

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## A frank chat about post-racing life with Formula 1 veteran David Coulthard

### Lead

During last weekend's 76th Goodwood Members' Meeting, we sat down with 13-time Grand Prix winner David Coulthard to talk about thrill-seeking after Formula 1, historic racing, and the newly formed IWC Racing Team, for which the Scot finished a commendable 9th place in the Salvadori Cup...

When you look at the entry lists for the Goodwood Revival or Members' Meeting and see former professional racing drivers who competed at the highest level in their respective disciplines, there's always a small part of you that hopes they'll shine once again. But more often than not, it's ultra-talented gentlemen drivers or current motorsport aces who finish at the pointy end of the grid. And there's a simple reason for this: preparation, or rather lack thereof. Don't think for one moment that this is cause for these 'legends' not to enjoy themselves, though — it's just an entirely different mind-set.

### From karting to Le Mans



"I really enjoy the atmosphere and the family feeling of events such as these, but I don't feel the need to be on track," says David Coulthard, the Formula 1 veteran who raced a Mercedes-Benz 300SL 'Gullwing' at Goodwood this weekend as part of the newly formed IWC Racing Team. "I'm so lucky to have had such a rich and full career, from karting and Le Mans to Formula 1, but I can't really do this justice. This was the first time I'd jumped in the car, and to properly do the legacy of my racing career justice, I should've done some testing beforehand. But I don't have the time or the desire because I have too many other things in my life that give me pleasure."

### Preparation is key



Coulthard has driven 300SLs numerous times before on the road, including in the Mille Miglia retrospective, and dabbled in historic racing over the years, but he says to explore the limits of any car on a track is an entirely different experience. "I love the involving nature of cars like these, but because I only had seven laps during practice to try to find its limit, it's hard to have a complete experience — it's the equivalent of a professional golfer playing a new course for the first time without knowing the yardage of the holes." That said, the straight-shooting Scotsman has the utmost respect for those historic drivers who are quick and committed: "They work hard at it and they deserve to have the excitement of being successful."

You'd think if you'd started 246 races in tens of different Formula 1 cars, from both the V10 and V8 generations, that driving would never again compare. "You're right, there's nothing that replaces the unbelievable feeling of power and grip when you're in a fast corner or celebrating with your team, but those times are gone," he explains. "I feel complete in that journey, and therefore, I don't need to find something to replace Formula 1 — I have four of my cars in my museum at home, and I'm in this spoiled and luxury position where it's still there if I want it."

### A different world



A bonus — that’s exactly what weekends such as the Members’ Meeting, or the 1971 Mercedes-Benz 280 SL in his garage, or the chance to watch his young son Dayton karting are for David Coulthard in this stage of his life. “To have the chance to race a ‘Gullwing’ for IWC, to be here with my wife and my son, to stay in Goodwood House, is additional — I’m so lucky.” And he’s very complimentary of the Duke of Richmond’s ability to transport people from reality. “This is a different world, another life, in which people are friendly, the camaraderie is obvious, and the spirit’s tangible.” We couldn’t have said it better ourselves, David — see you at the Revival?

*Photos: Robert Cooper for Classic Driver © 2018*

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