



GT NEWS

NEWSLETTER NR 2

FEB 17th 2006

SILVERSTONE SUPERCAR SHOWDOWN



TOURIST TROPHY



Silverstone has a stunning weekend of supercar action planned for May 6th and 7th, when the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy : the British round of the FIA GT Championship, will be the highlight of the Silverstone Supercar Showdown.

One of motor sports' most prestigious competitions, the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy, continues

its 21st century revival as it is contested in the British Round of the 2006 FIA GT Championship. The Tourist Trophy was the event that all the great racing drivers wanted to win. The late '50s and early '60s were probably the most significant in the Trophy's history, with some of motor sports' great names winning, including Stirling Moss, Denny Hulme, Graham Hill, Stuart Graham, Innes Ireland, Andrea de Adamich and Derek Bell in the fastest ever race. And most of the world's most desirable supercar marques have competed for the Trophy over the last hundred years including Rolls-Royce, driven and won by the founder, the Hon C S Rolls in 1906, Mercedes, Alfa Romeo, Porsche, Jaguar, Aston Martin, Ferrari, MG, Sunbeam, Lola and BMW. By being part of the FIA GT Championship, the Royal Automobile Club is demonstrating its continued commitment to the world of modern motor sports, as the battle of the titans takes place once again.

Royal Automobile Club Chairman, Tim Keown said, "This prestigious event aims to bring supercar owners and enthusiasts a spectacular, action-packed weekend, with two solid days of competition and entertainment. We are delighted that the historic Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy will be the centrepiece of the Silverstone Supercar Showdown, further securing its position as a firm fixture in contemporary motor sport. In its heyday, the Tourist Trophy was the event all the great racing drivers wanted to win and recent success proves that it's still the most coveted title."

Stephane Ratel, Chairman of SRO, promoter of the FIA GT Championship, added : "We are delighted to add a race as historic and as prestigious as the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy to the FIA GT Championship once again. 2006 looks like being one of the closest and most exciting seasons ever, and the teams and drivers are delighted to be heading back to the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit."

Richard Phillips, Managing Director of Silverstone Circuits Limited, commented, "The Silverstone Supercar Showdown is the perfect event to kick off another fantastic season of motorsport at Silverstone."

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SILVERSTONE SUPERCAR SHOWDOWN [continued]



"In its heyday, the Tourist Trophy was the event that all great racing drivers wanted to win, and recent success proves it is still a most coveted title" **Tim Keown, Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club**



For more information on the teams, drivers and everything about the FIA GT Championship, please visit : www.fiagt.com



SILVERSTONE SUPERCAR SHOWDOWN (Continued)

The power of the GT cars simply takes your breath away," Philipps continued, "Our free open paddock will give fans the opportunity to immerse themselves in the event, getting up close and personal with the cars, teams and drivers. There is also plenty to keep families and younger fans entertained away from the track, including a mixture of driver autograph sessions, air displays, trade stalls, entertainment zones, club car displays and a fun fair."

Although the undoubted star of the Silverstone Supercar Showdown, between May 5th and 7th, will be the FIA GT Championship, there will be an action-packed programme of support events, including the first-ever rounds of the FIA GT3 European Championship. The Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli Europe and the Ferrari Challenge Pirelli Coppa Shell will have two races each, while the Maserati Trofeo will race on Sunday. As well as the non-stop on-track action, the event will include a display of modern supercars from manufacturers, distributors and clubs in the centre of the circuit, as well as exhibitors of supercar products, art and photography. There will also be a fun-fair and other entertainment for all the family, not forgetting an open paddock, autograph sessions, air displays and more. Tickets go on sale in March, with a free pit-lane walkabout for the first 500 people to purchase a weekend ticket



MARTINI WORLD CIRCUIT TO FEATURE FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP

It has been announced that the FIA GT Championship will be featured on the Martini World Circuit, a new global motor sport TV show, which will be launched on March 1st this year. A series of 35 half-hour programmes, it will be broadcast weekly, and will be seen by millions of viewers on channels around the world.

The aim of the show is to reflect the glamour of top class motor sport, both on and off the track. The show is keen to ensure that it offers a global television platform for all top racing teams and their respective sponsors. This interest is not just confined to motor sport related stories, although these are an important part of the show. "No other programme will provide such a mix of stories week in and week out. We are also interested in lifestyle oriented stories away from the race circuit - something that could be of real interest to team sponsors, and the media activities they organise throughout the season."

Martini World Circuit Series Producer, Colin Campbell explained: "On Martini World Circuit we'll be covering all the top motor sport from around the world. Throughout the series not only will we be showing race action from the FIA GT Championship we'll be featuring lifestyle stories from behind the scenes. We want to profile the drivers, the teams and find out what goes on at FIA GT events."

Any FIA GT teams or drivers who would like to be featured should contact the production offices on <http://www.tvcorp.co.uk/mail/> or +44 (0) 207 478 7305



PAUL RICARD TEST SESSION MARCH 7th and 8th



The second test session for the FIA GT3 European Championship, scheduled for March 7th and 8th at the Paul Ricard High Tech Test Track, is also open to other GT race cars, including the GT1 and GT2 cars from the FIA GT Championship

Track time is 9:00 to 17:00 on both days, with more details given closer to the date.

Entries close on February 24th. Forms can be obtained from Sandrine or Benjamin (sandrine@sro.co.uk or benjamin@sro.co.uk)

Members of the press wishing to attend the test days should contact the Media Delegate, Jacquie Groom, on jacquie@sro.co.uk



JMB RACING ANNOUNCES GT2 PLANS

Monaco-based team JMB Racing, winner of the 2001 N-GT Championship with the Ferrari Modena and runner-up in 2002 and 2003, has announced that they will enter two Ferrari 430 cars in the GT2 category of the 2006 series.

One car will be driven by team regulars Peter Kutemann and Antoine Gosse. They will aim for points towards the team title, while a second crew- yet to be announced - will be aiming for the GT2 drivers' title.

Having already announced their GT3 plans, JMB Racing is also working on a GT1 programme, which will be made public soon.



ANTOINE GOSSE
(France)
Age : 48
Competed in FIA GT since 2003



PETER KUTEMANN
(Netherlands)
Age : 58
FIA GT since 2000



2001 : N-GT Teams Champion with the Ferrari 360 Modena. N-GT Drivers Champions with Christian Pescatori and David Terrien

2002 : 2nd in the N-GT Teams Classification; Christian Pescatori second in N-GT Drivers Classification

2003 : competes in both GT and N-GT categories. 2nd in N-GT with four wins; driver Fabrizio de Simone and Andrea Bertolini 2nd and 3rd in the Drivers Classification. Victory in Estoril in GT with the new Ferrari 575

2004 : Enters two Ferrari 575 M Maranello cars in GT category : 2nd overall. Victory at Donington for Wendlinger and Melo

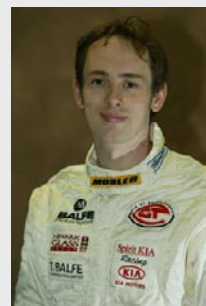
2005 : Enters two Maserati MC 12 in GT1. One win at Magny-Cours. Second in Teams, 3rd in Drivers classifications. Podium in GT2 at Dubai.

CUNNINGHAM JOINS BALFE AND DERBYSHIRE IN THE SALEEN

The Balfe Motorsport Team has signed Jamie Derbyshire and Neil Cunningham to partner Shaun Balfe in their Saleen S7R in the 2006 FIA GT Championship. Derbyshire shared the Mosler with Balfe last year, while Cunningham claimed a podium finish in the Embassy Racing Porsche at Silverstone, as well as a good finish in the Proximus 24 Hours of Spa. "We're pleased to have a strong line-up for the jump into GT1," Shaun said. "We know that some of the newer machinery will certainly be faster than us, but we have shown we can throw some great strategies out there, so a third driver makes a lot of sense to us."

Derbyshire can't wait to get into the car and start testing, especially after talking to Shaun following his brief test of the car. "It's going to be a good year," said Jamie. "It will certainly be interesting to see what the car is like, especially compared to the Mosler. I can't wait to get to grips with it, the carbon brakes are going to be something else to learn about. Shaun has told me they're mega once they're up to temperature," "I'm looking forward to the GT1 class. It's definitely going to be incredibly competitive this year. To be realistic I don't think we can challenge the Aston's on outright pace, but knowing how well the Balfe team can run the car I know that we can be there to challenge for the podium positions. I'm sure we're going to spring a few surprises during the year," he added.

Cunningham is also happy to have a full season of GT1 racing in ahead of him. "I'm over the moon!" said Neil. "A drive in a proper GT1 car in international competition is something I've been working for throughout my career and I can't wait to get behind the wheel of the car. Jonathan France and his team have decided to take a sabbatical this season and he has been incredibly helpful in backing me to go with the Balfe squad. I know that David Balfe and the rest of the team always turn out a damn good race car. With the work they're already doing and the driver line-up we've got I'm sure we can pick up some really competitive results through the year," he added.



SHAUN BALFE
(GBR - 33)
2005 : 4 G2 wins (Balfe Motorsport Mosler)
2004 : Spanish GT Champion (Mosler)
2003 : runner-up, British GT



JAMIE DERBYSHIRE
(GBR - 28)
2005 : 4 G2 wins (Balfe Motorsport Mosler)
2004 : FIA GT (Creation, Lister Storm)



NEIL CUNNINGHAM
(NZE - 43)
2005 : 3rd, British GT (Embassy Porsche)
FIA GT : 2nd GT2 at Silverstone, 5th at Spa

RENAUER SIGNS FORMER SKI-STAR HANS KNAUSS



Austrian team Renauer Motorsport has confirmed that it plans to enter two Porsche 996 GT3 RSR cars in the FIA GT Championship in 2006. The team, which took part in a number of races in 2005, scored a best result of second in the Brno round, with Wolfgang Kaufmann, Manfred Jurasz and Petr Valek at the wheel. The team held a presentation on the Semmering/Hirschenkogel ski-slopes at the end of January. There was a particular reason for this choice of location : former Austrian ski-star Hans Knauss has signed up to drive for Renauer for the 2006 season. His team-mates were announced as Manfred Jurasz, also from Austria, Wolfgang Kaufmann and Claus Schunk, both from Germany, and Petr Valek from the Czech Republic. Hans Knauss, aged 34, claimed seven world cup victories during his time on the ski pistes. Always fascinated with fast cars, he took part in a round of the Porsche Supercup in the VIP guest car, which, he said, gave him the motorsport 'bug'. "Sepp Renauer asked me if I would like to test a Porsche 911 GT3. We got on well from the start, and after that first test, we came up with this project," the Austrian said. "For me, this is a new beginning, and I am really looking forward to the first race."

WOLFGANG KAUFMANN SIGNS FOR FULL SEASON WITH RENAUER

Wolfgang Kaufmann, winner of the Porsche Cup in 2001, and a former FIA GT race winner, will be in the leading Renauer Porsche for the 2006 season. "I have been racing with some success with Renauer since 2001 in various categories, like the FIA SCC with the SR2 Tampolli Alfa, the Czech Endurance Championship and especially last season the FIA GT races at Monza (5th) and Brno (2nd)," Wolfgang said. "We will try to put in the very best performance with the small budget we have. My team-mate has not yet been decided, but should be announced in a couple of weeks. We should run on Dunlop tyres, continuing my long-term collaboration." Wolfgang took to the pistes during the presentation - his very first time on skis ! However, he was quoted later as saying "There is a reason that some others are skiers and I am a race driver!"



VALENTINO ROSSI TRIES A MASERATI MC 12



Seven-times World Champion on two wheels, Valentino Rossi recently tried a Racing Box Maserati MC 12 at the Misano Adriatico circuit. The Italian, who has previously raced a WRC car and tested a Formula One Ferrari, set a best lap time of 1:27, on a par with that set by the other drivers taking part in the test, which included Marci Cioci, who raced

for GPC at the end of 2005, finishing sixth in Bahrain.

Maserati Corse explained : "Arianna Matteuzzi, daughter of Gabriele Matteuzzi, is Valentino Rossi's girlfriend. Gabriele Matteuzzi shared the [Racing Box] drive in 2005 with Piergiuseppe Perazzini. The test was not planned and it was Rossi's passion for cars that was the motivation for the MC12 drive."

Racing Box has confirmed that they will enter their Maserati MC 12 in a number of European rounds of the FIA GT Championship in 2006. The car will be driven by Marco Cioci, Stefano Livio and Piergiuseppe Perazzini.

PHILIPP PETER - MARATHON MAN

The winter has been far from restful for new Race Alliance driver Philipp Peter. The Austrian - a regular in the FIA GT Championship since 2000 - has taken part in three long distance races in as many weeks : the 24 hour race in Dubai, the Mil Milhas Brasil and the 24 Hours of Daytona. He raced in three different cars - a BMW GTR, a Ferrari 575 M Maranello and a Porsche 996 - for three different teams (Düller, GPC Sport and Farnbacher).

In total, he spent 18 and a half hours behind the wheel during the 58 and a half hours of racing competition. Moreover, he spent 59 hours in a plane to be able to get from Switzerland to Dubai, then on to Brazil, back to Europe and finally out to the United States of America.



RACE ALLIANCE CONFIRMS GT2 PLANS

New team Race Alliance is planning to enter two Aston Martin DBR9 cars in the GT1 class - one, as previously announced, for Philipp Peter and Karl Wendlinger, and a second car, the drivers of which have not yet been named.

However, the team also plans to enter a Porsche 996 GT3-RSR in the GT2 class. The driver line- up for this car will be Lukas Lichtner-Hoyer and Dr. Thomas Gruber.

Lukas Lichtner-Hoyer is the owner of JetAlliance, a company which is specialized in the charter jet business, and is one of the partners in this new Austrian team.

GLPK CARSPORT PLANS 2006 CORVETTE C6 CAMPAIGN



Toine Hezemans has explained that it was looking likely that the GLPK Carsport combination would continue in 2006, with the same driver line-up of Mike Hezemans, Anthony Kumpen and Bert Longin - but with the new Corvette C6 car.

"Following talks over the weekend, this is the most probable scenario," Toine said. "It is an excellent team, with a good atmosphere, and we have to be able to aim for the top. The car should be very competitive." The trio claimed two wins in 2005 with the C5, at Imola and Zhuhai.

Moreover, Kumpen and Longin will race the C5 in the Belcar series, giving them plenty of time behind the wheel

MASERATI LAUNCHES MASERATI GRANSPORT MC VICTORY

To celebrate winning the 2005 FIA GT Manufacturers' Cup, Maserati has launched a new limited edition model of the GranSport.

The Maserati GranSport MC Victory will be officially launched at the upcoming Geneva Motor Show, and will be on the market from May, with only 180 uniquely numbered units produced.

As well as boasting finer standard equipment than the Maserati GranSport from which it derives, the new Maserati GranSport MC Victory offers a variety of new features that clearly link it to the Maserati MC12, celebrating its driving dynamics.

Externally, the Maserati GranSport MC Victory is immediately recognizable for its aerodynamic, blue carbon front and rear spoilers and for the Italian flag embedded in the side panels, another feature taken from the MC12.

The front splitter of the Maserati GranSport MC Victory was redesigned to guarantee more air load at high speeds with the addition of the two lateral aerodynamic profiles and a bigger protrusion. The Maserati GranSport MC Victory is now more driveable thanks to more direct and precise steering and an elevated stability at high speeds, the same characteristics as the Maserati MC12. Inside the cockpit of the Maserati GranSport MC Victory each and every driver will be able to experience the same exhilaration as the racing drivers of the Maserati MC12.



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