

CLASSIC DRIVER

The Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy 2009



Same driver-pairing as 2008, but in a different car; Karl Wendlinger and Ryan Sharp, in the K plus K Motorsports Saleen S7, won the 2009 Royal Automobile Tourist Trophy at Silverstone.

With 2009 being something of an interim year for international sports car racing, the organisers of this year's premier British event did well to attract generally good grids of GT1, GT2, GT3 and GT4 road-based GTs. I say *generally*, as the **Saleen** in **GT1**, and **Ginetta** and **Donkervoort** in GT4, do stretch the 'road car' credibility of the series a touch.

Maserati I can forgive, for its super-desirable **MC12** comes from a magnificent street-car range and the Modenese company has a strong history in long-distance racing going back to the 50s.



For 2010, the rules have been extensively shaken up to allow only much less modified cars – a good thing, as shown by the 2010-spec **Marc VDS Racing Ford GT1** [above] at Silverstone last weekend.

Anyway, back to the present. Ex-Grand Prix driver **Wendlinger** had put the Czech team's **Saleen** on pole and led – safety car incidents apart – for most of the 65-lap event. The **Michael Bartels/Andrea Bertolini Vitaphone Racing Team Maserati MC12** was second, 5.4 seconds behind the leader and 25 seconds ahead of the third-place **Corvette Z06**.

In GT2 – run as a sub-class of the main race – it was the familiar **Ferrari** vs. **Porsche** battle, with the **Westbrook/Collard Porsche 911 GT3 RS** coming out on top, over the raft of **Ferrari 430 GT2s**.



As usual, the less-modified **GT3** cars raced on both days, with the **French AutoGT Racing Morgan Super Sports** winning both rounds. It was an impressive result with the team's two-driver pairings sharing a win apiece. The races also saw the debut in GT3 of the rear-wheel-drive **Audi R8s**, finishing third in Race 1 and second in Race 2.

Pretty good, but given the industrial might of **Audi**, it shows how great was the achievement of **Morgan** to win both rounds.



Finally, in the **GT4 Cup** it was a **Ginetta G50** benefit. **Aston Martin** enthusiasts were disappointed that **Michael Mallock** in the **RS Williams Vantage GT4** could not convert the form displayed in qualifying (on pole for Race 2) into a strong showing during the races.

John Godley, **Motoring Secretary** of the **Royal Automobile Club**, commented:

"The members of the **Royal Automobile Club** who attended the **FIA GT Championship** race today were all delighted at the quality of the grid and the close racing throughout. Down to the final laps, either of two cars, each driven by previous winners of the trophy, could have claimed the victory.

"That **Sharp** and **Wendlinger** won successively, equalling a record that stood for 27 years - and this too achieved in a different car - added to the occasion. The quality of the racing was up to that of the best races in the past few years and of those in the 50s and 60s, when the likes of Stirling Moss were competing, in fact right back to the 1905 to 1908 era, when it was first held on the Isle of Man. For well over a century, the **Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy** has been running strongly, and we're already looking forward to next year!"

Text: Steve Wakefield

Photos: DPPI / FIA GT

ClassicInside - The Classic Driver Newsletter

[Free Subscription!](#)

Gallery

Hide gallery

Hide gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/royal-automobile-club-tourist-trophy-2009>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.