The Coys

INTERNATIONAL HISTORIC FESTIVAL

1997 Event Guide £5.00

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LOUIS VUITTON
MALLETIER A PARIS
MAISON FONDÉE EN 1854

Silverstone

Event created and organised by The British Racing Drivers' Club

CHRYSLER

COYS OF KENSINGTON
FOUNDED 1919

Seeing is believing in pre-war sports car racing

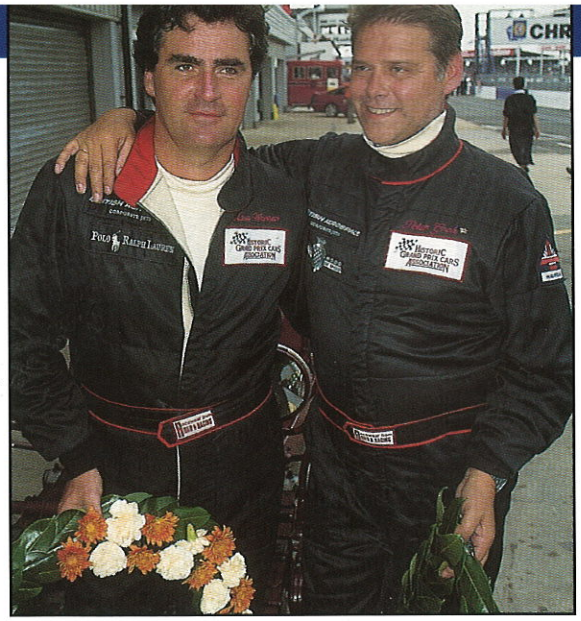
➢ Invictas, and Talbots fighting Bugattis — just as we might have back then.

Mixed up with them all will be the smaller cars, the Rileys, MGs and so on which had no chance of overall success in the big races, but which dominated their own engine-size classes. And they were also favourites in the TT, whose handicap format enabled each of these marques to score three victories.

MG successes started in the 750cc class with the various Midget models competing against the hitherto invincible Austin Sevens, then spread to the next class up with the arrival on the scene of the classic K3 Magnette in 1933. These cars, with 6-cylinder 1100cc engines, were twice class winners against strong Maserati opposition in the Mille Miglia, and achieved scores of lesser class victories all over the continent as well as at home.

Riley had made their name in the 1100 class with the famous 'Brooklands' Nine, a frequent winner at Le Mans and Ards, and the Sprite models extended the marque's success into the 1500 class. Both models gave many a young driver his first taste of racing in the 1930s, and continued to do so after the War: Mike Hawthorn and Innes Ireland both had their starts in Rileys.

The most successful British 1500 over the years however was Aston Martin, winner of its class at Le Mans every year the race was held between 1931 and 1937 except one, and with many successes in other events as well.



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The fastest Astons in this year's race should give the bigger-engined, but older, Alfas a run for their money. Among the cars taking part will be a number of those which gained success for the marque at Le Mans and elsewhere.

Other British cars were successful in the smaller classes of pre-war sports-car races, notably Lea-Francis, outright winners of the 1928 TT (on handicap), and Alvis, whose 1.5-litre contender was a pioneer of front-wheel drive about the same time.

Top: **Klaus Werner and Peter Groh will be looking for another win in Werner's Alfa Romeo 8c Le Mans.**
Above: **Cars wait for the start.**
Left: **The Stephen Curtis/David Morris Talbot in its unusual shade of green.**