

CLASSIC DRIVER

Racing Porsches for the whole family at RM Sotheby's Monterey

Lead

RM Sotheby's lineup for their Monterey 2021 auction is looking pretty spectacular, but what really caught our attention was the trio of Porsche race cars. Between the 917 K, 914-6, and 917/30 Junior, there's a hot seat for all ages.



Ask any petrol head to name the top 5 most iconic racing cars of all time and a Gulf-liveried 917 K, [just like the one you see here](#), is likely to make the list. Powered by an inimitable flat-12, this Porsche has recently benefitted from a complete restoration by Paul Lanzante to its correct 917 K Le Mans specification. While no 917 could be considered run of the mill, this specific 917 is an indisputable icon of both motorsport and film, having starred alongside Steve McQueen in the 1971 feature Le Mans; perhaps the most accurate depiction of motorsport ever to grace the silver screen. Prior to this 917's big screen appearance, it raced in the real 24 Hours of Le Mans, piloted by David Hobbs and Mike Hailwood to as high as 3rd place before the notoriously treacherous race retired the car. Despite only minor damage, the entire chassis was swiftly replaced back at the Porsche factory and the car continued to race under Team Shell Heckersbruch until 1974. Now in immaculate condition, this 917 K is "on the button" and ready to race again.



The 914 is somewhat of a black sheep among Porsche's back catalogue of superlative sports cars. With the rear of the car largely mirroring the front, many joked that you could never tell if a 914 was coming or going, while its shared development with Volkswagen did little to help the diminutive 914's sporting credentials. However, time has been kind to the 914 with its lean, angular design ageing gracefully in the presence of today's crop of rotund roadsters. Likewise, the ever-soaring prices of the rest of Stuttgart's range has made the 914 one of the most desirable and accessible classic Porsches on the market. Although, what you see here is no mere 914 as crammed behind the driver's seat is a 2.0 litre air-cooled flat-six from the 911T of the late 60s, making this one of just over 3000 914-6s ever made. [This 1970 914-6](#) is racier still, featuring a full roll-cage and four-point harnesses, and it's simply begging to embarrass some 911s at the soonest possible classic rally.





You'd be forgiven for thinking that this is one of the real 917/30s that so overwhelmingly dominated Can-Am racing that the series was scrapped entirely. In fact, this is only a 2/3 recreation, but you'd need a concours judge at hand to distinguish it from the real-deal just by looking at these images. Lovingly hand built in New Zealand, every aspect of this 917/30 Junior has been painstakingly CAD modelled to mirror the iconic race car, even down to the visible sections of the TIG welded aluminium spaceframe chassis and wheel fans, which are each attached with 160 rivets. The little car's creator was unyielding in their dedication to preserving the original car's proportions, and so installed the drivetrain from a Kawasaki Mule 610 farm vehicle as it was one of the few units that would fit inside the streamlined body. Despite the unglamorous origins of the powertrain, I'm sure we can all agree that it beats the electric motors found in the majority of similar recreations. As a result, [this 917/30 Junior](#) can not only fit both children and adults alike, but it also has enough torque to be useful at a racetrack for towing tyre trolleys, or even full-sized race cars. Without a doubt, this is one of the most thoughtfully crafted miniature race cars we've seen, and would make an excellent piece of automotive sculpture, or as a first step into the world of motorsport for the budding car enthusiast in your family.

Gallery

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