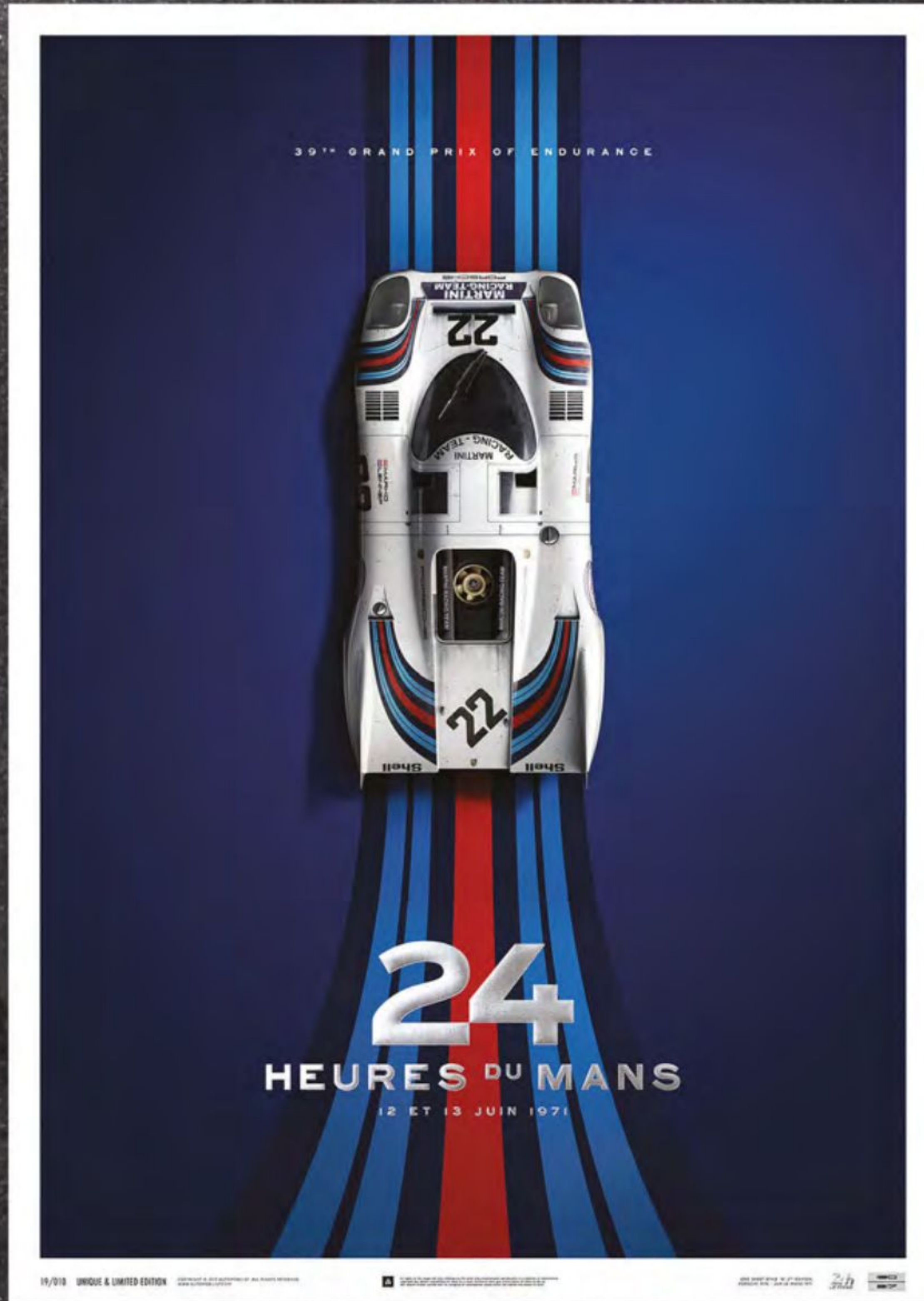
remember how to get in, where the buttons are, how you switch the car on and then go.

"The biggest challenge here is that you don't drive efficiently enough. These cars require a very efficient driving style where you need to be very gentle with the brakes and regenerate a lot of recovery from the hybrid system, and you need to be very precise on the throttle because any partial throttle or any doubt on the corner exit will spend fuel that you will need on the straight. So you need to be quite digital, quite precise on the things you drive with no hesitation."

That's quite a difference to the F1 car, the 2019 McLaren MCL34, he says.

"When you jump in the F1 car it forgives you. There is grip, power and fuel that you can use every lap, no problem. While here there's only one way to drive; there's no

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room for inspiration or to change something; you need to drive how you should drive. If you are not doing that, you are slow because you don't recharge enough [battery]."

His boss at Toyota, technical director Pascal Vasselon, is beaming at the thought of Alonso's presence at the Toyota WEC squad. "I think he's enjoying it very much! It seems he's discovering dimensions of motor sport because he had been exclusively in F1 for a long time and now he's found that it's a lot of fun cherry-picking activities.

"Now he's in a winning circle so when he joins a series, he joins with a team that can win. And then he takes important wins like Daytona so I think he's enjoying it."

**A**LONSO IS AWARE THAT HIS numerous forays into various forms of motor sport may imply that he's just having a bit of fun after the torrid time he had in an uncompetitive McLaren during F1's hybrid era. It's quite the opposite, he stresses.

"Yeah, it's challenging," he says. "I said in Bahrain that when I test cars or whatever people normally say: 'we are happy that you are having fun now.' I am not having any fun. I am putting in a lot of effort to these changes and it requires study and preparation."

His team-mate Sébastien Buemi is equally busy, testing for Red Bull in Formula 1 and campaigning for Nissan e.DAMS in Formula E. Buemi agrees with the notion that this is a difficult undertaking compared to driving single-seaters.

"It [the TS050] is the most complex car I've ever driven," says the Swiss. "It's much more complex than F1 [where there are] many things you cannot do. Here you have traction control, four-wheel drive, boost, and the regulation is a lot more open so you can do a lot more. For a new driver to jump in that car, it takes a long time to understand the small details and during these endurance tests we basically create problems on purpose to see how we react and cope."

Toyota began creating problems during its endurance tests after a brace of disasters at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 2016 and 2017. In particular, that late failure when Kazuki Nakajima ground to a halt with just a lap to go in 2016 springs to mind.

As a result, Toyota simulates problems, much like NASA would do before a mission, in order to pre-empt any issues. Last year, Toyota even ran a car with a wheel missing, at a test in Aragón.

"That was me!" says driver of the number 7 car, Kamui Kobayashi.

Toyota uses long-distance testing to simulate problems, such as running on just three wheels



"We've given him the chance to win again, and he's getting stronger"

#### FERNANDO'S DIARY

A recap of where Alonso has been since Le Mans last year, and how he did.

16/6/18	Le Mans 24 Hours	1st
24/6/18	F1 French GP	16th
1/7/18	F1 Austrian GP	8th
8/7/18	F1 British GP	8th
22/7/18	F1 German GP	DNF
29/7/18	F1 Hungarian GP	8th
19/8/18	WEC 6Hrs of Silverstone	DSQ
26/8/18	F1 Belgian GP	DNF
2/9/18	F1 Italian GP	DNF
5/9/18	IndyCar test at Barber	-
16/9/18	F1 Singapore GP	7th
30/9/18	F1 Russian GP	14th
7/10/18	F1 Japanese GP	14th
14/10/18	WEC 6Hrs of Fuji	2nd
21/10/18	F1 United States GP	DNF
28/10/18	F1 Mexican GP	DNF
11/11/18	F1 Brazilian GP	17th
18/11/18	WEC 6Hrs of Shanghai	2nd
25/11/18	F1 Abu Dhabi GP	11th
26/11/18	NASCAR test at Bahrain	-
26/1/19	24 Hours of Daytona	1st
15/3/19	WEC 1000M of Sebring	1st
27/3/19	Dakar Toyota Hilux test	-
2/4/19	F1 Bahrain test	-
4/4/19	Paul Ricard WEC test	-
11/4/19	IndyCar test at Texas	-



"It's very strange. When you pass the pitlane, other guys are looking at you and you look like an idiot, taking one wheel off and then going on track - what do they think? They think you're an idiot! This is all the simulation that we need in case of a puncture and all the stuff. When you hear that, it sounds crazy but this is how much time we spend troubleshooting."

The drivers even quiz each other on the thick manual that comes with the car, revising the ins and outs of operation, just in case the radio fails.

"Normally with the radio active it's fine," says Alonso's team-mate Nakajima. "The engineer can guide us, but at Le Mans anything can happen and we can maybe lose the radio... from now until Le Mans we will read through the manuals and try to remember as much as we can. Normally

the best scenario is not to have to use that kind of knowledge, but you never know and that's why we prepare. It's the most important thing for Le Mans."

Not only has this intense regime of practise helped Toyota get to winning ways, Vasselon says that Alonso feels thrilled to get back into a winning team. So much so that he is now reluctant to leave the podium.

"We have offered him the opportunity to win again," says the Toyota boss.

"This was really interesting and very genuine and fresh from him that in Spa last year when car number 8 won, Fernando told us that he was keen to stay on the podium for the whole night because he was so happy to be back on the podium! He has restarted that winning cycle and is becoming stronger and stronger as an endurance driver."

**N**OW BUSIER THAN EVER, Alonso has the last leg of world motor sport's 'triple crown' to secure: the Indianapolis 500 in May, where he'll race a Chevrolet-engined Dallara in McLaren colours.

"My focus now is on these two races: the Indy 500 and Le Mans. In the future I will think about whatever opportunities may come, consider all of them and think of what to do in 2020 that is fun and some iconic events that are prestigious and interesting."

And with the addition of a karting school and his Formula Renault team - FA Racing Team - Alonso is busier than he's ever

been during a normal grand prix season.

"It's very bad now, it's very busy," he adds. "In fact I'm thinking about going back to Formula 1 to relax a little bit! I've been very busy but I'm happy with everything, the karting school [included]. I quite like it. They [the students] are very open to listening. They are very scared of me so whatever you say - you can make a joke - like tell them to brake in a fast corner, they brake."

"You need to take care of the parents. You need to send them to the coffee shop and it's good fun apart from that. The children listen to everything and they're open to driving and they have the passion, they have the passion for motor sport. They dream of being in motor sport, it's what I had when I was a kid, so I'm happy to see that similar thing on the new drivers and hopefully we can help them. It's a real sense of satisfaction."

His next step after the Indianapolis 500? Probably another go at it, if he doesn't win "the only one that's missing on the list."

"I know how difficult and challenging it's going to be and it's a race that you need a lot of factors and luck going your way. There are 10 safety cars - yellows - in the last 50 laps and some of those will benefit you and some won't. You need to be in the right place at the right moment. What we can do is prepare as best we can."

"As a team we are new and we aren't collaborating with Andretti [Autosport] or anything like

before. This [2019 IndyCar] is fully McLaren [and assisted by British powerhouse Carlin] so we are new in many things and there are a lot of things to discover."

And after that, it won't be F1 - "unless McLaren wins some races before Abu Dhabi", he jokes - even though the team hasn't fully ruled out a return for Alonso.

Having tested the off-road Hilux, Alonso says that the Dakar Rally (taking place in Saudi Arabia in 2020) is also a tempting proposition for him in the future.

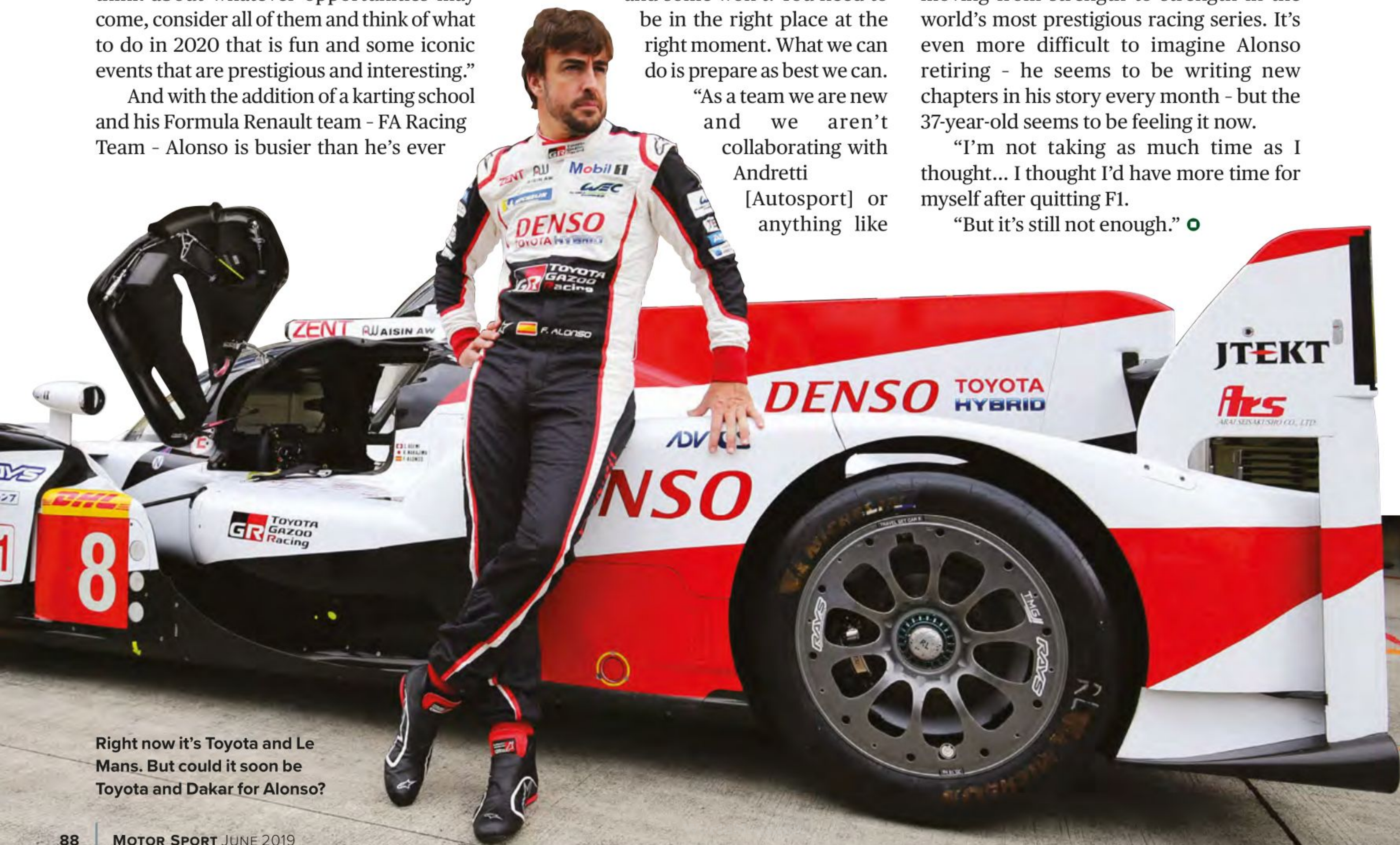
"Well Dakar was a very nice experience," he says. "I've been lucky enough to test different cars over the last couple of years and I tested MotoGP in the Honda days. So yeah, it was definitely very interesting to see what those cars could do in different terrains and altitudes and it was surprisingly fun to drive those cars."

"I think to make a commitment to rallying or Dakar has to be considered very carefully because one thing is to have a test and to have fun, and another thing is to be fast in those cars with zero experience. That's something I will evaluate in the next couple of months."

But it's really difficult to see Alonso retiring any time soon, particularly as he's moving from strength to strength in the world's most prestigious racing series. It's even more difficult to imagine Alonso retiring - he seems to be writing new chapters in his story every month - but the 37-year-old seems to be feeling it now.

"I'm not taking as much time as I thought... I thought I'd have more time for myself after quitting F1."

"But it's still not enough." ◉



Right now it's Toyota and Le Mans. But could it soon be Toyota and Dakar for Alonso?





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# ASTON MARTIN DBR9





After four decades in the sporting doldrums, Aston Martin revived its Le Mans ambitions with the DBR9, and it didn't disappoint, winning at La Sarthe in 2007. We sent **Sam Hancock** to see how it's aged.

PHOTOGRAPHER **LYNDON McNEIL**

# The come back king



# ASTON MARTIN DBR9



“It was Aston’s first attempt at Le Mans since the project cars of the 1960s, and it had to deliver”

Based on the DB9 road car, but mostly by looks alone. The DBR9 used carbon bodywork and a fully flat floor to boost downforce

**A**ston Martin has one of those cult followings. Whether you fell in love with the sleek lines of its era-defining sports coupés of the 1950s and '60s, or the rumble of its British-built naturally aspirated engines, or even just admired James Bond's latest toy on the silver screen.

Aston is a brand that resonates far beyond the levels of its production, with the power to thrill, entertain and conjure emotion within almost anybody. It doesn't matter if you like motor sport, or even cars, Astons usually found a way to entrance.


So, when the Gaydon marque announced in 2004 that it was planning a full-scale comeback to international sportscar racing, and specifically the holy grail of them all - the Le Mans 24 Hours - it was a pivotal moment for fans. Finally we'd see a full-bore Aston, pushing the limits with equal measures of performance and beauty. Of course, Aston had a glorious history at La Sarthe, winning in 1959 with its beautiful DBR1. Now, over four decades after Carroll Shelby and Roy Salvadori took the chequered flag in France, the brand was back with the aim of refreshing the fading memories of its sporting success.

With prototypes taking over at the front, Aston's most marketable option was a GT1 programme. After all, when you have cars

that look this good it makes sense to race them against your big rivals. While the proposed GT1 programme couldn't deliver an overall victory, the engagement of no less a firm than Prodrive to design, build and run the new car at least underlined the seriousness of Aston Martin's intent.

Banbury-based Prodrive had by then already masterminded umpteen touring car, sportscar and World Rally Championship victories on behalf of multiple manufacturers - including Honda, Ford and Subaru - under the leadership of David Richards, and it was working hard on a Formula 1 entry at the time. Crucially, it came to the Aston Martin project fresh from the perfect field test: a privately funded effort to turn Ferrari's 550 Maranello into a Le Mans class winner - a mission it accomplished in 2003.

Richards led a consortium to purchase Aston Martin from Ford in 2007. Armed with sufficient cash courtesy of the new ownership structure (which included Richards) and reinvigorated sales thanks to the ultra-desirable DB9 and V8 Vantage models that led the marque's commercial overhaul, the Prodrive effort became the best funded attempt to return Aston Martin to the top of the podium since the 'project' cars of the early 1960s. This programme needed to deliver.

Based on the elegant DB9, Aston Martin Racing's new GT1 shed around 600kg before hitting the race track. Only the chassis, roof, engine block, cylinder heads and door handles were saved, every other component was completely redesigned and purpose-built for racing. The naturally aspirated, six-litre V12 was shoved as far back from the front axle as possible to improve the centre of gravity and, despite breathing through mandatory restrictors, still produced close to 600bhp, all fed to the rear axle via a six-speed sequential gearbox from Xtrac. 

Hancock gets buckled in ahead of his shakedown with the car at Anglesey Circuit





Aston threw everything at Le Mans in 2007, and secured the win after a battle with Corvette

That the car retained its elegance while being plumped and plucked by the engineers at Prodrive is a happy coincidence. Surfaces were aggressively slashed for cooling, smoothed to reduce drag, warped, stretched and flicked to create downforce. And what a very good job they did too, for the DBR9 astonishingly won on its racing debut at the brutal 12 Hours of Sebring in 2005.

The traditional opener to the sportscar racing season, the Floridian heat and the violence of the bumpy airfield circuit is renowned for punishing a car more than at Le Mans. That the DBR9 enjoyed success so soon left onlookers in no doubt: here was a car that really could give Aston Martin the contemporary Le Mans triumph it so craved.

Further successes followed throughout 2005 and 2006 in the FIA GT Championship and American Le Mans Series, but victory at La Sarthe evaded the firm. Having snatched defeat from the jaws of victory in 2006, retiring from the lead in the 21st hour with clutch failure, AMR decided to concentrate all of its effort and resource on Le Mans only in 2007, and stood the factory team down from all other races.

That decision seemed to pay off as car 009, driven by Darren Turner, Rickard Rydell and David Brabham, navigated appalling weather and a fierce battle with Corvette to finish fifth overall and win the GT1 division after 24 hours of racing.

Chassis 10 is perhaps unique among the 18 examples built, in that it only contested one race, Le Mans, and won it. Thereafter it was immediately parked and preserved.



From left to right: Rydell, Brabham and Turner celebrate victory in 2007 after beating the elements and completing 343 laps of La Sarthe

Until today, as I have the great privilege of conducting a shakedown test after a recent recommissioning by Tim Samways' Sporting & Historic Cars equipe.

Sadly cleansed long ago of its hard-earned grit and grime, it is nonetheless resplendent in its original Le Mans livery. Still draped in extremely low-drag Le Mans-spec bodywork, chassis 10 sets itself apart from two further examples here today in the most subtle of ways: various cooling ducts are blanked, front-end dive planes are missing, wheel arches are more discreetly sculpted, the rear wing lies a little flatter. I am surprised to learn that the Aston Martin badge on the bonnet is raised from the surface rather than lowered flush within it, after Aston found it to assist the airflow over and around the car. No detail too small...

The interior is pleasingly peppered with

mementoes of that great June day: the original scrutineering stickers are unmolested, the driver identification and radio sockets each retain labels of the victorious pilots and, my favourite: a printed map of the Circuit de La Sarthe resides, beautifully faded, on the dashboard beneath transparent tape - each corner numbered to assist the team with its radio messages.

There is no 'sliding' into the cockpit of a DBR9. Ingress - and particularly egress - requires a yogic dexterity I must have mislaid in my 20s! Once in however, it's a remarkably cosy environment. Cocooned by an abundance of carbon-fibre, steel, and aluminium heat shield there's no sense of having to reach out for anything. Like a stay in the finest hotel, everything is brought to you exactly where you want it, when you want it.

The suede Momo steering wheel juts forth from the dashboard, deep toward my chest. The sturdy gear lever stands tall and proud, tilting ever so slightly left to save me the onerous effort of moving my right hand a further centimetre from the wheel in order to use it. The crude switch panel, looking painfully dated, dazzles with fluorescent highlights and indecipherable labels.

The pedals feel close, but comfortable, thanks to the uninhibited space above my high-rising knees. Only the intrusive girth of the roll cage as it flanks the A-pillars troubles me, so selfish is its consumption of my field of vision. The view through the windscreen is, by default, halved in depth thanks to the enormous sun strip that steals over half its surface area. It would be of concern if I didn't have prior experience of modern GT cars. I'm sat so far back that I can only liken it to driving from the back seat of your road car. I can't say I have any real idea where the extensive bonnet ends, or quite where the front wheels lie, but I'm sure I'll work it out.

**A** FLICK OF THE IGNITION, PRESS of the starter button and the isolated peace that surrounds the remote Anglesey Circuit is shattered in an instant. The front-mounted, 6-litre V12 roars into life and doesn't so much shout, as scream. Ear plugs are mandatory. So light is the flywheel that the revs obey my right foot with the precision of a concert orchestra. There is no lag.

The friendly clutch is remarkably progressive for a 'serious' race car and, having selected first gear with a rearward pull on the enormous gear lever, I drive



Clockwise from left: Original scrutineering stickers remain. Right: six-litre V12 is mounted deep in the chassis. Bottom, right: slowly fading circuit map, preserved only by sticky tape. Bottom: complex switch panel. Bottom, left: Raised badge aided aero. Below: original driver radio labels and Hancock in position. Below, left: 2007 entrant sticker



“The 6-litre V12 doesn't so much shout, it screams. Earplugs are mandatory”



away with surprising ease - no doubt a deliberate design consideration by Prodrive to minimise risk of time-consuming stalls.

My out-lap is a mess. The pre-heated slicks hit every apex, yet the cold carbon brakes are numb and their response is lacklustre. So sensitive is the throttle that my little 'blips' on downshift light up the dash like a Christmas tree. The gear shift mechanisms - calibrated only for flat-out driving - are unimpressed by my early prudence and reshuffle cogs stubbornly. I need to recalibrate my inputs entirely - and with residual temperatures conspicuously bleeding from the tyres, I need to do it quickly.

At full speed, and now with a little temperature, everything suddenly just works. Upshifting is fast and effortless - with no need for the clutch, or even a lift of the throttle, thanks to the momentary electronic cut triggered by my pull on the gear lever. And with less time to rattle the sequential gearbox down to its shorter ratios, my previously over-enthusiastic heel-and-toe inputs find balance with just the faintest pivot of my right foot. De-clutching on downshift is theoretically optional but it feels smoother to use it, especially to engage the lower gears.

Dart-like and nimble, the Le Mans victor feels alive. Torque delivery is smooth and

I would like in order to keep the car a little flatter. It forces me to brake earlier, but I make up for it somewhat by getting on the power sooner, helping further re-engage rear tyre with track.

This pitch sensitivity at high speed is, I suspect, an unavoidable compromise of the low drag, Le Mans-spec, bodywork - and I doth my cap to the boys who had to navigate the blisteringly fast Porsche curves 343 times in appalling conditions.

Interestingly, when hammering the brakes from full speed in the heavily curved braking zone at the end of the not-quite straight, the whole car feels absolutely bolted, teasing me to brake later with every passing lap. Reminiscent of the tricky entry to Mulsanne corner at Le Mans, I expect this was a welcome handling trait.

After a few runs, I feel dialled in, the speed of my inputs having now caught up with the natural pace of the car. Confident, and more at ease, I stumble upon a level of performance that I could easily have missed had I not been afforded so much track time.

This hidden window appears after a few laps of what already feels like 'maximum-attack'. The now hot tyres and brakes seem to trip into their peak operating zones and suddenly I'm teleported to a discreet new realm. The braking response is immense, the sense of retardation almost double. Arriving faster at the corners, I now feel too quick as the mass of the car finally becomes apparent - and yet the car still sticks. The lateral load and sense of roll you feel through your body, combined with the huge steering input (dampened by the effective power steering) feel utterly incompatible, like I am surely going to spin. But I don't, the grip is there throughout, and I just scythed through the apex five, 10, 15 kilometres per hour faster than before. Later, on new Michelins, this is amplified and now some of the braking zones become too short for the quantity of required downshifts. The limitations of a sequential gearbox exposed, I find myself yearning for paddles or an old school H-pattern such that I might loop a gear or two.

At this level the car is a colossus, bordering on prototype levels of performance. And yet it's so drivable. Not nervous and, in these cool temperatures, not particularly physical. All of which will be of great comfort to the more gentlemanly drivers who own and campaign these cars today in 'not-so historic' racing.

In my seven appearances at Le Mans between 2003-2012, I raced in all the classes except GT1. I now know what I missed. ◉

## "The balance is outstanding with an abundance of mechanical grip"

At the end of the long 'not-quite' straight, I bury the firm centre pedal from high speed with as much force as my right foot can muster. The car responds accommodatingly with a sharp improvement in retardation as pad warms to disc. Two or three applications later and the vigorous deceleration demands I brake later. Much later.

I can feel the DBR9 positively begging to be released. I oblige and allow the coastal scenery to blur. The V12 sings in appreciation. Not the prettiest sound, it is in fact somewhat harsh. Tight. But the ferocity with which it is delivered is utterly intoxicating.

versatile, the V12 still pulling easily out of the tight hairpins when I experiment with second instead of first. Hell, even third isn't too bad! These can't be Le Mans ratios...

In the tighter contortions of the Anglesey circuit, the DBR9 belies its 1100kg weight, feeling lithe and capable in quick direction changes. The balance is outstanding with an abundance of mechanical grip.

Attacking the fast right hander that leads onto the back straight, however, chassis 10 suddenly feels a little light on its heels through the entry. I soon learn to peel pressure from my trail braking earlier than



The interior is geared around both performance and driver comfort. There's even air conditioning, of sorts...



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# Double or nothing

The world's toughest race will count towards the World Endurance Championship for the second time in 12 months. **Gary Watkins** looks ahead to the 2019 Le Mans 24 Hours

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In 2018 Toyota finally secured the Le Mans victory it had long been seeking. It is hot favourite to repeat the feat this June



**T**HERE IS SOMETHING SLIGHTLY SURREAL ABOUT the World Endurance Championship ending at Le Mans in June - but then it always felt a little odd to dispatch the series' showpiece event relatively early in the campaign. It wasn't quite like NASCAR's tradition of commencing its season with the Daytona 500 - saving the best until first? - but what followed sometimes felt slightly anti-climactic.

The WEC's revised summer-to-summer schedule (which, uniquely, started and ends at Le Mans in 2018-19) means its focal point will henceforth also be its conclusion.

After scoring its maiden Le Mans victory in 2018 - and as the only factory team in the LMP1 class - Toyota inevitably starts as overwhelming favourite ahead of the race on June 15-16. Here, though, are a few key pointers to a race that will feature 62 cars, the biggest field in the event's history.

### LMP1

Can Toyota be beaten at this year's Le Mans 24 Hours? The answer has to be 'no' on the evidence of every round of the 2018/19 World Endurance Championship superseason so far. And that's despite the best efforts of the rule makers to edge the privateer opposition closer to the Japanese manufacturer's all-conquering TS050 Hybrids.

The changes under the so-called Equivalence of Technology to balance the Toyotas against the non-hybrid independents, the likes of Rebellion and SMP Racing, haven't been entirely successful. Witness the run of one-two finishes for the TS050s, broken only by the cars' Silverstone disqualification (for skidblock infringements). What's more, the half-a-second-per-lap advantage enshrined in the agreements covering the EoT is due to be back in place for Le Mans. Toyota, which had to agree to rule changes outside the FIA's stability statutes, was happy to waive it for the run-of-the-mill WEC races, but not for the big one.

On the assumption that the TS050s will finish one-two - and it is a fair one - at the Le Mans superseason finale on June 15/16, then the no7 Toyota crew of Kamui Kobayashi, Mike Conway and José María López need to win at Spa at the beginning of May. They are 15 points behind Fernando Alonso, Sébastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima going into the penultimate round of the championship in Belgium, but the difference between finishing first and second at the 24 Hours is only 11 points.

They have to close the gap before the final round, or the championship battle is all but dead.

### FORM GUIDE

The margins between the two Toyota crews have been tiny over the course of the superseason. But the stats are in favour of Alonso and co: they lead their team-mates four-two in race victories (when Silverstone is included).



### LMP2

The secondary prototype division is the biggest class in the Le Mans field, although only seven of the 20 cars are registered to score points in the WEC. The European and Asian Le Mans Series supply the rest of the LMP2 grid, including many of the potential front-runners. There's little doubt that P2 in the ELMS this season has a depth of quantity and quality that is missing from the WEC.

The championship battle in the WEC has come down to a straight fight between a pair of ORECA-Gibson 07s, run by the British Jota Sport squad under the Jackie Chan DC Racing banner, and the solo Signatech Alpine ORECA that carries the badges of the niche French sports car builder. They've shared out the class victories in six races run at the time of writing.

The Jota cars have won five times, with the line-up of Ho-Pin Tung, Stéphane Richelmi and Gabriel Aubry taking three of them. But Signatech drivers Nicolas Lapierre, Andre Negrão and Pierre Thiriet lead the points on consistency: they have yet to finish off the podium, though have seldom been a match for the British-run cars with the exception of Le Mans last year.

The team claimed maximum WEC points with second place 12 months ago and was then given the win proper when the G-Drive ORECA was thrown out for what were deemed illegal modifications to its refuelling system. Reigning ELMS champion team G-Drive Racing is back this year with a TDS Racing-run ORECA, which is now badged as an Aurus after the Russian luxury car builder that launched last year.

The Ligier charge should be led by the Anglo-American United Autosports squad. Co-owned by McLaren racing boss Zak Brown, the team finished in the top six overall on its Le Mans debut in 2017 and last year made it onto the class podium after the disqualification of the two TDS-run cars which finished ahead of it.

### FORM GUIDE

The G-Drive ORECA dominated the division at Le Mans last year. It had the pace to win, even without the seconds it gained at each pitstop thanks to its refuelling modifications. It has changed its line-up for this year, with ELMS LMP3 champion Job van Uitert coming in as its mandatory silver-rated or 'amateur' driver alongside Jean-Eric Vergne and Roman Rusinov, but should be right up there. ▶

## GTE PRO

Porsche claimed class victory at Le Mans last year with one of its retro-liveried 911 RSRs. Kévin Estre and Michael Christensen, who were joined in the winning car by Laurens Vanthoor, enjoy a healthy points lead going into Spa after a super-consistent season.

That's something no one else in the GTE Pro field has managed over the course of the superseason, even though the automatic Balance of Performance system - devised to level the playing field in a class containing cars as diverse as the Ford GT and the BMW M8 - has been a success. But making

predictions ahead of Le Mans isn't easy. The 24 Hours isn't subject to the same system, courtesy of the unique demands of the eight-and-a-half-mile Circuit de la Sarthe.

Fans should savour the battle between six manufacturers this year. GTE Pro has probably hit a high-water mark during the superseason. Ford, class winner in 2016, won't be back with an overt factory programme in 2020 and BMW has admitted its dissatisfaction with the WEC's marketing return, prompting it to hint that it might not come back.

## FORM GUIDE

The head points to another Porsche victory, given its consistency with the mid-engined 911 across a range of circuits. The heart must go for a Chevrolet Corvette C7.R in the 20th consecutive season for the front-engined American muscle car, the last before it is replaced by a car with the engine behind the driver.



Porsche no longer chases outright Le Mans victories, but its 911 remains formidable in both GTE divisions

## GTE AM

The mid-engined Porsche 911 RSR is in the ascendant right now in GTE Am, a class that allows for only one true pro in each driver line-up. The Proton squad won the division at Le Mans last year and the Project 1 team is leading the points chase, although only because its rival in the Porsche pack, Dempsey-Proton, lost all its points up to and including the Fuji race in October.

Bearing the name of US actor Patrick Dempsey, the German team was excluded from the Japanese race because it was found to have tinkered with the electronics that

measure the refuelling time in the pits. Its failure to co-operate with the investigation led to the draconian points penalty.

It bounced back, however, claiming class wins at Shanghai and Sebring with Julien Andlauer, Matt Campbell and Christian Ried.

## FORM GUIDE

Proton has the pace and the depth in talent to win again: it has a further two cars on the Le Mans entry, in addition to its pair of full-season WEC cars.

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Fancy experiencing the thrill of Le Mans first hand? For this year's race, Travel Destinations, an official Le Mans ticket agent, is offering £100 off any of its packages for new bookings, exclusively to *Motor Sport* readers.

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 silverstoneclass

# Summer of speed

It promises to be a vintage year for the Silverstone Classic in 2019 and it is not the only event that we are looking forward to

## SILVERSTONE CLASSIC

**W**ITHIN THE VARIED sphere of motor sport, few things used to conjure up such a delicious sense of intrigue as did the original European Formula 2 Championship. Approximately once a fortnight, the specialist weeklies would report on some of the brightest young stars in the racing firmament, with passing reference to a cluster of hopefuls who hadn't

been quick enough to make the cut.

It was ever interesting to learn a little more about Jacques Laffite or Hans-Joachim Stuck, but who was Fausto Morello, how had he secured backing from Marlboro, where exactly was Ecuador... and why did the series always seem to attract more drivers than it could comfortably accommodate?

Such were the questions that European F2 raised in a curious teen's mind, but an ever-rotating cast was part of its charm - as were the cars themselves, which were loud, proportionally elegant and built by once-thriving companies that have mostly since



Classic miscellany includes Minis, Bentleys and single-seaters from many generations

disappeared (March, Matra, Lola, Chevron and Ralt, to name but a few).

Such diversity has long been extinct, as a result of regulations that oblige contemporary teams to use identical equipment and also limit the entry to a set number, so random non-qualifiers can no longer pop up unexpectedly. But there will be a taste of what life was like more than 40 years ago when the Historic Sports Car Club's F2 championship features at the Silverstone Classic (July 26-28), the first time in the event's 29-year history that there have been dedicated Formula 2 races. The series' popularity has

mushroomed in recent seasons - the original target was to attract 40 cars (all built between 1967 and 1978, before ground-effect aerodynamics raised the performance bar), but the entry is already closer to 50.

The Masters FIA Historic F1 Championship (1966-85) has long been a Silverstone Classic staple and Classic F3 (1971-84) returns this season for the first time since 2014, so while modern F1, F2 and F3 are in action at Hockenheim during the German Grand Prix weekend, their bygone counterparts will simultaneously be active about 600 miles away, reflecting a time when single-seaters

could be identified by more than simply their liveries.

On a slightly less nimble - but no less distinguished - level, Bentley's centenary is one of several notable anniversaries that will be commemorated at the Classic, with a pre-war sports car race featuring Aston Martins, Bugattis, Lagondas, MGs and, it is hoped, at least 30 Bentleys.

At the opposite end of the dimensional scale, the Mini's diamond jubilee also features. Although more than 5.3 million were manufactured during a production life that ran from 1959-2000 with only minor

facelifts (and sales continued into the new millennium, with the final registration being logged in 2004), the Mini is a relatively rare sight on modern roads - although swarms can often be found at celebratory events, and the Silverstone Classic will be swamped with them, on and off the track.

Organisers hope to attract the biggest all-Mini grid ever seen - 50-plus cars - and British Racing Drivers' Club president Paddy Hopkirk, who shot to fame after he and Henry Liddon won the 1964 Monte Carlo Rally in a Mini, will be there. "When Alec Issigonis designed the car," he says, "I think that he envisaged it being used by district nurses

Mini. If you had one of those, you were cool.

"I recall one particular Silverstone race, in 1967. I was driving for Arden and we'd been working hard to develop an eight-port engine, which differed from those in the works cars but had been unreliable. We'd put mustard in the radiator, because the head gasket was leaking - in fact most things were leaking, so it was all a bit of a disaster. I was on green-spot Dunlops and factory driver John Rhodes had new CRX rubber, which gave him a bit of an advantage, but I had more power. How long the engine would last was another matter, but we had a great race-long dice and coming into Woodcote for the final time I'd pretty

## "We'd put mustard in the radiator, because the head gasket was leaking"

rather than racing or rally drivers. I don't think he had any idea it would become a world-beater, but after winning the Monte - ahead of the might of Ford and Citroën - *Life* magazine flew over from America to interview me and I received a telegram from The Beatles. I still have it, framed in my loo at home..."

Steve Neal, father of enduring British Touring Car Championship racer Matt, was also a notable Mini exponent. "I'd previously raced an Austin A40, which was horrible," he says, "but there was something about a

much run out of grip. He still had some and I could see him coming alongside, but I hung on to beat him by about the length of a bonnet."

Eighth overall and class victory was his.

The last of the major celebrations honours the Ford Capri's half-century. As with the Mini, there will be an exhibition area and a track parade, while Gordon Spice - one of the car's most successful racers in period - will present a special trophy to the highest-placed Capri driver in the Historic Touring Car Challenge.

"I never drove a Capri until I raced one," Spice says, "but it was the car that more or less rescued my career. I'd been competing in Formula 5000, without a great deal of success, and was starting to run out of money. Then a chap named Stan Robinson from Wisharts Garage in Crook, County Durham, offered me a seat in his production saloon Capri - and I never really looked back.

"They were such easy cars to drive and inspired so much confidence, because the handling was predictable and when you know what a car is going to do you can take bigger risks *and* go faster."

At the helm of a Capri, he won his class for five straight seasons in the British Saloon Car Championship from 1976-80 (although outright title success eluded him) and also shared victory with Teddy Pilette in the 1978 Spa 24 Hours, the last to be run on the full, original road circuit.

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- There are special packages for Mini and Capri owners who want to take part in displays and parades.

[www.silverstoneclassic.com/ticket-info](http://www.silverstoneclassic.com/ticket-info)



Goodwood venture built on the success of *Motor Sport's* first track day, at Thruxton in 2018





GOODWOOD TRACK DAY

# Fast cars and flower power

There are few finer places to be than Goodwood on a sunny day – or even one that’s slightly overcast, come to that. Conditions did little to temper enthusiasm as drivers assembled for *Motor Sport’s* second reader track day.

The event attracted a plethora of both modern and classic machinery, filtering between the daffodils that line one of Britain’s most iconic circuits. More than 60 drivers turned out in about 40 different cars – the cast including everything from Minis up to fully blown GT machinery.

Among the modern contingent, one of the main attractions was the Cambridge &

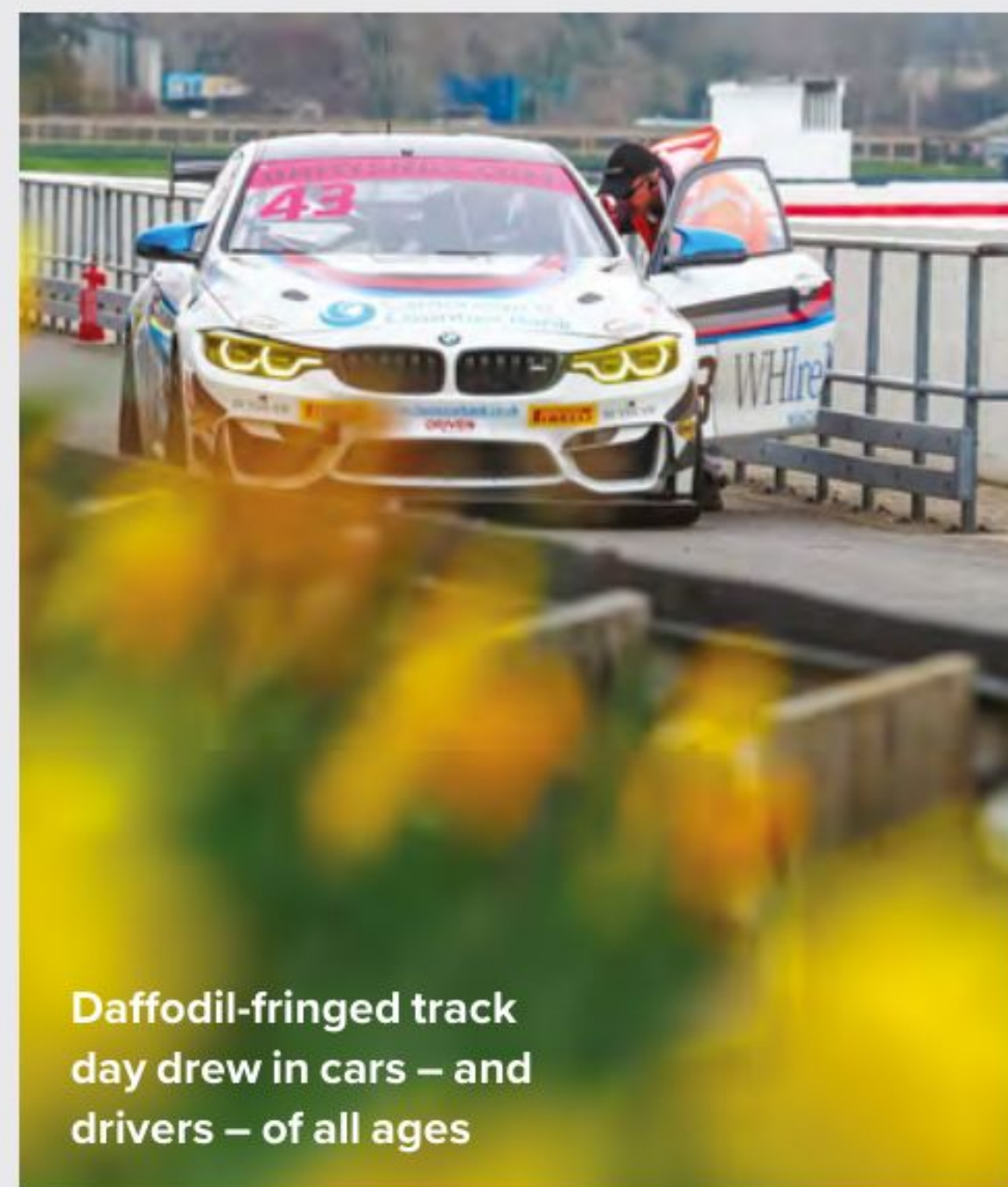
Counties Bank-backed Century Motorsport BMW M4 GT4 of Angus Fender and Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke, who will race the car in this year’s British GT Championship. The rumbling 3-litre twin-turbo machine represents the latest wave of GT4 racers.

From the classic selection, a rare Maserati 250S was stunning, as was a replica Aston Martin DBR1. A raucous TVR Tuscan also stole some looks. Mixed up with the exotica (including a Lamborghini Huracán) were an Abarth 595, several Caterhams and even a humble VW Golf.

During the lunch break the banks echoed to the sound of a demo lap from a Benetton-liveried Toleman TG185, formerly raced by Teo Fabi and supplied by Heritage F1.

Guests also tucked into a full buffet lunch in the Jackie Stewart Pavilion building, while chatting to members of the *Motor Sport* staff.

We have more such events planned, so keep your eyes peeled throughout 2019 if you’d like to take part.



Daffodil-fringed track day drew in cars – and drivers – of all ages

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HRDC sports and saloon racers will take part in the Thruxton Celebration

### THRUXTON MOTORSPORT CELEBRATION

## Thruxton turns back the clock

Ever since opening for racing in its current form, in 1968, Thruxton has been restricted to 12 days of racing per annum - and the accent has always been on making the most of the limited time available. This year's itinerary includes two British Touring Car Championship fixtures, British Superbikes and the new Thruxton Motorsport Celebration meeting.

Created in the slipstream of last year's

successful 50th anniversary event, the Motorsport Celebration takes place on June 1-2 and features 15 races from established promoters Motor Racing Legends and the Historic Racing Drivers' Club, both of which have a tradition of supplying full grids.

Several of the scheduled races take the form of mini-enduros, with 40- or 45-minute events for 1958-66 touring cars, pre-66 under 2-litre touring cars, pre-55/late '50s sports cars and 1966-90 touring cars, while Formula Junior, pre-66 sports & GTs and the HRDC's new Alfa Romeo Challenge, for cars of the 1950s-70s, complete the programme.

Thruxton Group MD Bill Coombs, a

regular front-runner on his occasional appearances in historic race meetings, says: "Last year was one to remember for Thruxton, with a host of events to mark our Golden Jubilee. It was by reminiscing about our illustrious history that we were inspired to launch the Motorsport Celebration. We're sure it will become a regional summer highlight."

The admission price includes paddock access. For complete ticket and timetable details, go to [thruxtonracing.co.uk](http://thruxtonracing.co.uk). And visit our website, [motorsportmagazine.com](http://motorsportmagazine.com), for details on how to obtain two complimentary Thruxton tickets when you take out a magazine subscription.



F1 PREVIEW EVENING

## Motor Sport live in London

Just ahead of this year's opening world championship grand prix in Melbourne, Australia, *Motor Sport* hosted a special evening at the Institute of Engineering and Technology, in central London.

Run in conjunction with headline partner Footman James, a classic vehicle insurance specialist, and associate sponsor Classic & Sports Finance, it was a glimpse ahead to the 2019 Formula 1 campaign and pivoted around an informal - but informative - conversation between 1996 world champion Damon Hill, former Formula 1 driver Karun Chandhok and *Motor Sport's* grand prix editor Mark



*Motor Sport* kick started its F1 season at the IET, with Hill, Chandhok, Hughes and Arron

Hughes, with the magazine's features editor Simon Arron hosting. After more than an hour of discussion, there were opportunities for audience members to ask questions. All tickets sold out and *Motor Sport* would like to thank those who supported the event.

Its success means we will in future

be looking to run other, similar ventures, details of which will be announced in the magazine and on [motorsportmagazine.com](http://motorsportmagazine.com)

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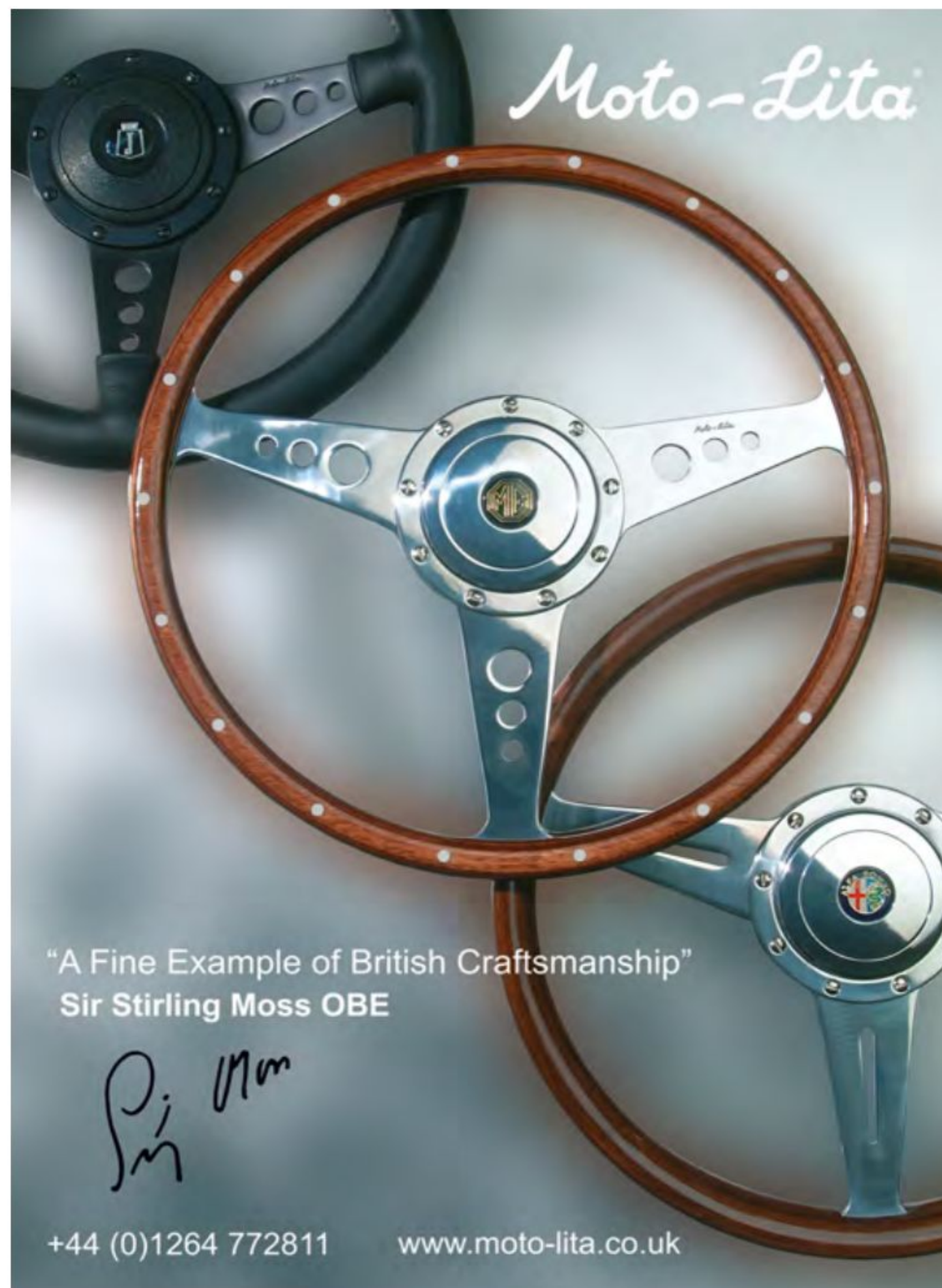


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Claire Williams faces  
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her father's team  
back up to scratch

# Will

“This is a family-owned team  
requiring a significant update”

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Once a byword for Formula 1 success, Williams has fallen on hard times over the past two seasons. To find out why, **Mark Hughes** spoke to deputy team principal Claire Williams

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- The decline and fall  
**Williams**



“Neither Mike nor Claire are engineers and there’s a sense that a technical background is missing”

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**W**hat the hell has gone wrong at Williams? That question has been underlined in red with the debacle of the FW42: from its late completion to its woeful pace. But the query has been lurking like a bad smell for some time.

Perhaps that smell was just a niggling background mustiness at first as the promise of the hybrid era and the big early advantage of Mercedes power was not fully grasped. But the whiff has become progressively more fetid as the fall down the ranks from third in 2014 and '15 became vertiginous in the last couple of years.

Chief technical officer Paddy Lowe was recruited in 2017 from multiple world titles at McLaren and Mercedes and was supposedly going to be the saviour. That dream ended with dismissal - or 'leave of absence' as the legalities insist it should be called - shortly after this year's car wasn't ready for the first days of winter testing (accounting for 40 per cent of all winter test days) and then proved hopelessly slow.

The days when 'Frank and Patrick' (Williams and Head) would plug in whatever promising, cheap driver could be found and



The new Williams FW42 has so far been anchored to the back of the grand prix grid

make a world champion of him are gone and the team is now lodged solidly - and for the immediate future - at the very bottom of the pack. In fact, Williams is further away from the pace of the penultimate team than that team is from the front.

Claire Williams assumed the reins of her father's team in 2013 as age took its toll on Sir Frank. At much the same time, Mike O'Driscoll - a man with a solid financial background in the automotive business - became CEO. Effectively, this was the de facto succession plan for Frank. But for Patrick Head, the technical colossus who'd help Frank make it all happen after years on the margins, there was no such succession. In fact, between the Australian and Bahrain races last month Head agreed to return on a temporary part-time basis eight years after retiring. Which rather illustrates the point. The late completion of the car was just



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

A gallery of happier times. Top: Alan Jones took the team's first title in 1980 with Ford power. Middle: Nigel Mansell was a serial winner with Honda engines in '86. Left: Jacques Villeneuve secured the team's last F1 crown in 1997, with Renault

emblematic of deep-seated structural and technical leadership problems.

Neither Mike nor Claire are engineers and there's an inevitable sense that a third leg of the managerial team - one with a technical background - is missing. That's originally how Lowe's position was envisaged, but what Williams/O'Driscoll on one side and Lowe on the other understood that role to be was quite different. That matter was never resolved as communications between them were sometimes bizarrely amorphous.

The problems run far deeper than a car that wasn't ready in time because of shortfalls in procurement, which meant several externally-supplied parts were not delivered

in time for the build. This is a family-owned team requiring a significant update and the management team has not been adequately guided by a senior technical person for a very long time. The question is: have they allowed themselves that guidance?

It was doubly unfortunate that the turning of the generations at Williams should coincide with a team caught awkwardly in the middle of a structural change within the whole sport. It has posed an inexperienced management team with a set of inbuilt unresolved problems, technical in nature.

The technical directors before Lowe - Mark Gillan, Mike Coughlan, Pat Symonds - were there only briefly and would

## THE PLIGHT OF WILLIAMS

contend they didn't have the authority to instigate any deep-seated structural changes. Or that it was simply too big a job to undertake on their own initiative, involving as it would have done an entirely different business model. What would that model have looked like? One where Williams recognised that in the manufacturer era, the most effective way to create the fastest car possible on the available budget was no longer to build it almost entirely in-house.

As F1 has moved further towards a satellite team model (with Haas at the most extreme, but also including Alfa Romeo, Toro Rosso and Racing Point), so Williams



Claire with father Sir Frank, who built up one of F1's powerhouse teams during the 1980s

and McLaren have become ever-further out on a limb as non-manufacturer independents. Money spent making non-performance-critical components is thus unavailable for performance. But further than that, there are aspects of Williams, whole departments, stuck in the 1990s in terms of processes and attitudes. Production turnaround, for example, is a long way off that of most teams.

When Lowe was recruited, he was empowered in a way his immediate predecessors had not been. No technical decisions could be made by the other directors; only he had that power. Their fate was therefore in his hands. Lowe is a thoroughly capable engineer and performed a vital function as a cog within the big wheel of McLaren, but in the looser structure of Williams the role was intensely demanding of inspirational and leadership skills, while also requiring a proactive involvement in the very weave of the processes and details. He saw his role as one of overseeing the big picture - but, taking readings from within the team, there was no one attending to the nitty-gritty of implementing his vision and no one communicating it to those who needed to know. Given Lowe's empowerment, this lack of guidance and

direction became a problem without an owner. Now that Paddy has been removed, the underlying structural problems remain.

When James Allison was parting ways with Ferrari mid-2016, Williams was strongly in the running for his services. He might well have been a better fit than Lowe, given the particular demands of Williams, but Mercedes came calling at Allison's door and Toto Wolff - in order to make way for Allison - helped soften Lowe's exit from Mercedes by liaising with Williams. Nonetheless, "We were excited about getting Paddy," says Claire. "There were questions about Williams falling into a cycle of decline and this was a statement of intent."

**I**T DIDN'T WORK OUT THAT WAY. A LINE had been drawn under the lineage of design instigated in 2014 with the FW36, and which had continued through to the end of 2016. Mercedes power became less of a differentiating factor as Ferrari and its customers improved, so Williams' promising start to the hybrid era - just a year after Claire took the reins - was brought up short. "Our success came early," Claire adds. "Mike and I inherited a team that had been eighth/ninth, then after making a decision about Mercedes power and building quite a neat little car, we finished third... We were perhaps slightly

## "Yes, we are still in the '90s in some areas. Our car build has demonstrated that"

blinded by that success and probably thought it was a bit easier than we should have done."

In fact, what they'd inherited was a team with those underlying problems, which were simply disguised by an initial power advantage over much of the field. Those problems were perhaps ignored as a consequence but were fully exposed with the clean-sheet design of last year's FW41, a truly disastrous car from beginning to end. Lowe had joined after the concept and design were already well underway. Its woeful form triggered a series of high-profile departures, including Dirk de Beer and Ed Wood (chiefs of aero and design respectively), but Lowe could legitimately absolve himself of full responsibility for this car. He would



Rookie Russell and returnee Kubica, below, have been restricted to fighting at the back

be judged instead on the FW42 - and was.

Lowe was the wrong man for the specific conundrum presented by the circumstances of Williams. The management of the team - stretching back way further than the current management, but including it - has failed to resolve those difficulties. The consequences of that have accumulated season upon season.

"Someone said to me that I need to look at Williams as a start-up," says Claire. "But actually, it's worse than that... We've inherited more than 40 years of the way things have been done. So, in some ways it's worse than a start-up as you have decades of build-up layers."

Williams remains a team out of its time. Simply put, F1 doesn't care what the reasons





behind under-performance might be. The objective is to put on track the fastest racing car possible, not to achieve some prize for constructing the highest percentage of parts in your own factory. The timing monitors reveal the reality, to the thousandth of a second.

Claire and Mike can look to the timing monitors to see how they're doing. But they should also be credited for the fact that they are even there to look at the monitors. Savvy financial management from O'Driscoll put the team on a much more solid financial footing than it had been, and Claire played a key part in sealing deals such as that with current sponsor ROKiT (said to be worth a very handy £16 million).

Claire and O'Driscoll are well aware of the problems and readily admit to

previous mistakes. But that, too, is of no relevance to the timing monitor. What does the future hold, given that 2019 is effectively already a write-off?

"First off, we're doing a full after-action review off the back of testing - about what happened by not getting the car there," replies the boss. "Then there are the wider issues to do with technical leadership... Yes, we are still in the '90s in some areas. Our car build has demonstrated that. Do we have the structure, processes and resource we need? We do, but they are at their limits. So what can we do, what can we reorganise, reshape to make it more efficient and cost-effective? We know a huge amount of stuff across each department about what's working, what's not working. We're fixing those issues. We've done a huge amount of work around cultural transformation, making sure the culture is right so people know what is expected and what our ambitions are. We have to have the right structures."

Do those structures involve a move towards the Racing Point model? Claire has been quoted as saying "over her dead body". While she still insists that the existing model of manufacturing is viable, she's now less

fundamentalist in what that entails. "If we are not going to get the limitations put on technical collaborations for which we are lobbying, and there are some areas where we felt outsourcing would be better, then OK, we will adapt. We're not going to be dinosaurs."

"Aero is a work in progress. Under Doug McKiernan it has definitely taken a step forward." His technical philosophies are quite different from those of the previous aero chiefs. "We hadn't had a new front wing on the car for years," continues Claire, "so what Doug's done is strip everything back to basics and started again from a new platform."

The philosophy of McKiernan - who assumed leadership of the aero department a year ago - is that it isn't ultimate downforce that is critical, but the shape of the aero map throughout the different dynamic states of the car (speed, roll, pitch/dive, steering angles etc) and keeping that shape nicely progressive. That's been the philosophy behind the FW42 and it has produced a car that's quite consistent but badly lacking in

ultimate downforce. It's far from

established that they are on the right path with this approach.

That's just one of the areas Patrick Head will be looking at. Head himself is not looking to reprise his former role, but simply trying to help out by giving guidance to a technical team that's in some disarray and understandably demotivated.

Claire admits there have been times when she's questioned whether she's the right person for the role in which these challenging circumstances have placed her. "I have done good things people don't see. I have brought in budget every year. I'm always thinking, 'Is there a different role for me?' I'm not arrogant enough to think only I could do this. It would take the board to tell me."

"Given the environment since the 2012 team payment agreement was put in place, we're in a solid place financially. We've managed to reduce our debt and sustain cashflow and we are constantly recruiting for 35-40 jobs. We've had a horrid 2018-19, but you can't myopically look at one year. Putting the underpinnings in place for 2021 onwards is our focus. We hope the FIA and F1 do their part to allow independent teams to be successful." ◉





# Evolution

The Cobra was Shelby's attempt to wrest Le Mans success from Ford, Jaguar and Ferrari. The Daytona Coupe was the secret weapon that it helped develop. **Andrew Frankel** tries both generations of American muscle

PHOTOGRAPHER LYNDON McNEIL



The red Cobra was fast but flawed, and paved the way for the stunning Daytona Coupe

# of the beast

**S**o many stories, so few of them good. I've had countless conversations with people about Shelby Cobras over the years, and what had struck me is that even those who own and love them tend not to hold back when it comes to the car's shortcomings. It seems their faults are part of their charm. Brutal power and those looks probably help too...

## NEST OF COBRAS

So this is going to be interesting. Thanks to Woodham Mortimer, the car preparers and restorer which bought JD Classics after the latter went into administration last year, we have two Cobras to try and, no, neither is 'real'. You'd be amazed how few actually are.

But they are utterly faithful recreations that earn the FIA papers that do not get issued unless the car is as it would have been in period. In every regard that matters - how they look, how they're built, how they drive, there should be no difference.

I feel a strange sense of trepidation, and not just because the weather is looking malevolent. I've been lucky enough to drive race versions of most of the cars that formed the bulk of the opposition to the Cobras in the early 1960s (Jaguar E-type, Aston DB4GT, even a Ferrari 250GTO) and if there was any fear with those it related to their values. With the Cobra, there's something else. Something about the car scares me, just a little.

But some things are in my favour: we're at Silverstone and if I'm going to cuddle a monster, I'd rather do it here. Second, Woodham Mortimer's operations manager and renowned historic racer Chris Ward and the rest of the team are as relaxed as can be. Besides being shown how to fire each one up there are no instructions: no rev limit or laps, no 'please look after it'. Just get in and go. As fast as you like, for as long as you like.

I try the red one first. The purpose of this story is to try to understand how the Cobra went from being a rather rough and ready Anglo-American hybrid into something that could and, indeed, eventually did beat the best of Europe's automotive aristocracy. So it makes sense to start at the beginning.

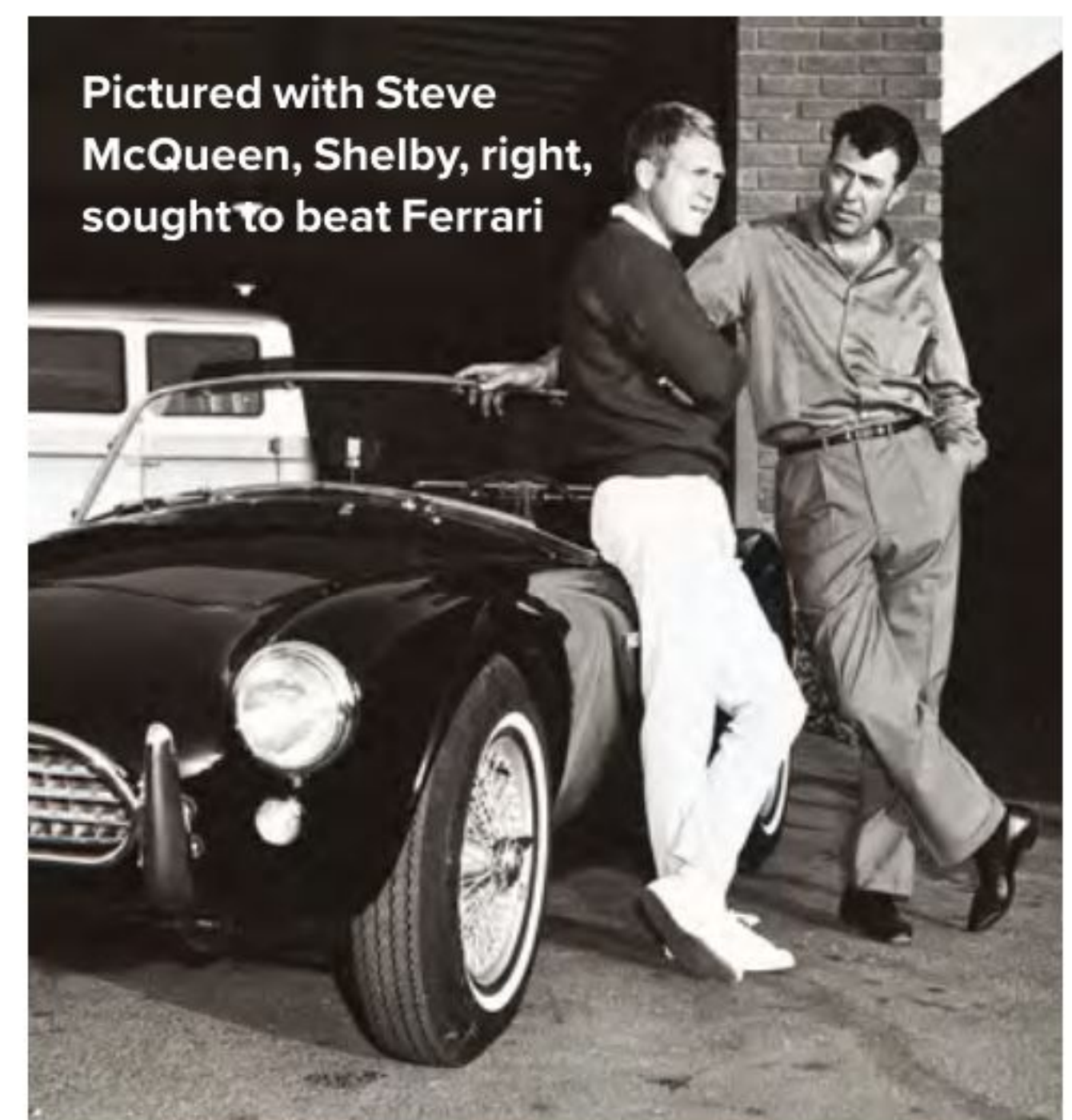
It does not begin well: I can get in, but

there is insufficient legroom for all 6ft 4in of me to operate the car safely. The only option is to pull the seat out and wedge me inside secured by foam and the six-point harness. It is very, very simple in here. Simple Smiths dials, a simple line of switches with labels painted onto the dash. Turn on the master switch, twist the key, apply a little throttle just to prod its four twin-choke Weber 48mm IDA carburettors and with more rumble than thunder, the 289cu in Ford V8 comes to life.

The clutch is heavy but not vicious, the action of the Hurst shifter long but not imprecise. Soon I'm rolling down the pit-lane with the sensation of really not having the slightest idea what's going to happen next.

**T**HERE IS AN INTERESTING little story about the Cobra, worth mentioning here first because I believe it remains little known, but also because it shows just how close the entire saga came to a very different outcome.

When he decided to create the car that would become the Cobra, it was not AC that Carroll Shelby rang first, but Aston Martin. It was 1960 and the previous summer he'd won Le Mans in a DBR1 paired with Roy Salvadori. His idea was to take the DB3S - which came second at Le Mans the year before - and slot in a V8. The plan failed because, as John Wyer pointed out, the DB3S was out of production, the race team that made it shut down, and Aston Martin drowning in orders for its then new DB4 road car. But I suspect if Shelby had started with a fully developed racing car with an already slippery body rather than an elderly British sports car designed with no thought for



Pictured with Steve McQueen, Shelby, right, sought to beat Ferrari



Legend says it's impossible to lift a wheel in an original Cobra due to the soft chassis

frontal area, the issues that made him create the Daytona Coupe might never have arisen in the first place.

So AC was Shelby's second choice and if for 1963 he hoped the combination of his Old English chassis and all-American motor would somehow vanquish the might of Maranello and its well-developed 250GTO at the first time of asking, he was wrong.

The Cobra proved that, even back then, there was more to making a successful racing car than simply ensuring it was powerful and light. The 'there's no replacement for displacement' axiom was found wanting.

The Americans were fond of portraying the GTO as state of the art. But it's not true: there was nothing remotely revolutionary about the GTO's engineering and in some regards was actually pretty dated even when new in 1962. It still had a live rear axle and



The Daytona Coupe won the GT class at Le Mans in 1964, but couldn't keep pace with the Ferrari 250LM or Ford GT40 that followed

## “The old 'there's no replacement for displacement' axiom was found severely wanting”

an engine so closely related to that in the first ever Ferrari its stroke was the same as V12s made in the 1940s. If anything, it proved what you can achieve not with cutting edge science, but the fabulous execution of very traditional thinking by a company that not only knew how to win, but expected to.

The Cobra came from a different place: a handful of talented, enthusiastic California hot-rodders with a dream of wrecking Enzo Ferrari's domination. Shelby is known to have loathed Ferrari, and reputedly blamed him for the death of his friend Luigi Musso during the 1958 French Grand Prix by pressurising him to go faster than it was safe to do. For Shelby, it was personal.

His Cobra was light, at around 1050kg. Clearly using a pushrod V8 wasn't going to get the same horsepower per litre as an overhead cam V12, but the 4.7-litre Ford V8 was good for at least 360bhp, 20 per cent more than the Ferrari engine and backed by an even greater torque advantage.

On paper, it should have been quick. And on tight US street courses, it was. But at faster circuits like Daytona and those it would face in Europe, well... the lead Cobra at a three-hour race at Daytona in 1963 was lapped four times by the winning GTOs. At the Sebring 12Hrs, the best Cobra shipped 11 laps - almost one an hour - to the quickest GTO. At Le Mans it was a dozen laps over 24 hours, but

they were much longer laps. The best GTO was over 100 miles ahead at the finish.

Something had to be done if Shelby's dream of blacking Ferrari's eye was to be realised. Shelby knew that Ferrari had a rebodied GTO with better suspension and a wider track coming for 1964. So he sat down to consider his options.

More power wasn't one of them - the V8 had been designed as a street car engine and was already on the limit of what could be kept reliable. He could put even more rubber on the road but that wouldn't solve the Cobra's big flaw: a lack of straight-line speed.

It's been estimated that at Le Mans the Cobras, even with factory hard tops, were giving up to 30mph to the slippery GTOs by the end of the Mulsanne Straight.

The answer came from a young designer called Peter Brock, who'd come to Shelby from GM where he'd had a hand in the shape of the Corvette Stingray. He'd always been fascinated by airflow and automotive forms, so suggested to Shelby that he created a new and aerodynamic body for the Cobra. But Shelby was no walkover and some of the older schoolers in the organisation thought

## NEST OF COBRAS

the idea a waste of time and money. It was the support of Shelby's British test driver, Ken Miles, that got the plan the green light.

Given that Mercedes-Benz was using windtunnels in the 1930s, it's strange to think that Brock designed the Daytona Coupe on a large piece of paper stuck to the wall. AC Cars was asked for the chassis drawings but they never turned up - whether or not because AC was miffed by Shelby's plan to build cars in California rather than shipping chassis from Thames Ditton.

Perhaps the greatest misconception about the Daytona Coupe is that it was just a Cobra with a different body. It was not: Brock realised he had a golden opportunity to redesign the tubular structure that sat on

the main chassis rails, for the Cobra's other big flaw was that it wasn't very rigid. Rinsey Mills, Shelby's official biographer, wrote that drivers reported 'door gaps altering and chattering when the car cornered hard...'

In the absence of any drawings, Brock took the chassis of a crashed Cobra and went to work, using Miles to determine the ideal driving position, working out where the roof line should be. He worked with Miles on creating a new tubular structure that would transform the torsional rigidity of the car alongside a new central triangulated spine.

Not that this was exactly declared to the FIA. For Shelby one of the big draws of the Coupe was that it would qualify under the same 'evolution of type' rules that allowed

Ferrari to homologate the GTO as an updated 250GT when it was not really anything of the sort. The fact is that the Daytona Coupe was different to the Cobra roadster not only in appearance, but construction too.

The first of six cars was ready for testing at Riverside in 1964, with Miles driving. In no time at all the coupe - designed on paper and with zero budget, using the same engine, suspension, brakes, wheel and tyres - was lapping over three seconds faster than the standard Cobra. With no development, the car did 175mph along Riverside's straight, which was less than a third of the length of the Mulsanne. The 30mph deficit was gone.

In the first race of 1964 - the Daytona 2000Km - the GTOs locked out the podium.

# The legend, reimagined

It may be built in South Africa, but this Daytona is far more usable, and available, than the original, says **Robert Ladbrook**

Considering the last authentic Shelby Daytona Cobra sold for £5.9 million at auction back in 2009, it's fair to say the model can be considered out of reach for the vast majority of the planet.

Even more so when you consider that there were only six originals made, between 1964 and '65. That car's price was boosted by the fact chassis CSX 260 won the manufacturers' title of the 1965 World Sportscar Championship, and it's almost undoubtedly appreciated in value since.

If you're craving one, and don't happen to own the country you live in, there is another option. The Daytona Cobra is still being produced, in road-going and in far more affordable form, by Superformance - the American company that specialises in replica and continuation cars.

Before anybody waves the 'kit car' flag, these cars may be recreations of Shelby's original, but have more than a little authentic DNA. The chassis is built by Hi-Tech Automotive in South Africa - which also makes the Noble M400 - but the reworked Daytona has been designed by Peter Brock - who also penned the original - and Bob Negstad, who worked up the Ford GT40's chassis and suspension. The cars all get continuation chassis numbers in original Shelby style, such as the desirable 'CSX' of

the period machines, and each is officially sanctioned by Shelby and eligible for the Shelby American Automotive Club Register.

Once the chassis have been fabricated, they are shipped to Superformance's distributors around the world. In Britain this mean Le Mans Coupes Ltd near Gatwick, which is run by Nigel Hulme.

"The cars come to us as a rolling chassis, and then we source and fit the drivetrain from a range of engines," says Hulme, who as well as the stunning Daytona recreation also specialises in continuation GT40s and Cobras.

"The first continuation cars were more race than road car, so they had no sound deadening or flexible differential mountings and quite a lot of transmission shunt. They weren't that nice to drive. Hi-Tech owner Jimmy Price got together with Peter Brock and Bob Negstad and they started again with a blank sheet of paper. The car is two per cent larger with a longer wheelbase. It also ditches the old transverse leaf springs for independent coil-over suspension all-round and is aerodynamically better, too. The end result looks like an original Daytona Cobra, but it's an all-round better unit."



It certainly has the stopping power a Daytona should. In Alan Mann Racing red and gold it's stunning.

Inside, the Superformance Daytona has room for two, a boot big enough for a pair of weekend bags and has electric windows and air conditioning.

This car has a 6.2-litre General Motors (Chevrolet) LS3 crate engine. The addition of a unit usually found in a Corvette may be a bit contentious, but Hulme counters "it's the same engine Peter Brock put in his own car, so there's an argument that it's historically correct." Purists will be pleased to know you



Despite the soaking wet weather, Frankel could feel the night and day difference between the two Cobras

“It gobbles up gears impressively, until it hits an aerodynamic wall at 130mph”



Fancy a more civilised Daytona Coupe? Superformance has the ultimate answer

can also have a Ford Coyote V8. As far as this 520bhp Chevy unit goes, once it starts you don't really care about its lineage. It sounds stunning, and it's loud.

The sound and the seamless wave of power make it thrilling though not an easy drive. The clutch is stiff, the steering at low speed is heavy and the gearshift is rather agricultural, but that makes it a rewarding challenge. It's not cheap, with this particular spec coming in at around £155,000, but compared to the cost of an original it's a bargain. And I want one...

**Superformance Shelby Daytona Cobra, £155,000 [superformanceuk.com](http://superformanceuk.com)**

But Bob Holbert put the Daytona on pole, a clear second faster than the winning GTO of Pedro Rodríguez. The car led for over half the race, setting fastest lap in the process before catching fire in a pit stop due to fuel leaking onto an overheated differential. The car retired, but notice had been served. At Sebring the Coupe finished eight laps ahead of the best '64 GTO, at Le Mans Dan Gurney and Bob Bondurant qualified it ahead of all bar the prototypes and then beat all the GTOs to win the GT category.

Yet it was still a close season, one problem being the sheer number of GTOs. At Spa a blocked fuel line meant the Coupe came nowhere. Only the roadsters went to the Nürburgring, the best finishing 23rd, compared to second for the GTO, with Ferraris filling the first seven places in their class. Perhaps here the deficiencies of the open Cobra were laid most bare. Ferrari beat Shelby in the championship by just six points.

Shelby finally got what he wanted in 1965, with the Daytonas romping to GT victory, taking eight out of the 11 rounds, including Le Mans once more. But, with Ferrari failing to get the 250LM homologated for GT racing, it was against derisory opposition. If you compare the results of the LM with the Daytona Coupe, there's no escaping the fact

that had it been in the same class, Ferrari would have taken the title again.

Even so, Shelby had what he wanted: the first FIA championship won by an American race team. But by the end of 1965 his eyes were on a different prize altogether, not just beating Ferrari for class honours, but outright with a handy little device called the GT40. He would not have long to wait.

**B**ACK IN THE PRESENT AND, BACK in the red Cobra I'm struggling to find confidence. Power is not the problem - in most regards this is a GT40-spec motor with well over 400bhp. We're using Silverstone's International Circuit and even given the far slower entry onto the Hangar Straight, it gobbles up gears impressively, at least until it hits an aerodynamic wall at perhaps 130mph. Thereafter it is slow going. But the brakes are excellent for something on old-school Dunlop race rubber.

But in the corners I have no faith in it at all. Chris has warned me the car has more of a wet set up on it and may understeer, but there's more going on here than that: I can't gauge how the car will react to steering input, once it has reacted I can't plot its trajectory too well and it doesn't want to



The poise, and the noise, of the Daytona Coupe make it a totally different experience

**“What I find surprising is not that it could beat a GTO, but that a GTO could get anywhere near it”**



adjust its line when I come off the throttle. There's quite a lot of vertical bobbing on its springs too. Every lap is faster than the last, but not once do I feel it is on my side.

I'm not surprised. Imprecise steering and unpredictable behaviour tallies with what I've heard. This is what a Cobra is like.

Or is it? The Daytona is waiting. Inside it is even more Spartan than the roadster. In front of me is a distinctly non-period Stack rev-counter and that's it. If I want any other information, I need to peer at the centre console where there are six far smaller dials and a bank of switches. Ignition, pump and fire. And now the space between my ears explodes. The car is on straight pipes and everything is shaking, including my brain.

It is intimidating and rather wonderful. The engine is the same size as the roadster's, albeit more powerful with around 440bhp thanks to its Steve Warrior-built motor.

Before I reach the end of the pit lane, I know this is going to be different. It doesn't feel like a development of the Cobra. It feels like a different car. There's no brick wall on the straight. Barely halfway along I'm backing off the throttle to avoid slamming into the rev-limiter in top. Goodness knows how fast it's going but even on this short stretch, it's in a different league to the Cobra. Brock clearly had a fine eye for aerodynamics, because it feels rock solid too.

But I notice the changes in the corners even more. It feels like a racing car: taut, precise, and trustworthy. I'm driving with more confidence; soon I'm drifting through Stowe, correcting twitches through the still fractionally damp Club and having a riot.

I come in only because I genuinely fear for my hearing, ram a couple of plugs into my ear and head out again. The next few

laps are joyous. It's still a car you drive with shoulders more than your wrists, but it's magical. Its front is as keen to find an apex as the roadster's is to avoid it, its back end so easy to place that you're happy to make it oversteer everywhere. Above all, despite the sound and fury, I get that sense of oneness with it that, for me, is key to going fast in any car. In short, I loved it.

I don't know if the night and day difference I felt between these two is exactly as that you'd find in original cars, but it tallies with what I've read. The difference in set up undoubtedly had a role, too. Chris said the secret with the roadster was to be over-ambitious with your entry speed to break the back loose so it never gets the chance to understeer. Maybe with time I'd have tried.

Or maybe I wouldn't. If I'd had more time, I know I'd have spent it in the Daytona. What I find more surprising is not that it could beat a GTO, but that a GTO could get anywhere near it at all.

*Thanks to Woodham Mortimer for its support with this feature. ◉*





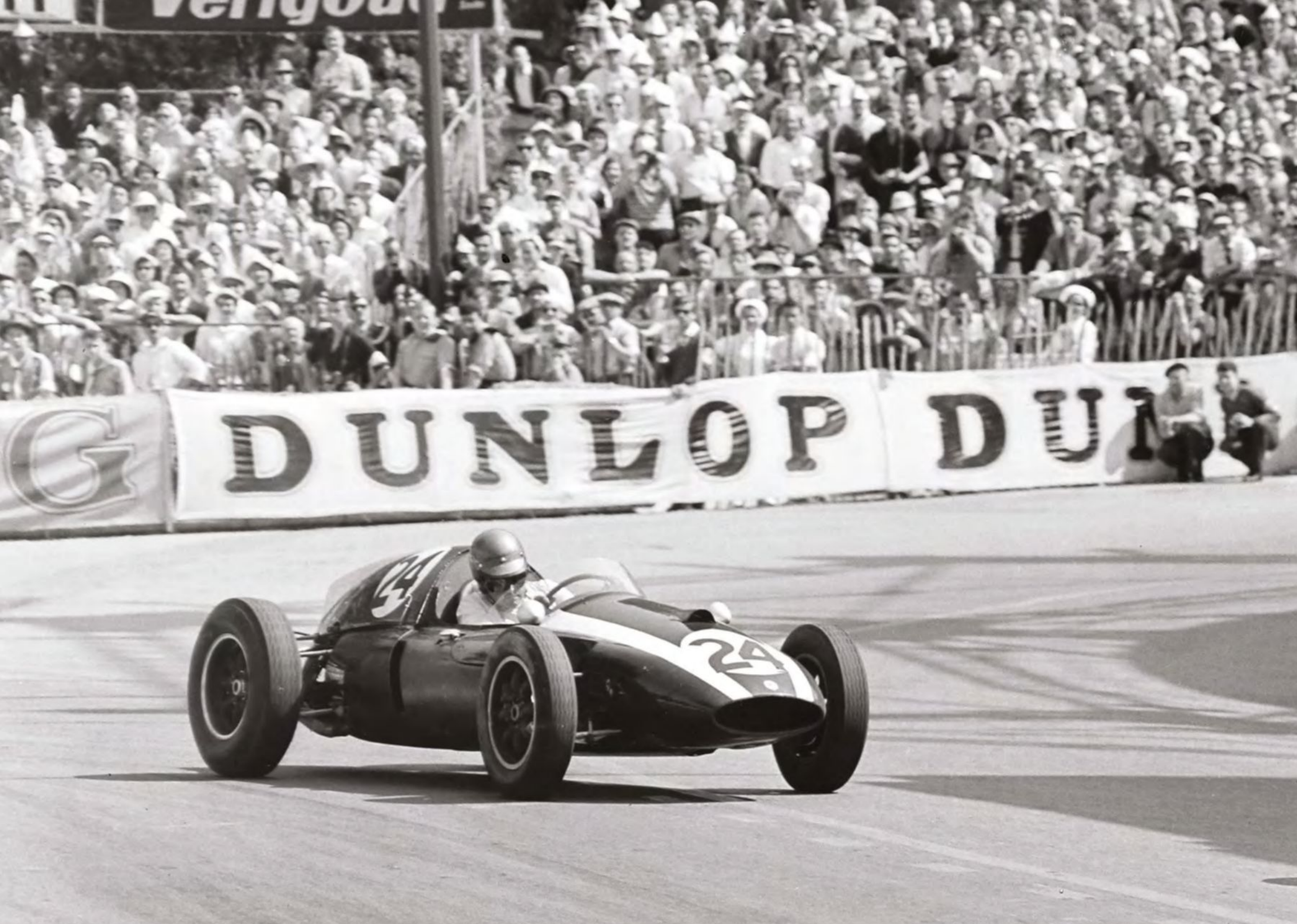
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The Cooper T51 proved ideal in 1959. Stirling Moss leads eventual winner Jack Brabham in Monaco

# The rear-engined revolution

**Doug Nye** recounts how the design of a Cold War fire pump evolved into the heart of the Cooper-Climax that prompted a front-to-back uprising in Formula 1



**F**ORMULA 1 OPERATED ON VERY different principles during the early years of the World Championship, when much of the technology had pre-WW2 roots, but in the late 1950s a revolution dawned. Led by British powerhouses Cooper and Coventry Climax, it altered the face of motor racing forever.

Climax-engined Coopers had won the opening two races of the 1958 Grand Prix season in Argentina (Stirling Moss) and Monaco (Maurice Trintignant), the first World Championship successes for cars with their engine behind the driver. Mike Hawthorn lifted that year's title in the front-engined Ferrari 246 - and Vanwall was champion constructor - but the warning signs were there for those adhering to racing tradition.

And in 1959 - almost exactly 60 years ago - it was Cooper's T51 that confirmed the effectiveness of this fresh philosophical shift.

The seeds for the machine that would win

both 1959 World Championship titles were sown some years earlier. Charlie Cooper was a tough, competitive mechanic working, occasionally, for some of the great British racing names. Walter Hassan - co-creator of Cooper's Coventry Climax FPF engine - was a tall, gangly mechanic with Bentley Motors.

In 1946-47, Surbiton garage proprietor Cooper helped son John and his school friend Eric Brandon to build their first 500cc single-seaters, cobbling an all-independently-suspended chassis from two Fiat 500 Topolino front ends, united back to back. That launched the Cooper marque and the rear-drive element came about from its grass roots.

500cc Formula 3 mainly used air-cooled motorcycle engines. Direct chain-drive to the rear wheels was deemed simplest, so placing driver ahead of both power unit and driven axle was logical. The Coopers and Eric ended up with one of the best-balanced and most drivable combinations in the class. For 1948 the Cooper Car Company Ltd was founded

to supply budding racers. Subsequently, their little factory in Hollyfield Road, Surbiton, added front-engined sports and F2 cars to their basic F3 production.

It wasn't until 1955 that Cooper's first serious rear-engined sports-racing design emerged as the Type 39, using a water-cooled Coventry Climax four-cylinder engine. The transom tail on its bodywork earned it the 'Bobtail' (or 'Manx') Cooper nickname.

Two years earlier, with the new 2½-litre F1 looming, such British specialists as Cooper, HWM, Connaught and Kieft sought suitable engines. Leonard Lee's engineering company in Widdrington Road, Coventry, developed ambitions to supply them. His Coventry Climax units had powered Crossley, Morgan, Swift and Triumph cars until the early 1930s, when that market shrank. Lee compensated by building Swift-type engines for Government pump and generator contracts. Soon he tendered to build a fire-fighting pump, borrowing expertise from the American ◀

## REAR SUSPENSION

The rear suspension's transverse leaf spring was clamped in the centre while a measure of free-end adjustment was achievable via trunnions attached to the top chassis tube each side. The wheel upright was located top and bottom by welded tubular wishbones. Bump and rebound control was by Armstrong telescopic dampers

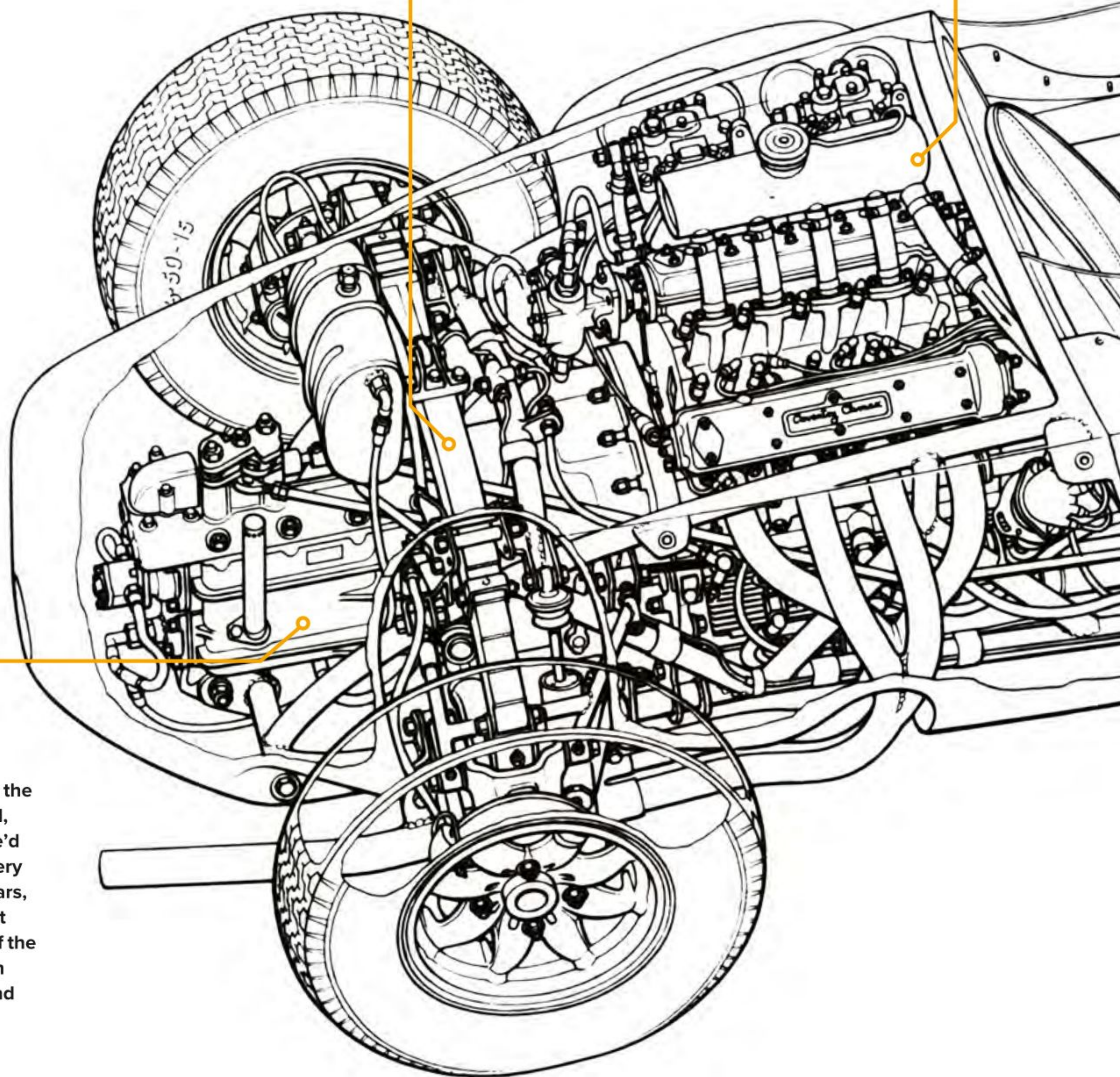
## ENGINE

Coventry Climax FPF 4-cylinder twin-overhead camshaft aluminium block, crankcase and head engine with two inclined valves per cylinder in hemispherical combustion chambers, five main bearing crankshaft and dry-sump lubrication

Cooper pioneered the post-war shift to rear-engined Formula 1 cars, setting the trend via Formula 2 in 1956-58. The 1959 T51 landed the firm, and the configuration, its first World Championship

## GEARBOX

Cooper designer Owen Maddock recalled the Citroën-derived Jack Knight-ERSA transaxle gearbox as taking "...one hell of a pounding with the 2½-litre engine twisting it under load, despite the strengthened casings we'd adopted the previous year... after every race we'd have to replace the lot, gears, dogs, selector forks – and as they got hot most of the oil would come out of the breather anyway...". The Walker team Coopers used Colotti gearboxes – and had as much (if different) trouble



Hale Fire Pump Company. Coventry Climax fire pumps performed heroically throughout World War II, before in 1950 Korean War tensions triggered new Government contracts. The existing Swift-originated Climax pump engine was an 800cc 20hp cast-iron side-valve unit. Now the Government required a portable replacement with twice the pumping capacity and half the weight...

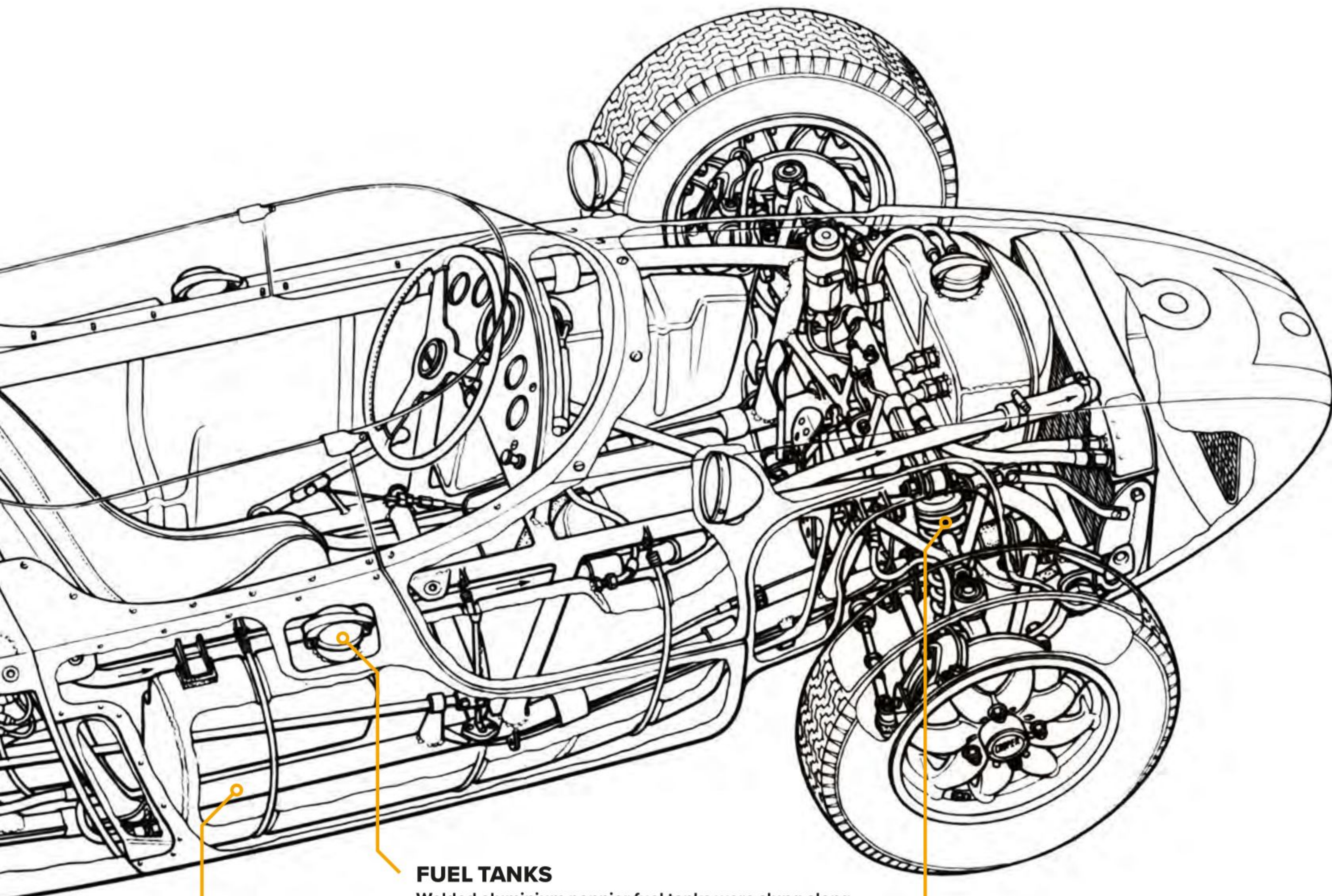
Hassan had just joined Climax as chief engineer and in September 1950 he looked at the pump contract with ex-ERA man Harry Mundy. The fire-pump's requirements - light weight, efficiency, good power-to-weight ratio - matched those of a racing engine.

Hassan and Mundy were both true racers and, in just three weeks, Harry schemed an all-aluminium, one-litre, single-overhead-camshaft, four-cylinder engine with inclined valves in wedge-shaped combustion chambers. One target was 35bhp at 3500rpm. Upon its first run in April 1951, the new unit delivered 37bhp.

This Coventry Climax FW - for 'Feather Weight' - won a Home Office order for 5000 engines. The company had a stand in the marine section of the 1952 Earl's Court Motor Show, where Wally and Harry met many old racing friends. John Heath of HWM, Rodney Clarke of Connaught and Cyril Kieft all wrote to Lee, imploring him to build them a new

2½-litre F1 engine. He agreed, so Hassan and Mundy produced the Climax 'Godiva' V8 only to take fright at Ferrari and Maserati's power claims, causing the project's unraced demise. Kieft, then Cooper and Lotus, focused instead upon the little single-cam Climax FW, for 1100cc sports car racing. Stock-block MG and Ford units were fragile and costly, once race-tuned. Responding again to demand, Lee directed Hassan and Mundy to adapt the FW.

The standard Climax FW engine displaced 1020cc. The 'FWA' - short for 'Feather Weight Automotive' - was overbored to 1098cc. In mid-summer 1954 the first FWA powered the Alan Rippon/Bill Black Kieft at Le Mans. Climax began small-scale FWA production



### FUEL TANKS

Welded aluminium pannier fuel tanks were slung along each side of the chassis frame amidships, extending from in line with the driver's seatback almost to the front suspension bays. They were fashioned in-house at Cooper's Hollyfield Road, Surbiton, works by the car-body building Beddings, a veteran father and son panel-bashing duo

### CHASSIS

Curved-tube welded chassis frame in mainly 1½-inch diameter steel tube, carrying stamped 'Bradnack lug' brackets to which detachable aluminium body panels were attached by Dzus fasteners

### FRONT SUSPENSION

Independent front suspension featured co-axial coil-spring/damper units interposed between welded-tubular upper and lower wishbone members. For years Cooper used a threaded Chorlton ball-joint at the front wishbone apex, plus stock Alford & Alder front uprights and stub axles – the upright derived from the Standard 8 production saloon's, and the stub axle from the Triumph TR3... Cooper was Formula 1's arch practitioner. And the recipe worked brilliantly

- and Cooper used it, rear-mounted, in its new 'Bobtails'. With only 75bhp available, the target 125mph demanded minimum weight and frontal area. The 'Bobtail' Cooper's sleek bodywork wrapped a 65lb tubular chassis with transverse leaf-spring suspension front and rear. F3 tuner Francis Beart suggested a Citroën *Traction Avant* gearbox turned about-face to drive the rear wheels, with close-ratio gears and shafts made by ERSA of Paris, who marketed a popular four-speed conversion of Citroën's standard three-speed 'boxes.

The 'Bobtails' became a huge force in 1100cc - and later 1500cc - sports car racing. Using the factory jig, Australian newcomer Jack Brabham built an F1 special along

'Bobtail' lines - using a six-cylinder Bristol engine under lookalike 'Bobtail' bodywork. He made his F1 debut in it at the 1955 British GP, and won the Australian GP.

Seven prototype 1100cc FWAs were delivered through 1954, followed by 100 for 1955 and more in 1956, plus 24 enlarged 1460cc 100bhp FWBs, while Hassan and Mundy were developing a twin-cam heads for '57. A few pilot 1500cc F2 races ran in 1956. Cooper dominated - and for international F2, 1957-60, the new dry-sump, twin-OHC Climax FPF became available. Schemed largely by Mundy, then developed by Hassan, Peter Windsor-Smith, Gray Ross, Ron Burr and Hugh Redington, the FPF had five main

bearings against the FWA/FWBs' three - and developed 141bhp at 7000rpm. F2 Cooper-Climaxes were quickly dominant.

The 1957 F2 Cooper was the Type 43 or 'F2 Mark II' design - with all-transverse leaf-spring suspension. Famously, during Goodwood testing, works driver Roy Salvadori suggested to John Cooper and private entrant Rob Walker that such a chassis fitted with an enlarged FPF engine would be ideal at Monaco. "It was so agile I thought it really could compete there..." He was right. Jack Brabham drove the 1.96-litre 'interim F1' Walker Cooper there - ran third and finally pushed the broken car home sixth. Such little '2-litre' hybrid Cooper-Climax cars raced

on in F1 that year. And few amongst the front-engined establishment foresaw their threat...

What advantages did rear-engined configuration offer? With no propeller-shaft to pass beneath - or around - the driver, he (or she) could sit lower, minimising the car's frontal area. Power-wasting prop-shaft angularities - and weight - were saved. One square foot less frontal area was considered worth 25bhp. With engine and final-drive mounted in-unit, torque reactions cancelled out, permitting lighter support structures. Lighter weight enhanced acceleration, permitted smaller brakes - and so on in an always-beneficial spiral. Concentrating a car's major masses within the wheelbase promoted rapid direction-change response. Without the extravagant power excess of the 1930s cars - in which drivers could change the car's attitude by breaking rear tyre adhesion - Cooper-Climax agility could outrace most front-engined rivals.

For 1958, an FIA rule change helped. While the 2½-litre F1 ceiling was extended to 1960, alcohol fuels were banned and replaced by 100/130-octane AvGas aviation spirit.

Together with father Charlie, John Cooper helped to rewrite the motor racing rulebook



MCKLEIN

Simultaneously, Grand Prix race distances were slashed from a minimum of 500km/three hours to only 300km/two hours. Fuel consumption on AvGas was inherently better than on methanol, so even without the shorter races, fuel tank capacity would still be reduced. Cars could now be considerably smaller and lighter - yet the Coopers already were, and their engines

## “Brabham pushed his Cooper the final yards, as World Champion”

were also outstandingly economical...

The 1958 F1/F2 Cooper was the T45 or 'Mark III'. New coil-spring front suspension provided better control than the transverse leaf-spring, which was retained at the rear, with double rear wishbones - in place of single - geometry. Jack Brabham had become expert at setting-up his cars' geometry, spring and damper settings. He was in constant contact with his Australian engineer friend Ron Tauranac, who recommended developments which Jack forced through, with John's ready connivance in face of Charlie's conservatism...

Increasing power was punishing the basic Citroën-ERSA transmission, and in the 1958 Cooper 'Mark III', working upon a Tauranac recommendation via Jack Brabham, ERSA and transmission specialist Jack Knight developed a pair of step-up spur gears within the clutch bell-housing. This enabled both a 2½-inch lower engine mounting, and easy final-drive ratio changing for differing circuits. Jack also “flew to Germany one day to get us some ZF diffs old Charlie wouldn't pay for. John fixed the money. I got the bits. We'd never have won a race without 'em...” And win Cooper did in 1958 - though not with the works cars.

Powered by a 1.96-litre FPF, Moss won the season-opening Argentine GP in Rob Walker's Cooper. With a further enlarged 2015cc Climax engine Maurice Trintignant won the very next round, at Monaco, in another Walker Cooper.

Lee had authorised four 2207cc units for 'interim F1' use; two for Cooper, two for Lotus. Once the faster circuits demonstrated these FPFs' power deficit against the full 2½-litre front-engined finest, Cooper and Colin Chapman asked Lee to sanction full 2½-litre FPFs for 1959. This demanded new block castings. Windsor-Smith detailed the 94.0mm x 89.9mm, 2495cc, definitive FPF

engine for F1, detail design only beginning on December 1, 1958 - barely 16 weeks before the engine's debut.

For 1958 the Cooper order book recorded 28 1959 Type 51 - or 'Mark IV' - cars for F1 and F2, scarcely changed from the 'Mark III'. The new 245bhp FPF made a real difference. Moss won for Walker at Easter Goodwood. New Cooper works driver Masten Gregory qualified on pole for the Aintree 200 - but front-engined Ferrari V6s finished 1-2. At Silverstone in May, Brabham won easily...

**A**T MONACO, THE FIRST WORLD Championship round of the year, Jack won his and the Cooper works' first *Grande Epreuve*. Jack placed second in Holland and third in France before winning the British GP. Moss won in Portugal and Italy in Walker's Cooper - and at Monza Cooper and his tiny team could celebrate clinching the constructors' title (on Ferrari's home soil, too).

Moss's Walker Cooper then won the Oulton Park Gold Cup, Jack finished second in Snetterton's F1 race - and then came the title-deciding US GP at Sebring. Jack and teammate Bruce McLaren dominated, leading 1-2 until the last lap... Jack: “I was about a mile from the finish when the car started to run on two cylinders. I was shocked. I just couldn't believe it...” He was out of fuel.

While Bruce went on to score his maiden GP victory by just 0.6sec from Trintignant's fast-finishing Walker Cooper. Jack pushed his car the final 400 yards in stifling heat.

Sweat-soaked, heart-pounding, Jack levered his Cooper past the flag - and flopped to the ground - but he was now World Champion driver.

So, 60 years ago - game, set and match to Cooper-Climax. ●



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# Spin it to win it

Last year Peter Hickman raised the Isle of Man TT lap record to 135.45mph, by spinning the rear tyre more than the roulette wheel. On the eve of this year's race, and for the first time, he explains to **Mat Oxley** exactly how he does it

**N**OT LONG AFTER PETER Hickman won last year's Senior TT on the Isle of Man he commentated over onboard footage of his sixth and final lap, during which he raised the outright lap record to 135.45mph in his successful pursuit of arch-rival Dean Harrison.

Hickman took 16 minutes and 42 seconds to complete the 37.75-mile lap aboard his Smiths Racing BMW S1000RR superbike, a pimped-up road bike that nudges 200mph on the straightest sections of the Mountain course. This layout was first used in 1911, when nascent motorcycles required pedal assistance to climb the steeper inclines.





Only 20 riders have lapped the TT course at over 130mph. Hickman says the key lies in the control of the rear wheel

The film is the usual beyond-belief onboard TT lap: Hickman rocking on at frankly ridiculous speeds that your brain cannot quite compute. Surely, the video is on fast-forward? No, it isn't.

Most of the course is ridden between 150 and 190mph, the sense of speed accentuated by the narrow country roads bordered by houses, trees, drystone walls and hedges.

This cannot be normal, but for a top TT rider it is exactly that - 20 riders have now lapped the course at over 130mph. However, there is something different about Hickman's Senior-winning lap. He's on full throttle, wringing the BMW's neck, its engine making



a hellish 13,000rpm din; then at some corners the revs rise wildly. The bike is breaking traction and spinning its rear tyre. Hickman is obviously overdoing it, on the verge of losing control. But in fact, he's not. He is purposely creating the wheelspin with his right wrist to make the bike oversteer, so he can get through corners faster.

Every few years someone raises the level at the TT by finding new ways of attacking the course, often using risky techniques perfected on short circuits, where errors aren't so costly. Motorcycle racers have been using the rear wheel to steer through corners since 'King' Kenny Roberts applied his

## SECRETS OF THE TT

dirt-track skills to asphalt in the 1970s; but this was at venues blessed with haybales and gravel run-off. Using wheelspin to create oversteer to make the difference through ultra-fast corners on the Isle of Man's unforgiving roads is something new. Hickman may not be the only rider doing this, but he does it better than anyone else.

"I use wheelspin to turn the bike," says the 31-year-old, who contested his first TT in 2014 and won his first two races last June. "I do it through a lot of the fourth-, fifth- and sixth-gear corners. At the end of the Mountain Mile there's a right kink which I go through absolutely flat-chat in top gear and I couldn't make that corner if I didn't slide the rear. I'd just go straight, because at that speed the bike doesn't want to turn.

"It's the same at Gorse Lea, one of my favourite [and one of the TT's most daunting] corners, I'm using wheelspin through there in fifth. Another one is through Crosby village at DJ's [where nine-times winner David Jefferies lost his life during the 2003 TT]. I do that flat in top gear, over 180mph, I don't even roll off a little bit and you can feel the whole bike slide and you can hear the tyre spin up on the exit. Again, you need the spin to make the corner. It's okay - I'm used to it, I plan to do it. I'm in control, and even when I get a slide I hadn't planned I've predicted it might happen, so I'm ready for it if it does happen.

"I use zero electronics - no traction control, no anti-wheelie - because we're not allowed any of that in British Superbikes and I want the bike to feel the same. BMW don't really like it - they say you need the electronics for safety!"

**H**ICKMAN IS ACCUSTOMED TO people questioning his sanity for racing a motorcycle down country lanes at close to the double ton. "I get called crazy a lot, but I don't think I'm crazy, but that's what makes crazy people crazy - they don't know they're crazy!" he laughs. "I don't think I'm mad. To me, the TT is just a calculated risk.

"When you line up at the start on Glencrutchery Road you know what you're putting yourself in for - there's massive consequences if you make a mistake. Whereas when I'm at Brands or some other BSB round I want to rip everyone's heads off and let them have it. At BSB you almost throw caution to the wind, whereas when you're racing on the roads you need more presence. A gung-ho approach doesn't work, you've got to calculate. I'm a very calculating person, but I don't overthink things either.

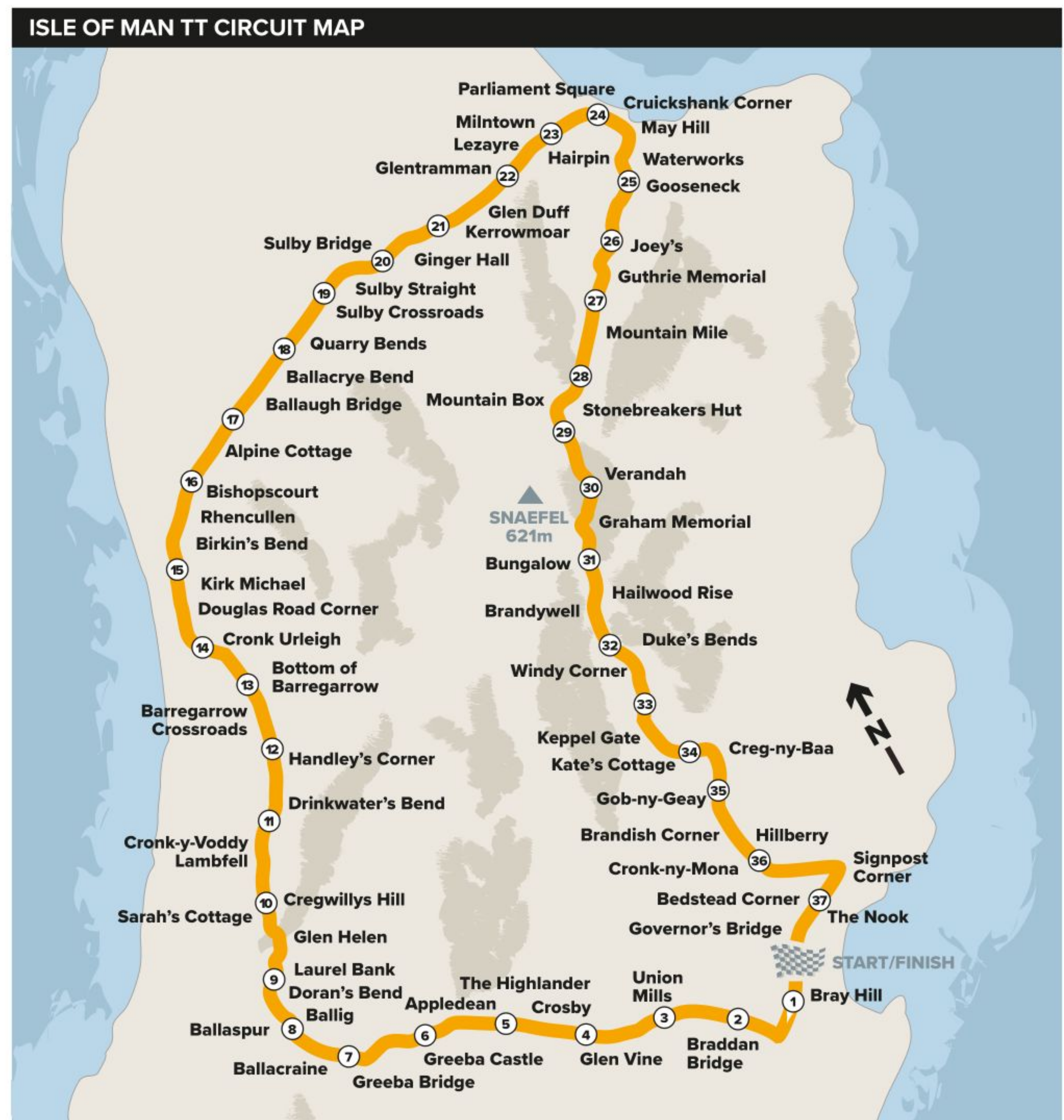
I'm very relaxed, so I guess that kind of demeanour helps, especially at the TT. If it's all good, I'm happy to push; if it's not, I'll just go, 'you know what, it's not right'. I like to build up to speed and I'm generally very smooth and very accurate. I can't make myself go fast when things don't feel right."

Most TT riders have parts of the course they love and parts they hate or fear. But not Hickman: "My favourite bit starts at the start line and finishes at the finish line. It's such a diverse course; there's nothing like it in the world. It's got fast bits, slow bits, very technical sections and some easier sections. There are places where the trees enclose the track completely so it's quite dark, also narrow and bumpy, then there are some really open parts, where it's quite wide and smooth. It's got everything you can think of, which is the one thing that makes it special above everything else. When I'm in the zone I'm completely at one with the bike and the circuit; there's nothing else in the world.

"There are some bits that I really look forward to and there are a few where I'm a bit kind of, urgh. I always enjoy Kirk Michael



To be fast you have to put the work in: Hickman drove multiple laps in a Ford Fiesta before his first TT event





His British Super Bikes campaigns aside, Hickman has carved a stellar career in road racing

- running through a little village at 170mph is pretty epic. Sulby straight is good, very, very fast with a flat-out kink at the end, where I was doing just over 196mph last year, so that's pretty cool going through there.

"As a rider I don't see any of it as scary. Even the bumpiest part of the course from Kerrowmoar to Iron Gates you can do flat-out on the superbike. It's always hard work and it does make you apprehensive. I've had moments there when I've done the same thing as every other lap and suddenly the bike does something you're not expecting, like it goes into a massive tank-slapper [when the handlebars whiplash from lock to lock] and there's nothing you can do about it."

How does a rider keep this side of disaster when that happens? "You hang on! And you don't roll off the throttle. That's the big thing - keep the gas on. It's a bit like motocross - keep the weight on the back wheel, so the front glides over the bumps. Through the really bumpy bits you don't even sit on the bike, you stand up, just an inch off the seat and you allow the bike to move underneath you. It probably helps that I'm six-foot two inches, so when the bike gets out of shape I can hang on because I've got a bit of leverage."

**I**NEVITABLY, HICKMAN HAS HAD A FEW scares at the TT. He had perhaps his biggest moment during the 2016 Senior race, through the missile-fast section between the villages of Kirk Michael and Ballaugh. "You come out of Kirk Michael, you do the Rhencullen jump, then you drop down the hill, go right and left through Bishops Court and then there's a flat-chat-in-sixth-gear right. That's where I hit my shoulder on the grass bank on the inside. It nearly pulled me off the back of the bike, which wasn't ideal."

The year before he had a huge moment coming down the mountain while approaching the mega-fast 33rd, a double left-hander with no run-off, just a steep drop down the hillside. "That one was really odd. I was running downhill, flat-out in top gear and as I cut across the crest I lost the front. I probably lost it for 50 metres, then I caught it again, went down two gears and chucked it onto the corner. I think the wind had changed and caught me, because after the race I spoke to John McGuinness and he had had exactly the same thing on the last lap."

Losing control of the front tyre on a motorcycle is a very different matter to losing control of the rear. Most racers can

save a rear-tyre slide, but when you lose the front you are usually in the lap of the gods; especially at 170mph.

Hickman doesn't push the front tyre at the TT, but he does at short circuits and at Macau, where he's won on three of his last four visits. "I use wheelspin to turn the bike just the same at Macau, plus I'm pushing the front tyre a lot harder, into pretty much every corner. Macau is more dangerous than the TT because it's all Armco barrier, but we do a lot less miles, so the risk is less. It's more of a short-circuit style there, which is why the short-circuit guys always dominate, not the road racers."

Until 2014, Hickman was an up-and-coming short-circuit racer, with no plans to risk it all between the walls and hedges. "If you had asked me a few years before 2014 I would've said I wouldn't do the TT. But I came to a point in my career where I was really struggling with BSB. I was a top-10 runner but unless I had a big cheque book I couldn't get a good ride, so I wasn't going to get anywhere because I don't come from a wealthy background. I came to a crossroads in my career - either go back to work as a plasterer, or try something different in racing. I just wanted to keep riding bikes, ●



Hickman contested his fifth Isle of Man TT in 2018, and says it takes longer to learn all of the track's secrets

TONY GOLDSMITH

because that's what I love doing, so I thought that doing the TT and other road races like the North West 200 [in Northern Ireland] would allow me to keep riding."

BSB pays no start money or prize money, whereas there can be plenty of both at the TT, NW200, Macau and other street races.

"In 2013 I earned £12,000 from my BSB team, plus maybe another 10 from sponsors. I had £15,000 debt, even though I didn't own anything - no car, no van, no bike, no house. So I stopped renting the house I was living in and started living in my motorhome, which I didn't even own. I lived in there for three years. I'd turn up at a BSB round a week early and leave a week late, using the free electricity and water, then I'd turn up at the next round a week early and so on. That's how I managed to get myself out of debt. Then I went to the TT in 2014, earned a bit of prize money and it snowballed from there. Last year my prize money from the TT alone was £32,000, plus bonuses from helmets, leathers and so on; so the turnaround has been massive."

Conquering the Mountain course isn't all about talent and bravery. It's also about hard work and doing the knowledge.

"Last year was only my fifth year at the TT, and five years isn't a long time at all. McGuinness started in 1999 and has done almost 60,000 miles there! I was fast straight away but I did a lot of homework. I watched lots of onboard videos and between January and April 2014 I made seven trips to the Island: always two days, hired a Ford Fiesta

and drove round and round. So that was seven trips, five laps on the first day and five laps on the second day at an hour a lap, which makes 70 hours. I'm still the fastest newcomer - I did 129.1mph on a superstock [showroom spec] bike in the 2014 Senior.

"Learning the track isn't always easy. That section from Kerrowmoar to Iron Gates is all about being on the gas, but a lot of it is blind, so you're learning and you can't see where you're going, so you roll off and then you have a massive tank-slapper because you

be. I think that's a good way to approach it. For some road racers the TT is everything, so if they f\*\*k up, their year is done. For me I've always got BSB."

And despite the risks of the TT, Hickman still finds it easier than riding at Brands Hatch, Snetterton or Donington.

"A lot of road race fanatics don't like to hear it, but for me the style of riding at the TT is easier than at BSB. Short-circuit racing is really hard, which is why most road racers don't go well at BSB. You don't attack corners

## "Lose the front at 170mph and you're in the lap of the gods"

hit a bump you shouldn't have hit, which then makes everything even worse. Once you've learned it, you go, 'right, I need to do this flat-out and it's better'. The thing is that you learn something new every lap, even after five years."

Despite his TT successes and the accompanying worldwide acclaim, Hickman still considers himself more of a short-circuit rider than a road racer.

"Everyone thinks the TT is my biggest thing, but it isn't. I concentrate on BSB; I go road racing for fun [and no doubt for the fun that money can buy] and what will be will

so aggressively at the TT, but that's where my short-circuit skills really help me, because I can attack some corners more aggressively than a lot of road racers. The difference is that I was a BSB rider before I was a TT rider, so it just comes naturally.

"I push 100 per cent at short circuits, and I push 100 per cent at the TT but it's a different type of 100 per cent. I'm trying really hard, but it's not the same. I take a step or two back from how I normally ride at BSB. Easy isn't the right word but that's how I feel - to me it's just cruising."

And that's just his opinion! ●



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# *Retropower*

Car makers' design studios buzz with ideas, most of which never reach the street. Imagine if someone released the creative brakes....

**Gordon Cruickshank** explores a company which turns fantasies into metal

PHOTOGRAPHER **LYNDON McNEIL**

**C**ALLUM SEVIOUR LIKES talking. It's just as well, as there's a lot to say - like why and how this Mercedes saloon has Corvette power under the bonnet and a whisky compartment inside, how come that Camaro boasts independent rear suspension, and why someone would spend Porsche money on a Nissan ZX. Nothing is normal here.

Don't be horrified. We have a long

tradition of specials in this country: just visit a VSCC meeting to see a Napier-engined Bentley or a V8-powered GN - cross-breeds of creativity, for the sheer pleasure of petrol power. So no-one should be shocked by the sort of transplant going on here just because these cars are generations younger. Cutting out the heart of a car with historical importance would be a crime; picking and mixing parts of mass-produced vehicles to make something fresh is creative, and I think it's inspiring. ●



“A certain level of OCD is  
desirable to work here”

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Callum Seviour behind the low-rider Kaiser Merc, above. Top left, design for the Camaro engine bay; below that the trackday Imp – which will reside in the owner’s living room. Left, a flat-front Gp1 RS2000 with only 15,000 miles under its harnesses

I’m always impressed by the immense efforts of marque restorers to maintain originality and I applaud the research and skill this requires. But there’s room for invention too, whether it’s fresh motive power or a radical new interior, and that’s the niche Retropower has formed for itself. Its two leads, brothers Callum and Nat Seviour, are lucky in that there’s a wave of interest in this ‘restomod’ area currently, people who admire a classic vehicle’s looks but not its period department. And to show that such people aren’t lairy wideboys, I give you Jaguar design supremo Ian Callum and his substantially modified Mk2 Jag, and Prof Gordon Murray, who loves a Mk1 Escort but feels it needs a little tickling up.

So he sent one to Retropower, and I’m in its large undistinguished building in a Leicestershire field while Callum describes the astonishing amount of Ford being excised and replaced by RP’s ingenuity – for instance the bespoke independent rear suspension. Not to make room for steam-roller tyres – the car will run on 185s and look pretty standard. I could detail the big stuff underneath – the 2.3-litre Cosworth Duratec engine, Mazda six-speed gearbox, the 3in exhaust with catalyser, the reshaped

inner arches – but instead let me pass on what Callum is telling me about the details. This what excites him, and it’s what they’re good at. Example 1: the bonnet release will no longer project through the grille. Now it is perfectly disguised as part of a grille slat. They didn’t need to do that, but...

Example 2: a screen wash tank made to match the brake reservoir opposite, because Callum likes under-bonnet symmetry. “But it was too small, so we’ve installed a secondary tank disguised as a passenger foot rest. And I didn’t want extra pipes so we ran the vent tube up inside the feed pipe. And we made a press tool to indent the tank like those rally co-driver footrests...”

Example 3: “We’re 3D-printing a cover panel for the strut tops which lifts up to reveal harness mountings. Just in case Gordon wants that. But you won’t see it. It’s all about the things you can’t see.”

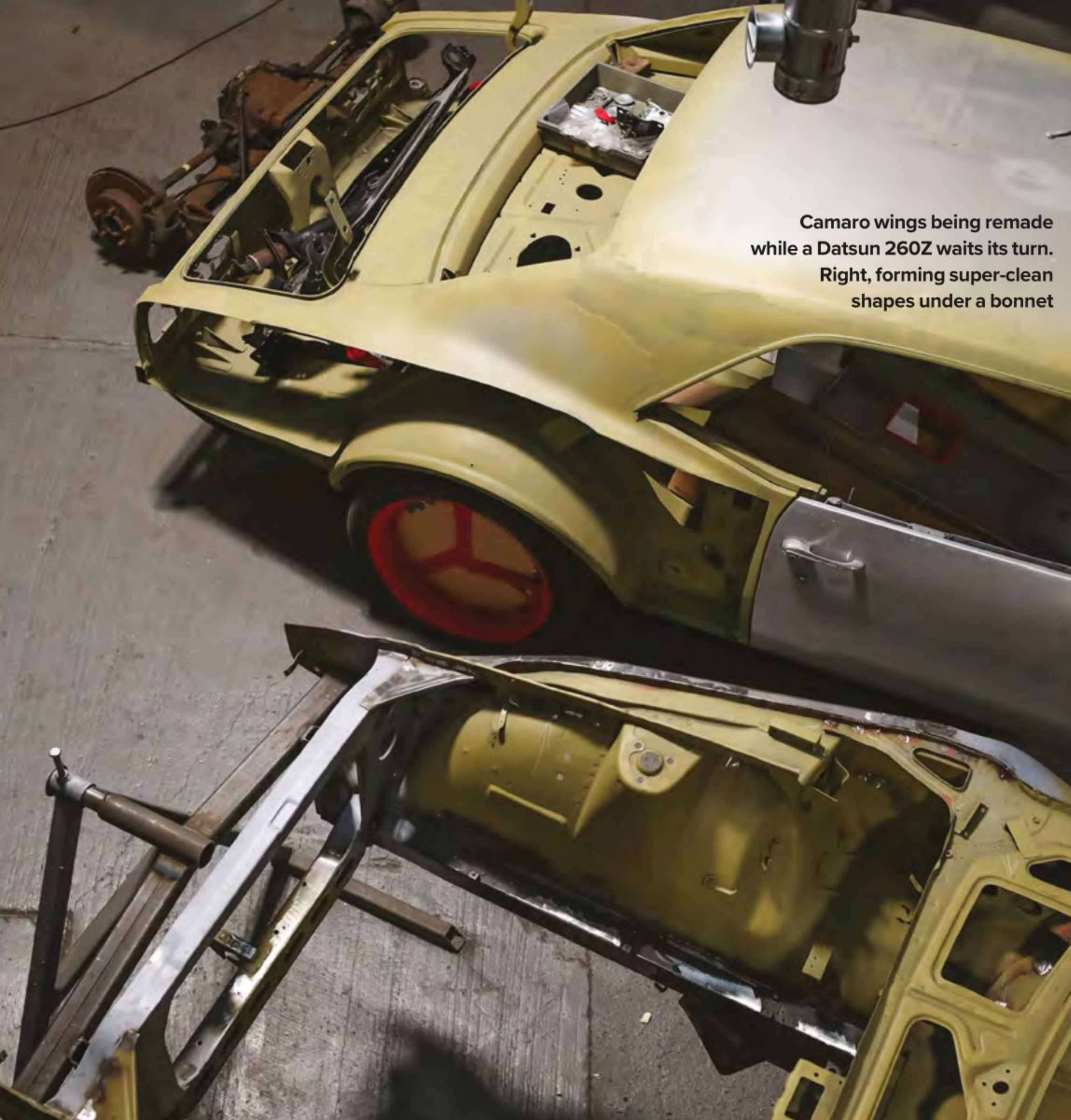
All this is stuff they’ve decided on themselves. “Gordon has given us a complete free hand,” says Callum. “He won’t even know about much of this until he sees it finished. He’s the dream client”.

It’s a long way from the firm’s early days, only 10 years back, when the brothers decided that their hobby of modifying cars

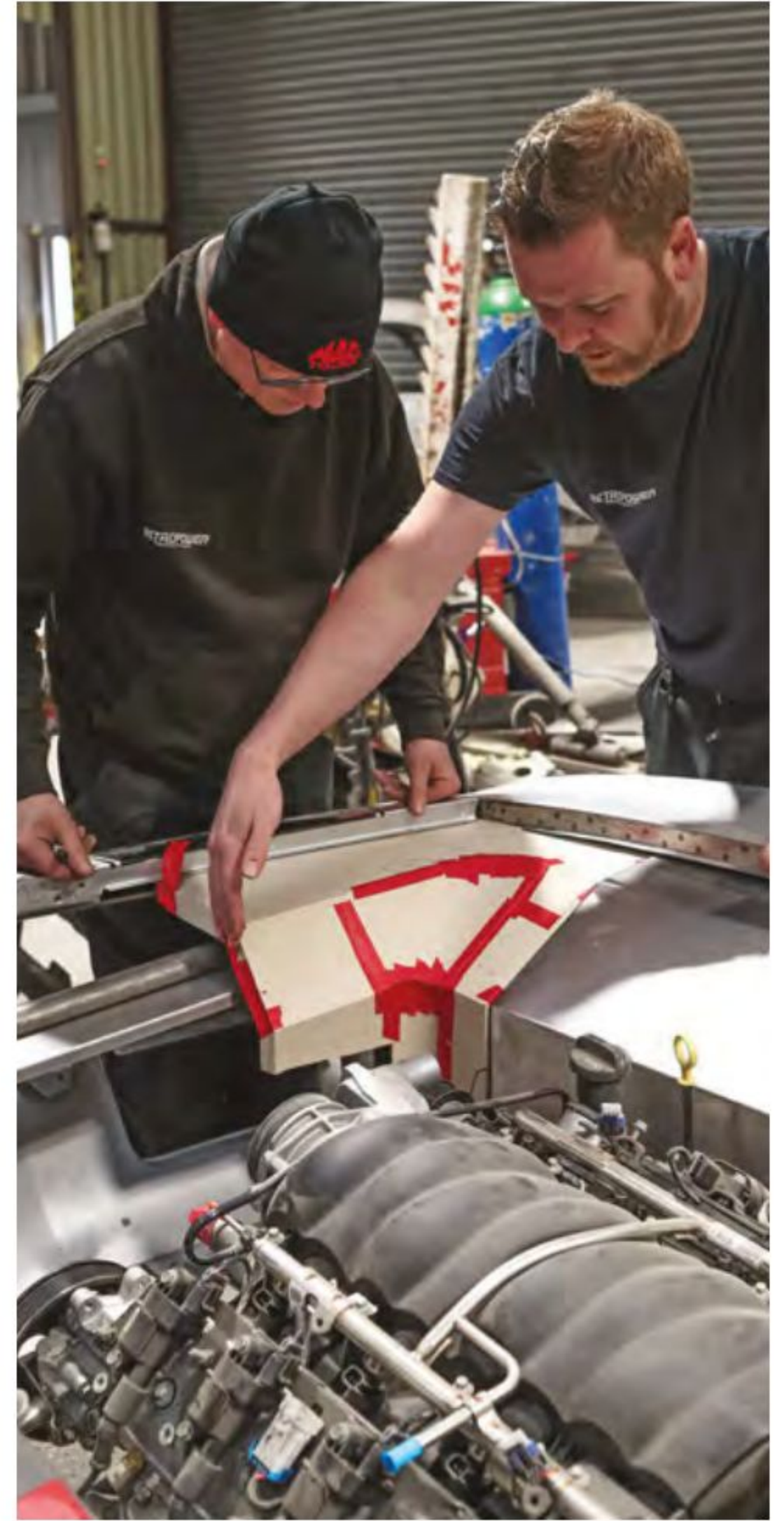
deserved to be the day job. It began with pepping up Vauxhalls and Opels; an Ascona 400 replica brought breakthrough attention in 2011, and there’s a Manta 400 here today with R33 Skyline mechanicals underneath. “We’ve come a long way,” says Callum. “Now we only do ground-up restorations or a full modification. We want every car that leaves here to be 100 per cent our work.”

**N**AT IS THE QUALIFIED automotive engineer who designs the suspensions and structures; Callum is the creative element in charge of design and assembly – and those invisible details. “Look at this,” he exclaims, leading me to the Mercedes 300 ‘stack-light’ saloon sitting limbo-low on its wheels due to the adjustable air kit on its Jaguar suspension. “We thought as we’ve got an air tank already, let’s use it,” says Cal. He presses a button and a sat-nav screen rises smoothly from the dash, hoisted by a tiny air cylinder. Up front is that LS3 ‘Vette motor, all 480bhp of it; inside, a custom console runs front to back containing 3D-printed switch panels, wireless phone charging and that vital whisky compartment. This is called “The





Camaro wings being remade while a Datsun 260Z waits its turn. Right, forming super-clean shapes under a bonnet



Kaiser', and even the stock dials now have 'Kaiser' printed within. It has a partner too, a 300CE coupé for the same client, currently having its undercarriage cut away for the same motor. "It's the perfect 'crate' engine," says Cal. "Huge power, rock-solid reliability."

It's not all V8s: here's a Stratos replica with a supercharged Alfa Romeo V6 aboard. I recognise the body colour - the same golden bronze as the stunning Stratos Zero prototype. They've constructed a rear panel repeating that show car's dramatic chevrons and copied its door-mounted control panel, while the Stratos dash binnacle disappears in favour of a single central screen. Flank-mounted air in-and-outlets for twin air coolers confirm this makes no pretence to be a strict copy. One-off parts are no problem as they're created digitally - Nat reckons that he's quicker with CAD than paper sketching - and then 3D-printed, machined, plasma-cut or fabricated to suit.

Nearby, an NSU Ro80 shell: surely of all cars this deserves a new engine, yet this one will retain its Wankel rotary. "It'd make a great electric conversion," says Cal, slightly wistfully. "Tons of room for batteries. But we've been approached about doing an electric Citroën SM. That'd be a cool project."

I get the impression that it's solving problems that entuses Cal and Nat, although plenty of those problems are self-inflicted. Take this '68 Chevrolet Camaro: I can see that none of the metalwork in the engine bay was shaped by GM. Inner arches, engine rails (yes, another LS3), suspension mounts and even the bulkhead are all specially fabricated, and again the scheme involves perfect under-bonnet symmetry - Cal lays out a sheaf of sketches showing the look he wants, including the restrained colour scheme for what the Americans call the 'ProTouring' look, and an interior schemed by (shhh) a moonlighting professional car designer. But RP has another design weapon too - Dean McConnel, who operates separately as Trimworks. Although independent, he's in the same building and acts as RP's in-house trim specialist. We'll come back to him another time.

Leaning over the Camaro wing, Stu cuts an opening for another tailor-made reservoir. "I'd like to lead-fill round it when it's in," Cal tells him. "I don't like to see gaps."

"A certain level of OCD is desirable to work here. But it leads to more expense, and then I have to explain it to the customer..." He reckons £100,000 is a baseline rate.

Other projects abound: there's a glowing yellow Imp, almost standard to look at but braced inside to cope with the adjustable suspension and 1200cc motor. That Nissan Sunny is getting 'widebody' styling which they sculpted in foam before taking profiles for the metalwork, while the Giulietta and Beetle are here for conventional restoration.

Call them restomods or modern specials, what comes out of here is genuinely inventive - check the website to admire its reworked Alfa Giulia GT or the highly enhanced V8 XJC. Me, I've been scheming some cross-breeds of my own - 4WD Matra Rancho? Front-engined Fiat 850 coupé? If the electric SM comes off there'll be a homeless front-drive Maserati V6; I bet they could make that fit in an Ro80... Damn. I think I've caught the Retropower bug. ●

#### THE ESSENTIALS

- **Name** Retropower
- **Specialisation** modified cars
- **Established** 2010
- **Number of employees** 9
- **Premises** nr Wykin, Leics
- **retropower.net**



# TALACREST

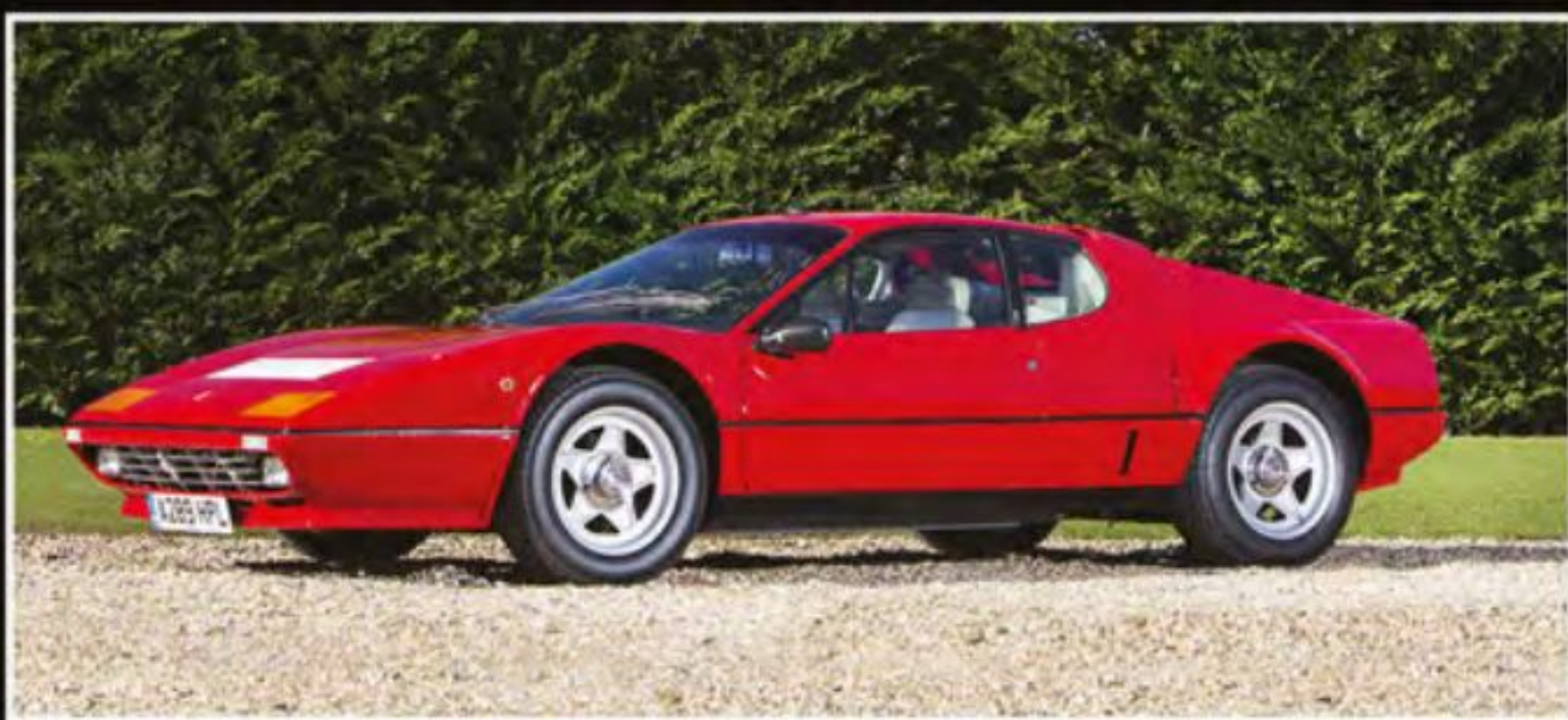
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# SPEEDSHOP

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This 906 competed at Le Mans in 1966, with owner Robert Buchet driving

## The last street fighter

Porsche's development curve during the 1960s was steep, and the 906 was a milestone model, says **Simon de Burton**

**A**LTHOUGH PORSCHE'S 904GTS enjoyed spectacular success almost from the time of its launch in 1964 with victories in circuit races and rallies everywhere from Sicily to Le Mans and from Spa to Watkins Glen, within two years the model was being rapidly overshadowed by Ferrari's Dino 206 - most notably in the prestigious European hillclimb championship

At the time, Ferdinand Piëch - the famous scion of the Porsche dynasty who went on to run the Volkswagen Group - was cutting his teeth as a development engineer at Porsche HQ in Stuttgart, where his first major project became the creation of a 904 successor.

Although similar to its predecessor in having a rear, mid-engine layout, a glassfibre body and sharing brakes, suspension and wheels, the 906 was significantly different

thanks to a tubular (rather than box-frame) chassis, and a markedly more powerful motor - most used the 2-litre 220bhp 901 six-cylinder unit - and more aerodynamic, unstressed bodywork that was meticulously hand-layered instead of being sprayed.

The changes meant the 906 weighed 113kg less than the earlier car, handled more nimbly and had a top speed around 170mph.

To meet the demands of the new FIA Group 4 category, just 50 customer 906s ◀

were produced together with 15 works versions, with the model proving to be the marque's last true street-legal racing car and quickly living up to its expectation by winning its class against the old 904's Dino nemesis on its debut in the 1966 24 Hours of Daytona.

Numerous other impressive competition performances, together with its rarity and 'icon' status, have combined to make the 906 among the most desired of all sports racing cars and one that is welcomed at top-level historic events around the world.

Rarely, however, do examples appear for sale - meaning this one is unlikely to hang around for long, despite its hefty price tag.

Carrying chassis number 114, the car was completed in April 1966 for its first owner Robert Buchet - the celebrated French race and rally driver and double Rome-Liège-Rome winner - who immediately took his new 906 to victory at that month's Montlhéry Coupe de Vitesse.

An attempt at the Le Mans 24 Hours proved less successful for Buchet, who retired after nine hours while running in 18th place (although works 906s finished fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh). But the comprehensive history file being sold with 114 shows that it competed in a further dozen races in '66, two of which it won, and no fewer than 14 the following year with five victories to claim the French track championship.

Indeed, the car boasts one of the fullest race records of any 906, having taken part in a verified 37 events at the hands of two



Porsche 906 chassis 114 has a comprehensive competition history to go along with it



further owners between 1968 and 1970 and winning the latter year's French hillclimb championship title.

Two quiet decades followed, after which the car was comprehensively restored during the mid 1990s by competition Porsche specialist Dieter Eissner, since when it has become a regular sight at major historic motor sport events such as the Tour Auto, Le Mans Classic, Goodwood Revival and Targa Florio Classic.

So, if you have 1.5 million euros burning a hole in your flameproof race suit - now you have something to spend it on.

To see - and hear - 114 in action, watch 'Porsche 906E Le Mans Classic 2012' on YouTube.

**1966 PORSCHE 906. €1,550,000**  
On offer privately from Darron Coppin  
brokerage, Dorset, UK  
email: [darron@svencycles.com](mailto:darron@svencycles.com)

## In the market for a street legal racing car?

A competition pedigree doesn't mean they can't be enjoyed on the road



**1983 LANCIA 037 RALLY GpB. £POA.** Ex-Jolly Club Racing and assigned the Italian registration 'TO Y70772', it came second in the 1983 Targa Florio Rally  
[girardo.com](http://girardo.com)



**1951 JAGUAR XK120 OTS. £99,995.** Jaguar's first true sports car quickly became a 1950s icon of speed. This 3.8-litre model has been hillclimbed regularly  
[hexagonclassics.com](http://hexagonclassics.com)



**1977 LANCIA STRATOS Gp4. €675,000.** Complete with an extensive competition history, this Stratos has just undergone a huge restoration and is UK registered.  
[markdonaldson.com](http://markdonaldson.com)



**1999 AC COBRA SUPERBLOWER. £169,995.** Carroll Shelby's original collaboration with AC produced a truly iconic race car for the road. The Cobra remains the king of cool  
[hexagonclassics.com](http://hexagonclassics.com)



williamloughran Ltd.



2018 Ferrari 812 Superfast (LHD)

£POA

Rosso Corsa with Nero leather interior, 20" painted alloys, suspension lifter, passenger display, 216 miles



Un-registered Porsche 911 (991.2) GT3 RS (LHD)

£POA

Bianco white with black Alcantara, Weissach pack, sports chrono pack, front axle lifter, VAT Q, del miles



2015 Porsche 911 (991) GT3 PDK (LHD)

£129,950

White with black Alcantara, Clubsport package, front axle lifter, 20" GT3 alloys, sport seats, 126 miles

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SELLER RECEIVED £58,560



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The 'Double Bubble' bodywork is signature Zagato, and gives the little Abarth a stunning finish



AUCTION HERO

## Zagato's pocket rocket

Want to get in on the Italian design house's centenary? Take a look at this Fiat-Abarth 750 GT, says **Simon de Burton**



**T**HIS YEAR'S CENTENARY OF THE founding of famed Italian coachbuilder Zagato was never going to go unnoticed by either the auction houses or the owners of Zagato-bodied cars hoping to sell theirs at an appropriate moment - so it comes as little surprise to see that RM Sotheby's consigned no fewer than four examples weeks in advance of entries closing for its sale.

The most recent is the 2019 Aston Martin Vanquish Zagato shooting brake number 12 (of 99) that failed to sell when it appeared with a 1 million euro high estimate at Artcurial's Retromobile auction in February. It will be up for grabs again at Villa Erba with 'no reserve', while other Z-badged offerings will include a 1990 Ferrari 348TB 'Zagato Elaborazione' and a 1955 Fiat 8V Coupé.

The latter is set to be one of the highlights of the sale, being a superbly restored example of the 26 built and one that retains its original and glorious 2-litre V8 engine.

Such is the desirability of an 8V coupé in this condition that this one is expected to sell for as much as 1.8 million euro - but for a fraction of that it should be possible to



acquire another 1950s Zagato which is even prettier and possibly more fun to own and drive. The car in question is this delightful 1959 Fiat-Abarth 750 GT that, with a signature 'double bubble' roof extending all the way down to its rear engine cover, is about as 'Zagato' as it gets.


This was the era in which Italy's punitive cubic capacity-based automobile taxation system forced the car industry to get creative by making small-engined small cars as good-looking and as entertaining as possible.

And there were few better results than

those achieved by combining Carlo Abarth's tuning skills with Ugo Zagato's genius for creating streamlined, lightweight coachwork of the type seen here.

Although built on a Fiat 600D floorpan, the Abarth 750GT Zagato was more or less bespoke, with the bijou bodywork being made entirely from aluminium and the Fiat engine being bored, stroked, tuned and - in this case - fitted with a lightweight 'Mille Miglia' crankshaft to create a 42 horsepower screamer that is good for around 90mph.

Thought to have been raced in the US in period, the car remained in America until 2014 when it returned to Europe and joined the fine collection of Italian Abarth connoisseur Luciano Bertolero who subjected it to a concours-standard nut and bolt restoration.

If you, too, think small is beautiful, this example of Zagato's art could be yours for €100-200,000. 

On sale at RM Sotheby's Villa Erba, Italy auction on May 25

**"Small Italian cars had to be as good looking as possible"**

**1968 McLAREN M1B CAN-AM. SOLD FOR £172,500. BONHAMS, GOODWOOD.**

Of the 30 or so McLaren M1B/Elva MKII Can-Am cars built, this was one of several to have scant competition history. Privately owned in the US, it was brought to Europe where the discovery of an oil pressure problem was cured by fitting a new engine. A refurbished gearbox was installed. So whoever bought it either has a nicely sorted car – or a rather troublesome machine.



**1958 BERKELEY SPORTS SE328. SOLD FOR \$7,700. R.M. SOTHEBY'S, FORT LAUDERDALE.**

Proof that bargains still exist, this 328cc Berkeley went for less than half its low pre-sale estimate. Ideal for those hoping to release their inner hippy, the psychedelic bodywork was the result of an easily-removable wrap.



**2006 SHELBY 427 S/C COBRA. SOLD FOR \$77,000. RM SOTHEBY'S, FORT LAUDERDALE.**

Not only was this in superb condition, finished in a great colour and trim combo and powered by a 427ci, supercharged V8, it is believed to have originally belonged to Carroll Shelby himself – and still carried his signature on the dashboard.



**1977 FORD ESCORT MKII RS2000 X-PACK. SOLD FOR £39,960. CLASSIC CAR AUCTIONS.**

Classic 'fast Fords' have soared in value and it's surprising this didn't fetch more. This was one of the original Tricentral cars used to publicise the Essex tuning firm's bolt-on bits that increased performance and enhanced appearance.



# Spring bloomers

The subsidence of winter brings fresh opportunities to grab a bargain project

**W**ITH SPRING HERE, our attentions are turning more to using old cars and motorcycles than simply dreaming about them and reading about them - and in many cases that means addressing the urge to buy something else even if, like me, you could spend the rest of your life fixing the basket cases you already own.

Sensibly, the auction houses take advantage of the serial classic buyer's vulnerability by staging sales at season openers such as the Goodwood Members' Meeting, the Techno Classica Essen and the April Classic Bike Show in Stafford.

The sap-rising enthusiasm with which such events are met means they are not entirely representative of what the market holds for the year ahead but, from what we've seen so far, it seems that a certain equilibrium has already set in. The best cars are still highly sought after, the days of people paying mad money for those that aren't worth it are all but gone and the 'right' classic motorcycles are definitely on the up.

What's most reassuring is there are still plenty of fun cars and motorcycles around that don't cost a fortune - and some of the best bargains seem to be race cars. In that area, however, the initial purchase is merely the tip of a financially draining iceberg - but sometimes the urge is impossible to resist. **o**





**1988 FERRARI TESTAROSSA. SOLD FOR £29,415. CLASSIC CAR AUCTIONS.**

While this Testarossa might appear a bargain, the buyer must have had the heart of a lion. Presented in essentially abandoned condition, it appeared to need 'everything' doing. Optimistically, it even had new tyres.



**1969 LOTUS TYPE 59 F3. SOLD FOR £63,250. BONHAMS, GOODWOOD.**

Seems like a bargain. It was driven in period by Bev Bond who, in 1970, beat James Hunt's Lotus 59 into second place in the British Empire Trophy. It also had the distinction of playing the role of Hunt's F3 car in the film *Rush*.



## MAX GIRARDO

**"The star lot, a Mercedes Gullwing, didn't arrive due to customs issues"**

Goodwood's first event of the year, the Members' Meeting, is an occasion not to miss with its intimate, enthusiast-driven atmosphere. The associated Bonhams sale featured more niche, lower-priced vehicles than the Festival of Speed or Revival auctions, but this didn't affect the numbers much – even though the star lot, a Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing, didn't arrive due to customs issues.

It was business as usual in the Bonhams tent, with auctioneer Jamie Knight efficiently selling cars to the tune of more than £5 million. The highlight was a Bentley 4½-litre tourer, which didn't sell on the block but subsequently found a new home for £525,000. It later transpired that the car had some very desirable Le Mans upgrades carried out by the factory in period, which were on the build sheets but weren't mentioned in the auction catalogue. This was a significant oversight, because history really does make a difference.

Techno Classica Essen followed a week later, with Coys and RM Sotheby's hosting sales. About 20 years ago Coys held auctions at the Nürburgring Oldtimer Grand Prix – a great occasion – but German auctions have slowly started to decline. With this in mind, many believed RM Sotheby's was brave to step into such a market, but Essen was an excellent venue with a strong

international attendance. Rather astutely, RM Sotheby's chose cars that reflected the show and had more than 200 on offer, mostly without reserve.

The firm's Youngtimer Collection had everyone talking and featured a few surprises, such as the 1979 Mercedes-Benz 500 TE that had been tuned by AMG. Interestingly, bidders didn't find a Bugatti Veyron or Lamborghini Diablo attractively priced – perhaps they weren't suited to the venue.

The real talking point wasn't the sales total – €18,446,530 with an 83 per cent sell-through rate – but three Lancias, a Stratos, an 037 and a Delta S4, the latter of which fetched €1m. Unfortunately, I have to break the news to S4 Stradale owners that not all of your cars would sell for as much.

Next on the calendar for RM Sotheby's is the biennial Villa Erba sale, and as I write this the final few consignments are being finalised. The tone of the sale will be very different from that of Essen, with a limited number of high-quality consignments hand-picked for the venue.

**Max Girardo is the founder of classic car specialist Girardo & Co. Before that he spent 20 years in the classic car auction world, where he was the managing director and head auctioneer at RM Sotheby's**

## Max's top picks coming up this month



**BONHAMS**

### 1992 WILLIAMS FW14B

It might be a little early to select a car from Bonhams' Goodwood Sale, but I'm sure many people will remember this GP winner dominating with Nigel Mansell in 1992.



**RM SOTHEBY'S**

### 1957 PORSCHE 550A

These little Porsches have garnered good interest of late. The value of more modern 911s has fluctuated, however, so will the 550 remain strong?



**RM SOTHEBY'S**

### 1959 FIAT-ABARTH 750 GT DOUBLE BUBBLE ZAGATO

This choice is a purely personal one, as I had one of the most memorable drives of my life in one of these. See also our Star Car on page 143.



## Buying guide BMW M3 (E30)

The performance saloon that became a touring car racing icon

**T**HE RACING RECORD OF THE BMW M3, the original E30-shape version, makes for very impressive reading. This machine captured World, European, British, German and Italian touring car titles to name just a few. It triumphed in the Spa 24 Hours four times and its Nürburgring equivalent on five occasions. Not bad for a car that for much of its career was competing against machinery with significantly more power.

The M3 had its roots in the early 1980s, when BMW Motorsport engine guru Paul Rosche sliced two cylinders off the M1 sports car's straight-six powerplant to create a 16-valve four pot. What became the S14B23 engine found its way into a new car designed at BMW Motorsport with competition at the forefront of its mind. So much so that few panels, apart from the roof and the doors,

were carried over from a standard E30 shell.

The car was launched at the Frankfurt show in 1985 and the production of 5000 cars, necessary for Group A homologation, was completed for the 1987 season. It wasn't aimed at the top class of touring car racing, but the secondary division.

Yet so good was this class contender that

on its day it could beat the Ford Sierra RS Cosworth outright. In the World Rally Championship it even beat four-wheel-drive machinery - witness Bernard Béguin's famous 1987 Tour de Corse victory.

The arrival of the M3 coincided with what turned out to be a one-off season for the original World Touring Car Championship. The 'Bimmer' won outright four times over the course of the season - not counting the victory in the Monza opener lost in the scrutineering bay to a roof metal thickness snag - and Roberto Ravaglia claimed the title.

It was the first of many for both the M3 and Ravaglia. The Italian was at the vanguard of BMW's campaigns with the car, sealing his place as one of the all-time touring car greats with a further four titles across the European Touring Car Championship, the DTM and Italian Superturismo.

### BMW M3

- **Price new** N/A
- **Price now** £90-140,000
- **Engine** 2.3-litre, 16-valve straight-four
- **Power** 300bhp
- **Major titles** WTCC (1987), ETCC (1988), DTM (1989), BTCC (1988 & '91), Italian Superturismo (1987, '89, '90 & '91)
- **Verdict** Maybe the greatest touring car of all time



First released in the mid-1980s, the E30 M3 went on to win the 1987 World Touring Car crown



# Market view

The compact rocket is starting to soar in value

It's hard to imagine a car that embodies the modern classic sector more than the E30 BMW M3. It had all the elements of a future classic; a premium brand, sector-leading performance, and a motor sport heritage.

What was different about the E30 M3 was the timeframe in which the model came to the fore – prices started to climb at a higher rate than would previously have been expected for a late '80s/early '90s model that wasn't a Ferrari. What is unusual in the current market, where some prices have cooled, is that last October a fully restored M3 with immaculate history sold at auction for £135,000 – the highest price for a road going E30 M3 for the past five years and smashing the reserve of £85-95,000.

Examples of race-spec M3s at auction are a little rarer than road-going ones. However, far and away the highest price paid recently at auction for an E30 M3 (road or race) was the car used by Tim Harvey during the 1991 British Touring Car Championship.

It failed to sell when previously offered in 2011, with an estimate of £86-100,000. But in 2017 it went for a final sum of £146,250.

Another surprise in the E30 market is that the prices are far and away higher than those experienced in 2014 and 2015.

**Robert Johnson,**  
Classic and Sports Finance



**CLASSIC & SPORTS**  
FINANCE

But the M3 deserves its place as one of history's greatest touring cars for more than just the successes it garnered, in the hands of factory teams such as Schnitzer, Bigazzi and CiBiEmme. The car was also a bedrock of the privateer racing scene.

The M3 wasn't quite an off-the-peg racer, more a kind of Airfix kit without the decals. Everything else for a team to build up a winning touring car arrived in crates from Munich along with a bare shell.

"The kit came with everything down to the last washer," remembers Malcolm Swetnam, team manager on the Prodrive-run BMW squad that won the 1988 BTCC title with Frank Sytner. "And woe betide you if there was a washer left over at the end. You'd have

to find where that washer went. It was ruthlessly efficient, typically German."

BMW improved the M3 over time, always with racing in mind, with a trio of evo versions culminating in the Sport Evolution of 1990. Conceived for the DTM, the engine was taken out to 2.5 litres and big 18-inch wheels were also homologated.

The importance of the M3 stretched into its dotage. It was an important flag in the sand on the creation of the touring car landscape that followed on from Group A. When the category that eventually became known as Super Touring was formulated by the brains of the BTCC for the 1991 season, the M3 in two-litre spec provided much of the field for the fledgling category. ●

**"Everything to build one came in crates, down to the last washer"**



ONE CURRENTLY FOR SALE

## BMW M3 On the forecourt

The original winning M3 has come on the market, with a string of successes in Europe and New Zealand behind it

Johnny Cecotto, Gianfranco Brancatelli, Riccardo Patrese, Allan Grice, Denny Hulme and Paul Radisich: the list of drivers who raced this BMW M3 in period reads like a who's who of touring car racing. And that's not counting the likes of Jim Richards and Greg Murphy, who've taken the wheel during its second career in the historic ranks.

It is the first Group A M3, delivered and built by the Italian CiBiEmme squad for the 1987 WTCC. It won at the Monza series opener that year with Cecotto and Patrese, but lost victory to homologation irregularities. It kept the silverware when it won at Dijon and also racked up maximum points as the first WTCC-registered finisher at the Bathurst 1000.

By then it was in the ownership of Kiwi entrant Mark Petch, though still run by CiBiEmme. It would go on to have a successful career Down Under in the New Zealand Touring Car Championship, winning the title with Brett Riley in 1991.

The car has been active in historic circles during the ownership of tin-top collector Peter Sturgeon. He describes it as a "unique piece of touring car history".

"It's a significant car that's in highly original but also pristine condition," he says of the car now in its '87 Bathurst livery. "It's ready to go, and these are easy cars to run: you put fuel in, fire up and go."

It's up for sale through [racecarsdirect.com](http://racecarsdirect.com) at £230,000, although Singleton insists that he's in no hurry to sell.

**RaceCarsDirect. Tel: 07970 736644**  
[racecarsdirect.com](http://racecarsdirect.com)



ONE ALREADY RESTORED

## BMW M3 Sport Evo In the workshop

Restoring the 1992 Spa 24 Hours winner was a tough task, especially when preserving originality

This BMW M3 Sport Evo that ran at the Goodwood Festival of Speed last year was indistinguishable from the car that crossed the line to win the 1992 Spa 24 Hours with Steve Soper, Christian Danner and Jean-Michel Martin. The 2.5-litre ex-DTM racer had not run in anger since the Bigazzi-run entry, with Soper at the wheel, overhauled Eric van de Poele's Schnitzer car in the closing stages, and has now undergone a sympathetic restoration at leading BMW racing specialist Amspeed in Brackley.

"The car went straight into a museum in Macau and our brief was keep the originality rather than making it race-ready," says Amspeed boss Arran Moulton-Smith. "We tried to keep as many original parts as possible. For example, we just re-foamed the fuel tank rather than just putting a new one in, which you'd do if you were going to race it."

"The interior hasn't been repainted and we've gone through the wiring rather than fitting a new loom. We've tried to keep the mess, if you like, replacing bits of tatty old tape with the modern equivalent. It's all part of the car's history."

The bodywork had been repainted, which meant Amspeed had to recreate the Bastos colour scheme in which it won Spa.

"There weren't many images of the car, but we managed to get it bang-on," says Moulton-Smith. "We used Andy Bell at SDS Racegraphics, who is one of the best for livery restoration."

"It was a cool project."

**Amspeed, Brackley, Northamptonshire. Tel: 01280 701230**  
[amspeedracing.co.uk](http://amspeedracing.co.uk)

# 1969 FERRARI 365 GTC

Regarded as one of the finest Ferrari GT models. One of just 22 right-hand drive cars with an outstanding ownership history, delivered new in 1969 to Viscount Portman, subsequent owners included Sir Anthony Bamford and 250 GTO owners the Hilton Brothers



## THE CLASSIC



## MOTOR HUB

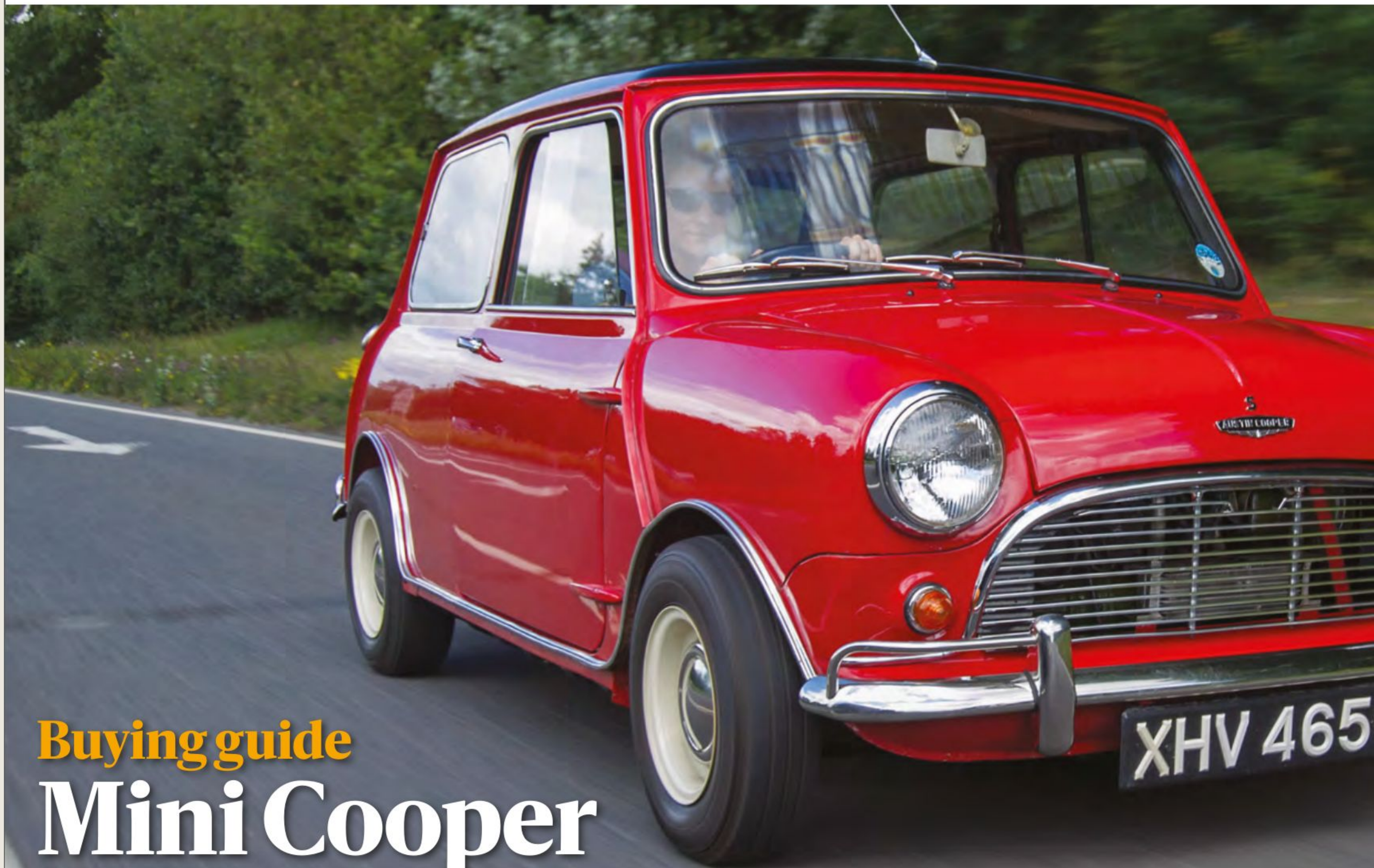
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# 1962 EX-WORKS O.S.C.A. 1600 GTS ZAGATO

A one-off Zagato-bodied car with rare twin-plug head raced at Le Mans in 1962 and in the US for the North American Racing Team. Also raced at the 1963 Sebring 12 Hours and at the 13th Annual Bahamas Speedwek



## Buying guide

# Mini Cooper

An economic runaround turned sporting star. The Mini did it all

**A**LEC ISSIGONIS DIDN'T LIKE old mate John Cooper's suggestion that his utilitarian creation was ripe for a performance upgrade and a future in motor sport. The Formula 1 team boss had seen the potential in a lightweight runaround with a wheel on each corner and his ideas found favour with the British Motor Corporation's board. The two friends then put their heads together and the Mini Cooper was born.

The hot versions of Britain's favourite small car built through the 1960s went on, of course, to enjoy great success on both rally stages and race tracks. But the Mini Cooper's legend extends beyond its competition pedigree. It did much to secure the place of the Mini in the collective psyche of the motoring world. Think the Swinging Sixties – George Harrison, Mick Jagger and

Steve McQueen all owned and were seen driving Coopers – and *The Italian Job*.

The original Minis – which weren't really called Minis at all, but Austin Sevens and Morris Mini-Minors instead – rolled off the production line in 1959 with just 34bhp from their 848cc A-series engines. The Cooper's longer stroke took the engine out to 997cc, and with twin SU carburettors and larger

inlet valves, its power was rated at a heady 54bhp on the release of the first cars in 1961.

The performance upgrade was coupled with a close-ratio gearbox, tiny disc brakes at the front developed by Lockheed and, at least on the car tested in the pages of *Motor Sport* by Bill Boddy, premium Dunlop Gold Seal tyres. That's not to forget proper door handles rather than the down to earth pulls of the first Minis.

Just 1000 cars were initially signed off in order to meet the Group 2 homologation requirements. Motor sport successes followed thick and fast: John Love won the British Saloon Car Championship title in 1962 and Pat Moss triumphed in the Tulip Rally in the Netherlands that same year.

The Mini Cooper S arrived in 1963, initially powered by a 1071cc engine and then a 1275 version, and with servo-assisted brakes thrown in.

### MINI COOPER

- **Price new** £679 7s 3d
- **Price now** £10-30,000
- **Engine** 997cc, 8-valve in-line four
- **Power** 54bhp
- **0-60mph** 17.1sec ● **Top speed** 88mph
- **Rivals** Renault 8 Gordini, Volvo 120
- **Verdict** A timeless icon that hit its mark on the race track and rally stage



  
 Read the full Bill Boddy test from 1961 on [motorsport magazine.com](http://motorsportmagazine.com)

The Mini Cooper enjoyed a production run that spanned the 1960s, '70s, '80s and even '90s

ALAMY



A British icon: the Mini Cooper had near-unrivalled handling due to its short chassis and wheels at each corner



It was the Cooper S that claimed three Monte Carlo Rally victories in the four years between 1964 and '67 with Paddy Hopkirk, Timo Mäkinen and Rauno Aaltonen. But the world knows it would have been four but for intransigent officialdom in the 1966 event. The Cooper S enjoyed success on the track as well, Warwick Banks taking the title in what was then called the European Touring Car Challenge in 1964.

The Cooper bowed out in 1971, temporarily as it turned out, when the single Mini performance model became the squared-off Clubman 1275GT, a car with blunt aerodynamics that was slower in a straight line than the Cooper S. But production of more humble round-nose Minis continued, and the timeless shape

**“Somehow, it survived Leyland and industrial unrest to be reborn”**

outlived the face-lifted version. Somehow, it survived through the 1974 nationalisation of a company that now had ‘Leyland’ in its title, then years of industrial unrest, and finally denationalisation of the Rover Group in 1988.

The Mini Cooper was reborn in the 1990s, first with a short run of cars dubbed the Mini Cooper RSP after the Rover Special Products skunkworks that got it back into production. Its success resulted in the Cooper S being put back into full production, now with fuel injection, in 1991.

The reinvigorated Mini brand found favour with BMW on its acquisition of Rover in 1994. The Cooper remained in production until 2000 and paved the way for an all-new Mini and, of course, hot Cooper versions. ▶

# Market view

Knowing your models is key to a wise purchase

From popping down the shops to racing in the Monte Carlo Rally and even appearing on the big screen, the classic Mini is one of the most versatile, well-known and collectable cars ever made.

With 5.3 million sold between 1959 and 2000, there’s one model that remains on the market radar – the Mk1 Mini Cooper.

Launched in September 1961, two distinct variations exist – the 1000 early homologation specials, rarely seen on the open market – and later examples, which were made until 1967.

We’ve seen a few later Mk1s in the classifieds and prices vary depending on where they were first delivered, whether they’ve been restored and what condition they’re in. For example, a fully restored UK, 1967 model with matching numbers is currently offered privately at £25,000.

Looking at the major auction houses, Silverstone Auctions sold a heavily rebuilt 1963 UK-registered example for £25,650 at its 2018 NEC Classic Motor Show Sale. In Paris, at this year’s Bonham’s sale, the team sold a 1963 French-registered example that was fully restored for £16,113.

Whether you have an early or a late car, you still own a piece of motoring history, and you can’t put a price on that. Or can you?

**David Bond, Managing Director, Footman James**





ONE CURRENTLY FOR SALE

Mini Cooper S

## On the forecourt

A ground-up restoration makes this Cooper from Blue Butts stand out from the crowd

A series 11275cc Cooper S that has been restored over an unknown period of time is up for sale at classic car dealer Blue Butts Chequered Flag for £49,995. The price reflects the high standard of the rebuild and the originality, reckons the company owner Tony Wood.

“Everything has been done to keep the car as standard as possible,” he says. “Lots of these cars have been modified over the years, but my mind tells me that original is better than modified these days, and it’s quite rare to find one like this.”

“When it came to us we had a new floor fitted at considerable expense and it really is a delightful car now. The seats have been re-trimmed in what we believe to be the original fabric, as has the roof lining, and the carpets are new but as they were when it left the factory.”

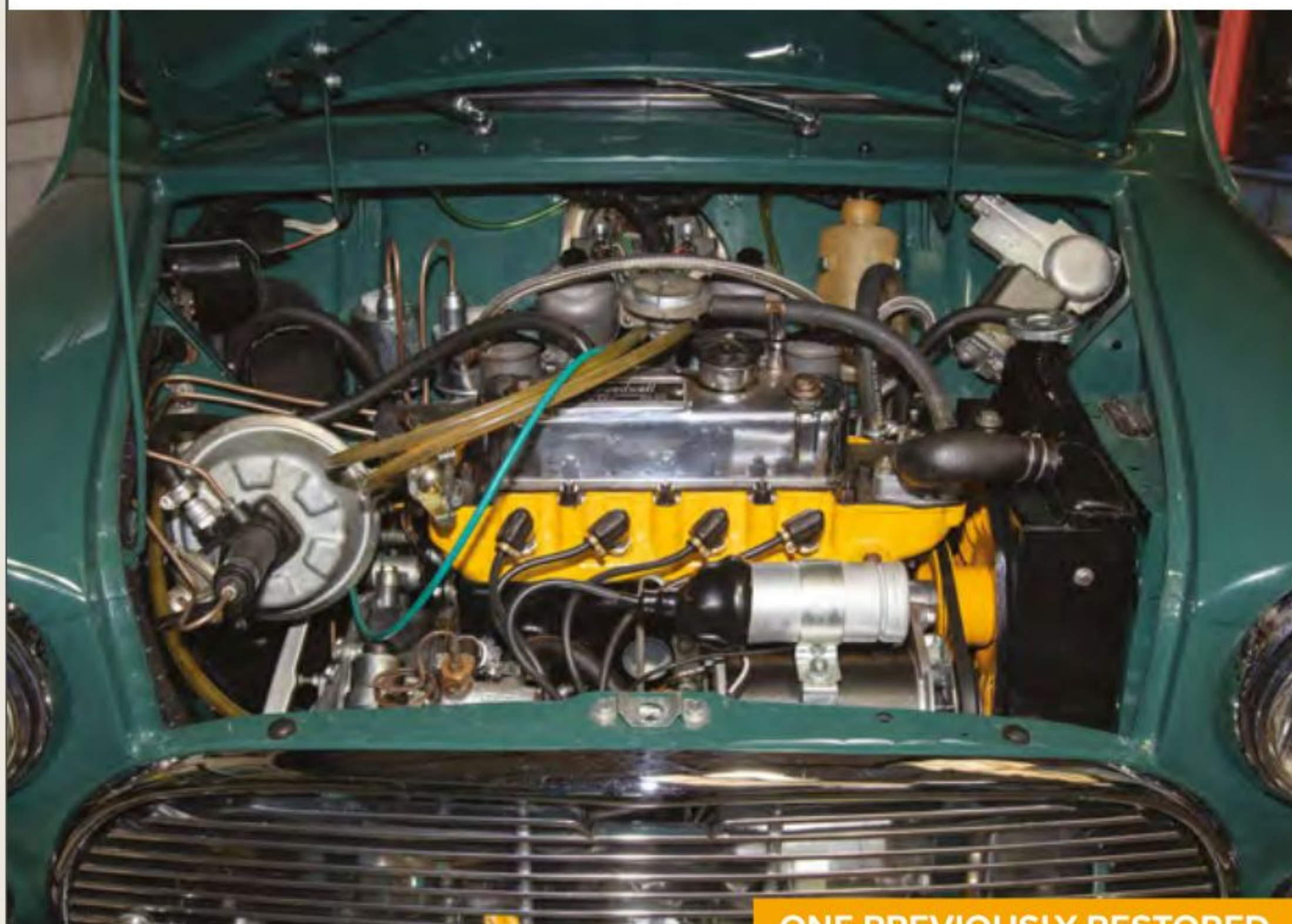
What it doesn’t have, admits Wood, is much in the way of history, save for the bills for the work commissioned by Blue Butts and a V5 registration document plus a heritage certificate with matching numbers.

“Like so many Minis there’s next to no history with the car,” he says. “No one bothered keeping the paperwork back in the 1970s and ’80s when the cars were more or less worthless. Provenance can be a nightmare with Minis.”

“From a sales point of view, a prospective owner will either like it or not. Someone looking for a Mini will see that it is a properly correct car. It’s a nice standard thing.”

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**Blue Butts Chequered Flag, Clitheroe, Lancashire.**  
Tel: 01200 446893. [classiccarbluebutts.co.uk](http://classiccarbluebutts.co.uk)



ONE PREVIOUSLY RESTORED

Mini Cooper S

## In the workshop

Even legends like Graham Hill became part of the Mini story, with aftermarket tuning options

Performance variants of any car inevitably draw the attention of the special tuners and the Mini Cooper was no exception. Speedwell Performance Conversions, for a time owned by Graham Hill, was just one of the companies that marketed an array of add-ons for the car, and it’s the aftermarket kit that makes this Mini so special — and valuable.

The 1966 D-reg Mini Cooper S restored by The Mini Works in East Lothian was given a makeover by Speedwell in period. The comprehensive kit included a revised cylinder head and camshaft, bigger carbs and an exhaust manifold that raised power to somewhere around the 90bhp mark.

Speedwell also fitted a twin-cannon exhaust and an oil cooler, while there’s also a rev-counter and competition bump stops. Restall seats and a Styla steering wheel completed what would have been a costly makeover by the original owner.

“Cars with these kinds of tuning kits are what collectors go for,” says Mini Works co-founder Simon Drew. “And they want them to have been put on in period, rather than added later to create a kind of phantom car.”

“The Restall seats were the best that money could buy and, with lumber support, quite trick for the time. The inside of car had just a sympathetic makeover to keep the originality.”

“It is all the original parts that make this Mini so desirable. We have a lot of cars through our doors, but this is one of the best we have built.”

---

**The Mini Works, Longniddry, East Lothian, Scotland.**  
Tel: 07764 196530. [theminiworks.com](http://theminiworks.com)





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**P.O.A**

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**P.O.A**



**1973 Porsche 911 Carrera 2.7 RS Touring (#0671)**

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**P.O.A.**



**1977 Lola T296 (HU87)**

The 1977 "Ultramar" works car with excellent history and few owners from new. 2 litre BDG engine. 2019 FIA HTP and spares.

**GBP 199,000**



**1959 Cooper Climax T49 Monaco (CM-6-59)**

One of 8 factory cars. Well known and fully sorted. Ex-Stirling Moss with continuous history from new. 2015 FIA HTP and good spares.

**P.O.A.**



**1961 Pre-production Jaguar E-type Competition Roadster (850020)**

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**P.O.A**

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### 1991 FERRARI F40

A very special UK supplied car with only 1,201m from new. An adjustable suspension, catalytic converter example with the kevlar weave evident all over the bodywork and the factory markings still in place. Complete with its original luggage, handbooks inc the service/warranty supplement, spare key & complete history file. Very few F40s can compare with this particular car for originality!.....£POA





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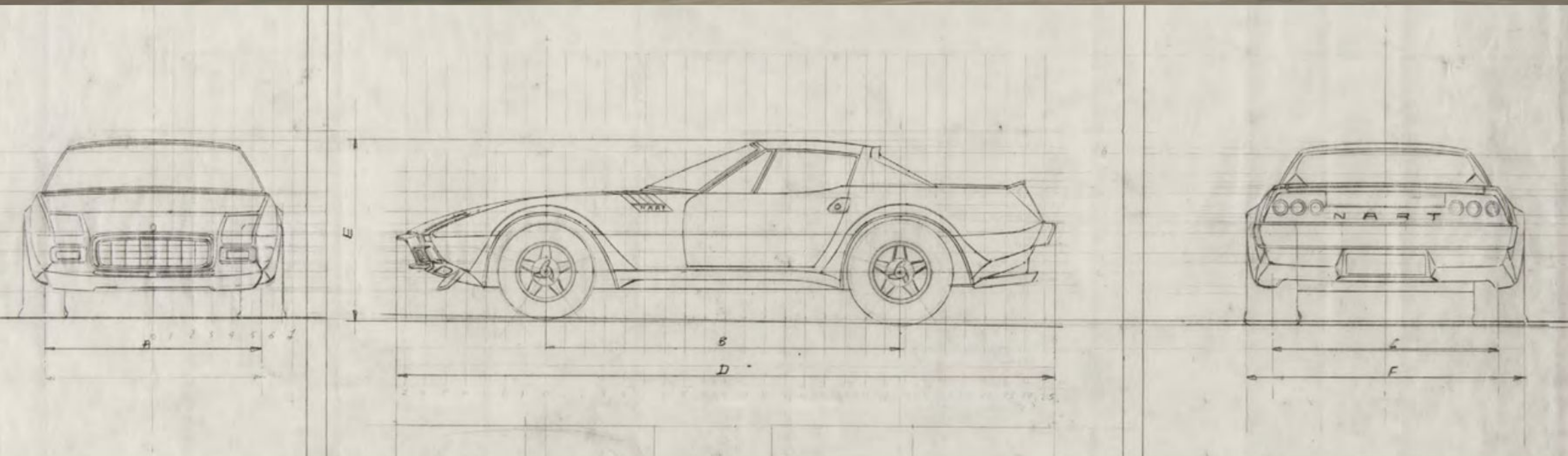
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# Classic Car Collection for Sale



**1951 JAGUAR C-TYPE - £395,000**

The Jaguar C-type is a one-of-a-kind competition sports car, dating from Jaguar's glory years. This particular model was hand-built quite some years ago to exacting standards with all the original Jaguar Browns Lane Chassis Blueprints. The current owners have raced it for the past three seasons across Europe, competing at the world's best race circuits, in 2017 she won the Motor Racing Legends RAC Woodcote Trophy Class Championship, notching up numerous wins and podium finishes. Never damaged but just some delightful racing patina showing race use. Bearing testament to her accuracy of build a full FIA/HTP passport was issued. This passport runs until 2025 making her eligible to participate in just about any historic motorsport race or occasion. Supplied with all fresh mechanicals, 30 minutes running since rebuild. Come with spare Sigma rebuilt engine. Plus gearbox, 2 spare differentials, new brakes, tyres on rims plus more. M.O.T Tested and includes cherished registration number PPW67 and race ready for this season. Ready to go - anywhere.



**1966 Ford Mustang V8 Convertible - £29,500**

Fabulous yellow coachwork with excellent black interior. Restored by her previous owner at great expense and kept in our heated storage facility since. Lightly used by us for trouble free trips to the Goodwood Revival and occasional family outings. Low mileage since restoration. In excellent visual and mechanical condition and a very nice purrr from her V8 power plant and Stainless-Steel exhaust.



**1967 Ford Mustang V8 Notchback - £19,950**

Unmarked pale blue coachwork with unmarked black interior. Used for occasional family trips and the odd journey to the Goodwood revival. Used at our villa for many years and kept in dehumidified triple garage in the Mediterranean until coming back to our shores. We have loved her and maintained her regardless of cost and she is running very well indeed.



**1986 Mercedes 300SL - £45,000**

Ordered by me new and always garaged and maintained regardless of cost. This Mercedes 300SL has covered a genuine 40,000 miles with a full history. The coachwork is unmarked metallic Padget Red and again with oatmeal interior with rear seats. She still retains her original hood which is as new, along with her original works hardtop. I think this is the finest unrestored 300SL available anywhere.



**1969 Jaguar E-Type Convertible - £85,000**

Unmarked British Racing Green coachwork restored some years ago by Martin Robey of Nuneaton. New tan leather interior and hood by Barton and Son of Luton. Kept at our villa in an air-conditioned garage for occasional use only in Mallorca and still only covered a genuine 67,000 miles from new. We loved her so much and brought her back to our home in England and at the same time converted her to right hand drive. Occasional trips to Goodwood and running beautifully. Complete with valuable cherished registration number.



*Sadly due to imminent loss of storage my classic car collection has to be sold*



**1973 De Tomaso Pantera - £89,000**

This superb and rust free Pantera has only covered 16,500 miles from new. She has had two owners and has always been garaged from new, and never driven in salty winter or wet conditions. Although originally white, I had her painted in the correct gulf racing colours which were applied at quite some expense. She has been very lightly used in my 10 years of ownership and has made a couple of trips to the Goodwood Members Meeting where she was much admired. An outstanding rust-free unrestored car with bullet proof mechanicals. Cherished number not included.



**1989 Ferrari Testarossa - £79,950**

Unbelievably beautiful in unmarked yellow coachwork with spotless black leather interior. I have just had her serviced with all-new cam belts by leading Ferrari specialists. I have had a report commissioned saying that she is corrosion free and an undamaged example that at the time of writing needs nothing doing to her. Although left-hand drive she has only covered 33,000 miles and is superb to drive. This represents exceptional value when considering values of right-hand drive examples that are not as beautiful.



**1959 Jaguar MK I Manual Overdrive - £89,000**

This car had been completely stripped and restored over a twenty-year period by the three very best pals and very professional coach builders for their own use and enjoyment. Sadly, old age crept in and one of the old friends passed away and the remaining two finished this masterpiece to the most exacting standards imaginable. Every nut and has been removed, restored or replaced. All mechanical items again were stripped and rebuilt. They fitted a fast road 3.4 engine along with overdrive gearbox and axle which are still running in as she has only covered 65 miles since this amazing work. I believe this to be the very best MKI around.



**1973 BMW CS 'L' Lightweight Race or Road Car - £135,000**

Just a few miles have been covered since a full mechanical and body restoration to road race spec. Full FIA/HTP roll cage, fuel cell, race seats, 6-point race seat belts. All lightweight wings, doors, bonnet and boot, plus Full 'Batmobile' rear wing and air scoop. A couple minor items to attend to in order acquire FIA/HTP papers to become a fully-fledged racing car. She has an outstanding and amazing performance. Fantastic road car or track day fun but also a very serious racing car. She comes with her expensive cherished registration number included.



**1962 Jaguar MK II Manual Overdrive - £49,000**

Quite some years ago I had this low mileage Jaguar stripped and restored over a 4-year period. Prior to me purchasing her she was kept in the same garage and unused for 34 years. Her mileage prior to me having her restored is a genuine 67,000 miles. I commissioned Jaguar restorers Flying Cats to strip the body and remove any possible corrosion and complete a full respray. I have fitted a fast road up rated 3.4 engine with large choke SU carburettors, a fully reconditioned overdrive gearbox and fully reconditioned axle. All new disc brakes, wheels, tyres, hubs, stainless steel exhaust system with manifold. All new chrome throughout, all new head lining and tan leather interior and much more besides. I have finished the running in process and completed two trouble free trips to the Goodwood Revival. She comes with her original log book and photographs before work started, and now ready for your enjoyment.



**1973 BMW 3.0 CSL - £165,000**

Fully restored by a well-known BMW main dealer and specialist and former owner now sadly deceased. In my collection for only a short while this car came to me after years of searching for a fully restored Batmobile. I have now covered about 500 trouble free miles in her and will be driving her to the next Goodwood Members Meeting. As you can see, she has beautifully unmarked white coachwork with spotless black interior. I haven't seen a better one in my search for one of these very rare cars. She always attracts a crowd when parked, and a very reluctant sale. She comes with her expensive cherished registration number.



**1969 Jaguar E-Type Series 2, FHC 2-Seater - £89,000**

This is a rebuilt car that stood for some years prior to her restoration by her former owner. All restoration work had been carried out regardless of cost. I have many bills and invoices to confirm the work. Approximately 6,000 miles have been covered since her rebuild and all is still parts running perfectly at the time of writing. The engine is to fast road spec, the body is unmarked British Racing Green and the interior unmarked light tan. She has always been a cherished car and still retains her car show awards on the glove box from previous years. She has been down to the Goodwood Revival with us on a number of occasions and with no problems at all.



**1979 Mini 'Mini' - £6,950**

Recently beautifully restored, with new paint work, interior, wheels and tyres. Plus, the engine has been rebuilt and brakes checked all round. This Mini 'Mini' is huge fun, doing donuts in reverse gear. A crowd puller wherever it goes.

2008 VANTAGE RS – CONCEPT CAR £345,000



Revealed at the opening party of Aston Martin's Design Studios in December 2007, the unique Vantage RS concept was revealed by CEO Dr Ulrich Bez and resulted in a rush of customer interest and orders placed. Here was Aston Martin's smallest car with their biggest and most powerful engine installed.

The concept utilised the aluminium VH chassis architecture and was fitted with an Aston Martin Racing supplied C-Spec DBRS9, 580bhp engine. This extraordinary power is transmitted a

manual 6-speed gearbox with limited slip differential. Bodied in aluminium and carbon fibre panels, some unique to the Vantage RS concept, the car included carbon interior fixtures and fittings, Alcantara trim and exclusive lightweight materials, still fitted. The total weight of under 1500kg - some 200kg under the weight of the production V12 Vantage.

The Vantage RS, the very car we are proud to offer, was publicly revealed at the 2008 Geneva Motor show. The car was subsequently road

registered in in 2014. One of the very few Aston Martin concept cars, to enter private ownership, the Vantage RS represents a unique opportunity for collectors to acquire a remarkable, road legal and fully functioning concept of what was to become one of Aston Martins' greatest cars of the modern era.

Road registered, in pristine condition and maintained by Aston Martin SVO, we are delighted to bring to market this unique original concept car.



1961 DB4 Race Car



£POA 1986 V8 Vantage Zagato Fast Rd £450,000



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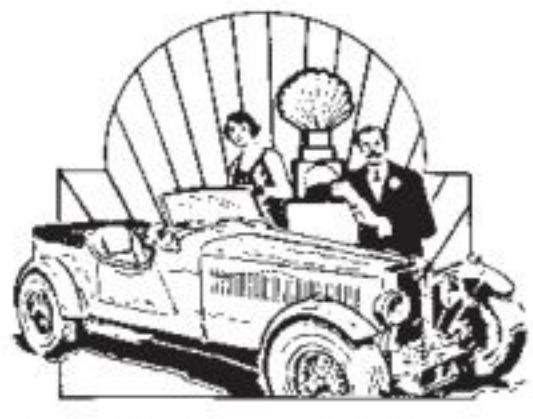
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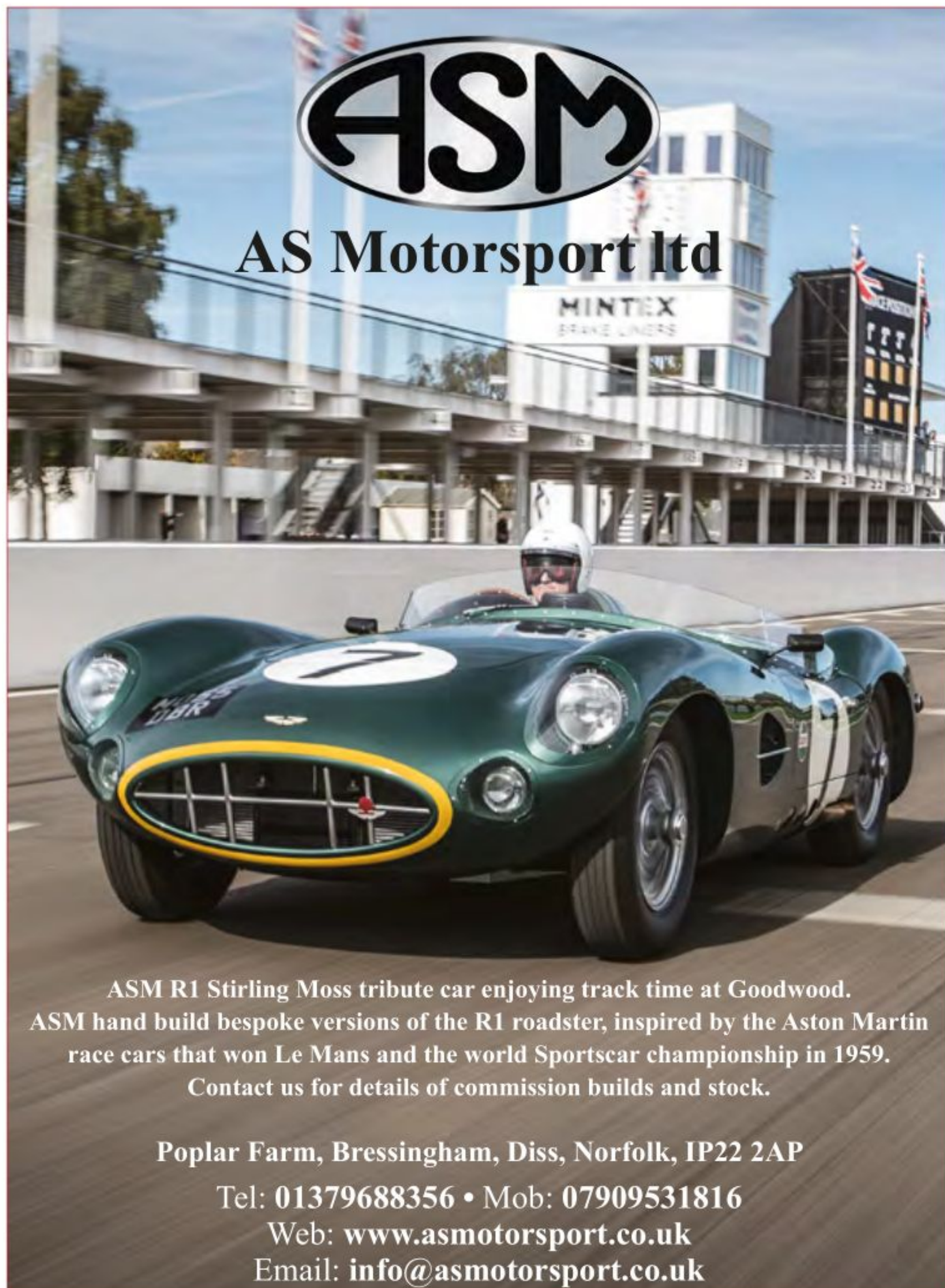


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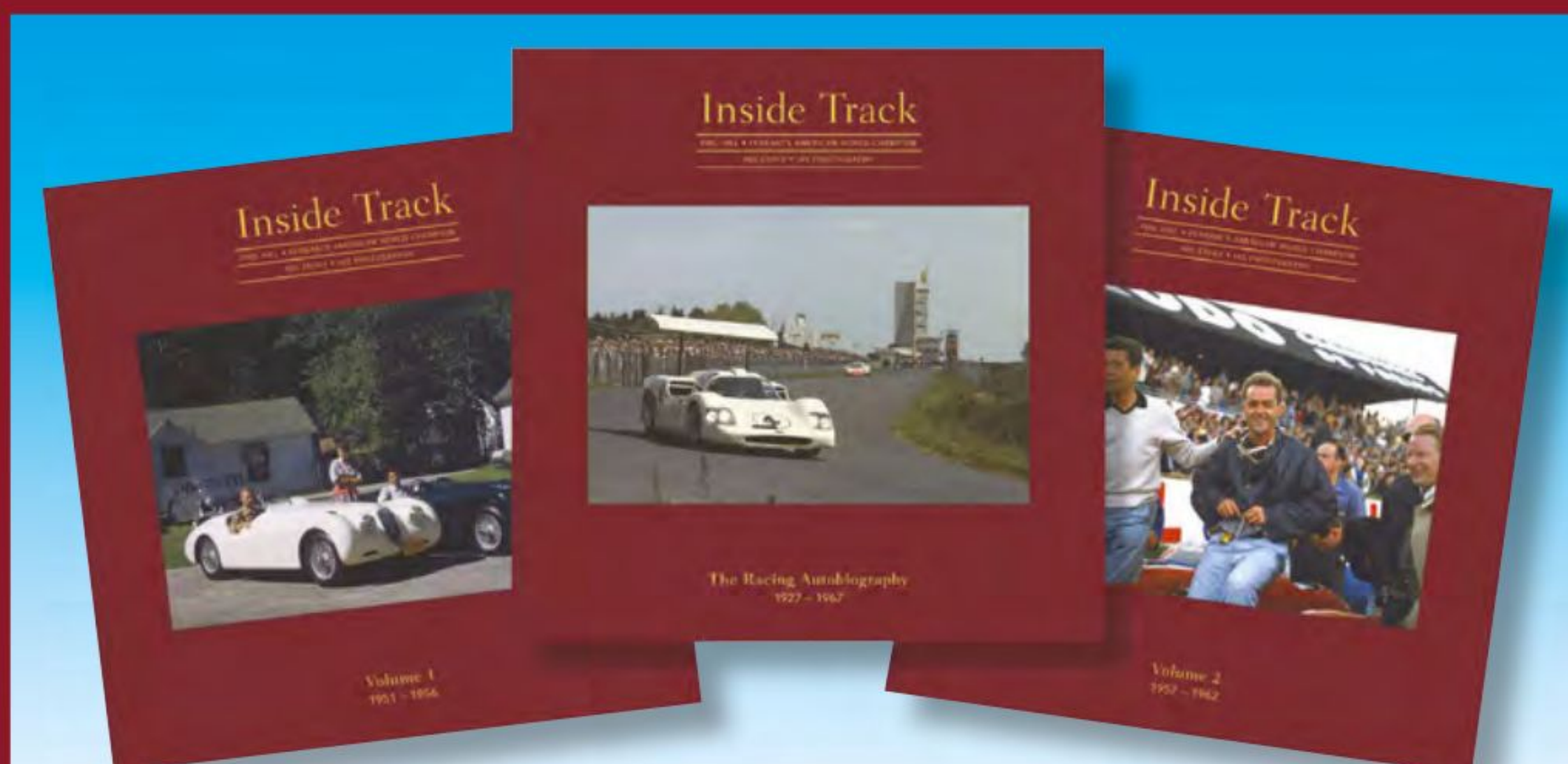
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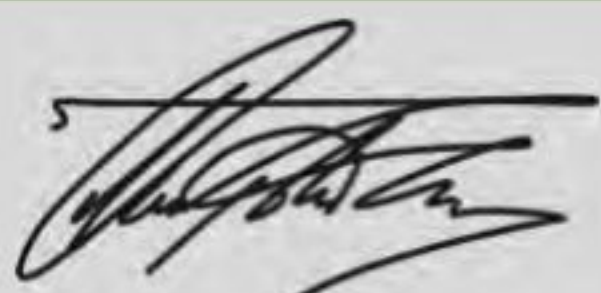
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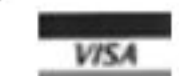
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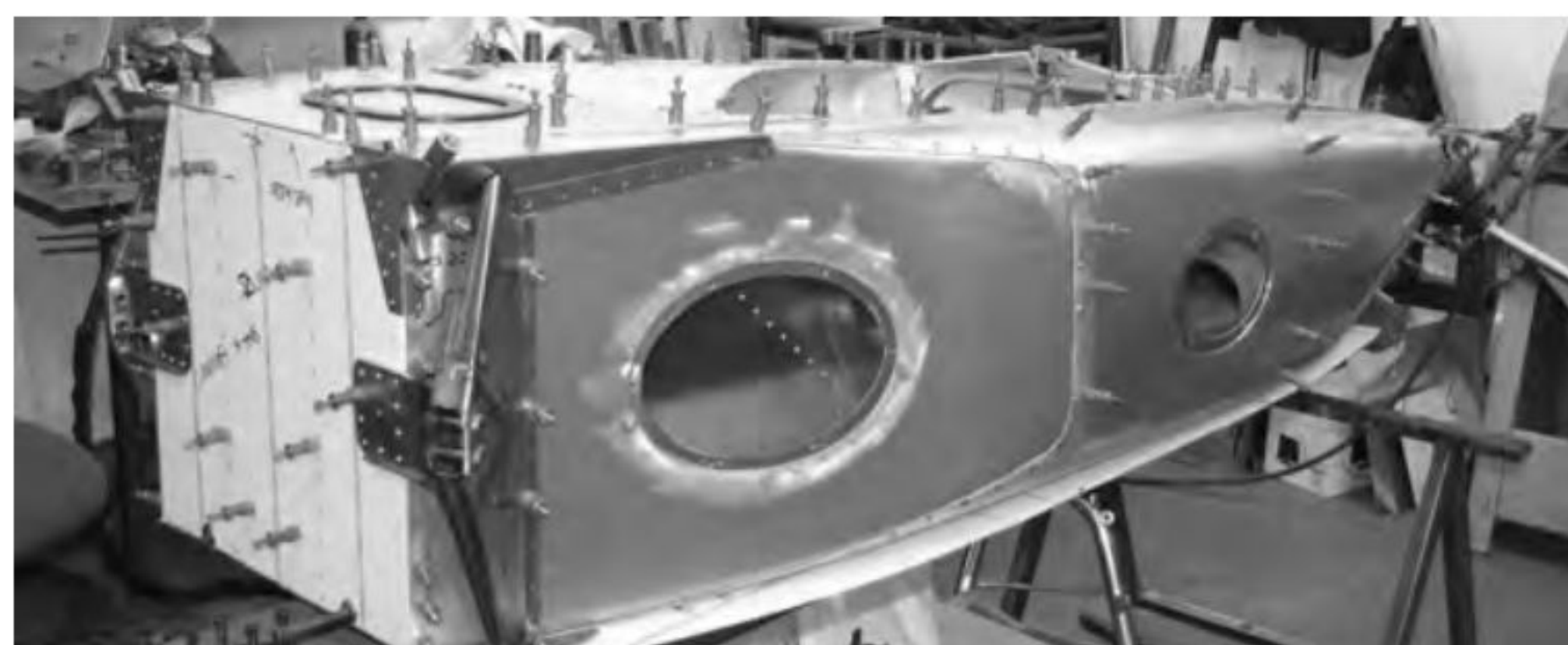
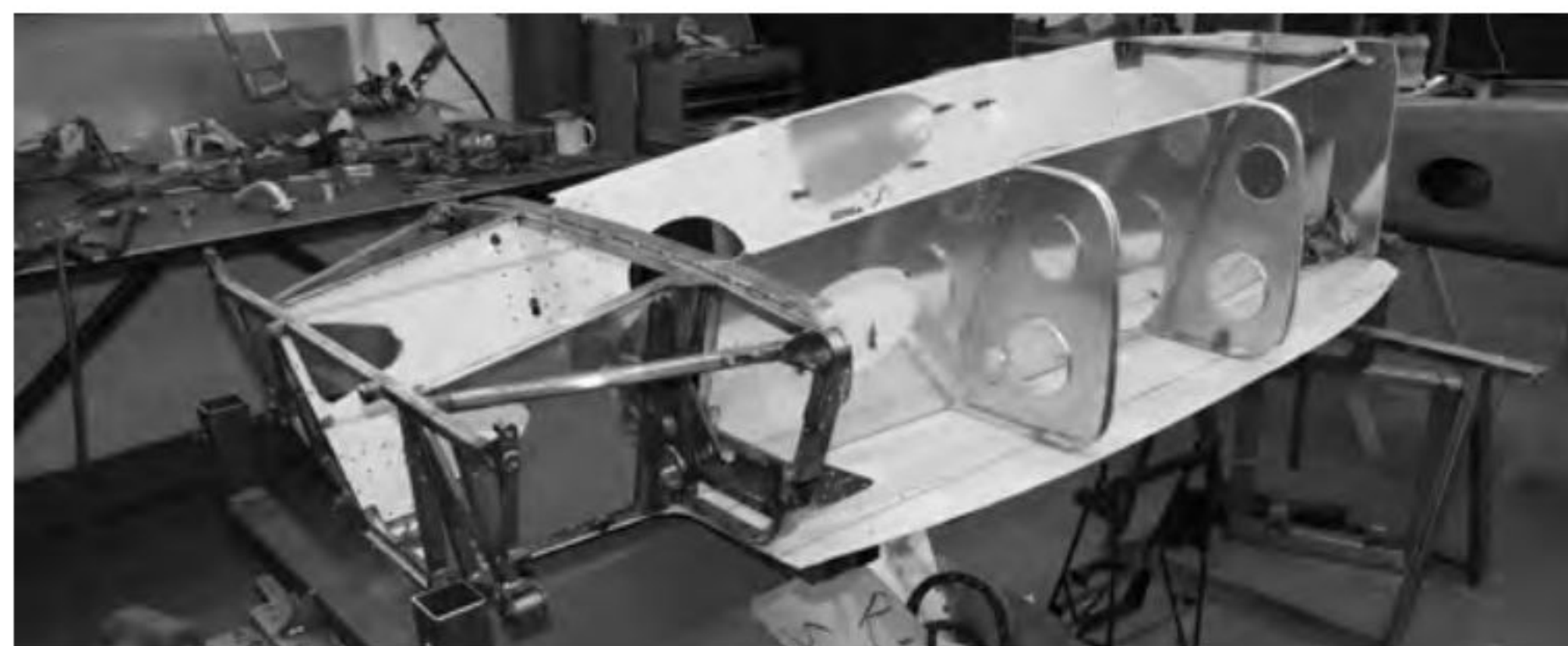

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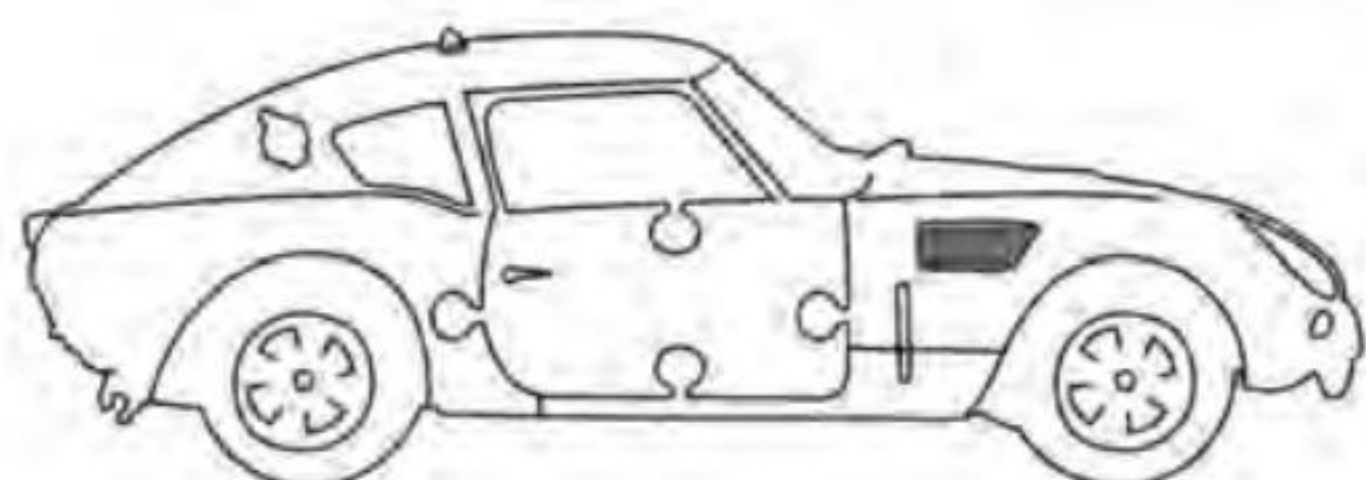
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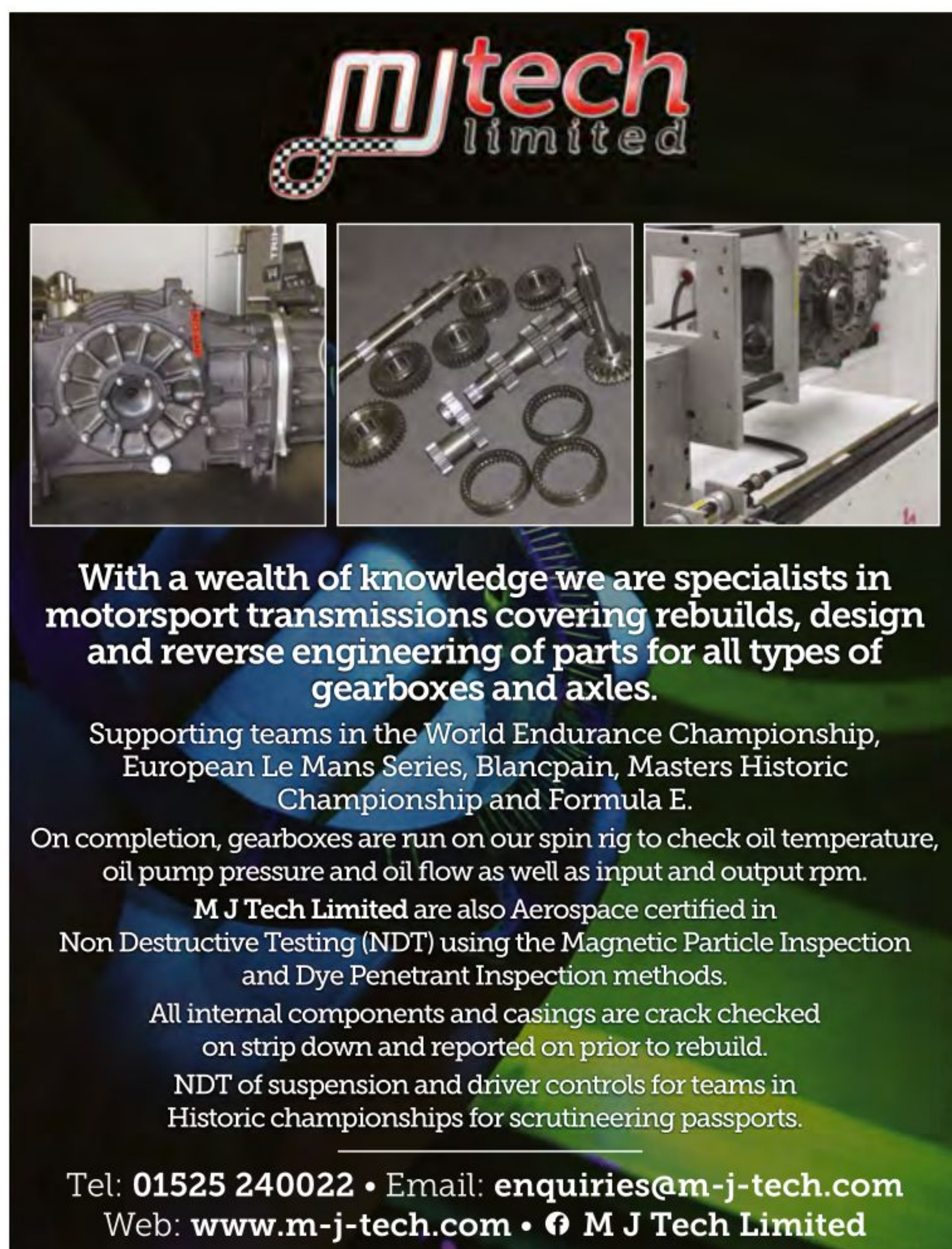


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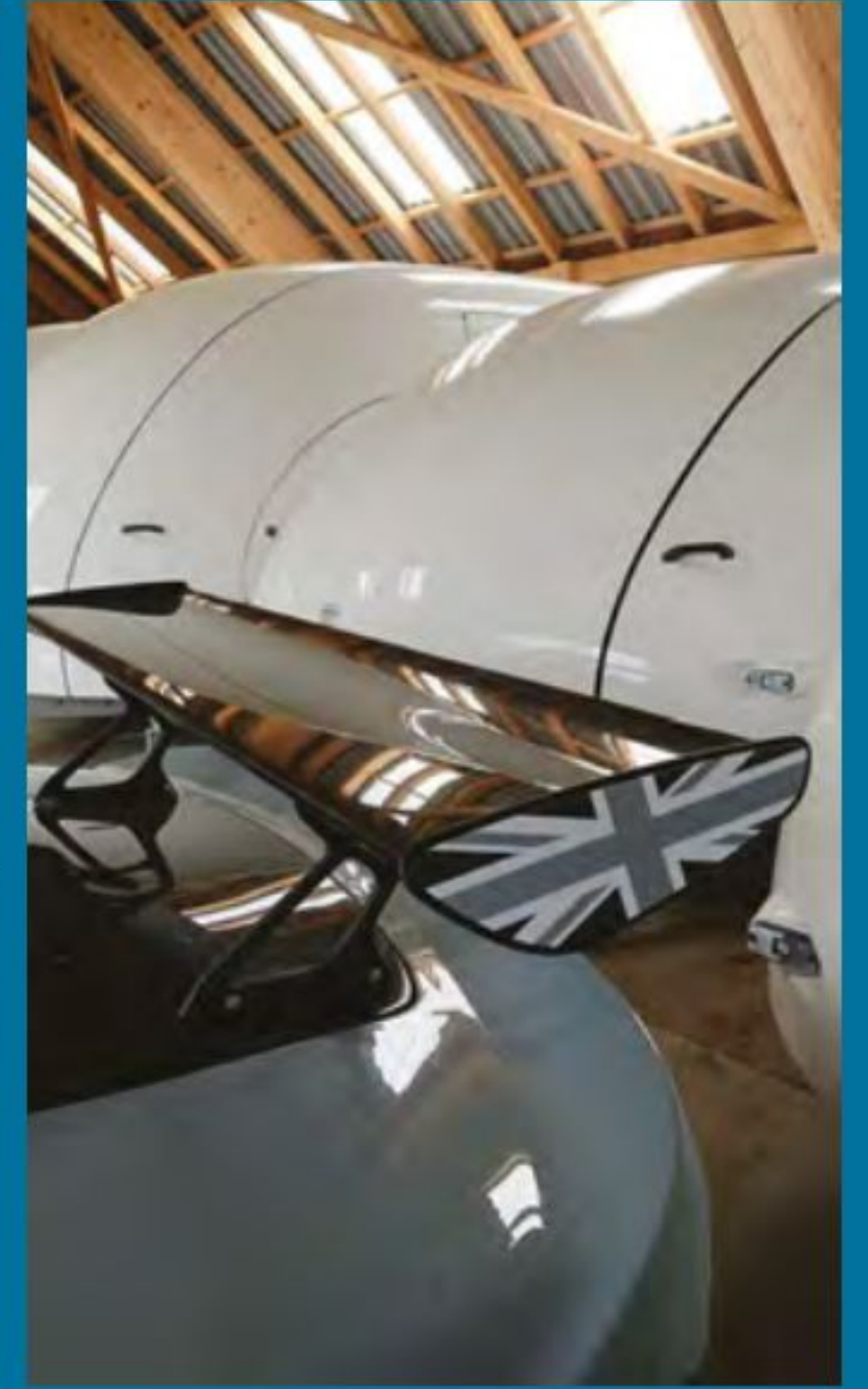
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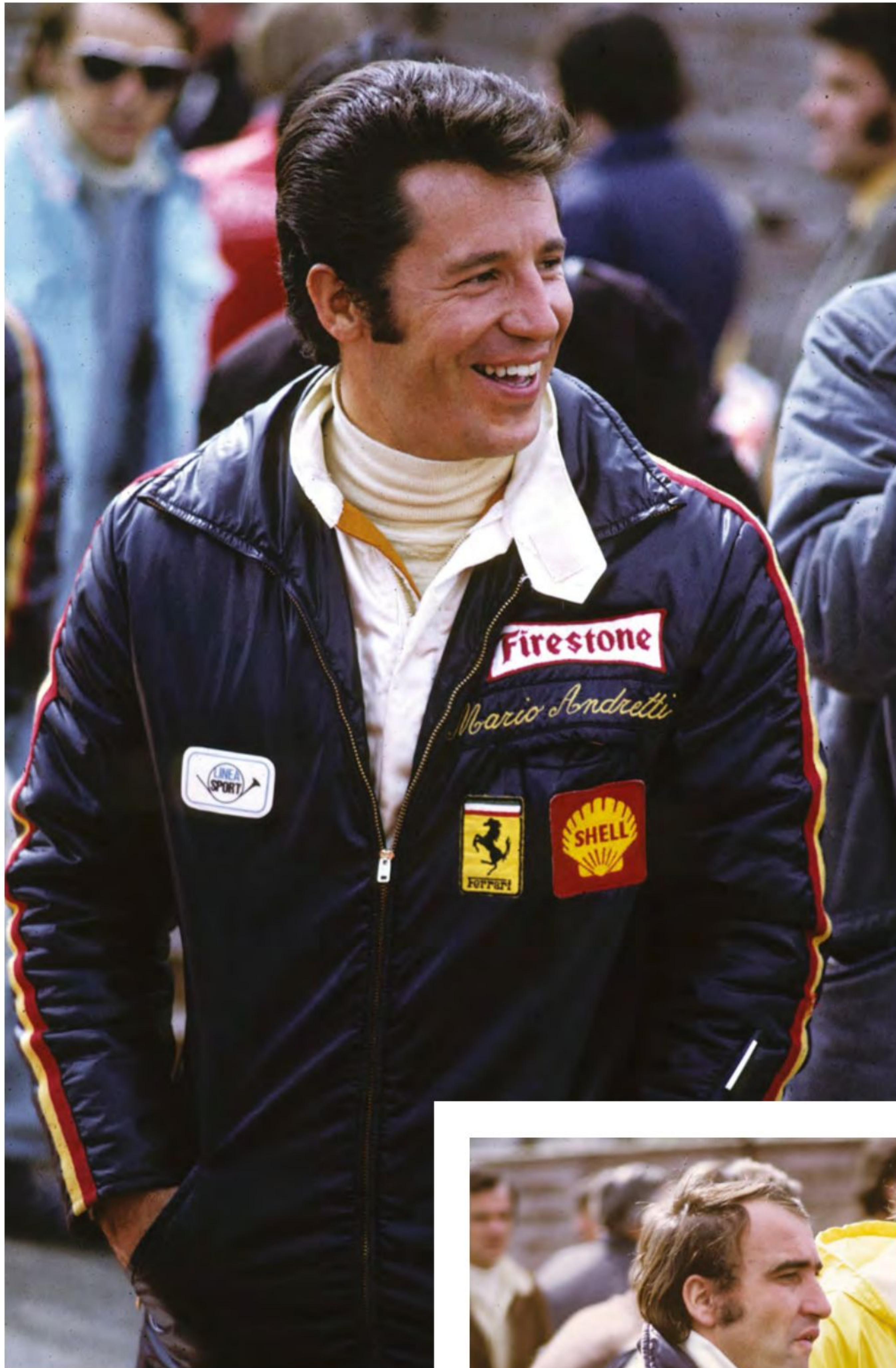
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# Big boys hit Brands

Kent's fabulous Brands Hatch circuit was a mecca for top-flight motor racing during the 1970s – and the BOAC 1000Kms attracted several leading marques and their star drivers. **Richard Lees** took the attached in '72



Clay Regazzoni leads the pack through Paddock Hill Bend in the Ferrari 312 PB he shared with Brian Redman. They would end up fifth overall after late engine trouble struck



**JANUARY 27, 1974  
INTERLAGOS, BRAZIL**

Tyrrell team manager Jo Ramirez has the Cosworth-powered 005 of Patrick Depailler weighed. Depailler qualified 16th, more than three seconds down on poleman Emerson Fittipaldi's McLaren, but would rise to eighth at the finish. The Frenchman's seasonal highlight would be a second place in Sweden, but team-mate Jody Scheckter proved to be Tyrrell's star turn – he won twice on his way to third in the championship.

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**1954 Aston Martin DB2/4**

Finished in metallic British Racing Green with beige hide interior. 40 years of single ownership. Methodically kept extensive service history. An excellent driving motor car, more details of which can be found on our website **£145,000**



**1954 Aston Martin DB2/4**

Finished in Midnight Blue with contrasting grey hide interior. This lovely motor car has been owned for the last 20 years by a gentleman now in his eighties. It has been maintained and improved by Four Ashes Garage with what would appear to be little regard to cost. More details on our website **£139,950**



**1955 Aston Martin DB2/4**

Finished in Burgundy with contrasting Tan hide interior. Undoubtedly one of the best DB2/4's that we have encountered for many years. This car was purchased by the current owner through Four Ashes Garage in January 2010 and was the subject of a total rebuild. Perfect for long distance continental rallies, Mille Miglia eligible, More details on our website, **£200,000**



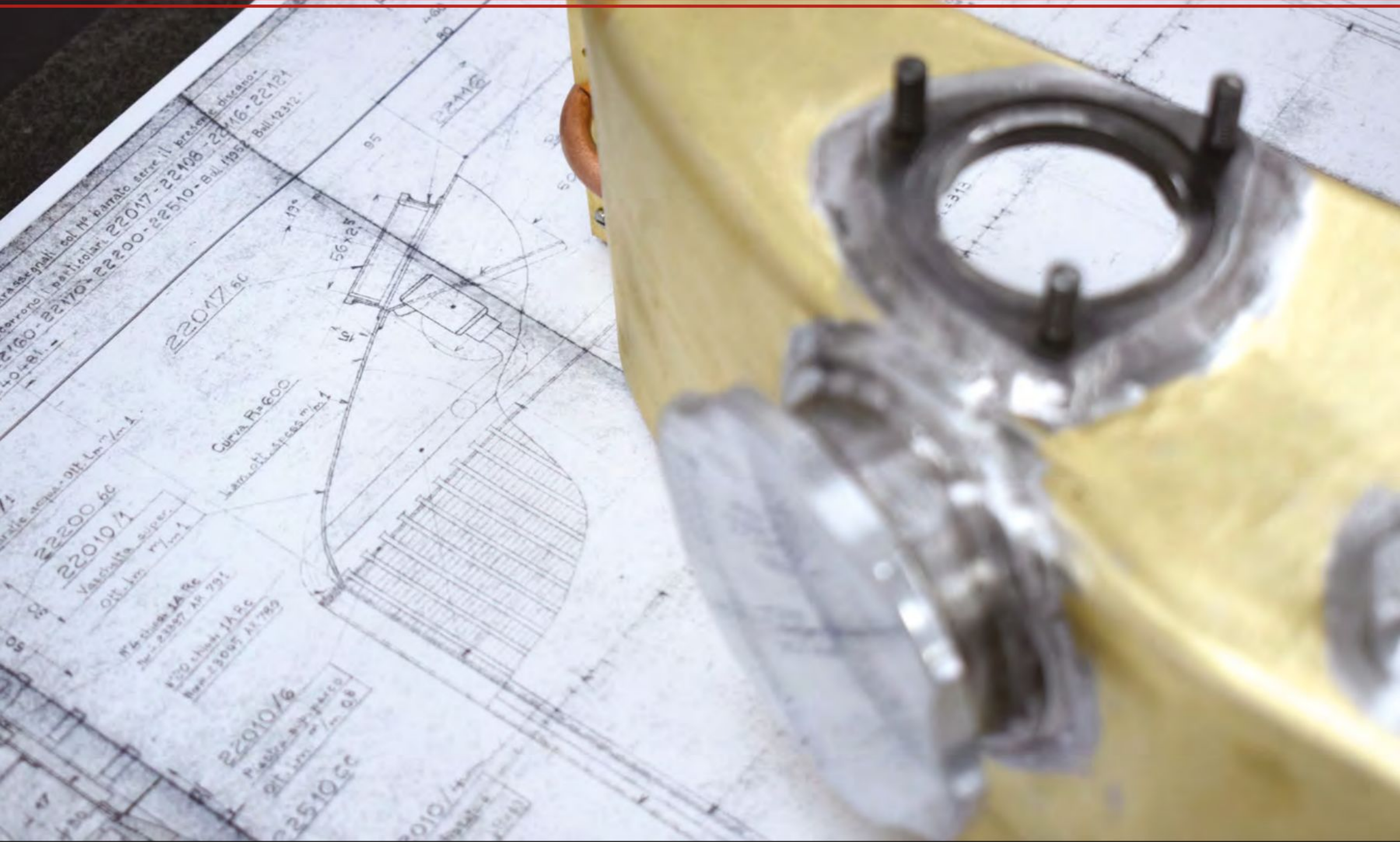
**1958 Aston Martin DB MkIII**

Finished in pale metallic blue with contrasting grey hide interior. Fresh from 20 years of ownership, during which time this car has had more than £80,000 spent on upgrades and maintenance. Cosmetically not perfect but from a driving point of view, "Simply the Best" More details on our website. **£250,000**

More Astons can be found by visiting our website at [www.runnymedemotorcompany.com](http://www.runnymedemotorcompany.com) or please call Martin Brewer for more details on any of our cars. We are seriously low on stock, please telephone if you have an Aston Martin to sell.

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