

CLASSIC DRIVER

Silverstone Auctions to offer the Dutch Grand Prix-winning, James Hunt Hesketh



There are few images that improve on a jubilant James Hunt spraying the champagne after a GP win, looking forward - no doubt - to an early night with a good book...

The Englishman's colourful antics, both on- and off-track, were a highlight in an otherwise dreary 1970s Britain. On his day, he was unbeatable, seeming to draw on a reserve of nervous energy that probably took its toll in later years. He died of a heart attack, aged just 45, in 1993.

Now, new auction house Silverstone Auctions has, as one of the highlights of its inaugural, Silverstone Classic sale, the very car that made Hunt, Lord Hesketh and innovative designer Harvey Postlethwaite everyday names: the Hesketh 308.

And it's a very special 308; chassis 308/2 was the car in which Hunt took his first, and the team under Lord Hesketh's ownership only, Grand Prix win. Having joined Hesketh in 1974 and enjoyed his first podium finish at the Swedish GP that June, it was at the 1975 Dutch GP at Zandvoort that saw Hunt finally achieve victory. Hunt was the first Englishman to win a Grand Prix since Peter Gethin's tight Monza finish in 1971.



The next year Hunt joined McLaren and, after many tense battles with Niki Lauda, won the World Championship.

After Hesketh closed the GP team at the end of 1975, this car was run as part of a two-car team for Guy Edwards and Harald Ertl.

In recent years it has been restored to its original, unsponsored (one is tempted to describe it as 'virgin white', but...) colours and raced extensively in historic racing.

The Hesketh 308/2 is fully race-prepared by WDK, newly crack-tested and ready to race, coming with "a substantial spares package", including the custom-made original steering wheel used only by James Hunt himself. It will be offered for sale at Silverstone Auctions' 23 July event, during the Silverstone Classic weekend.

Other entries include a 1961 Deep Sanderson 301 Prototype (Le Mans, Spa, Nürburgring history) at £46,000 - 50,000, a 1970 Costin Amigo (£70,000 - 90,000) and an 'outside bonnet locks', 'flat floor' 1961 Jaguar E-type 3.8 Series 1 Roadster for £120,000 - 150,000.

For further information, see www.silverstoneauctions.com.

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Photo: Silverstone Auctions

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