

CLASSIC DRIVER

Nürburgring record-hunters at dawn: Porsche 956 and 918 Spyder

Lead

To photograph a current record-holder at the Nordschleife is a rare opportunity. Stefan Bogner had two in front of the lens: the new Porsche 918 Spyder and Stefan Bellof's Porsche 956, for 30 years an unbeaten record-holder at the 'Green Hell'...

The lap time that Stefan Bellof set in the Porsche 956 on 28 May 1983 is unbeaten to this day.

It's hard to believe, but the lap time that Stefan Bellof set on 28 May 1983, in the Porsche 956, is unbeaten to this day: 6 minutes and 11.13 seconds. Neither the driver nor the team had expected to achieve this incredible result, in qualifying for the 1,000km race. But the phenomenal Group C racing car with its 630HP six-cylinder turbo boxer engine, and a racing weight of just 850kg, managed the near-impossible – even the average speed of more than 200km/h is still regarded as the fastest ever measured on the Nordschleife. No wonder: the Porsche 956 and its evolution version, the Porsche 962, are arguably the greatest endurance prototypes in history.

Meet the legends



You don't come across such legends every day – and certainly not at the place of their greatest victory. The Munich-based photographer and creator of 'Curves' magazine Stefan Bogner was at the Nürburgring when, shortly before sunset, he came across the Rothmans-liveried 956 in the paddock. An English collector rebuilt the record-breaking car, chassis number 007, for Bellof's former teammate, Derek Bell, to drive at the Avd Oldtimer Grand Prix in the summer of 2013 – the 30th anniversary of setting the lap record. And now it's back there. Having seen the car in the paddock, Bogner convinced the owner to bring the Porsche back to the track next morning for his photoshoot – with none other than Hans-Joachim Stuck at the wheel.

But Bogner has another ace up his sleeve: the Porsche 918 Spyder. On 4 September 2013, Porsche works driver Marc Lieb recorded a lap time in the hybrid supercar of just under seven minutes – which enabled the 918 to hold the title of 'fastest production sports car'. The record car in Martini livery is also at the Ring, and joins the 956 on track. The asphalt is wet from the rain, the fog hangs low in the woods, but the sun occasionally breaks through. Bogner is enthusiastic about the unearthly atmosphere of the 'Green Hell', hanging out of the camera car to capture the very special moment.

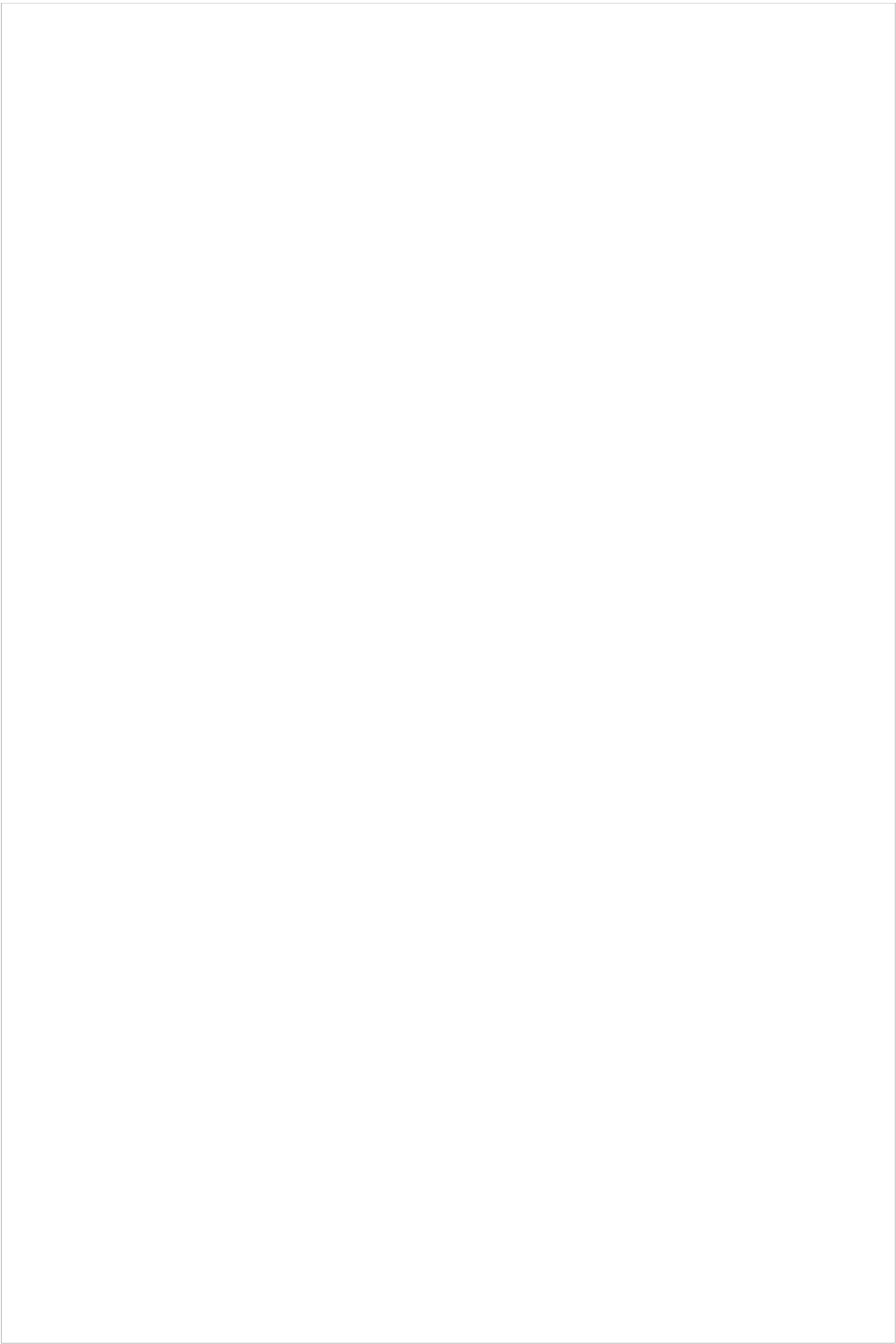
An unforgettable moment



In companionable harmony, the two record-breaking cars – the legend of 1983 and the world-leading sports car of 2013 – peacefully enjoy a joint victory lap on the Ring. But the spectacle is soon over: by 8:30, the Porsche duo is back in the paddock, the fog has lifted and the sun dries the asphalt – free to welcome the next challenger for the Nordschleife lap record.

Gallery













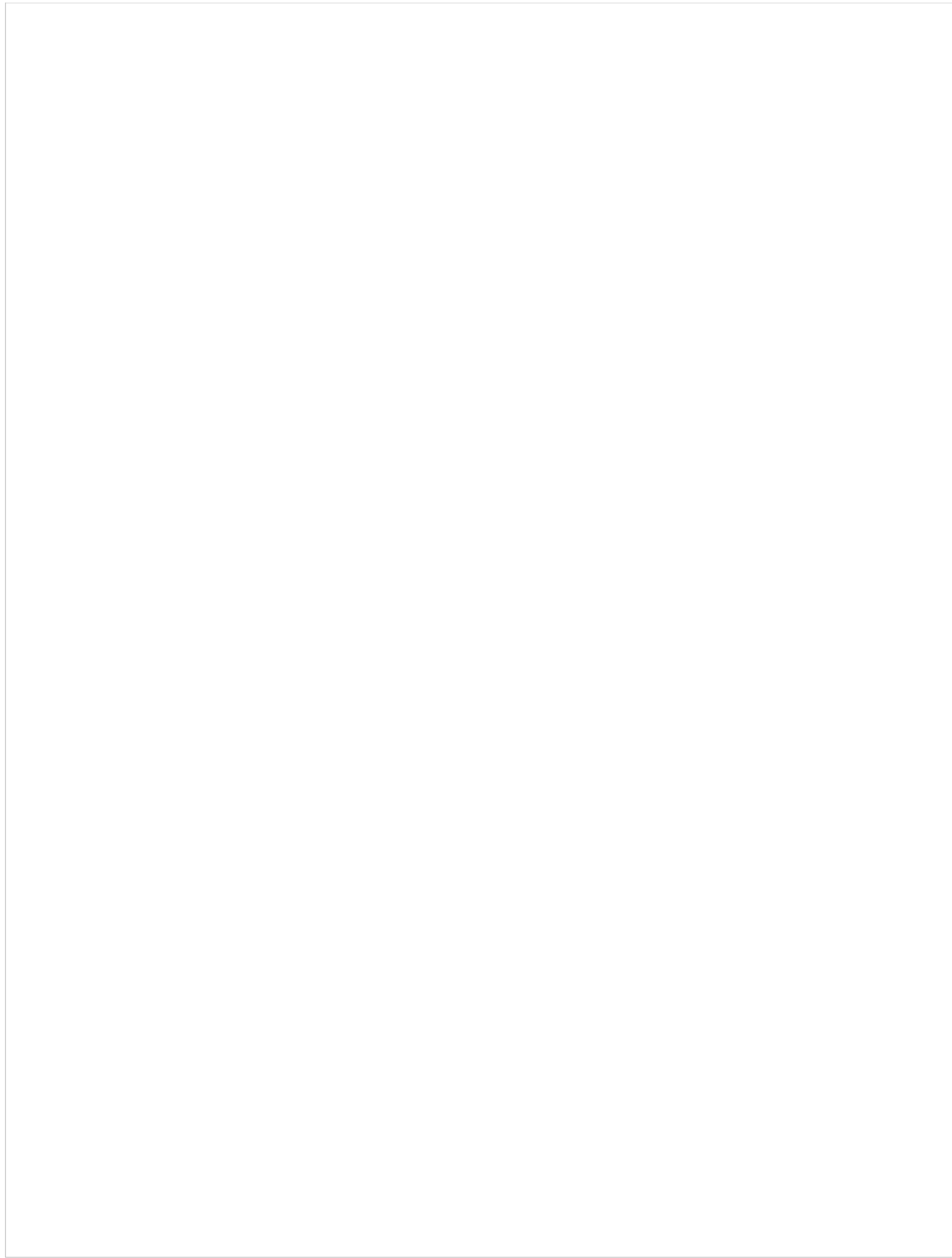












Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/cars/n-rburgring-record-hunters-dawn-porsche-956-and-918-spyder>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.