

CLASSIC DRIVER



The Silverstone Classic 2006

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The last weekend of July saw Silverstone playing host to over 700 competitors with an entry of 600-plus classic cars and motorcycles when it staged its annual “Silverstone Classic” three day festival. Spanning eighty years of motorsport with a line-up of 22 races that started on Friday afternoon and ran on until 5.00 pm on Sunday, Silverstone had something for every devotee of historic motor racing.



To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the DBR1 race car, **Aston Martin** was featured as the headline marque, with **Aston Martin Racing** bringing along a selection of their rare cars for the weekend. These cars went “Live” on Saturday and Sunday when the **Aston Martin Racing** pursuit challenge race treated the crowd to the unique sight of racing Astons ranging from the **DBR1** to **DBR9** all out on the track together. Saturday’s racing featured another special Aston event when the **Roy**

Salvadori Trophy race saw 39 Aston Martins built between 1931 through to 1959 take to the grid.

Many other historic racing series were using this meeting as a round in their championships, so the line-up included races from the **World Sports Car Masters** series, **BRDC Historic Sportscar Championship**, **Gentleman Drivers GT & Sports Endurance**, and the inaugural race for the **Royal Automobile Club's Woodcote Trophy**. As Silverstone hosts the British Grand Prix it has all the latest safety features, including those huge run-off areas needed by today's F1 cars when their traction control systems go to sleep, so without the proximity of Armco barriers the historic racing fraternity could really let their hair down. Particularly memorable were two dices between **Rod Jolley**, **1958 Lister Monzanapolis**, and **Nick Wigley**, **1954 Connaught B4** both ending in Nick's favour. **Manfredo Rossi**, **1974 Brabham BT42**, and **Peter Wuensch** **1977 Wolf WR1** ran nose to tail in both their events with the honours ending up one victory each. F1 veteran **Brian Redman** was signing autographs at lunchtime, then by mid-afternoon had swapped his pen for a steering wheel and was showing **Sid Hoole**, **1979 Lotus 80**, a few of his old tricks with the **1971 BRM P160**.



The weekend was not entirely devoted to racing; Silverstone's infield was full of other car-related attractions. Specialist car clubs ranging from the **Ferrari Owners** to the **Classic Corvette Society** had displays of their vehicles for the visitors to drool over, and if you had money to spare there were plenty of motoring book and memorabilia stands for you to spend it on. A Silverstone speciality that always attracts a long queue of people is their celebrity autograph sessions, this year **Damon Hill**, **Jackie Stewart**, **Jack Sears**, **Brian Redman** and **David Brabham** were among the famous names on hand to sign books and chat to the fans.



Silverstone does not manage to create the garden party atmosphere of Goodwood or the challenge of street circuits such as **Monaco** or **Pau**, but with its wide open spaces and long straights it's a power

circuit, so the sight and sound of the **DBR9** and **Richard Piper** in the **McLaren M8F** at full speed more than makes up for this.

Silverstone Classic concentrates on the cars and gives their drivers all the opportunity they need to race them to the full, in turn providing the visitors with a great show.

*Story and photos by Roger Dixon - all **strictly copyright**. For further information please visit www.rogerdixonphotography.com*





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