

CLASSIC DRIVER

Raced by Michael Schumacher, this Benetton B192 radiates Formula 1 history

Lead

It was driven to podium glory by Michael Schumacher in the 1992 Formula 1 World Championship. Steeped in racing history, the yellow and green Benetton B192 is now coming up for sale with Aguttes on 25 April at the Tour Auto sale. We cannot wait to see it back on the track.



With the opening of the Formula Legend 3.5 by Peter Auto, the Formula 1 cars of the 90s will find this year a new and very competitive playground. And there is no doubt that the Benetton B192-06 driven by Michael Schumacher in the 1992 FIA Formula 1 World Championship will be more than welcome in this brand new meeting. In addition to its spectacular livery, well anchored in our memories, this car has been an important step in Michael Schumacher's career.

Gautier Rossignol, the head of the Aguttes On Wheels department, [who will offer this car for sale as a preamble to the next Tour Auto on Monday, April 25 in Paris](#) summarizes well what this car is about: "This Benetton B192-06 is exceptional in many aspects, it is the F1 car that allowed Michael Schumacher to emancipate himself before imposing himself as one of the greatest F1 world champions of all times! There is no doubt that every F1 car that passed through his hands has that extra soul that turns a race car into an icon."



When Italian fashion giant Benetton bought the struggling Toleman team in 1985, it enlisted the services of the highly talented engineer Rory Byrne. After years of investments, the South African could finally rely on a significant Research & Development budget at his disposal. Thus, the B186 powered by the BMW Turbo engine allowed Benetton to take a first victory in their first full season. This was the beginning of a saga of resounding successes throughout the following decade, where Byrne's genius came to the fore thanks to a mix of optimal aerodynamic efficiency and rather conservative technical solutions.



In 1992, Benetton chose to start the F1 season with a "B" version, an evolution of the previous year's B191 model. It was not until the fourth Grand Prix, in Spain, that Benetton presented its new B192 chassis designed by Byrne. In the same line as the B191, with its front and rear pushrod suspensions, the powerful Ford HB V8 and no semi-automatic gearbox or active suspension, the car quickly stood out thanks to its breath-taking performances. Michael Schumacher, Benetton's main driver, rewarded the team almost immediately by finishing second behind Mansell's Williams-Renault. He followed this up by finishing fourth in Monaco and second in Canada.

Michael Schumacher drove the B192-06 chassis for the first time at the ninth race of the season, at Silverstone on 12 July 1992, with the number 19. His performance was very

impressive: fourth in qualifying, third after the warm up and fourth position after the race, behind the Martin Brundle in the second Benetton.



During the following Grand Prix, on July 26, 1992, in Germany on the very fast circuit of Hockenheim, the Benetton were handicapped by the lack of power of their Ford HB engine, which could not really compete against the Renault, Honda and Ferrari engines. While the Williams-Renault cars clearly dominated the rest of the grid, Schumacher, racing for the first time at home, had the public screaming with joy as he overtook Alesi on the start line in the B192-06 before finishing third behind Nigel Mansell and Ayrton Senna.



The Spa Grand Prix on August 30, 1992 was marked by a battle for the title of "best of the rest" between Senna, Patrese and Schumacher, Nigel Mansell having already been crowned world champion in Hungary. The B192-06 was then a reserve car. Michael Schumacher won the race at the wheel of B192-05, a first F1 victory for a German driver since Jochen Mass in 1975!



The last race of the B192-06's relatively brief but illustrious career took place at the Italian Grand Prix at Monza on September 13, 1992. As Gautier Rossignol recalls: "Michael Schumacher had a poor start, selecting the wrong gear and then colliding with a Ligier from behind at the first chicane. He had to pit to replace the nose and front wing at the end of the first lap, but then once again confirmed his status as one of the emerging talents of Formula 1 by finishing third behind Ayrton Senna and Martin Brundle. This marked the beginning of the official semi-retirement of the B192-06, which later became a reserve car in Portugal, Japan and Australia."



In addition to Michael Schumacher's extraordinary driving skills, the talents of Rory Byrne and technical director Ross Brawn proved decisive in allowing this chassis to shine against competition with considerable financial resources. In the end, the B192-06 chassis was present at eight of the 16 Grand Prix of the 1992 season, three as Michael Schumacher's car, and five as a reserve car. It then remained in the Benetton team and it is even possible that Ricardo Patrese used it for nine races during the 1993 season before he retired. It was then sold to British driver Matthew Mortlock who drove it in BOSS GP races before selling it to Prestige Racing in March 2010. Maintained at LRS Formula until 2015, the B192-06 then participated in several free practice sessions during demo events, such as the Classic Days meeting held in Magny-Cours, France before joining the collection of its current owner in February 2017.



With its iconic livery, which has stayed very close to the original, the car is still powered by the correctly specified Ford HB Langford Performance Engineering V8 and a six-speed sequential gearbox. It has just received two sets of wheels in line with those of the 1992 season. After a tune-up, it will be able to take the start of the promising Formula Legend 3.5 by Peter Auto. As Patrick Peter says: "If the Benetton shown here, the iconic Formula 1 car of the 1992 season in the hands of the great Michael Schumacher, ever ventures into our Formula Legends 3.5, I will certainly shudder at the idea that this unique piece (...), the fetish of our past passions, which it now represents, could break. But this fear, this shiver, I prefer it a thousand times to the sad feeling of seeing it age forgotten, cracked, mummified."

Now you know that if you become the lucky caretaker of this legendary Formula 1 car, it will not take long before you get an invitation to drive it on track!

Photos: Mathieu Bonnevie © 2022 / Aguttes

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