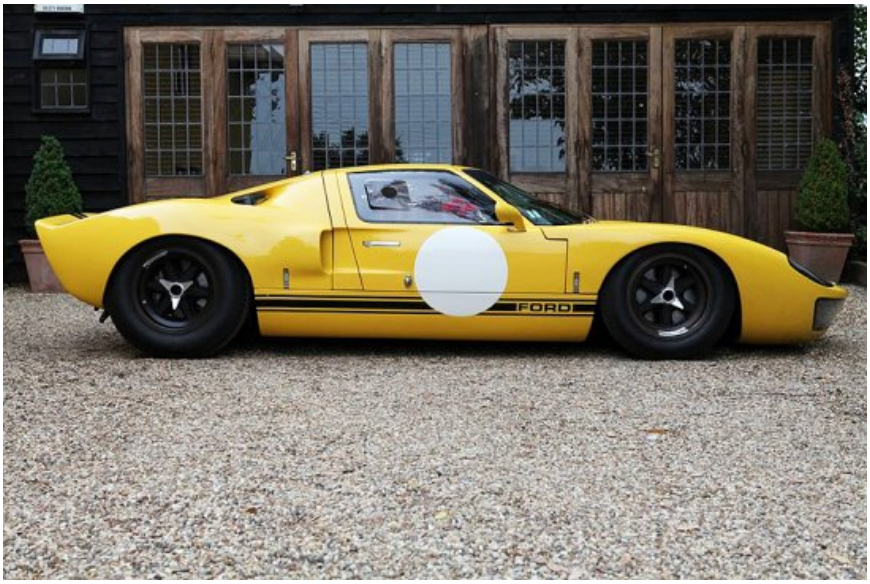
CLASSIC DRIVER

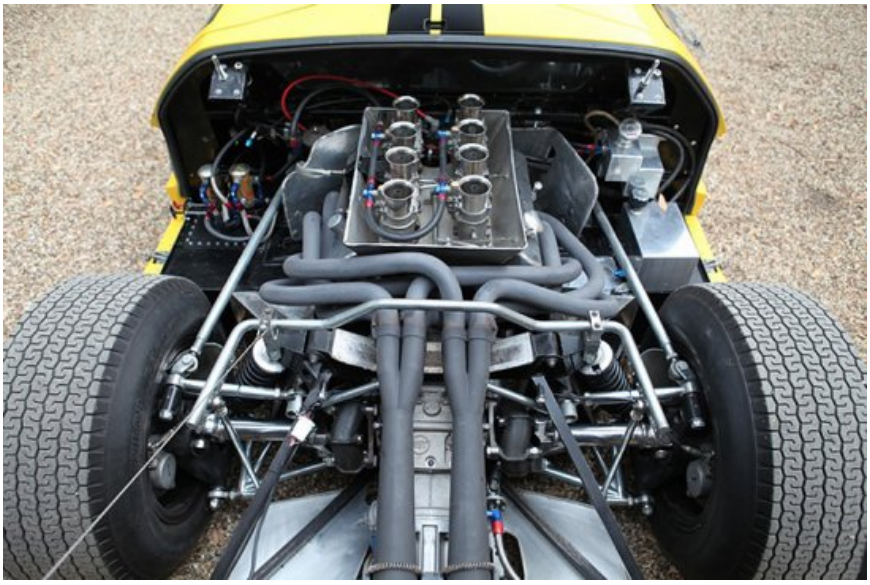
New to Classic Driver: 1965 Ford GT40, the ‘Grand Prix’ film camera car

Just how did John Frankenheimer achieve those stunning car-to-car shots, brought to the cinema in very 1960s split-screen editing? Many of them were filmed from an adapted version of this very car, the ex-1966 Brussels Motor Show Ford GT40, a potent racing car converted to high-speed camera platform and, in recent years, a front-running, pre-66 historic racer.

Classic Driver dealer Maxted-Page Ltd is offering chassis P/1027, now restored to its original Belgian yellow racing livery, and in tip-top racing condition, ready for action at the 2012 Le Mans Classic, the Tour Auto or any number of top events worldwide including – subject to invitation – the Goodwood Revival. In 2005, Sam Hancock drove it to victory in the Goodwood Revival Whitsun Trophy, setting a blistering lap record of 1:23.7 on the way.

‘Grand Prix’, directed by John Frankenheimer in 1966, is popularly considered one of the best motor racing films. It included much footage from the 1966 season, as well as some unforgettable acting by genuine Formula One drivers such as Graham Hill and the British broadcaster Raymond Baxter.

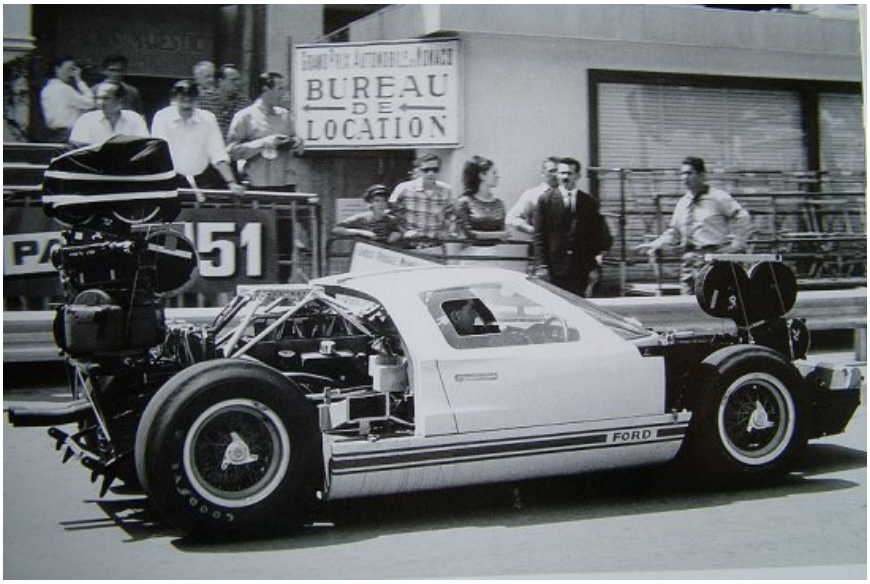




Beneath a predictably preposterous plot, the action is fairly realistic and considerably enhanced by the high-speed stunts where stars such as James Garner (a very handy driver) followed the modified GT40, just inches away from the camera lens. The producers used professional drivers behind the wheel of the 200mph GT40 and it took real guts to maintain a realistic pace at a circuit such as Monza.

After its vital, backstage role on the silver screen, P/1027 was sold by MGM to the Briggs Cunningham Automotive Museum in Costa Mesa, California, where it remained until the museum’s closure in the late 1990s. Arch enthusiast and doyen of the collecting world, Sir Anthony Bamford, then bought it, entrusting its race preperation to Gelscoe Motorsport who produced the Whitsun Trophy-winning machine you see here, all under the close supervision of long-term GT40 racer Willie Green.

In 2006 it was sold to Lord Irvine Laidlaw who campaigned it – now in his familiar maroon/silver colour scheme, and run by the experienced Simon Hadfield – at the 2008 Le Mans Classic and at Dijon in 2009. Maxted-Page then sold it to the current owner, who returned it to its original livery and ran it just once, at the 2010 Le Mans Classic.



Now equipped with new fuel bladders fitted by Premier Fuel systems (certificates available), in “totally race-ready condition” and with FIA HTP papers - Period F - and a full history file, the UK-duties-paid car represents the perfect opportunity for those looking for a potent historic racing car with fascinating history both in, and out, of period.

For further information see the car in the Classic Driver car database, email enquiries@maxted-page.com or call +44 (0) 178 747 7749.

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