

CLASSIC DRIVER

Our definitive take on the 75th Goodwood Members' Meeting

Lead
For three years now, the historic racing circus has descended on West Sussex for a season-opening dust-up at the Goodwood Members' Meeting. The 75th edition was the fastest, loudest, and most heart-stopping yet...

A corner of paradise



If you explained to a Goodwood virgin that there's an event in a small, rural corner of England where you can see history's fastest, noisiest, and most special racing cars going toe-to-toe and, perhaps more importantly, play tug of war with the heroes who drove them in period, they'd probably laugh in your face. "Goodwood is such a unique success story", Jochen Mass tells us during a brief moment away from his duties both on the track and as Darnley's house captain. "And it's hinged around Lord March's ideas, fantasies, and tremendous feelings for heritage and family — it was, after all, his family who founded this incredible circuit."

Cut the ribbon





Trust Lord March to kick off the historic racing calendar in a fashion that's nigh on impossible for anyone else to follow. In its revived form, the Members' Meeting has cemented its position on the calendars of thousands of enthusiasts from around the world. And while the event has undoubtedly grown in the last few years, it retains the core philosophy and values of the original Members' Meetings that ran at Goodwood between 1948 and 1966 — namely, the chance to get closer than ever to the action and, quite literally, brush shoulders with motorsport heroes from every era in a relaxed, access-all-areas environment.

Pinch me, I'm dreaming



Is there another place on earth where you can have your eyebrows singed by a flame-throwing Edwardian Fiat and witness Dario Franchitti, a three-time Indy 500 winner, pedalling his good friend and fellow Scot Allan McNish's Le Mans-winning Porsche 911 GT1 in the same day? And that's only the start. At the Members' Meeting, there's not really anywhere you're not allowed to go, which means that when you pull up a pew in the Great Hall for lunch or purchase a cigar from a nun's pram at the party in the evening, there's a good chance you'll be brushing shoulders with a Richard Attwood or a Derek Bell. It's truly surreal and something only Lord March can pull off.

Thrills, spills, and more



Of course, it's what went down on the track that will be seared into race-goers' memories. Archie Scott Brown would have been staggered to see the sheer number of Listers assembled for the race in his legendary name. He'd have been more impressed, though, with the action that unfolded in the race — Sam Hancock in the prototype 'Knobby' engaged in a breathless battle with Martin Stretton, and that was just for third place. The award for the most beautiful car of the weekend, at least in our opinion, would have certainly gone to Frederic Wakeman's slippery and sexy Costin-bodied coupé.

A star-studded spectacle



Saturday evening's star-studded Gerry Marshall Trophy, comprising what Goodwood's commentator humorously labelled "the cars your dad drove", was a similarly exciting affair, with Chris Ward and Gordon Shedden's Patrick Motorsport-liveried Rover SD1 snatching the ultimate spoils from the Bryants' thunderous Camaro after a safety car-induced sprint finish. Just why is racing in the dark so much more heart-in-mouth? It was a race that promised a lot and delivered in every conceivable way. But then, what else would you expect when the

draft of drivers included, among many others, Nicolas Minassian, David Coulthard, Tom Kristensen, Roberto Ravaglia, and Gerhard Berger?

Rest well, *Il Grande John*



With the usual spread of races varying from unwieldy Edwardian leviathans and Franco-Italian pre-War monopostos to 1960s big-banger Grand Tourers and multi-coloured Group 1 saloons — supplemented by an unbelievable trio of high-speed demonstrations — there was, as usual, so much to see and precious time in which to do it. The recent death of John Surtees, a true Goodwood legend, was marked not by a minute of silence but by a moment of noise, led by Lord March himself at the wheel of *Il Grande John's* Can-Am Lola. "I'm sure John heard all the noise and thanks us all for it", quipped the good Lord, "as will no doubt all the local residents!" Mass also spoke fondly of Surtees: "John was a fantastic character and an inspiring man", he recalled. "We didn't always see eye to eye, but when I think about him, it brings me back to Goodwood in the early days, when I had my first Formula 2 tests here in his cars."

David versus Goliath





In a turn of events no one saw transpiring, Mike Whitaker and Mike Jordan's tiny TVR Griffith fought off a brace of AC Cobras to take victory in the Graham Hill Trophy, a David versus Goliath battle if ever we saw one. It was also a race in which a number of esteemed Classic Driver dealers duked it out, including Gregor Fisker, Max Girardo, and James Cottingham, the latter of whom finished an impressive fourth, despite the gear knob of his Ferrari 250 GTO snapping off early in the race. "Much like a sudden shower of rain, it puts you off, as it affects your rhythm, especially when Rob Huff is chasing you down", Cottingham told us. "But you soon get used to it. My real concern was that the knob was rolling around in my footwell, and you wouldn't want that getting stuck under the brake pedal!" A special note must also go to the 17-year-old Oliver Hart, who narrowly missed out on third place in his Mustang in the inaugural Pierpoint Cup, thanks to a red flag — definitely one to watch in the future.

That's Charles...



Wandering round on Saturday afternoon, we spotted something that we thought truly summed up this special event. It was a young boy playing with two small model cars. One was a Lamborghini Miura and the other was a P1. It's important to remember that events such as this aren't reserved for owners of rose-tinted glasses, they're about inspiring the next generation, and this is something the Members' Meeting does so well. "Lord March manages to give a different face to all these events, and this meeting is a wonderful addition", concludes Jochen Mass. "But that's Charles — he's the driving force behind it all, and everybody loves it."

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