

## 2008 FIA GT Newsletter : Silverstone Preview



### Silverstone Preview

And finally, the long winter months are over, and the 2008 season can finally get underway ! Over the weekend of the 19th and 20th April, the first round of the twelfth season of the FIA GT Championship will unfold, and the names of the tenth Silverstone winner will eventually be known.

Silverstone provides familiar surroundings for the first event of the season, and the perfect conditions to allow the full grid of magnificent sportscars to show what they can do. With its long straights and combination of fast and slow corners, the track is popular with most of the teams and drivers. The nine previous visits to Silverstone have provided some excellent races and great variety in the winners.

The prestige and long history of the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy gives an added incentive to this first race of the season, with the prospect of adding names to the long list of past recipients, including many great names from the past 100 years. The Trophy will be escorted to Silverstone by the London to Silverstone Tour, with over thirty modern supercars heading for the track and their laps of honour on Friday lunchtime.

There is plenty of curiosity about this first race. There are few constants between 2007 and 2008, with new cars and new line-ups. Pre-season testing gave a first taste of what is to come, with very close times, but no-one can predict what will happen on Sunday April 20th, when the 2008 field is let loose for the first time. Will it be Aston Martin, Corvette, Lamborghini, Maserati or Saleen in GT1, Ferrari or Porsche in GT2, and Vertigo, Mosler or Saleen in G2 ? Plenty of variety, an undeniable quality in terms of teams and drivers – and plenty of questions. Questions that will only be answered after two hours of close-fought action.

Action that will be seen LIVE on increasingly more TV stations. The FIA GT Championship race will be shown live on ESPN Star in Asia, on TV Sport 5 in the Czech and Slovak Republics, on Sport+ in France, on DSF in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, on SuperSport in Greece, Sky Italia in Italy, on GO TV in Malta, on Showtime in the Middle East, on Sport 1 in the Netherlands, and on Sport TV in Portugal. More details for Silverstone will be announced shortly. Full details are available on the website.

Silverstone will not only be about the FIA GT Championship ! The first major meeting in Silverstone's 60th anniversary year will see a total of nearly 60 Million Euros worth of magnificent GT cars in action around the track. The first two rounds of the FIA GT3 European Championship will take place on Saturday and Sunday, with eleven different models taking part in the one-hour races. Ascari KZ1R, Aston Martin DBRS9, Corvette Z06, Dodge Viper Competition Coupe, Ferrari 430 GT2, Ford GT, Ford Mustang FR500, Lamborghini Gallardo, Jaguar XKR, Morgan Aero 8 and Porsche 997 Cup S will compete to see which will emerge victorious in this first confrontation of the 2008 season.

The GT4 European Cup is entering its second season with more cars, more makes, more drivers and a new class, Sports Light, for lighter cars with small production numbers. If last year's action is anything to go by, the spectators will be delighted by the close action between Aston Martin, BMW, Corvette, Nissan and Porsche, while Ginetta and KTM will face up in Sports Light, for two 30-minute sprints.

The Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli will also be in action, for their second meeting of the season, as will the Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli Coppa Shell. Packed grids, beautiful cars and an extremely international field should see plenty of close fighting around the 5.141 km Silverstone circuit.

Come rain or shine – and either is equally possible at this time of the year – Silverstone is on track for a wonderful weekend of GT action. Don't miss it !



Official website of the FIA GT Championship



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Back