

From championship cycling to trading supercars with 'Tornado Tom' Boonen

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Remi Dargegen Photography

Following an outstanding career on two wheels, the former Belgian professional cyclist Tom Boonen has turned his focus to the world of cars, fronting the luxury supercar dealership Iconicars. Rémi Dargegen paid a visit...





‘Tornado Tom’ Boonen is something of a national treasure in Belgium thanks to his heroic cycling career, during which he notched up countless victories including four in the gruelling Paris-Roubaix and three in the equally challenging Tour of Flanders.

After 15 years in the saddle, Boonen retired from professional cycling in 2015. But being an elite athlete, he couldn’t simply ‘switch off’ his competitive gene. Nope, he decided to pursue another of his passions instead and promptly obtained his motor racing licence, competing in the demanding 25-hour VW Fun Cup at Spa-Francorchamps less than a month later.



“Cars and motorsport have always been two of my main interests in life,” Boonen tells us during our visit to [Iconiccars](#), the swish new supercar dealership he founded in Tienen, Belgium, together with Joeri Vanhumbek, CEO of the expansive Carconnex network. “I remember doing a school project about the Bugatti EB110 when I was 11 and I always took car magazines to races.

“I loved competing in the Fun Cup, and I’ve done more than 50 races since then. Motorsport motivates me to keep fit and is one of the activities in which I find joy nowadays. It’s difficult to compare racing bicycles and cars – all I can say is that they both give me a chance to express myself.”



Founding Iconiccars was a natural progression for Boonen, who’s appreciated and enjoyed exotic road cars ever since buying a Chevrolet Corvette Z06 early on in his cycling career. It’s fair to say a majority of the cars in the showroom – or ‘lounge’, as Iconiccars calls it – makes a Corvette seem frankly mundane.

Boonen explains that the onus of Iconiccars’ inventory is on ultra-rare supercars and hypercars, those machines that stir the greatest emotions in him and, in turn, his customers. The proof is in the pudding and during our visit, there are three sensational cars we confess to having never even seen in the metal before: a gorgeous yellow Ferrari Sergio, one of six built, an aggressive Italdesign ZeroUno, one of just five extant, and a quirky Donkervoort D8 GTO-RS.



The Bugatti Veyron and ravishing red Ruf CTR3 are hardly pedestrian, either. The latter is, incidentally, Boonen's favourite, although since our visit he's taken an outrageous road-legal McLaren P1 GTR finished in bright yellow into stock.

"There will always be a market for the rarest and most special cars," continues Boonen, "and by focusing on providing the highest quality service, we aim to satisfy even the most knowledgeable of customers and guide them through an experience they will never forget."



He hopes that Iconicars' slick presentation, ability to effectively utilise the wider the network in which it's a part of in order to source the most desirable cars and its attention to customer service will elevate the dealership in what is a very competitive space in the market. The ingredients are certainly there - we wish Boonen and his team all the very best.

Before we force ourselves to leave, we can't resist asking Boonen whether he prefers two or four wheels for a sunny Sunday excursion. "For fun, I drive my Porsche 964 Turbo 3.6, which I adore and is truly a part of the family - my kids have even given it a nickname!"

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