CLASSIC DRIVER

Goodwood Festival of Speed 2010: Review

Visitors to the Goodwood Festival of Speed fall into several distinct categories. There are the fans of modern F1, crowding round the Drivers' Club to catch a glimpse of Jenson or Lewis. There are the more conservatively dressed cognoscenti, ooh-ing and ah-ing over the 16 priceless Alfas from the Museo Storico Alfa Romeo in Arese, and the Cartier Style et Luxe concours, won this year by Francis Lombardi's Maserati A6GCS. There are the rally types, spending most of the day at the Forest Rally Stage at the top of the hill… and then there are the bikers.

But for hundreds of happy picnickers with no particular affiliation, those who might not know (nor care about) the chassis number of every car on the hill, the delight is in the sheer variety of fun and games offered at **Lord March's** three-day garden party.

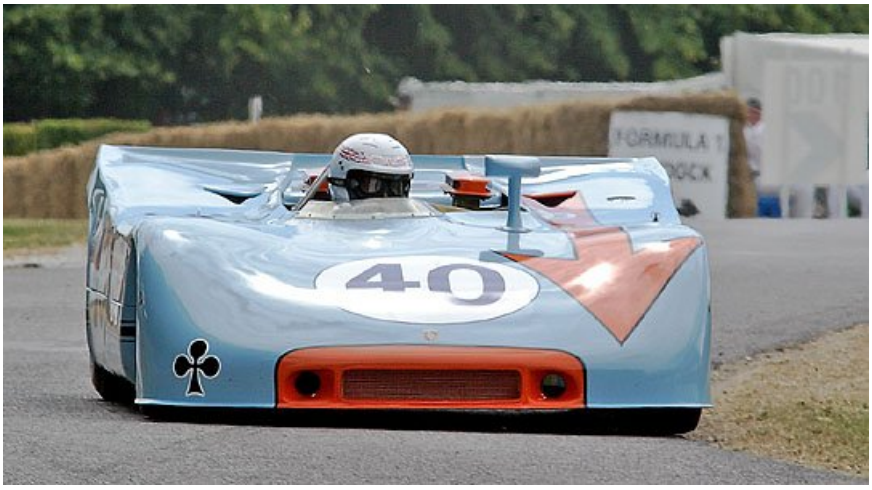
Not all the delights are four-, or even two-wheeled. Don't forget the **Rock Gods**, for a start. On Sunday, extravagantly bearded as ever, **ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons** was joined by fellow guitar superstars **Jeff Beck** and **Jimmie Vaughan**. They played **Foxy Lady** right outside **Goodwood House** and afterwards, **Gibbons** said of the **Festival**, "Man, you can't describe… You have to see it for yourself."

Suddenly the **Avro Vulcan** bomber looms overhead, a design that entered service in 1953 – a sinister angel of death from the **Cold War** era or a remarkable engineering achievement, depending on your viewpoint. Either way, the sight and sound of this huge, delta-wing subsonic jet, recently restored at **Bruntingthorpe**, never fails to fill spectators with a sense of awe.

At every moment of the **Festival** there is some new spectacle to gawp at – such as the emotional sight of **Sir Jackie Stewart**, wearing a replica blue helmet exactly like the late **Jim Clark's**, and taking the wheel of the **Lotus-Ford** that his fellow Scot took to victory in the **1965 Indy 500. Clark**, who led for 190 of the 200 laps, was the first driver to average over 150mph in a 500-mile race and it was Ford's first victory at the **Brickyard**. Since winning the race, the **Lotus** has spent decades on display in the **Henry Ford Museum** but, prepared now by Classic Team Lotus, it looked perfect and ran faultlessly. Back in 1965, Clark's pit crew were the legendary **Wood Brothers**, then famous for their lightning pitstop work in **NASCAR** events. Two of the original brothers, **Leonard and Delano Wood**, were reunited with the car and present throughout the Festival of Speed this year.

One unexpected highlight for this ardent enthusiast was the chance to see the hill at speed, from the passenger seat of the new, limited-edition **Ford Focus RS500**, driven by **Touring Car** legend **Paul Radisich**. No ordinary Ford production car, just 500 examples of the 350PS model have been built, all finished in hand-applied matt black foil. Sitting among cars worth 10 – or even 100 – times as much, the hot little Ford attracted immense attention from, er, a younger section of the audience. “What amazing torque,” said Radisich with enthusiasm, as we belted away from the startline.

Goodwood is like that every year, packed with an ever-growing number of motorsport’s high achievers and superstars, past and present. It’s an autograph hunter’s paradise – if that’s your thing.



On the hill itself, the show is almost non-stop and it would take several books to describe the extraordinary array of cars constantly screaming away every few seconds from the startline. **Nick Mason** in an **Auto Union Type D**, **Win Percy** in a **Jaguar Historic** saloon, **Bobby Unser** in a variety of **Indy cars** dating from the 1930s and 1960s, **Dieter Glemser** in the experimental **Mercedes-Benz C111** turbo-diesel record-breaker of 1978, **Stuart Graham** in a **Ford GT Mark II**, **Steve Soper** in a **1939 BMW 328** racing coupé, **Jochen Mass** in a series of **Mercedes-Benz** racers from 1902 to more modern times, **John Surtees** in the **Ferrari** that brought him the **1964 F1 World Championship**, **Emerson Fittipaldi** in one of his winning **McLarens**... it just goes on in that vein, seamlessly, throughout the entire Festival.

On Sunday, the generosity of radio star **Chris Evans** raised a rather large fortune for **Children in Need** as he made his **Ferrari** collection available and some of his lucky listeners were given a ride up the hill by well-known drivers. **Evans** himself was unobtrusively present, driving one of his own cars while quietly but enthusiastically making sure that his listeners were properly looked after.

Still looking futuristic, even though it dates from 1968, was the mid-engined **Marcos Mantis XP** (Experimental Prototype) of its American owner/driver, **Ned Morris**, whose father acquired it in the USA 40 years ago. As with the better known Mantis design concept of 1962, the radically innovative angular design of the **XP** was also penned by **Dennis Adams**. The **XP** chassis, typical of **Marcos** at the time, was a stressed plywood monocoque and the suspension was based on the contemporary **Cooper F1** car. Intended to be a Le Mans racer, it raced just once at Spa in 1968 and the project came to an end when the **1968 Le Mans 24Hrs** was postponed to September – by which time **Marcos** had been forced to convert the car to road use and export it to avoid tax trouble. Ned has restored this forgotten British lost cause to perfection and his research has confirmed that it is the only **Mantis XP** ever made.

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Meanwhile, **Roger Wills** was the outright winner of the timed section of the **2010 Goodwood Festival of Speed**, clocking a time of 47.15 seconds with his **Williams-Cosworth FW05** and comfortably beating double **British Rally Champion Johnny Milner's** 50.00 seconds time in his **Toyota Celica** sprint car. Saturday's surprise leader, **Anthony Reid**, spun his little **Lola** at the first corner on Sunday, putting himself out of contention in the final runs. Former **Goodwood** hillclimb winner **Justin Law** was enjoying himself this year, entertaining the crowd with the **Don Law Racing Jaguar XJ220**-based **Transit** van. Throwing the unlikely vehicle up the hill with the same style he puts into driving real **Group C** cars, **Justin** clocked an astonishing time of 61 seconds – the van leaning extravagantly in the tighter corners.

But for personal reasons, the **Classic Driver** 'style' award for 2010 must go to our regular contributor, **Tony Dron**. Not for his driving, however, but for the resourceful way he ensured he wouldn't be late for the Saturday evening ball at **Goodwood House**. Throwing aside his **Mercedes** racing overalls, **Dron** changed into black tie before taking the wheel of the oldest car on the hill – the **1902 Mercedes Simplex 40HP** – for the final run of the day.

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The Who
TheMagicBus

LOTUS
"Perfectly suited to taming race tracks around the world"

Text: *Charis Whitcombe*
Photos: *Roger Dixon (www.rogerdixonphotography.com)*
Photo of 1902 Mercedes Simplex 40HP: Jutta Reinhardt, Gaukler Studios

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