

CLASSIC DRIVER

[We found motoring nirvana at the 2019 Goodwood Festival of Speed](#)

Lead

Last weekend, the Duke of Richmond's picturesque corner of West Sussex shook to the sound of horsepower as the great and the good from motorsport's past, present, and future convened for the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Highlights were ear-splitting and aplenty...

You really do have to pinch yourself sometimes at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, the world's fastest summer garden party. Is that really Damon Hill behind the wheel of the Benetton B194 Michael Schumacher notoriously crashed into him at Adelaide to claim the 1994 Formula 1 World Championship? Or Arturo 'Little Art' Merzario cracking wise in the paddock with Emerson Fittipaldi, Riccardo Patrese and Sir Jackie Stewart? Or current McLaren F1 star Lando Norris wrestling the 700bhp M8D Can-Am car up the dauntingly narrow hill climb? For bona fide motorsport buffs, there is simply nowhere else on planet earth where you can imbibe so much high-octane history and nostalgia as you can at Goodwood.



There are anniversaries galore in 2019 and, as you can imagine, they were celebrated in fine fashion at the Festival of Speed. Aston Martin was the featured marque this year, the spectacular Gerry Judah-designed sculpture, topped by the actual 1959 Le Mans-winning DBR1, signifying 70 years since one of the marque's cars first raced at Goodwood.

The slew of Astons old and new in attendance was as diverse as it was beautiful. Who doesn't go weak at the knees at the sight of a Frank Feeley-designed DB3S or the sound of a DBR9 at full whack? In what proved to be a quintessentially British moment, virtually every Aston at the Festival was assembled around the central sculpture and serenaded with orchestral versions of Rule Britannia and the James Bond theme. The pageantry was capped off with daytime fireworks, which probably weren't quite as impressive in reality as they might sound.



Of course, Bentley celebrates its centenary this year, and while the Crewe-based manufacturer is busy preparing for its own celebrations poised to take place later this week, its presence at Goodwood was still very much felt with cars of all shapes and sizes from its 100-year history in action on the hill and a static beauty pageant over on the cricket pitch. As you well know, we've got more than a thing for [the flamboyant 1990s Bentley Continentals](#), but we have to say, the opulent [Brooklands](#) is certainly the daddy when it comes to the marque's post-2000 models.

It's been 50 years since Sir Jackie Stewart won his maiden F1 World Championship and in what was a particularly touching moment, the Flying Scot took to the hill with his title-winning Matra-Cosworth MS80, closely followed by his sons Paul and Mark in the Tyrells in which he won his second and third championships.



In this, [the Porsche 917's 50th anniversary year](#), there was inevitably a fine assembly of the marque's most famous prototype racer at Goodwood. Our friends over at [Crubilé Sport in France](#) brought our two favourite examples: the silver Kurz formerly owned – and road registered! – by Count Rossi and the Martini-liveried Langheck, which was raced at Le Mans in 1971 by Derek Bell and Jo Siffert. Bell, who lives just a stone's throw from Goodwood in picturesque Pagham, was reunited with the car for the first time since he raced it at La Sarthe 48 years ago. He didn't quite hit the staggering 246mph he clocked on the Mulsanne that year, but he certainly wasn't hanging around as he tore up the hill.



The seven-time F1 World Champion Michael Schumacher turned 50 years old earlier this year, though there is still no word on his condition following his dreadful skiing accident back in 2013. The Duke of Richmond lured a fabulous selection of the German's cars to celebrate his record-breaking career, from his very first Formula Ford and the Sauber Mercedes in which he contested Le Mans in 1991 to his Benetton and Ferrari title-winning F1 cars. In addition, there was also a number of personalities present who were closely affiliated with Schumacher during his career including Jean Todt, Luca di Montezemolo, and Ross Brawn. His wife Corrina and son Mick were understandably touched by the sights, sounds and conversations. Keep fighting Michael!



While the [McLaren GT](#) was far more handsome in the metal than its promotional photos had previously suggested and the [Ferrari P80/C](#) proved particularly deft in shredding its tyres, it was a couple of classically shaped Porsche 911s – the ['reimagined' Porsche 911 from Singer](#) and Lanzante's wild F1-engined 930 – and the new [De Tomaso P72](#) that stole our hearts from the bumper crop of modern supercars at the show. The latter, a voluptuous carbon-fibre supercar with styling cues taken from some of the most beautiful 1960s prototype racecars, certainly made the biggest splash on our social media channels over the weekend.



Lanzante's 930 is a restomod 911 with a frankly barmy twist. The Hampshire-based company's close affiliation with McLaren has allowed it to snag 11 old TAG-badged Porsche twin-turbocharged, six-cylinder F1 engines from its stores. And because Porsche did actually use a 930 mule to test the engine back in the day before it wound up in the back of Niki Lauda's Marlboro-liveried single-seater, Lanzante has decided to transplant them in the back of 11 specially modified 930s.

That's right, for around one million of Her Majesty's finest pounds, you can buy an old Porsche 911 with the TAG Turbo engine that claimed 26 F1 wins from 68 Grands Prix between 1984 and '87. The best bit? Each of the finished cars will have a plaque showing which races its respective engine completed and who was at the wheel.



We also had the privilege of sitting down with Singer Vehicle Design's founder Rob Dickinson and Maz Fawaz to talk about [the results of its Dynamics & Lightweighting Study](#) (or DLS), undertaken in collaboration with Williams Advanced Engineering and a raft of automotive specialists, one year on from its reveal at last year's Festival of Speed. "We're going through the irritating final stages of ticking all the boxes," Dickinson explains. "The idea was never to throw the book at an old Porsche 911 and turn it into a racing car. The 911 is adored and is successful on so many levels because of its duality, which we had to retain.



"We think the engine is now making around 560bhp when it's actually in the car and if you spec the car correctly, it's under 1,000kg. We also managed to get proper downforce from the revised Ducktail spoiler, which is a huge achievement. The idea was to build something that would not be beaten and that would go down in history as a landmark car. We knew we couldn't do that sitting in California and we thought this car deserved the effort. The Porsche 911 is the most important sports car in the world, after all - why wouldn't you try and optimise it with an open chequebook?" The first customer Porsche 911s 'reimagined' by Singer utilising the results of its Dynamics and Lightweighting Study will be delivered before the end of the year and just 75 examples will be restored in total.



A number of audacious and opulent Avion Voisins vied with a 1936 Bugatti Type 57 S Atlantic and some of Zagato's most spectacular designs for the judge's affections over on the Cartier Style et Luxe lawn, though it was the dinky 1957 Abarth Sperimentale 'Goccia' by Vignale – a car that was deemed too radical even for Carlo Abarth – that truly stole our hearts.



There's only one person who might be a touch disgruntled after last weekend's Festival of Speed and that's 'Quick Nick' Heidfeld. His longstanding hill-climb record of 41.6sec, which he set back in 1999 driving a McLaren MP4/13 F1 car, finally fell when the French driver Romain Dumas clocked a scarcely believable 39.9sec in the all-electric Volkswagen I.D. R. To the automotive traditionalists out there, make of that what you will...



Naturally, if there is a facet of automotive history in which you're particularly interested, be it Edwardian pioneers, post-War GT sports cars, contemporary F1 or our autonomous future, the Duke of Richmond will have generously indulged you at the Festival of Speed. Sure, it's horrendously busy at times and often imposingly commercial, but there's simply no other event that showcases such a broad and diverse cross-section of the car world. Why else would so many walking and rolling legends be lured to West Sussex each and every year? Onwards to the Revival!

Photos: Robert Cooper for Classic Driver © 2019

Gallery

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