

CLASSIC DRIVER

Silverstone Classic 2008



What a triumph. Visitors to the Silverstone Classic must have thought they were back in the glory days of the Coys (and, before that, Christie's) Festival, such was the buzz, on-track and off, at the Northamptonshire circuit last weekend. In just one year, Roger Etccl and his team at Motion Works have proved that there *is* room for more than one top-class historic event in the UK calendar. While nothing can match Goodwood's unique style, the Silverstone Classic is a totally different - and thoroughly fabulous - event in its own genre. Just as it used to be.

True, the blazingly hot weather helped bolster the atmosphere: just where *were* the torrential downpours we'd been promised? But no one knew what the skies would bring when 900 competitors filled up the 21 grids, when 50-plus car clubs booked space, and when spectators - more than 57,000 of them, according to the organisers - made plans for the weekend.



Even in the dark days of the post-Coys era, when the Festival lost its sparkle, the racing at Silverstone has always been superb and this year was no exception. From the **pre-1966 Grand Prix** cars to **FIA Historic Formula One** (1966-85), from **pre-War sportscars** to **Group C sports-racers**, and from **Top Hat saloons** to the 90-minute race for **World Sportscar Masters** in the dusk of Saturday evening, the grids were full, the racing close, and the cars outstanding. Okay, so we didn't quite see the super-valuable 250 GTOs and SWBs of the past (still seen in the TT race at the Goodwood Revival) but, after this year's Classic, many of the top collectors will surely consider joining the spectacle at Silverstone in 2009?



While we're not here to give a blow-by-blow account of the racing, every stint at the trackside rewarded spectators with rich gems of historic motorsport at its best. Such as the four **Lola T70s** which took second to fifth place in the twilight **Denny Hulme Trophy Race for World Sportscar Masters** on Saturday evening – pipped to the post only by the **Lola T212** of **Hancock** and **Hancock**. Or the eleven **Listers** competing in the **BRDC Historic Sportscars race** – surely a world record for the number of **Listers** ever to compete together on track? Certainly, the static gathering of 17 Listers in the **BRDC Grandstand** car park after the race was the greatest number of these cars ever assembled in one place. Even at the factory, in period, confirmed Brian Lister, there were never this many together at one time: a fitting tribute to the 50th anniversary year of the **Lister Knobbly** and, of course, to the tragic death of **Archie Scott Brown** in May 1958.



Then there were the muscular **Mustangs** of the **Top Hat Touring Cars**, the **pre-56 sports-racers** of the **Royal Automobile Club Woodcote Trophy**, and the vast grid of **Porsche Road Sports Cars**, spanning a huge era – 1948 to 2008, no less – and doubtless delighting the hordes of **Porsche Club** members who came to the Classic. (There were some 600 Porsches in the club area on Saturday; and more on Sunday, by the look of it.)

And we haven't even mentioned the air displays, live music in the **Scarf & Goggles** (always a favourite with the Editor, that), or the big-screen showing of the classic 1966 film **'Grand Prix'**. Plus, of course, the **Bonhams** auction of **Lotus** and **Porsche** road and race cars.



So, click onto your diary software and make a note against the **24/25/26 July 2009** – the date for next year's Silverstone Classic (always assuming the good old F1 calendar doesn't force everyone to change their plans). Particularly if you're keen on **Jaguars** – as that will be the featured marque at the **Silverstone Classic 2009**.

Text: [Charis Whitcombe](#)

Photos: [Roger Dixon](#) - all **strictly copyright**. For further information please visit www.rogerdixonphotography.com











ClassicInside - The Classic Driver Newsletter
[Free Subscription!](#)
Gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/silverstone-classic-2008>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.