

Relaunch of the International St. Moritz Automobile Week

Organisers of the Bernina Gran Turismo hillclimb, first run in 2015, have long held the ambition to revive the International Automobile Week, which last took place in 1929 and 1930 in glamorous St. Moritz. The event back then comprised of a concours d'élégance, a race over a flying kilometre, a rally, and the Bernina hillclimb.

As of 2021 the Internationale St. Moritzer Automobilwochen will be relaunched to include all of these events over one week in autumn based in the famous resort. "It was only logical to resume the Kilomètre Lancé and the Concours," said event Advisory Board member Florian Seidl. "Of course, such events have to be adapted to the times without losing the reference to history." Rather than running on the road, the race will take place at the airport in Samaden, within sight of Shellstrasse, the road where it was first held, and which still bears the name of the sponsor of the time. Event backer, Kurt Engelhorn and his team have recruited expert reinforcements in the form of German organisers Tobias Aichele and Jörg Litzenburger, known for the Solitude Revival and the Glemseck 101 motorcycle events respectively, to help with the planning.

"The Motorsport Revival will be a concours that is not a concours," continued Seidl. "Instead of the conventional, somewhat dusty display of over-restored vehicles, we will focus on racing and sports cars. It will be a very exclusive event, celebrating upscale lifestyle, but uninhibited and modern. This suits St. Moritz and not least the Kempinski Grand Hotel des Bains, where the event will take place. There will therefore only be a strictly limited number of tickets available to maintain exclusivity and the vehicles on display will also be selected according to strict criteria." A motoring-themed film festival is also planned during the week.

Another topic close to the organisers' hearts is the issue of the next generation, which is why there will not only be a decidedly young jury, but also a themed discussion panel where the new generation will have a voice. "This is the main reason why we want to leave the beaten track. We need to make Classic Cars and the related events interesting and exciting for a young audience. Therefore, we will bring more movement and action and much less stiff static into play. The events have to be more fun again."

Dates over which the various events will take place, culminating on the second weekend with the popular Bernina hillclimb, are 10-19 September. Each event has its own website and social media pages.



Thruxton Historic - Fast and Furious

With UK racers confined to home circuits for the time being, the Thruxton Historic race meeting, put on by Motor Racing Legends, will give them an opportunity to drive on the country's fastest circuit on the weekend of 12-13 June, and they have responded by filling the grids. Nestled in the Hampshire countryside, the circuit, opened in 1968, offers a thrilling high speed ride to competitors.

The meeting will welcome the usual mix of MRL grids, which include two grids for cars from the 1950s. The Woodcote Trophy is for original sports cars from post-war era, and the Stirling Moss Trophy is for sports racing cars up to 1961.

Touring cars are catered for with two 40-minute races in one big grid, encompassing everything from what was the U2TC (under two litre touring cars) series, to the MRL HTCC for Group A cars up to 1990, Group 2 cars up to 1981 and Group 5 cars up to 1969 – so everything from Ford Lotus Cortina and GTA Alfa, to Ford 'Cologne' Capris and 'Batmobile' BMWs, through SD1 Rovers and Jaguar XJSs, to BMW M3s and Ford Sierra RS500s. There are four separate podiums depending on period.

Pre-'63 GT drivers will have a dress rehearsal for the Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy feature race, which takes place at Classic Silverstone at the end of July. A one-hour, two-driver race is scheduled for them.

The most recent addition to the MRL line-up, the Jaguar Classic Challenge, will also have a one-hour, two-driver race, and more recently a Pre-War race has been added to the timetable after a big response from competitors keen to get their cars out of the garage after a long hiatus.

Julius Thurgood will bring his HRDC Jack Sears Trophy for pre-'66 touring cars, Allstars for GT and touring cars of the same period,



and Classic Alfa Challenge grids, giving many car owners the opportunity to enter two or even three races.

Icing on the cake will be the Jochen Rindt Trophy race. This was born from a group of competitors who wanted to race at Thruxton and formed the Classic Racing Car Club to organise a race for them. For early Formula 2, Historic and Classic F3, Formula Atlantic and FF2000, plus an invitation class, their efforts have garnered huge support, and nearly two months before the event the grid is virtually full. The event has also gathered support from Former F1 world champion Damon Hill supporting the F3 class, multi-championship winning race car constructor Adrian Reynard backing the FF2000 class and British club racing hero Ian Flux, sponsoring the Formula Atlantic class.

This prestigious trophy has been awarded by the BARC over the years, since the untimely death of Rindt, who had strong connections with Thruxton and Formula 2. The first JRT was won in 1971 by Graham Hill (Rindt's teammate at Lotus in 1970). Since then, the JRT has been run periodically for special races with the blessing of the BARC. Two 20-minute races are on the programme. Contact Rob Manger robmanger@live.co.uk for entries for this.