

CLASSIC DRIVER

Tour Britannia 2006 - good news for spectators



Entries for the 2006 Tour Britannia are rolling in and the good news for spectators is that at many venues, entry will be absolutely free. The event, which will run for the second time from 5-8 September, will have at least one free of charge spectator venue each day.

Tour Britannia combines the best of the country's race circuits with special tests in the grounds of castles, stately homes and parks. The field will be led away from the start at Coombe Abbey in Warwickshire by the competitors in the **Touring - Regularity Category**. Among the beautiful cars to be seen will be a pair of **AC Aces** in the hands of 2005 winner John Ruston, and Belgian husband and wife team, Marc and An Vandendijk. Various **Ferrari, Bizzarini, Porsche** and **Mercedes-Benz** will follow, along with the usual mixture of British sports cars.

Immediately behind come the entrants in the **Competition Category**. Cars will range from Rudiger Friedrichs' **1932 Alvis Speed 20**, last year's Tour Britannia Index victor, to Arnold Meier's **1972 Ferrari Daytona Competizione**, with **Alfa Romeos, Austin Healeys, Chevrons, Lotuses, Cobras, Mustangs, Porsches** and many others in between.

2005 winner Ray Bellm has swapped his **Ford GT40** for a **Lotus Elan** and the ex-FIA GT World Champion promises to be a top contender for overall Tour Britannia honours. Last year's runner up Howard Redhouse also has a **Lotus**, but his is a monstrous V8 powered 30, and the Irishman will be looking to go one place better in 2006. **Chevrons** have replaced Ford GT40s as the most popular weapon of choice. Michael Schryver, Chris Chiles and Gareth Burnett are all in **B8s** and their races should be memorable.

With more twisty circuits and an increased stage mileage in the 2006 Tour Britannia route, **Porsche 911s** may well feature at the top of the leaderboard, especially with the likes of Nick Faure, Peter Lovett, Nick Whale and Paul Howells at the wheel. Robi Bernberg returns with his more standard 911, while Adam Wiseberg drives a similar machine.

Austin Healeys didn't feature in the inaugural Tour Britannia entry list but this year already three have been entered. 1994 Tour Auto winner Bobby Bell drives Oliver Harris's **100/4**, while Chris Levett-Prinsep has a **3000 MkII**. Eric Woolley swaps the Mustang he campaigned in 2005 for a 3000 Sebring.

Ford Mustangs are as popular as ever with David and Caroline Betts hoping to repeat their success of 2005 with their **Shelby GT350**, while Colorado's Doug Allen is back again. Newcomers Roy Stephenson and auction house boss Simon Hope bring along similar examples. Other big V8s include the **Chevrolets** of Richard Lloyd and Rob Potter, with ex Formula 2 star Jac Nelleman sharing the wheel. Jonathan Bradburn's **Cobra**, Malcolm Verey's **Sunbeam Tiger** and Pietro Silva's **de Tomaso** are also V8 powered.

Frenchman Yves Junne comes fresh from his post-historic victory in the Tour Auto, where Tour Britannia Sporting Director Fred Gallagher was co-driving. Junne swaps his **Porsche 910** for a **904** this time and should be a top contender for outright victory in the Index of Performance classification.



The Route -

Scrutineering and administrative checks will be held at the event base at Coombe Abbey, near Coventry, on the afternoon of **Monday 4 September**. The public are welcome and will be free to mingle with the cars and crews.

The event proper starts from Coombe Abbey on the morning of **Tuesday 5 September** and spectators are again welcome, as they will be on each day. That day's public competitive section is at Loton Park where a small charge will be made by the venue's proprietors. Cars will attack the picturesque hill twice and there are lots of great viewing areas. First car is due back at Coombe Abbey around 16h45 and there should be lots of entertainment as crews and their mechanics re-fettle cars.

Wednesday's spectator action takes place at the home of British sprinting, Curborough, near Lichfield. Admission is free and the action will start around 14h00, while first car is due back at base around 16h30.

Thursday's first competitive section is at the stunning Belvoir Castle, near Grantham in Lincs. First cars will be there around 08h30 and will complete two runs of the tricky stage. Normal Belvoir Castle entry fees will be levied. Crews then head on through the fens to Cadwell Park, probably Britain's most spectacular race circuit. Entry here will be completely free.

The final leg on **Friday 8 September** opens with a reverse run at Arbury Hall before the closing set of regularity tests and races at Mallory Park circuit. The finish will be around midday with the prize-giving lunch held at the circuit.

Tour Britannia, a unique event on Britain's motorsport calendar, is open to owners of pre-1976 road legal cars. The event takes place between 5-8 September 2006.

Regulations and entry forms can be found on the event website: www.TourBritannia.com , or are available from:

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