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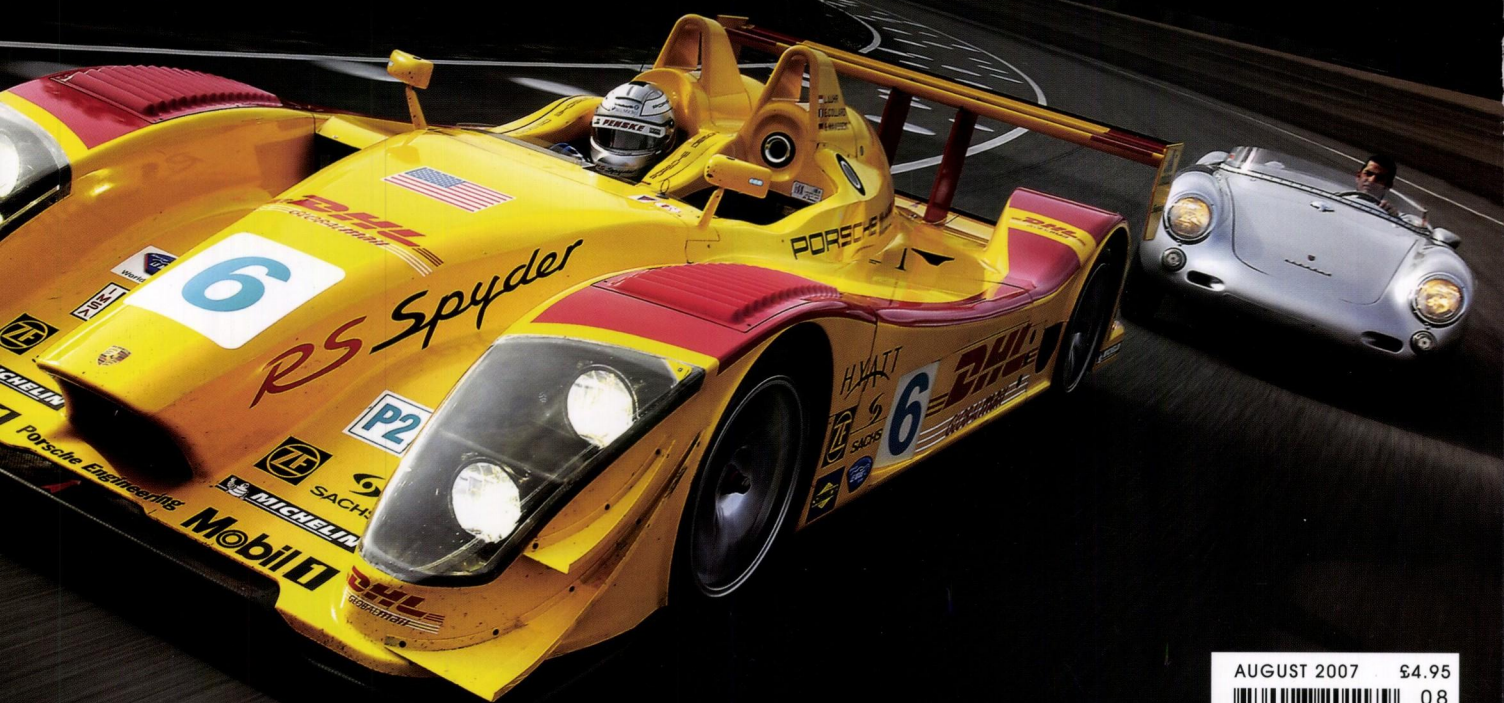
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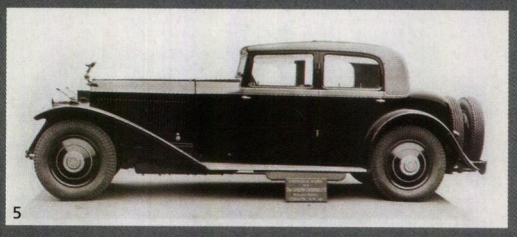
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1 *The ex-Sydney Allard-Jack Fairman* 1952 Allard J2X Chassis no. 'J-3055' in the pits, LeMans 1952. Offered for sale now for the first time since January 6, 1953 when acquired by the current owner. Photo credit: The Phil Hill Photographic Collection

2 1959-60 Cooper Monaco-Climax Chassis no. 'CM-1-59'

3 1971 Formula 1 BRM P160 Chassis no. '009'

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Volume 83 Number 8
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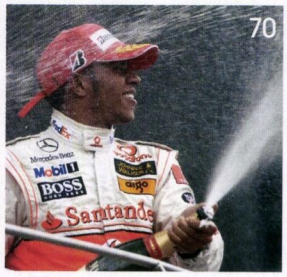
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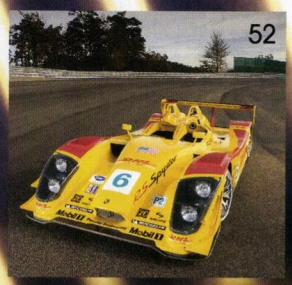
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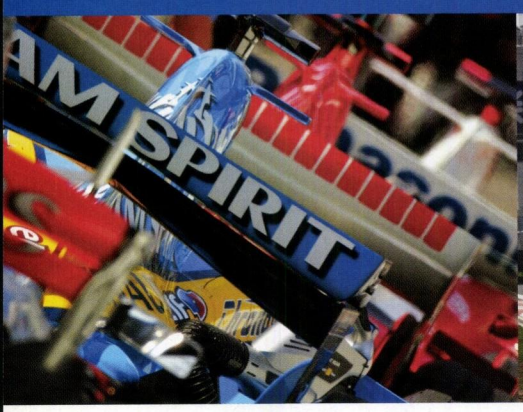




The inside line on Jacques Villeneuve's bid to win at Le Mans – p40

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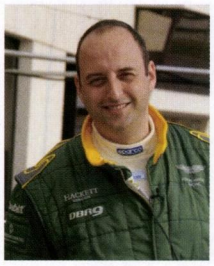
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The cult of personality

In mid-June, two events took place on either side of the Atlantic that were both triumphs for British motorsport. One was the lead item on near enough every major sports bulletin, the other went unnoticed in all but the specialist press. I talk, of course, about Lewis Hamilton's canny and composed win at Indianapolis, and Aston Martin's class triumph at Le Mans.

The interest in Hamilton is clear and clearly explained: no British driver has ever had a more promising start to their grand prix career and while he undoubtedly has been given the tools to do the job, so has his double world champion team-mate.

What's irking me is the lack of interest in Le Mans. At Indy, the first four finished in the same order in which they had lined up on the grid. At Le Mans the Astons realised a dream at the third time of asking, having raced twice around the clock in often appalling weather. As a race or as a story of human endeavour, the Le Mans 24 Hours would seem to have Indy licked.

Le Mans may be the world's greatest race but I fear this may soon be under threat, as long as its organiser the ACO continues its policy of ensuring that only diesel-powered prototypes have the slightest chance of winning outright. There may be some benefit to road cars, but the fact is that diesel race engines are all but inaudible and their performance advantage so great as to render all teams without the vast budget to develop their own diesel obsolete. The result is a race that looks and now even sounds boring. Even with the weather doing its best to upset the form book, Audi still won its seventh Le Mans in its past eight attempts, by a margin of more than 80 miles.

Frankly I'd be happy to see all prototypes outlawed so that wonderful looking and sounding cars based on those you can actually buy – like the Astons and Corvettes – can battle for outright victory, not just for class honours. If Le Mans is to continue to thrive, it needs to provide its loyal spectators something more than is currently on offer. It is still the world's greatest motor race: I'd like it to stay that way.

Andrew Frankel

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LAT

HAMILTON SMASHES RECORDS WITH DOUBLE TOP

Lewis leads championship after winning from pole in Montreal and Indianapolis

Lewis Hamilton's remarkable ascendancy continues. After finishing second to McLaren team-mate Fernando Alonso in Monaco, Hamilton shared the lead of the world championship but had yet to win a race.

He then headed off to the North American tour comprising the grands prix of Canada and the USA. Montreal and Indianapolis were two circuits of which he had no prior experience – and yet he won both events from pole position and at the time of writing was 10 points clear of Alonso at the top of the world championship title stakes. Already Hamilton is beginning to be talked of as the logical favourite for the crown.

In rookie terms his season seems to be redefining what is possible and from a historical perspective his performance so far is quite unprecedented.

He took his maiden grand prix win in Canada after leading from the start and staying there following each of the four safety car restarts. At Indianapolis he was under pressure throughout from Alonso, but at neither event did Lewis look even remotely like he was about to crack under the strain.

In fact it was double world champion Alonso on whom the pressure appeared to be telling. The Spaniard's comments about not feeling comfortable in a British team with a British team-mate caused a stir after Canada, while at Indy he gesticulated to his pit for not instructing Hamilton to move aside at a stage in the race where Alonso believed himself to be quicker.



WRI

Audi's seventh Le Mans prize

Audi equalled Jaguar's tally of victories in the Le Mans 24 Hours with a seventh victory in nine attempts. This year's triumph means only Porsche and Ferrari now have more wins in the world's most prestigious sportscar race. Frank Biela, Emanuele Pirro and Marco Werner took a clear victory aboard one of the three Audi R10 turbo-diesel prototypes entered for the race on June 16/17. They finished 10 laps ahead of the best of the Peugeot 908s in second place.

However, Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich denied that this year's win was predictable. "This victory is the most difficult we have had at Le Mans," he said. "We were put under pressure by Peugeot right to the end of the race." The task was made more difficult because the winning car was the only R10 to finish. The other two cars crashed out, one as a result of driver error, the other when a wheel came off.

Aston Martin claimed GT1 honours after a thrilling race between the two Prodrive-run factory cars. David Brabham, Darren Turner and Rickard Rydell came out on top after the other car lost time making bodywork repairs after Johnny Herbert had a minor incident.



James Mann

Brooklands birthday bash

The world's first motor racing circuit echoed once again to racing engines and the excited chatter of thousands of spectators as Brooklands celebrated its 100th birthday in June. A cavalcade of veteran cars, all centenarians, re-enacted the opening parade a century before to the very day, while hundreds of racing cars and 'bikes, many of which had actually competed at the Track, performed for the crowd. Outer-circuit monsters such as Blitzen Benz, LSR Delage, Parry Thomas' 'Babs', the Birkin single-seater Bentley and the Napier-Railton opened up on the Mercedes World test track, joined by a Mercedes W125, W196 and 300SLR driven by John Surtees, Jochen Mass and Sir Stirling Moss, while Gary Paffett demonstrated a Mercedes-McLaren F1 car. On the Test Hill onlookers cheered the noisiest ascents and marque displays packed the Paddock, while impressive air displays recalled the Track's aviation heritage. It was almost possible to feel the 1930s had returned.

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LAT

Dijon '89: Wollek guides his 962 (centre) to the final Porsche Group C victory of the era

Ultimate 962 at Silverstone

Derek Bell will race what is widely thought to be the ultimate Porsche 962 in the Group C/GTP races at the Silverstone Classic in July.

The car now owned by Mark Sumpter was the last Porsche to win a World Sportscar Championship race in the Group C era when Bob Wollek won at Dijon in 1989, during a season dominated by the Mercedes team. The Joest team then extensively developed the car to compete in GTP racing in America.

"It doesn't get any better than sharing a 962 with Derek Bell on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit," said Sumpter.

The 50th anniversary of the Lotus Elite will also be celebrated at Silverstone. Up to 50 Elites will be there, including the Le Mans class winners and the ex-Les Leston Elite 'DAD 10'.

PACKED GP SUPPORT

The historic sports car race supporting the British Grand Prix at Silverstone has been heavily over-subscribed, with around 80 applications for the 44 places available on the grid. The race will run on Sunday afternoon following the grand prix.

"We've been overwhelmed with applications," said Grahame White of race organiser, the Historic Sports Car Club. "The final selection will be extremely difficult." The list includes 10 Lola T70s, six AC Cobras, eight E-Type Jaguars, 16 Chevrons and five McLarens.

Lola T70s will feature strongly among a packed field in the grand prix support race



LAT



LAT

RALLY SHOW FLYERS

'Flying Finns' Rauno Aaltonen and Timo Makinen will join Paddy Hopkirk at the Rally Show at Chatsworth on September 29/30. They will mark 40 years since the end of the Mini Cooper's reign in international rallying. As well as historic and modern rallies and a pageant of rally history, there will be 'stage sessions' for car owners.

Gripping battle at Shelsley

The outright hill record at Shelsley Walsh was smashed when the British Hillclimb Championship contenders tackled the newly resurfaced hill in early June. The record was broken five times in one day, as Scott Moran and Martin Groves battled, with Moran finally leaving the new record at 22.83sec. At the start of the day, the record stood to Groves at 23.75sec.

First runs on the new surface saw the outright record tumble to Scott Moran in his Gould



Eddie Walder

BRINGING THEM ON

Oxford Brookes University has unveiled a new scheme to find the next generation of motorsport engineers. Prodrive boss David Richards opened the new £8 million Motorsport Engineering Centre, which has led to a Fernando Alonso sponsorship programme, and proves that the UK is investing in its strong tradition of motorsport. Tel: 01865 741 111, or check: www.brookes.ac.uk

Lola ready for Leslie

Former touring car and Le Mans racer David Leslie plans to give his rebuilt Lola Mk1 sports-racing car its debut later this summer. Leslie acquired chassis BR32 in 1999 and has recently had a rebuild completed by Mark Lewis. Leslie has strong links with Lola as his wife Jane is from the Broadley family.



Phil Jones

David Morris in ERA 11B. He set the fastest ERA time at the Wiscombe tribute to his father

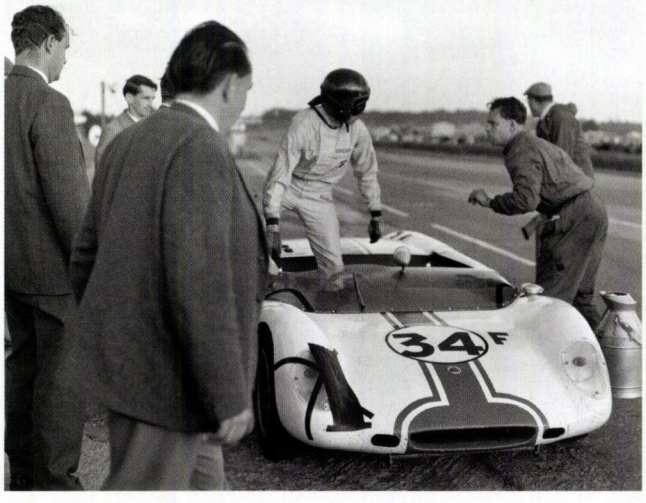
ERAs salute Martin Morris

An incredible field of 14 ERAs assembled at the VSCC Wiscombe Park hillclimb in May as a tribute to the late Martin Morris. Renowned as an ERA expert, Morris competed with R9B for three decades and the Devon hillclimb was his local event. His son David managed to gather nearly the entire production run of ERAs from all over the world for a one-off celebration – and then set the fastest ERA time of the day in R11B.

THREE HOURS TO RUN AGAIN

Following the success of the 2007 race, the Historic Sports Car Club will repeat the *Autosport* Three-Hour race at Snetterton in the summer of 2008. Recalling the classic events of the 1960s at the Norfolk circuit, the race is for cars from the club's GT and Sports Racing Championship.

Jim Clark steps into his Lotus 23 during the 1963 *Autosport* Three Hours event



LAT

Pittaway's dramatic escape

VSCC racer Duncan Pittaway was fortunate to escape with only a fractured collar bone and mild concussion after rolling his 1921 GN Vitesse at Oulton Park. The incident was at Lodge on the first lap of the Brooklands and Goddard Trophies race after Pittaway caught a spin and the GN then snapped back the other way.

Duncan Pittaway is well-known for flamboyant driving, but this was not part of the plan



Phil Broster



Jeff Bloxham

Back to front

The Chevrolet Corvair of Bruce Chapman made its UK race debut at Silverstone in May when Rae Davis raced the 1965 car in a Top Hat race. The 2.8-litre turbocharged rear-engined machine is seen as a challenger for the Ford Mustangs and Falcons.

Norwich re-Union

The Norwich Union MSA Classic will return on Sunday October 14, with a field of classic cars descending on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit. Cars at least 20 years old will start from various locations around the UK, reviving an event which has not been run for a decade.

Tour Britannia

Two special stages on the Mercedes test track at Brooklands will be a major feature of the opening day of the 2007 Tour Britannia in September. Competitors will tackle the 1.5-mile stage twice in one day.

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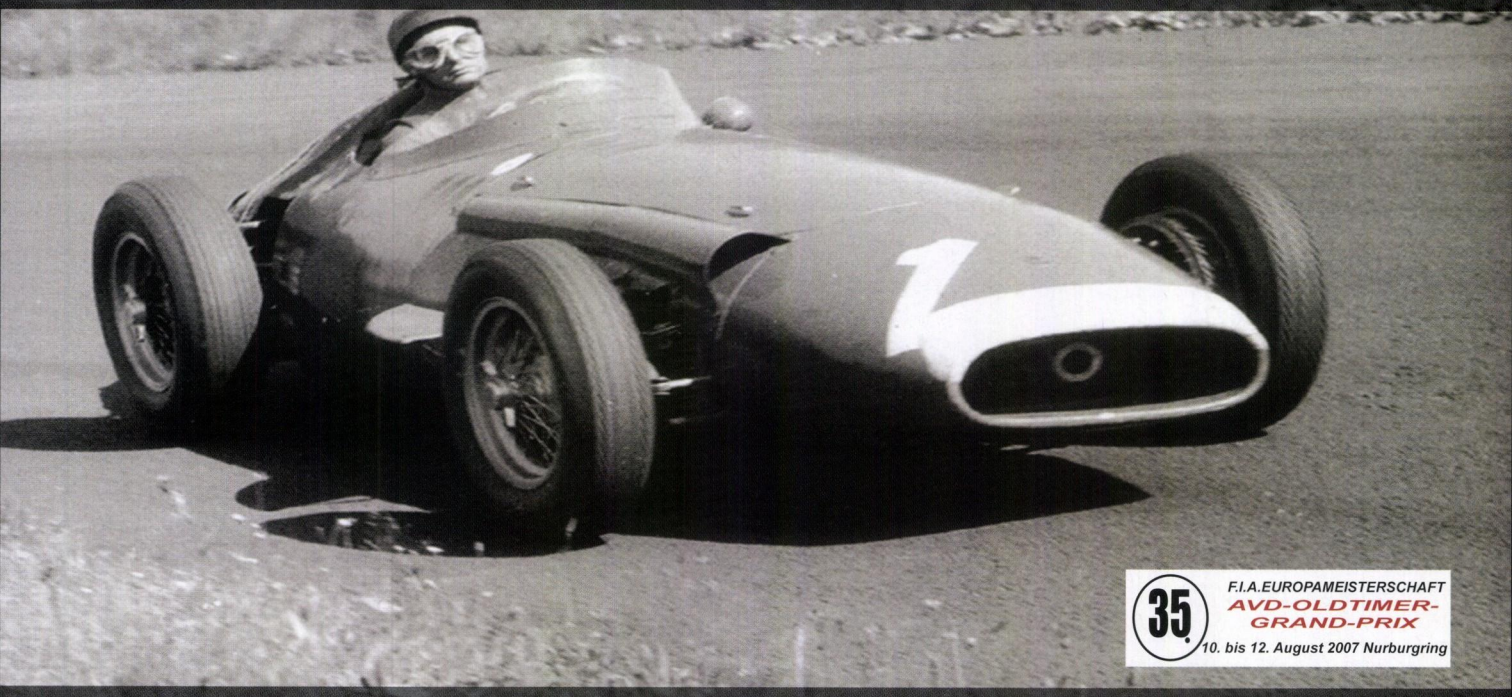
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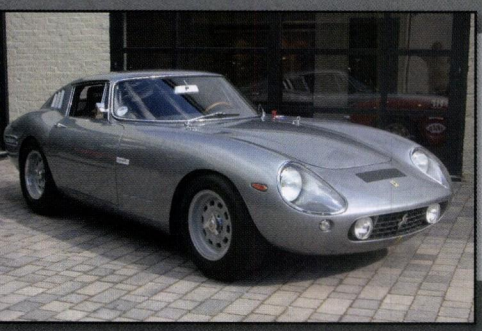
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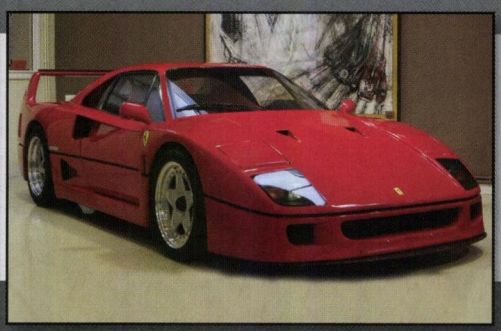
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France Junior grew up around racing and carried out most roles in race organisation

BILL FRANCE JUNIOR

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Following on from his father, Bill Senior, the founder of NASCAR, he headed the series for 28 years until 2000 and was central to its massive success.

When he took over from his father in 1972, Bill Junior expanded the series via TV coverage and other venues across North America. His International Speedway Corporation owned 12 of the tracks on the calendar, including Daytona.

James Diffey

One of Britain's finest all-round historic competitors lost his battle with cancer at the age of 40. Diffey continued to race until the final weeks of his life, having scored many successes in a range of cars.

Rodney Smith

Among the most enthusiastic owners of historic cars in North America, Rodney Smith was killed in a cycling accident near his home in California.

Smith, who was 67, owned ERA R2A and R3A and kept them busy racing on both sides of the Atlantic. Journalist Mark Gillies often raced the ERAs, along with various Maseratis from Smith's collection.



LAT

George Begg

Motorcycle racer, car designer and a legendary figure in New Zealand motorsport, George Begg died in April, aged 77.

He competed in Europe on two wheels in the mid-1950s but returned home following a fatal accident involving friend and travelling companion Bob Cook. In the early '60s, Begg switched to cars, entering a BSA-powered single-seater in hillclimb events, this toe-in-the-water exercise leading to a Chevy V8-engined sports-racer and a series of F5000/Tasman cars. He was also employed by Bruce McLaren as an engineer/mechanic.

Begg returned to his first love of motorcycles in 1976.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Jeff Bloxham

Rowan Atkinson has acquired a Ford Falcon (above) for historic touring car racing. The car is being prepared by Simon Hadfield.

Chris Lillingston-Price will campaign an ex-works Chevron B8 after a long rebuild. Reine Wisell and John Hine took it to seventh in the 1969 BOAC 500 at Brands Hatch.

The Jaguar D-type in which George Constantine won the 1956 Watkins Glen GP will be raced by Gavin Pickering.

Roger Ballard has been elected president for the Vintage Sports Car Club, following on from Martin Grant-Peterkin. Ballard has been a VSCC member for over 40 years.

Pierre-François Rousselot, an F3 ace of the early 1970s, returned to racing to share the Austin Healey 3000 of Mike Knight in a Cloth Cap race at Silverstone.

DIARY

- **JUL 6-8 SILVERSTONE**
  British Grand Prix
  www.silverstone.co.uk
- **JUL 7/8 LE MANS BUGATTI (F)**
  Group C/GTP races
  www.groupcracing.com
- **JUL 7/8 CADWELL PARK**
  Classic Sports Car Club meet
  www.motorsportvision.co.uk
- **JUL 13-15 PORTO (P)**
  Grand Premio Historico
  www.circuitodaboavista.com
- **JUL 14/15 CHIMAY (B)**
  Historic Race Festival
  www.themastersseries.com
- **JUL 21/22 KNOCKHILL**
  Classic Speed Fair
  www.knockhill.com
- **JUL 27-29 SILVERSTONE**
  Silverstone Classic
  www.silverstone.co.uk
- **AUG 4 CASTLE COMBE**
  CCRC/HSCC race meeting
  www.hscc.org.uk
- **AUG 4 SILVERSTONE**
  Bentley Drivers' Club race meeting
  www.bdcl.co.uk
- **AUG 4/5 PRESCOTT**
  Vintage Sports Car Club hillclimb
  www.vscc.co.uk
- **AUG 11 OULTON PARK**
  Classic Sports Car Club meet
  www.motorsportvision.co.uk
- **AUG 11/12 NÜRBURGRING (D)**
  AvD Oldtimer GP
  www.nuerburgring.de
- **AUG 12 MALLORY PARK**
  VSCC meet, www.vscc.co.uk
- **AUG 16-19 LAGUNA SECA (USA)**
  Rolex Monterey Classic
  www.montereyhistoric.com
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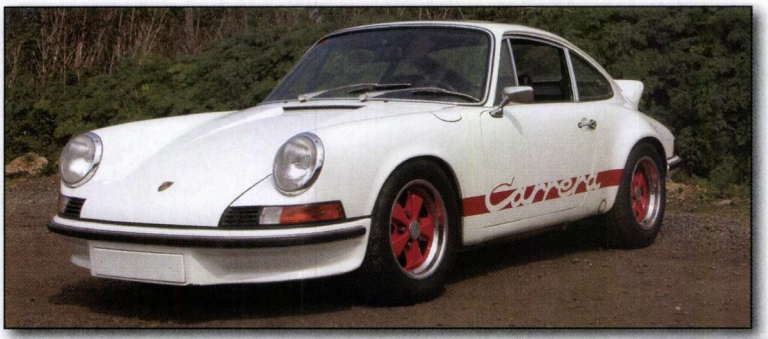
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1967 McLaren M1C - Delivered new to Carl Haas in the USA in 1967, this M1C raced in the CanAm Challenge before going to the Harrahs Museum in 1971, from where it was sold at auction in 1985 and returned to Britain and then back to Germany. Finished in dark green and yellow, this desirable and very competitive CanAm machine is offered in truly excellent condition and is described as being 'on the button ' and ready to race. It comes with FIA papers and spare, original wheels.

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Chronograph corner

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Limited editon first released by Tag Heuer in 1969 to celebrate the principality's grand prix, and favoured by Steve McQueen. It's still a striking watch and is water-resistant.
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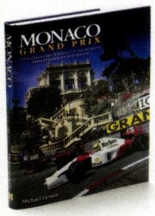
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BREITLING BENTLEY GT RACING *£4335*
Breitling celebrates Bentley's recent competition exploits with this sophisticated steel timepiece, a more compact size than other models in its Bentley collection. It is also available in a rose gold edition of 500.
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Reviews

MONACO GRAND PRIX

Michael Hewett

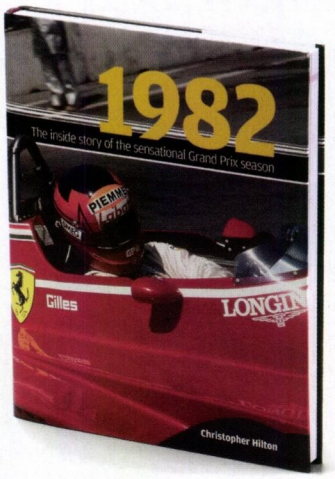


Another day, another picture book, but that's not to denigrate this hefty 352-page hardback. A year-by-year account of the great race, there's minimal text, much of it in extended captions. But some of the images – most are by Hewett – are fabulous: we particularly enjoyed Chris Amon flogging his eponymous car in qualifying in '74 and Jochen Rindt two-wheeling his Lotus 49 en route to his '70 win, while shots of Lorenzo Bandini's '67 crash are compelling. If there is a criticism, it's that pictures are often cropped tight with little background detail: we would have preferred it if they'd been given a little room to breath. The design is a mite dated, too, but there's much to like here. **RH**

Published by Haynes, ISBN 978-1-84425-401-9, £40

1982

Christopher Hilton



The cover depicts Gilles Villeneuve whose death, for many, dominates the year in question. Yet there was so much more – I had forgotten about the drivers' strike that January at Kyalami! The subtitle, "The inside story of the sensational grand prix season", is for once justified.

To recap: 11 race winners and a thrilling climax, the battle of the normally aspirated cars against the fast but fragile turbos, Pironi's 'stolen' Imola win and the sickening deaths of Villeneuve and Riccardo Paletti.

A chapter is devoted to each of the 16 rounds – after the fifth race, at Zolder, there are four pages simply headed "Remembering Gilles".

Hilton's comprehensive analysis is supported by circuit maps, grid positions and results. It's not merely a fact-filled, dry stroll through an epic season, however. A fan's perspective is provided by pages devoted to the thoughts and pictures of people who were there. More interesting still is the section alongside every circuit map in which drivers of the era explain their thoughts on the circuits and how to drive them.

An excellent work: informative, cleanly laid out and nicely printed. Some of the images are on the grainy side, but that merely adds to the period feel. How about a series of the greatest years, Haynes? **PH**

Published by Haynes, ISBN 978-1-84425-404-0, £35

DVD

MOTORFILMS QUARTERLY, VOL 18

Doug Nye/David Weguelin

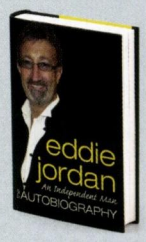
A truly remarkable 90-minute disc showing more fascinating glimpses of motorsport through the ages. Introduced by the estimable Doug Nye from the treasure trove that is his office, its homely feel fails to detract from his and David Weguelin's enthusiasm. Segments include remarkable colour footage of the 1947 Jersey International Road Race and Bugatti publicity material for the then-new Type 35 from the 1924 Grand Prix de l'ACF at Lyon-Givors. More recent is the 1978 BL promo film charting the rally exploits of Tony Pond and Fred Gallagher in the works Triumph TR8. There's also an oddity that follows a group of enthusiasts on their way to the 1954 Monte Carlo Rally. Abroad really was foreign in those days and, as Nye chuckles, the charming piece is "utterly barking". **PH**

Motorfilms (01885 400380, www.motorfilms.com), £19.99

Photography: LAT, Packshot Solutions

EDDIE JORDAN – AN INDEPENDENT MAN

Eddie Jordan



To some a racer through and through, to others a fame-chasing self-publicist, Eddie Jordan polarises opinion.

The latter-day Bad Boy Racers TV show host and former F1 team owner gives very much his own account of his time in motorsport. It's entertaining too, EJ recounting life as a driver – from rallying a Triumph 2.5PI to racing a BMW M1 at Le Mans – before moving on to his time as a team owner in the junior formulae.

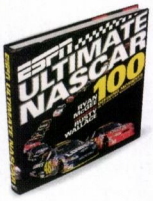
It really gets interesting when the story revolves around his F1 squad – Bernie E's involvement in Benetton poaching Michael Schumacher from under EJ's nose, Bertrand Gachot's jail term and the cracking '99 season. Very enjoyable to dip into although some drivers – not least Heinz-Harald Frentzen – will inevitably have a different view of events! **RH**

Published by Orion Books, ISBN 978-0-75287-534-7, £18.99

ESPN ULTIMATE NASCAR – 100 DEFINING MOMENTS

Ryan McGee

No, NASCAR doesn't normally figure on my radar, but the format of this one offers a crash course in the rough, tough world of American oval stock car racing, giving you the greatest hits of the formula in an engagingly bullish style. Each spread details one 'defining moment' summarised in thoroughly transatlantic talk. (I thought I could read American, if not speak it, but I've no idea what "tougher than a locust post" means…)



And if the language is punchy, the layout will sock you in the eye. I've never seen so many different ways of assembling a date, a photo and some text.

But it's highly entertaining; tales of Junior Johnson "hauling illegal liquids", the Talladega race when the lead changed 150 times, the smashes, the punch-ups and the great nicknames; it's almost made me want to watch some NASCAR racing. **GC**

Published by ESPN, ISBN 978-1 933060-25-5, $29.99

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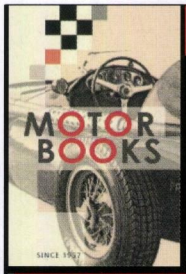
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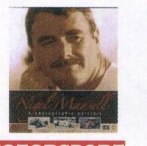
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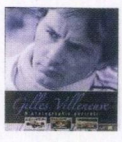
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From Le Mans to Monterey

Plus - Bugatti Atalante sells well, mementos of Jenks and a stunning DB4GT

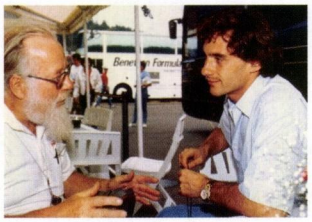
That Monterey bonanza of Pebble Beach always pulls in interesting machinery. A 1952 Allard J2X should be a highlight of Bonhams and Butterfields' sale at Quail Lodge on August 17; it was raced at Le Mans by Sydney Allard and Jack Fairman and has been in the same family since 1953. There is one major change from its original racing spec, in that the Chrysler V8 engine was replaced in 1953 with a Cadillac V8. Estimated price is £350-450,000.

Gooding & Company is to sell a fascinating early Indy racer at Pebble Beach on August 19. The 1910 National is reckoned to have raced in the first meetings after the Brickyard was paved, driven by Arthur Greiner. It is expected to fetch £250-350,000.

The 'barn find' 1938 Bugatti Type 57C Atalante Coupé we mentioned in June exceeded all expectations and made well over the estimate of £150,000, selling for £433,000 through Christies.

Meanwhile, a Le Mans class-winning 1981 Lancia Beta Monte Carlo was among the exciting lots at Bonhams Monaco sale. The ex-works, Martini-liveried Lancia changed hands for £152,000.







Above: Le Mans Allard is up for sale with Butterfields and Bonhams in August. Right: Jenks with Senna – Brightwells sells this photo among DSJ memorabilia on July 11 in Leominster. Far right: £40-45,000 is expected to be enough to secure this Ford Galaxie race car at H&H's Kempton Park sale in July

AROUND THE DEALERS

Interesting competition cars currently for sale here and abroad

Salesroom Correspondent - Louisa Skipper
Our new page highlighting all that's best in salesrooms and private collections today.
Contact: louisa.skipper@motorsportmagazine.co.uk Tel: 020 7349 3185

PORSCHE 908 SPYDER

This car started life in closed 908L form as a factory race car and was driven in the 1969 Daytona 24 Hours by Udo Schütz, Gerhard Mitter and Richard Attwood. It was classified 24th although a driveshaft failure stopped it on lap 483. Converted at the factory to spyder spec, it was later sold to Japanese racer Hiroshi Kazato. It remained in Japan for 30 years before being sold to America and later to Europe and current owner Manfred Freisinger. For further details: www.freisinger-motorsport.de or call 0049 (0)7 21 55 49 26 27.







Top: DB4 GT should star at RM's Monterey sale in August. Above: Le Mans Lancia fetched £152,000. Below: early Indy racer will be at Pebble Beach on August 19

Brightwells will be selling Jenks memorabilia on July 11 in Leominster. The items all originate from the estate of Denis Jenkinson and include personal photographs of him with Stirling Moss and Ayrton Senna, racing licences, membership cards, invitations, press credentials and driving licences from 1947 to 1971, one including an endorsement for speeding! Individual items start at £20.

RM will be among many of the auction houses at Monterey from August 17-19, with its sport and classic car auction. It will be offering a 1961 Aston Martin DB4 GT in desirable 'Factory Lightweight' spec. The estimate is £800,000 to £960,000.

H&H's July 25 auction will include a 1964 Ford Galaxie 500 Fastback Racer with NASCAR and UK HSCC pedigree. Powered by a Ford 427ci (7-litre) V8 engine, it last raced in HSCC specification. In one of its last outings it led the inaugural Top Hat one-hour race by 14 seconds until fuel starvation problems intervened. It is estimated to fetch from £40,000 to £45,000.



Alfa Romeo GTAm, 1970



This started life as a 1750 GTV, but was converted into a GTAm by Autodelta in 1974. It was raced for three years in Europe before moving to the USA. It has more recently been used extensively in historic racing in Europe. It is fitted with a 105 series 2-litre engine, but the pukka GTAm motor also comes with the car. Contact: Marcel Roks on 0032 14 478 900. Price: £92,000.

Lotus 49



The Lotus 49 featured on the cover of the July issue of *Motor Sport* is now for sale. Chassis 49/R4 was the last to race in green and yellow livery and was driven by Jim Clark to his last grand prix victory in South Africa. It was sold to Rob Walker and crashed by Jo Siffert at Brands. It was later rebuilt with the permission of Rob Walker. Contact David McLaughlin 01483 271796. Price: call for details.

Aston Martin DBR9



Chassis number 102 is a 2005 model. Its uprated engine is significantly more powerful, by around 75bhp, than the standard engine of that time. It has a non-standard high-downforce aero package and is fitted with a standard DBR9 gearbox with pneumatic semi-automatic paddle shift system. Contact: Oakfields 01256 760256. Price: £587,411.

DIARY

July 11
Brightwells, classic cars and automobilia, Leominster, Herefordshire. Tel: 01568 611122

July 14
Coys, fine cars, Blenheim Palace. Tel: 020 8614 7888

July 25
H&H, classic cars and automobilia, Kempton Park, Surrey. Tel: 01925 730630

July 27
Bonhams, Porsche cars and related automobilia, BRDC, Silverstone. Tel: 020 7468 5801

July 31
Barons, classic Italian and other cars, Sandown Park, Surrey. Tel: 0238 066 8413

July 31
BCA, vintage, classic and collectors' vehicles, Bridgwater, Somerset. Tel: 01252 743390

August 11
Coys, Oldtimer Grand Prix sale, Nürburgring. Tel: 020 8614 7888

August 15-19
Blackhawk, important automobiles, Pebble Beach, California. Tel: 001 925 736 3444

August 16
Christies, exceptional motor cars, Monterey Jet Center, California, USA. Tel: 001 212 636 2000

August 17
Bonhams and Butterfields, Quail Lodge, Carmel, USA. Tel: 020 7468 5801/001 415 391 4000

August 19
Gooding & Company, Ferrari and Rolls-Royce, Pebble Beach, California. Tel: 001 310 899 1960

Letters

CLARK UNMATCHED

Sir,

Thank you as ever for keeping the memory of Jim Clark so alive. I read John Surtees' candid appreciation of Clark which so succinctly exemplifies the man that Clark was.

It is quite remarkable that such a competitive and skilful protagonist of his sport has never had a critical or unkind word either written or said about him during his lifetime or after his tragic and untimely death.

I feel exceptionally privileged to have seen him race; his fluency and balance have never been matched.

Paul Normand, Thankerton, Lanarkshire

MIRAGE THROUGH THE MIST

Sir,

Your article in July on the Gulf Mirage was an entertaining treat, and your timing impeccable as usual.

Two days before reading Paul Fearnley's absorbing piece, I'd been standing next to the real thing (the Mirage, that is, not Mr Fearnley!), in the pits at the inaugural Brands Hatch Historic Festival. The 1972 incarnation of the car still wows all who see her. Well done Marc Devis and your Belgian crew.

By coincidence, Derek Bell had posed for a couple of snaps just five minutes before I chanced on the Mirage in its pit garage. Sadly, the two-day deluge at Brands didn't suit the Mirage, which appeared for qualifying, but didn't run on race day – at least, I didn't see it through the murk and spray!

Perhaps this is an opportunity to say that, dreadful weather notwithstanding, the Brands Historic Festival was a great event. A sincere 'well done' to those who entertained us punters with some real racing. 100mph laps in Group C in that weather? Big respect!

Tom Phillips, Maidstone, Kent

AINTREE INSPIRATION

Sir,

As I read your revitalised magazine, I come to a shocking thought. It is now 50 years since I attended my first ever motor race meeting. And what a meeting. The 1957 British Grand Prix at Aintree, where I saw Moss beat those "bloody red cars". Why was I there? Because I was lucky enough to sing in Manchester Cathedral Choir, and our Master of Choristers was a motor racing fan. Alan Wicks organised a trip for 20 choir members to pay a visit to that momentous meeting. I shamefully must admit that I did spend a fair amount of time collecting Coke bottles to return at 3d each. Had I only realised the historic nature of the unfolding events I would have paid more attention. Still I was struck by the wondrous noise, it was 'mechanical Mozart'. Where are those 20 young men now? Did any of them go on to enjoy a modest amount of racing, as I did?

We have the greatest sport in the world to enjoy, and the most wonderful soundtrack. How I do wish that I could convey my thanks to the man who lit the fuse of my unending affair with motorsport. So we should all nurture the young enthusiasts, and show them that there is a tremendous world out there to enjoy. If we don't, then they may just think that the world is Formula 1 and 'nowt else'.

Keep up the great work – and surely 'Sir William Boddy, MBE' has a ring to it.

Patrick Smith, via e-mail

BODDY CHANGES

Sir,

Your latest issue has caused me to completely change my *Motor Sport* habits. For a number of years now I have had a routine when the magazine is delivered. I sit down with a cup of coffee and start to read in a set format. First of all I read the Editorial and Matters of Moment. I then read the letters and then glance through the magazine reading the picture and article captions to get a flavour of the articles I will be reading over the next few weeks.

However, today my routine has been shattered by the superb 'Lunch with Bill Boddy'. It was like meeting up with an old friend I had not seen for years. I read the article immediately, in fact twice. This prompted me to go staight to WB's articles and read them. I was so absorbed in the articles that before I knew it I had read three-quarters of the magazine. This has completely ruined my reading plan for the rest of the month and I will now have to delve into my collection to read some previous issues. (I have subscribed to *Motor Sport* since 1973 and my collection goes back to 1950.)

I know you went through some difficult times, especially during the 'red top' era, but I have to say that *Motor Sport* is now an outstanding publication that stands head and shoulders above the rest.

Ron Wood, Dodleston, Cheshire

LUNCHEON VOUCHER

Sir,

Thank you for 'Lunch with Bill Boddy' (July 2007). Simon Taylor's and WB's columns are invariably the first items I read in each issue, and to have the two combined in one, so to speak, was a true delight. What an amazing recall WB has, and what memories! He founded a great magazine, the standard of which still excels.

Charles Shildrick, Normandy, France

DESIGN KID NAMED

Sir,

Reading your article about Vic Elford in the June issue, I was astonished to see the comment made about "The sucker car idea came from a 12-year-old kid who sent him a little drawing..."

Over 20 years ago a very dear friend of mine told me that when he was a child in San Antonio, Texas, he'd mailed a drawing to Jim Hall suggesting a powered fan or rotor blade of some kind mounted in a Chaparral might help him beat the McLarens by sucking the car to the ground. As he was an honourable and trustworthy sort not given to telling tall tales, I believed him. His name was Patrick Landrum, now sadly deceased six years ago at the age of 46.

On a number of occasions as an adult he had tried to contact Mr Hall, to no avail. Imagine my surprise and joy to read your lovely article and come across this bit of information! Patrick would have gotten some immense satisfaction from it.

As far as I can remember Hall never acknowledged Landrum's idea to him personally. The fact that he still has the drawings is testament enough. I've been an avid reader of *Motor Sport* for many years and will continue to do so. Please commend the art director for the new design – it's superb.

Jeff Jackson, Houston, Texas

FERRARI THANKS

Sir,

I can think of just one word to describe how much I liked your 60 Years of Ferrari issue: *gracias*!

Abel Cruz, Barcelona, Spain

FUELLISH RULES

Sir,

How can a rule be justified which means a car must either run out of fuel or pick up a penalty?

As I understand it, a rule which means just that clobbered Fernando Alonso and Nico Rosberg during the recent Canadian Grand Prix, and I can't for the life of me understand how that is fair, or in the interests of good racing.

In the June 1972 issue of *Motor Sport* DSJ wrote: "The job of writing rules and regulations to control something as complex as motor racing is an unenviable task... The people who volunteer to take on this job for the FIA have my greatest sympathy."

I'm not sure that I feel quite as generous as Jenks on this one.

Mervyn Gott, Chichester, Sussex

RESPECT DUE

Sir,

I was delighted to see the wonderful pictures of Brooklands in its hey-day (July issue). However, they also served to remind me that it took a German company, Mercedes, to treat the site with the respect it is due.

Something as unique as Brooklands should be a heritage monument and a source of national pride. In my view it is a disgrace that much of the site is now essentially a bland trading estate with access to the remaining track limited to the Members Banking.

This is not to denigrate the trustees of the Spirit of Brooklands – the Museum does a wonderful job.

V Belvedere, Plymouth

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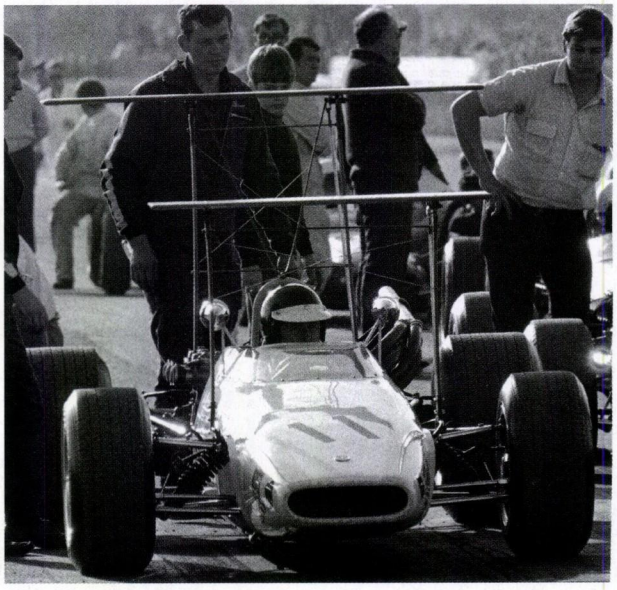


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Right: Elfin 600B of Henk Woelders at Calder in '69 – last Oz race to permit wings. Below: atmospheric start of Australian saloon event, with heat haze and gum trees





YOU WERE THERE

Nic Maennling's passion for motorsport was sparked by Stirling Moss, the1955 Mille Miglia and the pictures of Klemantaski ("Those early dawn photos of Lancia D50 with all those rivets – erotic stuff!"). As various jobs took him across the world, he also visited local race tracks.

In Australia he enjoyed a chat with Graham Hill during the 1968/69 Tasman Series, and took in many races – at places like Sandown and Calder – before returning to settle in Canada.

The last GP he attended was at Montreal in 1995 – "They won't let me jump the fence any more, and in Montreal a general admission ticket is completely useless."

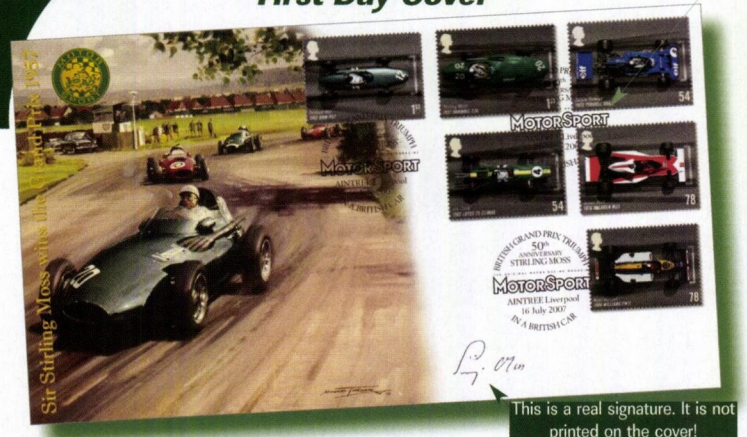
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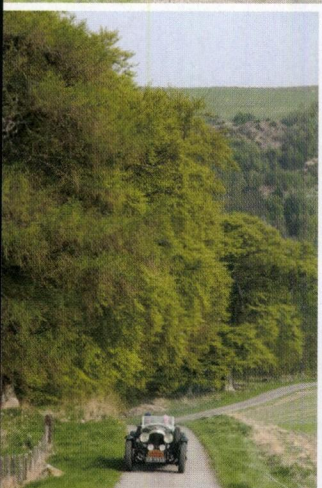
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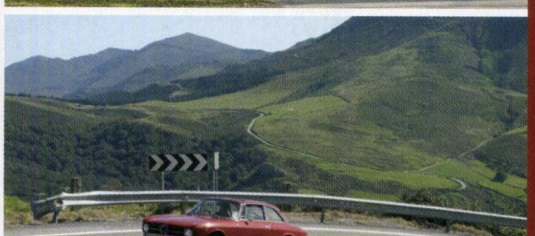
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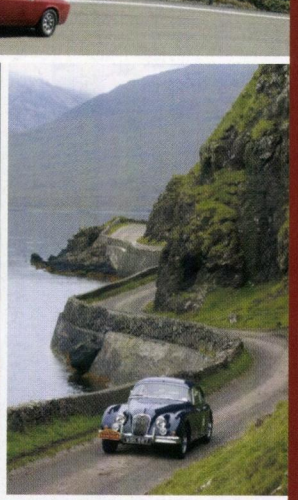














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Dario Franchitti

I've won the Indy 500! I don't want that to sound arrogant. That's not how it's meant. Far from it: it's been a truly humbling experience. I've said it here because I still don't believe it. Perhaps I will when I read this page in my copy of *Motor Sport*, a magazine I grew up with.

There was a moment on the Monday morning after the race when it began to hit me. By then, I'd already drunk the milk in Victory Lane and done almost four hours of interviews and live TV. I finished at 11pm, but still found time to celebrate – six more hours in fact, which wasn't such a good idea when my first scheduled appointment with the media was at 8am the next morning. But what the hell! You can't finish the day you win Indy by going to bed early, can you?

I wasn't feeling my best, I'll admit, but it was worth it. The day was gruelling and it reminded me of something Scott Dixon had said after the race: "Tomorrow you'll realise which part of this job you get paid for, and that in reality you race for free."

But *the* moment, for me, came at about 11am: the traditional photo shoot of the car, me, the garland and the trophy on the yard of bricks at the start/finish line. For the first hour I was standing in the cockpit as the team, sponsors, pit crew, family and so on came along for shots. I must have worn more than a hundred caps and shaken hundreds of hands. Then came the time for me to stand with the trophy for the next set of shots.

This is going to sound crazy, but I had never before looked at the trophy – even though this had been my fifth Indy 500. I think it's bad luck to look at a trophy before a race. You'll often see me with my hands over my eyes in drivers' meeting so that I can't see it. That's why that Monday morning hit me hard. I stopped, finally looked at the Borg-Warner Trophy, saw the faces and names on it, and realised that I will be there next year, that I'm going to be on the same Indy 500 trophy as Jim Clark. That's a moment I had dreamed about.

That sink-in feeling

He'd drunk the milk and done the interviews, but only after some sober reflection the next day did the full impact of his Indy 500 win dawn on him



Clark was my hero when I grew up. He died before I was born, but I've read a lot about him. And when I drove for Paul Stewart Racing in Formula Vauxhall and F3, Jackie Stewart was my boss and he told me a lot about Jim, too. 2005 was the 40th anniversary of his Indy win and I wanted to win that particular 500 more than anything. It didn't happen [Dario finished sixth after leading 15 laps] and that was a disappointment, because I really could have done it that year.

I had a quick car again this year, but I was fifth when the rain stopped the race on lap 113. My Andretti Green team-mates were 1-2-3, with my great friend Tony Kanaan in first. I'm sure they wanted the race to be stopped there and then. And I would have been happy for the team. But I knew I had a car that was better than fifth.

When the race restarted after a three-hour delay, I had a cut in a tyre and had to pit. That put me on a different strategy to the rest, but by then I had a rocket ship of a car. I charged from 14th. It was great. I could reel them in, pass safely, move up to the next one...

You know, of course, how it ended. So please forgive me for using this space to acknowledge what this win means to me.

As a Scotsman, Jackie Stewart has not only been my team boss in days gone by, he's a hero, too. He called me during practice to ask how it was going. I told him this and that, and he made a suggestion. We did it – and it worked! He's been out of the cockpit for more than 30 years, but he's still got it.

For me, though, Jim Clark is *the* man. He has been a role model to me. I'm in the process of renovating a house, and whereas before I would have racing stuff all over the place, this time I'm limiting it to one room: a Jim Clark-themed bathroom. I even went to buy some tiles – for the first and only time, I promise you. They had to match the colour of Jim's crash helmet. That's a tough blue to find, trust me.

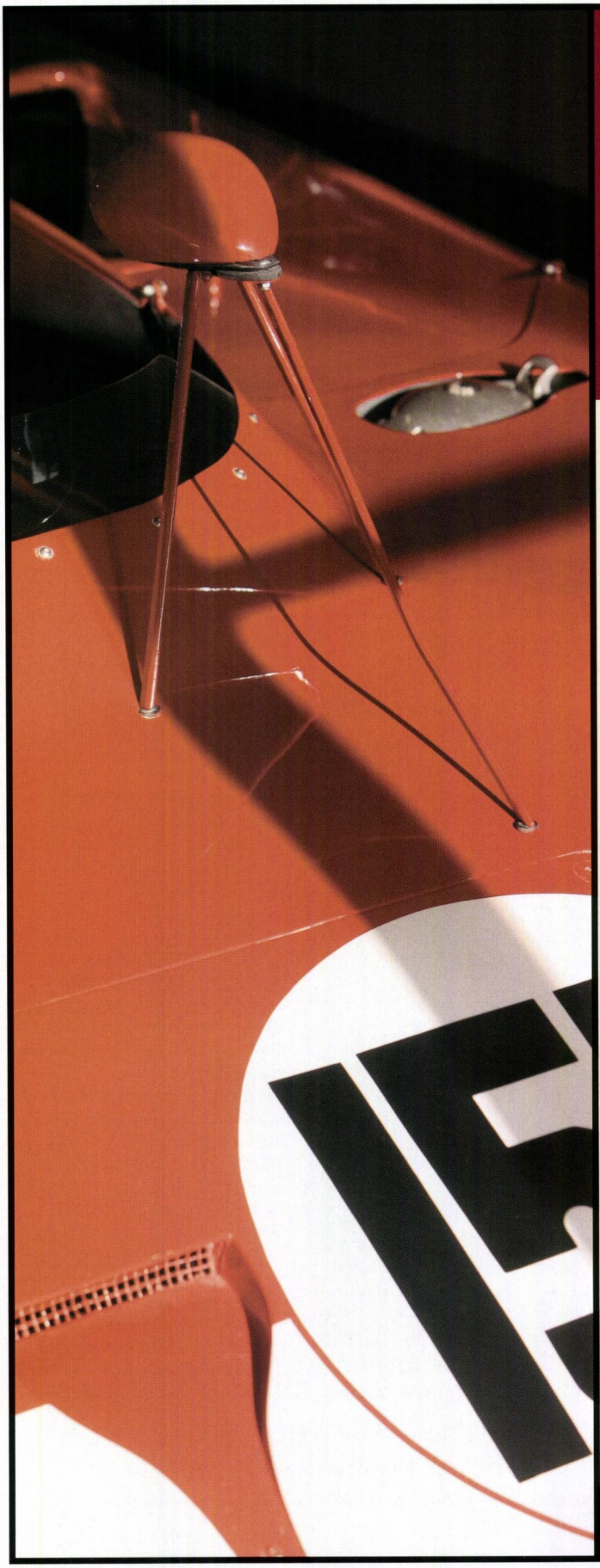
Winning at Indianapolis truly is a moment to savour. As a kid, my younger brother Marino and I had a Bobby Rahal poster from Indy on our bedroom wall. Never in a million years did I think I'd get to drink the milk as he did. I dreamed and hoped – but never thought it would happen.

Yet here I am, still pinching myself, in *Motor Sport* as the winner of the Indianapolis 500. Two privileges in one. Who would have thought it?



Foyt, Andretti, Clark, Hill, Johncock, Mears... Dario checks out his illustrious Indy peers

"Jackie Stewart called me during practice to ask how it was going. I told him this and that, and he made a suggestion. We tried it – and it worked! He's still got it"



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Mark Hughes

Must try harder

There are parallels between the situations of Jody Scheckter in 1979 and Kimi Räikönnen today. The South African says the Finn needs to dig deeper to reassert his status within Ferrari

In 1979, Jody Scheckter arrived at Ferrari as the world champion elect. That he'd not yet won a title seemed just a statistical anomaly. Ferrari was a top team looking for a top driver, he was on the market following the end of a liaison that had promised much – which had brought several race wins and a runner-up position in the championship – but which had rather lost momentum. His obvious next move was to Ferrari, the team with the all the facilities and the rock-solid reliability he craved. Upon signing with Maranello he immediately made himself not only the pre-season title favourite, but also F1's best-paid driver.

It couldn't go wrong. But there was a guy in the other car, on a fraction of Jody's wages, who'd had his first Ferrari season the year before, whom Jody had assumed would be no problem. He was a good guy, easy to get along with, didn't play the politics game – but was he fast! He could drive the red car and its funny Michelin rubber significantly faster than Jody. He'd had a full year's head-start in the ways of the team and in understanding the driving technique required by these very different tyres. Almost straight away the team's supposed number one was being beaten by his team-mate. It left Ferrari in a quandary about who to back as their title hope for the remainder of the season. Did it give Scheckter more time or throw its weight behind the junior?

This year Kimi Räikkönen arrived at Ferrari as the world champion elect. That he'd not yet won a title seemed just a statistical anomaly. Ferrari was a top team looking for a top driver, he was on the market following the end of a liaison that had promised much – which had brought several race wins and a runner-up position in the championship – but which had rather lost momentum. His obvious next move was to Ferrari. Upon signing with Maranello he made himself not only the pre-season title favourite, but also F1's best-paid driver.

It couldn't go wrong. But there was a guy in the other car, on a fraction of Kimi's wages, who'd had his first Ferrari season the year before, whom Kimi had assumed would be no problem. He was a good guy, easy to get along with, didn't play the politics game – but was he fast! He could drive the red car and its Bridgestone rubber significantly faster. Almost straight away the team's supposed number one was being beaten by his team-mate. It left Ferrari in a quandary about who to back as its title hope for the remainder of the season.

Uncanny as the parallels are, there are some differences. One is that Felipe Massa is not comparable to Gilles Villeneuve, and Felipe's advantage over his supposed team leader was not so clear-cut once you looked behind the reasons for the disparity. After the first four races, only in Malaysia was Massa clearly the quicker qualifier. In Australia there'd been no comparison because Felipe didn't get a lap in before his transmission failed, in Bahrain Räikkönen's final run was spoilt by traffic and in Spain the difference was almost un-measurable once account was taken of Räikkönen's heavier fuel load. But it's perception that counts and the perception was definitely in Massa's favour, and with the half way point of the season in view, Räikkönen badly needed to score some straight defeats over his team-mate if he was to get the full weight of the team behind his title bid.

Back in '79 things had been made more complex by a scoring system that counted only the best four results from each half of the season. As the halfway point neared, it was clear that the only title threat to Ferrari was from Ligier. By the fifth round Jacques Laffite and Patrick Depailler had scored three wins between them and Villeneuve had taken the other two (plus one non-title race). Scheckter had taken none. So before the sixth round at Zolder Ferrari announced that Jody had until Monaco, round seven, to score a win – otherwise they would be forced to transfer their title aspirations to Villeneuve. Jody promptly won the next two races, and his campaign was back on the rails.

"Yes, I can see the parallels," he allows, "although I had a contract that stipulated me as the number one and I don't believe that's the case today with Kimi, so that makes it a little harder for him. My situation was a bit more like Alonso's with Hamilton.

"We were all expecting Kimi to be immediately faster but Felipe is showing that he's not prepared to be a number two any more. But even though I was number one, Gilles was still beating me early in the season. Yes, partly it was down to tyres. The Michelins were sometimes unbelievably good but they could suddenly just collapse if you pushed them too hard. I should have won in South Africa if it hadn't have been for that – and I guess more experience with the tyres would have helped me there. But my biggest problem was that Gilles was just incredibly fast. Luckily for me, at that stage he was more interested in winning races than championships. All I wanted was to win the title, so I just had to dig deeper, push harder.

"But there was a massive amount of pressure on me for a time and I'm sure Kimi has been feeling it too. There's no magic cure, just digging deeper and trying harder."



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No sweat? Räikkönen thought that eclipsing team-mate Massa wouldn't be a problem

"My biggest problem was that Gilles was incredibly fast. At that stage he was more interested in winning races than championships. All I wanted was to win the title"

Andrew Frankel

Screenless wonder

After the disappointing Europa, Lotus is back to doing what it does best with the road-legal 2-Eleven trackday special. All you need is a trailer to cart it to Spa or the Nürburgring

The first time I drove on Lotus's famous test track outside the factory in Hethel I was in an Esprit. Big deal, you may think. But, to me, it was massively significant. For a start I was driving on a track I'd been reading about for many years, one made more mythical by the fact that it had never been raced on. It was shrouded in secrecy, where black and gold grand prix machines would roll factory-fresh on to the circuit. Their DFVs would then split the air asunder for a few mesmerising minutes before being shut down and the cars spirited back into the 'skunk works' of the world's most interesting, innovative racing team.

This was no normal Esprit, but the Esprit GT2 raced by one Alessandro Zanardi. You may remember the car; you may even remember its moment of fame where, in the wet at Donington, it ran seconds quicker than anything else on the track, including every GT1 car in the race. The secret of its speed had nothing to do with the ageing 2.2-litre twin-cam four. But it did go around corners beautifully, particularly when fitted with an unusually effective aero package. The team was run by George Howard-Chappell (who masterminded Aston's fabulous class victory at Le Mans) and I can remember after a few exploratory laps George leaning in, pressing a button and explaining that I had just qualified for proper turbo boost pressure.

All of which made Windsock rather interesting. Windsock is the greatest corner no one has ever heard of, a terrifying right-hand flick leading on to the runway at Hethel, hence the name. In an underpowered GT2 car with a great chassis, vast slicks and no little downforce, the corner was not quite flat. I can remember the noise of the splitter smashing into the appalling bumps as I turned in, the thump of my heart as I willed myself to take it flat and the lift of my foot as, every lap, both spirit and flesh chickened out.

Hethel has changed a lot since then – it's now a much more useful test facility with a considerably greater variety of corners than the old boomerang-shaped track. But Windsock remains in all its terrifying glory, and recently I was back at its entry, yet again failing to take it flat.

The car was the Lotus 2-Eleven and, like the GT2 Esprit, it is a heavily evolved version of a Lotus road car, designed for use on the track. Unlike the GT2, however, it is not a racing car: it's road legal, costs £39,995 and is the most thrilling car ever to emerge from Hethel wearing a number plate.

In concept at least, it is exactly the type of car Lotus should be making. It's light in weight, simple in construction and no less than outstanding to drive. In fact if there's any road car that blends raw point-to-point speed, fluency on the limit and mercy beyond it into a more impressive brew, I need to drive it.

Underneath that mad, doorless, window- and screen-less shape, lies the flesh and bone of the Exige S. But its supercharged, 1.8-litre motor has been boosted to give 252bhp and its weight pared to 740kg. Others will be quicker – a Caterham Seven CSR260 and supercharged Ariel Atom both enjoy significantly superior power to weight ratios and could be expected to post quicker lap times, but Lotus says the only reason for that is that the 2-Eleven is based on a structure whose strength and safety are derived from a car that's been through the full type approval process. It also points out that it's a Lotus and, to anyone with a sense of heritage, the initials on the nose will count for a lot.

I reckon they're right. The fact that this is an interesting and exciting new car is good news no doubt, but the fact that it is one of too few truly great Lotuses of recent years is cause for celebration. I've driven a 1950s Seven and a 1960s Elan and both have the same spirit found inside this mad little racetrack refugee.

But as a road car it could, and should, be better. The lack of a windscreen dramatically compromises its ability to do distances. I drove it between two junctions on the A11 and, bluntly, that was enough. Setting off for a long weekend at Spa or the Nürburgring – surely the sort of adventure for which the 2-Eleven was designed – is not something that I would contemplate. Lotus can't fit a taller wind deflector because then it would be classified as a windscreen by the authorities which would then necessitate wiper blades and an extra level of weight, complexity and hassle Lotus does not need at present. But without such a screen, you'll be better off towing it, at which point you might as well spend the same on the pure track version which has even more downforce, 40kg less weight and even more exceptional track manners.

What Lotus should do is produce an aftermarket screen and sell it to 2-Eleven owners, making it clear it's intended strictly for track purposes only. If those owners then decide to flout Lotus' advice, and indeed type approval regulations, by using those screens to make their lives a little less uncivilised between tracks, Lotus could hardly be blamed for that.

However owners configure their 2-Elevens, to me it's simply a relief to be reporting back from Hethel with a happy story. Last time I wrote about Lotus on this page I had just driven the misguided Europa, which turned out to be the most disappointing Lotus I'd sampled in the last decade. The 2-Eleven, by stark contrast, is the most exciting and one of the very best. It is small, light, simple and quick cars such as this upon which Lotus built its reputation. And it is cars like this upon which that reputation will be maintained and the company's future secured. And, yes, with a Lotus chassis engineer at the helm, Windsock is indeed flat. More, please.



Back to basics: the 2-Eleven can be hurled around a circuit with incredible precision

"If there's any road car that blends raw point-to-point speed, fluency on the limit and mercy beyond it into a more impressive brew, I need to drive it"

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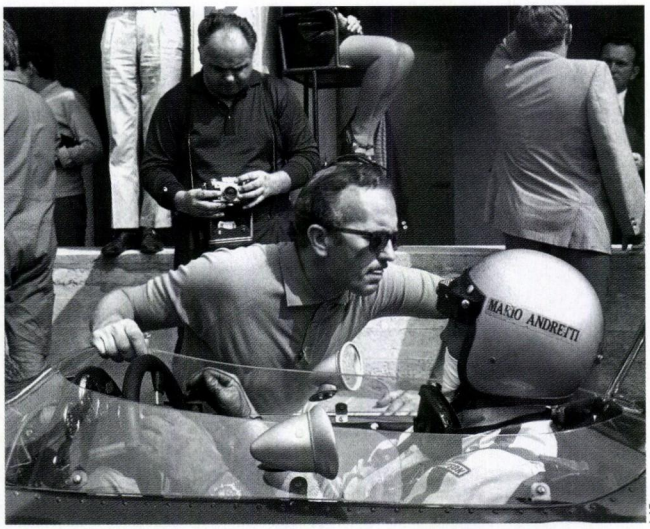
Mario Andretti's childhood years in a refugee camp in Italy and early racing career on US dirt tracks gave him a background entirely different to those of his GP rivals – and real charisma

As I walked into the Donington Park GPLive paddock in May, a lot of folk were clustered together around somebody or something, and curiosity drew me towards them. In the middle of the crush sat a Lotus 49 in Gold Leaf colours, and in its cockpit sat Mario Andretti.

"First time I drove it at Monza in '68 I just flat fell in love with that car. I'd never been in an F1 car before, but I'd thought about it so much. It was exactly what I'd expected – taut, precise and a little underpowered compared with what I was used to in Indycars. It was a very sincere car, in that it gave you something for nothing. That first day at Monza we were quicker than Chris Amon's Ferrari, and he was pretty much top dog that year."

Now 67, and a dozen years on from his retirement from 'open-wheel racing', Andretti still pulls a crowd like few have ever done. He was loving it, once more sitting in this car which took him to pole position in his first grand prix, and when he stepped out the rush for autographs was immediate. He must have signed for more than half an hour.

An Italian friend, the distinguished journalist Pino Allievi, always says, "There's no one like Mario – there never has been, and there never will be again." I know what he means. Andretti has charisma to throw away, that much we know, but to me what really stands out about him is his humanity – that and his laconic way with a one-liner.



LAT

Andretti, aboard a Lotus 49, chats to Colin Chapman at Monza in 1968 – the first time he drove it. Mario's time with Chapman was a wonderful chapter in his racing life, he says

Later that day he talked about the good and bad of working with Colin Chapman.

"When we first got together, Colin says, 'Mario, I always want to make a car as light as possible.' I says, 'Well, Colin, I want to live as long as possible. I guess we need to talk.'

"Over time, in fact, I dealt with the problem straightforwardly. Colin wanted to introduce titanium rockers, and I says, 'Well, give them to Ronnie [Peterson] if you want, but I will not drive with titanium rockers on my car.' Same with the pedals – I had a steel brake pedal because I demanded it. I used to work very closely with the mechanics like Bob Dance – I'd say, 'Listen, if there's anything you think is borderline, let me know, and I'll deal with it.'

"The thing is, I believed in Colin from way back. My first time at Indianapolis was 1965, the year Jimmy Clark won in a Lotus, and I remember asking Jimmy to speak to Colin about keeping me in mind for a ride sometime. Jimmy reported that Colin had said he would do that, but I didn't really believe it. Then the results started coming and by '68 we were talking seriously.

"Working with him was no trip to Paris, but I guess you're always going to have problems with a genius, right? All in all Colin was a wonderful chapter in my life – he was such a maverick. And of all the cars I ever drove, I guess the Lotus 79 was my favourite. Okay, it was the car that took me to the world championship, but every time I went into a race with the 79 I felt I could win it if the car would stay under me. I totally understood that car – including its flexing, which of course Colin would never admit to!"

There is a uniquely exotic quality about Andretti's career in motor racing, and it comes from its astonishing diversity. Had his parents not emigrated to America in 1955, when Mario was 15, it is not impossible that he would still have achieved his ambition and become a professional racing driver, but it seems less likely. As he points out, "The blood in my veins is Italian blood and a passport will never change that; of course I will always love Italy, but it sure as hell didn't offer me anything when I was a kid."

Andretti was born in the north-east, in Montona near Trieste, a part of the world that is now in Croatia. At the end of the Second World War, his father had a well-paid job, and for a time life seemed good.

"Then suddenly Communism arrives – everyone's equal, right? Too damn right everyone's equal – we all had nothing! From 1948 until we went to the States in '55, we lived in a displaced persons' camp, and for half that time we shared one huge room with 17 families. You don't forget that when you're a kid – you don't forget your mother's always crying and you don't know why.

I always get mad when people knock the American way of life, call it what you want, because they got no experience of the alternative. I'm not just blowing smoke here."

Suffice it to say that, were Mario Andretti to live in the UK, it is unlikely he would be seduced by the politics of Gordon Brown.

There was, though, one thing to be said for life in the refugee camp in Lucca: alongside was a parking lot, and as Mario and his brother Aldo grew up, people would allow them to park their cars. "Actually, that was where we learned to *spin* cars! Those poor people – they had no idea.

"I don't know what it was that ignited in us this thing about motor racing – but it was there even then. We used to watch the Mille Miglia, and in '54 we were taken to Monza for the Italian GP, where I saw Ascari."

It was perhaps inevitable that Alberto Ascari should have become the hero of this young boy in Italy. "He was portrayed by the press as very cold, very determined – there was something about him that was very exciting. Cold as ice, entirely composed – I just loved that."

In May 1955 Mario and Aldo watched Stirling Moss and Denis Jenkinson win the Mille Miglia, and then prepared themselves for what seemed like exile. They could understand why their parents had decided on emigration to the USA, but there seemed to be nothing there for them. "We knew of Indianapolis, of course, but only because Ascari had run there once. We figured we were kissing racing goodbye – and to make matters worse, Ascari was killed at Monza just before we left Italy.

"We were really down, Aldo and I, but it didn't last. When we got to the States we went to Nazareth in Pennsylvania, because we had an uncle who'd settled there. After just a few days we were working at his gas station and this guy drives in with his pickup, towing a sprint car. Man, it was like it had been a Mercedes W196! 'Where's the track?' we said, and he tells us it's right over there, a few hundred yards away. Suddenly we had a whole new life."

Indeed they had. In time the boys acquired an old Hudson Hornet and went stock car racing, and from there Mario progressed to midgets, then sprint cars, then finally to championship cars – Indycars – as well as taking in a little NASCAR.

A little NASCAR... in 1967 Andretti won the Daytona 500.

In the early- to mid-1960s, though, even as he pounded round countless dirt ovals in what was a horribly perilous era for sprint car drivers, at the back of his mind was always Formula 1.

"I knew I had to make my mark in Indycars, to get myself established, and it was all I was worried about then. The world championship was something far away, something to look into later on – if I ever got the chance.

"When I finally got into F1 my racing background was entirely different from the other guys, but that was because of circumstance. I was living in the United States, I wanted to be a race driver – and I had no money. It wasn't a matter of opting to go with the midgets and sprints, rather than F3 or something. I didn't even have the fare to Europe."

And that says it. *That* is where so much of the Andretti mystique comes from – the fact that on June 21 1964, when such as Surtees and Hill and Bandini and Gurney and Rindt and Amon and McLaren were competing in the Le Mans 24 Hours, prior to moving on to Rouen-les-Essarts for the French Grand Prix, he, Mario, was driving the Windmill Truckers Special in his first championship race on the dirt, at Langhorne, a track not far from the Andrettis' home and the most feared in North America.



Jim Houlgrave

Autograph hunters flock round Mario Andretti in a Lotus 49 at Donington's GPLive meeting

"Working with Chapman was no trip to Paris, but I guess you're always going to have problems with a genius, right?"

Mario's apprenticeship in other words was unique: no driver ever came to grand prix racing with as broad a brush of experience already behind him. His silky style in an F1 car belied the fact that he had learned his trade in a form of racing where opposite lock was a way of life. Andretti was always of the Prost school, dedicated to finding a car's perfect set-up, but at heart he was an old-fashioned racer, and if the occasion demanded would bully an ill-handling car into positions it shouldn't have been.

Except on the ovals, that is. "You can't do it at a place like Indy, where the speeds are just too high. You might get away with it on a four-lap qualifying run, but it's a bit too character-building to keep it going for long. Sooner or later, you're looking for a piece of the wall."

It may be 25 years since his last grand prix (at Las Vegas in 1982) but Andretti's love of Formula 1 remains. His great hope is that his 20-year-old grandson, Marco, will ultimately make the switch from Indycars, and he keeps right up with what is happening in what remains his first love.

"I really like the way F1 is at the moment. In some teams the number one and number two haven't been established – the jury's out in that respect. The ones who were expected to lead the train – like Räikkönen and Alonso – haven't necessarily done it: their young team-mates are giving them hassle, and I think that's great."

For all his love of technology, though, he has a fundamental distaste for 'driver aids'.

"The cars forgive you so much these days, I think. You can't miss a shift, you can't over-rev the engine, stuff like that. Most of all, though, I hate traction control, and I'm so glad – *so glad* – to see that they're throwing it away next year."

It was Mario who long ago came up with the phrase, 'The educated right foot'. And there was no better school for that than the dirt of Langhorne.



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HDi
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J.VILLENEUVE



VILLENEUVE AT LE MANS

Having already won the Formula 1 world title and the Indy 500, the mercurial Jacques Villeneuve turned to the 24 Heures du Mans for another stab at glory

by Rob Widdows. Photography: James Burns

"I have said things which have gone against me, sure, but that's how I am. What is important to me is to be the best at everything I do. If it's easy, then it means you didn't work hard enough"

Top: Easily identifiable in his trademark baggy race suit and rimless spectacles, Jacques Villeneuve was relishing his return to competitive motorsport in a turbodiesel Peugeot partnered by, from left, Lamy, Sarrazin and Minassian. Below left: Peugeot's effort was a big event at La Sarthe, and Villeneuve appeared at ease with the promotional demands of the job as the French firm aimed to put one over Audi in the battle of the 'oil burners'. Below right: The sleek 908 HDi FAP coupé proudly leaves its carbon fibre exposed





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Jacques is back. On track and on form, complete with baggy overalls and Peugeot shirts that are far too big for him. The man has been back to his cave, to his private paradise, since being rather abruptly fired by the BMW Sauber Formula 1 team. He has licked his wounds, recorded an album and spent time with his wife and baby son. Back in the spotlight, he's at ease with himself if not the entire world around him. There is still plenty that irritates, bringing restless impatience to those so-straight grey eyes. You sense that, if he were a bird of prey, he could spot a mouse from 1000ft.

"I'm really not so keen on all these interviews," he says, emerging from the motorhome where he, his wife Johanna and eight-month-old Jules will live for much of the month of June. "I get angry when you print just what you want to hear, just a few quotes you're trying to make me say. That's pointless, you know, and why should I waste my time?" The eyes are drilling me from behind those wiry spectacles, the clipped consonants of the Québéçois adding a sting to the sentences. "I don't understand why drivers say they don't mind all the interviews when they're racing, that it's all part of the job, then when they retire they say the one thing they won't miss is all the interviews. Crazy."

So, Jacques is back, which is very big news indeed. And never has car number seven, the Peugeot 908 HDi FAP, been the centre of so much attention.

The Automobile Club de l'Ouest has published a list of 24 reasons why you should have been to Le Mans this year. Number eight advised that you be there to witness Jacques Villeneuve take on a big challenge. And so it proved, starting with a preliminary test day at the beginning of June.

Walking along the pitlane that Sunday at the Circuit de la Sarthe you could be forgiven for thinking that Jacques was the only show in town. While other teams went quietly about their business the Peugeot garage was surrounded by chattering reporters, photographers and not a few fans who had slipped through the ropes. Jacques signed a few autographs, seemed at ease chatting with his fellow drivers.

"Yeah, I feel good, actually. I feel comfortable and it's good to be back, especially with my family here. It would not be so good if they were not here with me. It's better for me to handle the race weekend this way." He clasps his hands, cracking his knuckles, still a little fidgety about all the faces peering in at us as we talk. His driver's wristband is bugging him, too tight underneath the Nomex. "I can't take it off or they won't let me in," he smiles. "Anyway, it's nice to be back. I've been around racing since I was five-years-old – it's what I always wanted to do. I know my way around. We went racing with my father this way, as a family. This is my environment; I've been doing this for 17 years now."

This was manifestly not the case in the summer of 2006 when Jacques was summarily dismissed by BMW Sauber, effectively bringing his grand prix career to a rude and painful halt against the barriers at Hockenheim. The official line from Munich was that his employment had been terminated by mutual consent. "I was not happy about that, of course, but there are no regrets." He pauses, decides to expand a little: "I knew anyway that they were not going to keep me, that they had other plans. It was clear from the start of the year. It was just a shame because I was driving well, the car was getting better and we scored points in Malaysia. There was no point in having big arguments: you always end up where you started. It would have made no difference if I'd won the next two races – they wanted me out so I went. It would not have happened that way at Williams with Frank and Patrick, there was more human nature there, and no, it was not a nice experience.

"But I wasn't happy about the way Formula 1 was going: the paddock was a clinical place, no fun. The atmosphere was medical; antiseptic. And the team owners now, they have so much ego, so much more self-importance; some of them just wanting to take all the glory for themselves when they should not be the stars of the show. I could not speak my mind any more in that environment, in that atmosphere, and I say what I think. You asked me if I am a maverick – well, I'm not sure what you mean; it was never a deliberate thing for me. I have said things which have gone against me in my career, sure, but that was normal for me, it's how I am. So it was not such a big deal at the end with BMW; I just thought, OK, my Formula 1 days are finished, time to move on: that's the way it happens. If it's not meant to be any more, then it's not meant to be; life changes.

"What is important to me is to be the best at everything I do, to find the perfect way. You have to shoot high because you will never be as good as what you aim at, you always have to shoot higher than what you can achieve if you want to achieve your very best. To me, anything you do, you have to sweat for it. If it's just easy, then it means you didn't work hard enough at it. It's important for me to keep pushing the envelope, keep going to the edge. I've always been this way. OK, Formula 1 is behind me – I guess if I had the chance of a really competitive car, I'd be interested – but I'm not going to win more F1 titles. Schumacher has seven and I'm not going to better that, am I? There are many other things in my life now."

One of the biggest things in his life right now, in France in June, is the job he's being paid to do by Peugeot Sport. The French manufacturer knows how to win Le Mans and Jacques knows to how to win races but life is never that simple, especially when the car is still not fully developed. The 908 HDi FAP is a beautiful piece of kit, a highly sophisticated new-generation endurance racer that looks like a cross between a jet fighter and an F1 car in a designer suit. Within its slippery carbon-fibre flanks, the black material left unpainted, sits a 5.5-litre, twin-turbocharged V12 diesel which produces more than 700bhp and monumental amounts of torque at extremely low revs. This motor from Peugeot's technical centre at Vélizy is shrouded, literally, in secrecy. Every time the body is lifted a red cloth is draped over the machinery. There is much at stake here, Peugeot ▶

palpably keen to put one over the Audis in the battle for supremacy in the lucrative diesel road car market. Jacques is enthusiastic, animated on the subject of his latest toy.

"Yeah, it feels like a real racing car," he grins, "and you can attack with it, slide it in the corners, find that rhythm, which is nice. But it's sharp also, like an F1 car. You can be millimetre-perfect with it as well; you can be accurate, and I like that. I always liked that about F1, the need to be precise; exactly on the lines. The 908 is working at low revs, sure, but inside the noise is good, you know you are in a real racing car and it goes up to 5000 quite quickly. All that torque takes you out of the corners very fast, not Formula 1 but it demands your attention. There is some turbo lag but you get used to it. Anyway now you have the lights for changing up the gears, you're not so much listening for the revs. Being shut inside the cockpit, that's new and quite different; it's like your own little world in there. You don't get so much the feeling of the world rushing by, like in a Formula 1 car, but still it's quite physical to drive. At night, especially, it's like being flat-out on the *autoroute* at three o'clock in the morning with the radio playing; you get a rhythm going, there are no distractions. It's a good feeling."

Not since Graham Hill won at Le Mans with Matra in 1972 has a racing driver won what they call the Triple – the World Championship, the Indy 500 and the 24 Heures du Mans. Of this Jacques is very much aware.

"Sure, and for me it would be four actually," he grins, a glint in those sharp grey eyes, "because I won the Indycar Championship as well, so yes, it's a big ambition for me. I want to give it my best shot, I want to win because maybe next year I won't be able to be here. I worked with French engineers before at Williams with the Renault engine, so I know Peugeot can do the job. It's not a big connection for me, the French part, but I do think in French more than English most of the time."

Veterans of the 24 Heures du Mans will tell you that to win the race, first you have to beat the place. Just as the Indianapolis 500 takes up most of the month of May, so Le Mans takes up a large part of June. Since the testing at Paul Ricard, the cars have been re-built for this, the opening scrutineering and test weekend at La Sarthe. Then there's the very Gallic theatre of further scrutineering in the town square, the qualifying day, the night-time qualifying, a further complete re-build and finally the race itself. Three weeks of pressure for team and drivers. For a rookie, especially one from Formula 1, there are many challenges, not least of which is sharing your racing car with two other people. Jacques is partnered with Marc Gené and Nicolas Minassian, while in the garage next door there's another bespectacled Indycar champion. There has been much talk about whether Sébastien Bourdais, teamed with Pedro Lamy and Stéphane Sarrazin, will be quicker than Jacques.

He won't be drawn into any of this just yet. All will be revealed on the track. "Of course, yes, you must work with your team-mates at Le Mans and there is no big thing about who will be quickest. Pole would be good, though." JV on pole would do no harm at all for Peugeot, that much has been evident. Gené is a bit more forthcoming. "Jacques will have no problem," says the Spaniard, also racing here for the first time. "He's a world champion; the driving will be no ▶




TOTAL
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problem but many things can happen in 24 hours. But the quick guys are quick wherever they go."

Johnny Herbert, the 1991 winner who similarly returned to chasing honours in the great race after leaving F1, adds: "The biggest problem for JV will be the traffic. The Peugeot is maybe 30mph faster on the straights, and it's very hard to read what the slower guys are going to do."

Another man who knows a bit about this place is Stefan Johansson. "I've had one clear lap here in 11 years," he laughs. "It's so frustrating. Jacques will have to be patient, and keep out of the pits, of course. Otherwise it's not a big deal for him. The top guys will always be quick straight away."

On the eve of the first test day there are myriad jobs to do. Comfort in the narrow 908 HDi is always going to be a compromise. The seat and pedals are adjusted for the tallest driver, in this case Gené, while the others must fit in as best they can. The best part of an hour is spent on this and Jacques is not happy with the position of the pedals. He is not tall but he is powerfully built, stocky like a boxer, and he must install his own seat at each pit stop. "Sharing a car with other drivers is not a problem for me. I am not getting involved in any setting-up work today, and the others are far more accustomed to this car than I am anyway. First I need to learn the track, which has quite a few interesting corners, and then do some longer runs to see how the tyres evolve."

Jacques must complete a mandatory ten laps this weekend to satisfy an ACO regulation for all who race at the circuit for the first time. Time to go to work.

"My biggest worry is the amount of traffic," he says, looking concerned, not knowing who most of the other drivers are. "This is something new to me, and some of the cars are taking some pretty bizarre lines. What do you call them, gentlemen racers? That is the danger here, but for us as the professional drivers whatever happens will be our fault because it's for us to judge what can go wrong and not put ourselves in a position where it can happen. The key is to finish the 24 hours, not to try and do qualifying laps all the time. It's like driving on the road; these people will not react in the same way as proper racers, so don't assume they have seen you. You have to be pre-emptive, pass before or after a corner in case he closes the door on you. But once you get in the race you forget that and you end up driving too aggressively. But you don't want to be too defensive or you'll end up falling asleep!

"Always leave yourself a margin: if he chops me off, is there room to go through on the grass or is there a guardrail? If there is a guardrail, then you lift; you can always go through on the grass if you have to. When you've driven for 17 years it becomes natural, you know in advance what to expect. You always imagine subconsciously what could go wrong and then be prepared for it. But you only know that if you've made mistakes, if you have learned from that. Lots of people don't learn, they make a mistake, then they come back and say they did nothing wrong and they make the same mistake over and over again. It's like everything: it's head over body. It's the brain that controls all this. It's a matter of when you make the move – that has a bigger effect than the move itself.





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"My biggest worry is the traffic. Some of the cars are taking pretty bizarre lines. What do you call them, gentlemen racers? But it's for us professional drivers to judge what can go wrong and be pre-emptive"

Left: Villeneuve is not famous for toeing the party line, but says he feels comfortable working with a French crew following his experience with Renault during his Williams days. Le Mans 2007 represents the Canadian's first time racing with a roof over his head since he drove a TOM'S Toyota at Mine in 1992 during his spell racing in Japan. JV was aiming to become only the second driver after Graham Hill to have conquered the endurance classic, the Indianapolis 500 and the F1 world championship

"It's what is happening in Formula 1 now. That is why I always said just take the mirrors off – you will have fewer accidents because the guy behind will know that you have not seen him, so he will not put himself in a position where you will drive into him. The danger is when the guy behind you thinks: 'He must have seen me, I'll just put my nose in there' and that is just not always the case."

He warms to this subject. "A lot of these young drivers now think that if they get their front wing next to the rear wheel of the guy in front, then it's their corner. Well, no, it isn't their corner; they were not alongside so of course they get driven off the track. The line belongs to the car in front; they don't seem to understand that. So that's why I said to take the mirrors off. People said 'You're crazy, you're so stupid, how can you block the other guy?' Well, yeah exactly, you're not supposed to block.

"Another aspect of today's Formula 1 is that the young drivers do not seem to realise that the sport is still very dangerous. Because the cars are strong, and because there's not been a really big shunt recently [JV was talking before Robert Kubica's horrifying crash in Canada], they drive as if it is impossible for them to be hurt any more. This is just not the case; speeds are high, and F1 is still a dangerous sport."

By the end of the test weekend Jacques had come through unscathed, not at the top of the timesheets, but fastest rookie. Peugeot described the start of the month as "rewarding", Bourdais setting the best time on race tyres, with the sister car fifth, three seconds away.

I first met Jacques at the Macau Formula 3 race in 1992, packing his ponytail into his helmet to do battle around those narrow streets. The spectacles were more student, less designer then but here was somebody just a little different, as you might expect from Gilles' son. He was clearly very much his own man. Never one to suffer a fool for longer than necessary, he remains that man today. Older and wiser, but the smouldering is still there, as is the raw intelligence; the willingness to take a pace into the danger zone. And now he's ventured out from his mountain hideaway in search of new prizes.

"It's the hunter in us." He looks me in the eye: "It's deeply ingrained. It's too easy to be lazy. Life is good, there's always something positive out of anything. Don't look at the dark side of things, look at the bright side, whatever is happening."

And the interview? "They don't all have to be hateful," he smiles and walks smartly away. There is work to be done. Then he turns. "We should talk about the music," he says. "You going to mention the album?"



After his BMW sacking, Villeneuve solaced himself with his other passion, music. He has just released a new solo album, Private Paradise

HENRI PESCAROLO ON GRAHAM HILL

Ambitious young hotshoe Henri Pescarolo was far from pleased when he was paired with Graham Hill – reckoned by some to be in decline – for Le Mans in 1972, but Graham turned out to be Pesca's perfect team-mate. They won

Words: Rob Widdows. Photography: Schlegelmilch

Pescarolo Sport had garage number one at Le Mans this year, pole position in one of the world's most recognisable pitlanes. The French team enjoyed this honour thanks to its charismatic leader, a man inextricably linked to *Les Vingt-Quatre Heures du Mans*. Henri Pescarolo has taken part in no fewer than 33 of these races, winning on four occasions.

The first of these victories came in 1972, and so it's no surprise that he's keen to talk about his team-mate of that year: Matra's surprise choice, Graham Hill. The win was the first leg of Matra-Simca's hat-trick at La Sarthe – and completed the triple crown Hill so desired: F1 world championship, Indianapolis 500 and Le Mans.

"First of all, it was very strange, you know," Pescarolo says in those deliberate tones, serious face under peaked cap, "because I did not want to drive for Matra. I was very upset with them because they had pushed me out of the F1 team in 1970, even though I'd had fantastic results. It was my first full year in Formula 1, and the car was not so competitive, yet I was third at Monaco [he was also fifth in France and sixth in Belgium and Germany]. So when they asked Chris Amon to join for 1971, it was very frustrating for me. I decided never again to race for Matra.

"Two years later Jabby Crombac came to tell me that Matra wanted me to drive for them at Le Mans. I told him no. But in the end I agreed to do it. I saw it was the right team and the right car, and that there was a chance to win."

But soon there was another sticking point.

"I was so surprised," admits Pesca, "when they told me I would be driving with Graham Hill. At first I said, 'No, I don't want him.' I was concerned about how he would cope with the conditions, the dangers. Le Mans is so different from F1. It's a road race, the most dangerous race at that time. I said, 'What if it's raining in the night, or there's fog in the morning, do you think he will be prepared to take risks?'"

Pescarolo's worries were understandable. Although Hill had plenty of experience of Le Mans – he numbered Stirling Moss, Richie Ginther and Jackie Stewart among his previous co-drivers there, and had finished second in 1964 alongside Jo Bonnier in Maranello Concessionaires' Ferrari 330P – he hadn't started this enduro event since 1966, and, at 43, his powers appeared to be waning.

Right: Henri Pescarolo (centre in blue overalls) and Graham Hill (with flowers) celebrate their historic 1972 Le Mans 24 Hours victory for Matra

"I was still a young driver," says Pescarolo. "Graham Hill was a legend. I had never even spoken to him. That would have been impossible for me. But eventually I said, 'Okay, I will drive with him.'

"And so he came to the team, became my team-mate – and in a very short time a real friend too. It was strange. It was as if it had always been like that. It was so easy from the first contact. He was such a fantastic guy. And he was bloody quick of course." In all conditions, too. "When I looked at his lap times during the night, and in the rain, I thought, 'Okay, I can sleep now.' His speed in the night was one of the reasons we won.

"And we were good together as a team. That helped. We spent the week before the race together, staying in the same château, and it was a fantastic time for me."

Pescarolo had admired Hill from a distance. Now he had a close-up of the Englishman's famed determination: "I think he realised this was his last chance to win the race. And although he was teamed with drivers much younger than himself, he was ready to listen, to learn. I told him things you must watch out for in this race, things that can go wrong. But he had huge experience, too. He was soon on the pace.

"A lot of teams have had problems because one of the drivers wants to prove he is the faster. This leads to many mistakes. But that never happened with Graham. He was intelligent and had the right approach. We both had: if I was quick he was pleased; if he was quick I was pleased. He knew it was important not to have your team-mate as your enemy. Not all F1 drivers, especially world champions, have understood that.

"We beat the other Matras with their F1 drivers – François Cevert, Jean-Pierre Beltoise – because we drove as a team. ▶


ESSO



"There was an explosion of joy after the race. Right through the night, with champagne. Then the whole team went to lunch with President Pompidou at the Elysée Palace. Incredible"



Top: Graham Hill heads into Tertre Rouge during a drive Henri Pescarolo now describes as "perfect." Above: Pesca sits in the MS670 as the Matra men make adjustments in the pits

It was the same with Gérard Larrousse and me in the two years after. But with Graham it was something very, very special. I was so pleased for him because that was his big target: to win Le Mans."

Interviewed after the race, Hill was equally generous in praise of his team-mate – and team: "The rivalry between the Matra drivers was intense. We all wanted to win. My car was still pulling the same revs down the Mulsanne Straight at the end of the race as it had at the start. A fantastic car – and the best team I've ever driven for at Le Mans.

"I cannot praise Henri Pescarolo highly enough. We shared the four-hour stints throughout the race, but it was Henri who actually drove across the line, which was only right as it was the first French win for over 20 years."

The French had gone winless at their most famous race since the Rosiers' 1950 victory in a Talbot-Lago.

"There was an explosion of joy after the race," remembers Pescarolo. "Right through the night, with champagne at a big Moët et Chandon party. Then the whole team went to lunch with President Pompidou at the Elysée Palace. Incredible.

"Matra had been trying to win at Le Mans for so long and now they had their first victory. It was absolutely fabulous for them and for me. Everybody was calling us the *Matraciens*, the men of Matra. We had been really ready to kill ourselves for the team."

And 43-year-old Graham Hill, a very English Englishman in a very French team at the most French of races, had matched them all the way.

"He was perfect," smiles Pesca. Ⓜ



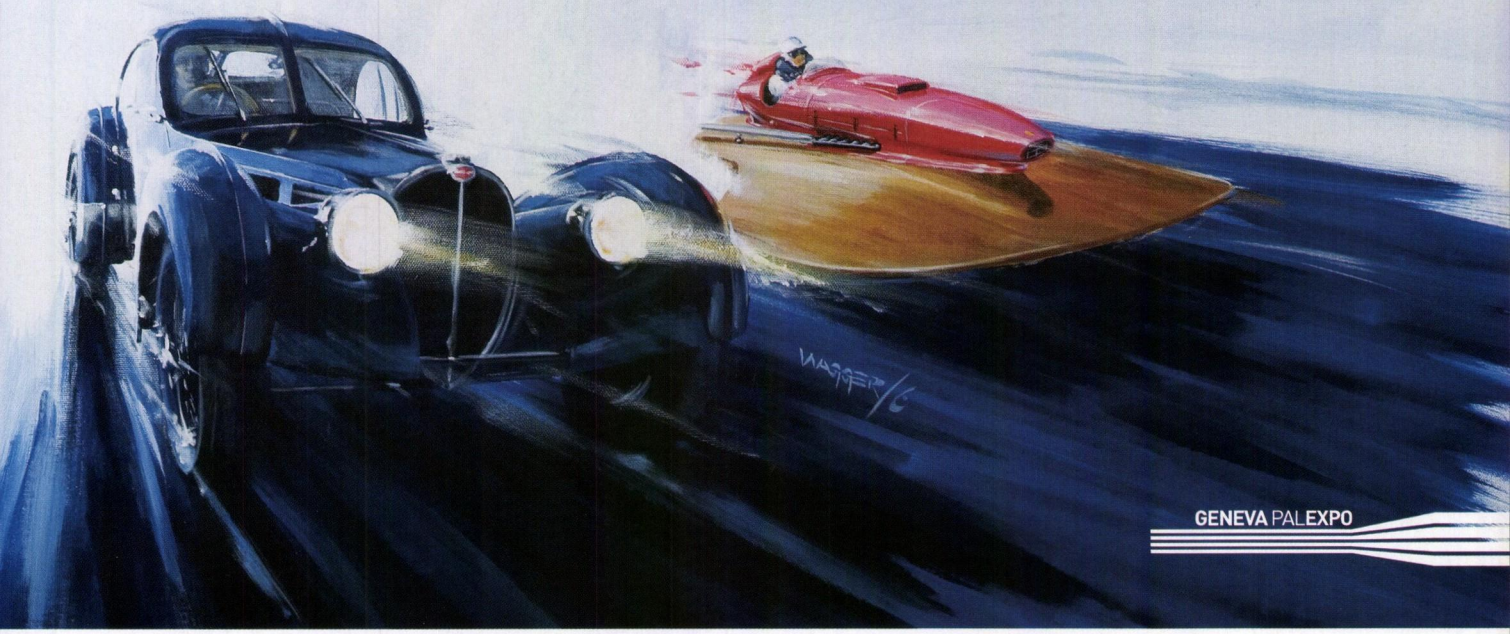
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2006-spec Porsche Spyder leads 550 version from 1954



PICKING UP THE THREAD

There's over half a century between these Porsche Spyders, yet they are linked by more than a badge. The genetic strands which connect them are fine, hard to see at first, but, as **Chris Harris** discovers from the driving seat, they're strong too

Photography: David L F Smith



James Dean had originally intended to trailer his Porsche to the races at Salinas, California, but chose at the last minute to drive the car there in order to familiarise himself with it. It was a decision with tragic consequences

The announcement in 2005 that Porsche would in the next year return to sports car racing with a purpose-built prototype met with a mixed reaction. Aficionados were excited that the most successful producer of such vehicles was back in town. Potential customers were enthused at the prospect of being able to buy one – although this wouldn't be possible until 2007. But a slice of the racing demographic were rather less impressed when Porsche pulled the covers off its new racer, appropriately name RS Spyder. You see, by entering LMP2 – that's one class below the all-winning Audis – against a raft of privateer outfits was rather like Kevin Pietersen announcing his intention to join Flax Bourton cricket club of the Western League.

As it turned out, the Spyders didn't have it all their own way. I journeyed to Sebring last year to watch their first race: neither car finished, a small transmission component failing over this track's bumps. But the car was quick and, lest we forget, it was not a *full* factory team. Just as it had done in Can-Am 34 years before, Porsche had teamed up with Roger Penske's huge operation. After that difficult introduction in Florida, the Spyders began to flourish and their eventual class title included an outright 1-2 at Mid-Ohio.

Porsche's decision to use the Spyder moniker was entirely justified. Generations of road-going and racing Italian exotica have used the title, but the car which the majority of the population associate with that name assumed universal notoriety the day J Dean Esq lost his life behind the wheel of one. (The car was to be called the 550/1500RS, but the American importer Max Hoffman suggested that it would be easier to sell given a name.) The significance of that crash on September 30, 1955 isn't lost on Porsche; its own 550 Spyder, currently idling in the pitlane at the company's Weissach test track, is, I am promptly told, the chassis immediately after Dean's. I think that rates as provenance.

Motorsport has advanced immeasurably since the 1950s, and the clean, organic shape of the 550 sits uncomfortably against the brutal aero-management philosophy of the later car. But before we drive them, there are similarities to be explored and explained.

The first lies in the reason for their existence. Porsche's commercial approach to motorsport was shaped by its 550 Spyder project. As the car evolved from Walter Glöckler's Spyder, it was raced as it was developed. No two cars were the same and, as the programme progressed, a strategy emerged: Porsche would use only new vehicles for major events, and sell them after each race. And so was born its customer motorsport department. Today's Spyder follows

Left: Bettmann/Corbis, right: LAT



In May 2006 this RS Spyder won the ALMS race at Mid-Ohio. It was driven by Timo Bernhard/Romain Dumas. Team-mates Sascha Maassen/ Lucas Luhr ensured a Penske Porsche 1-2

the same brief: yes, Porsche is trying to win in the ALMS, but this is also an exercise designed to sell cars and make money. And if you take one look at Porsche Motorsport's new HQ at Weissach you realise how clever this strategy has been. Last winter alone it built 250 GT3 Cup cars, at least two dozen RSRs and three customer Spyders. That's enough volume to be considered a car manufacturer in its own right.

Other similarities? Well, their engines are mounted amidships – and other than that I have to confess I'm struggling. And anyway, the new car is being warmed.

This Le Mans-type racer is, at first, an intimidating device. Every surface appears to be a brittle, costly slither of carbon fibre, and its tiny cabin is littered with electronic gizmos and widgets whose operations are unknown but whose cost is, I assume, significant. You clamber in over the side, drop into the hard carbon seat, adjust the mandatory HANS device to be comfortable under the belts, and are then harnessed in place the way you imagine those aboard Saturn 5 might have been. Scope for head and neck articulation is limited to *Inspector Clouseau*-style furtive eye movements.

The motor fires quickly and loudly. It displaces just 3397cc and is forced to breathe through 44mm restrictors, but somehow the alchemists in the engine shop have squeezed from it 503bhp at 10,300rpm and 273lb ft at 7500rpm.

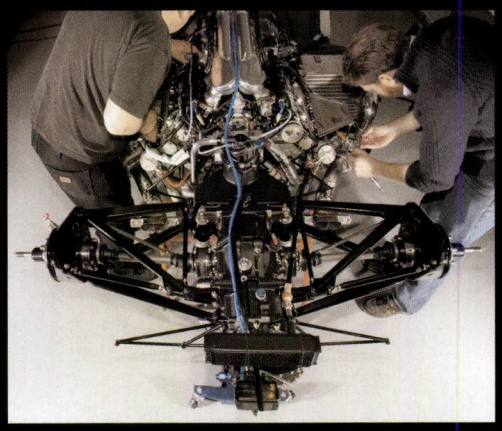
So, as Roland Kussmaul, a man with a direct link to every post-956 racing Porsche, asks me not to bin it, it's time to consider three simple facts: 503bhp, 775kg, cold slicks.

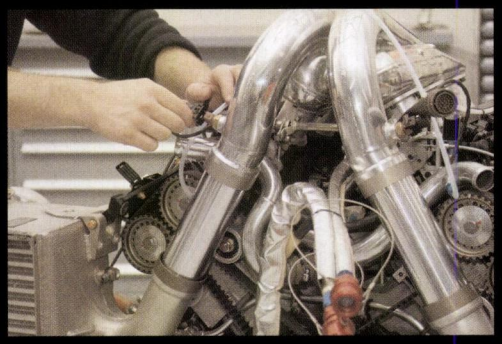
The car's aggressive appearance and disjointed boarding procedure has prepared you for the worst, but an unexpectedly friendly character is confirmed within 100 yards of pulling away: it's easy to drive. A simple foot clutch gets you moving, after which the Spyder becomes a strictly two-pedal, two-paddle device. Flick the right paddle to shift up, the left to shift down. It sounds simple. And that's before you suss the uncanny accuracy with which the electronic systems blend the changes. Like any race transmission, it likes to work under maximum duress, and there's significant slip from the cold rubber, but even so I have never driven a car that assists its driver so comprehensively.

The traction control system has many different maps for changing weather conditions and is understandably set to 'full wally' for my purposes, allowing me to lean on the rear axle from cold (although the car will still spin with the traction control on, apparently) and marvel at this six-speed transmission. Flat shifts from second to third send only the faintest flutter through the body. Remarkably, it's even smoother coming back down the 'box. From 140mph in fifth, the driver simply flicks the left paddle, then waits the ▶









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few milliseconds it takes for the black box to assimilate the difference between crank and cog speeds and apportion the precise number of revs to bridge that gap. This process is seamless, making a mockery of jerky road-going equivalents.

And the brakes – 380mm front and 355mm rear carbon discs – are mind-blowing. With some tyre temperature, it's now possible to carry more corner speed and thump down the straights. Acceleration is strong up to about 140mph, but then begins to tail off because the Spyder runs more wing than a Fokker Triplane. Lift off the throttle at 155mph and it decelerates like a modern road car using half its braking performance. This means that the Spyder's initial retardation is aerodynamically assisted, that you can punch the middle pedal as hard as you dare, bracing yourself in the belts as the car pulls 3g. But as speed is shed, so is aero effect, and this means that, just at the point your brain tells you to push a touch harder on the pedal, actually you must reduce pressure in preparation for mechanical grip's takeover. It's a strange feeling, but becomes instinctive fairly quickly.

The car's agility, though, is more difficult to comprehend. Weissach is a technical circuit shrouded in concrete obstacles, yet the Spyder slices at 100mph through turns which a GT3 RS couldn't manage at 65mph. The final banked right-hander generates in the region of 2.5 lateral g, and after 10 laps my neck is throbbing. Modern racing drivers need to be incredibly fit.

Given the vigour with which it spun its V8 into life, you could assume that the new Spyder's starter motor is as powerful as the 550's engine. The air-cooled flat-four has been warming for a few minutes, but I lean in and switch it off. Whereas I was desperate to jump in and drive the other, I want to walk around the 550, absorb its shape and details. Only time will tell if future generations will stalk around surviving RS Spyders 50 years from now and coo with delight – but I doubt it.

The 550 is a tiny racing slipper of a car, a machine shorn of everything superfluous, thus reducing mass and therefore maximising performance. Its shape was dictated by lengthy spells in a wind tunnel, and yet, like so many contemporary designs, its basic beauty suggests that function played no role in its creation.

Turn the key and that opinion changes. The opposed-four motor fires with enthusiasm. Brush the throttle pedal lightly and the rev-counter's needle immediately fidgets through 2000rpm and energy fizzes into the lightweight body.

There is little about the controls that would concern the driver of any air-cooled 911: floor-hinged pedals, familiar typefaces and a gear lever jutting from the floor. As enjoyable mechanical operations go, there are few to rival the gearshift of a healthy 550. Whereas the later car works its magic with competence, the joy in the old-timer lies in its action. The throw is relatively long, but the linkage has little slack and those last few inches as the cogs engage remind us why a manual gearbox is so special.

People in the 1950s must have been staggered by this car. Its Type 547 engine is now a thing of legend, and with a reliable 125bhp at 6500rpm from 1498cc, such status is well deserved. Kerb weight is in the region of 490kg, giving a power-to-weight ratio of 255bhp per tonne. It was very expensive at the time – nearly $7000 brand new – but so exceptional was its engineering, so strong its performance, ▶

JENKS ON...

...the 550 Spyder, Moss and Porsche

1953 Paris Salon

The German firm showed a delightful open two-seater competition car based on the factory Nürburgring cars, fitted with the latest ohc engine; this follows the normal Porsche flat-four layout, but has twin camshafts to each bank of cylinders, the camshafts being driven by bevels and shafts. A large double-choke downdraught carburetter is used for each bank and the distributor is driven off the end of each inlet camshaft, supplying sparks for two plugs per cylinder... A power output of 110bhp is claimed and a speed of 225kph (140mph). **October 1953**

1954 Le Mans 24 Hours

The three Porsches were the new 550 models, the prototype of which ran in the Mille Miglia. They were open two-seaters, with the engine and gearbox behind the driver, but in front of the rear axle, suspension being IFS at the front by trailing links and torsion bars with swing-axles on torsion bars at the rear. The three cars were perfectly turned out, coloured flashes along the rear wings giving identity, these being blue, green and red, for the pairs of drivers. **June 1954**

1955 Lisbon Grand Prix

Never having even sat in a Porsche Spyder before, Moss soon mastered the technique of handling and found the lightness and responsiveness of the car very agreeable. His best time of the two training periods was 2min. 27.27sec, 12sec better than the rest of the field with but one exception. Portuguese J Filipe Nogeuira, driving his own Porsche Spyder, made the excellent time of 2min 30.6sec.

The race was naturally dominated by Moss with the factory car, but as in practice Filipe Nogeuira was the outstanding driver. The Portuguese driver kept the silver Porsche in sight, losing only two or three seconds a lap. When the traffic became heavy, the hallmark of a great grand prix driver began to make itself felt and Moss drew right away, but even so, during the 25 laps of the 5.4-kilometre circuit the Portuguese driver only lost 63 seconds. **September 1955**

Team spirit

One is often tempted to refer to 'typical German thoroughness and orderliness', but this is never possible while the Porsche firm continue to be successful at racing, for they have the slap-happy sporting attitude of most English teams, their set-up being anything but 'typical German'. **October 1955**

Denis Jenkinson was our Continental Correspondent for many years from the 1950s

Von Frankenberg/Polensky's Spyder finished fourth overall in the 1955 Le Mans 24 Hours



LAT



there really was no competition substitute.

There are some interesting similarities and differences at work here. For starters, despite its huge power advantage, it's the modern Spyder's engine which is better contained by its chassis. The 550 accrues speed with disarming ease. Contemporary tests show that standard cars could hit 60mph in a little over 8sec and top 120mph, but its braking performance and mechanical grip is, predictably, a long way short of that potential.

No matter, it has balance to spare. And this is the most striking similarity between two cars separated by half a century: both were created to allow the driver to flourish. Not only was the 550 the fastest sub-1500cc sports car of its day, it was also the easiest to drive, and when you're trying to sell cars for endurance racing, that last point is important. Its chassis is remarkable. Lightweight, mid-engined sports cars are not famous for being forgiving souls, but this one is happiest slithering about deep into the meat of third gear. I'm certain the fastest way to coax it around Weissach would be to lean on the front axle until understeer sets in and then stabilise the throttle. But there is such a temptation to introduce more right foot and feel the back arc around that you soon find yourself adopting what can only be described as the line of maximum slip. Light, accurate steering and skinny radials only serve as further encouragement. You can see why these cars proved so devastating at Le Mans: the combination of useable performance and mechanical strength was irrepressible. In 1955 Helmut Polensky and Richard von Frankenberg finished fourth there, beaten only by two D-types and an Aston DB3S, cars with engines twice the size of the Porsche's.

The shape of both Porsche Spyders was determined by wind tunnel tests. Presumably, the aerodynamicists of the 1950s had their tunnel switched to 'blow', while their successors had theirs set to 'suck'

And what an engine this four-cam motor is. It loves to rev. The shove is impressive from 1500rpm to around 5000rpm, which is when the induction noise assumes a more serious tone, and it hammers on to 6500rpm. They were capable of revving well into the sevens, and driving it now, I can only assume that some ran them harder even than that, such is the mechanical smoothness and lack of inertia felt.

It's an addictive machine. You exit the final right-hander in third gear, grab fourth and, as the air rushes over your head and the 550 begins to wander, you begin to wonder how something with a quarter of the horsepower of Porsche's latest toy can prove almost as thrilling. Even more remarkable is the fact that this particular example feels as though it could lap for hours, but then I suspect it is rather expertly maintained.

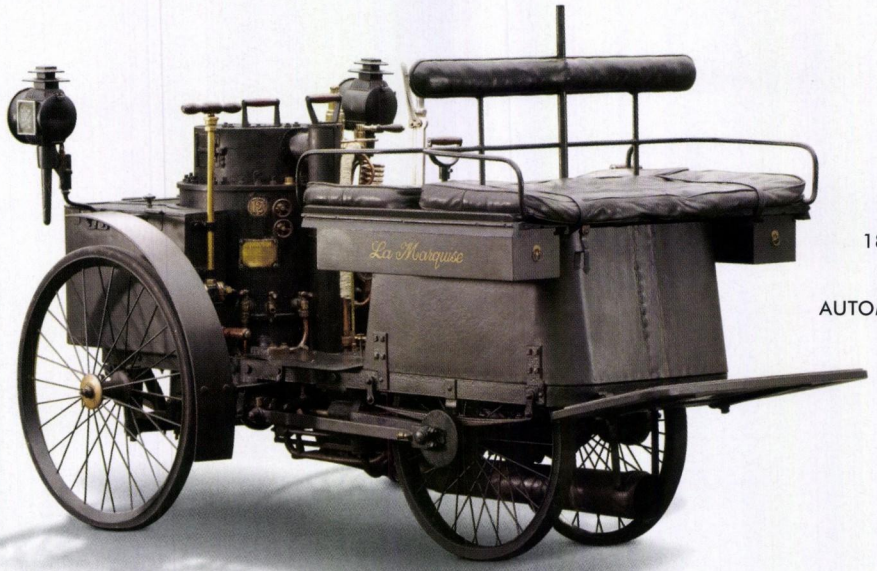
The modern RS Spyder is an incredible machine: so amenable, so nimble, so damn fast. It continues the lineage begun by the 550, and even though this sounds like an emotionally clouded observation, strands of that gorgeous little silver car's DNA are very much apparent in the yellow monster. Long may such genetic excellence continue.

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All images LAT

Far left: Linge en route to winning the 1960 Tour de Corse with Walter Strähle. Left: he shared his racing with testing duties – he's shown here at the Porsche test track at Weissach in 1965

Employee number one

Herbert Linge was the first person taken on by Porsche in 1949. Heading its racing department while enjoying a successful career at the wheel made his name synonymous with the marque. **Colin Goodwin** charts his career

In 1943 a father escorted his 15-year-old son to a factory gate in Stuttgart. It was the first day of the boy's apprenticeship as a mechanic. The lad had only the most basic education but was obviously very skilled with his hands because 100 people had applied for only eight apprenticeships. The company was Porsche and the boy was Herbert Linge. Over the next 45 years this boy would help shape Porsche's road and racing cars, and make his own mark on racing's pages.

Linge proved to be the most talented of his peers and was awarded a scholarship to the local engineering school, which he attended three afternoons a week. They were tough times. The RAF was pounding German industry and there were many shortages as the war in the East started to go badly wrong. The bus that used to take young Linge from his home to Zuffenhausen stopped running and Linge had to make the 25km journey by bicycle.

Almost 20 years later Porsche was planning to build a test track near the factory so that its racing team could test its cars without having to go to the Nürburgring or to Hockenheim – or test racing cars on the *autobahn* with dodgy number plates, as Linge had done many times. A site was found near the Stuttgart factory that seemed ideal. Unfortunately, Ferry Porsche was not happy at the thought of tearing up good farmland. Linge, however, knew of an ideal site near his home (where he had lived his whole life) in Weissach. The test track was built and, later in the 1960s, the entire racing shop was moved to the site. So, nearly 30 years after a teenage Linge had to cycle to work, work came to him. ▶



Ready to depart the Porsche factory for the 1965 Monte Carlo Rally. From right: Linge, Peter Falk, Huschke von Hanstein, Eugen Bohringer (in Porsche 904) and Rolf Wuterich

The biography of Herbert Linge is the history of Porsche. From 1946 to 1948 in the turmoil that was postwar Germany, Linge worked in Baden Baden repairing Volkswagens for the French army. In Gmünd, Austria, Porsche built its first car and then in November 1949 moved back to Stuttgart. The first employee taken on by the company was Linge.

The Porsche cars built in Gmünd were alloy-bodied – the perfect material for very low volumes, but for larger scale production steel would be far cheaper. Porsche chose coachbuilder Reutter, which among other work looked after Stuttgart's trams, to build the 356.

"We were working in a corner of Reutter's factory," recalls Linge. "Porsche didn't even have tools so I used my own and borrowed what I didn't have from people at Reutter. Every day Ferdinand Porsche would come around and see how we were doing. To me he was like a god. But not only was he an idol, he was also an extremely pleasant man."

In 1948 American entrepreneur Max Hoffman signed up as Porsche's North American agent. Hoffman loved the cars and within a couple of years had established the US as the source of 30 per cent of Porsche's sales. There were, however, a couple of problems. First off, the fuel quality in the US was higher than in Europe and that made the cars run poorly. Second, American customers weren't used to shifting gears so there were problems with clutches and gearboxes. In 1952 Linge was sent to America to sort the problems. "Customers couldn't believe it when a mechanic from the factory arrived to sort out their car," says Linge, "and the factory couldn't believe it when I told them about the adjustments that were needed to make the engines run properly. Traffic jams were unheard of in Europe in the early '50s, but in New York they were an everyday experience and the cars had to deal with them."

In November 1952 Linge was asked to go down to Mexico to help a couple of Porsche customers competing in the Carrera Panamericana. Linge was to act as a riding mechanic for Konstantin Berckheim in his 356. "I just turned up with a small toolbox, which was a bit of a contrast to the Mercedes set-up. Alfred Neubauer was there with 25 mechanics and three trucks," remembers Linge.

"Neubauer saw me underneath one of the cars adjusting the valve clearances at the end of a day's driving. I had it up on the simple jack supplied with the car. Neubauer said 'You can't work on your car in the dust' and turned to his chief mechanic and told him to find me a space in their garage. Later I had the engine out of the car and, when it was ready to go back in, Neubauer told his drivers Karl Kling and Hermann Lang to roll up their sleeves and help me refit the engine. Which they did." Neubauer was so impressed by Linge's determination that he offered him a job. Which, fortunately for Porsche, Linge turned down.

Although based in the US until 1956, Linge made frequent trips back to Europe, including one in 1954 to co-drive with Hans Hermann in the Mille Miglia. "I'd done a lot of test driving around Stuttgart in the Spyder, so knew the car pretty well." Linge is modest to say the least, but his ability behind the wheel must have already been noticed. In the end Hermann did all the driving, but the plan was for Linge to take a turn at the wheel if the main driver needed a break. What Linge did do was spend a week reconnoitring the course. "I made up a road book that featured only the sections that were blind – I figured I wasn't going to be of much help to a driver of Hermann's ability by telling him what he could see for himself. Denis Jenkinson saw it and copied it for the next year with Moss – but he had the idea of saving space by putting it on a roll of paper.

"Anyway, by Rome we were 25sec ahead. Hans was quite careful for the first few hours, but once he gained some confidence in my notes he put his foot down."

Before Rome, however, came a famous Mille Miglia anecdote. The pair arrived at a rail crossing just as the Rome express was approaching. The barriers came down but Hermann judged that the 550 Spyder would just slip underneath and, with his right hand pushed down on Linge's head, they just cleared the barrier.

"We had a bit of a problem later when the car came to a halt. Hans was ready to pack up but I quickly realised that the rain had got to the distributor so I dried it out and wrapped it in tape."

Hermann and Linge won their class. Linge's contribution hadn't gone unnoticed, and was he asked to co-drive for rally ace Helmut Polensky in that year's Liège-Rome-Liège rally in a four-cam-engined Gmünd coupé with a lowered roof. "It was called a rally," says Linge, "but the organisers set stage times so tight that it was essentially a race." To give the driver a break on the 3100-mile event, the co-driver would share the driving. Polensky and Linge won it outright.

That Linge's working life involved driving and testing all Porsche's cars – including the competition models – doesn't entirely explain his ability behind the wheel. He must also have had a large chunk of natural talent. "I used to race motorbikes, which was a big help," explains Linge. "In fact, I remember Wolfgang Von Trips showing me a photograph of a motorcycle sprint in Weissach in the mid 1940s that he

had competed in. I said I was riding at that meeting but didn't remember seeing his name. 'You wouldn't have done,' said Trips. 'I was riding under another name so that my parents wouldn't find out.'"

In 1955 Linge's career as a driver took off with a class win at the Nürburgring 500Km in an experimental Spyder. The next year he partnered Huschke von Hanstein in a 550 Spyder at the Sebring 12 hours. "We actually borrowed the car from Briggs Cunningham," says Linge. "It was brand new and hadn't even been delivered. Imagine that, borrowing someone's new car and then doing a 12-hour endurance race and handing it back afterwards."

In 1958 Linge entered his first Le Mans driving with Carel de Beaufort in a 1.5-litre 550 Spyder. "It rained, which was a big help because we had very narrow tyres on the car because of its swing axles. We finished second in class and fifth overall."

The next year was even more successful, with a second place at the Targa Florio. "I had to be pretty careful about the racing because I didn't want my colleagues to say 'Oh, Linge just wants to go racing and not work' so the racing very much took second place. Often von Hanstein [who was in charge of the racing department as well as PR] would say, if he was short of a driver, 'Linge has always got his helmet with him, go and find him.'"

He might not have raced every Porsche, but Linge certainly drove them all: "I didn't like single-seaters. Watching the front wheels wobbling about really put me off. People would say 'But Linge, they do the same on the sports cars that you are happy to drive', but in a sports car they were hidden and I couldn't see them doing it."

Linge during the 1959 Targa Florio, where he finished second. Not bad for a man who raced only when his work with the Porsche competition department allowed

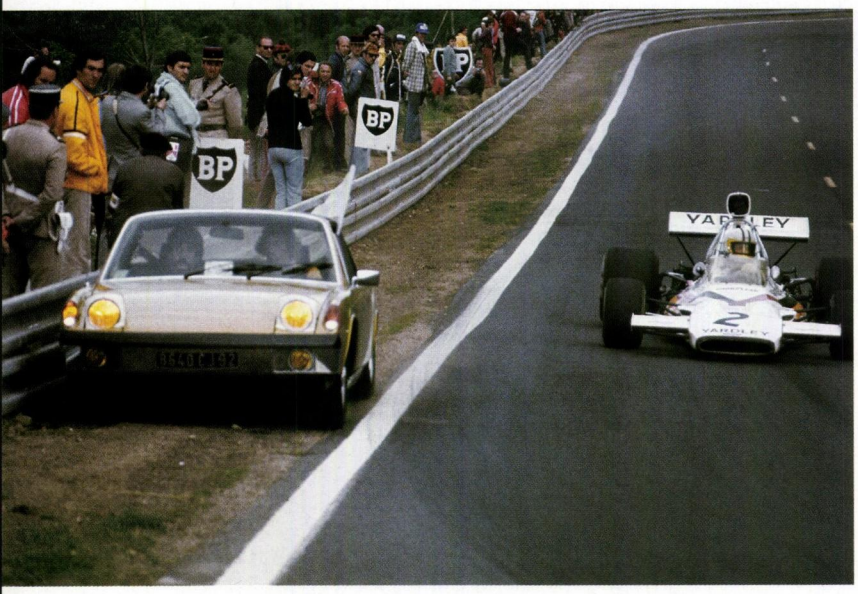
Linge was at the Nürburgring in early 1962 when Joakim Bonnier was testing the new eight-cylinder 804 F1 car. The Swede hadn't managed to get it around the circuit any quicker than the previous year's four-cylinder 718, which he wanted to retain for the forthcoming season. Linge had a go and went substantially quicker, which was a bit of a choker for Bonnier. Then Dan Gurney had a go and did a blindingly fast lap. Gurney is Linge's favourite driver (alongside his friend Hans Hermann). "Years later I saw Dan at some event and he said, 'Herbert, do you know why I was so quick at the 'Ring in the F1 car that day? Because I was scared stiff that you would do to me what you did to Bonnier.'"

By the early 1960s Porsche's racing workshop had a staff of 200, led by Linge. It was the beginning of the end of the era of Porsche the minnow and the start of another: the Piëch era. "Ferdinand Piëch was a hard taskmaster but once you had his respect he was fine to work with," remembers Linge. "There was no going home early with him. He'd come around and say, 'What are you going to do all evening if you go home early? You might as well stay at work.'"

With such a large staff, Linge's racing activities had to be ▶

"We borrowed a car from Briggs Cunningham. Imagine that, borrowing someone's new car and then doing a 12-hour endurance race and handing it back afterwards"





cut back. Not so much, however, that his name doesn't pepper results sheets from the golden years of sports car racing, with a second place at the 1964 Targa Florio and a consistent record at Le Mans, usually well up the field.

In 1969 Linge got the chance to drive a 917 at Le Mans. Private entrant John Woolfe had bought the first customer 917, which he was going to drive in the race with fellow Brit Digby Martland. Martland, who was successful in Chevron sports cars, wisely backed away, recognising that the mighty Porsche would be a bit too much to handle.

"Woolfe's car was hardly running at the start of practice," says Linge. "It had no performance at all yet you couldn't hear it misfiring. In the garage that evening, when we had the engine running, we saw sparks arcing around the distributor cap. We put a new cap on and the engine ran on full power. That just left us the worry about Woolfe's ability to drive such a fast car. I'd replaced Martland and Piëch tried very hard to persuade Woolfe to not drive. The aerodynamics were so wrong that on the Mulsanne straight you could hear the rear tyres spinning in fifth gear. Woolfe was determined to drive and unfortunately was killed at White House."

Piëch finally gave Linge an ultimatum: driving seat or workshop. "Not a difficult decision," says Linge. "I was already in my forties so my career as a driver was coming to a close anyway."

Linge did drive one more big race, however. At Le Mans in 1970 he shared a Porsche 908 with Jonathan Williams. That the pair finished ninth was quite an achievement, because the 908 was the camera car entered by Steve McQueen's Solar Productions for filming footage of the race. "We had to stop many more times than other cars to have the film changed in the cameras," says Linge.

Porsche's racing department continued to grow in the 1970s and '80s until eventually Linge had 800 employees under him. He retired in 1988, but was asked back to start the Carrera Cup series. After which he retired for good.

An incredible career. From working on Panzers in the Second World War to a class win in the Mille Miglia. And, of course, overseeing the building of dozens of incredible Porsche racing cars.

But there is one other achievement which has nothing to do with Porsche and for which the name Herbert Linge should never be forgotten. Like many, Linge was horrified by the regular loss of life in racing and how, especially at places like Le Mans, the field might pass the site of an accident once or twice before help arrived.

Linge's solution was a 'safety car' equipped with fire equipment, a doctor and a quick driver to reach the scene of the accident rapidly. In 1972 Linge got Porsche to supply a 914/6 for the job – which was then equipped with a foam sprayer and tools – and he drove it. Almost immediately the idea was justified when at an Interserie race Herbie Müller's Porsche tangled with a McLaren. Linge and a doctor were on the scene promptly to attend to the drivers.

Linge also took the nascent safety car to an F2 race at Hockenheim, where it was seen by Bernie Ecclestone. "Bernie immediately wanted a safety car for F1 and for two years paid for one out of his own pocket. For three years I drove the safety car with Professor Sid Watkins beside me."

Porsche is a funny company. My local Porsche 'centre' will sell you a teddy bear wearing a racing suit, but you can't buy Linge's biography, which was independently published and only available in German. Porsche should release it in the language of every country in which its cars are sold.

The book contains a picture of a young Herbert showing Ferdinand Porsche a cylinder head. It is the first Porsche cylinder head ever made – the perfect illustration of Linge's incalculable contribution to the Porsche legend. Ⓜ

Top: Linge pilots the pioneering Porsche 914/6 safety car at the 1972 French Grand Prix. Below: in the 908/2 camera car at Le Mans in 1970





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THERE'S NOT A TOOLBOX IN SIGHT

Testing plays a huge part in today's Formula 1 programmes, and it's a seriously high-tech business. **Rob Widdows** joined BMW Sauber at Catalunya and marvelled

Photography: xpb.cc

There's nothing new about testing. But then there are precious few aspects of motorsport that can be described as new in the sense of changing the world. That is not the sport's primary objective. One of the *raisons d'être* of racing is the pure, unadulterated competition, a man in a car against another man in a car. Racing.

These days, however, motor manufacturers are keen to stress the importance of improving the breed, passing such things as carbon brakes on to you and me. More importantly, they understand the urgent need to engineer a more environmentally friendly form of everyday transport. Racing, they say, at the extreme level of modern Formula 1 at least, will produce a greener, less demanding vehicle. But more of that later.

I am reminded of a conversation with Denis Jenkinson in the mid 1980s. Jenks was a man who said what he thought, spoke of things as he found them. "Motor racing is nothing more, nothing less, than a reflection of the world that is going on around it," he said, "and what we are seeing, and will increasingly see, is more commerce and more technology." He was right, as ever. Here was a man, a motor racing addict, who kept his enthusiasm under control when it came to what he perceived to be the dilution of the sport, the racing itself. "I am not at all sure about the computers, the gadgetry," he said – this a man who loved all things mechanical – "and the way grand prix racing is going reflects the way the world is going; that is more technology, more computers and less individuality."

He was right again. My memories of these conversations lead me to believe that he would have been much impressed by the cleverness of the modern racing car, but not by its correctness, its character confined by restrictive rules and CAD/CAM programmers. Jenks had, after all, seen wings, aerofoils, sequential gearboxes and Heath Robinson wind tunnels – notably with Mercedes-Benz and Porsche before the war – but he was not to be around to witness the full impact of the computer age.

Much of my early life was spent standing in a cold and draughty Goodwood pitlane, sheltering under the tin roof, watching racing cars pound round in pursuit of that extra tenth. When Ken Tyrrell brought a young Scot called Jackie Stewart to Sussex, he sat on the pit counter, stabbing at his stopwatch, lap after lap, scribbling the thoughts of JYS onto his note pad. When Jack Brabham came from Chessington, the punchy little Brabham-Hondas on a trailer behind a van, he drove, stepped out, made an adjustment and drove again. Japanese mechanics fiddled with springs, dampers and roll bars, peered up the exhaust pipes and nodded excitedly.

Left: Nick Heidfeld at the wheel during a Barcelona test session – chasing fractions of a second and every possible improvement

Things got really technical when, one winter, McLaren arrived with the Can-Am cars. The long, fast corners were a test for Robin Herd's aerodynamics, the huge power of the Chevrolet V8 demanding that downforce be applied to the big, wide Goodyears. Bruce and Denny covered hundreds of miles. Airflow over those wide orange decks was crucial, Herd sticking pieces of blue thread on the surfaces to see which way they blew in the wind.

Nelson Piquet and Gordon Murray came to Goodwood with the Brabham-BMW. Nelson flung the car round, making short work of the straights, slamming over the kerbs and cutting corners to stop the watch in under a minute. This was getting serious, and the F1 teams migrated to the wide open spaces of Silverstone.

Much of my time last month was spent trying to understand what I had seen standing in the heat, and sheltering from the thunderstorms, at the Catalunya track near Barcelona. The grands prix themselves are the tip of the iceberg. Days like these in Spain are the huge part that remains underwater, under wraps that may not be penetrated by those who are invited to watch, or rather gawp, boggle-eyed at what is taking place. This is where races are won, or lost. This is where engineers engage in their constant quest for a tenth of a second. Or less. A sneeze can move a car five places up or down the grid.

No amount of racing success if ever likely to impress that breed of motorist for whom a car is merely transport to office and supermarket. However, there are manufacturers, especially those involved with F1, who believe that intense competition will result in significantly leaner, greener and more efficient road cars.

The BMW Sauber F107 is rocket science, Nick Heidfeld the test pilot. He has his daughter Juni's thumbprint on the back of his helmet: there is humanity among the technology. Oddly, the bearded German's image appears clean-shaven on the shiny white expanse of the test team truck. A rare lapse in attention to detail for the Bavaria Motor Works squad. Surprisingly, nobody has so far been tempted with a paintbrush. ▶

Below: it's all in a day's work for the crack BMW Sauber F1 test team on-track and off at Spain's Circuit de Catalunya

A large team from the University of Very Bright Young Things looks after every single breath taken by this racing car. If you have a first-class degree in aeronautics, or gravitational physics, you will understand what they are doing when they go testing. If you do not, you can only watch in awe and try to get your head round what is happening. Today much time will be spent on perfecting the traction control and some new aero parts.

"I'm looking forward to being without the TC," says Heidfeld. "It will be easier to make mistakes, yes, but it will be more exciting and the quick drivers won't be any slower. Niki Lauda said a monkey could drive an F1 car now, but he spun when he tried the Jaguar. Is not so easy, you know." So what does he need from the test? "More top speed, Ferrari is way ahead, and some progress with the TC." And what has he found on this, the first day? "Nothing I should tell you," he smiles, and climbs back aboard the car.

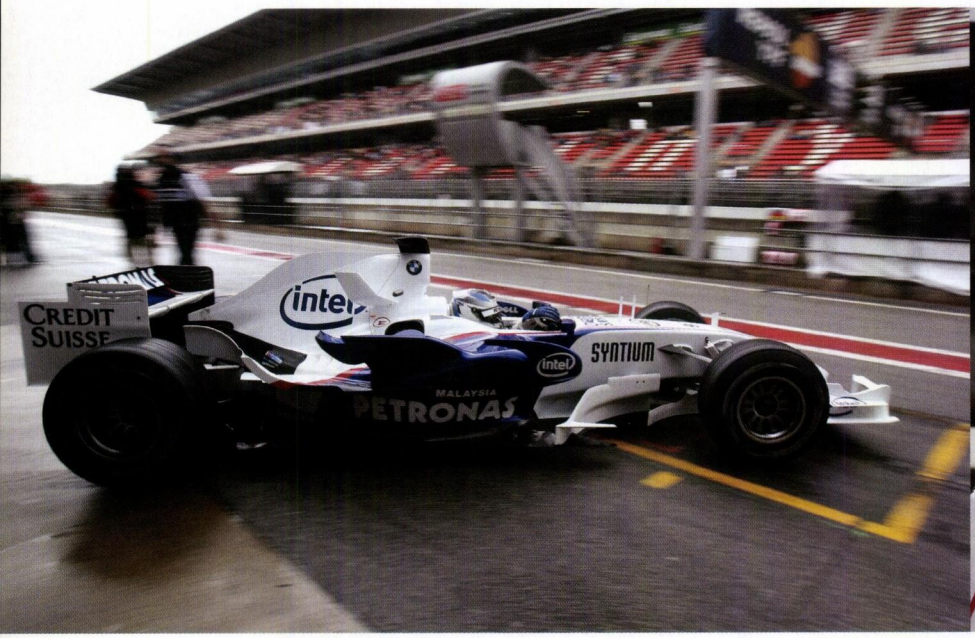
There are 35 people here, working out of four enormous trucks. The car sits in the pit garage like a patient in an operating theatre, connected by strange umbilical cords to computers that send and receive huge amounts of data every second. This car cannot move a muscle without it being recorded, downloaded and diagnosed. Eleven studious men sit at computers in an adjoining room, glued to their screens, occasionally reporting via headsets to the team's head of track engineering, Mike Krack, who oversees the test. Heidfeld has just returned from three flying laps of the recently revised Catalunya circuit.

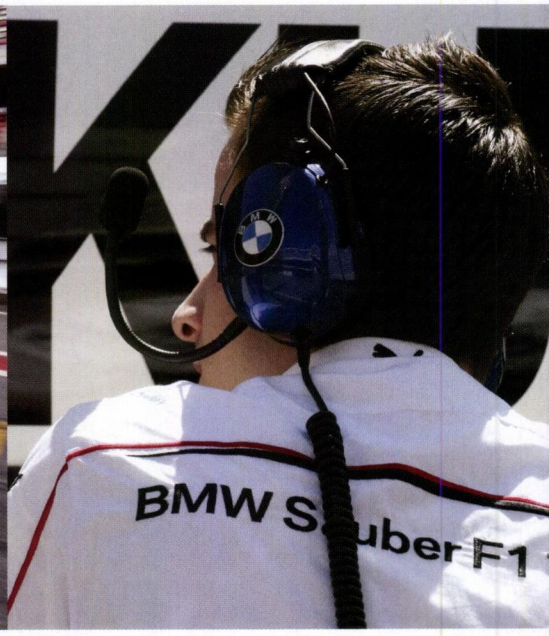
"I killed the tyres on the last lap," he reports, speaking slowly, calmly and quietly. "The TC is coming in too early – I think I pushed the problem button. There is oversteer on the exit of Turn 3, the TC is better there but track conditions have changed since the last run." Notes are made on a clipboard and keyboards are tapped next door. "You were five or six kph faster on the entry to Turn 3 that lap, looked like a big moment," reports a disembodied voice from a computer station. They are analysing one particular corner of the circuit in intense detail, diagnosing what the car is doing, and why. Heidfeld is asked to re-set one of the many controls on the steering wheel. 'Go to five' is the command. Then he steps out, lifts a rear tyre warmer to inspect the rubber, and goes into a huddle with his engineers. They plot the next few laps.

"This is our interface with the car," explains the electronics man, showing me round the steering wheel. "On this interface we can control the engine revs, the traction control and the fuel mixture, and there is a menu of programmes for certain other situations." He is not prepared to expand on that. I comment that there is no room for any more buttons unless they remove the BMW badge from the centre of this console. "We have to keep that there," smiles my guide, reaching for his laptop to make another software change. The layout and the colours of the controls are unique to Heidfeld, his fingers going to the buttons like a touch typist, no room for hesitation. A different steering wheel will be used when team-mate Robert Kubica drives the following day. Even the hand grips are moulded for each driver.

"We may find a tenth today," says Mike Krack, "but probably so will Ferrari and McLaren. We have new parts to try; the car is already completely changed since the launch. We have new aero parts since Bahrain, new suspension, but then so have the others. Every time we gain, they gain, and

"I'm looking forward to being without the traction control next year," says Heidfeld. "It will be easier to make mistakes, yes, but it will be more exciting and the quick drivers won't be any slower"





it's hard to close that gap, even though it's hundredths of a second sometimes. This car is good, but if you start with a bad car one season, if the basics are wrong, then it's tough. I've never seen a bad car become a good one during a season when you're racing every two weeks. We have a feeling when a car is good; engineers are also human beings you know, and this car is good," he smiles.

The driver is seen as just one of many input sources. His comments are just one element of the data being collected. They are isolating a balance problem in one particular corner, focusing on the data from the aerodynamics, the suspension, the characteristics of the new Bridgestone tyres. "You take the good drivers for granted," says Krack. "You only realise they are useful when you have one that is less good. A driver will not lead development, he is one part. We are working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at the track and at the factory, changing parts overnight sometimes, sending data to the factory once we've analysed every detail at the end of each day. We are the end of a chain here; we get the glory when we win, the blame and the shame when we lose, but it's all a huge team effort."

Heidfeld prepares for another run, adjustments to the front wing and changes within the seamless-shift gearbox completed, computers ready to monitor the car once again. A command from a laptop fires the engine. "Prepare for leaving now," the driver is told, his gloved fingers setting controls on the steering wheel, or interface. The faintest clunk and the BMW Sauber F107 is rolling, turning right along the pitlane. Engineers return to their computers, Krack heads for the pitwall.

"Can be faster in turns two, seven and nine," a matter-of-fact voice reports, then silence, the coloured graphs and graphics dancing up, down, left and right across the bank of screens. "TC too late now," Heidfeld reports. "You do the diagnostic?" he asks, calm as you like from the cockpit at 240kph. And so it continues through the day, stopping when the rain is torrential, grabbing food and coffees when they can. In the breaks the mechanics eat well, stoking up on healthy salads and pasta in a marquee behind the pits. Their hands are clean, most of the changes to the car being made within the software programmes. There is not a toolbox in sight, though somebody produced a screwdriver to adjust the front wing. A lot is happening but so much of it is invisible to the untrained eye.

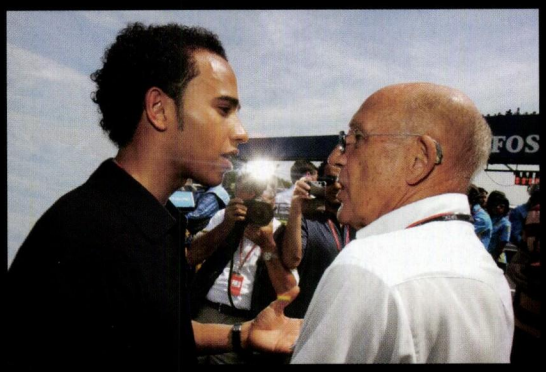
The modern racing driver receives constant attention, too. Joseph Leberer is a graduate of the Willi Dungl school and looked after Senna and Prost at McLaren before he came to BMW Sauber. "It's hard work in the car," he says. "They never rest, unless it's Monza. It's not comfortable in there, it's a tight fit, the seat is hard, the car is stiff and they are strapped down with five belts. So I warm him up before he drives – some massage, some cardio for the circulation, some physio on the joints and muscles. It's vital to be fit, to have health in body and mind. Nick is very precise about what he wants, he's quite relaxed and we have a routine we go through before he gets into the car."

After three days, a fraction of a second is found in a new front wing. The test team packs up and hauls out towards the French border, bound for Hinwil where the race team is preparing to leave for the race. They will pass each other on the *autoroute*, job done for one, job to do for the other.

The 21st century racing car is a bewildering beast, a beauty that bristles with all the secret functions of new technology. Admired by many, understood by few. Next year traction control is banned, but the bright young things will find plenty more wizardry to occupy their minds. Leaving Circuit de Catalunya I pass Juan Manuel Fangio standing by his Mercedes-Benz, cast in bronze. I wonder what the maestro would have made of the modern grand prix car. We can only guess. But Jenks would probably say it's just the way of the world today. A world in which cars on the grids are separated by cat's whiskers. Ⓜ







The spirit of Fangio

It's not only Lewis Hamilton's exceptional skills which impress. **Sir Stirling Moss** sees in him a similar blend of maturity, confidence and modesty to his own great mentor

For someone of my vintage it's a tremendous breath of fresh air to see someone like Lewis Hamilton doing so well. The statistics are amazing enough already, but they only really count in retrospect. For the present, he's pretty much unique...

I've been observing this sport, in one way or the other, for well over 60 years now and I can safely say in all truth that he is the most interesting and talented figure I can identify in all of that time. I know that he has been carefully managed, but I think it's about rather more than that, and I also think that if he fulfils his obvious potential then it is going to be difficult, however understandably so, for McLaren to let him be his own man. He has had a fantastic racing career already, let alone what he'll have over the next 10 to 15 years, but they did a fine job in taking him up.

I've been a big fan of Lewis since I first saw him race in GP2, and when I learned about his background and story, I felt a curious empathy with him, a common cause, because I can well recall feeling a bit of an outsider myself when I started out, and while motor racing then was very much more an establishment sport (which it isn't really now), I can very well imagine that it must have been tough for him even without the huge costs of those vital early days, because one thing has not changed about motor racing – it isn't cheap. But however hard it's been for him he certainly doesn't let it show, which rather reminds me of someone else I knew...

His family, particularly his father, have obviously been totally committed to him, as mine was, and from where I'm sitting, it really shows; there are plenty of examples of people who tried to make it in motor racing without that family effort – Chris Bristow springs to mind, among others – because quite simply without it, it becomes incredibly difficult, complicated and dangerously distracting. Without that faith in you, life can be very hard, so I think Lewis' family has been hugely important to him – probably the single biggest factor, aside from his own talent, which is obviously extraordinary.

I see that the papers have made much of 'the black issue' but it's fairly obvious to me (because motor racing is not the only sport that I've followed for all these years) that it was only a matter of time before the arrival of someone as talented as Lewis obviously is would turn the sport on its head, which is what he has managed to do. It's only a matter of regret that it hasn't happened before; we saw it with Jack Johnson in boxing, with Jesse Owens in athletics, a host of cricketers and footballers and of course there is the obvious parallel with Tiger Woods. This can only be great for the sport, in that it widens its appeal to a whole new fan base who may have felt that they had no hero of their own and may even have felt excluded because of that. Certainly, there was something of the Notting Hill Carnival at Monaco this year.

But there is a hint in all this of what could have happened in 1986, when the black American driver Willy T Ribbs tested an F1 Brabham at the time that Bernie Ecclestone owned the team. While Lewis's talent may well be in a league of its own (and I believe it is), that event does go some way to show that motor racing is not exclusive in that way, unlike golf was in America before Tiger Woods reinvented it – there were still some golf clubs which wouldn't admit black people (or Jews) even after Woods was starting to win everything. Motor racing isn't like that, thank God; it's very meritocratic, and has to be if it's to survive.

Hamilton and Moss speak the same language despite their different eras – and unusually, the youngster has the humility to listen to advice from his elders



But there's something else about Lewis which I find interesting, and which really rings some loud bells for me, and this is his combination of personal humility, professional skill and modest self-confidence. It is very unusual to see all these characteristics in the same place at the same time, and there is really only one man I can think of who I knew who displayed the same blend of outlook, and that was Fangio.

I know that Juan Manuel Fangio was more than 20 years older than Lewis Hamilton is now when I drove for Mercedes with him in the 1950s, but perhaps that is exactly the point. Lewis seems to me to have that same maturity which combines a grown-up world view without being middle-aged, and after his win in Montreal it was even more striking – obviously he was very happy, but that aside, he was almost ticking the boxes – five starts, five podium positions and now a win to top it off, as if it was somehow inevitable and now he can really get on with it. It obviously isn't going to end there, because whatever happens from now on, mechanical breakdowns, punctures, oil on the track or whatever else, Lewis Hamilton is now clearly the man to beat. No one else will do. He's even managed (in the popular imagination at least) to eclipse the car he drives, which is quite a trick these days, and that's without him even actually saying very much!

It has been all too easy for the press (or at least the non-specialist press) to over-hype the latest British star, particularly when you remember that the last British world champion was Damon Hill, but it's also true that they are the first to take that same person apart in print on any pretext when they don't deliver the goods. But I just don't have the impression that Lewis' philosophy as we see it in public is governed by that.

On the other hand I can understand why McLaren might be; it's logical to keep him out of the clutches of Fleet St, because for the tabloids it only ever seems to be about the driver, not the designers, engineers, mechanics and so forth. They're running a racing team, after all, and a team seldom revolves around one person. But they will have to ease off on the PR before long and let him speak for himself, certainly when he's world champion. But let's hope a proper racing writer gets first go at him.

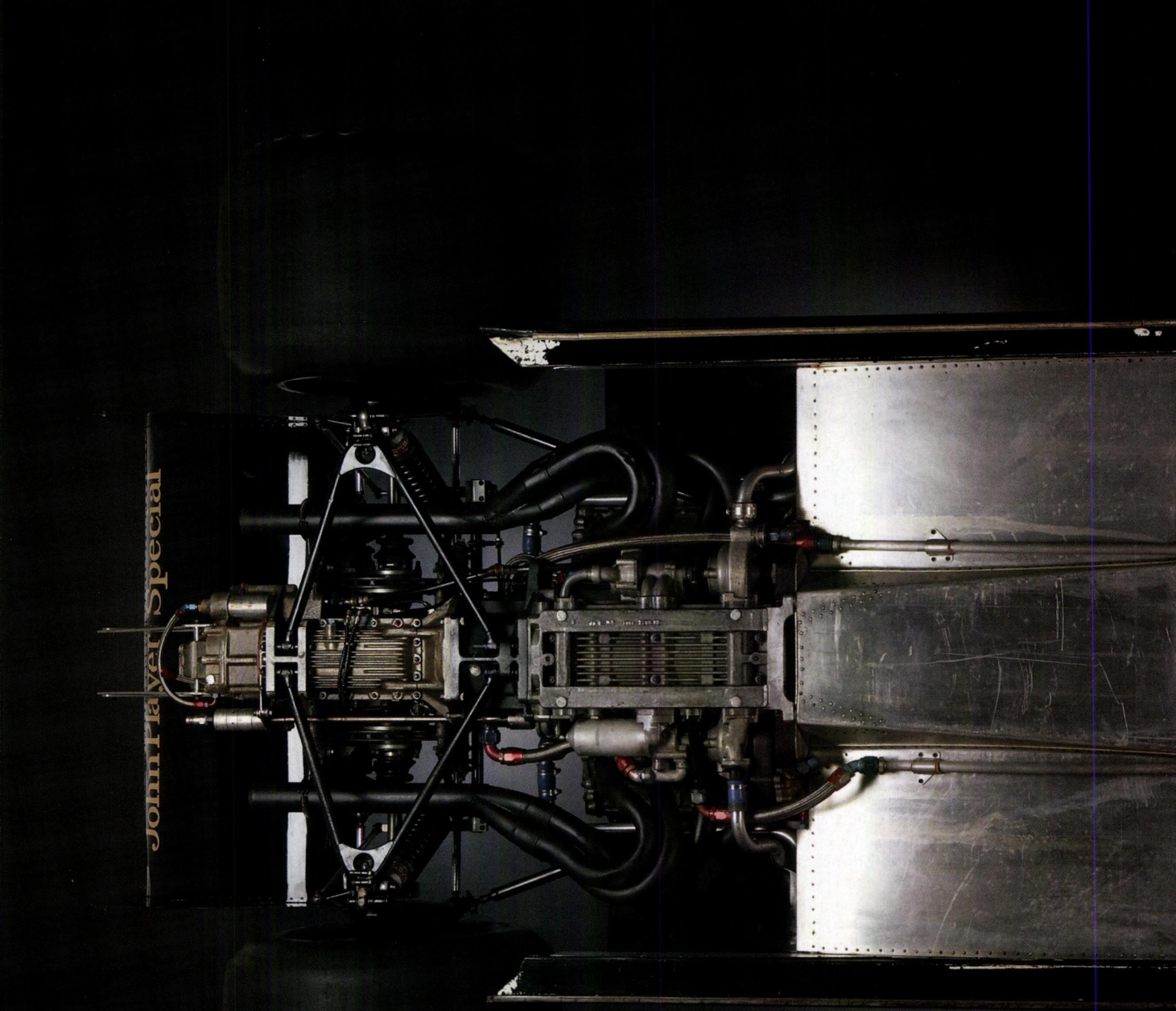
Who has Lewis Hamilton as a driver got to worry about at Silverstone? Well, obviously his team-mate has a big point to make, despite his own surprisingly moderate performance in Canada, but who else is there? Perhaps Felipe Massa, who has clearly come on a long way; it wasn't that long ago that you wouldn't want him near a car of yours, but he's steadied now. On the other hand there are one or two other drivers who seem to have woken up a bit (or their cars have), but it is so very rare to see the best driver being so far ahead of the next-best that I'm not sure this will sink in quite yet, certainly outside the sport. All else being equal, there's no reason to think that we won't see a repeat performance of his Canada race in both the USA and France before we see him on home territory.

Lewis Hamilton's arrival on the scene is going to have a radical effect on motorsport, in terms of its fan base, its accessibility, the possibilities for young drivers, whom the sponsors will support, all those things which are so important now. When I raced with Fangio, it seemed to us that the rest of the field was competing to be the first non-Mercedes home, and from the showing so far there's going to be more than a hint of that in the months to come. It is all most welcome.

Sir Stirling Moss was speaking to Robert Edwards

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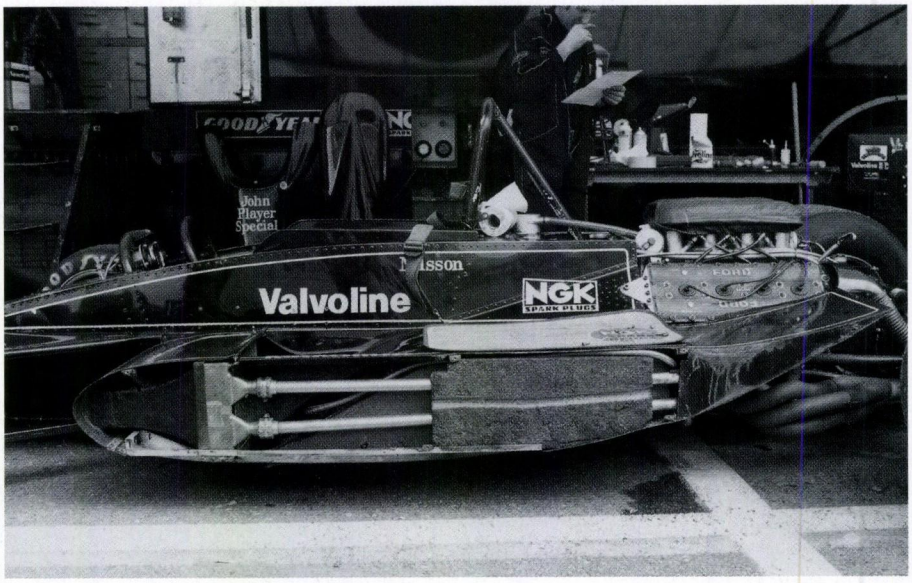


Ground force

This is what rivals didn't see until it was too late – an invisible revolution which made their cars redundant overnight. With the 78, Lotus brought ground effect to racing

by Keith Howard. Photography: Marc Wright

Thirty years ago, the motorsport world tilted on its axis. In one of the rare instances of technological step change, Team Lotus developed ground effect aerodynamics and with the Type 78 'wing car' jolted itself from the arctic latitudes of the ous two seasons to the equatorial sunshine of five wins, nd in the constructors' championship and third in the rs' championship for Mario Andretti. From that moment ard, motor racing was changed forever as first Formula 1 then other formulae began to harness the downforce ed by artful airflow management beneath the car. espite its pivotal role in realigning racing car design ities, making efficient aero design the sine qua non, the not as fondly remembered as the following season's 79, ne principal reason: the 79 carried Andretti and Lotus to world championship double. But was it really the better The designer of the 78, Ralph Bellamy, thinks not and ns below his story of its development with the wind tunnel on that was to redirect motorsport history.



Both: LAT

OFF

er [Wright] and I went down to the Imperial College wind el one Monday morning, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, y to start the aerodynamic programme. But there was a nical problem with the tunnel so we weren't able to start the Wednesday. By the end of that week we'd achieved urprising result that when you placed an inverted aerofoil on close to the moving belt, it was sucked up. We hadn't cipated that because conventional wisdom was that nd effect was bad. If you look at F1 cars of that period, front wings were always mounted quite high, clear of the nd. Suddenly we were finding that if you put them lower worked better.

Peter and I returned to Imperial on the following Monday concentrated our efforts on trying inverted wing sections d of the rear wheels. Peter ran the tunnel and collected lata, while I made changes to the model – which was just ck of wood down the middle, representing the ocoque, with bits screwed on the side. When we started et inconsistent results Peter suggested that this might be use the wing sections were being screwed on at slightly ing heights each time. So we put a piece of cardboard on nd of the wing to close off the gap to the belt, to allow us t the height more consistently. When we ran that, the nforce figures just went off the scale. We realised then what we had to do was seal off the gap between the edge and the road. On the 78 we initially used brushes, h provided only a partial seal but allowed the car to over kerbs. Later Peter developed the more effective ng skirt system.

When we'd finished the testing, Colin asked me whether I ted to build a car along these lines. I said yes, and to his it he said OK, let's do it. We could have run the 78 in late 6 but one reason we didn't was that we all thought as as other designers saw it, they'd understand it straight y and copy it. But in 1977 the team was actually able to people that the improved performance came from a clever rential. There was a campaign of disinformation and it amazingly successful. Even when new cars appeared for 8 it was clear that many other designers hadn't an inkling t the 78 was about."

STRUCTURE

"Because the technical regulations limited the size of each fuel tank, you needed three tanks to get through a race. So the 78's chassis comprised a central section with seat tank, plus two side tanks on either side of the seat tank. The side panels of the monocoque were all of aluminium honeycomb sandwich material, so all told the tub was quite stiff. All that was inherited from the 77 was the rear suspension.

"I'm convinced that for the 1978 season, rather than introducing the 79, Team Lotus should have stuck with the 78 and put the 79's rear end on it. That would have been a better car than the 79 because the 78 was a lot stiffer and stronger as a result of its full-width chassis. Colin had got the rules changed to allow one big fuel tank, which meant that the 79 could have a thin central monocoque with composite wings hung on either side. It was lighter but not stiff enough."

EXILED

"The launch of the 78 was deliberately low-key. Previous JPS launches had been spectacular affairs in London but the 78 launch took place in Norfolk a few days before Christmas when most people were more interested in other things. Peter Windsor came up and we had a chat about the car. I'm reliably informed that when Colin read the resulting article he was hopping mad, even though I'd been careful to ensure that he got the glory. He said nothing to me about it – didn't blow his top, call me into his office and dress me down. Instead I was told that there were problems in the road car factory, and I was to sort them out. That was me out of the race team, so I never went racing with the 78."

A STEP TOO FAR

"The 78 should have won the championship in 1977 but Colin stuffed it. Not content with having aerodynamically the best car on the track – and a structurally sound one at that – he had to go off to Cosworth and do a deal to get development engines. But development engines blow up. Races were lost due to engine failure when the car should really have won every race once the skirts were fixed – it was so much faster than anything else. As a result, people don't remember the 78 for the great car it was."



Previous page: underview of 78 shows that over two-thirds of width is generating suction. Top: wing profile clear when side removed. Above: Andretti, Long Beach 1978: Bellamy believes 78 was a better car than 79

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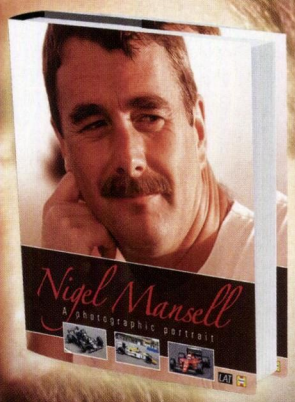
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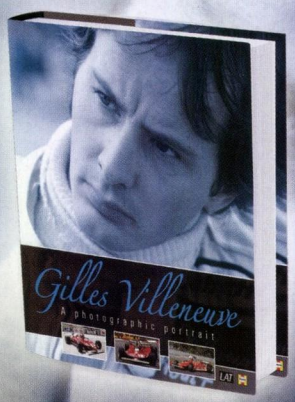
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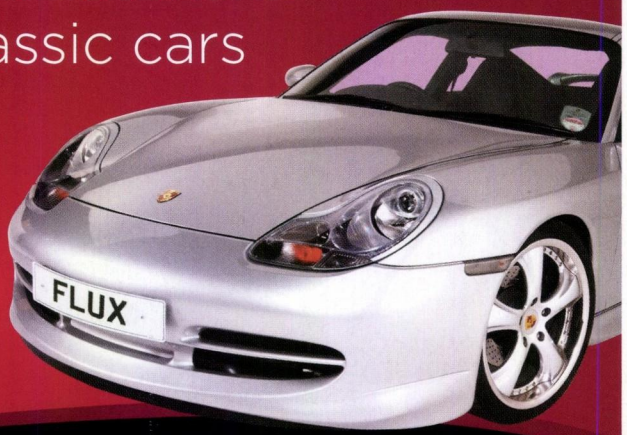
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Enter the dragon

Italian rally legend Sandro Munari's love affair with the Targa Florio road race began in 1967 with a Lancia and culminated in a dramatic win for Ferrari in

by Anthony Peacock

Sandro Munari was known as *il Drago* (the Dragon) and his following at home was such that his most devoted fans used to kiss the asphalt he had just driven on. Insanely competitive, he became the first person to win the Monte Carlo Rally three times in a row and made the twisty mountain roads of Sanremo his own – you can still see the legend 'Munari' daubed in fading paint on more than one crumbling wall.

Surprisingly, Munari only won his home rally once – but he was driving a Lancia Stratos, so who's counting?

In 1967 *il Drago* won the Italian Rally Championship for the first time driving a Lancia Fulvia HF coupé and in the same year his employer decided to try him out on the Targa Florio in the same car. He retired but his racing debut sparked a minor obsession, so Lancia entered him again in 1968.

Realistically, Munari could not hope for much from the 1298cc V4 Fulvia against the might of the Porsche factory team. It was almost foreign territory for him too – the Targa Florio was as far away from the area around Venice where Sandro was brought up as it is possible to get in Italy.

Contrary to expectations, the little Lancia beat several far more powerful cars to finish 11th, and Munari was also gratified to beat his illustrious rallying rival Paddy Hopkirk, who was competing in an MGB GT.

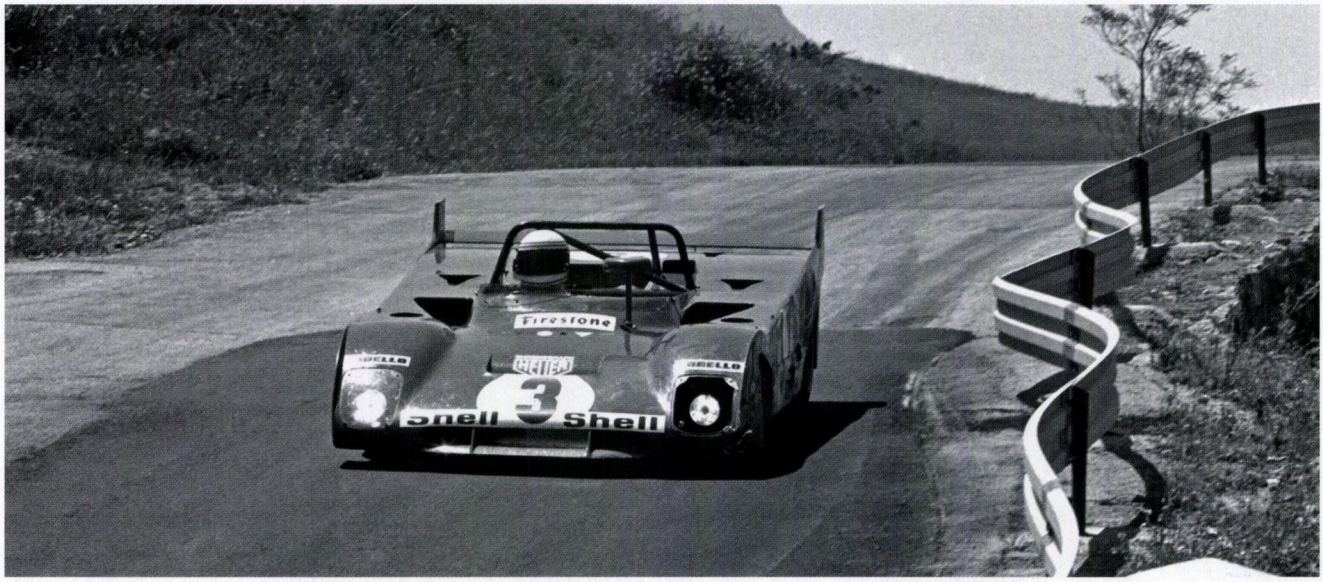
Much as he enjoyed driving it, the diminutive Lancia was never going to give one of Italy's biggest motorsport heroes the chance to score the win he craved. For that Munari had to wait until 1972, when he was called up by Ferrari to drive the 3-litre flat-12 312PB. Alfa Romeo had dominated the previous year with Nino Vaccarella, so Ferrari gambled on some fresh young talent for its single entry, in the form of Munari and Arturo Merzario, who had just started in grand prix racing. By contrast, Alfa Romeo entered an intimidating line-up that included Vaccarella, Vic Elford and Helmut Marko.

Elford took the lead as expected – before damaging his Alfa at the end of the first lap – but the Munari/Merzario 312PB's pace was surprising. After Vaccarella's engine failed, Marko took the fight to the Ferrari, passing Munari at the halfway point to record a fastest lap of 33min 41sec. A bit of luck came Munari's way when Nanni Galli, sharing with Marko, spun. But Marko was soon back in the Alfa, hounding the winning Ferrari all the way to the flag – finishing only 17 sec behind. Not only was it the fastest Targa ever, it was also the most spectacular. No surprise, then, that it was won by Italy's most flamboyant driver.

The final irony is that Munari, now 66, runs a safe driving school in association with Mercedes in northern Italy. Yet he has fond memories of those dangerous days. "These days, I think racing drivers and rally drivers have it a lot easier," he says. "The risks are gone, but also the adventures. And events like the Monte Carlo Rally and the Targa Florio were real adventures. There was no room for mistakes."



Munari's Targa Florio debut was in a Lancia Fulvia rally car. His finest hour came in 1972, when he won at the wheel of a Ferrari 312PB

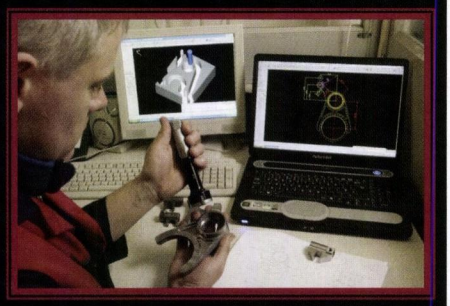


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"The risks are gone, but also the adventures. And events like the Monte Carlo Rally and the Targa Florio were real adventures. There was no room for mistakes"



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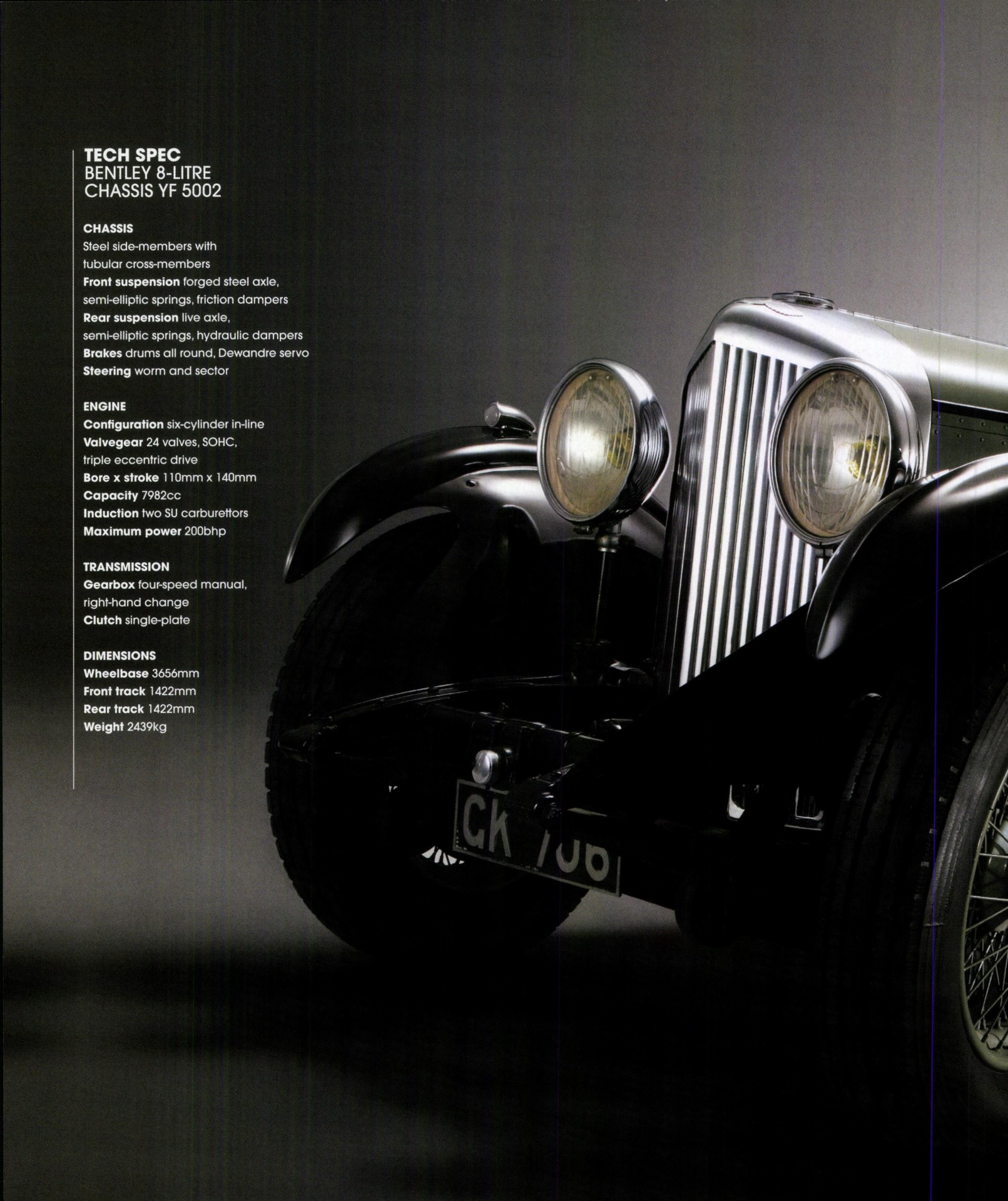
PROFILE

BENTLEY 8-LITRE



Once the personal car of WO Bentley, this Mulliner saloon – a favourite for high-speed trips to France – has returned to its maker. *Motor Sport* is granted an audience before it is restored

by Gordon Cruickshank. Photography Mary Wright



TECH SPEC
BENTLEY 8-LITRE
CHASSIS YF 5002

CHASSIS
Steel side-members with
tubular cross-members
Front suspension forged steel axle,
semi-elliptic springs, friction dampers
Rear suspension live axle,
semi-elliptic springs, hydraulic dampers
Brakes drums all round, Dewandre servo
Steering worm and sector

ENGINE
Configuration six-cylinder in-line
Valvegear 24 valves, SOHC,
triple eccentric drive
Bore x stroke 110mm x 140mm
Capacity 7982cc
Induction two SU carburettors
Maximum power 200bhp

TRANSMISSION
Gearbox four-speed manual,
right-hand change
Clutch single-plate

DIMENSIONS
Wheelbase 3656mm
Front track 1422mm
Rear track 1422mm
Weight 2439kg



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1974 Datsun Super Samuri


1950 Jaguar MkV 3.5


1924 Morris Cowley Van

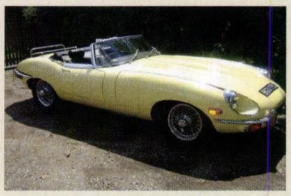

1923 Morris Cowley Tourer


1954 MG TF


1982 Rolls-Royce Corniche


1991 Alfa Spider S4

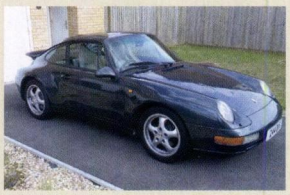

1975 Morgan 4/4


1969 Jaguar E-Type S2


1924 Lea Francis F-Type


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Heritage. We've been going on about it in *Motor Sport* for years, and now the rest of the world is catching up. Ferrari used to chop up its old racing cars; now they are carefully slid into the Cliente Corsa programme to please fortunate owners and spectators.

It's more difficult if you are buying in. Consider what are arguably the two greatest British marques: Rolls-Royce, purchased by BMW, a firm with a fine history of its own; or Bentley, almost mythical as regards its vintage years, but sadly devalued in later decades and a challenge for Volkswagen. From somewhere these companies, German both, had to extract or contrive an essence of Britishness which spoke to what we think we feel about both badges.

Rolls-Royce succeeded brilliantly with its new Phantom: immense presence, and proportions which put the onlooker in mind of the great days of coach-building: the Grecian radiator arrives as a fanfare, and you know that the passenger compartment will be along in a moment. But frankly it was easier for Rolls-Royce: it was aiming to build the plutocrat of saloons – rapid, but not a sports car.

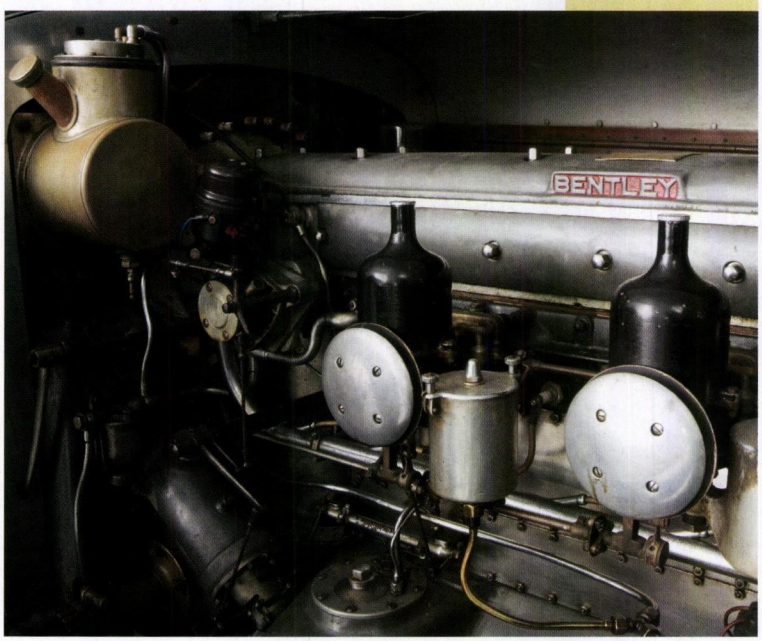
VW, however, had to cross-connect raw, open motoring, racing success and silent, speedy luxury, though it was the last of those which W O Bentley wanted to offer. We know that because the 8-litre saloon profiled here was WO's own vehicle, his *beau idéal* of the sporting car, a car which he drove for thousands of miles in Britain and across the Continent and on whose logbook he wrote "Any person using this car other than examiner, tester or urgent purveyor… will be *immediately* discharged". It was very special to him.

Today the new Bentley company is rediscovering its identity by gathering its history to itself. After three decades or more in the same hands, WO's 8-litre now belongs to the firm which makes the magnificent Continental GT, a car which is a long way from the archetypal rough-riding open 4½, but very close in spirit to this one.



Clare Hay/David Northey

Above: WO stands beside GK706, somewhere in France during the winter of 1930/31. Below: despite the huge capacity, a pair of SUs sufficed for this monster of torque



I had the chance to inspect it before it went off for restoration, and that is how we have chosen to photograph it: a little tired, slightly down at one corner, traces of rust on the painted green spokes. For this 8-litre is in remarkable, original, condition. These are the very seats on which WO sat, the same doors he pulled shut, the same starter button he thumbed before heading down the A2 for Dover.

For over 30 years the car has belonged to the Majzub family, who maintained it and changed nothing. Julian Majzub remembers it fondly: "My father loved it. A lot of 8-litres went to people who just wanted a car they could wear top hats in, but this is what WO envisaged as his perfect car. A genuine 100mph saloon; you can easily average 80mph."

That's confirmed by contemporary reports. The second production chassis, this was the first definitive 8-litre and was the car the firm loaned to magazines for road tests – a car that had a huge impact on the car world. "Motoring in its very highest form," *The Autocar* called it. Now that a Cricklewood Bentley is a hobby vehicle and not a means of transport we are used to these huge limousines being turned into Le Mans lookalikes, or seeing the massive engines transplanted into lighter 3- or 4½–litre chassis to go racing. In 1930 you had to choose between travelling quickly and carrying passengers, if comfort mattered. There were open sports cars which would do 90 or 100mph at the cost of an open-air pummelling, and there were comfortable limousines, but even a powerful saloon car could not be expected to whisk four people along at 100mph – until the 8-litre appeared.

Perhaps the BMW M5 had the same sort of impact in our era, proferring 150mph for a quartet of cosseted inhabitants. Or the latest Bentley Flying Spur, which effectively doubles the 8-litre's top speed with unimpaired luxury. For it was the comfort which WO was selling with his vast new machine: a town carriage as much as a grand tourer, it would pull from walking pace in top gear. Just what today's S-class or 750i ▶

does, but through sheer earth-moving torque, not via a seven-speed autobox. And it had the huge-striding quality which consumes the miles without apparent effort. *The Autocar* suggested one could breakfast in London and lunch in Catterick – which would be pushing it today. It was such an astonishing combination of qualities that Rolls-Royce, whose Phantom was Bentley's chief target, did not at first take the 100 claim seriously. When it realised the rumours were true, and that Bentley was in cash trouble, it took decisive action.

Surviving Bentley records tell us that Chassis YH5002 went to H J Mulliner in October 1930, where it received a compact Weymann-pattern body with fabric sunroof. WO was a fan of the Weymann system, which used movable joints covered in fabric to give a body which would flex with the chassis, avoiding the creaks and groans of conventional saloons. He commented on the "silence and almost negligible weight." That mattered, because the whole car weighs almost 2½ tons.

Although coachbuilders were competing to add ever more lavish fittings to large cars, there is none of that here. No cigar companions, cocktail cabinets, or fold-down tables, not even a door pocket, although the dainty nickel-plated window catches have a lovely twist to them which makes you want to fiddle. Driver and passenger sit in beautifully shaped bucket seats, rear passengers on a bench with a small armrest, and the mottled brown leather, with patches, has been in there a very, very long time. Since 1930? The service records say it started out with cloth upholstery (leather was what the chauffeur got in the '30s; owners preferred to sit on Bedford cloth), so that is one of the decisions Bentley will have to make about the restoration.

Paint choice is easier: although it looks good in its unusual green and black, it started in black and will revert to black. Julian Majzub explains: "Fred Hoffman [a Bentley engineer] told my father that it had been green once, so he repainted it."

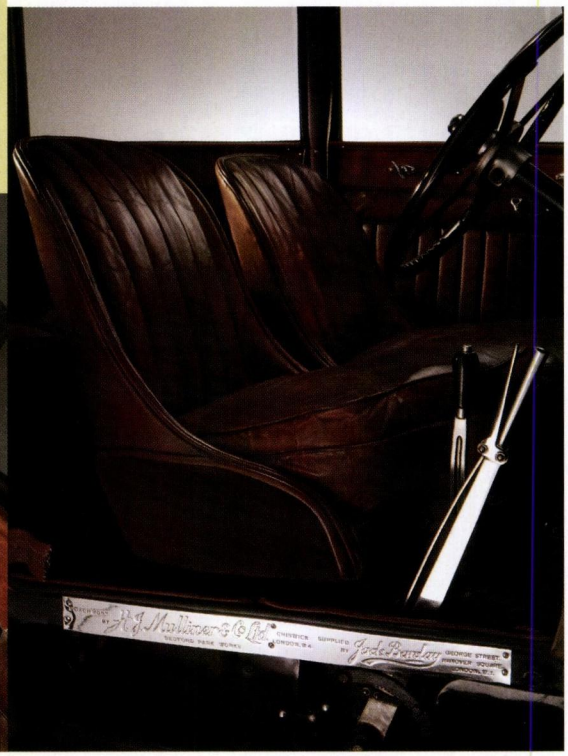
WO mentions "a great feeling of spaciousness." Maybe so if you are talking about headroom and the large windows, but a tall man riding in the rear might find his knees up in the air, despite the little heel recess in the floor; it might take a pair of high heels but not a pair of brogues. This in a car 17ft long. It's inevitable in a car built on a proper chassis, and even though WO used a hypoid rear axle and dropped the frame for greater stability, the 8-litre towers over ordinary cars. It's equally surprising that the luggage space is so small: open up the lid and drop-down panel and there's barely room for one suitcase.

Under the tiny peak over the windscreen is an unusual fitting, an American proprietary vacuum-powered wiper WO rather liked. It's unusual in that the arms don't pivot but slide sideways; as WO put it, "one blade catching the other and carrying it in a companionable sort of manner to the other side of the screen when parked." That alone will be a challenge for James Pearce, the Sussex firm which is carrying out the restoration.

The wiper is virtually the only special feature of this machine, which was the company demonstrator as well as personal transport. Built on the short wheelbase (12 instead of 13ft), it wasn't lightened or tuned: the engine breathes through the same pair of SUs as all the other 8-litres, and the running gear was production-standard, though WO specified two distributors instead of one plus one magneto.

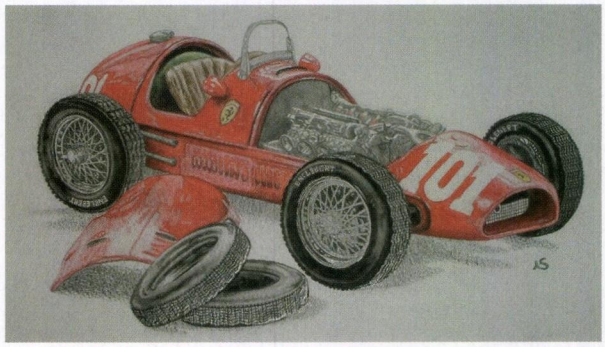
There was no technical advance to the new car: the straight-six engine was much as the 6½-litre – the same non-detachable head with single overhead camshaft operating four valves per cylinder, with a similar cam drive. Living in a vertical funnel behind the block, this ingenious system borrowed from WO's locomotive origins, using triple eccentrics and three coupling rods to rotate the camshaft. It was an expensive solution, but extremely quiet. There was a new quieter gearbox, still decoupled from the engine, but nothing else novel. ▶



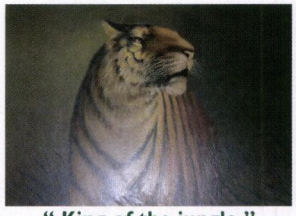


Left: Mr Bentley's commanding viewpoint as he motored abroad. Right: the best seat in the house, much worn. Right-hand change has typical Bentley rifle-bolt feel

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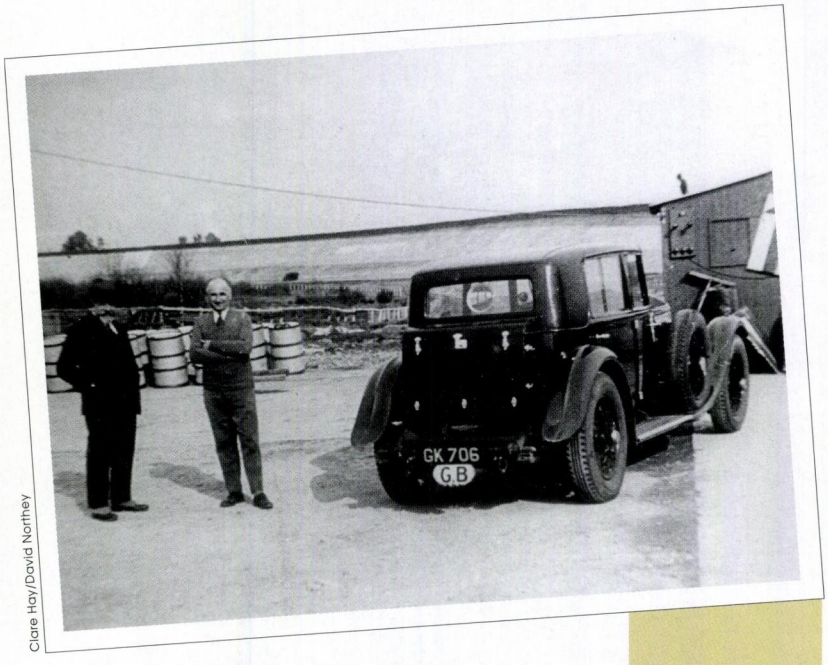
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Clare Hay/David Northey

One of the problems with the huge new engine was cooling. Adequate radiators were hard to make at the time, so on 'The Box' (a 6½ with the new 8-litre engine fitted and a rather ugly saloon body) Bentley experimented with evaporative cooling, where the water is kept boiling and the radiator is used to condense steam rather than to cool water. In the end, improved radiator technology side-stepped this difficulty before production began, and Bentley returned to conventional cooling, with thermostatic radiator shutters. However, three of the nine dials on GK706's busy dash are temperature gauges connected to different points, presumably to monitor the new radiator's performance on the long thrash to the Riviera. Interestingly, the clock is larger than the speedometer; perhaps time mattered more than mph on WO's longer journeys. After all, he called it: "A fast and delightful car which did a prodigious mileage, including once solo from Dieppe to Cannes in one day without my having to put the lights on." WO enjoyed these trips, and recorded them on film; the black and white shots with this article come from his personal album.

Bentley historian Clare Hay adds a tale about this car, told to her by Margaret Bentley, WO's third wife. She was actually introduced to WO by wife number two, and told Hay that WO drove her home that night, and was so excited that he muffed his gear-changes.

But he was not to enjoy GK706 much longer. In his autobiography he records sadly how he parted with it after Rolls-Royce secretly bought his company in 1931. "The nadir was reached when I was instructed in a letter to sell my 8-litre. I left it with Jack Barclay and walked home, without a car for the first time in goodness knows how long, wondering if I should ever have another."

Perhaps because of the slump following the Wall St Crash, the car sat at Barclays until 1932 when Kensington Moir, Bentley dealer and racer, bought it for £1200 – £250 less than the chassis price a year before. It was exactly the wrong time to bring out an outrageously fast and expensive car, and only 100 were built; yet WO claimed it was the most profitable Bentley they ever made.

From Kensington Moir GK706 went through a series of owners, but all stayed in touch with the Bentley service department (which remained open until 1939). The records show that as early as 1932 GK706 needed one new piston and eight main bearings, new rings only a year on, then new road springs and a series of crankshaft dampers, so it was not having an easy life.

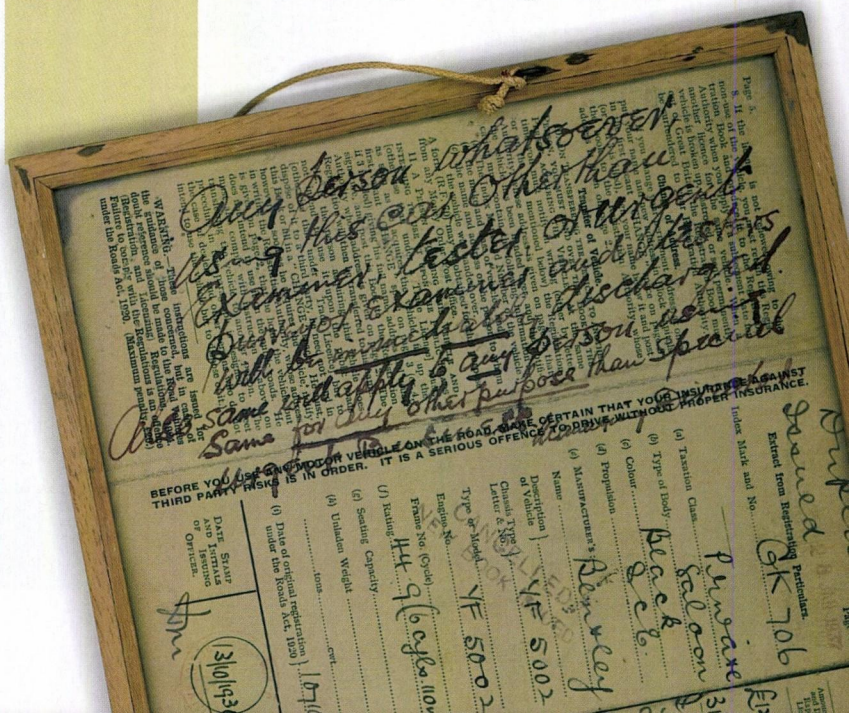
Julian Majzub can't recall when his father bought the car, but he's known it much of his life. Fuad Majzub certainly had it in 1968, because that year he was able to reunite WO with his favourite Bentley when he took the founder to lunch in it on his 80th birthday. "I'm sorry to see it go," Julian says, "but it's for a good cause: my brother is giving the proceeds to a Middle East education charity. And it will be well looked after: Franz-Josef Paefgen [CEO of Bentley Motors] is very keen to maintain its originality."

In a few months GK706 will look rather smarter than today, ready to parade the Bentley message; but I'm quietly glad I saw it first, a little weathered and worn.

When I went to inspect it the one view I couldn't get was the driver's, peering along the bonnet over the wide, hard-rimmed wheel. Too much of a jump from my wheelchair. But that didn't matter; it's the one view I know already. Above the desk in my study at home there is a large Roy Nockolds print of the dash of this car, with WO's hand on the wheel and the bonnet spearing down a dusty French road between Napoleon's avenues of trees. With mountains on the left and open fields on the right, the arrow-straight road disappears to a distant, invisible goal, and there is not a vehicle in sight. I gaze at it when I'm stuck for the next line. When I've inched my way home in London's traffic, it's relaxing to look up at this elysian vision of motoring as it once was, and to imagine that I'm sitting beside WO, in the finest car he ever made.

Thanks to: Clare Hay, Tim Houlding, BDC, Bentley Motors.

Above: on a recce to Montlhéry for a possible record attempt, WO took this picture with Bentley racer and agent Jean Chassagne (centre). Below: WO's warning in the logbook shows how much GK 706 meant to him


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(b) Type of Body
(c) Colour
(d) Propulsion
(e) Manufacturer's Name
Description of Vehicle
Chassis Type Letter & Type
Type or Model
Engine No.
Frame No. (Cycle)
(f) Rating
(g) Seating Capacity
(h) Unladen Weight
(i) Date of original registration under the Roads Act, 1920
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Saloon
Racer
Black
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The approach is low-key: we appear to be heading for an industrial estate. But, past the gate, there are neat hedges and a cobbled area between two buildings, with gently sloping lawns beyond. The keeper of the collection, Massimo Giuliano, opens the doors of the main building and, stretching away into its depths, there are lines of rally cars. Fantastic rally cars: from Timo Mäkinen's 1000 Lakes-winning Mini Cooper S of 1967 and Bengt Söderström's 1966 RAC-winning Lotus-Cortina, to Juha Kankkunen's Lancia Delta HF Integrale which finished second on the 1992 Safari. Not all the cars here are winners, but all are genuine ex-works cars restored to, or preserved in, their former glory.

The man responsible for this Aladdin's Cave spent his early years as a works co-driver. In his tiny office, overflowing with memorabilia, books, photographs and model cars, Gino Macaluso explains how it all came about.

"My family lived in Turin. I attended university there." With Lancia Reparto Corse just round the corner, it was impossible not to be aware of rallying. It was 1968 and Fiat was sponsoring the revival of the Sestrière Rally as a major international event. "My friend Giancarlo Romano and I decided we'd like to do some rallying. We progressed from a 1300cc Escort to a Fiat 124 saloon and finally to a Cooper S in 1969, but it was an expensive hobby for students."

A 1970 offer from the Fiat-supported Pinerolo Corse, run by Gianfranco Silecchia, to co-drive Luciano Trombotto was more financially attractive. "Our car was a little basic," says Macaluso. "It was a 124 Spider – red with blue stripes – but it had no hardtop; we rallied with a canvas hood." There were no big wins, but their consistency augured well. Macaluso, however, wanted to give his own driving talent one more chance. "Rather unwisely, I decided to do some more rallies with my friend in 1971, first in a Fulvia coupé and then a 124 Spider. By the end of the year, though, I was ready to go back to Fiat, which now had a proper team. But the deal was again as a co-driver, this time with Raffaele Pinto. Our target was the European Rally Championship."

Below: to rally fans, Gino Macaluso's collection is akin to a shrine: just about every significant rally car of the last 40 years is here – and most of them are winning chassis

Pinto blossomed under Macaluso's guidance and they won the Costa Brava, Hessen, Polish, Semperit and Yugoslavia rallies, and took the title. This was a major achievement for Fiat and enabled the team to persuade senior management to homologate the new 1756cc 124 Spider for the inaugural year of the World Rally Championship, 1973.

The rivalry between Fiat and Lancia was at its height, and Macaluso was dispatched to Elba with drivers Fulvio Bacchelli and Alcide Paganelli to see if a Ferrari 308 could be the basis for an all-conquering rally car. Except Lancia beat Fiat to the draw by getting approval to build 400 examples of the Stratos. Fiat then assessed a more modest rally project, the four-cylinder 1.6-litre X1/9, later increased to 1.8 litres. Macaluso was put in charge and worked with Giorgio Pianta to develop it. He was also competing in rallies with Sergio Barbasio, finishing 10th on the RAC in a 124 Spider.

The following year he was paired with Maurizio Verini and they won the Italian Championship. But the end of his rally career was in sight: "My father was the importer of Omega watches. Because of his early death the business needed someone to run it full-time. My hobby had to go."

Macaluso's last event was memorable, however: he was co-driver to Clay Regazzoni in a Fiat X1/9 on the 1974 Giro d'Italia. "He had lost the F1 world championship to Emerson Fittipaldi at Watkins Glen the previous week. I thought he would be quite low – but he was fantastic: cheerful, full of passion and wanted to get everything right on the car." Unfortunately, they retired when the engine broke.

For almost 20 years Macaluso concentrated on the business. He bought two of the most revered names in Swiss ▶





McKlein

watchmaking – Girard-Perregaux and Daniel JeanRichard – and, through his friendship with Luca di Montezemolo, formed a link with Ferrari that continues today.

Collecting ex-works rally cars only came to mind in the early 1990s. The catalyst occurred when Giuliano, who helped Macaluso with his road cars, stumbled across an old car on a farm near Genoa. He was told it was a prototype Fiat – an X1/9 that had been originally campaigned by a Formula 1 driver. It was the car in which Macaluso had finished his rally career. It was purchased, taken back to Turin and restored.

As you might expect, there is a strong Lancia and Fiat thread running through the collection. The earliest Lancia is a Fulvia coupé used by Simo Lampinen on the 1970 East African Safari; it retired after an accident and spent 20 years in Kenya before being repatriated. Then, in perfect Martini livery, there are the Rallye 037 driven by Miki Biasion in Sardinia and used extensively for testing, the Delta S4 driven to second on the 1986 New Zealand and San Remo rallies by Markku Alén and Dario Cerrato, and the Delta Integrale Didier Auriol took to victory on the 1990 San Remo.

There are examples of both types of Fiat 124 Spider Abarth; the 1460cc car was campaigned by Bacchelli in 1972; the later 1840cc model is the car in which Rauno Aaltonen/Robin Turvey finished second on the 1973 Acropolis. There's a 131 Abarth, too – the car Markku Alén used to finish third on the 1978 Welsh Rally and Attilio Bettega drove in 1979.

Of the 'outsiders', Mäkinen's Cooper S still has the marks on its bonnet from when it flew open on the Ouninpohja jumps in Finland after mechanics had propped it open to improve the cooling; Timo drove half the stage with his head out of the window to take his third 1000 Lakes win in a row. Söderström's Cortina is in Group 1 trim: standard seats and lap-and-diagonal seat belts. Then there's Stig Blomqvist's long-wheelbase Gp4 Audi Quattro that won the 1982 San Remo, and the Carlos Sainz GpA Toyota Celica GT4 in which the Spaniard secured his first world title (profiled in *Motor Sport*, May 2007). Nearby, there's Jean Ragnotti's 1981 Monte Carlo-winning Gp4 Renault R5 Turbo and Bernard Darniche's 1973 Alpine-Renault A110.

Above: Attilio Bettega meets the San Remo fans in 1983. The Lancia 037 is Macaluso's favourite to drive out of his collection

The building across the yard is slightly smaller. It contains Gino's road cars – a Ferrari F40 with Michelotto bodywork, a 456 once owned by Piero Ferrari, a GTB/4, a Testarossa with special Pininfarina bodywork that was a prototype for a one-make race series, a Bizzarrini 5300 GT Strada, a Mercedes-Benz 300SL and an Aston Martin DB5 – plus his racing cars. There are three important Martini-liveried Lancias: a Beta Monte Carlo, a Group 6 LC1 and a Group C LC2 with a twin-turbo Ferrari V8. (Macaluso quietly confides that he'd like to find a Porsche 956 to keep them company.) These nestle against the Alfa Romeo 155 V6 TI that won the 1993 DTM in the hands of Nicola Larini and the ex-Jacques Laffite Ligier JS11/15 that won the 1980 German GP.

But the most intriguing sight is a yacht hull, a symphony in yellow, protruding from a packing case. It's a weird size, too.

"Girard-Perregaux is associated with the BMW Oracle Racing entry which represented the USA in the 2007 America's Cup," explains Macaluso. "Larry Ellison, CEO of Oracle, told me he would send three models of the yacht. I thought no more of it until one morning my secretary in Turin phoned to say that a model boat had arrived. I told her to put it in my office. She said that was not possible. It had arrived on a truck!" The model is one-third scale, built to be used in water-flow tests.

This is a fascinating private collection. But which of his cars does Gino most like to drive?

"It has to be the 037," he grins. "That was the last true racing car that took part in rallies. The emotional feeling it generates is inexpressible."

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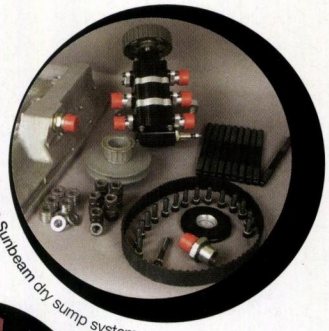
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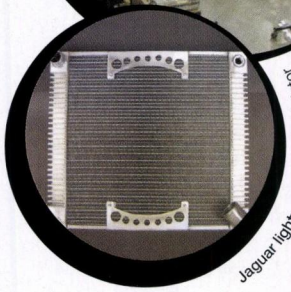
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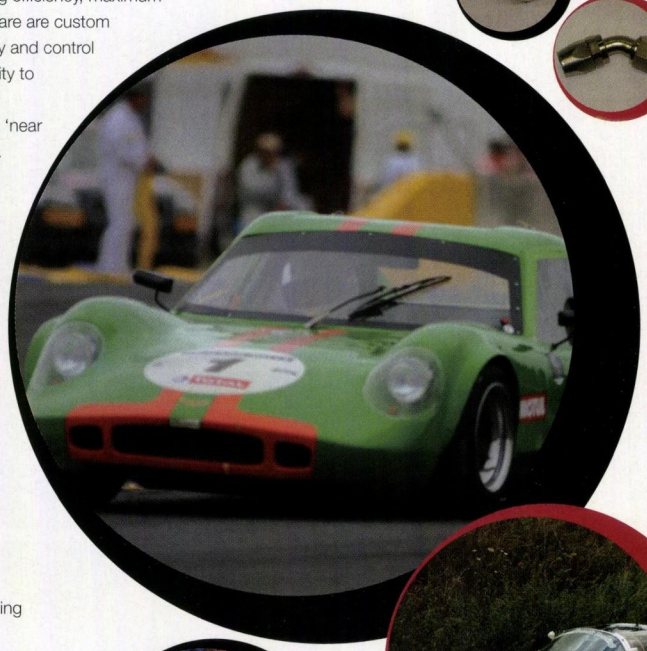


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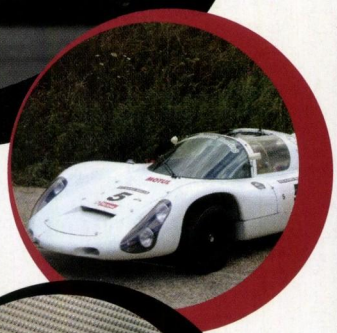


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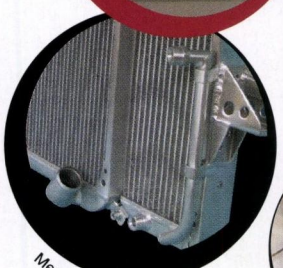






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Bompani's home win

E-type driver and event organiser Mauro Bompani was a popular winner of the Modena Cento Ore, a delightful four-day mix of stages and races in central Italy

Over four glorious days, 76 cars tackled this 17-stage event, starting and finishing in Modena.

Competitors were kept busy on the first day, tackling no fewer than five stages before finishing at Montecatini. This was one of the most delightful stops, a picturesque town overlooked by the smaller Montecatini Alto. The organisers provided an elegant reception in an ancient spa and castle, followed by a superb dinner.

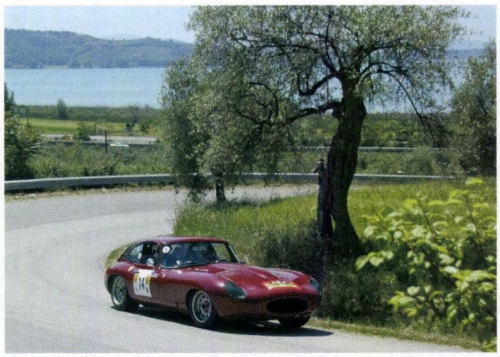
The rally was shaping up by day two and was being led by Michael Eschmann/Hans Werner Woll in a 2.8 Porsche 911 RSR. Up at the sharp end with them were organiser Mauro Bompani's E-type Jaguar, the Pier-Angelo Masselli/Carlo Sighicelli 1965 911, John Sheldon's Lotus Elan, the E-type of Manfredo Rossi di Montelera and Pierre Alain Mayeux and Rino Righi/Mauro Iacolutti's Ford Escort.

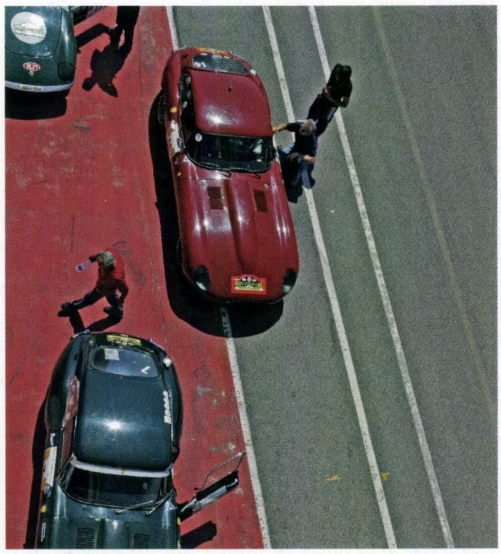
Misfortune befell Ben Cussons/Howard Redhouse on Castelrigone. Redhouse sustained knee injuries when their C-type crashed. Keenly competitive, they had been using to good effect the pace notes provided until a faulty headphone caused Ben to miss a sharp right.

Magione was the event's first circuit and was looking decidedly past its prime, peeling paint disguising its former glory. But its layout demonstrated great character, with fast double apexes, a decent straight and some interesting complexes.

The race introduced some new players at the front, including José Albuquerque's Ford GT40 which was first, the Bill Wykeham/Mike Sexton Morgan Plus 8 (fourth) and Wolfgang Friedrichs's Aston Martin Project 214 (fifth). Eschmann only managed eighth. It was also to be the end of Sheldon's challenge for victory, because of a diff failure on the Elan. The Dirk Waaijenberg/André Schoonenwoolf Mustang showed remarkable rallying skills on the resulting oil slick.

Day three: the fabulous drive across Umbria and into Tuscany was breathtaking. But the rigours of the event were taking their toll. The Alex Edipidis/John Palmos E-type hit a tree and David and Deborah Franklin's Shelby Mustang broke a front hub.







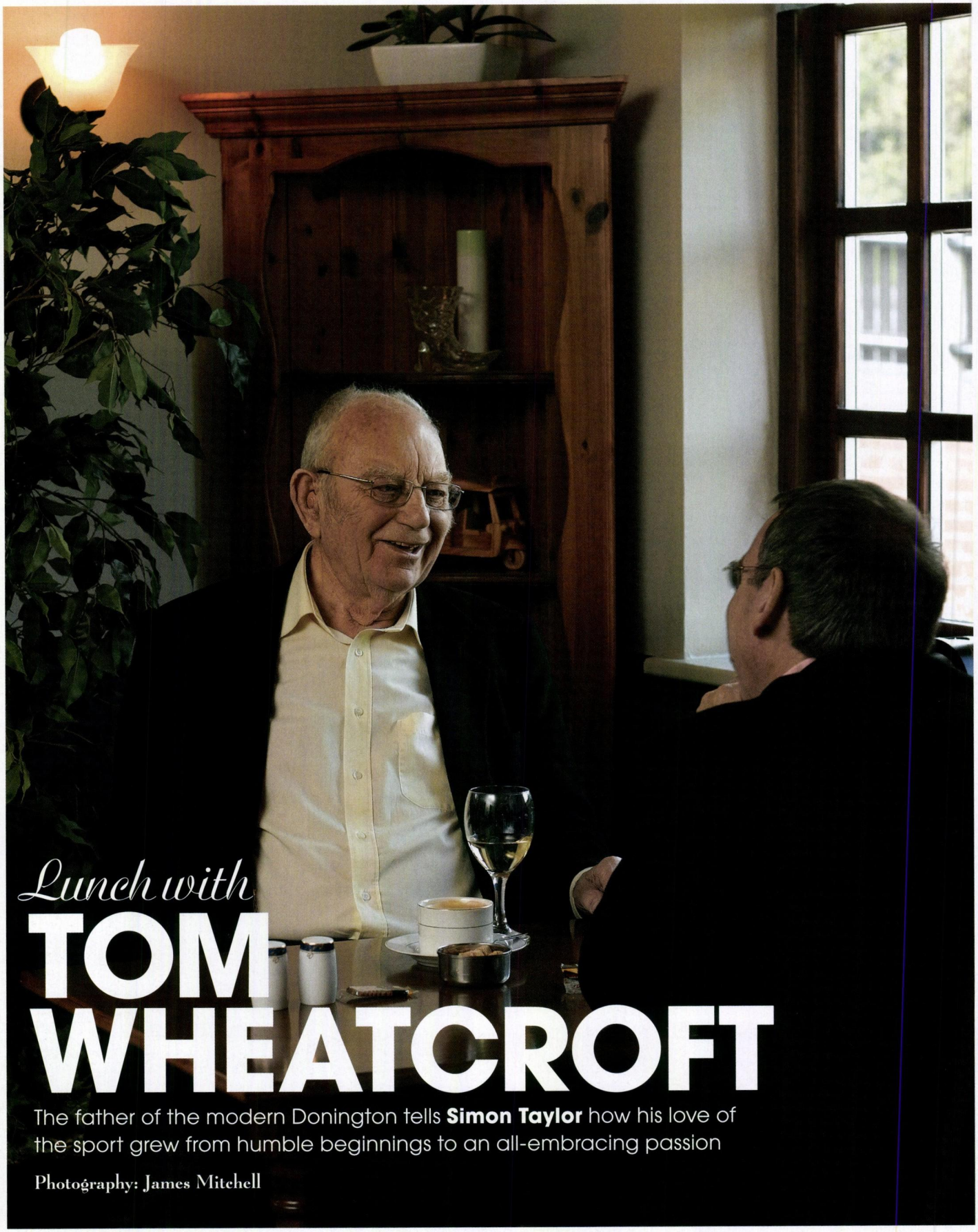
Mugello was the scene of the second and last race of the event. David Clark steam-rollered Friedrichs's Aston through the pack and took the chequered flag one second ahead of the Masselli/Sighicelli 911 which still ended the day in second place overall. Unfortunately, the Albuquerque GT40 was showing signs of the driveshaft failure which would put it out by the next day. Checking into Riolo Terme, the last night stop, another superb dinner awaited competitors.

The final day's route went west, just past Imola – where another race would have been welcome. On this leg Masselli retired his Porsche, but a needle match was taking place between the Fitzsimons team cars: the Wykeham/Sexton Morgan and the 2.7 RS of David Fitzsimons/Neil Tollich. The Porsche crew were dramatic on the stages, making full use of the provided pace notes. But this alone was not enough to give them the lead they required over the Morgan, which was slightly quicker on the racetracks. At the last stage, the Fiorano test track, there was a mere second between them. Last year here the New Zealand Porsche crew took the blind right-hander under the bridge flat – resulting in a trip across the neatly coiffured infield. This year they took five seconds out of the Morgan to secure third place. The latter, however, still won the Period G honours.

His diff troubles cured, John Sheldon won this test in the little Elan, with Bompani taking it easy, letting the battling Period G, H and I cars do their worst at the front. He still had plenty in hand to take second on overall time to Eschmann and be declared the official event winner (which only those in older cars, up to Period F, could be). He contemplated passing over his win to the next eligible team, being the organiser and all. But then he thought, 'stuff that!' and proudly accepted the trophy. It was a popular win.

Top: Mauro Bompani cracks on in the E-type Jaguar, which was top dog in the pre-1966 Period F group and hence the overall winner. Middle: two Jaguar E-types and a Lotus Elan in the pitlane at Mugello. Bottom: the Itala which won the 1907 Paris-Peking race was demonstrated over the first stage. Opposite: a bevy of Porsche 356s in piazza pose at the finish in Modena


CREDIT SUISSE



Lunch with

TOM WHEATCROFT

The father of the modern Donington tells **Simon Taylor** how his love of the sport grew from humble beginnings to an all-embracing passion

Photography: James Mitchell

Larger than life: that well-worn phrase might have been coined especially for Tom Wheatcroft. His presence fills any room with energy and bonhomie. Tom likes to laugh, and finds much to laugh about. Actually, 'laugh' is too paltry a word to describe the process that begins deep inside the man as a rumbling, whirring noise, like some giant starter motor winding up a large-capacity engine of mirth, and then erupts and engulfs everyone within earshot.

As well as the laughter there is the passion, an all-consuming love of motor racing machinery and motor racing people. It still burns as brightly as it did more than 70 years ago when Tom, a penniless 13-year-old, bicycled 30 miles from his home in Leicester to Donington Park, found a hole in the hedge, and crawled through to see, hear and smell racing cars for the first time. It is the stuff of legend that some four decades later Tom Wheatcroft bought the long-derelict track, surmounted apparently insuperable obstacles to bring it back from the dead, and made it the scene of the European Grand Prix.

As well as circuit owner and promoter, he has been a Formula 1 entrant, team sponsor, and benefactor of young drivers. And his passion has also benefited countless numbers of enthusiasts through his extraordinary Donington Collection, the finest and most complete display of historic racing cars in the world.

Childhood wasn't easy for Tom. He was only two when his father died and at four he was badly injured playing in a timberyard when a pile of huge logs fell on him. There were worries about brain damage, and he was kept off school. "The doctor said I'd never be able to take any pressure," Tom remembers. "He were wrong about that!" – and the laugh begins to rumble, *rrrrrr rrrrrr*. So he filled his time searching rubbish dumps for discarded wood, which he chopped up and sold as kindling for a shilling a bag. He finally went to school for the first time when he was 12.

"I did a lot of fighting. Fighting is a weakness. If a lad's fighting, he's missing something and it makes him want to fight. My weakness was I'd never been to school, and my mother couldn't give me the chances I thought I should have. Four of them at school took the piss out of me, and I give them all a hiding. We were friends after that."

But Tom only stayed at school for 18 months. He was still 13 when he "went on the buildings" as an apprentice plasterer. He had an insatiable appetite for hard work, and by the time he was 16 he could plaster an average 1000sq ft house in a day. Soon he was riding to Donington on his own 350cc Rudge. He never missed a meeting, and of course he saw the famous German onslaughts in 1937 and 1938. "You had to be there to know what it were like. The W125 Mercs and the V16 Auto Unions were doing 170mph by halfway down the straight. The noise and the smell and the speed – we'd none of us seen anything like it before. The nitro made your eyes water. And when they took off over the Melbourne hump, two foot off the ground, you just didn't believe what you were seeing."

Then came World War Two. At 19, having barely ever left Leicestershire, Tom found himself posted to Burma, then India, Iran, Iraq, North Africa, Italy, Belgium and finally Germany, driving tanks. His hair-raising war stories underline the toughness of the man – and his ever-present willingness to challenge authority. After several narrow escapes he was back in Leicester in 1946 with a German wife, Lenchen, and the first of his seven children. With his £50 gratuity he set himself up as a jobbing builder, sowing the seeds of a giant business that, within less than a decade, would be riding the post-war boom and completing a house every day.

Donington was no more, of course, but in 1950 Tom took a rare day off to go to the British Grand Prix at Silverstone. Since then he's never missed an F1 race on British soil. In 1956 he made his first foreign foray, driving his smart red Daimler Conquest roadster down to Sicily to watch Fangio lead home a Lancia-Ferrari 1-2-3 in the Syracuse GP, and soon he was a regular European spectator. The F1 circus was smaller then, and Tom was befriended by *Autosport* editor Gregor Grant.

"Gregor were ever so good to me. There'd be parties, and he'd say, 'Tom, d'you fancy coming to a do tonight?' Mimmo Dei, who ran Scuderia Centro Sud, he had a party at the Italian GP one year, in a big house just outside the Monza gates; very grand. Of course I weren't invited, but Gregor sweeps in and introduces me to the host, 'This is Monsieur So-and-so', makes me sound important, and they bow at us and in we go. Afterwards I said to Gregor: 'How d'you get invited to such a wonderful do? Everybody were there, Fangio; everybody.' And Gregor says, 'Oh, I wasn't invited.' If I'd known I would never have dared go in. He took me around, I were like a spaniel dog beside him, and he got me the courage to chat to anybody. And I'd sometimes bring his reports back to the *Autosport* offices, to help out.

"I loved Gregor. He knew what were going on, but he were a terrible liar. He'd tell nine of the biggest lies you'd ever heard, and then the 10th one, the wildest of the lot, would turn out to be true. We're eating in a fish restaurant in Monte Carlo, and he says, 'Tom, I've found a car. It's four doors away from where we're sitting. It's the remains of the Lancia that Ascari crashed into the water here in 1955.' 'Come on, Gregor, you've got your eyes crossed. I bet you a tenner you can't show me that car.' So he took me up the road, and we went into a lock-up, and there it was. I went back later and couldn't find the bastard thing. It came out of the water and they put it in that lock-up, but then it must have got stolen... *rrrrrr rrrrrr.* ▶



LAT

Tom and Roger Williamson, above, developed a close friendship which would surely have brought great racing success had tragedy not intervened

"We rang up McLaren there and then and ordered two cars. We were all set to run Roger in F1, do it properly. I know he had it in him to go right to the very top"

"Fangio were a lovely man. If you had a pound or a penny, he treated you the same. We got to be friends down the years, and he came to Donington a few times. I went to his 80th birthday party. He drove me from Buenos Aires to his home town in the country, and the whole place turned out to welcome him, kids, old men; everybody. He sent me his helmet for my collection. It were during the Falklands War, and the customs people intercepted it and wanted to destroy it. Fortunately I got that sorted. I've got Nuvolari's helmet from when he won at Donington in 1938, and Ascari's helmet, Hawthorn's and a lot more.

"Rob Walker were a real gentleman, just like it said in his passport. I got to know his team ever so well. I used to go back to the paddock at night and fetch the mechanics some beer. His wife Betty always had a tin of her home-made chocolate brownies that she'd hand around in the pits. Once I were coming back from the Nürburgring in me 300SL Gullwing and there was his Facel II broken down by the side of the road. He were going to leave it there for someone to collect, but I said, 'You can't leave the booger here; I'll tow you.' Towed him about 80 miles on a short rope... *rrrrrr rrrrrr*."

In 1963 Tom decided he wanted a painting of one of his favourite cars, the Ferrari 125. A top motorsport artist of the day quoted him £900. Then, flicking through the classifieds in the back of *Motor Sport*, he saw a real 125 for sale – for £1000. The 1949 Italian GP winner, it had been in Australia ever since Peter Whitehead took it there for the Tasman Series, and now it had a Chevy V8 engine in it. Tom bought it sight unseen. Later he tracked down the original engine (in an Australian powerboat!) and had the car rebuilt to original spec. By 1973 he had bought and restored 30 more grand prix cars.

"I've always been lucky. I can always come up with the right figure to do a deal. A deal's got to be a two-way street: you've got to leave some cake for the other man, otherwise he'll never deal with you again. I've dealt with Bernie Ecclestone for more than 20 years, and it's always dead easy with him. I've sold him several cars, like I sold him a V16 BRM, and we always do a deal in two minutes. Always over the 'phone, always unseen. First car he tried to buy was the Thinwall Special. I had both of them, one complete and one in bits. I told him I weren't selling the complete one but he could have the one in bits. 'What sort of bits?' 'Big bits, Bernie. Engine's all complete, we've took the sump off and had a look. Chassis, fuel tanks, it's all there.' He says, 'What's your figure?' '£350,000, Bernie.' 'Now, Tom, you've got your figures mixed up. All that money for a load of rust?' 'No, Bernie, I'm not charging you for the rust.' *rrrrrr rrrrrr*. The cheque were in the post next day.

"Bernie will always use you when he can. I were in the Silverstone paddock and he came up and said, 'Talk to me here, Tom, where the BRDC blazers can see us, because I'm doing their new British GP contract.' He wanted them to think he were bringing the race to Donington. *rrrrrr rrrrrr*. With me he's always been 100 per cent. When he closed the Brabham factory down he rang up. 'Tom, there's a lorry load of stuff here, don't know if it's any good or not, but you can have the lot. I'll send it up.' We get on like a house afire."

There are now over 150 cars in the Donington Collection, many of them unique. To see some of the marques lined up is heart-stopping – the BRMs, for example, running chronologically through 27 seasons of failure to triumph and then mediocrity, from Mk 1 and Mk 2 V16s to P201. Or the full glorious set of Vanwalls, from Thinwall Special to the final rear-engined car, and including the unraced streamliner. Some are unrealised dreams that were never raced, like the 1969 4WD Cosworth. Tom has a story about every one: how he found lost and hidden cars, how he married engines that had been parted from chassis, who he dealt with and how each deal was done. In the 1960s and 1970s old racing cars were worth very little, but now the Collection's value is simply incalculable. The ex-Nuvolari Maserati 8CM, for example, cost Tom £9500. As one of the most original 1930s grand prix cars in the world, it is now almost priceless. Post-war F1 cars were routinely bought for £2000 and restored for £4000 more. But, while Tom is the shrewdest of buyers, his acquisitions have all been driven by the love of each car and its history, and not by any thought of investment value.

Tom also believes in driving his cars. Most of them, restored and maintained by Hall & Hall, are fully raceworthy. Even the wondrous Bimotore Alfa is ready to go, on both engines. Every so often Tom invites a few close friends up to Donington for "a little play". And Tom plays hard, and has had his share of hairy moments: the one-off Tec-Mec had just been fully restored when Tom somersaulted it, escaping serious injury but instigating another rebuild.

Although almost all his cars are single-seaters, Tom wanted a Bugatti Royale. None of the six that exist could be bought, so he spent 10 years and £2 million having a perfect



LAT

"They put oxygen in me, but I didn't think I'd make it to the podium. But once I were up there with Senna, wearing me top hat, I felt strong as a bulldozer, 18 years old again"

The European GP, above, was Tom's and Donington's finest day, even though it lost him over £4 million

copy built from scratch: engine, chassis, body, interior, every detail correct. While he was at it, he had five spare blocks cast and four spare chassis made, to salt away for possible future use. Now he has commissioned Crosthwaite and Gardner to make a batch of five Mercedes-Benz W125s – and Bernie has already ordered the first car. "Some people may not like it, but this way everyone can see and hear and smell a W125 really being raced."

From collector to entrant was an inevitable step. In 1970 Tom backed Derek Bell in the Tasman Series and then, briefly, in F1 with a Brabham BT26A, before helping him into Team Surtees. He also ran Derek in Formula 2 with a BT30 and the *équipe* finished second in the European Championship. Then at the 1971 Monaco GP, watching the F3 final from his balcony at the Hotel Metropole, Tom found himself following the charging progress up the field of a young driver from his home town of Leicester. Roger Williamson was doing his first season in F3 on a shoestring, and Tom noted the March 713's smoky engine. So he stumped off to the distant F3 paddock, where he found Roger already embarking on a roadside engine rebuild. "He'd got the engine on the never-never from Holbay, and he couldn't even afford the first payment. I introduced meself, and right from the start we just got on ever so well." There was an immediate rapport between them, and perhaps Tom recognised something of himself in the quiet, unpretentious but totally determined 23-year-old.



"I can always come up with the right figure to do a deal. A deal's a two-way street: you've got to leave some cake for the other man, otherwise he'll never deal with you again"

Tom's self-created Bugatti Royale, above, outside his chosen lunch venue, the Nag's Head in Castle Donington

Tom's gift there and then of a fresh engine grew within a few weeks into full backing for a concentrated onslaught on British F3, in which Roger became virtually unbeatable. Over the next two seasons he won three championships, and the top Grovewood Award. His trademark attacking style, head down in the cockpit, showed at its best when the odds were stacked against him. F2 followed in 1973, with a typically Williamson display at Monza: Roger was pushed off at the first chicane by Vittorio Brambilla, restarted dead last, and came through to win by 17sec. Already there was interest from the Formula 1 world and, following an impressive BRM test, Tom was summoned to lunch at The Dorchester with Louis Stanley. Not surprisingly the pompous Stanley and the no-nonsense Wheatcroft didn't speak the same language. "He tried to buy Roger. I told him Roger weren't for sale. Things got heated, and I got up and left the table. As I went I said, 'You've spoiled my day, Louis.' He called after me, 'You can call me Mr Stanley.' 'I'll try to remember that, Louis.' *rrrrrr rrrrrr*."

Tom had much more respect for Ken Tyrrell, who also wanted to sign Roger. With Jackie Stewart's retirement looming, Ken needed a young team-mate for François Cevert. Meanwhile, Tom hired an F1 March for Roger's first grand prix, at Silverstone. This was the year of the Scheckter induced pile-up at the end of lap one, so his debut was brief. Two weeks later came the Dutch GP.

"The day before we left for Zandvoort, Roger came over and said he had something to ask me. 'Is there any chance of me staying with you, instead of going with Tyrrell?' 'Now, Roger,' I said, 'you've got to make your name. Ken has forgotten more about F1 than I'll ever know. I'm not good enough for you.' 'But we said that about F3, and we said that about F2, but we did it. I want to stay with you.' So we rang up McLaren there and then and we ordered two F1 cars, so we'd have a spare. Teddy Mayer agreed we'd get all the works know-how – if they learned anything, we'd get it. So there I was, all set to run an F1 McLaren for Roger, do it properly. I know he had it in him to go right to the very top."

The ghastly events of that Zandvoort race are all too familiar. Roger qualified 18th out of 24 starters, but he was already up to 13th on lap eight when, in a fast fifth-gear right-hander, his left front tyre delaminated. The barrier that he hit was anchored in sand and bent back on impact, launching the car, which finally came to rest upside down several hundred yards down the track. Roger was almost certainly completely unhurt, but trapped inside. The car's nearly full tanks ignited, and the marshals nearby, improperly clothed to deal with fire, did not go to his aid. David Purley, who'd been chasing Roger, stopped and rushed into the fire, but despite frantic efforts he couldn't lift the car off him single-handed. Neither of the two fire extinguishers he grabbed from the trackside worked. The race wasn't stopped, and by the time a fire truck got to the scene several minutes later the car was burnt out, and Roger was dead.

"It were the worst day of my life. He didn't have a break on his body, you know. He were conscious in the car, shouting to Purley to get him out. The police came and arrested me – as the owner of the car, under Dutch law I were implicated in his death – and I had to verify him and everything. I spent the night in a cell, and it were 10 o'clock next morning when the British consul got me out. Then we had to fly him home. I just felt so sad. I loved Roger like a ▶



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son. People said I should sue, but I wasn't interested. It wouldn't bring Roger back. But I were very ill after that: it knocked a lot out of me. I started to get over it, and then a year later, when farmers were burning stubble after the harvest, I saw the smoke rising across the fields like I did from the pits that day, [and] it all came back. I were ashamed; had to have some words with myself. You have to learn to live with it but I still think of Roger every day."

It wasn't quite the end of Tom's days as an entrant. He commissioned Mike Pilbeam to design a Formula Atlantic chassis and then an F2 version – initially with a straight-six Abarth engine – which was raced by Brian Henton and Bob Evans. But by now Donington was consuming more and more of Tom's time. In 1971 he'd heard that the site of the old circuit, which was an Army transport depot during the war and had been lying fallow ever since, might be for sale. Within days he had bought it. That was only the start of a six-year pitched battle, with endless planning problems and trenchant local opposition conspiring to block his dream of running motor racing there once more. But Tom has quite extraordinary tenacity. "I'm an awkward bastard. I'm determined in everything I do. I'd known Donington as a lad, and I wanted the place to live again. The more I were blocked, and fobbed off, and lied to – and the more days we spent in court with my legal bills mounting by the minute – the more determined I became."

On May 28 1977 the first race meeting took place, 38 years after the last one. Even that was nearly stopped by protesters claiming right of way over an ancient footpath that crossed the track. Meanwhile the new Museum building had been built near the main entrance, and before long international events came back to Donington – the British Motorcycle GP, and rounds of the World Sportscar Championship. But of course Tom wanted an F1 race, and finally he got it: the European Grand Prix in April 1993. That wet weekend, when Ayrton Senna scored perhaps his greatest victory, has gone down in history.

"I shouldn't have been there. I were very ill in hospital because I'd just had a heart attack, then I'd had an operation, the whole do, but on the Saturday I told the specialist I had to go because I had a grand prix on. I got to the track and I saw Bernie. I could see from the way he looked at me he thought he'd better get his money quick before I snuffed it. *rrrrrr rrrrrr*.

"Then on the Sunday someone said I should drive the W154 Mercedes in the demonstration laps before the race. After all the struggles to get the race to happen, I wanted to do it. The specialist were very unhappy: he said I were mad, but he told me whatever I did not to let any cold air get to my chest, to wrap a silk scarf around my mouth. Off we went, and it were raining heavy. I couldn't see much, and I'd never driven the W154 before, but down through Craner Curves we went, and I thought, 'This is grand'. Then all of a sudden I can't breathe. I pull the scarf off my mouth, and when the cold air goes in it's like a hundred little bayonets inside me lungs jabbing to come out. Then I realised I was off line, and I thought, 'you booger, you're going to stuff it'. I tried to brake, and then we were in the gravel. They hooked me out with a tractor and I carried on for my four laps, got it back to the paddock, and I were just finished. I were gone. They lifted me out of the car, took me to the medical centre, took my overalls off, put oxygen in me. I tried to fight it, then I passed out. I didn't think I'd make it to the podium to present the prizes, but I did get there, and once I was up there with Senna, wearing me top hat, I felt strong as a bulldozer – 18 years old again. Then I went home to bed.



LAT

"Down through the Craner Curves we go, and I think, 'This is grand'. Then I'm off line. I tried to brake, and we were in the gravel. They hooked me out with a tractor"

Tom navigates the mud-streaked Mercedes W154, above, around a streaming wet Donington before the 1993 European GP

"Of course, because of the dreadful weather and the cold, we only got 50,000 spectators. Between you and me, I lost £4.2 million that weekend. But it were bloody wonderful. At the FIA prize-giving in Paris that year we got the trophy for the best-organised race. Really tickled me up, that did. Max [Mosley] come out of the curtains one side of the stage, Bernie come out of the other, trophy were so big it were all he could carry. When I went up for it, everybody stood and cheered. Afterwards Bernie come up and he said, 'Tom, you can run the grand prix next year. I can get rid of Silverstone.' I said, 'No thanks, Bernie. It's proved two things to me: the circuit's no good for a grand prix unless I put the structure in and spend the money, and you can't run two grands prix in one country. Even with good weather I'll still lose £2 million, maybe two and a half."

Donington's new lease has been much in the news and, says Tom, has been misunderstood by some. "We haven't sold Donington. Us Wheatcrofts still own it. After 14 months of negotiation, we've granted a 150-year lease on the whole place. That covers the museum as well, and the new people have to operate the museum and pay the labour, and there are very strict conditions in the lease about cleanliness and upkeep. The cars mean so much to us as a family, we'll never let them go. And the cars in the museum that are on loan to us: some of them have been with us for over 30 years, and we have a great relationship of trust with their owners. They're all still under our control. I'm president of the new company, and my son Kevin is very much involved. They can't even take one car out of the museum to photograph it without his say-so."

A crucial provision in the lease caters for Tom's wish to take any of his cars out of the museum from time to time and exercise them on the track. For the rest of us, that wondrous collection, and the track where once Auto Unions and W125s roared, are there to enjoy. They are the true legacy of this great enthusiast's lifelong passion, which all began when a young lad found a hole in the Donington hedge and squeezed through it, 72 years ago.



Never a man to settle for dull routine, every car that Colin Chapman conceived, whittled and brought to bear had a point and a purpose to it. Considered contentment was never his thing – but the Elite? As envelope-pushing exercises go, the realisation of this achingly pretty little coupé was an act of breathtaking audacity even by his lofty standards. And, as with most cars that eschewed conservatism, it never made any money: blazing trails is rarely profitable.

Too much too soon? For Chapman, soon was never soon enough. When the Elite broke cover at the 1957 Motor Show at Earls Court, Lotus had been in existence for barely a decade. From the kernel of an Austin Seven-based trials car, the marque had blossomed into a serious player in national motorsport and the other car on the stand that year was more in keeping with the traditional Lotus idiom: the Seven was a clubmans' racer for home assembly. But its debut passed almost unnoticed as jaws slackened in front of Chapman's brave new baby. Lotus was reaching for the stars.

It seems such a stretch; that a cabal of young men without much meaningful backing behind them would have the daring – the balls – to create a glassfibre monocoque, despite little prior experience of the newfangled wonder material: notwithstanding the very concept of such a structure being alien to, well, everyone other than Chapman. That his newest conceit would also boast a drag coefficient of a then astounding 0.29 (for comparison the Ford Sierra, which was launched 26 years later, scored 0.34) is equally incredible. That it should also be crowned with dizzying beauty courtesy of an accountant... An *accountant*? Implausible doesn't quite seem to cut it.

Except that this was the Chapman universe. The Elite was, inwardly at least, an entirely rational idea: there was nothing 'wing and prayer' about its conception. The would-be motor mogul was all too aware that if Lotus was to grow it needed a foothold in the road car field – and there was clearly a healthy market for a small-displacement coupé. But Chapman being Chapman, there was also a competition-related ulterior motive: the emergent sub-1300cc GT class was ripe for the picking.

Chapman was only too aware that unitary steel construction cost a prohibitive amount for such a small-scale product. Glassfibre was the answer: it was lighter than metal, didn't corrode and required less tooling. Only problem was, nobody had made the leap to creating a monocoque out of the stuff. But with Chapman's background as a qualified stress engineer, combined with his flair for making the impossible entirely possible, he pulled it off.

Chapman, along with number-crunching and artistically gifted friend Peter Kirwan-Taylor, set to designing the car, with Frank Costin later applying his learned aerodynamic bent to tweaking its outline: the rear end was cropped, minor changes were made to the nose to make it cleave air more cleanly, and the once-envisaged semi-enclosed front wheels were opened up; this may have created drag but the Elite would otherwise have had the turning circle of an ocean liner. Progress at the Edmonton workshop throughout 1956 was slow, with just one man, the unsung John Frayling, turning conceptual drawings into a full-size mock-up. Plans for the model to debut at the 1957 Le Mans 24 Hours came and went and so it was a shell-shocked London audience that first got to glimpse Lotus's brave new world.

The specification was, on paper at least, without equal in its class. Powering the tiny device – 12ft long, 58in wide and 46in high – was the light-alloy overhead-cam Coventry Climax four, designed originally as a portable fire pump. Adopted and developed for road use as the FWE (Feather Weight Elite), with a 10:1 compression ratio, it produced 75bhp even in single-SU carb spec.

Suspension owed much to the Lotus 12 single-seater: coil springs and double wishbones up front, Chapman struts at the rear – their tops anchored high in the tail of the cockpit under conical 'Sabrina' towers, their bottoms carrying alloy hubs located by double-jointed driveshafts, forward radius arms and triangulated brackets. This set-up was typically economical, imaginative and efficient. The braking arrangement was equally advanced, with discs all round, the fronts mounted inboard to reduce unsprung weight.

Inside, it was sparse but elegant, the Nardi copycat ▶

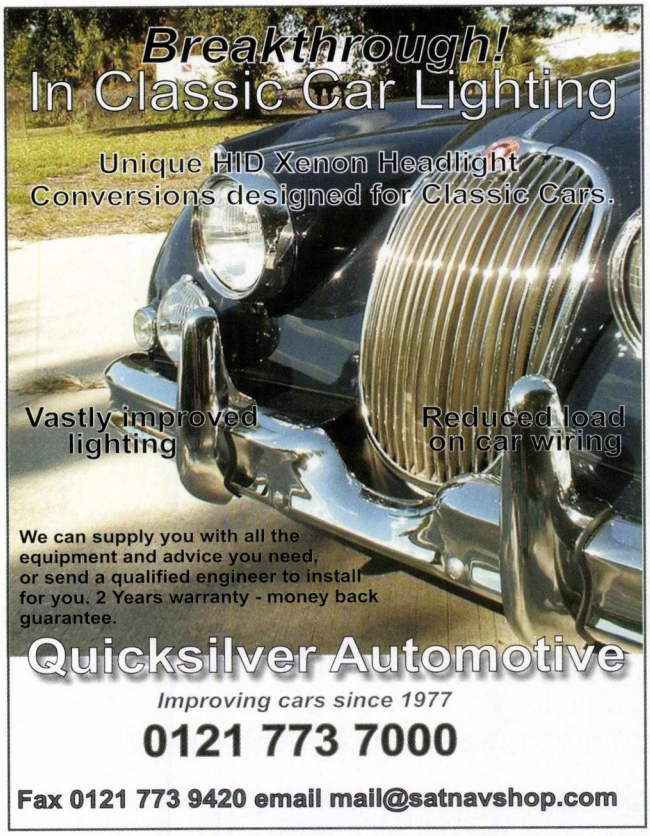
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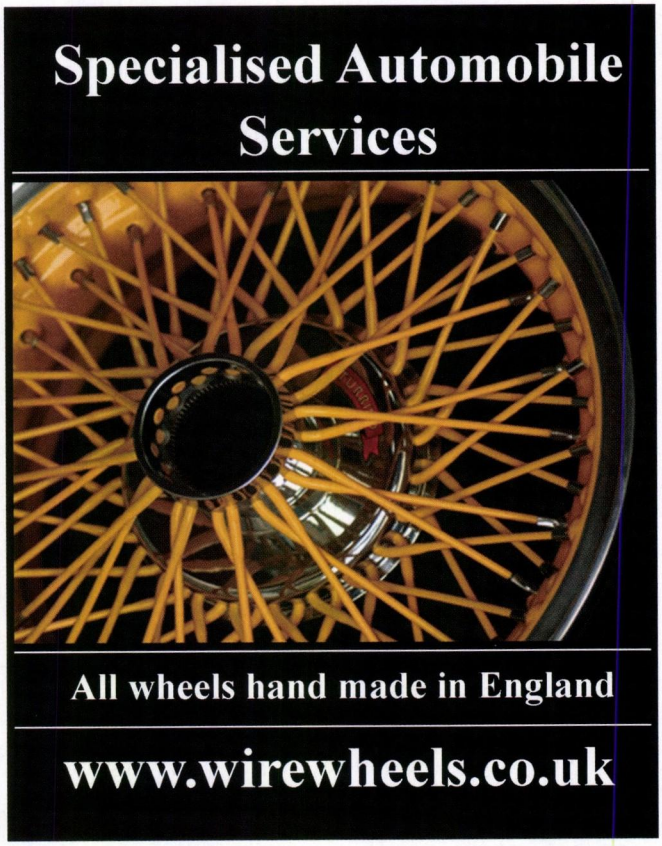




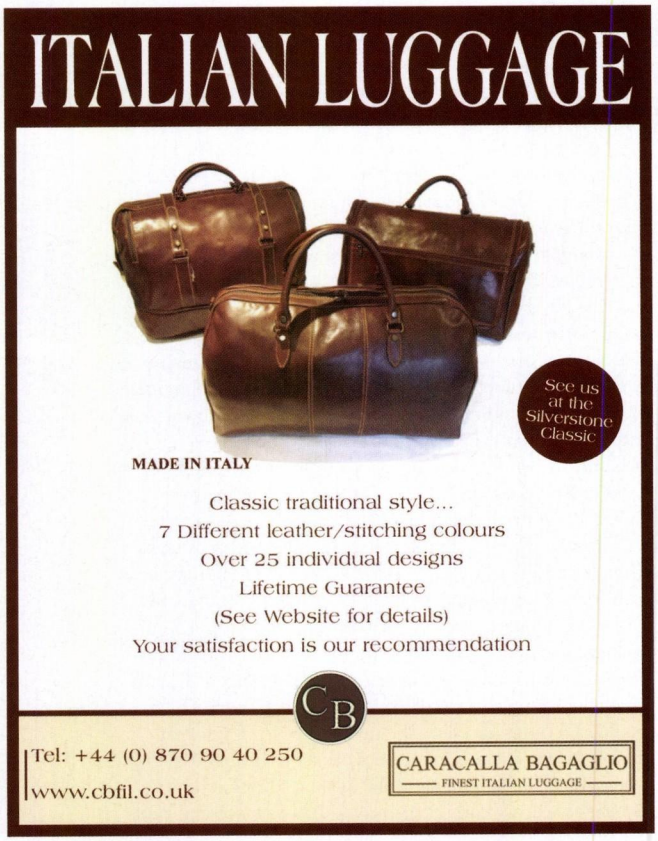
LAT

Left: Les Leston (leading) and Graham Warner were the two principal Elite racers in period, 'DAD10' sporting a smoother nose by Frank Costin. Below: Peter Lumsden and Peter Riley won their class in the June 1959 'Ring 1000Km in R W Fitzwilliam's example


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By the time the Elite arrived at the Geneva Salon the following March, a deal had been struck with boatbuilder Maximar of Pulborough, Sussex to mould the bodyshells (manufacture subsequently shifting to Bristol Aircraft Ltd).

And, predictably, it wasn't long before the model made its competition debut, Ian Walker kicking things off with a 1600cc class win at Silverstone in May 1958. Of greater import, Jim Clark, in only his second full year of racing, battled against Chapman at the Boxing Day Brands Hatch meeting and entered into legend.

Then came Le Mans. For the '59 running, Peters Lumsden and Riley drove their privateer Elite to first in the 1500cc GT class and eighth overall: they'd covered 2259 miles, averaging 94.1mph and 18.97mpg. A year on, four Lotuses made the start, and the marque scored a 1-2 in the 1300cc GT category while also scooping the Index of Thermal Efficiency. Four more class wins followed to '64, by which time the car was out of production.

Brilliant though it was, there were a few fundamental flaws to Chapman's daring. Reliability wasn't too hot, the engine main-lining oil, while punters complained of resonance through the structure at speed. In overseas markets, dealer back-up was practically non-existent, which almost did for Lotus's reputation in the US. Improvements with the Series 2 edition from mid-1960, with its revised suspension mountings and geometry, did little to improve its fragility. A new Special Equipment edition introduced that autumn meant a useful power hike to 85bhp (in time, 95 to 105bhp was available with the Super editions) and a close-ratio gearbox, but Chapman was still losing a fortune. By now, the Elite was offered at an eye-watering £2006 – but it cost at least £100 more to build. A last resort to offer it in the UK in DIY form at £1299 (from October 1961) brought about a minor revival, but the writing was on the wall. And it was no great surprise that when production ended in 1963 (by which time 1078 had been made), its replacement, the Elan, featured an easy-to-fabricate steel backbone chassis. ▶

Below: Ford designer Peter Cambridge was responsible for the Elite's cockpit layout: wheel is a close copy of a Nardi item. Bottom: remarkably aerodynamic shape gives Cd of 0.29









Top: all Elites were coupés due to monocoque design; profile clearly related to Elan successor. Above: Climax FWE engine was developed especially for this car

Flop it may have been (if only commercially), but some 50 years on since its inception the Elite still captivates. Kirwan-Taylor may have been an amateur stylist, his slender portfolio numbering only the lacklustre Citroën Bijou and a one-off Frazer Nash, but this is one hell of a legacy.

And it's small; a foot shorter than a Porsche 356. Yet step inside and the elegantly simple cockpit is cosy without being claustrophobic. You sense that real thought went into the ergonomics. The driving stance isn't askew, and the door tops don't crowd you. As Peter Rix, a man with 35 years of Elite ownership behind him (over 20 with this car) says: "It isn't like you're bundled in or sitting on a chassis rail. I think a lot of people expect the Elite to be some sort of superior 'special' – but it's much more than that."

He's not wrong. In every aspect of driving sensation, the Elite is vibrant. It demands to be *driven*. Not altogether lively below 3000rpm, it starts getting vocal as you pile on the revs and is happiest near the red line. As Rix puts it: "In just about every other area, it's a decent-enough GT. It's just that you can't cruise in it because it's so loud. You can drive through it, but things only level off at 100mph."

Engine harmonics aside, where the Elite really stumbles is in traffic. It isn't especially tractable, and while this can be a chore with any car made in 1962, as with this Series 2 edition, here the clutch has a peculiarly short movement.

But God is it fun. The ZF 'box is precise (early cars had an MGA item), the stubby lever fitting into the palm of your hand, its tall ratios proving perfect here. The rack-and-pinion steering is as alert as you would expect from a Lotus, with instant feedback, even if there is occasional kickback over uneven surfaces. That said, what really amazes is the ride quality. There's proper suspension travel, traversing topographical unpleasantness with real ease, proving just how advanced Chapman's thinking was.

And the brakes... If anything, a car weighing just 1445lb doesn't really need big anchors: the four-wheel discs are super-effective for a car of this vintage.

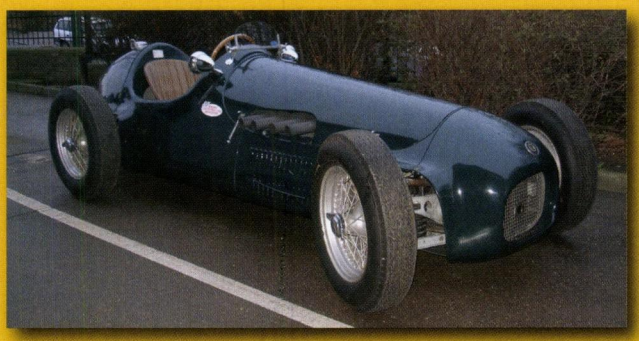
Yet for all its virtues – and it has many – you have to ask yourself: what did the Elite really achieve? While famously the world's first glassfibre monocoque (admittedly with steel reinforcement to the front subframe), you can gauge just how successful any design is by the number of subsequent copyists: that would be the Rochdale Olympic, then. But that shouldn't denigrate an exercise in, to borrow an Americanism, thinking outside the box. But then Chapman would most likely have redesigned the box first anyway.

He was like that. Ⓜ

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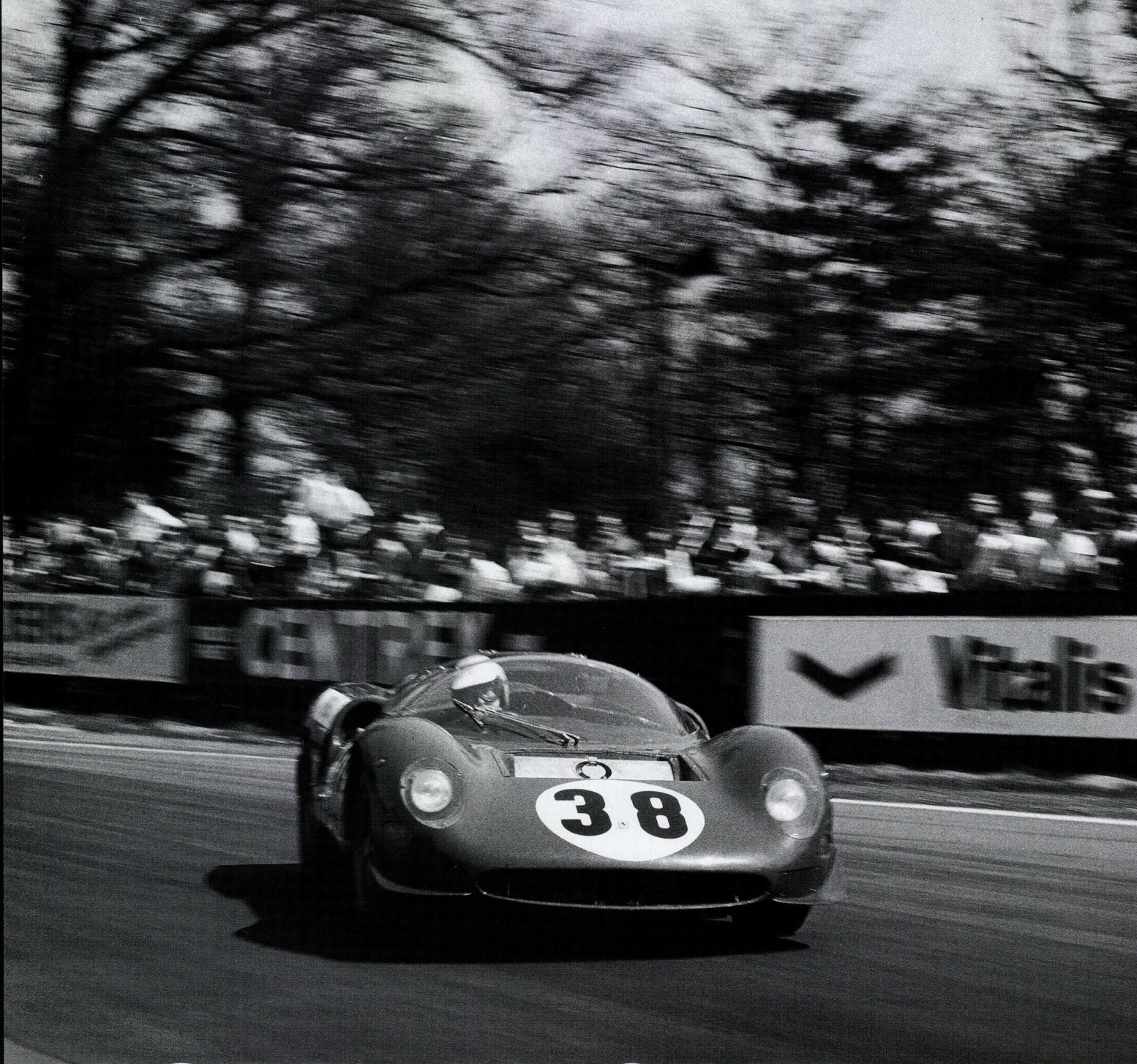
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FOREVER GREEN

David Piper was one of the most successful privateers of the 1960s. His green cars stood out then – and he's still racing them, in the same livery. **Rob Widdows** talks to him about his long career. The repeatable parts, that is

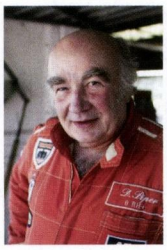
Photography: LAT

The man is a tidal wave of anecdotes spanning more than half a century of motor racing. Some consider him a lovely man. Some consider him an old rascal. Many consider him both. But one thing about David Ruff Piper is undisputed: he's a survivor.

Born into a family of Hertfordshire landowners on December 2, 1930, he has mixed memories of a childhood which ought to have led him to a career in engineering.

"My father was an electrical engineer, and before I was nine we'd been to New Zealand – where he helped establish television – and back, via America, all by ship. War had broken out and father joined up and got involved in all sorts of secret stuff to do with radar. I was sent away to school and was useless at everything; I was only good for working on the family farm. But that's where I discovered my love of machinery – and driving."

The teenaged David spent his days, and some nights, ploughing the fields, messing around with motorcycles and hurting himself. Then a chance meeting with former ERA race mechanic Tom Ivens brought him to his first motorsport event, a Luton Hoo Speed Trial. The bug had bitten – and with the money from his contract farming, he acquired a supercharged MG J4 fitted with competition bodywork. He also attended the de Havilland-affiliated Hatfield Technical College, where he met talented young aerospace engineers Colin Chapman and Mike Costin.



Left: Piper was ninth in the 1966 TT at Oulton Park in his P2. Above: Still racing at 76. Below: Piper stable at Goodwood in 2006 – David (in front) in the 330 P4 and Paolo Cavalieri aboard the P2

David's first race came at Silverstone in 1953. "I'd done a few speed trials and was competitive," he smiles. "Now I wanted to do some real racing. I competed at Castle Combe and Goodwood, learning the ropes. I always loved Goodwood – lots of pretty girls in summer frocks."

For 1955 David bought "a real racing car", the Empire Special, a Lotus MkVI fitted with a supercharged 750cc MG engine. He took it to Ireland for the Leinster Trophy in County Wicklow – and scored his first victory.

"I won my class and [outright] on handicap," he explains. "I met Mike Hawthorn there and he did a lap of the course in my Lotus, after which he bought me a Guinness – and poured it over my head. We later played touch rugger in the bar, caused a bit of mayhem, and then I went skinny-dipping in the Irish Sea with some girls.

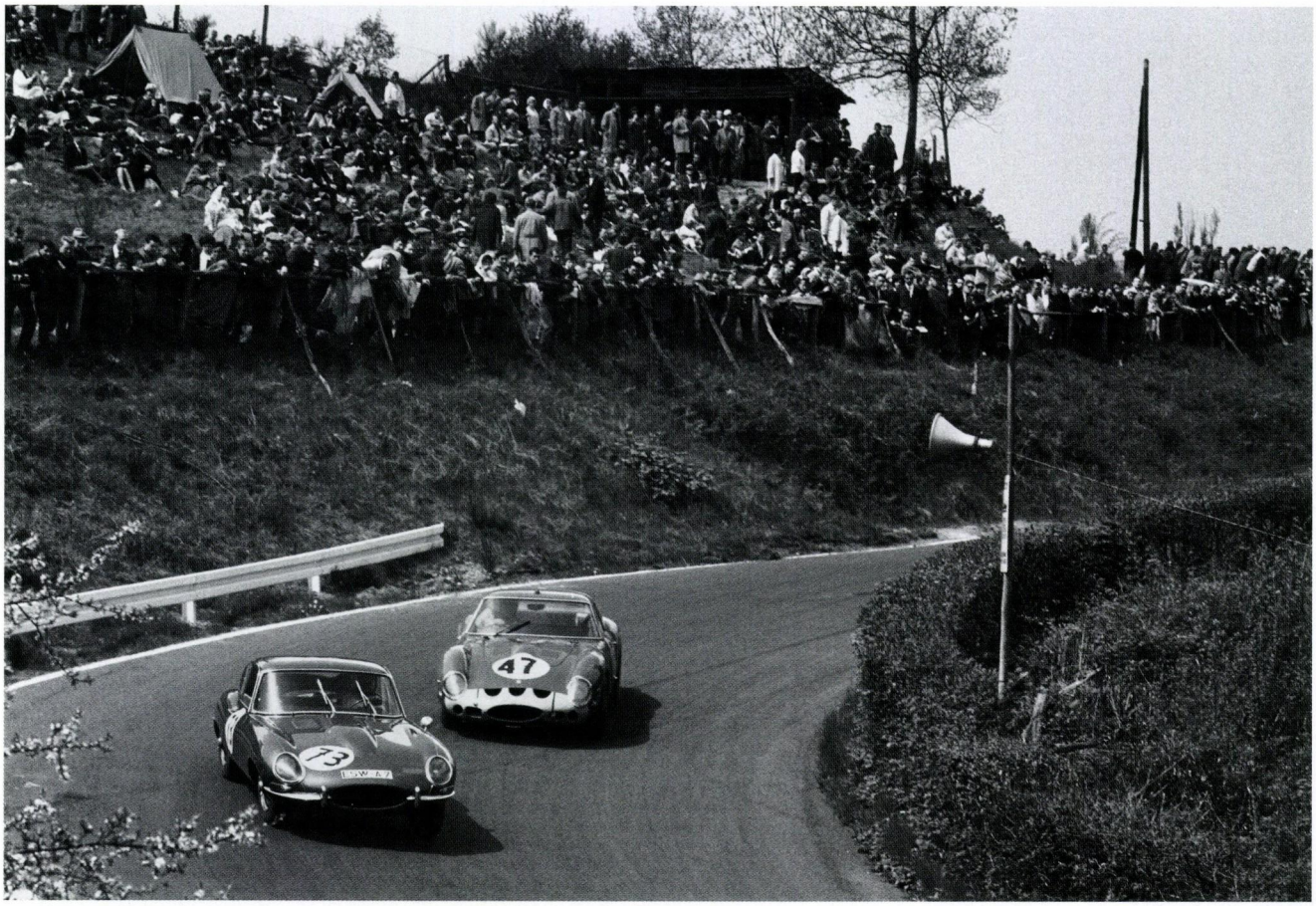
"This race was the beginning of the end of the farming."

David left home after relations with his father finally broke down. "Sad, really. Years later we met in Europe and he tried to repair the damage. But it was no good. My mother was proud of my racing, though." A mournful look replaces the usual steely glint in David's brown eyes.

All he had now was the Lotus, £25 and the promise from ▶

"Father joined up and got involved in all sorts of secret stuff to do with radar. I was sent to school and was useless at everything; I was only good for working on the farm. But that's where I discovered my love of machinery – and driving"





On the way to sixth place in the 1963 Nürburgring 1000Km, Piper's 250 GTO, co-driven by the USA's Ed Cantrell, menaces the Max Werner/Norm Olsen Jaguar E-type which finished 18th

Alfred 'Pa' Moss of a job on his farm.

"We didn't see much of Stirling, he was a big cheese by then. But his sister Pat kept her horses there and Alf Francis looked after the grey Maserati 250F that Stirling raced. One day Ken Gregory [Moss's manager] and Jack Brabham came by to look at the Maser. Jack stayed in my digs. Nobody knew him from a bar of soap. He was just a speedway racer from Australia."

A year later David bought a Lotus XI sports car from Chapman and went racing around Europe, sleeping rough in the straw bales that lined the tracks and getting by on the starting money. Another chance meeting, this time with dealer and racer Dan Margulies, led to a drive in the Targa Florio in the latter's C-type Jaguar.

"We drove it down, took the cattle boat to Palermo, and ended our race on three Dunlops and a Pirelli because we'd had a puncture. I remember Peter Collins roaring past going through Collesano, the megaphones of his Ferrari blaring. He gave me a cheery wave and a blast on the air-horns, and I thought to myself 'I must get a Ferrari one day'."

That wish still seemed very distant, though. Back home, David worked for Vauxhall Dealer Deliveries in Luton, ferrying cars to and from the docks, and for the Gas Board, delivering cookers in Harpenden.

"I was learning about being a private entrant," he laughs. "I traded up to a newer Lotus XI, and made my first visit to Le Mans [in 1958], as third driver to John Young and Maurice Charles in their D-type Jaguar. An early crash put them out – but I was hooked on that race."

More of Le Mans – David's nemesis – later. Less well known are his forays into single-seater racing. He ran his Lotus 16 in 1.5-litre F2 form in 1959, making his GP debut with it at Aintree – he retired with a blown head gasket – and finishing second in the F2 Flugplatzrennen at Zeltweg. But he was using 2.5 litres of Coventry Climax when he finished runner-up to Brabham's Cooper in the Lady Wigram Trophy in January 1960. That year he also used the 16 to finish 12th in the British GP at Silverstone.

But sports car racing throughout the 1960s was how and when David became one of the most prolific, successful and well-known privateer racers, mainly in a succession of unmistakeable bright green Ferraris.

"I'd always used Esso fuels and oils," he says. "But they pulled the plug after the Suez Crisis. So I switched to BP, who stayed with me for years. I never did like British Racing Green – a dull colour – so I painted everything in BP green."

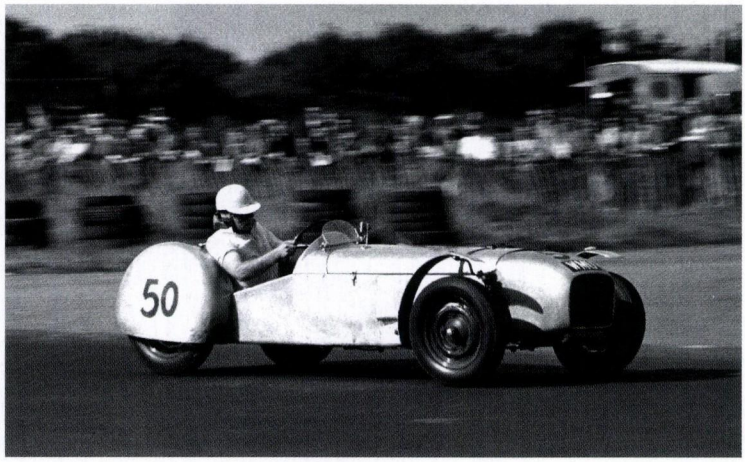
'Everything' included his first Ferrari, a 250GTO from Maranello Concessionaires. In 1962 he took it to the Tour de France to get a feel for the car. "We did five races and seven hillclimbs in a week. It was absolutely knackering. I survived on black coffees and Armagnacs. But it was worth it. We [he shared the car with Margulies] came home fourth, which, I heard later, impressed Mr Ferrari. We [this time he shared the car with local talent Bruce Johnstone] also went

to South Africa with the GTO and won the Kyalami Nine Hours [the first of five consecutive victories at that race]. That was the start of my love affair with the country. I still go to race there every year."

David's love of Ferraris led him to move to Modena in 1963, setting up a workshop and learning the language. By this time he was also in demand with some of the big players of sports car racing, sharing a NART-run Ferrari 250GTO LMB at Le Mans with Masten Gregory, finishing sixth, and a 250LM with Jochen Rindt the following year, when a failed oil seal caused them to become the race's first retirement. Ironically, Rindt and Gregory would team up in 1965 to win the race in a NART 250LM. "That really pissed me off," David laughs.

The Piper adventure, however, suffered a painful and abrupt interlude in 1970. While shooting for Steve McQueen's film *Le Mans*, David lost control of his Porsche 917 at Maison Blanche and crashed heavily. He was lucky to get out alive.

"We'd been filming on and off for months and going to races in the downtime. This day at Le Mans we went out in the afternoon, me leading Steve round for another sequence. The back end broke away as I turned-in for the apex. I hit the guard rail on the right, bounced across the track, hit the barrier on the left and was launched into the air. The car ▶



Above: Piper's Lotus MkVI at Castle Combe in 1955. Below: Piper and co-driver Brian Redman get ready for the 1970 Buenos Aires 1000Km. Their Porsche 917 led but was punted off by a Lola T70

"We did five races and seven hillclimbs in a week. It was knackering. I survived on black coffees and Armagnacs. But it was worth it"





broke in half when it landed. There was blood everywhere," he winces. "I was sitting in the back half – but my right foot had been trapped among the pedals. I was still conscious and I could move my toes, but it hurt like hell and I could see that my foot was in a bit of a mess."

McQueen summoned his private 'plane and had David flown to a hospital in Luton. But the senior surgeon David knew there was on holiday and so he was transferred to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in London.

"It was like a First World War establishment. Didn't fill me with confidence. And it was obvious that the French had not cleaned me up properly after the shunt. The medical team was three nuns and an ambulance, I recall. It hurt so much I got my mechanic Fax Dunn, who saved my bacon on many occasions, to remove the plaster with a hacksaw. The wound had gone septic. The surgeon seemed shocked, started cutting bits off and then said I'd have to have the leg off at the knee. But a doctor friend of mine advised saving the knee, so I took a risk and told the surgeon to go below it, gambling on there being no further septic damage.

"I thought my career was finished. It was a bad time. But Douglas Bader came to see me and dropped his trousers to show me his two false legs. That made me feel more positive. Steve McQueen came to see me a few times too, always on his bike. He used to cycle through the hospital, up and down the corridors. That gave us something to laugh about."

Piper and his Ferrari 250LM in the pits during the 1965 Tourist Trophy at Oulton Park – he was third behind Denny Hulme's Brabham BT8 and David Hobbs's Lola T70

As you might expect by now, David returned to the circuits – despite his comfortable early life, he'd become used to setbacks – and he expanded his own privateer team, exploiting the valuable collection – Porsche 917, Ferraris 250LM, 330P, 330P2, 330P4 and 365P, Matra MS650 and Ford F3L – he'd acquired over the years by hiring them out to an increasing number of wealthy drivers keen to have some serious fun. "Those cars have been my pension, my life insurance. I've never had life insurance," he says.

He was still driving them too, becoming the FIA *Champion d'Europe Historique* in 1990.

"I just got on with it. I couldn't heel-and-toe, but braking turned out to be the real problem. So I learnt to left-foot brake, and once I got the hang of that, it was much better."

This year will be David's 54th season of racing and he will share some of the drives with Richard Attwood, with whom he first co-drove in 1965.

"It's amazing, really," he says, patting his right leg and reaching for his pipe. "I've had a great life – and you haven't heard the half of it yet."

The other half, however, is full of anecdotes unsuitable for a family magazine such as this.

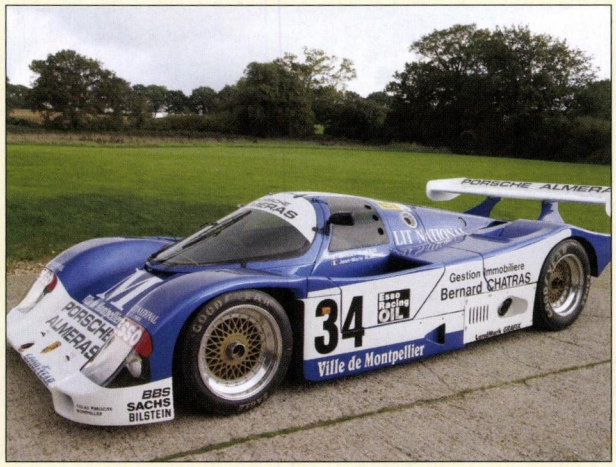
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Eric Sawyer

Racing beats rain

Beautiful cars and good racing shone through at Brands as dreadful weather failed to spoil an exciting new fixture on the historic racing calendar. **Paul Lawrence** reports

The British Bank Holiday weather did its best to wreck the Masters weekend on the Brands Hatch GP circuit, but some great cars and an encouraging crowd proved that the concept is most definitely right.

On track, Richard Meins scored his most significant single-seater victory to date, winning the sole Grand Prix Masters race in his ex-Emerson Fittipaldi McLaren M23. Sadly, the meeting's second race was lost to some truly shocking weather.

The weekend showcased the Masters Series, with the opening Group C/GTP races as welcome additions to the mix. Predictably, the clash with the Pau weekend and an already very crowded spell in the calendar didn't help grids, and the 16-strong F1 grid was not the best in Masters' history. But for the fans, the chance to see some famous cars from the heritage of Brands back in action on the grand prix circuit was a rare treat. As a debut event for Masters and Brands Hatch, there were many positives to build on.

Defying his limited single-seater experience, Meins showed that he has quickly adapted to F1 cars by fending off the similar car of Joaquin Folch in testing conditions. A mid-race safety car intervention gave Meins a real headache, as his lead over Folch was wiped out, but he kept his cool and rebuilt his lead over the Spanish nobleman, finishing a couple of seconds clear at the flag.

The John Bendall/ Bill Wykeham AC Cobra leads the similar car of Chris Chiles Sr/Paul Ingram which eventually moved ahead to win the Gentleman Drivers' GT race

On Monday, in even worse weather, the pack went out behind the safety car for a green flag lap, but event director Dave Scott elected to take the field into the pits and see if conditions improved. They didn't, and the race was later scrubbed, a decision readily accepted by the drivers.

Things weren't a lot better for the pair of Group C/GTP races that opened the season for the rejuvenated category. It proved a winning weekend for local drivers as Kentish men David Mercer and Andy Purdie took a win each. Mercer won well on Sunday in his Spice SE90C, but a mix-up over the pit stop times on Monday catapulted Purdie's Richard Lloyd Racing-built Porsche 962C into a big lead.

Justin Law (Jaguar XJR12) and Mark Sumpter (Porsche 962) ran well in contention on both days and Sumpter summed up the conditions on Monday: "The heavens really opened and we ran behind the safety car for a while. Then we had another five minutes of racing in torrential rain and eventually they red-flagged the race."

Graeme Dodd was the star of the 40-minute Top Hat Touring Car race, after a late call for him to race his Ford ▶

ANDREW FRANKEL ON U2TC

Grown-up fun in an Alfa GTA

I was lucky enough to do three races at Brands but the one that stands out was the U2TC 50-minute event, the penultimate race on the card. The acronym stands for Under 2-litre Touring Cars, which meant a grid full of Lotus Cortinas, Minis, Alfas and little BMWs.

For spectators and drivers alike, the appeal was clear: close racing among similar cars. Earlier in the day I'd taken part in the Top Hat Masters Saloon car race in the same Alfa Romeo GTA and there was no doubt that, for all the fun there was to be had, not to mention the rare privilege of racing on the Grand Prix circuit, you did need to be constantly on the look-out for flying Falcons and Mustangs which, with something like three times the power but clearly inferior brakes and grip, would come flying past on the straights, dive in front of you, slam on the brakes long before you'd planned and then hold you up through the next corner before disappearing off into the distance.

U2TC was devised by Carol Spagg so that people with interesting European touring cars would have somewhere to race without being blown off the track by a tidal wave of American horsepower. And, despite the awful weather, it worked wonderfully well.

On paper the weather clearly favoured the ultra-lightweight Mini contingent with their front-wheel drive configuration, but in qualifying they were kept from the front row by the TiSA BMW of Jackie Oliver and the pole-sitting Alfa Romeo GTA of Dieter-Karl Anton.

If anything conditions were even worse before the start, bad enough for at least one team to think better of it and not even line up on the grid.

But once things were underway it turned into a hugely enjoyable occasion. Although the rain was bad, the track was actually in quite good condition, better by far than in qualifying thanks to having been washed clean by two days of near-enough torrential downpours. Better was the standard of driving which was close enough to rate as seriously grown-up entertainment, without ever degenerating into rash stupidity. You have to put a lot of trust in those around you when the weather is that bad, and no one I came across put a foot wrong.

And I also had the honour of being lapped by Oliver. I should have been ashamed that the combination of me and the 1600 GTA could not keep an entire lap of the Brands GP circuit between us and his 1800 BMW in a 25-minute stint, but such was the pleasure in watching it come past, balanced in a perfect, slightly tail-out drift all the way through Hawthorns, it became one of few times I found myself glad to be lapped.

The U2TC series is now heading for Dijon, Spa, Zandvoort and Paul Ricard for the rest of the season, and I wish it all the very best in all its endeavours. The cars may not be powerful, but they are beautiful, fast and fun to watch and drive.

Mini vs BMW battles are all part of the fun in Under 2-litre Touring Cars. Here the Padmores' Austin Cooper S runs side-by-side with the Oliver/Shaw 1800 TiSA



Jeff Bloxham



Charlie Wooding



Charlie Wooding

Top: launch time for the Top Hat Masters' grid. Above: Richard Meins won the Grand Prix Masters race in his ex-Fittipaldi M23. Right: Wayne Park took an impressive World Sportscar Masters double. Below right: Andy Purdie was one of two Group C winners in the RLR Porsche 962C

Mustang solo rather than hand over to son James. "I decided it was best to keep him in it," explained James, who had done very few laps in the wet. However, a mid-race safety car period closed things up and Dodd had to work hard to fend off Leo Voyazides (Ford Falcon) at the restart.

Behind the Falcon, which Voyazides shared with Jason Minshaw, Simon Garrad flew his Lotus Cortina to third, while a fine fourth was the Wolseley Hornet of Norman Grimshaw/Nick Swift. Freshly prepared in homage to the period Hornet of Alec Poole, the car is the latest giant-killer to emerge from Grimshaw's Cheshire workshop.

Another starring performance came from Simon Hadfield and Hamish Somerville in the Sports Racing Masters race. Hadfield missed qualifying as he was busy at Pau, but he flew back overnight to start Monday's race from the back of the grid in the David Clark-owned Elva Mk8.

Hadfield worked through to take the lead just as Julian Bronson pitted his McLaren M1B and China-based Canadian Somerville did the rest. "Hamish took it over and just flew," said Hadfield. Danny Wright briefly squeezed Philip Walker's Cooper Monaco ahead after a safety car period, but Somerville quickly re-asserted himself.

Having left his country's drought behind, Australian Wayne Park wasn't fazed by the rain as he scored a hugely impressive World Sportscar Masters double in his Lola T70 Mk3B. Donington WSM winner Leo Voyazides retired his Lola T280 with clutch problems, and Sean Walker chased Park home in the opening race in his Chevron B16.

On Monday, Park was coming under pressure from the T70 Mk3B of Stefano Rosina until the Italian spoilt his chances with a time-consuming trip through the gravel trap at Druids. He still recovered to take second place before Chris Chiles Junior arrived in his Chevron B8.

While Chiles Junior was shining in the Chevron, his father – Chris Senior – partnered Paul Ingram to a commanding Gentleman Drivers' victory in their AC Cobra. Freshly prepared for the 2007 season from a road car, the Chiles/Ingram Cobra out-paced the similar car of Bill Wykeham/John Bendall, while a stirring performance from the Chris Clarkson/Ted Williams Austin Healey 3000 prevented a Cobra lock-out of the podium at the end of 90 minutes.

After a catalogue of car problems, it all came right for Richard Shaw and Jackie Oliver in the U2TC touring car race. Their BMW 1800TiSA saw off the challenge of the Minis, which revelled in the slippery track conditions. After 24 laps, the Cooper S of Graham Churchill/Peter Baldwin just beat the similar car of Ian Cox/Allen Tice to second.

A disappointing field of 1950s cars wrapped up the weekend: Nigel Webb's Jaguar XK120 shook off a determined challenge from Rod Adlington's Austin A35.

RESULTS

World Sportscar Masters
Race one
1 Park
Lola T70 Mk3B
2 Walker
Chevron B16
3 Meins
Lola T70 Mk3B

Race two
1 Park
Lola T70 Mk3B
2 Rosina
Lola T70 Mk3B
3 Chiles Jr
Chevron B8

Group C Sportscars
Race one
1 Mercer
Spice SE 90C
2 Law
Jaguar XJR12
3 Sumpter
Porsche 962C

Race two
1 Purdie
RLR Porsche 962C
2 Pearson
Jaguar XJR11
3 Sumpter
Porsche 962C

Grand Prix Masters
1 Meins
McLaren M23
2 Folch
McLaren M23
3 Perkins
Fittipaldi F5A

Sports Racing Masters
1 Somerville/Hadfield
Elva MK8
2 Walker/Wright
Cooper Monaco
3 Clarkson/Williams
Lotus 23

Top Hat Masters
1 Dodd
Ford Mustang
2 Minshaw/Voyazides
Ford Falcon
3 Garrad
Ford Lotus Cortina

Top Hat 1950s
1 Webb
Jaguar XK120
2 Adlington
Austin A35
3 Wrigley
Austin A35

Gentleman Drivers
1 Chiles/Ingram
AC Cobra
2 Wykeham/Bendall
AC Cobra
3 Clarkson/Williams
Austin Healey 3000

U2TC
1 Shaw/Oliver
BMW 1800 TiSA
2 Churchill/Baldwin
Austin Cooper S
3 Cox/Tice
Austin Cooper S



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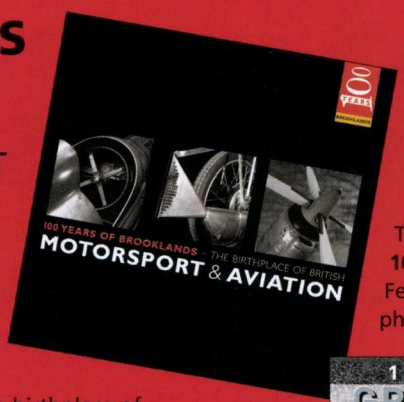
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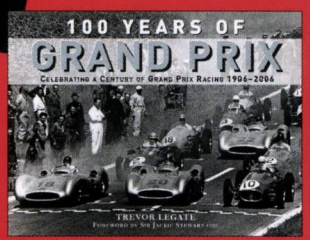


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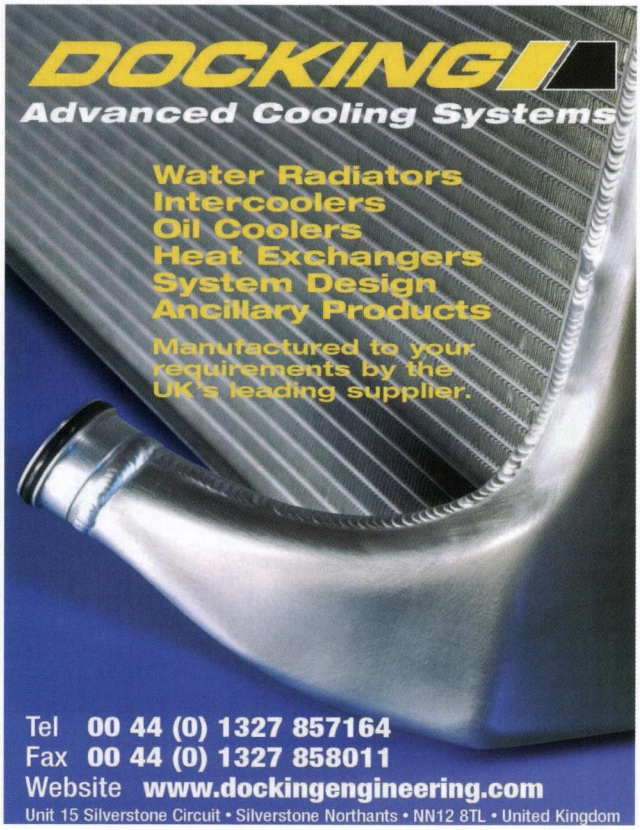
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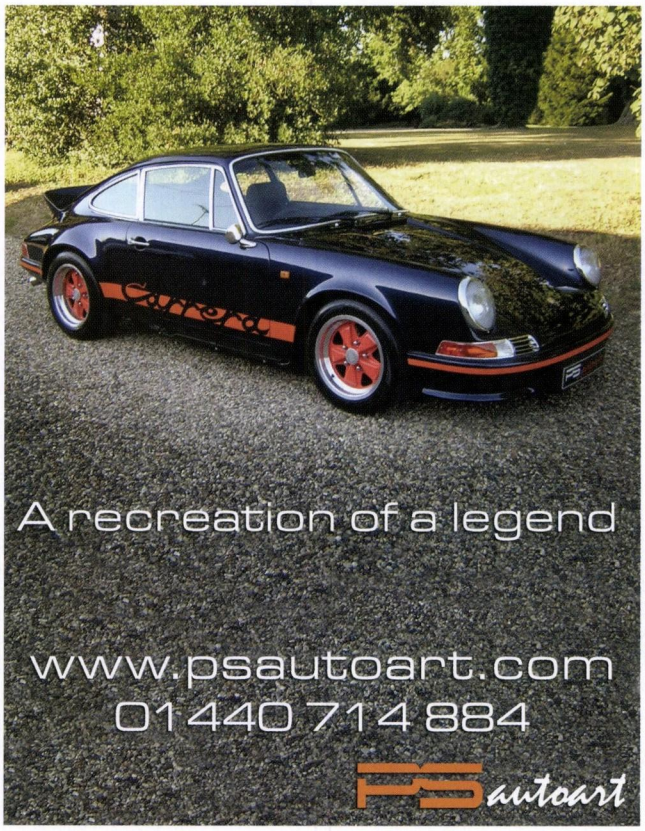
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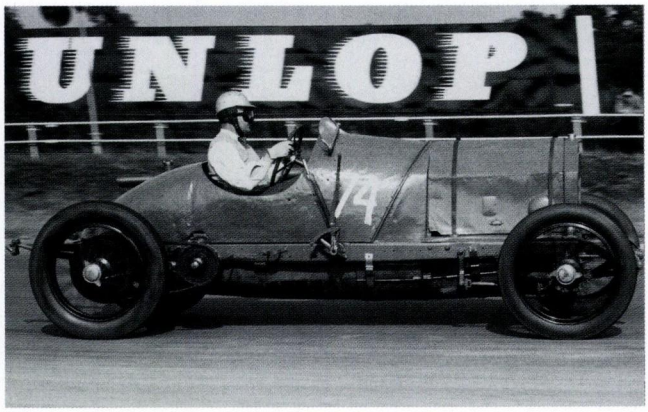
One of our Fiats is missing

Fiat built a pair of 10-litre racers for the abandoned 1909 French Grand Prix. One raced later at Brooklands – but where is it now?

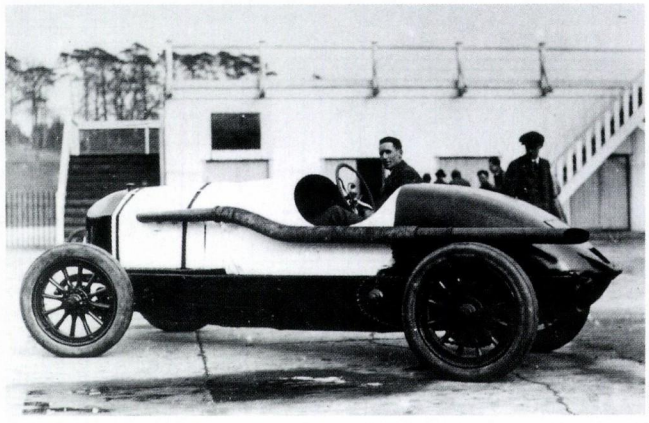
When I visited Fiat's Centro Historico Museum in Turin in 1967, it was full of accurate scale models of the company's products – locomotives, rolling stock, tractors, and ships, etc, because it would have been impossible even in the enormous hall to display all of Fiat's productions. But there were full-sized exhibits too, including cars such as Ernest Eldrige's famous aero-engined 'Mephistopheles' and the S61 Fiat which gave John Cobb, ex-Etonian fur-broker with a mansion in Esher, close to Brooklands, his apprenticeship to motor racing which was to lead to the ultimate lap-record there of 143.44mph and the official fastest time of 151.97mph in 1935.

These Fiats occupied 16 pages in my book *Brooklands Giants* (2006, Haynes). The S61 had a standard chain-drive chassis but the engine is a 10-litre OHC racing concept, as Kent Karslake detailed in an appendix in the same book. This type of Fiat was apparently intended for the abandoned 1909 French GP.

Owned by Sir Frederick Richmond of Debenhams, John Duff found it in 1920 and began racing it at Brooklands after being fastest at the Westcliffe speed trials and making fastest time of the day at Fanoe in Denmark. Subsequent owners were wine importer Philip Rampon, Ernest Eldridge until he became too busy with the Land Speed Record Fiat 'Mephistopheles', and petrol representative Roland Warde, who used to tow the Fiat from Sunbury-on-Thames to Brooklands behind his Chrysler. He shared it with John Cobb during 1926, the latter acquiring the car a year later.



LAT



NMM

Above: Dr Pinkerton tackles Copse in the Fiat S61 during a VSCC meeting at Silverstone in 1956. Below: John Duff in the S61 at Brooklands in the 1920s

Cobb continued to race the S61 up to 1929, after which the BARC's ban on the older cars racing stopped its remarkable career at Brooklands of 10 wins, nine seconds and 13 third places, and a last effort by Warde with a Class A five-kilometre record of 104.10mph. Of these, Cobb contributed four wins and two second places while also driving other cars, and it was he who set the old Fiat's fastest lap of Brooklands Track, of 110.68mph, when its engine was giving 120bhp at 1650rpm.

It all appeared to be over in 1926 when the engine blew up, but Warde encountered Lord Cunliffe's touring S61 Fiat delivering the Government newspapers during the General Strike and afterwards acquired its 1911 engine.

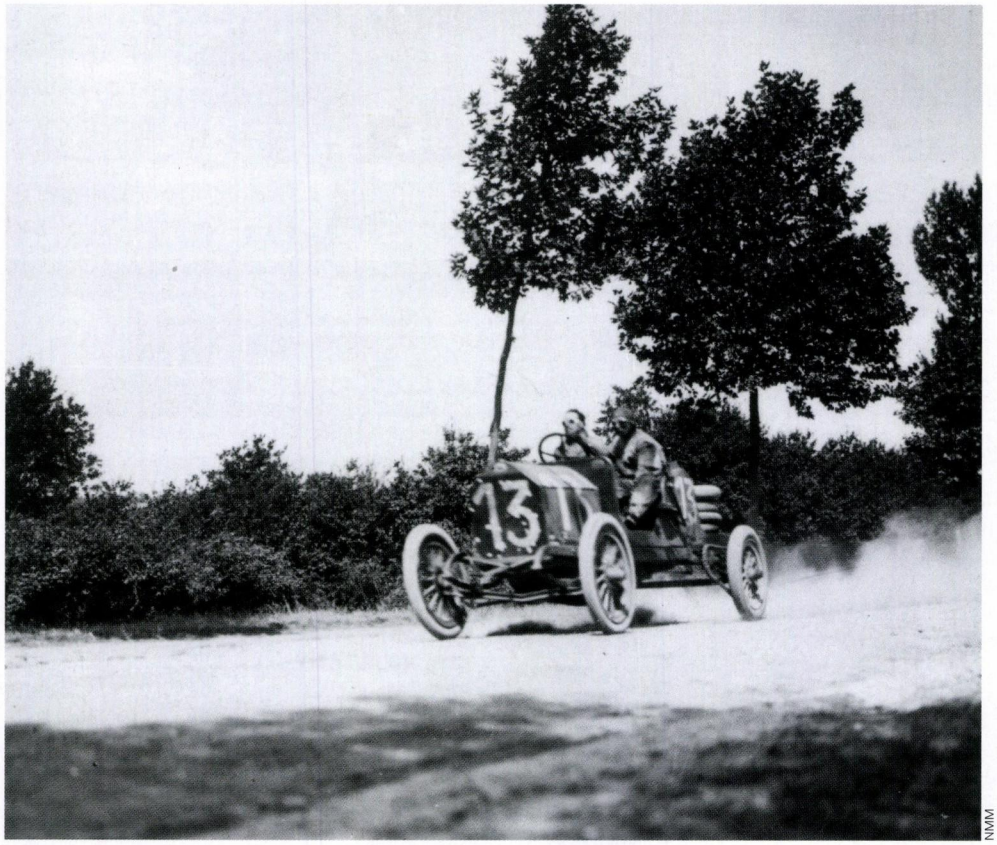
When I visited the museum, after writing about the Fiat and Lancia factories, the then curator was surprised when I recognised the tandem V24 AS6 engine from the Macchi MC72 seaplane which took the Air Speed Record to 440.6mph in 1931, and said if I turned round I could see this aircraft in action.

I thought he was joking, but he had set off a film in which the pilot Francesco Agello, an immediate national hero on landing, nevertheless had to climb onto a float and get wet to ensure that the seaplane did not porpoise in the sea's wash, until the rescue launch got him!

I was allowed to hold a splendid model of a sports Fiat Balilla, about two feet long, in which everything worked including the direction indicators, and there was a far smaller model of a railway Pullman carriage of which I was told that, had we had water available and had poured some of it into the diminutive cistern, the minute lavatory would flush correctly, and apparently each model had to follow so closely the drawings lent to its maker that when the Fiat directors discovered from a photo enlargement that its tiny door handles were fractionally too large they sent the model back for rectification.

Fiat's chief engineer praised the Issigonis Mini but said Fiat had earlier built a small car with a transverse engine. When the S61 racing car's Track days were over it was left for sale at Thomson & Taylor's. There were no offers, so Ken Taylor asked Brian Pickford, who raced his motorcycle at BMCRC meetings with support from his sister, to take it away, which he did for £6. The engine was found to have a cracked head and the car languished for some time at Pickford's Runfold place.

The VSCC had started its Edwardian class by this time and Anthony Heal and others were anxious to find exciting racing



Victor Hémery, driving a Fiat S61, stirs up a dustcloud on his way to victory in the 1911 Grand Prix de France at Le Mans

cars with which to compete. So Heal, whose father owned the well-known and prestigious shop in London's Tottenham Court Road, collected the S61 with one of its furniture vans and took it to Slade's Garage in Penn, Buckinghamshire. The subsequent FTD successes in VSCC events are too long to describe in detail but their total equalled the Brooklands' victories.

The Fiat was the fastest Edwardian racing car in these VSCC events, with the possible exception of the 1912 Lorraine-Dietrich known as 'Vieux Charles Trois' by a narrow margin. After WW2 in 1946 the car took Heal and his bride to their wedding, the engine left ticking over outside the Register Office.

In the Brighton Speed Trials, at Shelsley Walsh, Prescott, Lewes, Crystal Palace and Poole (where in the wet it beat an ERA, an Alta and a Bugatti), the Fiat ran at so many of these events, more than once, with equal success, and Cecil Clutton also drove it.

The next owners were Dr Pinkerton who ran it in VSCC events, and for whom Frank Lockhart's garage maintained it, and VCC member Arthur James.

The S61's cylinder blocks had been porous from Duff's days, and he used to postpone filling the radiator until on a race starting-line, and also dousing the wooden wheels (wire wheels were fitted later). This did not always work, and the sparking plugs might or might not get wet!

Heal adopted this precaution but James decided that new blocks were due, which he had cast, but could not machine. Fiat in Turin took over, saying they would get the machining done if James would leave the car to them in his will. But when he went to collect the car apparently nothing had been done and I have heard that after his death the S61 was relegated to the museum cellar. 'Mephistopheles' came to Lord March's Goodwood Festival of Speed but there was no sign of the historic and notably successful S61, although it could surely have been run up the hillclimb course if treated to Duff and Heal's method of ignoring those leaking cylinder blocks.

I have since tried to establish whether the S61 is still in the Centro Historico and Fiat's Press Officer agreed to enquire, but so far I have heard nothing. I just hope this famous Fiat will not be destroyed.

RUMBLINGS

In connection with the Brooklands Centenary a third book, *The Brooklands Centenary Yearbook 1907* has been published by the Brooklands Museum Trust, a reminder that not only Mercedes-Benz but also Stratstone of Mayfair, the Gallaher Group plc, Tesco, Sony, Luxfords of Weybridge and Procter & Gamble occupy the Track site.

A new Brooklands Club with the right to use the former BARC badge has appeared to join the long-established Brooklands Society, which I started long ago before the commercial value of the place became apparent!

The *Daily Mail* and Tindle newspapers, organisers of the London-Brighton Run for veteran cars on November 4, have already received over 250 entries, 20 of which are other than those in the record 2004 entry and six of which are thought not to have previously appeared in the Run, all pre-1905 I hope. They aim for a record 500; late entries (after July 31st) cost £75. The Concours for 115 veterans (vehicles – not necessarily people) is to take place in Berkeley Square on the Saturday, with rides for the public. More details are available from Jeff Carter, Motion Works, Silverstone Innovation Centre, Silverstone Circuit. Tel: 01327 856024.

The re-enactment of the 1902 177-mile Raid Figueira da Foz to Lisboa for pre-1930 cars takes place from October 19-21.

CAREFREE LAPPERY

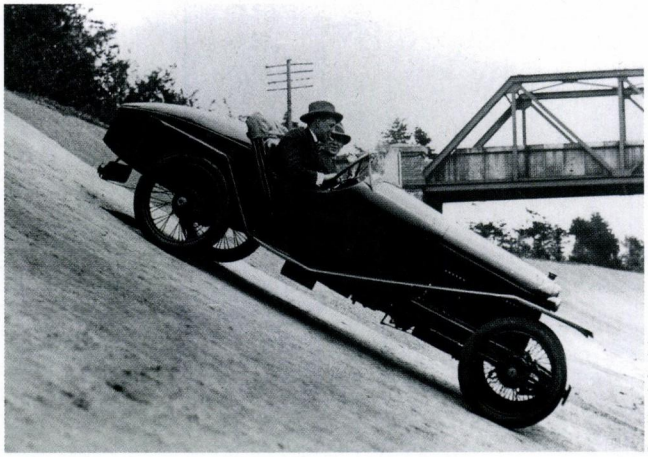
For ten bob you could lap Brooklands in the '20s. Safety was not a concern

Memories of Brooklands will continue throughout this centenary year. I wonder how many remember the freedom there. For instance, on non-race days, if no record attacks were taking place, anyone could take a car round the Track for 10/-.

In 1927, when I was 14, my mother and her sister thought it would be nice to go for a country car-ride on a July Saturday. So they hired a white Armstrong-Siddeley 14. I suggested the Weybridge area and, on arrival there, that we go round the Track. The young chauffeur was willing, so we paid the fee – I cannot recall any form of indemnity being signed. This unsuitable car soon developed a puncture, so as instructed we drew into the Railway Straight bay and, while it was being repaired, I got out and with my vest-pocket Kodak took photographs of the cars racing past. Wonderful freedom.

Or what about the day when I persuaded a friend who owned a Cotton-Blackburne motorcycle to do more Brooklands' lappery? We shared the five bob, but I was told I could not ride pillion – the only safety stipulation. So I had to watch. He came in saying the 'bike's forks needed adjusting and bounced it up and down to test them, and the front wheel fell out! He could so easily have been killed. That afternoon ended when they wanted to close the Track and sent out the BARC's yellow and black 1931 Austin 7 to patrol it. My friend thought they were having a race with him and speeded up. They came to me asking me to stop him; I said I needed to go home but he thought my signals implied that I was enjoying watching him.

Carefree indeed, but wise? I wonder whether they counted the number of cars and 'bikes at the end of the day, in case some had gone unseen into the ditch.



Brooklands Society

On non-race days the banking was used for many things, such as driving tests and parking



CYCLECAR COOPERATION

It was an excellent idea of Mike Hallows, Ian Patton and Bob Jones to organise a private rally for cyclecars, which they see as an endangered species, with the generous cooperation of Sir John Venables-Llewelyn and Lady Carolyn who made their Llysdinam estate available.

The event had an entry of 27 cyclecars, from an AC Sociable and the essential Bedelia and Tamplin to rare devices like a Graham-White and a CID, Twombley, Rollo, MV Bambino, and the Morgans, GNs, Bleriot-Whippet, and propeller-driven Leyat etc, plus the near-cyclecars like the Peugeot Quadrilette and two 1914 Humberettes.

The two-day frolic included a hillclimb up the Llysdinam drive and the Souvenir Programme included a full report of the first cyclecar run of 1912 from ***The Cyclecar***, which ended with a lobster supper, repeated in the 2007 event. Colour pictures of most entrants recall previous such events which included the ascent of the public road hill at Old Wyche in 1999, etc. It is hoped to repeat this jolly in 2009.

RUMBLINGS

International Alvis Day at Wimpole Hall near Cambridge is on July 7-8, when racing cars from 1923 to 1937 will be displayed. The Singer Owners' Club and the Hillman Club will have their rallies in Coventry from July 13-15 with a gathering of these and Rootes cars in Coombe Park, Coventry, on the Sunday and parades on all three days through the town.

Full results of the 2006 sprint events at Curborough are contained in the club's yearbook. The Secretary is David Pattison, 19 Noddington Lane, Whittington, Lichfield, Staffs, WS14 0PA. This year's events at the popular course continue up to October 14.

The Inter-Register competitions for less active clubs in competition, which *Motor Sport* suggested, are the Humber Register Navigation Rally on July 15, the STD Register's driving tests on July 29, the Crossley Register's Treasure Hunt on September 30, the Riley Register's Navigation Rally on October 21 and the Austin Ten Club's Nightjar event on November 17. Details from Stephen Weld on 01765 658569.

For many years I have answered readers' queries to the best of my ability. May I now indulge you in trying to answer one of my own? In *The Wind in the Willows*, Mr Toad alarms people with his fast driving in his monster motor car. Did author Kenneth Grahame base this on ownership of his own exciting car? Is there an autobiography that would perhaps answer this query?

THE ORIGINAL MOTOR RACING MAGAZINE

MOTOR SPORT

SINCE 1924

Print Collection No. 4

Parting Shot

We have chosen four stunning photographs that you can purchase as high-quality prints.

This month's images from the LAT Archive all feature sports car and single-seater racers. The prints are available in sizes to fit standard frames with a white border and caption to fit a 50 x 40cm (20 x 16in) frame. Each print measures 50 x 40cm (20 x 16in) with an image area of 40 x 30cm (16 x 12in) and costs £30 plus £5 p&p in the UK; overseas postage is £10.

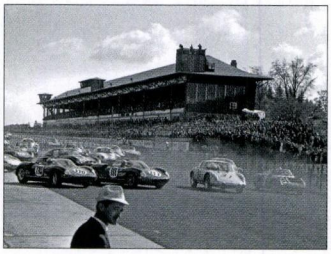
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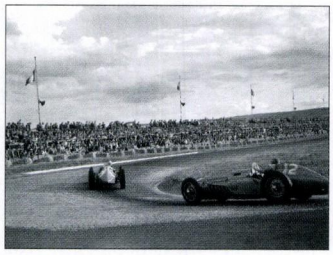


Brian Muir tries to dig the Ford GT40 he shared with Jackie Oliver out of the sand Le Mans 1968

14



15



16



13 From the July 2007 issue, Brian Muir tries to dig the Ford GT40 he shared with Jackie Oliver out of the sand during the 1968 Le Mans 24 Hours. 14 From the June 2007 issue, Nürburgring 1963, Porsche and Ferrari at the start, with John Surtees in car 110 eventually winning the race. 15 From the April 2007 issue, the Lago-Talbot of Louis Chiron leads the 1949 Grand Prix de France. 16 From the February 2007 issue, Denny Hulme's McLaren comes up to lap Silvio Moser's Brabham at Brands Hatch in 1968.

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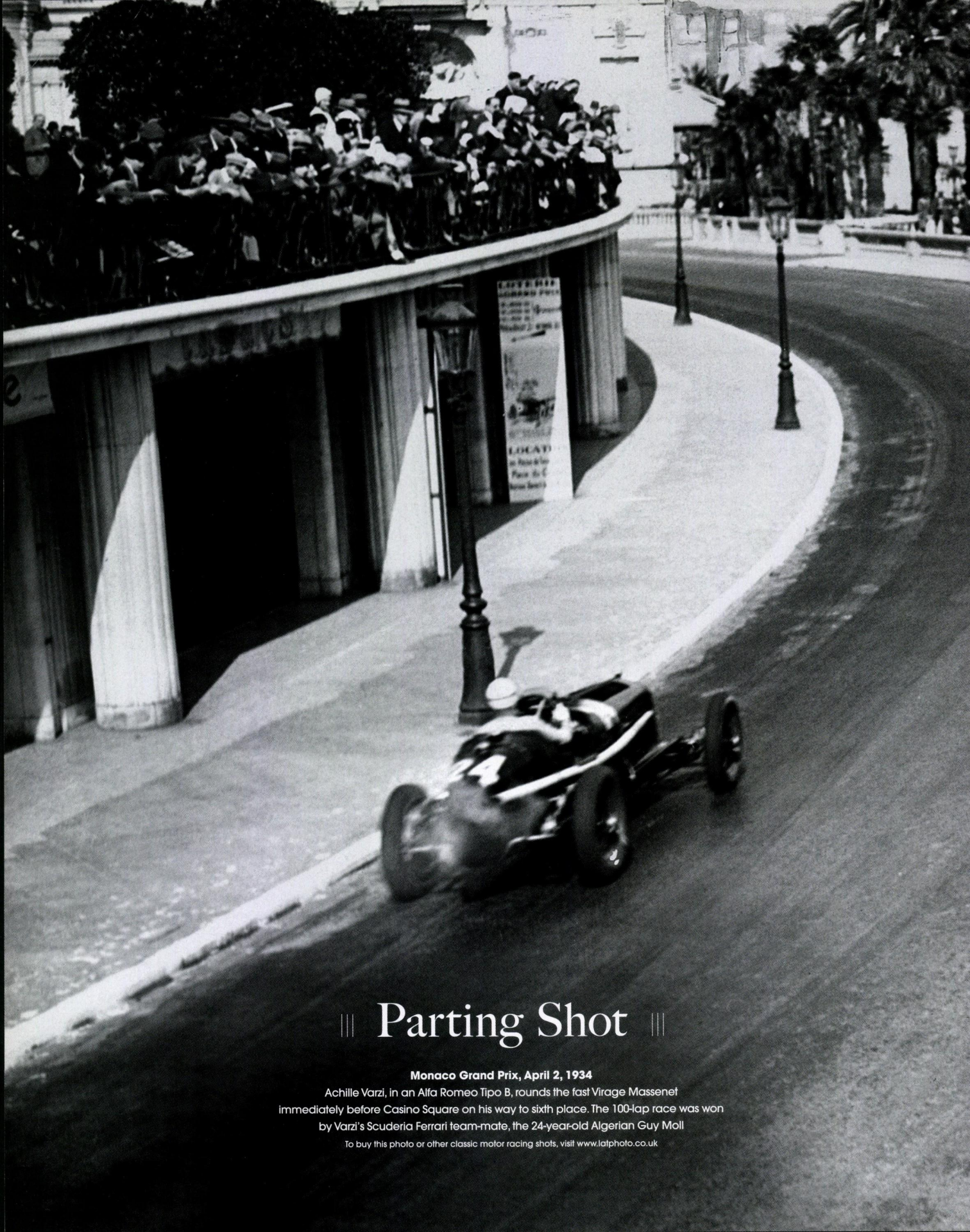
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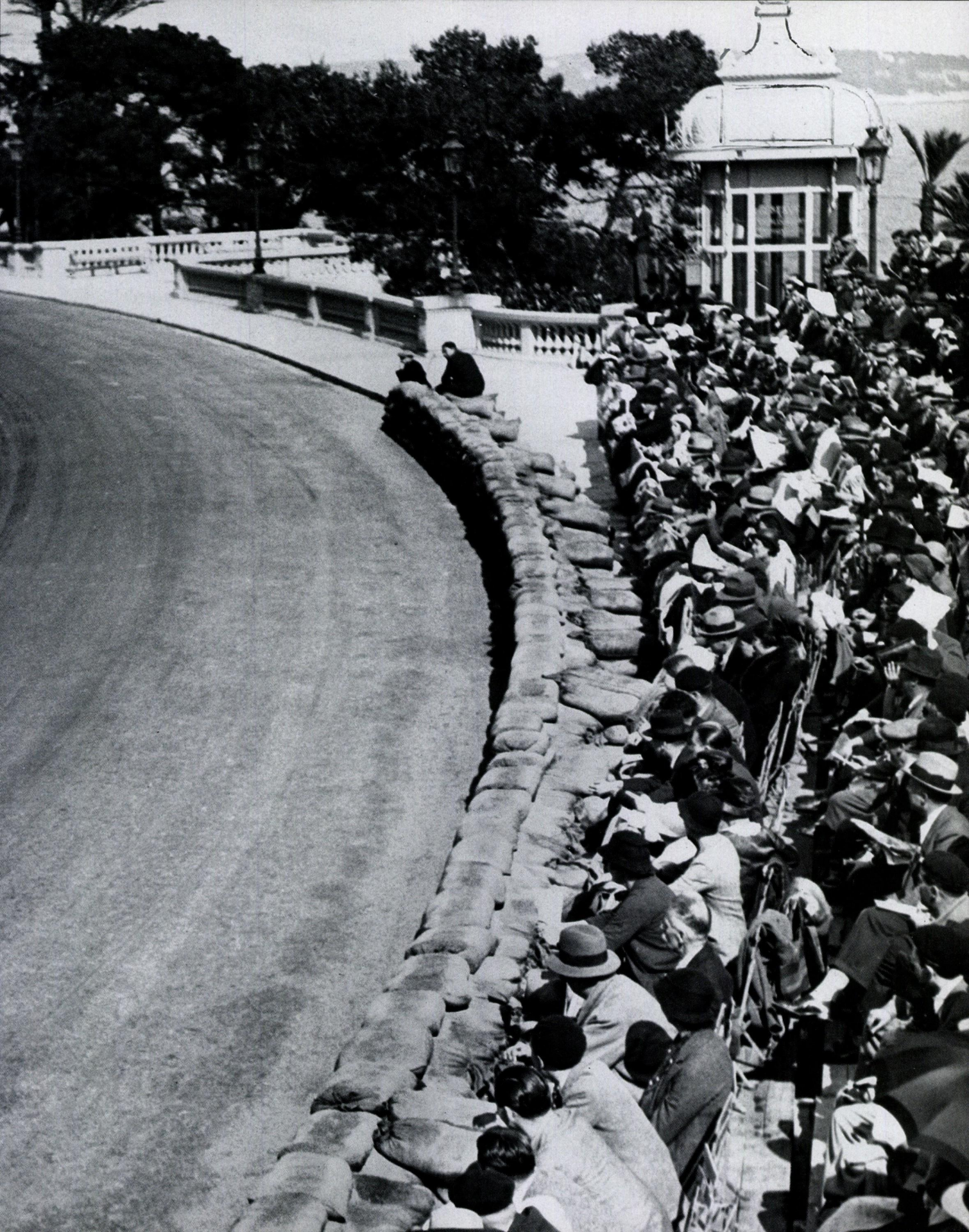


Parting Shot

Monaco Grand Prix, April 2, 1934

Achille Varzi, in an Alfa Romeo Tipo B, rounds the fast Virage Massenet immediately before Casino Square on his way to sixth place. The 100-lap race was won by Varzi's Scuderia Ferrari team-mate, the 24-year-old Algerian Guy Moll

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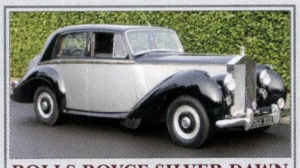
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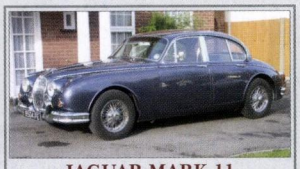
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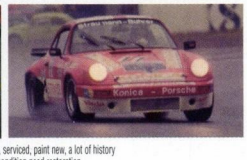


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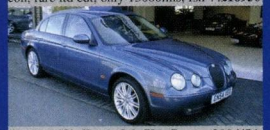
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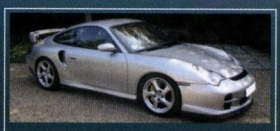




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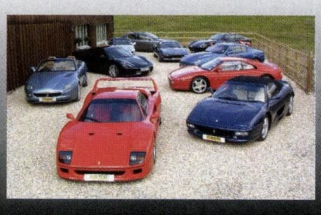
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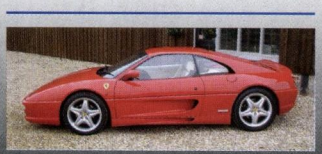
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  Fully sorted and ready to race. (s/n: 015)
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- 1969 Lamborghini Miura S
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- 1971 Lamborghini Miura SV
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- 1973 Porsche 911RS 2.7
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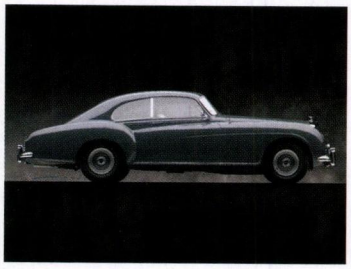
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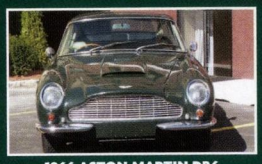

1954 LANCIA AURELIA B20 GT 2500 46.000 GBP

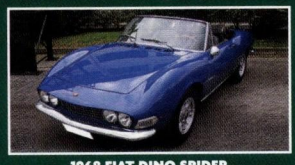

1959 ALFA ROMEO 2000 SPIDER 23.000 GBP

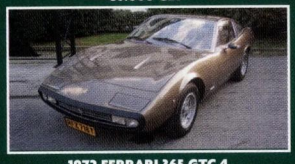

1959 ALFA ROMEO GIULIETTA SPIDER 21.000 GBP

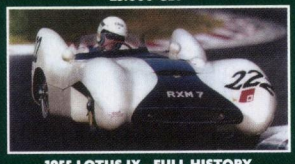
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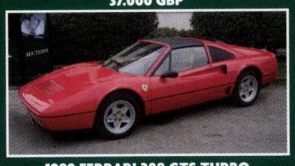

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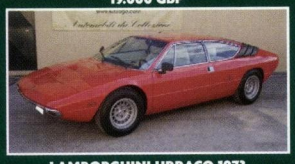

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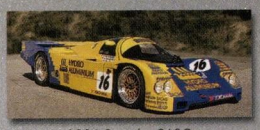

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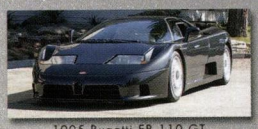

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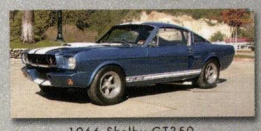

1986 Porsche 962C

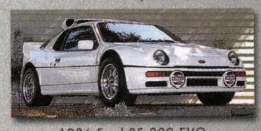

1959 Birdcage Maserati

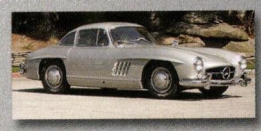

1995 Bugatti EB 110 GT


1981 Porsche 935 "Moby Dick"


1965 Iso Rivolta Daytona


1966 Shelby GT350


1986 Ford RS 200 EVO


1955 300SL Gullwing

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2006 "Canepa Design" Escalade ESV
2006 "Canepa Design" Hummer H2
2005 "Canepa Design" Hummer H2
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1988 Porsche "Canepa Design" 959
1989 Porsche 911 Speedster
1989 Porsche Club Sport
1995 Bugatti EB 110 GT
2001 Porsche GT2
2006 AMG/Mercedes Benz CLK DTM

Race Cars
1959 Birdcage Maserati
1965 Iso Rivolta Daytona
1966 Shelby GT350
1966 Mustang BP Race Car
1967 Porsche 910
1967 Ginetta G12
1976 Brad Frisselle, Datsun 240Z
1977 Porsche RSR
1977 JPL IMSA Greenwood Corvette
1978 BMW 320 Turbo
1980 Porsche 935 K3
1982 Porsche 935, Bob Akin
1989 Pontiac NASCAR Winston Cup
1992 Nissan GTP ZX Turbo

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1957 Chevy Belair Fuel Inject
1958 Porsche Speedster
1959 Pontiac Bonneville
1962 Chevy Biscayne
1968 Ford Shelby Mustang GT500 KR
1967 427 Corvette Coupe
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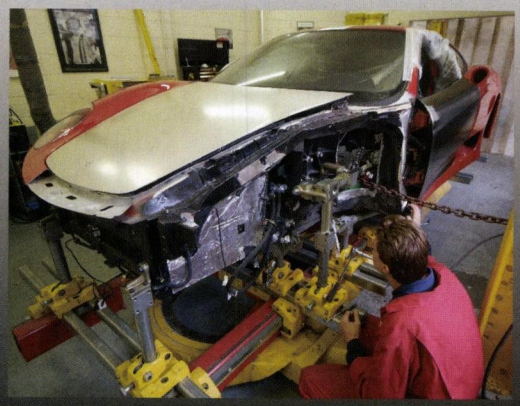
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1964 Genie MK8/10 Sports Racing Car
1968 Glass 1600 GT Coupe
1964 Iso Grifo A3C Corsa Competition



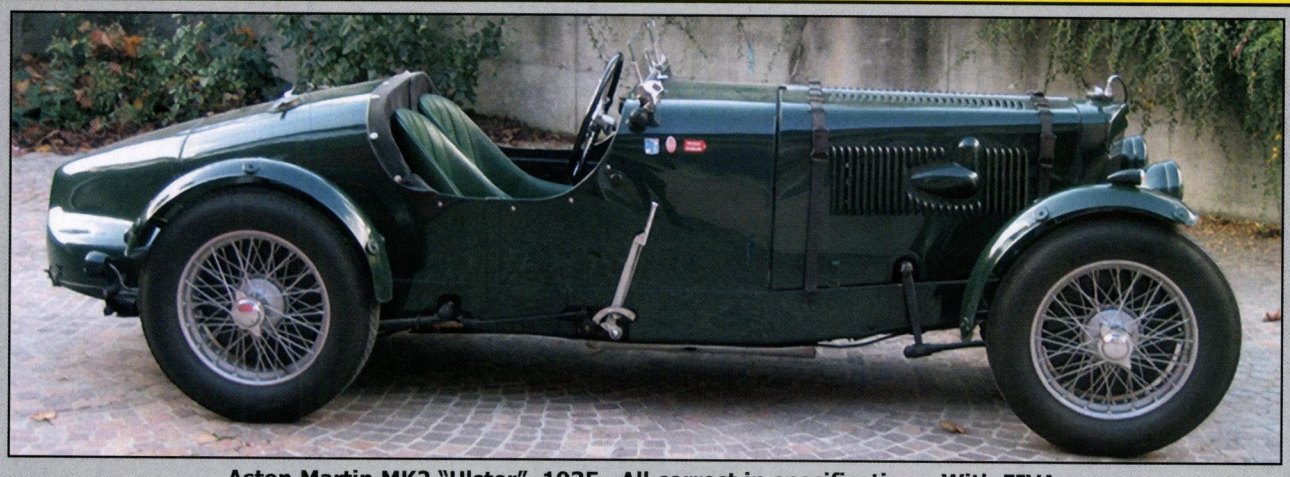
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Aston Martin MK2 "Ulster", 1935. All correct in specifications. With FIVA.

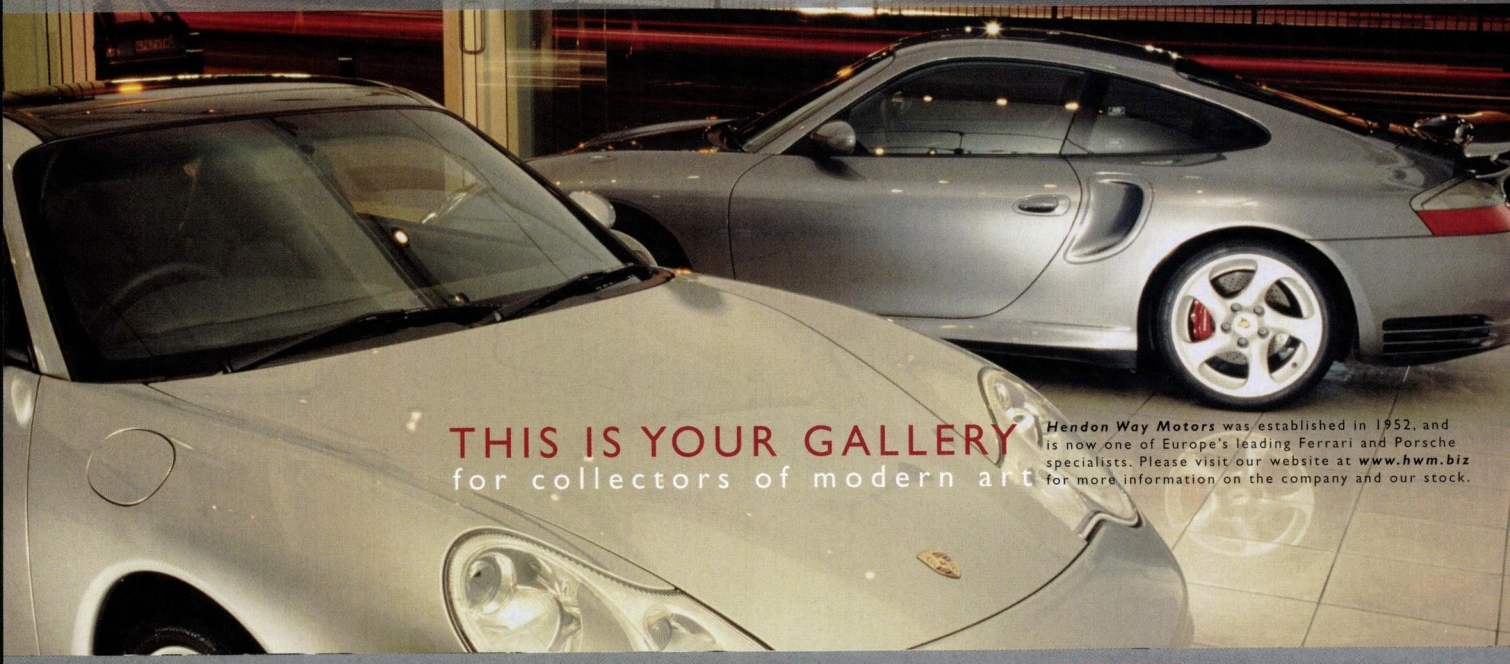
Alfa Romeo 2000 GTAm, 1973.
Abarth Simca 2000.
AC Bristol Competition, 1957
Bandini 1000 Barchetta, 1965.
Bentley Derby Special, 1937.
Bristol Frazer Nash Rep Rep
Cisitalia 204A Spyder.
Ferrari F40 Competition, 1993.
Ford RS200, 1986.
Jaguar 3.8 MK2, 1961.
Jensen 541-S, 1962.
Minerva AKS Liberty, 1930.
Maserati Mistral 4.0 Ltr. 1966.
Porsche 356A Roadster D, 59.
Porsche 356B Roadster,1960.
Porsche 914/6 Group-4, 1970
Riley Kestrel 12/4 6-light, 1937.
Renault 5 Maxi Turbo II.

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1995 PORSCHE 993 TURBO 4 MIDNIGHT BLUE 39,000 MLS
Grey Leather, Sunroof, 18" alloys, Computer, Sport seats

1997 PORSCHE 993 C4 S MIDNIGHT BLUE 42,000 MLS
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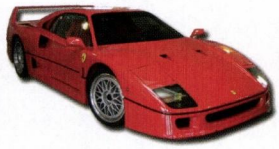
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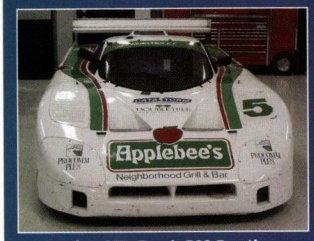
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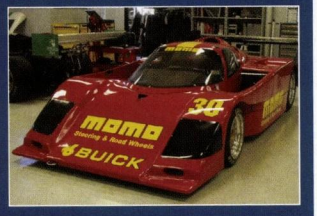
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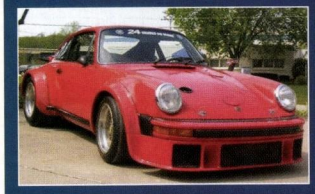
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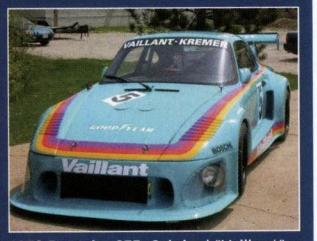
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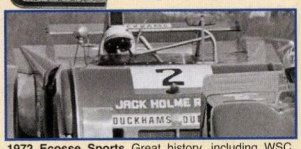


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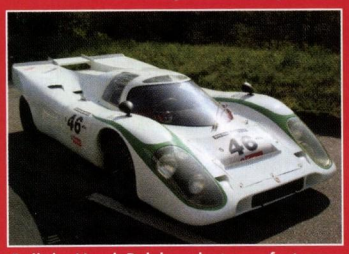
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Porsche 917 K (#917 037)



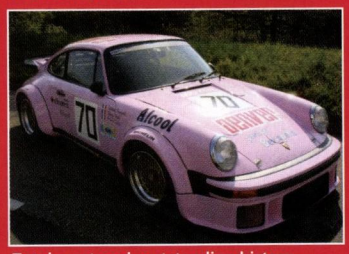
Built by Vasek Polak on last new factory spare frame.
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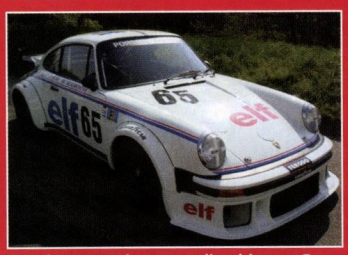
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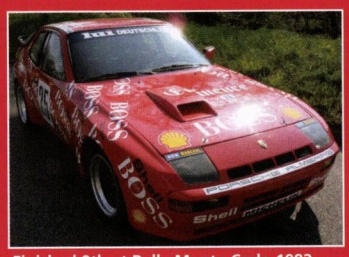
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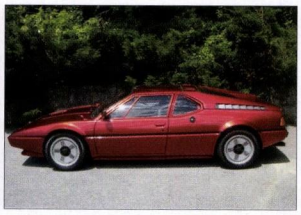
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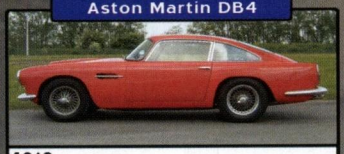
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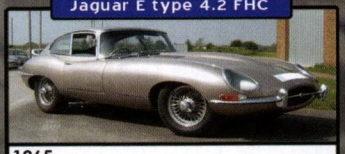
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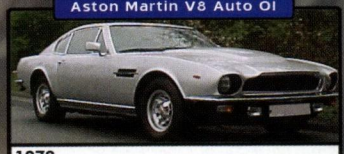
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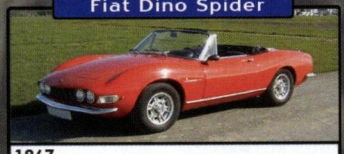
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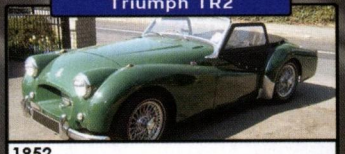
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One of the worst things as a parent is when your young child learns the word "Why?". I suppose it's in our monkey-nature to poke and prod and ask why, and why, as a constructive question, is fine. However in the hands of an inexperienced child the word 'why' becomes one of the most frustrating words in the English language.

"Why do I have to go to bed?" "Because I said so." *"Why?"* "Because you need to." *"Why?"* We've all been there, but that question haunts us for our whole lives.

We look at mountains, seas, stars and very often ask why. We see people doing amazing things like climbing those mountains, sailing across the sea, or going to the stars and again can very often ask why. In this case the answer is usually 'because it's there'. Personally I like to visit places of antiquity such as Stonehenge, cathedrals, even some of the great civic museums and buildings. When I go to these places I very rarely wonder why. I know why subconsciously. I know people want to leave a mark on the world, something that will be appreciated and leave a reminder long after those craftsmen are no longer with us.

Perhaps that's why Bugatti built cars. He came from an artistic family and had seen his father's furniture and knew that in the mists of time it would still be appreciated and that his father would be remembered. His particular talent was in visualising mechanisms and exploring the limits of technology at that time to produce aesthetically pleasing and efficient cars. These cars reflect his personality and the surroundings in which they were built, something which we now appreciate and cherish whether it's Bugattis, Aston Martins, Ferraris or even Bentleys. These cars reflect the unique personalities that created them. When we drive them, if we make an effort to understand the period and the constraints in which they were designed, we don't need to ask why.

I work with cars because I love them but I can't imagine making cars as part of Volkswagen or BMW. Products roll out the other end of a production line after a concept is refined, re-designed and honed to the point where it's boringly efficient and criticism can be levelled mainly at the plastic nature of the interior trim! We take Bugatti's concept and make it flesh utilising the skills of artisans and craftsmen who can still take a raw lump of material and turn it into something beautiful. It's not exactly sculpture but it comes close.

As a business every year my accountant asks me why, but I don't think he would ever understand the satisfaction of seeing a unique Bugatti nursed back to health but still retaining its uniqueness. The sense of achievement watching a new Type 35B light its tyres up for the first time, or the immense sense of pride you get from watching a car that you've engineered pushed to the limit by somebody truly talented to score another twenty five on a tricky section. The cars will be here long after I've gone. Stories will remain and become part of folklore, like my father's first encounter with Bombay Ducks in Gerry Marshall's company.

I've been doing a lot of thinking about the big ideas recently and I've come to the conclusion that, because of language, we see them as questions and now we expect every question to be answered. How big is the universe? How fast does it go Mister? We learn the inappropriate use of why at an early age, you would think that with experience we would grow out of it. If you are called upon to explain why memories of a sunset on a beach make you feel good, or a Bezique Slammer will always be a particularly poignant memory, there's no good answer, they just are.

Like the cathedrals it's what is left behind that counts, that indelible mark and when you're looking at what's left behind you see a testament to the human spirit, character and in many cases sheer bloody mindedness. In this situation why is a question answered before it was asked.

Tim

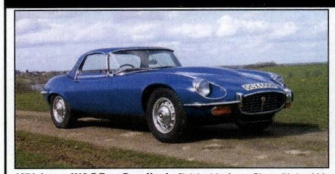
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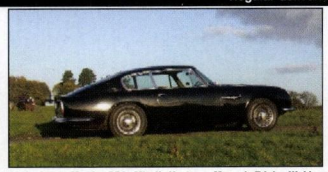
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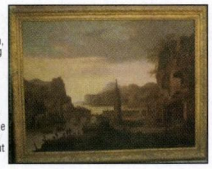


1975 Bentley Corniche Convertible. Finished in Balmoral Green with black hide upholstery. Ebony finished wood trims. Comprehensive history file to reassure the new owner of this extremely rare, desirable Bentley's pedigree and provenance. Interesting part exchanges may be considered . . . . . **£38,950. Also 1976 Series 1A Bentley Corniche FHC available**



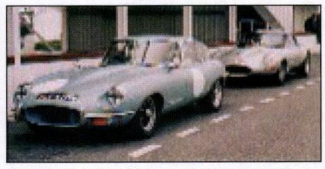
1976 Bentley Corniche Series 1A in Walnut Brown. Believed to be one of three, extremely rare and desirable John Blatchley designed Corniche fixed head coupe. These are the obvious successors of the Bentley Continental. **£39,950**

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1969 CORVETTE STINGRAY 427 (7 Litre) ROADSTER - L.H. DRIVE

3 owners and 54,000 miles. 4 speed manual (Hurst shift). Positraction axle; Astro ventilation; electric windows; leather trim (black), off-white soft-top; original '8 track' stereo; owner's handbook and workshop manuals etc. Absolutely magnificent.



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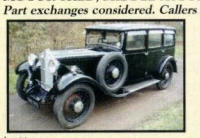
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1949 **ALVIS** TA14 Mulliner saloon £12,000
1950 **LEA FRANCIS** 2.5 litre 2+2 seat sports £23,500
1951 **ALVIS** TA21 saloon £12,250
1951 **BENTLEY** Mk VI 2-door coupe by Park Ward £32,000
1951 **HOTCHKISS** Anjeu 13.50 saloon. 3 owners £18,750
1952 **DAIMLER** Special Sports by Barker £22,500
1953 **ALVIS** TA21 saloon £10,500
1953 **ALVIS** TC21 Mulliner saloon. £13,250
1953 **ARMSTRONG SIDDELEY** 346 Saphire saloon. Pre-select gearbox £9,500
1953 **DAIMLER** DB18 Conquest 4-door saloon £7,250
1954 **M.G.** TF 1250 (Old English White) £16,500
1955 **ALVIS** TC21/100 saloon (Grey Lady) £11,750
1956 **MERCEDES BENZ** 190 SL £26,750
1956 **ROVER** P4 60 saloon. Under 45,000 mls, 4 owners. £6,250
1957 **AUSTIN** A55 Manumatic Saloon £4,950
1959 **ALVIS** TD21 series I drophead coupe. (some series II mods.) £18,450
1960 **ALVIS** TD21 series I drophead coupe £22,500
1960 **AUSTIN HEALEY** 3000 Bj7 Mkl. Lhd. £19,250
1960 **VAUXHALL** Victor. Needs some welding. £1,250
1962 **JAGUAR** E-type series I 3.8 f.h.c. £14,750
1963 **VAUXHALL** Victor de Lane £1,475
1964 **AUSTIN HEALEY** 3000 MKIII 2+2 sports. Lhd. £25,000
1964 **JAGUAR** Mk II 3.8 manual with O/D & CWW. P.A.S. £17,250
1964 **MERCEDES BENZ** 230SL. 3 owners. £18,250
1964 **PEUGEOT** 403 saloon £3,450
1964 **ROLLS ROYCE** Silver Cloud III. One family, 77,000 miles. £29,500
1964 **VOLVO** Amazon Estate. Mechanically up rated. O/d. Lhd. £4,250
1965 **ALVIS** TE21 saloon. 5 speed manual, CWW, PAS. £7,750
1965 **ALVIS** TE21 saloon. 5 speed manual, CWW, PAS. £17,000
1966 **ALFA ROMEO** 1600 spider Duetto. Lhd. £11,250
1967 **JAGUAR** E-type 4.2 series II coupe. £23,750
1967 **LANCIA** Flavia Sport Zagato. (Rare right-hand-drive) £14,000
1968 **MORRIS** Minor 1000 van £3,450
1969 **LANCIA** Fulvia Rallye Sport, 1.3S coupe £8,250
1969 **M.G.** Midget. Hard top. Race prepared £5,995
1969 **M.G.** B roadster. Oseli rebuilt & tuned engine. £12,250
1970 **FORD** Zephr saloon £700
1970 **LOTUS** Elan S4 SE £8,500
1970 **M.G.** B roaster (red) £7,750
1971 **FORD** Escort MKI 1300XL 4-door saloon £4,450
1971 **M.G.** B GT sunroof, disc wheels £3,500
1972 **MERCEDES BENZ** 350SL. Hard & Soft top. £6,500
1973 **MERCEDES BENZ** 350 SLC £8,000
1973 **TRIUMPH** Spitfire MKIV. 1500 engine, hard & soft top. £3,250
1974 **DAIMLER** Double Six series II saloon. Lwb. 2 owners, 29,000mls. £6,000
1974 **MERCEDES BENZ** 240D 4-door saloon. Lhd. Auto. £2,750
1974 **TRIUMPH** GT6 MK III £4,250
1975 **FIAT** 124 spider. Lhd £4,750
1975 **NSU** RO80 saloon. 1 owner, 13,000 miles. (modified rota tips). £8,250
1975 **ROVER** P6 2200SC saloon. 1 owner. £1,850
1976 **MERCEDES BENZ** 250 Automatic (Some work required) £1,250
1976 **M.G.** B GT. Sunroof (Flame) £2,200
1976 **M.G.** B GT. Sunroof (Flame) £3,375
1977 **M.G.** Midget 1500 ..... £3,500
1977 **M.G.** Midget 1500 ..... £3,500
1979 **M.G.** B GT. Needing work (Yellow) £900
1979 **M.G.** Midget 1500 ..... £2,850
1979 **VOLVO** 262C Bertone coupe £2,950
1980 **FIAT** 124 spider. Lhd. £4,500
1980 **LANDROVER** SWB petrol engine with cab. MOT just expired. £750
1981 **DAIMLER** 4.2 Sovereign series III Vanden Plas £1,495
1982 **BEDFORD** CF 250. Mobile home. £450
1982 **FIAT** 124 Spider. Lhd. Hard & soft top £5,250
1982 **M.G.** B roadster (Yellow) £4,500
1982 **TVR** Tasmin convertible. (2 litre Ford engine) £5,950
1983 **ROLLS ROYCE** Silver Spirit (White) £9,850
1985 **RANGE ROVER** V8 HSE £600
1986 **FORD** Escort 1.6i cabriolet £625
1986 **RENAULT** Alpine GTA 2.5 Turbo £6,750
1990 **MAZDA** MX-5 sport £5,500
1991 **EVANTE** Mk II 2-seat sports £11,750
1994 **ALFA ROMEO** 164 2-litre twin-spark saloon. Not MOT'd £450
1995 **ROVER** 827 Vanden Plas Limo. By Coleman Milne. (Red) £2,500
1996 **TYRRELL** formula one racing car. Ch. No. 24/08. No mechanics. £26,500

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1912 **PIVOT** 500cc. Fafnir engine £9,250
1952 **HOREX** Regina 350 ..... £3,350
1958 **SIMSON** 425 S £1,275
C1959 **MOTOBI** Arditio 125cc £3,250
1974 **BMW** R90/6 ..... £3,000
1974 **MZ** TS 250 ..... £650
1981 **BMW** K75 ..... £2,100
1981 **KAWASAKI** Z1000 fuel injected £2,200
1983 **HONDA** VN1100 ..... £2,300
1992 **JAWA** 350/634. Twin Sport. 430Miles, 2 owners £1,500

BOATS

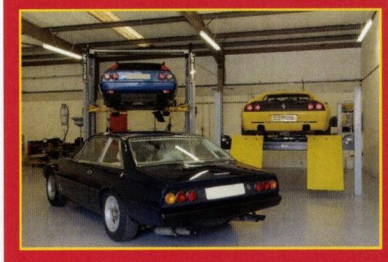
1946 **CHRISCRAFT** Runabout 17'6" Delux. 3ltr. Grey Marine eng. £14,950

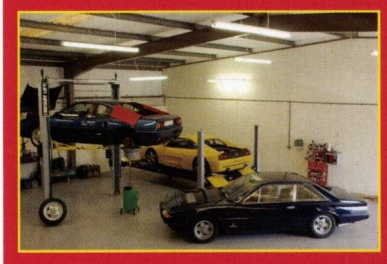
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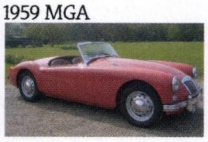
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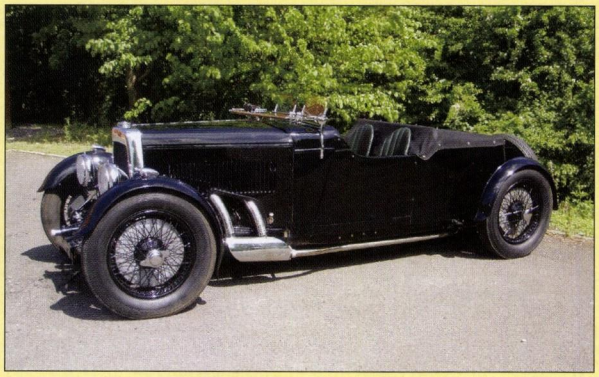
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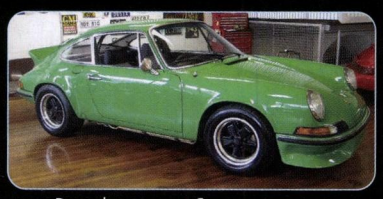
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Black Pearl, grey leather, 4 speed manual, Overdrive, chrome wire wheels. POA



1960 Aston Martin DB 4 Series 2
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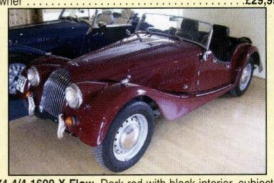
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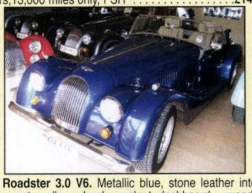
1999 +8 4.6. Connaught green, stone leather, walnut dashboard and interior, stone weather equipment, chrome wires, wind deflectors, luggage rack, wood rim steering wheel, 1 owner £29,995



1990 4/4 1600. Corsa red, stone interior and weather equipment. Chrome wire wheels, wind deflectors, spot lamps, walnut dashboard, galvanised chassis, scuttle roll bar, 3 owners,13,000 miles only, FSH £14,995



1974 4/4 1600 X Flow. Dark red with black interior, subject of a full documented rebuild including new galvanised chassis, rebuilt engine and 5 speed gear box, new body frame, panels and wings. Looks gorgeous and drives superbly £13,500



2004 Roadster 3.0 V6. Metallic blue, stone leather interior, sports seats, alloy wheels, walnut dashboard, wood rim steering wheel, black weather equipment, chrome interior mirror, 2 owners, FSH, 3,300 miles £33,500



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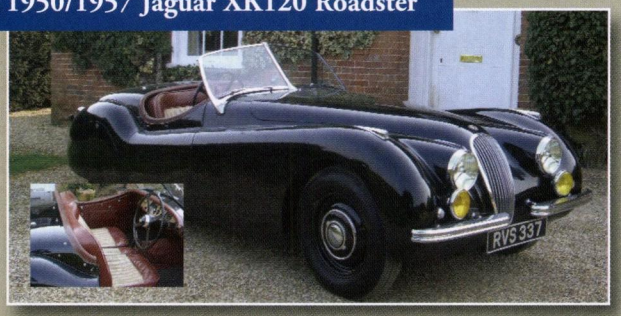
2005 Roadster 3.0 V6. Solent Silver, red interior, maroon weather equipment, walnut dashboard, alloy wheels, sports exhaust, le mans gear knob, radio CD, 1 owner, FSH £35,850

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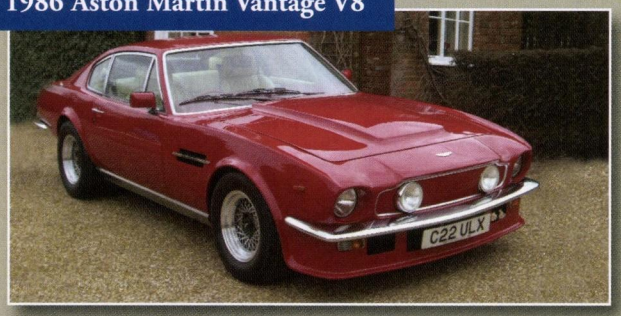
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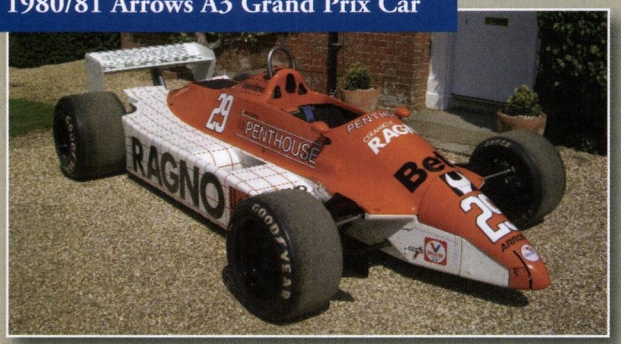
1986 Aston Martin Vantage V8



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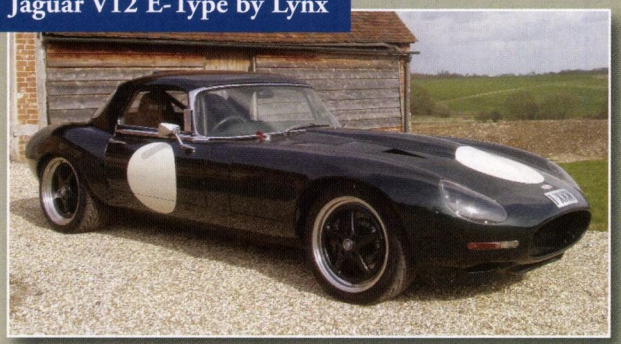
A selection of the many cars currently available from Duncan Hamilton & Co Ltd

1980/81 Arrows A3 Grand Prix Car

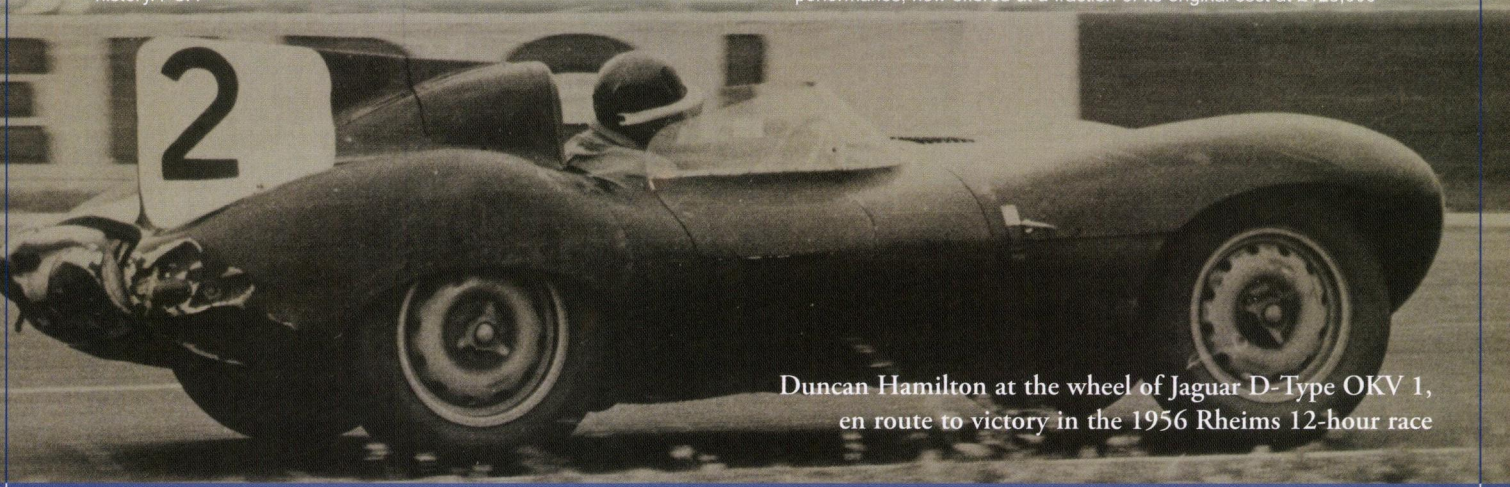


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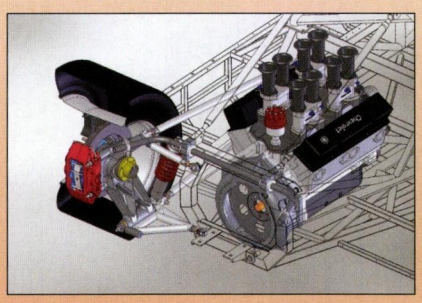
NEW Prototype for SALE, Price POA

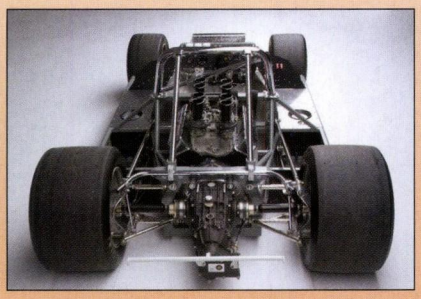


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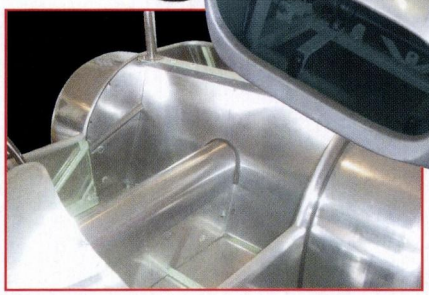


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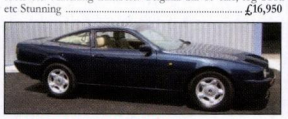
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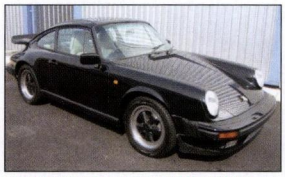


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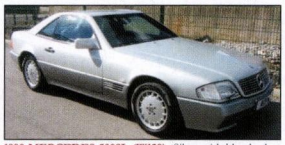


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1988 PORSCHE 3.2 CARRERA SPORT COUPE, Black with Linen leather Trim, Sports seats, Black carpets, Fuch Alloys, (G50 Box) FPSH, Stunning example, Rare like this **£21950**



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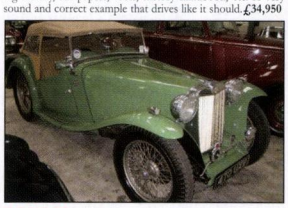
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1950 BENTLEY MK 6. Rare two Door Coupe By James Young. This Superb Original Vehicle is Finished in Ascot Grey Over Oxford Blue, with grey Trim, has been maintained , And Used for Overseas Tours, etc by its last owner, Very Interest ing history, All papers, tools, factory handbook, etc. A very sound and correct example that drives like it should. **£34,950**



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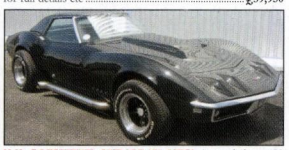
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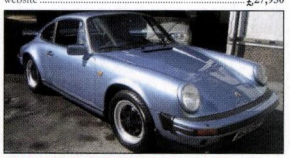
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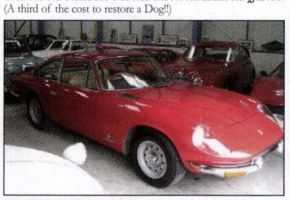
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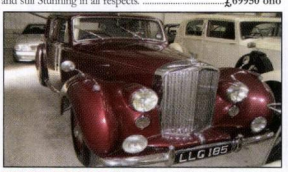
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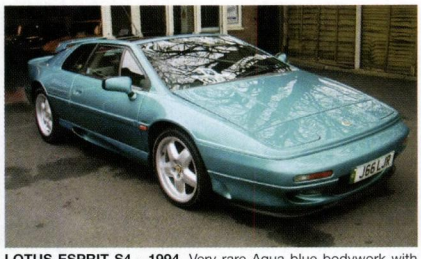
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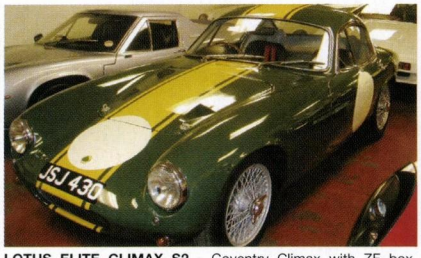
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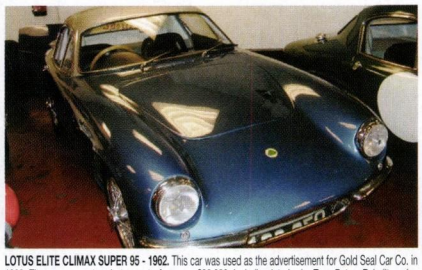
LOTUS ESPRIT S4 - 1994. Very rare Aqua blue bodywork with black leather interior. A/C. Factory sunroof. 55,000 miles. A well-loved car in superb condition previously supplied by us to a regular customer. Needs to be viewed. ***£13,950***



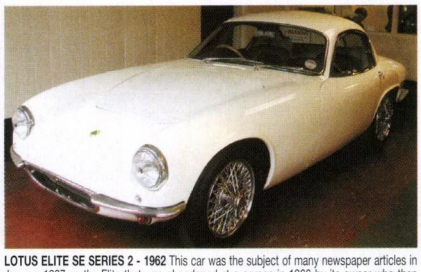
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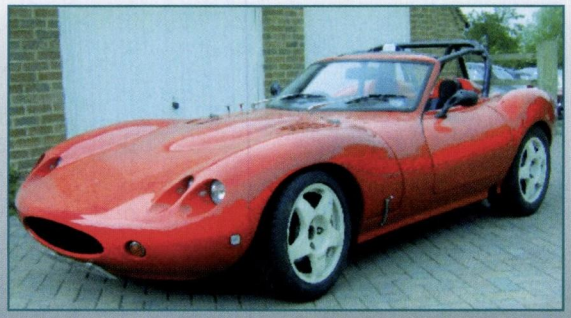


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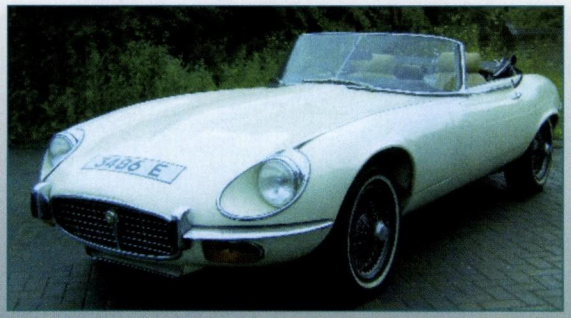
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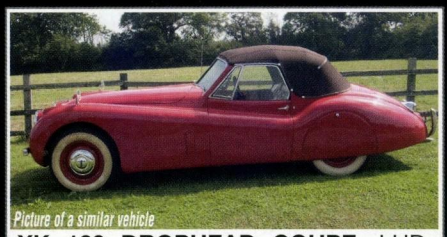
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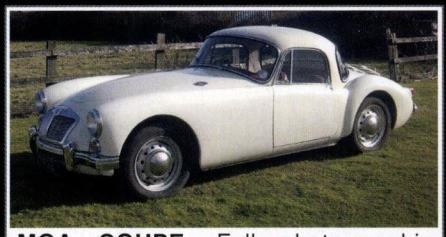
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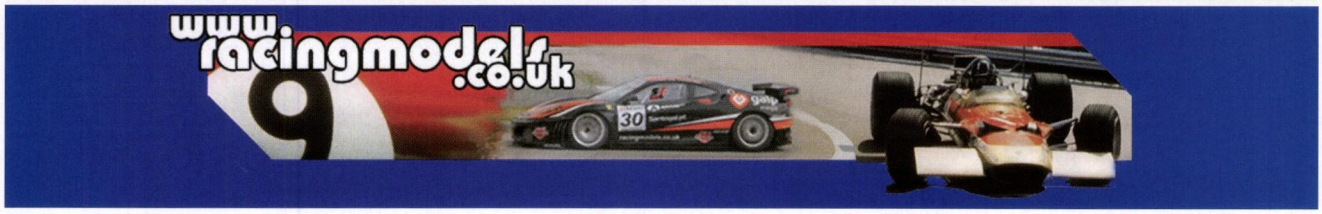
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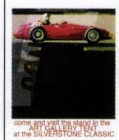
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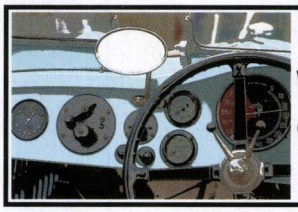
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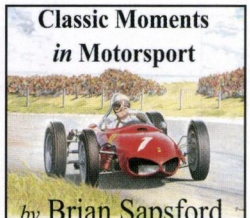
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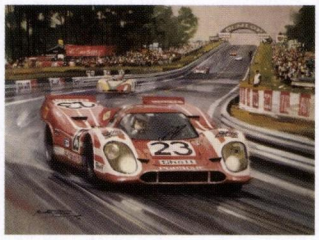
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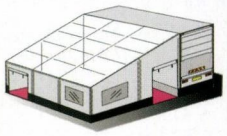
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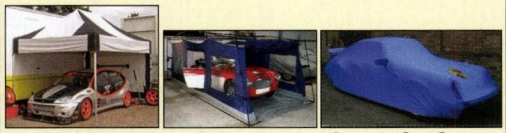
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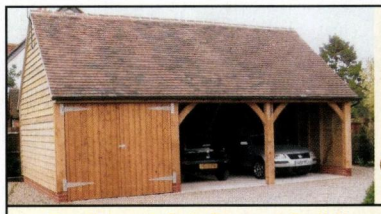


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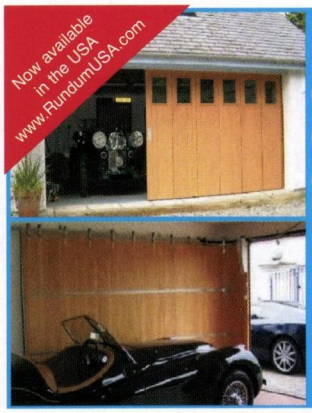


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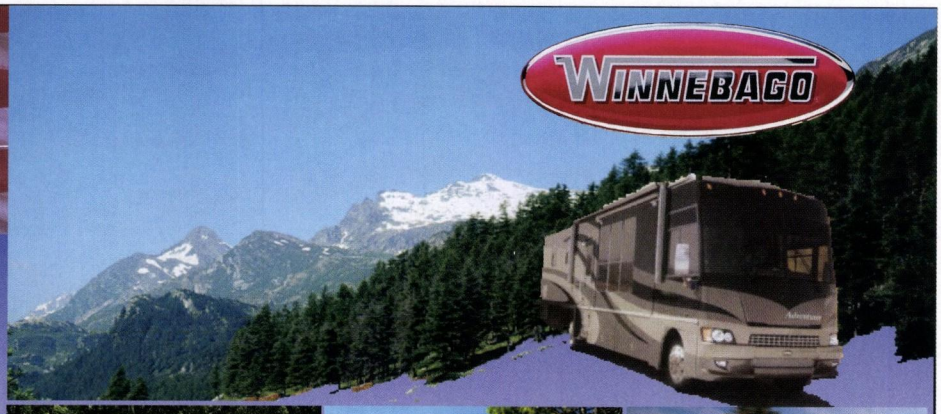
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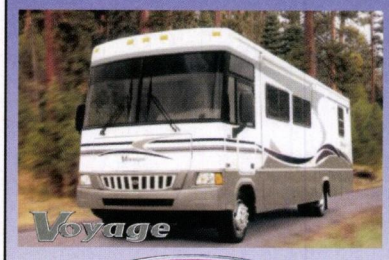
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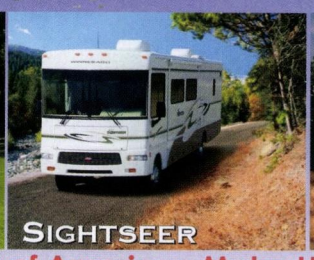
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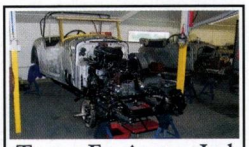
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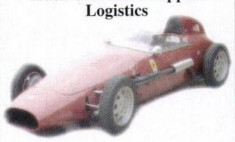
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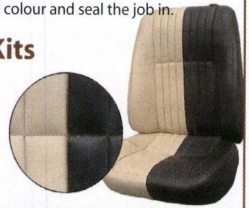




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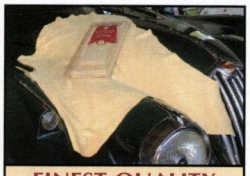
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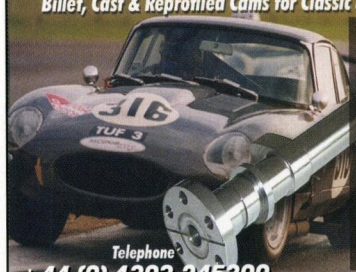
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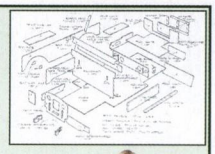
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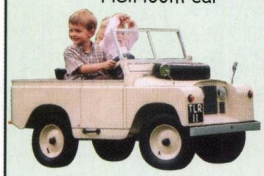
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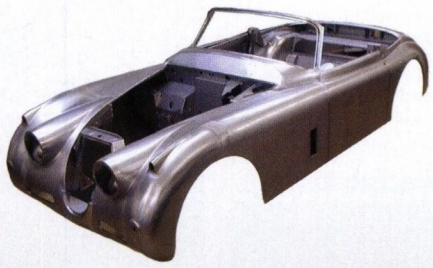


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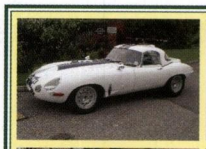
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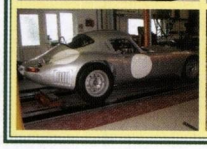
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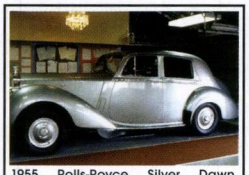
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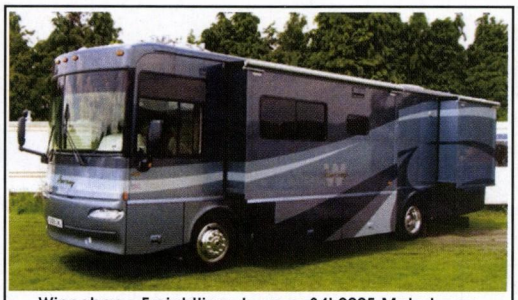
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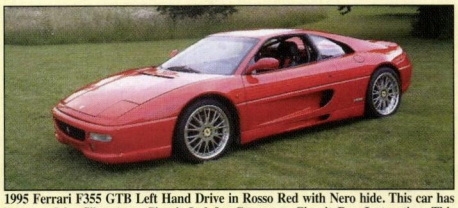
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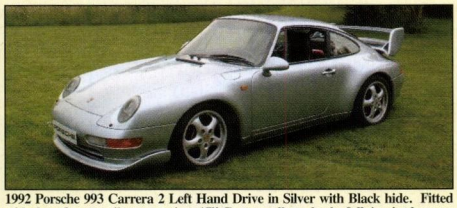
Aston Martin in the Thames Valley

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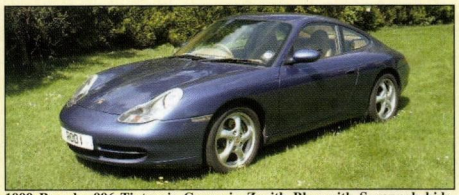
1995 Ferrari F355 GTB Left Hand Drive in Rosso Red with Nero hide. This car has been used by Silverstone Circuit Ltd for Corporate Circuit Day Instruction. This vehicle is fitted with full roll cage and full 4 point safety harness, 18" Evo X alloy wheels and fire extinguisher. It has covered 60,000 miles and comes with a comprehensive maintenance schedule. Superb for both track day and road use £29,950



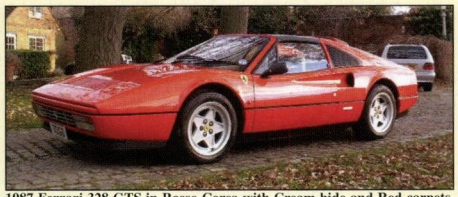
1992 Porsche 993 Carrera 2 Left Hand Drive in Silver with Black hide. Fitted with deep front spoiler, rear wing, 17" Carrera alloy wheels, full 4 point harness seat belts, full roll cage, electric sunroof and fire extinguisher. Previously owned by Silverstone Circuit Ltd for Corporate Circuit Day Instruction. Superb for both track day and road use. Includes comprehensive maintenance schedule £19,995



1989 Ferrari Testarossa (left hand drive) in Rosso Corsa with Black hide. This is a truly stunning example with full Ferrari service history, major service in December 2006 including cambelts, air conditioning and brake overhaul. Please enquire for full specification. Sensibly priced at £34,950



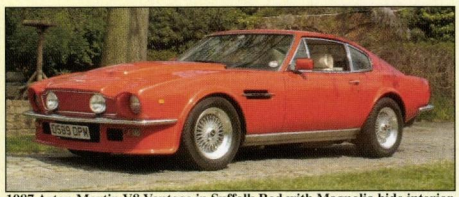
1999 Porsche 996 Tiptronic Coupe in Zenith Blue with Savannah hide. This is a well cared for example having had only one owner at 49,000 miles with full Porsche service history. Fitted with all usual refinements including air conditioning £26,950



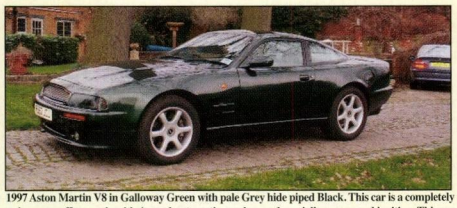
1987 Ferrari 328 GTS in Rosso Corsa with Cream hide and Red carpets. Only 35,000 miles with history. Fitted with 5 speed Manual gearbox, 16" wheels, air conditioning and electric windows £29,950



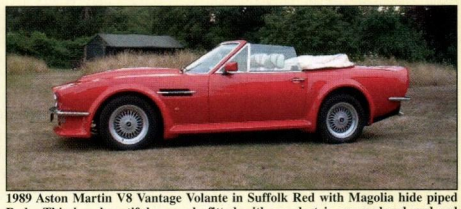
1999 Porsche Carrera 4 Cabriolet in Ocean Blue with Grey hide. Fitted with Manual transmission, on board computer, Tracker, hard top and electric soft top, electric leather seats, 6 stack CD player and 18" split rim alloy wheels. 32,000 miles, 3 owners and total Porsche history. ...£28,950



1987 Aston Martin V8 Vantage in Suffolk Red with Magnolia hide interior. This is a beautiful example fitted with 5 speed Manual gearbox, Ronal alloy wheels and new sills by marque specialists. Excellent service history. £49,950



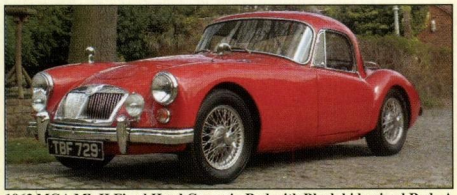
1997 Aston Martin V8 in Galloway Green with pale Grey hide piped Black. This car is a completely unique one-off example with 4 speed automatic gearbox and specially re-mapped ignition. This car is fitted with 18" 6 spoke alloy wheels, wing vents, mesh grilles, 6 stack CD player. It is a beautiful 3 owner example that has complete service history together with a detailed invoice file showing £30,000 expenditure on the vehicle in the last 18 months. Only 45,000 miles. £45,950



1989 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Volante in Suffolk Red with Magolia hide piped Red. This is a beautiful example fitted with an electric cream hood and red carpets. This car has excellent service history with a 5 speed Manual gearbox and 16" Ronal wheels. It is one of the last V8 Vantages registered. Only 36,000 miles £59,950



1954 Rolls Royce Silver Dawn 4.5 Litre Full Flow Engine. Finished in Masons Black over Silver and beautiful recent total refurbishment of sumptuous Red hide interior and Walnut veneer. Fitted with 4 speed automatic transmission, large opening sunroof, picnic tables front and rear, (big boot) and rear blind. Mechanically superb, this car was acquired by the Sharp collection in the early 70s and appears to have had little or no use from then until 2005. The milometer reading of 19500 is therefore possibly correct. Since 2005, around £18,000 has been spent on mechanical refurbishment and a further £15,000 on a perfect re-paint £47,500



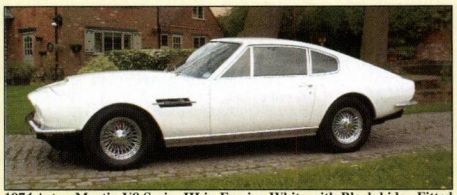
1962 MGA Mk II Fixed Head Coupe in Red with Black hide piped Red. A truly stunning example which has had the benefit of a chassis up restoration and is totally perfect throughout £14,950



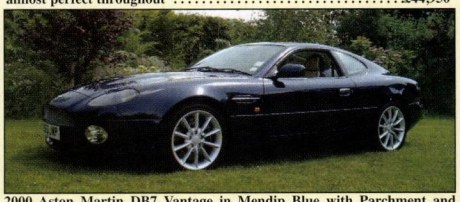
1995 Bentley Continental R in Silver with full Black hide. This is a beautiful example fitted with all usual refinements including heated electric seats, air conditioning, tinted glass, air conditioning, 18" alloy wheels and 6 stack CD player. Only covered 35,000 miles from new and is almost perfect throughout £44,950



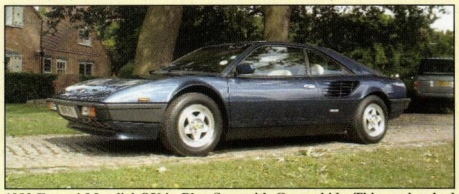
2004 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage GTA in Ferrari Verde Zeltweg with Biscuit hide. Superb example fitted with Tiptronic transmission, 18" GTA alloy wheels, alloy pedals, electric scalloped Recaro sports seats, white dials, 6 stack CD player, mesh grille, black callipers and all usual refinements. 3 owners, 19,000 miles. Full Aston Martin service history £54,950



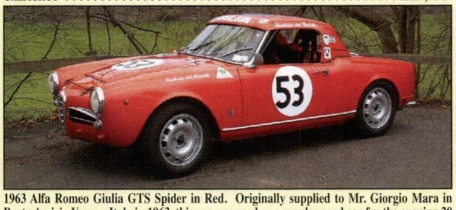
1974 Aston Martin V8 Series III in Ermine White with Black hide. Fitted with automatic transmission, electric sunroof, chrome wire wheels, stainless steel exhaust and headlamp wash/wipe. Only one owner from new, 35,000 miles, this is undoubtedly one of the nicest Series III V8s in existence £29,950



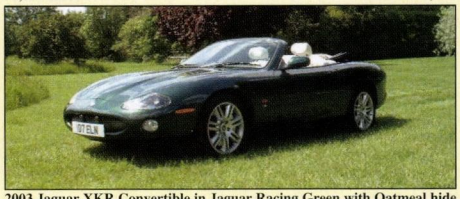
2000 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage in Mendip Blue with Parchment and Pacific hide. Fitted with all usual refinements including automatic transmission, 18" alloy wheels, electric heated seats, air conditioning and alloy wheels. Beautiful condition with full Aston Martin service history. 52,000 miles £36,950



1983 Ferrari Mondial QV in Blue Sera with Cream hide. This car has had only 4 owners from new and has been the subject of a considerable restoration by marque specialists. Previous MOTs dating back to 1990 to substantiate mileage and complete with driver's handbook. New cambelt December 2005. The car is in excellent condition throughout £12,950



1963 Alfa Romeo Giulia GTS Spider in Red. Originally supplied to Mr. Giorgio Mara in Busto Arsizio Varese, Italy in 1963, this car was used as a regular road car for the ensuing 20 years before being prepared for racing by Cupellini Corrado, a well respected Italian specialist for racing, sale and acquisition of historic Ferraris. It has undergone a series of development and improvements works in order to prepare it for historic competition £POA



2003 Jaguar XKR Convertible in Jaguar Racing Green with Oatmeal hide interior and Dark Green mohair hood. Fitted with all usual refinements including electric heated seats, 18" alloy wheels, electric windows, air conditioning, 6 stack CD player, Classic Pack. Only 1 lady owner from new with full Jaguar service history. 19,000 miles £31,950

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