

CLASSIC DRIVER



Techno Classica Essen 2007

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Last Sunday the gates of the 2007 Techno Classica closed on an event that featured over 1,000 exhibitors and more than 2,500 cars for sale. All of great interest to the 154,300 visitors - and the reporting team from Classic Driver.



In addition to the dealers and trade stands there was the traditional presence of motor clubs, as well as usual big participation by the major German motor manufacturers, all using the event to showcase the breadth of their heritage. **BMW** were firmly established in Hall 12, with a display in the form of the company's famous 'four-cylinder' HQ in Munich. Its classic division, **BMW Mobile Tradition**, was showing some of the famous cars and motorcycles of its past, from the **BMW 303** to the very latest hydrogen-powered **7-Series**. There were also separate displays for **Rolls-Royce** and **MINI**, both of course owned by the Bavarian marque.



Similarly, the **Volkswagen** group was showing historic models from **Audi**, **Bentley**, **Horch**, **Lamborghini**, **Skoda** and **VW**. While **Bentley** had a display of more modern models, **Lamborghini** were working with the **International Lamborghini Owners Club**, and one of the cars featured was the very last **Countach** produced. **Audi** was focusing on its rally successes with the immortal **Quattro**, as well as its luxury history via the **Horch** brand.



Audi were also showing their allegiance to the **Tazio Nuvolari** event in Italy. And speaking of which, **Ferrari** had a big stand under the **'Ferrari Classiche'** banner, demonstrating how important it is for older models to be checked for authenticity to not only prove their originality, but also get the very best performance out of the cars from Maranello. **Porsche** had many older **911s**, and **Mercedes-Benz** brought its large luxury cabriolets from the past, as well as the study based on the new **S-Class** called the **"Ocean Drive"**.



Naturally the Techno Classica is also an important meeting place for dealers and collectors. It's the occasion where the big traders pick their best stock to show to a discerning European audience. Interestingly, in 2007, there were few **Mercedes-Benz 300SL 'Gullwings'** on display – normally a staple model at Essen. The reason could well be that the value of these cars (now some 500,000 EURO for a good example) has grown to such an extent that the market is that much more limited. They're not a purchase collectors make 'on impulse'. Gullwings apart, there were plenty of other vehicles suitable for the Classic Driver, like the 'matching pair' on **Thiesen's** stand of a yellow

Bizzarrini 5300 GT America (Race) and a blue **Bizzarrini 5300 GT Stradale** – the latter selling on the opening day.

There was a lot of interest on dealers **Steenbuck-Automobiles** who had travelled all the way down from Northern Germany. One of the star cars on their stand was the **1959 Ferrari 250 GT**, an interesting and rare example with its unique bonnet scoop and extravagantly designed grilles behind the front wheels, just one of three cars built in this manner.



Another Classic Driver dealer, **Michael Brinkert**, was showing a white **1986 Lamborghini Countach 5000 S QV** as well as his usual speciality, a couple of classic **Aston Martins**. In effect, the Essen Show is his 'home fair' as his showroom is almost 'round the corner'.



Every year at Techno Classica there's something to surprise. This time it was on the stand of French Porsche specialist **Benoit Couturier** who specialises in one-off prototypes of the marque and one-

such was the racing transporter based on a **VW 'Bully'**, but treated in the same way as the famous **Mercedes-Benz** high-speed racing transporter of the 1950s. On its flat back was a **Porsche 550 Spyder**. Talking of the famous Stuttgart sports car maker, there were so many **911s** on display at Essen this year it must have been some sort of record.



For rare racing Porsches, **Jan B. Luehn's** stand was the place to be. On display was not only the yellow **1988 Japanese championship-winning 962C**, but also a **Porsche 907** that can be driven on the road. Just to even things up, Luehn also had the last-ever **Lola Can Am** car built, a **T310** that had, until recently, been in the famous **Rosso Bianco Collection**. Some British dealers and auction houses made the trip to Germany, **Peter Byrne** had a magnificent **pre-War Bentley**, as well as a genuine '**Coombs**' **Jaguar Mk II** and a **Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost**, while auctioneers **Coys** were publicising their next **German sale on 21st April**. **RM Auctions, in association with Sotheby's**, had the **May Maranello Ferrari Sale** uppermost in their minds, the centrepiece of their stand being several early entries including the **1962 Le Mans-winning Ferrari 330 TRI/LM**.

Text: J. Philip Rathgen

Photos: Nanette Schärf / Mathias Paulokat

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