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Ferrari returns to Le Mans 2002



Prodrive is taking the best known marque in motorsport, Ferrari, back to the most famous race in the world, the Le Mans 24 hour.

Prodrive will be running two Ferrari 550 Maranellos in the GTS class at Le Mans in June (subject to entries being accepted). Alain Menu and Rickard Rydell are already confirmed as drivers and Prodrive is currently talking to a number of other candidates to make up the full team.

A front-engined Ferrari, the 275 GTB, last competed at Le Mans in 1966 and Ferrari last won the classic race the year before with the 250LM in the hands of Jochen Rindt and Masten Gregory. In 2002, Prodrive is aiming for a podium finish for its 550 Maranello in the GTS class.

In preparation for the endurance event, Prodrive will be running a durability and development programme over the coming months. As part of this, one of the cars will be raced at Sebring in the USA in March by Rydell, Menu and a third driver. The second Le Mans specification car is currently being prepared at Prodrive's headquarters in Banbury, UK.

Prodrive's race winning FIA GT car, which won two out of the five races it entered in last year's FIA GT Championship, will once again be competing in the series in 2002, but this time in the hands of a private team.

"When we won at the A1 Ring last year, in only our second sports car race, it was a tremendous achievement for everybody involved," said George Howard-Chappell, Prodrive Ferrari team principal. "We are lucky to already have two fast, experienced drivers in Menu and Rydell, who know the car and if we can find another four who come close to their speed then we will give ourselves an excellent opportunity to emulate our achievements last year."

Story and photos: *Prodrive Press Office*

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