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ISSUE 09 NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018 £4.99

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W202 AMG
BUYING GUIDE

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HUNT'S
560 SEC**

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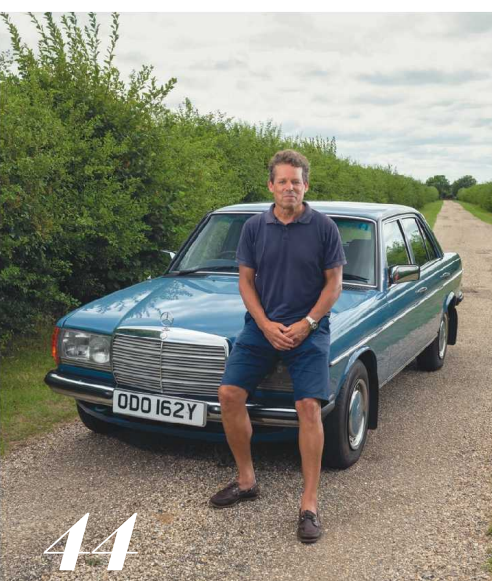
What's hot (and what's not) at auction.



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DRIVER**
**SEE PAGE 62
FOR DETAILS**

NEW BEGINNINGS...

WELCOME TO THE Nov/Dec edition of *Mercedes Driver*. I'm thrilled to have been appointed as editor of the magazine, and as you'll no doubt recognise by flicking through the following pages, I've enjoyed tracking down some of the very best Mercedes metal to present for your enjoyment. Chief among the special cars I've recently spent time with is the last new Benz owned by 1976 Formula One World Champion and British motorsport legend, James Hunt.

It hardly seems possible twenty-five years have passed since the great man died. Pleasingly, interest in the machines he drove on and off the racing circuit remains extraordinarily high. He was a great lover of Mercedes, and it came as no surprise to see his 1989 560 SEC generate a huge amount of excitement beyond the motoring media when the recommissioned Blue-Black beast was sent to auction. Newspapers around the globe reported on the car's emergence from a recent life of neglect.

There was, however, only one title afforded access to the V8-powered large barge. Yep, you guessed it! Setting pace to rival anything Hunt achieved during his glittering F1 career, we filled our camera support vehicle with photography equipment and set sail for where the SEC was being stored following its rebirth.

The great thing about Hunt's former steed is regardless of its obvious desirable provenance, none of the car's former keepers have been precious

about keeping mileage low. It's a theme I intend to promote throughout *Mercedes Driver*. Indeed, you'll find it reflected in the many other attention-grabbing features crammed into this issue. Be it the immaculate W123 230E used by Piers Richings as his daily hack, the R107 500 SL charged with ferrying Olly Hackett and Lucy Dawson around France, or the W124 E320 Sportline cherished by Chris Lansbury, Mercedes cars are at their absolute best when being put to good use. Be sure to tell me about yours.

Of course, no matter how much seat time you enjoy in your Mercedes, you need adequate insurance. It's a necessary spend for any motorist, so you might as well make sure you get your money's worth. In this issue, we've included a list of twenty-five top tips to help reduce your premiums come renewal time.

If you're new to the world of Mercedes, then our W202 AMG buying guide may well be of assistance when it comes to choosing your next chariot. For the rest of you, kick back, relax and turn the page. I hope you enjoy reading my first issue in charge of *Mercedes Driver* as much as I did pulling it together!



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HAPPY HUNTING GROUND

His finances may have suffered a serious setback, but that didn't stop Formula One ace, James Hunt, from enjoying this 1989 560 SEC

WORDS **Dan Furr** PHOTOGRAPHY **Dan Sherwood**

When the 45-year-old James Hunt died on 15th June 1993, the 1976 Formula One champion's personal fortune had been hugely reduced as a consequence of the Lloyd's of London scandal of the late 1980s. In essence, Hunt and many other then-wealthy investors (including high-ranking politicians, sports personalities and even members of the British monarchy) pledged large amounts of cash to the insurer, effectively acting as underwriters for future liabilities. The financial reward Lloyd's promised was high, but relationships turned sour when investors found themselves liable for a colossal number of new claims relating to past incidents. Chiefly, complaints from applicants concerned exposure to asbestos experienced in the workplace as far back as the 1940s. Not only did American courts rule individuals could claim, permission was granted for them to do so regardless of whether they were suffering symptoms of illness. The floodgates opened.

Many investors (known as Names) faced financial ruin. Five hundred were bankrupted. Fifteen committed suicide. Even today, legal battles continue between Lloyd's and many of those who gave the three-century-old institution the majority of their amassed wealth. Hunt lost close to £200k,

a significant sum today, let alone three decades ago! This serious dent in his finances saw him flirt with the idea of mounting a racing comeback in 1990 as a driver for the Williams Formula One team. Testing followed, but move wasn't to be. Instead, the eccentric sportsman relied on a steady stream of income from the BBC, for whom he'd acted as media commentator for Grand Prix racing since his shock retirement from the sport in 1979.

WEAPON OF CHOICE

When it comes to the cars Hunt drove, two obvious images spring to mind. The first is of his Cosworth-tuned McLaren M23, the F1 machine he raced to victory in the face of stiff competition from the radiant red Ferrari 312 of Niki Lauda. The pair's on and off-track relationship has since been immortalised in the Ron Howard movie, *Rush*. After the Lloyd's scandal, however, the vehicle he was most commonly associated with was GDX 294E, a tired 1967 Austin A35 van. Hunt used the 848cc load-lugger to carry his beloved budgerigars to shows. The four-cylinder cargo carrier fetched £13,000 at the Silverstone Classic auction in 2011 after being bought by the seller for £3,500 at the Brooks Olympia sale in 1993, yet vintage vans and championship-winning race cars weren't the only four-wheelers Hunt had a passion for...

Parked on the driveway alongside the A35 at Hunt's London home, NLT 935V was a familiar

Right Top and bottom halves of the exterior are now colour-matched, while each corner rides on a staggered AMG rim

Below Mushroom hide has been cleaned and recoloured



Track record

James Hunt began his racing career in touring cars before progressing to Formula Three, where he succeeded in attracting the attention of Lord Hesketh, the owner of Hesketh Racing, an independent motorsport team. Hunt first competed in Formula One for his new employer in 1973. He won many races for the Hesketh concern, but overall championship victory evaded him until he signed for McLaren in 1975. In his first full year racing for the team, Hunt won the drivers' championship, a hard-fought battle which cemented his place in history as one of motorsport's greats. His controversial behaviour on the track earned him the nickname 'Hunt the Shunt', while his turbulent lifestyle made him a regular feature of the mainstream media.



A 1989 560 SEC, THE BLUE-BLACK TWO-DOOR WAS REGISTERED TO HUNT FROM NEW



sight to visitors popping in to see the living legend when he wasn't in the commentary box rubbing shoulders with Murray Walker. Taking the form of a brown 450 SEL 6.9, the V8-powered four-door featured the largest engine of any production car outside of America when originally built. Weighing in at two tonnes and measuring almost eighteen feet in length, the large barge's scale was as impressive as its technical specification. There was only one snag: the example Hunt owned was perched on bricks and in need of full restoration.

He bought the mighty Merc when it was less than a year old, but by the time he was driving around in the A35, his fortunes had changed so radically he wasn't in a position to treat the land yacht to the attention it was in desperate need of. Thankfully, he had F93 UBJ for fast-road fun. A 1989 560 SEC, the Blue-Black two-door was registered to Hunt from new, thought to be a gift from a generous benefactor.

STAYING ALIVE

Hunt kept the 5.5-litre coupe for two years before it passed through the hands of several owners, garnering numerous plate changes along the way. The car also found itself riding on a set of staggered AMG deep-dish wheels and had covered 143k miles before coming into the possession of Fraser Pemberton, a restorer of German sports cars based in Cheshire. "My team recommissioned the low mileage 1977 450 SEL owned by Bee Gees frontman, Barry Gibb, for thirty-one years," he tell us, referencing the white whale which sold for £17,600 at the Classic Car & Restoration Show

DRIVER

Q&A



FRASER PEMBERTON

First Mercedes
W124 E320 convertible

Favourite Mercedes
600 Grosser

Best thing about this 560 SEC
It's the epitome of brilliant engineering for the road

Worst thing about this 560 SEC
The fact I didn't get hold of the car before previous owners started cocking around with it

Best thing about Mercedes ownership
You're driving a vehicle renowned for superior build quality





REPLACEMENT WHEEL ARCHES SHOWED SIGNS OF A POORLY EXECUTED RESPRAY



at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre in March. Since that time, his band of Mercedes-keen merry men have been working on a selection of other interesting Benz-badged beasts, not least of all Hunt's SEC.

"You have to keep an eye out for corrosion when it comes to the W126 range," continues Fraser. "Front wings and the boot wells are usually the first places to go. The Hunt car was no different." Fortunately, the previous owner supplied a new genuine offside front wing to replace the original panel, which was suffering from corrosion at its base. In contrast, the exposed inner metalwork looked brand new when the old wing was removed. The discovery came as huge relief to Fraser and allowed his team to concentrate on fixing faulty electrics and restoring the car's interior. "It was apparent the car had been looked after, but I wouldn't say it had been cherished," he reasons. "The self-levelling suspension worked without error and the engine was in excellent working order when I took delivery of the car. Its

Mushroom leather, on the other hand, showed clear signs of heavy use. The hide was creased, cracked and exhibited signs of poorly executed past repair work. We had no choice but to strip it back before attempting to right its many wrongs."

FORMULA WON

A new headlining was required, the sunroof didn't work and the seat belt butler motors were in need of overhaul. It was a similar story outside the car, where headlight wipers weren't operating as Mercedes intended. Additionally, replacement rear wheel arches showed signs of a poorly executed respray. A fresh coat of colour was deemed necessary ("we added an extra ten percent black!"), which covers the whole of the body, while replacement exterior trim and a fresh windscreen were fitted in advance of the car's star turn at the Brightwells Leominster auction in September.

"I'd already lined up an exciting W108 restoration project before finishing work on Hunt's SEC. The newer car had to go!" beams Fraser, quietly happy at the cool coupe's auction sale price of £14,000. A healthy service history coupled with paperwork proving the charismatic motorsport star's ownership was undoubtedly one of the key attractions for eager online and in-room bidders, not to mention the fact it was revealed the car would be the lead feature in this issue of *Mercedes Driver*. "It makes a nice addition to the history file, and further emphasises the serious provenance of this particular 560 SEC," muses Fraser, satisfied at being able to play a part in ensuring the long-term survival of a magnificent Mercedes first owned by one of Britain's best-loved racing drivers.

Top "It's what James would have wanted!"

Above Copy of original V5 shows James Simon Wallis Hunt as the first owner of this superb C126 560 SEC

Facing page Interior has been tidied due to cracks in leather

Livewire

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AMG GT 4MATIC+ pricing announced

V8 powerhouse of performance available in three trim levels with a wealth of cost options

The new Mercedes-AMG GT 4MATIC+ four-door coupé is now on sale, with prices starting at £121,350 for the GT 63 4MATIC+. The GT 63 S 4MATIC+ is available from £135,550, while the GT 63 S 4MATIC+ Edition 1 starts at £148,950.

The GT 63 uses AMG's hand-built four-litre V8 'hot V' biturbo petrol engine, which generates 585hp and 800Nm torque. The GT 63 S delivers a monstrous 639hp and maximum torque of 900Nm. The GT 63 can achieve 0 to 62 mph in 3.4 seconds, while the GT 63 S completes the same sprint in a blisteringly quick 3.2 seconds.

The GT 63 delivers a combined fuel consumption of 25.2mpg and emits 256g/km of CO₂, while the GT 63 S delivers 25.0mpg and emits 257g/km of CO₂.

All three versions come as standard with an AMG Speedshift MCT 9G transmission, which has a wet start-off clutch, kit which reduces weight and optimises responses.

AMG Ride Control+ suspension is standard on all versions of the car and features continuous adjustable damping which provides better handling and a sportier driving experience.

Standard equipment on the GT 63 includes twenty-inch AMG double-spoke light-alloy wheels, LED headlights, a 360° camera, a 12.3-inch widescreen infotainment touchscreen display, ambient lighting with a choice of sixty-four colours (yes, really!), heated front and rear seats, AMG Track Pace, wireless mobile device charging, Keyless-Go Comfort (including keyless start and hands-free functionality), fully automatic opening and closing of the



car's boot lid, Burmester surround sound audio equipment and an AMG Performance steering wheel trimmed in Nappa leather.

The GT 63 S adds the AMG Dynamic Plus package, which includes electronic rear-axle differential lock, 'RACE' drive mode (including 'Drift-Mode'), larger front brake discs, yellow-painted AMG calipers, twenty-inch AMG multi-spoke alloy wheels, and an AMG Performance steering wheel upholstered in Dinamica microfibre.

The limited edition AMG GT 63 S Edition 1 comes as standard with Graphite Grey magno paint, even larger wheels (cross-spoke forged rims with black inserts), an Aerodynamics package comprising a fixed rear aerofoil in high-gloss black and an optimised front apron with splitter, Premium Plus package, AMG Carbon Matte trim, AMG Nappa leather Magma grey



seats with yellow contrast stitching, black Dinamica headlining, Memory package, Air Balance and AMG Night package.

Wait! There's more! The £3,600 Premium Plus package – standard on the GT 63 S Edition 1 – adds even more specification (and wordplay!) thanks to Air Balance, ENERGIZING Comfort, active multicontour seats with massage function, a heads-up display, soft door close and climatized front seats.

For £3,695, customers can opt for the Rear Luxury Lounge package which includes individual rear seats, centre console and touch-screen centre display with infotainment function access, Thermotronic automatic climate control, pre-installation for a tablet PC, wireless phone charging for rear passengers and climatized cup holders. Take our money!



Rockingham Motor Speedway to be repurposed as car storage facility

After months of speculation, it has been announced Rockingham Motor Speedway will cease to be a venue for racing activity following the sale of the site to an investment company keen to repurpose "Europe's fastest racing circuit" as a storage centre for fleet and auction vehicles. The move comes after the British Touring Car Championship (Rockingham's biggest draw) announced it was cancelling its visit to the Corby-based circuit for 2019. The BTCC's move follows the site's massive grandstands being condemned on health and safety grounds following the discovery of subsidence. The 300-acre plot was once hailed as bringing a new dawn to British motorsport, but lack of profits in the years following the opening of the circuit in 2001 mean massive debts have forced the sale. We're told all events scheduled until the end of the year will remain unaffected by the change.



Hemmels acquired by Principle Global

Based in Cardiff and famous for remanufacturing classic Mercedes cars, Hemmels has a new majority stakeholder in the form of Richard Butterfield, chairman and founder of brand implementation agency, Principle Global. Hemmels (most famous for its Gullwing and Pagoda-based output) employs forty people responsible for dismantling and restoring a matching number of vehicles each year. The firm's cars take approximately fifty weeks to complete. Butterfield is known to be a classic Mercedes buff and has plans to expand Hemmels beyond its current footprint to ensure production capability reaches double what it is today with eighteen months. The company's customers include royalty and high profile racing drivers. We wish everyone at Hemmels every success for the future!

See you there...

ULTIMATE STANCE

Hailed as the premium indoor event for the UK and Europe's stanced cars, Ultimate Stance returns to the Telford International Centre on Sunday 4th November. A retro display, detailing demonstrations, a BMX freestyle show, radio-controlled car action, live music and a charity auction and some of the cleanest cars you're like to see this year will be gathered together for a day to remember. Visit the website bit.ly/ultimatestance for all the juicy details.

NEC CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW

The Mercedes-Benz club will have a large stand at this year's Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, due to take place 9th-11th November at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. The club's theme for this year is 'Built to Last'. We can't wait to see what Benz-badged delights are served up! Visit bit.ly/mclubnec for ticket information.

SIMPLY SMART

Owners of Smart cars are invited to drive and park within the Beaulieu complex on 11th November for what's being billed as a great day out for enthusiasts. The event is set to provide an opportunity to admire a wide range of these often colourfully wrapped vehicles, from the ForTwo to the Roadster. Crossblades are also expected to be a popular sight. Point t'internet browser at bit.ly/simplysmart

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SPECIALISTS IN MERCEDES-BENZ CARS

Alton, Hampshire, UK (40 mins from J10 M25)



190E 1.8 litre Saloon, 1992J, one owner from new, 4-speed auto, 28,000 miles, fmbsh, signal red grey check cloth, sunroof, ABS, centre armrest, front electric windows, front seat nets. Absolutely in showroom condition ! **£9,950.**



500 SE, 1991J, 4-speed auto, 67,000 miles, fmbsh, astral silver metallic, navy leather, aircon, cruise, electric sunroof, electric steering column, electric heated memory seats, otg, headlamp wash/wipe, illuminated vanity mirrors, Blaupunkt radio/cassette. One of the best examples for sale. **£14,950.**



E55 AMG (210-series), 2000X, 5-speed auto/tiptronic, 73,000 miles, fmbsh, brilliant silver metallic, dual tone leather black & ivory leather, climate control, cruise, electric steering column, electric heated orthopaedic memory seats, Command radio/single CD, SatNav/CD Changer/hands free telephone, anti-dazzle rear view mirror, headlamp washers, 18" AMG 5 spoke single rim alloys, AMG bodystyling, front & side airbags, front & rear parking sensors, birdseye wood veneer etc. A fabulous machine..... **£12,950.**



300 SL, 1988E, 4-speed auto, 4 owners, 80,000 miles, fmbsh, diamond blue metallic, navy cloth, dark blue soft top, hard top, factory aircon, cruise, rear seats, driver's airbag, wind deflector, illuminated vanity mirrors. A stunning example. **£34,950.**



300 SL, 1989F, 4-speed auto, 61,000 miles, fmbsh, astral silver metallic, mushroom leather, black soft top, factory fitted hard top, rear seats, illuminated vanity mirrors, Becker Mexico radio/cassette. Last owner 16 years. Beautiful colour combination. **£39,950.**



300 SL, 1989G, 3 owners, 4-speed auto, 109,000 miles, fmbsh, astral silver, navy sports check cloth, navy soft top, factory fitted hard top, cruise, rear seats, Blaupunkt radio/cassette, headlamp wash/wipe, illuminated vanity mirrors. A fine example. **£29,950.**



190E 1.8 litre LE, 1993K, 3 owners, 4 speed auto, 53,000 miles, fmbsh, brilliant silver, black check cloth, electric sunroof, driver's airbag. Large history file with original LE certificate. **£7,950.**



SL 500, 2003/03, 2 owners, 5-speed auto/tiptronic, 29,000 miles, fmbsh, brilliant silver metallic, red leather, electric retractable roof, climate, cruise, electric steering column, electric heated memory seats with lumbar support both sides, ESP, Comand with single CD/radio/SatNav/mobile hands free and 10 CD changer, headlamp washers, wind deflector, 18" AMG alloys. **£14,950.**



E320 Coupe, 1996N, 3 owners, 5-speed auto, 63,000 miles, fmbsh, ruby red metallic, mushroom leather, factory air conditioning, cruise, electric sunroof, headlamp wash/wipe, otg, infrared locking. Beautiful original car. **£13,950.**



300 SL 24-valve, 1992J, 4-speed auto, 30,000 miles, fmbsh, smoke silver metallic, navy leather, electric navy soft top, factory fitted hard top, cruise control, electric seats, twin airbags, rear seats, wind deflector, infrared locking Blaupunkt radio/single CD. A very low mileage SL in show condition..... **£14,950.**



500 SEC, 1988E, 4-speed auto, 60,000 miles, fmbsh & just serviced, smoke silver metallic, navy leather, factory climate control, cruise, electric seats with driver's memory, electric sunroof, headlamp wash/wipe. Gorgeous original car. **£17,950.**



300 SL, 1987E, 4-speed auto, 91,000 miles, fmbsh, smoke silver metallic, mushroom leather, dark brown soft top, factory fitted hard top, rear seats. A lovely original example. Last lady owner 14 years. **£29,950.**

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DTM R/C KIT

The Tamiya Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II ZakSpeed Debis Racing TT-01E is a 1:10 scale radio-controlled car assembly kit recreating the mighty Merc as it raced in the 1991 Deutsche Tourenwagen Masters (DTM) touring car series. The kit includes an accurately reproduced polycarbonate body, rear view mirrors, grille components and a sectioned rear wing. It also includes period-correct sticker markings for the ZakSpeed and Debis Racing concerns, as well as a raised Mercedes-Benz three-pointed star.

The body is mated to Tamiya's high performance, easy-to-assemble, four-wheel drive, shaft-driven TT-01 Type E chassis. The bathtub frame has its motor and battery close to the ground in order to achieve a low centre of gravity and optimum balance. Mounted on the frame are fibreglass-reinforced nylon upper deck and gear covers which improve rigidity. A three-piece tie rod provides smooth steering action.

Combined with Tamiya's familiar wishbone suspension system, not to mention front and rear differential gears, all of the kit's qualities come together to result in superb driving characteristics. Propelled by a torque-tuned Type 540 motor, this diminutive DTM machine is instructed by a two-channel radio control system which has been usefully bundled with the required battery and charger in both starter and racing cost options, each designed to suit the experience of the user and intended application.

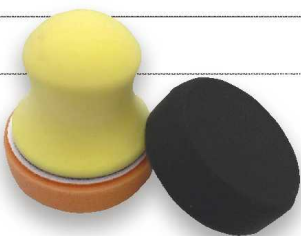
In the sixth and seventh races of the 1991 DTM, the car depicted here was piloted by a young Michael Schumacher. Its iconic six-spoke wheels are expertly reproduced in small scale and



are wrapped in slicks to help achieve maximum traction. Arguably better still, Tamiya's TT-10E platform comes with a range of tuning options for the serious R/C fan, making this magnificent mini-Mercedes quicker and faster if desired.

Founded in 1946, Tamiya has forged a reputation for producing models of outstanding quality and accurate detail. The Japanese company has won numerous awards for its extensive range of radio-controlled car kits, which spans many makes, models and motorsport series. Tamiya is also respected for its large portfolio of radio-controlled aviation and marine models.

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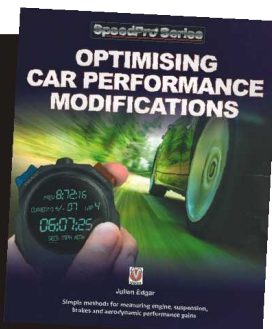
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A photograph of two sports cars racing on a track. In the foreground, the rear left side of a black car is visible. Behind it, a red car is driving away. The track has a yellow line on the right side, and the background shows a line of trees under a grey sky.

BATTLE STATIONS

Which is more sporty? The 190E 2.3-16 or the Porsche 944S?
We hopped across to Germany in order to find out...

WORDS **Dan Furr** PHOTOGRAPHY **Reiner Ratzke**

Multi-valve technology. A great engineering advancement from which endless technical-sounding factory designations have been plastered across trunk lids, yet in truth, when everyman marques were shouting about their adoption of four valves per cylinder in the late 1980s, owners of luxury German sports cars were rolling their eyes. After all, they were in charge of models from manufacturers which had adopted the format many years beforehand.

French firm, Peugeot, can lay claim to producing the first car powered by a four-cylinder twin-cam packing sixteen valves. Built in 1912 and designed by Swiss mechanical engineer, Ernest Henry (described as “the most brilliant engine designer ever”), the 7.6-litre Grand Prix racing masterpiece was labelled L76 and ably demonstrated the benefits of multi-valve technology by revving its way into the history books with a clutch of impressive speed records. It wasn’t until the close of the first World War, however, that rival car makers began to experiment with the technology. Mercedes, for example, used a supercharged 5.6-litre straight-eight with dual overhead camshafts and four valves per cylinder in its 1937 W125 race car. Producing close to 650bhp at 5,800rpm, the sensational speed machine topped out at 200mph.

The expensive cost of introducing multi-valve technology to engines meant it remained the preserve of works motorsport teams (the only exception being ‘money no object’ road car manufacturers, such as Bentley) before the outbreak of World War II, but the game-changing Cosworth DFV F1 engine of 1967 signalled the

beginning of the configuration’s sharp rise in popularity, reduced manufacturing costs and unprecedented accessibility. Consequently, as the 1970s got underway, a variety of mass-produced road cars making use of multiple valves per cylinder were released into the wild, but it wasn’t until Mercedes revealed the W201 190E 2.3-16 and its Cosworth-designed sixteen-valve cylinder head at the Frankfurt Motor Show in 1983 that multi-valve technology became mainstream.

With an average speed of 155mph achieved during a punishing endurance test, the sporty Benz delivered record-breaking performance with a claimed 185bhp and 174lb/ft torque. Power was produced by an engine featuring pressed alloy pistons, heavy duty rings, updated camshaft profiles, altered inlet and exhaust ports, Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection and, of course, that all-important Cossie head. Elsewhere on the new car, specification included a limited-slip differential, four individual Recaro sports seats, extra instrument gauges (oil temperature, battery voltage and a stopwatch) and a profile-enhancing body kit inherited from Deutsche Tourenwagen Meisterschaft (DTM) touring car weaponry demanding the introduction of the road car for homologation purposes.

Seeing what was happening across town, Porsche soon muscled in on Mercedes’ multi-valve adventures. Stuttgart-crested race cars, including the legendary 845bhp 935/78 nicknamed ‘Moby Dick’ (in recognition of its whale-like tail), had used four valves per cylinder at the track for many years, but even the excellent 944 Turbo was still utilising an eight-valve head on its water-cooled inline-four in 1986. Sensing an industry-wide move to sixteen-valve heads for mass production cars, not



Henry's gain

Cosworth was founded in London in 1958 as a specialist in high-power engines and electronics for motorsport. As employees of Lotus, Cosworth co-founders, Mike Costin and Keith Duckworth, initially worked exclusively with the Norfolk-based sports car and racing concern, producing competition winning powerplants for Colin Chapman's projects. Later, a contract with Ford saw the development of the DFV F1 engine and the eventual purchase of Cosworth by Ford following the launch of successful road, race and rally cars in the form of RS-badged Sierras and Escorts.



DTM WEAPONRY DEMANDED THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CAR FOR HOMOLOGATION PURPOSES



Above You'd think the coupe should be more fun than the saloon, but a side-by-side test proves the Mercedes delivers plenty more smiles to the mile

Facing page Dog-engagement gearbox features reverse where most people expect first to be positioned



to mention witnessing how quick the 2.3-16 was in roadgoing trim, Porsche set about revising the 944 range, launching the sixteen-valve, naturally aspirated 944S in 1987.

This was the first time dual overhead camshafts and multi-valve technology had been used on the 944. Free of forced induction, the model's high-powered 2.5-litre lump was now rated at 190bhp and featured a self-adjusting timing belt tensioner. 16V Ventiler badges appeared on the transaxle's bodywork. The 2.3-16 now had serious competition in the sports car sector.

PONY SHOW

The Porsche beats the Benz when it comes to displacement and horsepower (by a measly 0.2-litres and 5bhp), but the 2.3-16 is a lighter car, weighing in at approximately fifty kilograms less than the 944S. In truth, most drivers wouldn't be able to tell the difference between an engine output of 200bhp and 300bhp, but everyone can feel the performance advantages of less weight; the Mercedes feels much perkier when the pedal hits the metal, throwing the driver into his or her seat with the results of a satisfyingly linear power band and the sound of old-fashioned intake grate.

Many will be surprised by how predictable



and agile the motorsport-derived 190E is. Thanks to lowered, stiff suspension (comprising uprated dampers, thick anti-roll bars, hard bushes and a self-levelling rear end), it's not a tough car to be in charge of, but the Porsche feels more relaxed due to its extraordinary balance. The manufacturer's goal with the transaxle layout was to achieve as close to 50:50 weight distribution front to back as possible. A water-cooled engine at the nose, a long bonnet, a short front overhang and a long roof were matched to an overhang at the rear designed to accommodate the transmission behind the axle, thereby perfectly balancing weight. The result? Advanced, sharp and super-responsive handling.

It's a more comfortable car than the 2.3-16 too, but you might expect these qualities from a less aggressive vehicle commanding a higher price tag; on the occasion of its introduction to main dealer showrooms, the 944S was offered at 58,950DM, whereas the 2.3-16 was pitched to punters at 49,850DM. That's a massive difference, and one which provided Mercedes with the opportunity to deliver practicality and performance in a sporty four-door package at a price point acceptable to the lower middle classes.

An optional four-speed automatic transmission was introduced to the Mercedes in 1986, but this hardly seems the tool of choice for those who enjoy spirited driving (and surely that's what one buys a Cosworth-tweaked 190E for?!). Then again, how many first-time 2.3-16 drivers have accidentally thrown the five-speed manual gearbox into reverse, expecting to find first? The latter is positioned bottom-left thanks to the introduction of a Getrag five-speed with a dog-leg layout. In theory, this makes the remaining forward ratios easier and quicker to shift between thanks to a

simple H-pattern, but in reality, many owners complained about the fact they kept confusing first and reverse gear, even though the same gearbox was widely celebrated when used in BMW's mighty E30 M3. Go figure!

The sixteen-valve engine powering the special 190E marches briskly and effortlessly through the rev range. At 4,000rpm, it properly wakes up, barking into life before speeding towards the redline. When faced with such blistering pace, the 944S has no chance. At low speed, the coupe feels heavy, perhaps even cumbersome, although it's fair to say it does pack a punch when floored; the torquey, larger-displacement four-cylinder powerplant makes use of an intake made famous by Porsche's 944 Turbo Cup cars. It's a system which comes into its own when high speed is reached, but for truly impressive power from Porsche's transaxle range, a sixteen-valve 944 aided by a snail-shaped bhp booster should be experienced.

MOVING FORWARD

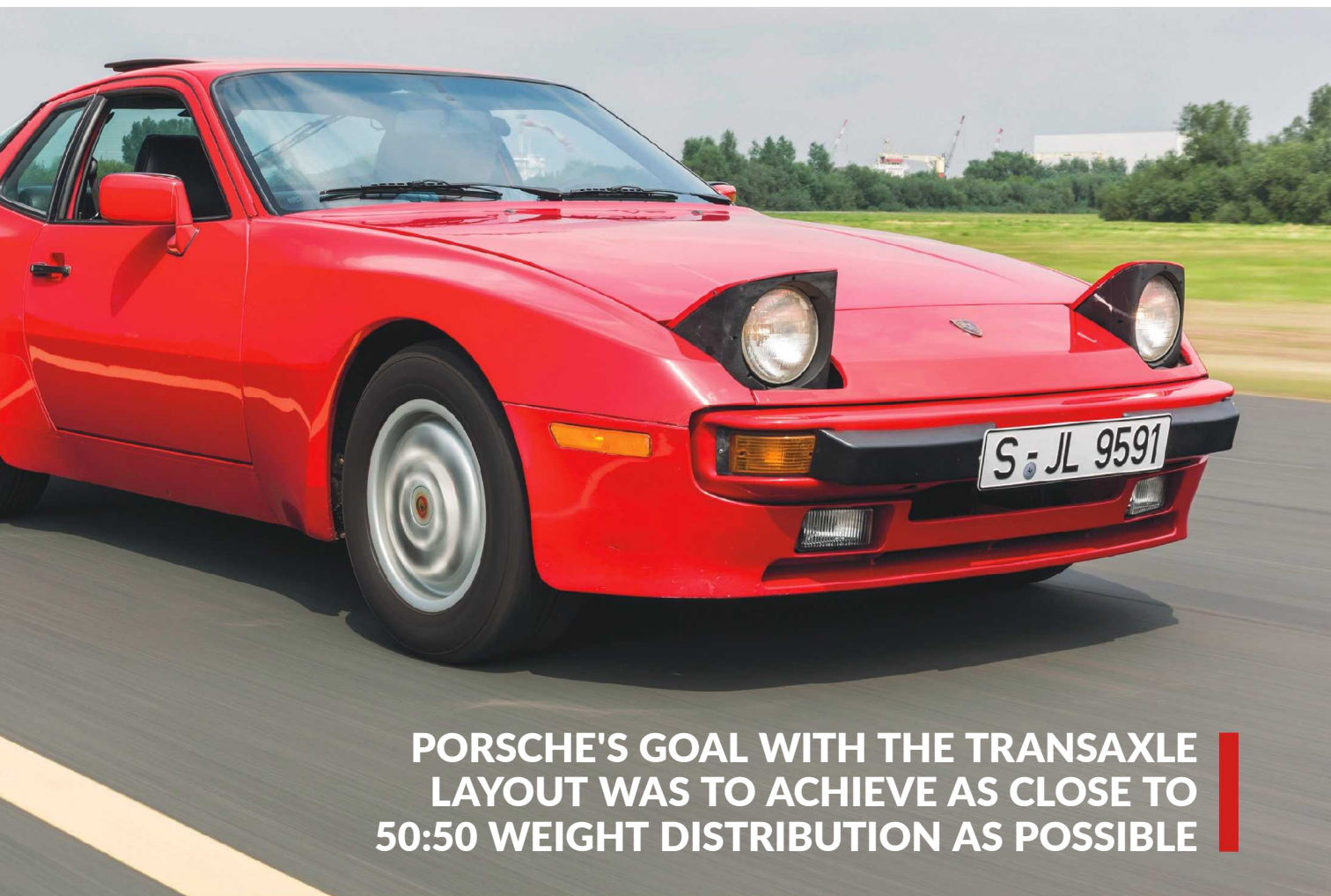
An updated engine with 2.5-litres of displacement replaced the Merc's 2.3-litre unit in 1988. The older powerplant had suffered a significant drop in poke thanks to the forced introduction of a catalytic converter. Strengthened twin timing chains were included on the newer engine in order to counter complaints about the weakness of single chains on the earlier car's beating heart, while extra galloping ponies came along for the ride, resulting in an overall power figure of 204bhp stifled to 197bhp with a catalyst in place.

Cosworth continued to provide cylinder heads for the motorsport-bred, sixteen-valve 190E, but Mercedes tried its best to play down the involvement of the UK concern in the

Above The 944's evolution as a purely Porsche development of the narrow-bodied 924 (a model with joint VW-Porsche parentage) is clear to see

Left Oval-shaped dashboard binnacle replaced the 'square dash' of earlier 944s and still feels surprisingly fresh today





PORSCHE'S GOAL WITH THE TRANSAXLE LAYOUT WAS TO ACHIEVE AS CLOSE TO 50:50 WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION AS POSSIBLE

Big hitter

The 944 was the most successful Porsche product prior to the launch of the Boxster. The transaxle's muscular body and powerful drivetrain was an evolution of the 924 GTP, a Le Mans machine which debuted at Sarthe in 1981. Based on the 924 Carrera GT, the new car introduced a purely Porsche 2.5-litre engine and finished seventh overall before being unveiled as the 944 road car in 1982. Newly designed brakes and suspension, interior upgrades and a wider track heralded the beginning of a successful nine-year production run before the arrival of the 968.



Left Torquey sixteen-valve inline-four boasts 2.5-litres of displacement and would go on to become a three-litre unit for the 944 S2, crowning the engine as being the largest four-cylinder production powerplant of its time

THE BABY BENZ REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN PERFORMANCE SALOON HISTORY



development of the updated model. Nevertheless, Coscast logos – indicating a part cast at Cosworth's foundry in Britain – can be seen in 2.3-16 and 2.5-16 engine bays if you look hard enough.

Regardless of British contribution to the realisation of an iconic German road racer, the ballistic Baby Benz represents a significant milestone in performance saloon car history. The 2.3-16 is fast, it's fun and it oozes practicality. It's got loads of luggage space and a desirable technical specification, even by today's standards. Due to the enthusiasm cars of this age have for attracting tinworm, it's a rare beast too. Even so, production of the 2.3-16 exceeded the lower volume of the 944S by more than 2,000 units.

The transaxle is, of course, forever in the shadow of its air-cooled sibling, both in terms of respect and price. It seems only a Turbo badge is enough to get the majority of old-school Porschephiles salivating when it comes to appreciating the merits of water-cooled wonders. That's a shame, because the high-quality design, durable technology, excellent handling and agreeable fuel economy of the 944S contribute to a car more practical and more comfortable than a similarly-aged 911. That's not to say the front-engined Stuttgart-badged belter is more fun than a 2.3-16, though! Contrary to what you might think at first glance, the character of the 944S is more in keeping with its continent cruising cousin, the V8-powered 928 grand tourer, than it is that of a snappy sports machine. It's civilised, more mature. In contrast, the Mercedes is an absolute riot of fast-road fun. Take our advice and buy one before prices rise beyond reach. You won't regret it!



Above The 944's impact bumpers are a familiar sight in North America, where they were introduced to satisfy strict road safety legislation





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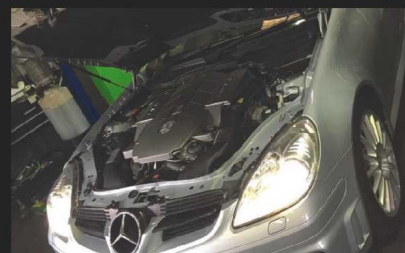
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Antony Kingham

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This was certainly what my brother, David, and I experienced when we tried to secure storage for our cars. The services being promoted by some of the companies we were made aware of amounted to tight, dusty and expensive warehousing with an inability to access vehicles when required. "By appointment only" was a common theme, a condition we found to be wholly unacceptable. After all, I might want to hit the road today while the sun is shining, not in forty-eight hours when it's pouring with rain!

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Owners of the vehicles we store – all makes and models are welcome – are invited to call us whenever they like. We pride ourselves on providing quick access. Furthermore, unlike many of the people in charge of other car storage companies, we recognise owners may have bespoke requirements and priorities, which is why we've devised a range of options to suit every individual, be it a need for logistics and transport, maintenance programmes or special treatments over and above undercover storage.

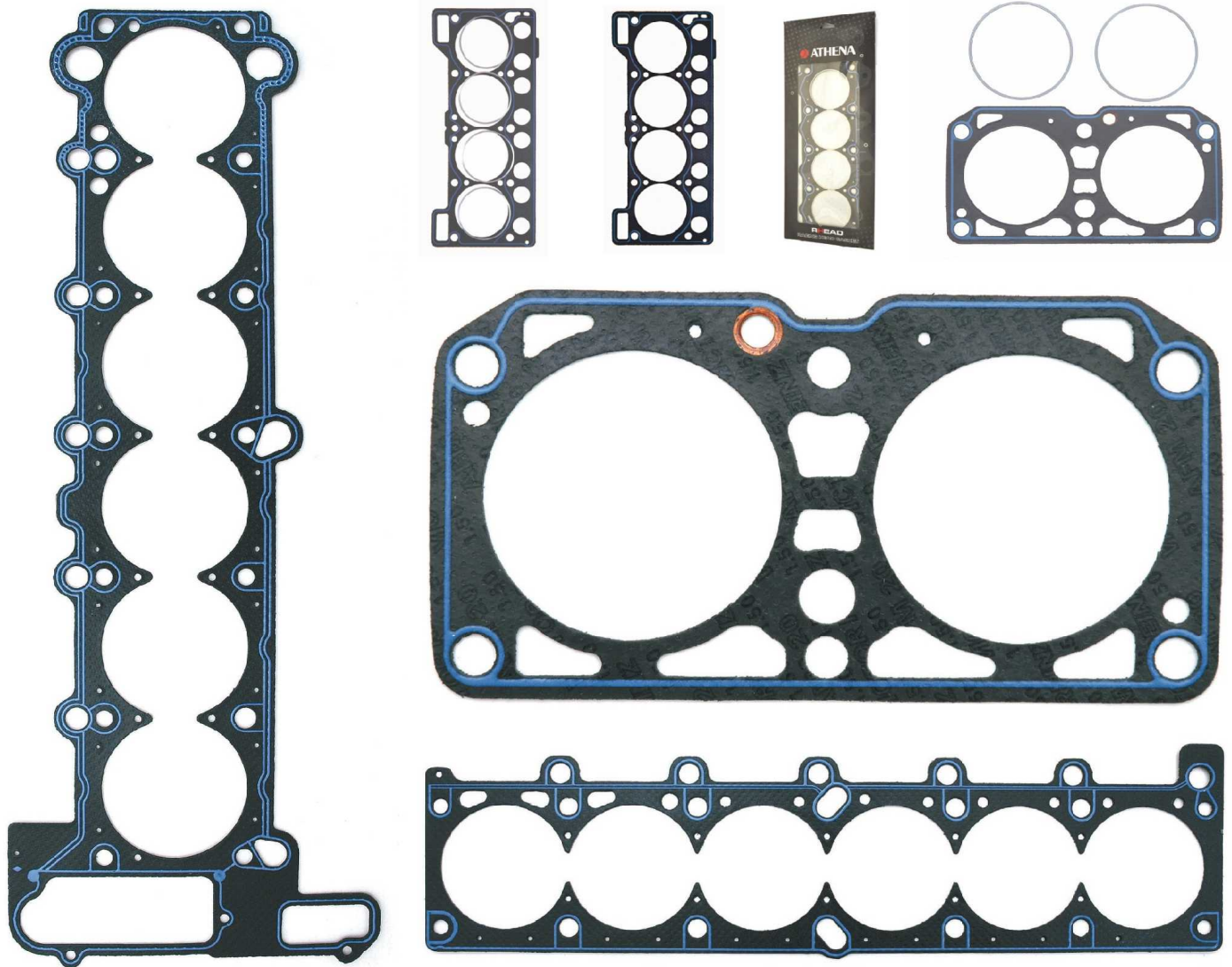
Close monitoring, battery trickle charging, tyre rolling and use of a soft cover is included with each of our secure storage packages. We keep prices low (starting at £25 per week per vehicle at the time of writing). Satisfyingly, Ecurie 137 has been a great way for David and I to meet fellow enthusiasts, and we're thrilled to be able to help those who find themselves in the same position we did. Don't hesitate to get in touch!

Above Get in touch with the Kinghams if you need to store your Mercedes securely

Twitter @ecurie137
www.ecurie137.co.uk

Unlike many of the people in charge of other car storage companies, we recognise owners may have bespoke requirements

Athena Race Head Gaskets



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www.enginepartsuk.net


TORQUE *Enthusiast*

James Fairweather

For more than fifty years, the annual SEMA Show has been the number one place to be if you're interested in new tuning products and scene-stealing builds...

Held in the sprawling halls of the Las Vegas Convention Center, the annual Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show is modifying mecca for any Mercedes owner keen to find out what tuning trends are developing. It's also the place to find the latest offerings from the world's leading aftermarket parts manufacturers, as well as being home to the grand unveiling of more completed projects cars than anywhere else on Earth!

The first SEMA Show took place in 1967. It attracted less than a hundred manufacturers and welcomed 3,000 visitors. Just five cars were on display, although one could argue the case for quality over quantity thanks to the inclusion of a then-new Ford GT40 and a Dodge Dart dragster.

By the time the show moved to Anaheim Stadium in 1974, sophisticated displays and far-reaching marketing techniques ruled the roost. Manufacturers were queuing up to have a presence at the show, which swelled to include 500 display booths. Product innovation and excellence in the automotive industry was the overriding theme, and if you wanted your company to be associated with these traits, a stand at the SEMA Show was considered half the battle won.

Recognising demand from within the industry it represents, SEMA's ruling body made significant efforts to expand the show rapidly. Today, it occupies more than one million ft² hosting in excess of 11,000 booths. Attendance figures increase year on year, with at least 150,000 visitors expected when the show opens its doors each November. An amazing achievement for an event not open to the general public!

That's right. The SEMA Show is only open to industry representatives, be they media, manufacturers or buyers (more than 60,000 of those chaps and chapettes turn up!), a reflection of the show's status as the place to do business if you've got a new automotive product to promote. It's also the forum many major car makers now use to showcase unusual designs, where commissioned builds can be used to draw attention to models



which might otherwise go unnoticed. Manufacturer offerings aside, there are hundreds of sponsored project cars exhibited at the show. Owners, tuners and bodyshop specialists work flat-out day and night to finish their cars in accordance with strict deadlines, with project managers often planning builds more than a year in advance of the big reveal.

It's not all flashy cars and new products, though. Educational seminars, networking opportunities and off-site live action demonstrations are all part of what makes the annual SEMA Show a 'must attend' event on the calendar of many working in the automotive industry.

2018's bash starts on 30th October and ends on 2nd November. From hot rods and off-roaders to mobile electronics and collision repair, whatever your automotive interest, SEMA has you covered. Now all you need to do is fly to Las Vegas and blag a ticket to the show. See you there!

Above SEMA Show offers attendees the perfect opportunity to get up close and personal with restorers, parts manufacturers, car designers, tuners and modifiers

Twitter @SEMASHOW
www.semashow.com

Attendance figures increase year on year, with at least 150,000 visitors expected when the show opens its doors each November

smart drivers have
been fitting Nankang
since 1959



Established in 1959, Nankang produce
tyres for every season and terrain that
come in a truly comprehensive size range
that represent exceptional value for money.

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@NankangTyreUK


TORQUE *Driver*

Christian Novak

If you think attacking the asphalt of the world's best-loved circuits requires serious spend, then consider the low cost of an advanced online racing simulation portal...

Every racing fan dreams of getting behind the wheel of a formidable motorsport machine, braking hard at the apex whilst overcoming head-to-head challenges, the likes of which are usually reserved for professional racers. The reality of the situation is that in the real world, the ability to be able to do so requires vast sums of cash, time and mind-boggling logistics solutions.

Advances in technology have encouraged the widespread adoption of digital racing simulators in the field of professional driving. Away from the test sites of the world's biggest motorsport teams, the same huge leaps in software development can be witnessed in the gaming environment, so much so that some of the globe's most successful drivers champion the accuracy of track and car depictions presented in popular driving simulators.

iRacing is arguably the best online racing portal out there. The platform's software authors spend huge sums of money laser-scanning the world's racing circuits to ensure every bump, dip and kerb is faithfully represented. In fact, such is the level of detail poured into iRacing's virtual tracks, teams in some of the biggest motorsport series (namely F1, BTCC and WEC) are keen for their star drivers to use the software as a way of familiarising themselves with circuit layout before competing on the physical version of the same asphalt!

This is great news for those of us who spend time taking part in what is an inexpensive and highly-competitive way of racing; it's not unusual to find yourself battling for position with famous drivers, such as Reubens Barichello and Fernando Alonso!

The premise of iRacing is simple: you enter and complete in races just like you would in a regular championship. Different tracks, officially licenced cars and special events feature just as they would in the real world. For example, my team (find us on Facebook by searching for *Team GB Sim Racing*) participates in endurance competitions at digital recreations of Daytona, Silverstone and Spa. Each race lasts between three and six hours, with special twenty-four hour rounds held at a virtual Le Mans.



Whether you want to experience NASCAR, World of Outlaws sprinting, open-wheeled IndyCar, an Australian V8 Supercar, an IMSA Prototype, a GT racer or a classic touring car, iRacing is widely regarded as being as close to the real thing as it's possible to get. All you need is a computer equipped with a couple of USB ports, a digital steering wheel and pedal box (these can be bought at low cost) and an internet connection. iRacing does the hard work for you by managing more than forty different official series. Alternatively, you can choose to race in more than four-hundred private leagues or launch your own!

As attractive as iRacing is on a brightly-lit screen, the use of a virtual reality headset takes the platform from advanced gaming to a totally immersive and realistic competitive driving proposition. Having a full 360° view in the cockpit of whichever virtual racing car you happen to be piloting immeasurably enhances the affair.

iRacing is a serious business, which is why McLaren and Mazda are rewarding the winning ways of competitors with invitations to compete for them in the real world. Take note, Mercedes. I'm ready and waiting for your call!

Above Officially-sanctioned cars and tracks have been authored in cooperation with real-world race teams, enabling accurate mechanical and dynamic models

Join Team GB Sim Racing on Facebook
www.bit.ly/teamgbisimracing

iRacing
www.iracing.com

The use of a virtual reality headset takes iRacing from advanced gaming to a totally immersive and realistic competitive driving proposition



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www.rhspecialistinsurance.co.uk

25 WAYS TO LOWER YOUR CAR INSURANCE

We spoke to Emma Airey at **RH Specialist** vehicle insurance to get the inside scoop on how you can save a packet on your premiums...



Everyone wants to know how they can save money on their car insurance. When all is said and done, it's an expense petrolheads are powerless to avoid. Most of us wince when it comes to renewal time, but this is especially true for younger drivers and those of us in charge of heavily modified motors.

We wouldn't necessarily advocate opting for the cheapest insurance available; low price policies often deliver a poor level of cover that doesn't reflect the real-world value of your vehicle. The last thing you want is for that wince to turn into regret in the unlikely event that you'll need to make a claim. At the end of the day, you've got to pay for insurance, so you might as well get your money's worth.

To find out more about how insurance premiums are calculated, we spoke to Emma Airey, head of RH Specialist vehicle insurance, who revealed how you can put yourself in the frame for the best performance, classic and modified car cover deals. Her fifteen years in the industry means she's well placed to advise on what does and doesn't affect the cost of insurance for a cherished Mercedes!

We've compiled her feedback into a list of twenty-five different points for

consideration. This helpful information should provide food for thought when it comes to stopping premiums from destroying your bank balance. Some of the suggestions listed are easy to achieve, others are trickier. Some require investment, some don't, but rest assured each will have a positive effect on the cost of insuring your car.

1 JOIN THE CLUB!
Membership of an owners club is a great way of showing an insurer you're proud of your car. Firms providing cover recognise registered club members are likely to take great care of their four-wheeled friends, doing all they can to avoid loss or damage. Make sure you have a verifiable club membership number to quote when it comes to renewing your policy. Pleasingly, RH will give you thirty days to provide the information (if required), enabling you to join a club after taking out your policy.

2 DRIVING QUALIFICATIONS
An additional driving qualification can be a great way to reduce your premiums, especially if you're young. The most common and widely acknowledged course is the UK

government's Pass Plus (gov.uk/pass-plus) practical training programme, enabling drivers to improve their skills and knowledge of road safety in a matter of hours. The course attracts a fee, although some local councils offer discounts. It's worth bearing in mind not all insurers offer reduced costs against Pass Plus, so be sure to find out when shopping around for quotes.

3 NO CLAIMS BONUS
This one requires patience, but there's no better way to lower your insurance costs than to build up a healthy No Claims Bonus (NCB) on your private car or future classic policy. Obviously, this means driving carefully and not making a claim! Consider the benefits of protecting your NCB. The service may attract a small fee, but you might end up paying out a lot more in the long run if you lose the discount you've spent years accumulating.

4 EXPERIENCED DRIVERS
Adding experienced drivers to your private car policy may lower the price you pay when it comes to renewal. Of course, many insurers calculate cost based on the highest



EMMA AIREY

OCCUPATION
Head of RH Specialist
vehicle insurance

**LENGTH OF TIME IN
INSURANCE INDUSTRY**
Fifteen years

CAR HISTORY
I've owned a TVR, an
Alfa, a Rolls-Royce,
a BMW E46 M3 and
everything in between.
I'm pretty sure I was
weaned on two-stroke!

FAVOURITE MERCEDES
SLK55 AMG

**BEST THING ABOUT
MERCEDES CARS?**
Their reliability and
quality of construction

risk driver listed, but some do take the experience of additional named drivers into account, helping to reduce the overall price of cover. If you're relatively new to the road, then you may wish to include a parent or older sibling on your policy, whereas older owners of classic Mercedes cars could do a lot worse than adding their spouse. Proving to an insurer that you take this stuff seriously is vital, and a named driver may well save you cash.

Above RH can cater for your standard, comprehensive, vintage classic, future classic, modified, laid-up, and motorsport policy requirements



5 CLEAN LICENCE

The best advice here is the simplest: don't speed! If you are unable to resist exercising your lead foot on the public highway, then be prepared to pay a penalty, not only through fines handed down by law enforcement agencies, but also in the form of a heightened insurance premium when it comes to renewal. After all, every driving licence endorsement you attract sees you a step closer to being classed as 'high risk' as far as insurers are concerned.

Driving licence endorsements can have a dramatic effect on the cost of insurance, so be sure to accept the option of a Speed Awareness course in place of points if the offer is made available to you.

If may seem obvious, but avoid using your phone on the move, and don't

get behind the wheel after a night on the sauce. Not only are these actions illegal, but a conviction for dangerous driving will land you a hefty insurance premium come renewal time.

6 SPEAK TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE

If your car is modified, then few mainstream insurers will offer you cover. Those that do may limit you to a specific number of alterations due to restrictions regarding the number of changes an underwriter's rulebook considers acceptable.

If you are in charge of a tuned Mercedes, you're better off speaking to a specialist insurer. Not only will they understand what coilovers and remaps are, but they'll be able to offer you the correct level of cover for your car. They may even be able to provide track day cover if you tell them when and where it is you intend to attack the asphalt.

7 LIMIT MILEAGE

It makes sense when you think about it, but the less time you spend on the road, the less likely you are to have an accident. Think seriously about how many miles you'll cover during the year after renewal. If you only use your car for occasional trips out on sunny days and for attending events during show season, then consider limiting your insurance to a low number of miles. For example, telling your insurer that you'll cover no more than 5,000 miles per year may drastically reduce the cost of cover, but don't lie about it – in the event of a claim, the insurer may check the mileage registered on your car's MOT test certificate if one is required.



Insurer Talk

It's vital to provide the correct information when approaching an insurer, even if you're using a price comparison website. "Today's insurers are data enriched, which means we rely on the same kind of information as banks when it comes to evaluating the risk involved in providing an individual with cover," says Emma. "For example, if you enter random name and address data into a price comparison website, the details you've provided won't tally up with what's on the electoral register, which means the insurer will be unable to identify you. This may result in an unfavourable quote." The best policy (geddit?!) is to provide the correct details when you're looking for cover. RH is a 41-year-old brand serving a shade under 40k clients with an average premium of below £200, so there's no need to hide behind incorrect information.



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8 SINGLE PAYMENT

It may seem like an eye-watering wedge to pay in one go, but if you can afford to pay for your insurance in a single payment, then it'll work out cheaper than spreading the cost over the life of the policy. Paying monthly provides you with a loan from the broker, encouraging interest on the amount you borrow. That said, paying monthly is a great way to spread the cost of insurance. After all, not everybody is in a position to pay their insurer a lump sum. Wanting to assist drivers wherever possible, RH offers one of the most competitive APR rates on the market.

'unloved' motor more likely to be in harm's way. While we're on the subject of value, it's worth looking into the possibility of agreed valuation. Generally speaking, this will increase the cost of insurance (the good news is an agreed value policy with RH doesn't cost any more than market value, assuming there's no increase in the vehicle's value), but both you and the insurer will know exactly what needs to be paid out in the event of a claim for total loss. Take photos of your car in order to keep a record of its overall condition and stay informed of market trends which might encourage a rise or drop in value.

9 VALUE

It stands to reason a Mercedes worth £100k is going to cost more to insure than one that is valued at £4k. This is primarily due to the fact that payout in the event of a claim will be much higher on an expensive car, but don't think that means a cheap motor is the answer to your problems. An insurer will almost certainly assume a £500 banger isn't going to be treated with the same respect as a supercar, meaning the cost of insuring the former may be increased to counter the extra risk of an

10 INSURE AS A CLASSIC

Older cars are less likely to be involved in a claim than their newer counterparts. Insurers have their own ideas about what qualifies as a classic, so shop around. Companies specialising in classic car insurance should be your first port of call, but be mindful of the fact many won't insure a modified vehicle as a classic. Furthermore, most insurers will want to hear you're in possession of a second car that performs as your daily runaround. Thankfully, RH will insure modified vehicles as classics as long as they're more than a decade old.



11

SECOND CAR

This isn't exactly a cheap way to reduce insurance costs, but many in charge of a classic Mercedes will have a daily driver to smoke around in. Insuring your modified or classic car as a second vehicle (e.g. not your main car) can reduce your premium significantly. It's worth noting most classic car policies don't accrue NCB discounts, leaving them active for your daily hack.



12

MULTI-CAR POLICIES

If you own more than one car, listing them on a single policy may significantly reduce the cost of cover when compared to insuring each vehicle individually. You should be able to use your NCB across all cars on a single policy. Mainstream and specialist insurers alike offer multi-car cover, so there are plenty of options at your disposal. You're not restricted to cars, though. Providing you have a specialist vehicle insured with RH, they will allow you to add an unlimited number and wide range of specialist and everyday vehicles, including motorcycles, cars, trikes, vintage tractors, motorhomes, horse boxes, trailers and even vans (provided they're social, domestic and pleasure use only).

13

EXCESS

Adding voluntary excess (the amount of a claim you pay before the insurer's coffers kick in) can significantly reduce the cost of your policy. Don't go mad and end up with an excess you'll never be able to afford, but act sensibly and you'll make a big difference to the health of your wallet. RH has a compulsory excess only for classics.

14

BE SENSIBLE WITH YOUR MODIFICATIONS

Personalising your pride and joy is a pursuit only you can be in charge of, but keep in mind that engine swaps, transmission transplants and forced induction conversions could attract more increases in the cost of insurance than suspension upgrades, wheel swaps or the addition of big brake kits, all of which may improve the safety of your Mercedes. If in doubt, speak to your insurer and ask what the impact of various upgrades might be.

**Insurer Talk**

"I'd recommend you call for a preliminary quote before buying your next Mercedes," says Emma. "I've lost count of the number of drivers who buy a car before finding out how much it will cost to insure. This can be disastrous, especially if a vehicle history check hasn't been carried out. It costs just a few quid to check the particulars of a car using any one of a number of online services, and the DVLA's vehicle enquiry website will give you stacks of information, including fails, passes and advisories registered at any point in the car's recorded MOT history. Best of all, the service is free of charge!"

15

DON'T BE AFRAID TO HAGGLE

The insurance market is very competitive, so don't accept the automatically generated price of renewal when it lands in your inbox. As frustrating as it might seem, spend time shopping around to see what different companies can do for you. It's a tedious task, but an afternoon of boredom may save you a whole heap of cash!


16

INSURE PROPERLY

All modifications should be declared. Failure to do so may void your insurance, resulting in your car being impounded and the addition of regrettable endorsements on your driving licence. Also, nobody wants to be the guy involved in an accident ending in the fatality of a third party, but even less desirable is being the same guy with an invalid insurance policy. You have a responsibility to other road users when you're out and about in your car, so insure correctly. Tell the insurer about all penalty points you've accrued, declare the engine swap you've just carried out. If you come unstuck, you'll only have yourself to blame when you find it difficult to get insured. You have been warned!

17

DASH CAM

Over the course of the past few years, dash cams have become massively popular with owners of cars spanning all makes and models due to the technology proving itself to be a great way to identify who is at fault when it comes to a claim. While RH doesn't currently offer a discount for dash cam installation, some insurers may reward you with a lower premium. Don't drive like an idiot, though. In the event of a claim arising as a consequence of an accident that's your fault, the insurer will want to see your dash cam footage. 



Insurer Talk

"One of the major concerns for drivers taking out cover is the unwelcome added costs commonly associated with new insurance policies," reasons Emma. "One of RH's biggest plus points is the company's lack of fee for administration tasks. This attractive policy feature means no fee for mid-term alterations, no extra spend for preparing renewals and no additional cost options, other than competitively priced legal cover." This will come as huge relief to Mercedes drivers used to seeing their policy prices boosted with unwanted add-ons. Give Emma's friendly team a call for a quote on 0333 043 3911 or visit the company's website at www.rhspecialistsinsurance.co.uk

18

LENGTH OF TIME OWNED

If you've owned the same Mercedes for a considerable length of time, it shows the insurer you take care of your car and that you have a clear attachment to it. It's assumed you're less likely to be involved in events leading to a claim, and the reduced level of risk may result in a lower premium. Also, when it comes to performance vehicles, the longer you've owned your car, the more experience you're likely to have behind the wheel, encouraging some insurers to confidently lower the cost of cover. RH will do this in addition to considering your experience driving the same or similar cars in the past. Top job!

19

POSTCODE

There's not much you can do about this one, but where you live has a huge effect on the price you pay for insurance. For example, if you live in a bustling city, you'll pay more than if you were out in

the sticks. Less cars and less busy roads means less chance of an accident. Some insurers may refuse cover for cars kept out on the road regardless of postcode, so even if you're in a low-risk area, try to make use of an available driveway or garage.

20

JOB CHOICE

We're not saying you should change your job in order to achieve a lower insurance premium, but think carefully about your occupation and how best it fits with the available options when completing online insurance application forms. You don't want to pay a higher price simply through regrettable user error!

21

CHOOSE YOUR CAR CAREFULLY

If you're seventeen years old and fancy driving an SL55 AMG F1 as your daily, then perhaps you need to think again! The truth of the matter is that when it comes to affordable insurance, younger drivers are better off in charge of lower-powered, lower value cars while they build up NCB. That's not to say young drivers have to dismiss the idea of buying a quick Mercedes altogether. Consider the purchase of a first-gen SLK. They're cheap to run, cheap to maintain and won't break the bank.

22

ADD-ONS

Insurers are no longer allowed to 'hide' extras such as breakdown cover within the price of the insurance they offer, but they may still try to convince you to add them to your policy. Have a think about what you need and what you can get for a lower price elsewhere. RH prides itself on only having one cost option (legal cover priced at £10.50 regardless of how many cars you have covered).

23

BLACK BOXES

Ideal for many young drivers to prove they're safe and reliable behind the wheel, a 'black box' (also known as telematics insurance) records various pieces of information about your driving style and habits, including speed, distance, time of day, braking, cornering and so on. Insurers which encourage black boxes will request the information held by the unit in the event of a claim, which is great if you've been driving sensibly, but bad news if you've been trying to show off your drifting skills on the public highway.

24

SECURITY

It's an obvious one, but the more security on your car, the less likely it is to be stolen. Back in the day, this meant adding a noisy alarm, but with today's sophisticated gadgets and key-cloning devices doing the rounds, extra security – such as trackers and immobilisers – are a worthwhile addition. Highly visible physical security, including steering wheel locks and gearshift-to-handbrake locks, is also a great way to deter opportunist thieves, and may result in a cheaper insurance policy when it comes to renewal time.

25

STORAGE

If you have access to a garage, then make use of it. Storing your car behind a locked door could reduce the cost of your insurance policy. Safe storage will also offer welcome security benefits. Even keeping your car on a driveway overnight will reduce the amount of money asked of you by an insurer, more so if the driveway is protected by secured gates. Remove the car from the public highway when it's not in use and watch those policy premiums drop. Hooray!



Insurer Talk

"With regard to limited mileage policies, RH differs from the competition in many ways, not least of all the removal of a cap on mileage for cars forty years of age or over," reveals Emma. "Owners of younger cars can choose between values of 1,500, 3,000 or 5,000 miles, although you will need to make sure you have an everyday car in addition to your insured cherished vehicle." It's not just the age of your Mercedes Emma's team takes into consideration. "Unlike some of our competitors, we will insure a driver of any age, providing the driver applying for cover is fit and well enough to drive in accordance with the DVLA's requirements," she smiles.

**Specialist vehicle
insurance from
people who share
your passion.**



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From iconic models to future classics –
we've been providing specialist vehicle
insurance for over 40 years.



CARLY CONNECTED CAR PRO VERSION APP AND ADAPTOR

Bag yourself the diagnostic kit recommended by experts



Carly Connected Car's smartphone app can tap into your Mercedes' multiple ECUs to check for correlation with the visible speedometer and identify whether data has been manipulated. This is especially useful when inspecting a car prior to purchase, or if trying to get a better understanding of the history of an already-bought vehicle with previous owners. After all, mileage fraud is more prevalent than previously thought, risking driver safety and costing motorists millions each year.

Carly is the world market leader in mobile car electronics. The company's exhaustive research (a study of more than 150,000 vehicles forming part of a larger survey of one million cars) identified eighteen percent of vehicles displaying incorrect mileage! One of the reasons mileage fraud is on the rise is the increasingly popularity of affordable car finance plans. Personal Contract Purchases and Personal Contract Hire deals often come with strict limits on mileage, where distance over and above what's agreed attracts a fee. This can be charged as much as 30p per mile, leading some owners to employ the services of

'mileage correction' firms offering to reset or 'backdial' odometers.

"Unscrupulous members of the motor trade with access to the right equipment can easily adjust mileage clocks," says Avid Avini, one of Carly's founders. "Our app goes beyond the visual and paperwork check most buyers rely on. The software interrogates up to fifty control units in the car, comparing data with what's visible on the dashboard."

As well as mileage checks, the app can indicate how a car has been driven by its previous owners. It also lists logged fault codes, highlighting potential problems with the engine, brakes, infotainment, climate control and steering systems, sometimes before they've made themselves known. The app can be used to clear codes or error messages which would typically cost a princely sum at your local main dealer, plus it's possible to use Carly's app to display live engine operating data.

As you can see, whether you're on the lookout for a new Mercedes, or if you want to add easy-to-operate diagnostic equipment to your existing toolkit, Carly's app is a hugely valuable tool for owners of cars equipped with an OBDII diagnostic port. This includes most Mercedes cars

from 2004 onwards (see the full list of applications by pointing your browser at bit.ly/carlymercedes).

We've got three hardware adaptors and Pro apps (choose between iOS or Android) with a lifetime of continuous software updates and first-class customer support to give away to lucky readers as competition prizes. To be in with a chance of winning, all you need to do is answer the following simple question:

Which racing driver owned the 560 SEC featured on the cover of this issue of Mercedes Driver?

- a) James Hunt
- b) Rebecca Jackson
- c) Callum Iliott

Head over to mediajustice.co.uk/md and register your answer. It really is that easy! Good luck!

CONTACT

For a full list of the Mercedes cars covered and the supported features of the Carly Connected Car app, visit www.mycarly.com



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

It is a condition of entry that the prize winner and his or her car may be photographed for a feature to be included in a forthcoming edition of Mercedes Driver magazine. The winner must be prepared to supply their name, address and other personal information in order for the competition prize to be supplied. The competition is only open to UK residents. The competition is not open to employees or associates of Kelsey Media or Media Justice. Only one entry permitted per person. There is no cash alternative and the prize is not transferable. We reserve the right to cancel the competition if circumstances change beyond our control. By entering the competition, you agree to be bound by the rules, and you agree that your name and age may be mentioned in subsequent printed feature text. Details of your competition entry may be shared with agents acting on behalf of Kelsey Media. Mercedes Driver is a Kelsey Media brand. Kelsey Media takes no responsibility beyond promoting this competition. Kelsey Media will only ever use your information in accordance with its strict multi-layer privacy notice. For full details, visit kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. If at any point you have any queries regarding Kelsey's data policy, you can email our Data Protection Officer at dpo@kelsey.co.uk. Submitting data indicates your consent to the rules outlined in this terms and conditions statement. We may choose to contact you via email when we have Mercedes Driver news that we think you might be interested in. Asterisk denotes approximate value of prize. The editor's decision is final.



WHEN LESS IS MORE

Piers Richings is enjoying the poke of his immaculate W123's 2.3-litre lump after the many years he spent driving V8s

WORDS **Dan Furr** PHOTOGRAPHY **Dan Sherwood**



Right Richings Greetham automotive lifestyle accessories are the perfect match for this beautiful W123



Widely regarded as the last of the truly over-engineered Mercedes cars, the W123 was produced in huge numbers during a production cycle lasting nine years before the introduction of the W124 in the mid-1980s. The boys at Benz managed to shift almost three million W123s during this time, making it the most successful product offered by the company. Perhaps unsurprisingly, when Piers Richings, founder of automotive accessories giant, Richbrook (richbrook.co.uk), started to explore the Mercedes back catalogue a decade ago, he was curious to find out why the W123 is still regarded as a jewel in the manufacturer's crown. Not that he immediately jumped behind the wheel of the W114's successor...

"I bought a W126 500 SE instead," he tells us. "I loved the car's battleship grey paintwork and matching hide, but I couldn't resist the lure of the sportier SEC body shape. Before long, I'd parted with the SE in favour of a coupe powered by the same engine." He quickly discovered all that glitters is not necessarily gold. "I don't mind admitting I bought a bad example," he groans. "I loved the way the car looked, but it came complete with a high number of mechanical issues preventing me from getting on with the business of enjoyable driving. As much as I love the SEC, this one had to go."

His fondness for the V8 powerplants stuffed

beneath the long bonnets of retro rides can be traced back to his experiences riding around in the 300 SEL 6.3 his father owned four decades ago. Originally a private project by Mercedes engineer, Erich Waxenberger, the model came about following an idea to lift the powerful M100 engine from the super-luxury 600 and stuff it into the front of an S-Class. The biggest engine visitors to Mercedes showrooms could order with their W109s at the time was an inline-six, but amazed at Waxenberger's achievement at turning the S-Class into a sports car beater, factory bosses put the Frankenstein-spec four-wheeler into production, revealing it at the 1968 Geneva Motor Show.

The resulting 300 SEL 6.3 may have weighed almost two tonnes, but the fuel injected four-door travelled at high speed with superior levels of comfort, despatching a rapid sprint to 62mph from rest in under 6.5 seconds. The car maxed out at close to 137mph.

FAMILY AFFAIR

"Trips out in my dad's Mercedes were a big thrill for the fifteen-year-old me!" beams Piers. "At the time of its release, the 300 SEL 6.3 was the world's fastest four-door car. It's an impressive machine with an amazing engine, one which left a lasting impression on my young mind." Strange, then, he should choose to buy a W123 powered by one of the range's smaller powerplants.

"I enjoyed the wonderful waft delivered by the five-litre V8s in my W126s, but I liked the idea

DRIVER Q&A



PIERS RICHINGS

First Mercedes
1990 W126 500 SE

Favourite Mercedes
300 SEL 6.3

Best thing about your W123 230E
I love the 'clunk' sound of its doors closing!

Worst thing about your W123 230E
Squeaky seats

Best thing about Mercedes ownership
You have faith in the reliability of these cars due to the quality of engineering poured into them at the factory





THE MORE YOU LOOK, THE MORE YOU'RE AMAZED AT THE PRESERVATION OF ORIGINALITY

of trying a Mercedes with a more compact engine,” continues the resident of North Norfolk. He struck lucky when he spotted the 1983 Labrador Blau 230E seen here advertised for sale three years ago. In a standard state of tune, boasting original paintwork, immaculate cabin furniture, little more than 70k miles registered on its odometer and still wearing its original dealer-issue registration plates, the modern classic was everything he wished for. Well, other than a staggeringly tall ride height. “The car was riding on heavy duty dampers more in keeping with what you’d fit to a motor you’re about to put to work as a towing vehicle! My first job was to fit a set of standard shocks and springs.” W123 service and repair specialist, Mark Cosovich (w123world.com), was only too happy to take delivery of the offending parts thereafter.

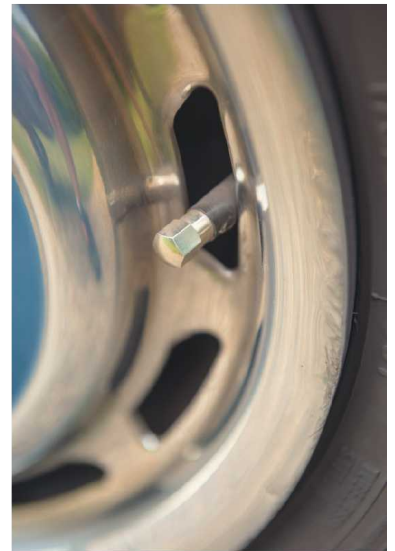
EARLY DETAILS

The more you look around the car, the more you’re amazed at the preservation of its originality. We spot a Pioneer cassette-radio that’s managed to avoid being replaced with a newer head unit. The number-etched factory glass remains present and correct. Bargate Motors (now Mercedes-Benz of Boston) main dealer window graphics stay stuck



Left We have more than a feeling this kind of detail on a W123 is considered highly desirable

Facing page Richbrook magnetic tyre valve caps were a ‘must have’ accessory!



Rich pickings

In addition to his role as Richbrook's chief, Piers is also founder of Richings Greetham, a company specialising in the design and production of high quality leather wallets and travel accessories aimed at owners of classic cars. Focusing on elegant design, function and longevity, the company has gone from strength to strength thanks to the popularity of its travel pouches, iPhone cases, passport holders, headphone cable tidies, laptop sleeves, glasses cases, zip wallets, card holders and key rings, each available in a variety of colours. Visit richingsgreetham.co.uk

in the same place they were positioned thirty-five years ago. Then there's the 'Clunk-Click' sticker adhered to the dash. Free of any wear, tear or mucky paw prints, the striking infographic marked the beginning of UK legislation forcing compulsory seatbelt use in the front of a vehicle from 31st January 1983 onwards, a move designed to cut carnage on British roads.

"The body has never been welded," confirms Piers. "To keep it that way, I've ensured the chassis has been treated to a healthy dose of Waxoyl," he adds. That's just as well, because this super saloon is put to work as his commuter. "It's true! I use the car to take me to Richbrook's offices in Fakenham and home again most days. I've got other cars, but I love driving my W123. I'll use it for B-road blasts into nearby Holt, or to ferry me to shows." How does having half the number of cylinders to play with shape-up when compared to the experience of driving the monster Mercs he's owned in the past? He pauses for a moment before replying. "I'll be honest," he whispers. "I miss the torque of a V8. The four-pot engine is great, though. Fuel injection is a welcome feature, and the car isn't sluggish by any stretch of the imagination. The power and speed produced by the 230E is ample for how and

where I travel, and the automatic transmission makes for effortless time in the driving seat."

The engine is in perfect working order and benefits from easy breathing thanks to a free-flowing stainless steel exhaust system. Toyo 350 177/80 tyres wrapped around the factory fourteens provide a low-noise, high-comfort ride, while Richbrook magnetic tyre valve caps hint at who owns this beautiful Benz.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed the last three years I've spent with the car, but I'm now on the lookout for its replacement," announces Piers when we ask what's next for his terrific 230E. "I'm on the hunt for another V8!" he roars, before revealing his plan to track down and purchase a pristine example of a W124 400E.

The W123 230E might not be the most exciting Mercedes saloon ever built, but if you're looking for an utterly dependable, brilliantly comfortable four-door offering decent fuel economy, bags of character and mechanicals recognised for being easy to work on, then you can't go far wrong. "I'm in no rush to sell," smiles Piers. "I count myself lucky to have found a 230E in such good condition. I certainly don't mind hanging on to it for a while longer!"



STAR POWER

Ever wondered about the history of the Mercedes-Benz emblem decorating the nose of your car? Wonder no more...

On 6th August 1909, Benz & Cie submitted an application for a new registered trademark. Featuring the company name surrounded by a wreath, the design was entered on the Register of Trademarks

by Germany's Imperial Patent Office on 10th October 1910. Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft (DMG) had already applied for legal protection of the Mercedes star on 24th June 1909 before it too was added to the register, albeit a year later than Benz's efforts.

Looking back, the fact both car makers registered their trademarks in the summer of 1909 seems to mirror the events of 1886, when Gottlieb Daimler and Carl Benz independently

created a car powered by a fast-running internal combustion engine. The two geniuses had no knowledge of each other.

The three-pointed star was the idea of Gottlieb's sons, Paul and Adolf. Their father had used a similar symbol to mark the family's house on a postcard depicting the town of Deutz some years earlier. The striking design used on cars is intended to symbolise the use of DMG engines on land, at sea and in the air. The boys also registered a four-pointed star logo, which became the emblem of Deutsche Aerospace AG (DASA) in the 1980s and is currently the corporate identity of the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS).

STRONG START

In its formative years, the Mercedes star was used without a surrounding ring. Primarily, it adorned radiators, but it was also occasionally seen on bonnets accompanied by the firm's name in the form of block lettering. In rare instances, two Mercedes stars were used! Placed opposite one another, they featured on V-shaped radiators.

The logo gained its outer circle and block lettering in 1916, pre-empting elements of the

THEIR FATHER HAD USED A SIMILAR SYMBOL TO MARK THE FAMILY'S HOME ON A POSTCARD DEPICTING THE TOWN OF DEUTZ



joint Mercedes-Benz emblem to follow. Four small stars in a dark round strip picked up the theme of the central symbol and hinted at the lesser-known four-star design the Daimler brothers developed previously. In 1921, DMG registered a vivid star rising in a ring as an emblem expressly for use as a three-dimensional decoration atop a radiator. The corresponding trademark was registered 2nd August 1923. In its difficult-to-miss position on top of the radiator cap, the upright, standalone star was far more prominent and easier to recognise than when attached as a badge to bodywork, especially when a car was travelling past awestruck onlookers at speed.

In 1925, the star and laurel wreath were combined to create the signet for the new Mercedes-Benz brand. The application to register the logo and its wording as trademarks came in advance of the official merging of the two manufacturers (listed as Daimler-Benz) in 1926.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

The outline of the new symbol picked up on the circular form of the two previous trademarks, with the Mercedes star remaining prominent. The

Above and facing page

The evolution of the iconic Mercedes-Benz emblem is clear to see from this illustrated trip back through its history



company's lettering moved from the lower edge of the outer ring to the top, enabling the Benz name to appear in its place. The laurel branches from the Mannheim brand's trademark replaced the four outer Mercedes stars. Look closely, and you'll see the branches have their roots right next to the letters B and Z, while the tips stretch out to the first and last letters of the Mercedes name.

This 1926 design gave rise to a complex trademark which reflected claims made by each company about its products whilst alluding to their rich histories. Later, in 1933, Mercedes-Benz registered a streamlined form of the emblem comprising a slim, black circle in which the black silhouette of the Mercedes star was present. It is from this design the Mercedes-Benz trademark used today was developed.

FROM THE
VAULTS

1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966



THE BEASTS FROM BOTTRUP

Brabus has been churning out monstrous Mercs for more than four decades. Buckle up for a ride through the tuner's greatest hits!

WORDS **Richard Gooding** PHOTOGRAPHY **Various**

1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 **1977**



Left and below Brabus is a name derived from the first three letters of its founding partners' surnames: Brackmann and Buschmann

In the same way RUF has become recognised as the first name in classic Porsche tuning, Brabus is a name synonymous with modified Mercs. The guys and girls in Bottrop have spent the past forty years created mean machines combining brawn and luxury, be they Smart, Maybach or Benz-badged beasts.

The Brabus story began in 1977. Petrolhead, Bodo Buschmann, wanted to extract trapped ponies from the cars in his father's Mercedes dealership, but he quickly discovered each of the tuners he approached was unable to satisfy his demands. He bought a Porsche to play with instead, but disapproval from Buschmann Snr (it simply wasn't acceptable for the son of a Mercedes merchant to be driving a model produced by a rival manufacturer!) soon saw the air-cooled car make way for a W116. Neither as athletic or as stirring as his Zuffenhausen sports coupe, Bodo set about modifying the S-Class to match the pace of his Porsche. Visitors to his father's dealership took notice of what the youngster was working on and enquired about the possibility of similar upgrades for their own Mercs. The seeds were sown.

German law dictated Bodo needed a business partner if he wanted to turn his increasingly popular activities into a company. His university chum, Klaus Brackmann, agreed to get involved. Before long, Brabus was established. In truth, Klaus had little interest in automotive tuning and sold his share of the business to Bodo for the equivalent of €100 a short while after the legal paperwork was done and dusted. His contribution to ensuring Bodo's vision was to be become a reality, however, shouldn't be overlooked.



FROM THE
VAULTS

1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966



The W126 S-Class became the Brabus *brot and butter*, yet owners found themselves wanting similar treatment for their other Mercs too. This diversification suited Bodo's plans perfectly, affording him an ever-broadening base of models to play with. It wasn't long before Benz buffs all over Germany heard about the work Brabus was producing. In fact, the firm's reputation spread worldwide, leading to the arrival of customers from the United Arab Emirates as the 1980s drew near. Brabus became a hit in the Middle East thereafter, an unexpected trend which would go on to necessitate the expansion of Bodo's Kirchhellener Straße premises to some 112,000m².

The first Brabus multimedia system found its way into a Mercedes in 1982, signalling the company's evolution into a concern capable of more than tweaking engines and chassis equipment. Within two years, a new research and development department was opened to help create more varied and more extreme tuning programmes. Bodo moved the company away from S-Class fettling, instead directing his team to concentrate their efforts on playing with the then-new W201 platform. Consequently, in 1984,

the Brabus 190E V8 packed a 276bhp punch with 317lb/ft torque from its S-Class sourced eight-pot engine. The power figures produced by the massively modified Merc eclipsed those of the Cosworth-tuned 2.3-16 (seen on page twenty-two of this issue of Mercedes Driver) by a significant margin. This was significant for a number of reasons, not least of all the fact Mercedes factory bosses were promoting the 2.3-16 as being the fastest manufacturer-built W201 of the day.

GOING TO EXTREMES

What were the 1980s if not a decade of excess?! Exuberance and extravagance have long been Brabus hallmarks. Early, extreme and experimentation are other words beginning with the letter 'e' which can be attributed to the efforts of the boys from Bottrop. As if to prove the point, the C43 AMG of 1997 may have been the first official big-power mid-sized Mercedes, but the Brabus 190E V8 beat it to market by a massive thirteen years! For those who found Bodo's wild W201 a tad excessive, the lightweight 3.6S with its twelve-valve, 268bhp version of the M103 straight-six from the W124 line-up arrived



1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 **1977**



Facing page Humble origins led to rapid expansion

Above In addition to customising new Mercedes cars, Brabus can tweak and tune older models

FROM THE
VAULTS

1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966



Old, but gold

In addition to its line of infotainment systems and bespoke interior solutions for brand new production cars, Brabus seized upon the 'retro trend' by adding classic Mercedes models to the list of cars the company caters for. Brabus Classic renovates vintage Mercs from the ground-up. Recent projects have included Gullwings, Pagodas, W186 300s and W111s, each emerging from the Brabus Classic workshop with a certificate of authenticity and a manufacturer-style three-year warranty.

1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 **1977**



POWER TORQUING	POWER TORQUING	SEAT OF POWER
		
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in 1988. Thanks to a rear seat delete, a lack of air-conditioning and the removal of heavy sound-deadening material, the new car managed the 0-60mph dash in 6.3 seconds when fitted with the optional 'short sprint' rear differential. A recorded top speed of 177mph set the standard, but if the 3.6S still wasn't quick enough for you, the 282bhp, 24-valve, 3.6-24 released a year later knocked a full half-second of the 3.6S's sprint time. Crikey!

HIRED GUN

In a ludicrous-yet-effective marketing masterstroke, rental company, Sixt, ordered two-hundred Brabus-tuned 190Es in a deal which spawned more loyal customers to Bodo's ever-enlarging empire. Success enabled him to continue experimenting, as proved by the Brabus-optimised W124 and its record-breaking drag-coefficient of just 0.26 Cd. It was, however, the release of Brabus-enhanced V12 engines in 1992 which catapulted Bodo's company into the big league. Boasting 6.9-litres of displacement and an output of 501bhp with 517lb/ft of tarmac-twisting torque, the ground-breaking powerplants turned the

W124 500E into a monster. Even so, Bodo wasn't done yet. Engine size rose to 7.3-litres in 1996, enabling the 574bhp W210-based E V12 7.3S to hit 205mph. And that was with a speed limiter in place! Needless to say, the car was rated as the world's fastest saloon, leading to the engine being used in the load-lugging T V12 estate and the mud-plugging ML-based M V12, crowning each vehicle the quickest in their class.

If the V12 wouldn't fit, Brabus shoehorned its 6.5-litre V8 into engine bays instead. Bodo didn't have it all his own way, though. Until AMG was swallowed up by Daimler in 1999, the Affalterbach tuning house was his biggest competition on the Mercedes tuning scene. He recognised AMG's assimilation as the perfect excuse for Brabus create even more extreme vehicles and expanded the company's workshops accordingly, earning it the accolade of being the world's largest vehicle tuning outfit by a significant margin.

An official joint venture with Daimler-owned Smart resulted in the creation of Smart-Brabus GmbH in 2002. The 214bhp V6-powered BiTurbo Roadster Coupe was a highlight of the venture, **2**

Above Today, Brabus is a massive business spanning many different workshops and showrooms at its Bottrop base

Facing page Bodo's intention was to add "power and refinement" to Mercedes products, be they fast-road racer, comfortable cruiser or hardcore utility vehicle

FROM THE
VAULTS

1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966



1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 **1977**



Left Joint venture with Smart resulted in the creation of Smart-Brabus GmbH and the 214bhp V6 Biturbo Roadster

Right If four wheels isn't enough for you, perhaps you should think about buying the insane 704bhp Brabus G700?!



Variety pack

It's not just Mercs and Maybachs enjoying the Brabus treatment. Diversification is the name of the game, a theme exemplified by the B-badged Teslas rolling out of Bottrop! Both the Model S and Roadster can be given a Brabus makeover. In a surprising move, Bodo's company was appointed official tuning partner of Bugatti in 1994. Two EB110 SSs were built, but much like Brabus Teslas, development work was mainly focused on cosmetic upgrades. In 1999, the Startech subsidiary was created, serving owners of Bentleys.

while in 2005, Brabus engineers added to their Guinness World Record trophy tally when the E V12 shot into the saloon top speed record books by recording 217mph at Nardo. Even this achievement was overshadowed by what is arguably Brabus' most famous creation: the CLS-based Rocket of 2006. Returning to the Italian high-speed test track, Bodo watched the 6.2-litre, 724bhp, twin-turbocharged M275 V12 four-door fastback achieve an intergalactic 227mph. Loaded with 973lb/ft torque, the car became a beacon for Brabus tuning the world over.

THE WILD BUNCH

Coveted 'B' badges have since been found on equally as formidable freaks, such as the 907lb/ft Unimog U500 Black Edition, the 660bhp Brabus-Mercedes-McLaren SLR, the 720bhp AMG-badged C63-based BiTurbo V12 Bullit, the SLS 700 BiTurbo and, perhaps the ultimate Bottrop behemoth, the G63-based G700 6x6. A brutish 704bhp six-wheeler weighing in at 3.8-tonnes, the monster Merc can reach 60mph in just 4.4 seconds. Beautifully and bonkersly Brabus!

12

FROM THE
VAULTS1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 **1977**

Bodo's early creations focused on combining affluence and dynamism, qualities the company still holds dear. Sadly, he passed away in April this year at just sixty-two years of age. Undoubtedly, his legacy lives on; the monstrously delicious fusion of pace, opulence and class put Brabus creations in a league of their own. The company's workforce comprises more than 450 employees spread across five sites producing hand-built cars (each supplied with a three-year warranty). There are Brabus dealerships in over a hundred countries, and it's not just executive saloons and low-slung sports cars which get the Brabus treatment. Got an A-Class or Vaneo? No problem. Brabus can cater for you too!

WORDS TO LIVE BY

Bodo's motto of "never work for money, work for passion" is underscored by the determination of his son, Constantin, who now finds himself at the helm of Brabus, a company recognised by the German Federal Motor Transport Authority as being a vehicle manufacturer in its own right. Brabus has



Above No matter your taste, Brabus can deliver any style, any way you want it

Left Bodo is credited with creating some of the world's most outrageously powerful Mercedes-Benz vehicles

always made dream machines for individuals who crave high quality cars with blistering performance and lashings of luxury, and just like the past four decades it has spent under Bodo's control, the firm shows no signs of slowing down. Here's to the next forty years of Brabus brilliance!

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2003 Mercedes SL500. Jasper Blue, 1 lady owner, 62000 miles, FSH £8,995



2000 Mercedes SLK320. Brilliant Silver, Black hide, 63000 miles, FSH £5,795



1994 Mercedes 300SL R129. Signal Red, Cream leather, 62000 miles, FSH £8,995



1999 Mercedes E55 AMG. Brilliant Silver, every extra, 65000 miles, FSH £8,995



1962 Jaguar Mk2 3.8. Red, Beige hide, PAS, Auto, CWW, Good car £21,995



2001 Mercedes SLK320. Designo Metallic Purple. 20000 miles, FSH £9,795



2006 Audi A4 1.8T S-line Conv. 6-speed. Avus Silver, 50000 miles, FSH £6,795



2004 BMW E46 318Ci SE Convertible. Auto, Silver Grey, 51500 miles £5,995



2000(W) Mercedes E240 Elegance. Brilliant Silver, 41000 miles, like new £3,295



2001(X) BMW Z3 2.2i Roadster. Titan Silver, Black hide, 61000 miles, FSH £5,295



2000 Audi A6 4.2 V8 Quattro Sport Tip Saloon. Silver, 55000 miles, FSH £ 5,795



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1972 MGB Roadster. Blaze with Navy trim. Chrome wires, 55,000 miles £7,995



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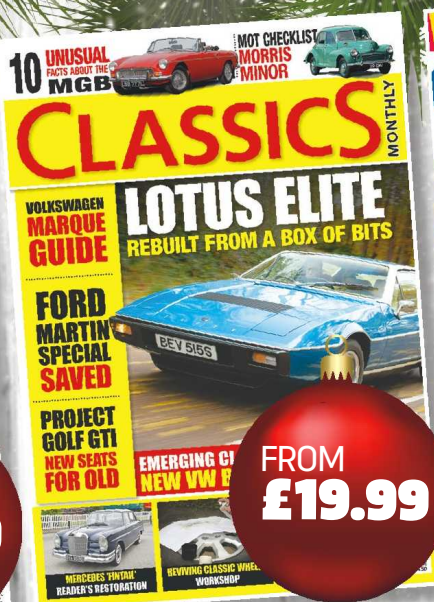
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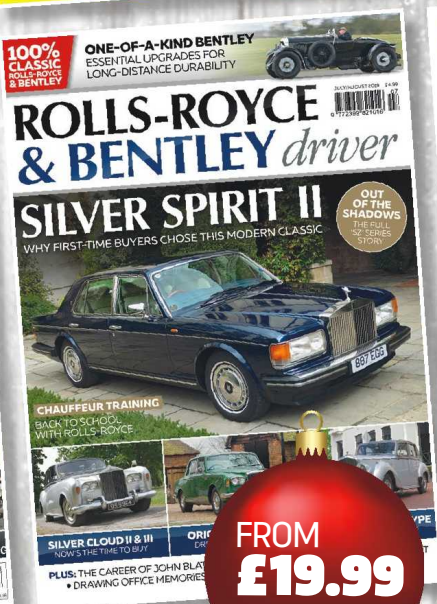
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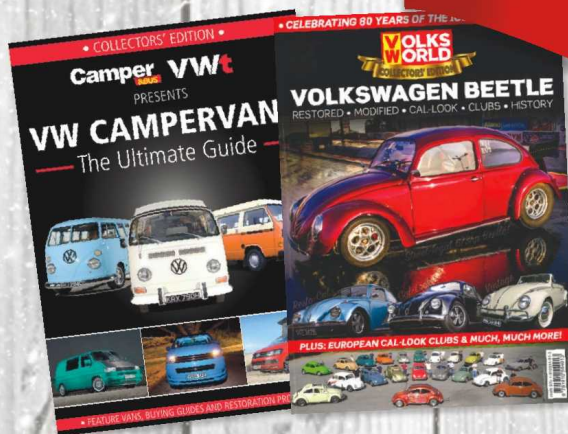
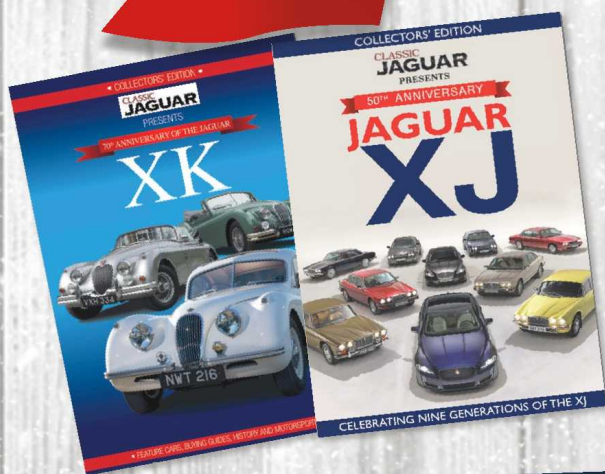
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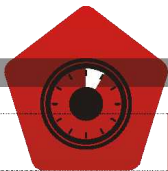


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FIVE MINUTES WITH...

Gary Conway



Who are you and what do you do?

I'm Gary Conway, managing director at performance vehicle maintenance, modification and service specialist, GCAP Performance.

When was GCAP established?

I founded the company in 2012. Prior to that time, I'd forged a reputation for tuning a high number of desirable sports cars. These projects led to demand for my services. Subsequently, I established GCAP. The business has gone from strength to strength, serving many owners of Mercedes-Benz cars, including AMGs of all ages.

Where is the company based?

Notting Hill, which is within kicking distance of the A40 in West London. The workshop is easy to get to from any direction, and GCAP customers like the fact they can go sightseeing or shopping while their car is being worked on!

How many people work with you at GCAP?

We're a team of five, including myself, two mechanics, an automotive electronics specialist and an expert engine builder.

Right GCAP offers servicing and tuning packages for AMG-badged A45, C63, E63, G63, SLS and GT models from its Notting Hill base

How has GCAP changed over the years?

The biggest difference has been the amount of research and development the business is now concerned with. When I started the company, requests from customers focused on regular servicing and the supply and installation of bolt-on performance enhancing parts, but as time has progressed, owners of luxury sports cars have expressed their desire for more bespoke tuning. As a case in point, Mercedes embracing turbocharging technology in its range of performance vehicles has resulted in a high number of requests from GCAP customers in charge of A45 AMGs wanting custom maps to go with free-flowing intake and exhaust pipework, as well as hybrid turbochargers from trusted German forced induction specialist, LOBA Motorsport. GCAP is LOBA's exclusive UK distributor.

Does your base in London's fashionable Notting Hill entice celebrity clientele?

We see a lot of well-known faces in and out of our workshop. We look after cars for Formula One drivers, actors, comedians and television presenters, including Jonathan Ross. We even look after the AMG-fettled machines of well-known motoring journalists. That said, GCAP can provide a full mechanical overhaul of any Mercedes for any customer, regardless of whether they happen to be famous!

What's your favourite Mercedes?

The Chelsea boy in me loves the new G-Wagen, but I'm also a fan of the AMG GT. Two very different Mercs, but both equally awesome!

Can we follow your adventures online?

Mercedes Driver readers are invited to visit the GCAP Facebook page and our website, which can be found at gcappperformance.co.uk

Thanks for your time, Gary. It's appreciated!





ART OF SPEED

For more than fifty years, Mercedes racing posters announced success at the circuit through bold adventures in graphic design

Above and facing page

Detailed illustrations were readied in advance of race day, allowing for quick insertion of text and fast-paced turnaround for print as soon as the winning driver crossed the finish line

If artists, Hans Liska and Walter Gotschke, had been in Shanghai on 15th April 2012, it's almost certain they would have picked up their pencils to chronicle Nico Rosberg's triumph at the Chinese Grand Prix. Being the first victory for a factory Silver Arrow since 1955, the occasion served as a major milestone in a return to Mercedes dominance at the track. Of course, in Liska and Gotschke's day, victory for the works team was a common occurrence. Moreover, almost every win was

immortalised when the pair translated success at the circuit to high-quality illustrations presented as racing posters for marketing purposes.

In the early days of racing posters, drawings were the standard format due to the fact the artwork had to be published the same day as the race. Ordinarily, the majority of the graphics used would be created prior to the race being depicted, allowing the winner's name to be quickly inserted as soon as results were announced. Interestingly, a second-place finish was applauded in print by

GROSSER PREIS der SCHWEIZ 1938




Ein neuer dreifacher MERCEDES-BENZ-Sieg !

1. Europameister Rudolf Caracciola
2. Richard B. Seaman
3. Manfred v. Brauchitsch

Schnellste Runde: Richard B. Seaman mit einem Durchschnitt von 153,4 km/std

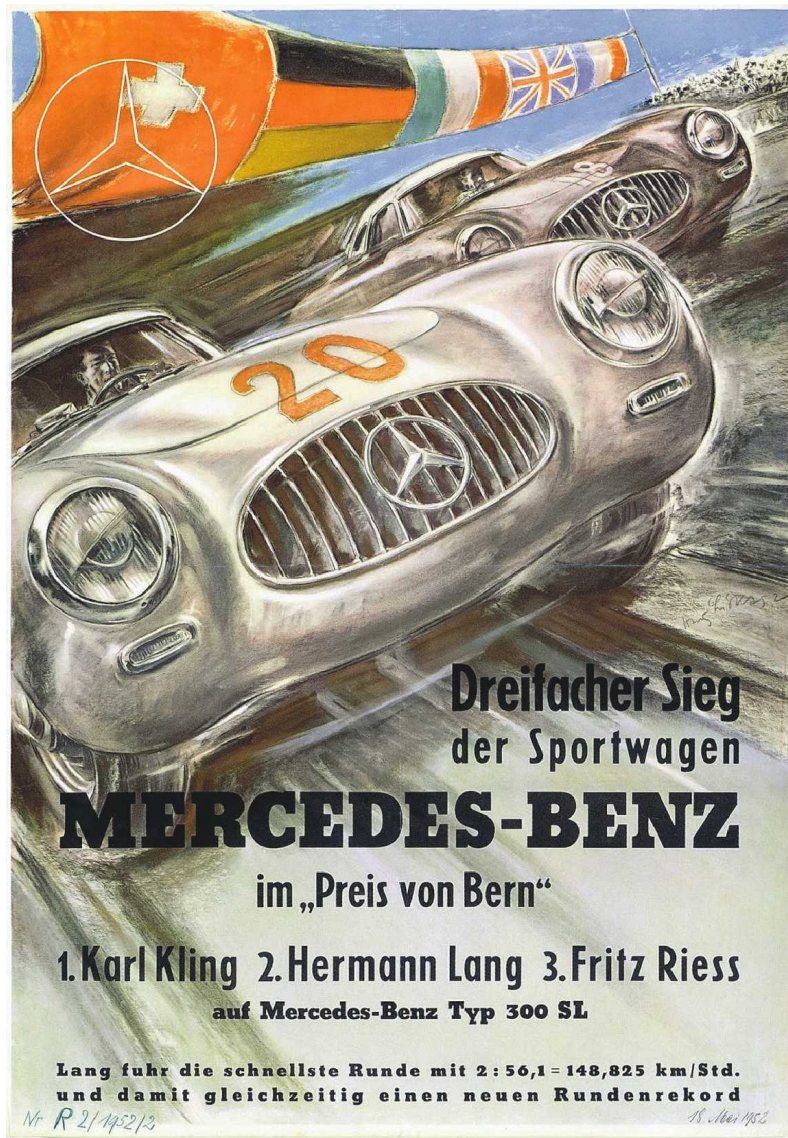
Wiederum sicherten konstruktive Überlegenheit, fachmännisches Können und hervorragende Fahrkunst diesen überzeugenden Mercedes-Benz-Erfolg

Sämtliche MERCEDES-BENZ-Rennwagen waren ausgerüstet mit Continental-Reifen, Bosch-Kerzen, Bosch-Zündung und -Kolben

MERCEDES-BENZ

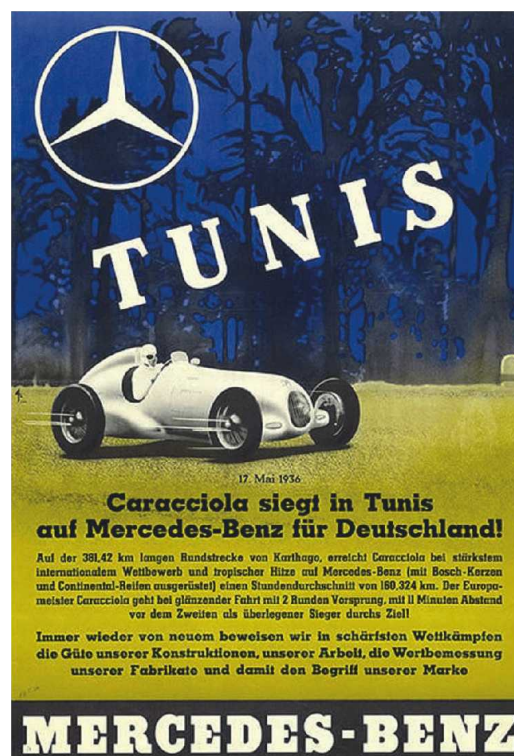
Herausgeber: Daimler-Benz AG, Stuttgart-Uerschingen

Offsetdruck: Wilm. Kunschdruck Stuttgart



aesthetically less engaging period for Mercedes' track-inspired marketing materials. A much-needed change didn't occur until 1934, when Mercedes re-entered Formula racing. A legend was born; from the start, the new Silver Arrows raced to victory. Unexpectedly, the impressive motorsport machines were nowhere to be seen on the subsequently generated posters. Instead, driver portraits and generic racing scenes were depicted. The artwork had an increasing graphic design quality about it, and from 1938 onwards, the designers of the work were beginning to make themselves known. Gotschke, for instance, was suddenly being hailed as "the Picasso of the track" and would go on to become one of the world's most famous automotive illustrators.

His drawings followed a consistent pattern of hushed tones enabled through a limited use of colour. He'd forged a uniform layout for typography and graphic elements that was to be seen on most of his work for Mercedes, but just like Rudaux had experienced two decades beforehand, great change was coming to Germany, and with it, a



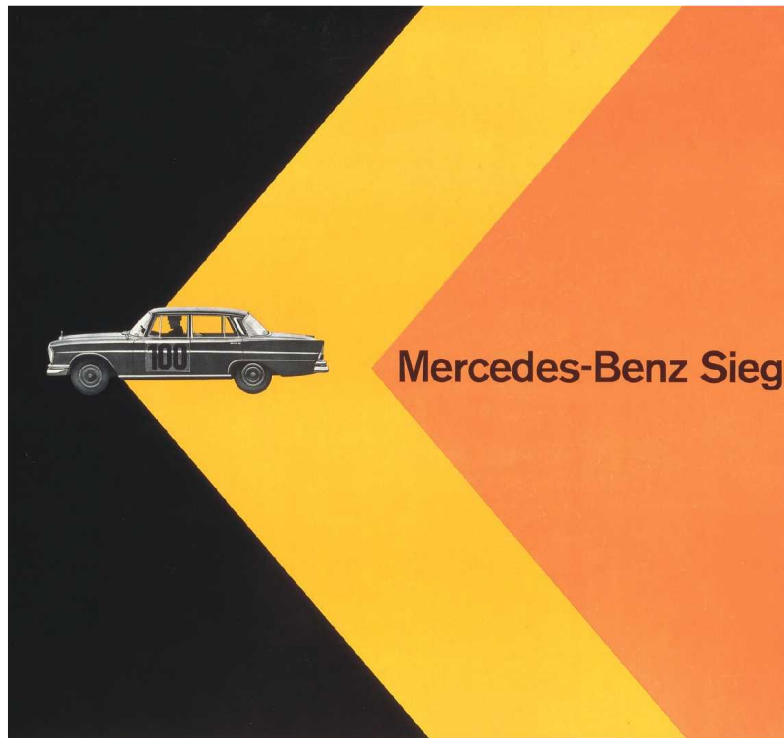
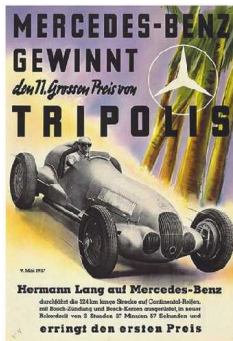
the company on only one occasion: the comeback of superstar driver, Karl Kling.

Although Mercedes had been a runaway success in motorsport since the first high-speed races at the end of the nineteenth century – the works teams had gained enormous publicity as a consequence of unrivalled high-octane action – it wasn't until 1914 the first racing poster told of these wins. Drawn by artist, Henri Rudaux, a Frenchman who had already produced work for Daimler, the work was inspired by the layouts of his fellow countryman and printmaker, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. The resulting graphic design concept was exactly what bosses at Mercedes were looking for, so much so the layouts for all of the company's racing posters remained largely unchanged for many years!

BEYOND WORDS

From Rudaux's pre-WW1 work through to the mid-1930s, purely typographic posters ("from one victory to the next!") boasted one of them in 1924) became the norm, marking an

Above right The 1908 French Grand Prix was promoted by Mercedes with a hand-drawn illustration, whereas the manufacturer's racing posters during the 1920s were usually simpler, text-only designs



Mercedes-Benz 300 SE gewinnt 24-Stunden-Rennen von Francorchamps

In diesem spannenden und harten Tourenwagenrennen errangen Robert Crevits/Georges Gosselin mit einer Durchschnittsgeschwindigkeit von 164,875 km/h – 281 Runden und einer Runde Vorsprung den ersten Platz im Gesamtklassement.

Eugen Böhringer auf Mercedes-Benz 300 SE fuhr mit 177,296 km/h die schnellste Runde.

Von 55 gestarteten Wagen konnten nur 24 gewertet werden.

shake-up of key personnel and manufacturing activities at Mercedes.

Liska was a newspaper illustrator by trade, but after WW2 ended, he became an in-house graphic designer for Mercedes. Pamphlets and handbooks were his calling card, but when the works team re-entered Formula racing, there was once again many triumphs to be documented. Additionally, the 300 SL's performance at Le Mans, endurance victories at Nürburgring and a win at the Carrera Panamericana needed to be announced. Needless to say, Liska was kept very busy!

FIT THE BILL

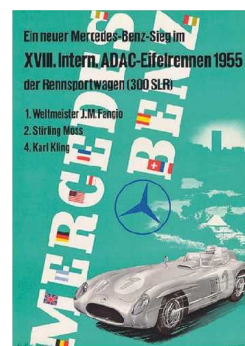
He was frustrated at being bound to restrictive corporate guidelines, yet he still managed to convey depth and emotion to his poster artwork. The days of being stuck to a formulaic approach to design, however, were coming to an end at Mercedes. In 1955, the manufacturer ventured a bold step towards modernity, engaging independent graphic designer, Anton Stankowski ('the father of concrete art'), as freelance art director. It was a move hotly debated within the organisation, and not one which went down well with all members of the board. Even so, Stankowski's ground-breaking work for many of the world's major brands resulted in him being given free rein to create all posters for Mercedes continued racing efforts.

Breaking from tradition, his works were based on a single design, one which he said were "more radical and more abstract" than what Mercedes had been promoting up until that point in time. The result was a selection of posters based on a 'master' layout, reflecting the move for advertising art to move towards what we now regard as corporate identity. Bold works were produced, but Stankowski's tenure generating posters for Mercedes was short-lived; there was no longer a requirement for racing posters following the final victory of a Silver Arrow on 11th September 1955, a triumph at Monza marking the yet another withdrawal by our favourite car maker from Formula racing until F1 superno, Ross Brawn, introduced Rosberg and seven-time championship winner, Michael Schumacher, aboard their new Silver Arrows MGP W01s in 2010.

Today, Mercedes racing posters created during the first half of the last century are highly sought after by collectors, with original works passing between enthusiasts for vast sums of money.

Above As this late 1960s effort promoting the 24hrs of Spa demonstrates, Mercedes sporadically produced racing posters after the Stankowski era drew to a close

Far right In keeping with his 'one template for all' strategy, Stankowski's 1955 International ADAC Eiffel Race poster art (featuring the 300 SLR) was repurposed for the same year's Irish Tourist Trophy results advertisement





TRUE BLUE

Proving the R107's qualities as the perfect cabriolet for road trips, this 1987 500 SL recently ferried its owners around France

WORDS **Dan Furr** PHOTOGRAPHY **Dan Sherwood**



Despite the colourful variety of hot hatches and sporty saloons car manufacturers have laid before us over the years, one body style exudes glamour like no other: the cabriolet. It's a simple idea which has remained popular throughout automotive history, and it doesn't take much to bring to mind images of the rich and famous cruising in exotic drop-tops while the vast majority of us pootle around in comparatively drab machinery. Meh!

It's safe to assume a classic Mercedes is what many will visualise when asked to picture a roofless sports car. Moreover, if you're after a comfortable continent cruiser promising high-speed thrills and reliability, an R107 is likely to be your weapon of choice. And if you're 'in for a pound', then you might as well jump behind the wheel of the V8-powered 500 SL.

"To be honest, I was more concerned with overall mechanical and cosmetic condition than choice of engine," recalls Olly Hackett, the proud owner of the R107 pictured on these pages. "I would have accepted a 280 SL if I'd come across a mint example before seeing the car I ended up with."

The blue belter he's in possession of was the fourth and final of its kind to be subjected to his beady eye. "At one point, I entertained the idea of buying a Triumph TR6, but the 500 SL I bought combines serious firepower and classic looks with modern levels of reliability and comfort. Fuel injection and bags of luggage space, plus the availability of rear seats, meant the car ticked every box when I sat down to draw up a list of my requirements from a sports car."

Four owners prior to Olly have taken exceptionally good care of the eight-cylinder stunner. His name appeared on the car's logbook in early 2017. "I had a few niggles to contend with, including a sticky boot release mechanism, but the car sailed through its MOT, affording me the opportunity to hit the road safe in the knowledge I'd bought a good 'un!" With 170k miles covered, it's clear to see he isn't the only petrolhead to have enjoyed plenty of seat time in the '87-plater. Indeed, Olly tells us one of the car's previous custodians racked up a high number of miles using the car as a daily driver for more than five years, yet the bulletproof nature of the five-litre lump up front, not to mention meticulously observed service and maintenance intervals, means this fantastic 500 SL performs just as well today as it ever did.

Driving *al fresco* on sunny days is one thing, but most owners of open-topped sports cars dream of enjoying long road trips in their chariot of choice. In truth, few ever get around to setting sail for foreign lands. Enter Olly's significant other, Lucy Dawson. "We were discussing where to go for our next holiday when I suggested a road trip in the Merc," says the Suffolk-based artist and textile designer (bellaart.co.uk). This was music to Olly's ears, and it wasn't long before the pair were planning a route which would enable them to zig-zag their way through the vineyards of southern France.

After travelling by ferry from Portsmouth to Santander on the north coast of Spain, the intrepid adventurers made their way through the Pyrenees towards Lourdes. "I was really looking forward to what we hoped would be an early highlight of the trip," smiles Olly. "We were both excited by the promise of dramatic scenery and tight, twisty roads

Bottom left Leather has been sat in for more than 170k miles, but remains in fantastic condition thanks to hide balm





Art attack

Bella Art (bellaart.co.uk) was founded by Lucy at her Suffolk studio eight years ago. Specialising in the creation of luxury home accessories featuring designs taken from her original watercolours, her work is heavily influenced by the woodland animals and other wildlife spotted in and around the village she lives in. Proud hares, wild horses, beautiful bees and birds decorate her high-quality cushions, kitchenware, fabrics, lampshades, make-up and wash bags, prints and greetings cards, all proudly made in the UK. Bella Art's product range is constantly expanding, with Lucy's latest designs set to adorn a new line of quality chinaware.

carving their way through the mountains." The reality of the drive turned out to be quite different. "Thick fog meant we couldn't see any further than a metre or two in front of the car!" laughs Lucy. "It wasn't quite the spectacle we were hoping for!"

GOING THE DISTANCE

On they journeyed through wine country, the 500 SL effortlessly munching miles as its occupants enjoyed the delights of roof-down motoring in a Mercedes. "The car didn't miss a beat," remembers Olly. "It was great to be able to put its five-litre powerplant to the test, and I was really impressed by how easy we were able to take sharp corners at speed. Best of all, we only had to pull the roof up for two days of the entire three-week trip."

The R107's reputation for safe, reliable motoring through quality engineering was clearly proving itself as the car continued in the direction of Normandy. Just as Olly and Lucy were preparing for the final leg of the journey in France before boarding a homebound ferry, however, disaster struck. "We had less than fifty miles of the trip remaining when the car started to lose power uphill," sighs Olly. "Half a mile later, it conked out completely." A roadside investigation revealed a dead battery and a suspected failed alternator. Drat!

Being stranded in a foreign country with a broken-down vehicle can be the stuff of

Above Metallic blue paintwork takes years off the R107

Left There's every chance Olly and Lucy misheard what was being said to them when they were told what they'd need to carry onboard in order to drive legally in mainland Europe!





nightmares. More than a few motorists are likely to have viewed the incident as enough to have ruined their holiday, but as is always the case when it comes to road trips, advance planning pays dividends. This was certainly true when it came to resurrecting the SL. "Before leaving the UK, we'd taken out European breakdown cover with the RAC," confirms Lucy. "The company arranged for us to be collected by a local mechanic and his low-loader. We were promptly driven to a workshop in a typically rustic rural French village where the spanner man in question set about repairing the car's failed alternator."

Labour costs were covered by the RAC. Thankfully, due to the lack of new parts required, there was no charge to be met by the delayed holidaymakers. Well, unless you count the cost of the impromptu coffees and croissants they gobbled

down in a local café while they waited for their Merc to be mended!

"The car performed brilliantly either side of the alternator complaint, and the hassle-free repair work just goes to show how easy it is to work on these cars without attracting significant cost," muses Olly. In many respects, he views the experience as a positive, highlighting how valuable breakdown cover can be when travelling abroad. "We'd have no hesitation in using the car for another road trip," he reveals. "It's just so much fun!"

SPOILER ALERT

Since returning home, the beautiful blue Benz has been taken out whenever there's been warm weather or when Lucy has been exhibiting her wares at summer craft markets in and around North Norfolk. Olly has continued to treat the car

DRIVER Q&A

OLLY HACKETT

First Mercedes
This one!

Favourite Mercedes
Pagoda

Best thing about your 500 SL
It's reliable, quick and super-comfortable

Worst thing about your 500 SL
It broke down in France!

Best thing about Mercedes ownership
These are cool cars to be in charge of

--

LUCY DAWSON

First Mercedes
109 CDI van

Favourite Mercedes
300 SL Gullwing

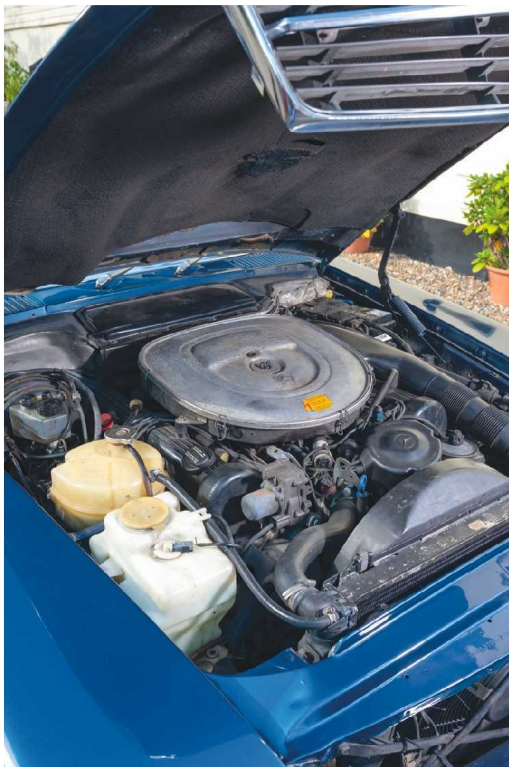
Best thing about your 500 SL
It's lovely to drive when the sun is out

Worst thing about your 500 SL
Retracting the roof can be a pain

Best thing about Mercedes ownership
Feeling tly!

in the manner to which it has become accustomed by observing servicing schedules the second they demand attention, although he's now focused on treating the devastatingly good-looking drop-top to cosmetic work. "I'm probably going to upset some of your readers in saying this," he says tentatively, "but I'm not a fan of the car's rear spoiler. I prefer the simpler line of a bare boot lid, which is why I'm planning to remove the spoiler and have the panel painted when the bonnet gets a stone-chip-remedying coat of colour in the coming weeks."

Since its launch in 1971, the R107's timeless beauty and range of bombproof six and eight-cylinder engines has made the model a popular choice with those looking to enjoy modern levels of refinement and reliability wrapped in a classic open-topped styling package. In fact, such was the universal appreciation for the R107 during its near two-decade production run, it was the only cabriolet offered by Mercedes! Today, enthusiasm for this modern classic is on the rise, with tidy examples – like the 500 SL presented here – commanding strong money in the showrooms of specialist dealers and on the floor of auction rooms. Our advice is for you to grab an R107 while prices remain reasonable. As Olly and Lucy can attest, for summer fun and sheer class, there are few drop-tops which can offer the same high number of smiles to the mile!



Left Punchy five-litre V8 cruises without complaint, producing close to 240bhp and 296lb/ft torque in stock trim



**THERE ARE FEW DROP
TOPS WHICH CAN OFFER
THE SAME NUMBER OF
SMILES TO THE MILE**

Recent months have marked the biggest overhaul in the MOT test's history, with massive changes and exemptions aimed squarely at owners of classic cars. The most significant of these updates is the announcement vehicles more than forty years old (pre-1978) will no longer need an MOT test. It's a rolling rule, meaning if your Mercedes was first registered at the start of September 1979, it won't need an MOT past September 2019.

There are, of course, exceptions to these conditions. For example, exemption doesn't apply if you've "substantially changed" your Mercedes. "What does substantially changed mean?" we hear you cry. Good question! The government's published documentation regarding this is mind-numbingly long, but in short, if you've radically altered any of your car's main components (chassis, monocoque, subframes, engine, transmission, axles etc.), then you're going to need to get the car tested each year. Swapping your four-wheeled friend's engine with a unit of the same basic design (e.g. replacing an M117 with another M117 boasting bigger displacement) is deemed acceptable, as is upgrading and improving suspension and braking systems. It's only if you change the type or method of each part's operation (e.g. changing from a steering box to a rack and pinion system) you'll be required to return to your friendly local testing station every twelve months.

Changes you make to improve safety, efficiency or environmental performance – such as swapping drum brakes to disc brakes or adding adjustable dampers – and alterations made to "preserve the vehicle" (fitting non-standard parts because OEM items are no longer available) are also acceptable. Kit cars and those on a Q-plate are already considered "substantially changed", so they'll continue to be subjected to scrutiny, as will commercial vehicles. The exceptions are those which haven't been altered for at least thirty years and are already taxed under the Vehicle of Historic Interest (VHI) license.



TESTING TIMES

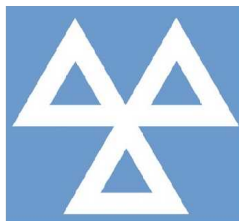
A raft of changes to the MOT test has introduced exemptions for forty-year-old cars, as well as stricter rules for newer vehicles. Here's what you need to know...



It's worth noting vehicles first registered before the MOT test was introduced back in 1960 were previously exempt from MOT legislation, but the "substantially changed" rules will now mean heavily modified cars from this era may now need to be subjected to an MOT test. For example, if you own a 1958 Ponton and previously equipped it with a V8, the car is now going to need a valid MOT certificate to be driven on the public highway, even if you didn't need put the car through a test before the new legislation came into effect.

OPPOSING VIEWS

While many classic cars are now exempt from the MOT, voluntary testing is offered. The rules clearly state you're required to keep the vehicle in a roadworthy condition, so don't think you can buy a barn find which hasn't moved for forty years, turn the key and expect to drive it home legally. You need to think carefully about the standard of



Above Is the government right to assume the majority of cars older than forty years are in the hands of enthusiasts who wouldn't dream of letting their classics fall into disrepair?

maintenance your car is subjected car to. It's with this in mind many owners of older cars fail to see the attraction of MOT exemption. The test is an inexpensive way of ensuring you haven't missed a vital safety check (not all owners crawl around under their cars checking the condition of brake lines and chassis legs!). The government claims the vast majority of owners in possession of vehicles more than four decades old are enthusiasts who like nothing more than keeping their retro ride in tip-top condition, but the counter-argument is that removing the need to test each vehicle opens the door to unscrupulous folk who won't think twice about driving a rot box, causing accidents and endangering life. Furthermore, non-enthusiasts may begin to consider all older cars to be dangerous, which simply isn't the case.

Another consideration is the well-meaning chaps and chapettes who have every intention to fix whatever fault they've identified on their car, 2



but time prevents them from doing so. “I’ll get around to doing it later,” is a familiar quote to many. The MOT test ensures these complaints are addressed in accordance with a strict schedule, preventing vehicle failure and, in some cases, accidents. Regardless of the new rules, we’d advise you get your car tested – or at least checked over – by a professional technician unless you’re already in the trade.

When the time comes for you and your classic Mercedes to kiss goodbye to MOT tests, you’ll be required to declare your car exempt and to confirm it hasn’t been “substantially changed”. You’ll also be required to register the car under VHI rules, which you can do by filling in a form online or at your local Post Office. If you don’t do this, you’ll need to continue obtaining a valid MOT certificate each year. Simple!

SAFETY IN NUMBERS

The Department for Transport consulted with more than 2,100 public and private trade bodies, owners clubs and classic car businesses before it published its decision to implement the new rules. Tellingly, 1,130 of the organisations polled opposed the decision, with just under 900 in favour. Unsurprisingly, the primary objections concern safety. Naturally, the government cited the availability of voluntary MOT testing, but the facts speak for themselves: of all the pre-1960 vehicles already exempt from the MOT test prior to the new rules coming into force, only six percent of owners subjected their cars to a voluntary test. Yes, you read that correctly. Six percent.

While we’re mostly concerned with changes affecting Mercedes cars more than forty years old, there’s a wider raft of MOT changes now in force which affect newer cars on UK roads; vehicles required to have an MOT by law (e.g. Mercedes cars registered post-1978) will be subjected to a more rigorous test characterised by a new category structure: Dangerous, Major or Minor.

Above While headlines are being grabbed by news of older cars no longer requiring an MOT test, there are big changes owners of newer Mercedes cars need to take into careful consideration

A Dangerous or Major defect will result in an automatic fail, meaning the car cannot be driven until the fault is repaired.

A Minor defect is a bit like what we’ve come to know as an advisory, insofar as it’s a fault which needs to be repaired, yet it’s not serious enough for the car to be removed from the road, and, therefore, won’t generate an automatic MOT test fail. Advisories are still relevant, however, because the tester can choose to list them if he or she feels there’s an issue worth flagging.

The rush to force diesels off the road shows no sign of abating, with an immediate fail if the car in question produces smoke of any kind from the exhaust. Emissions levels will also be under closer scrutiny than ever before. Not good news for Volkswagen owners!

If you’re unsure about any of the changes we’ve outlined here, or are unsure how you and your car will be affected by them, we’d recommend you visit bit.ly/motrulcs and read the government’s published overview of how the new testing rules work. Additionally, we’d love to know what your thoughts are about the shakeup. Good? Bad? Drop us a line by emailing dan.furr@kelseymedia.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.





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LONG-TERM LOVE

Chris Lansbury coveted this W124 E320 Sportline for years. Now it's finally his, he won't be letting go!

WORDS Emma Woodcock PHOTOGRAPHY Dan Sherwood



Two long decades ago, a young Chris Lansbury took time out to view a beautiful Mercedes. Sharp, straight-lined and imperious from its stacked headlight to its slotted disc wheels, the W111 280SE comported itself beautifully in white paint and red leather. Chris was tempted, but not quite tempted enough. "I felt I was too young to own a car like that," he sighs. "With the way prices have been going of late, it's a decision I regret!"

His love of German marques started early. In time, it translated into his own driving history. "Growing up, I was lucky to have a father who always owned the latest Porsche 911 and a mother who drove a Mercedes 190E. Exposure to these cars left a lasting impression, leading to my own roster of Benz-badged beasts!" He counts a G-Wagen, a couple of R107 SLs and a pair of Cosworth-fettled W201 190Es among his former steeds. Various W124s have also found themselves parked on his driveway.

Four years after his encounter with the W111, his head was again turned by a four-seater convertible. This time, it was a W124 drop-top demanding his attention. The car in his sights was a 1993 E320 wearing the taller headlights and integrated radiator grille introduced to the W124 range earlier that year. Dressed in silver over grey coupled with a blue hood and matching leather, the cool car quickly cast its spell.

"I happened to be friends with owner," explains Chris. "I'd always admired his ride, which was just four years old when his wife chose it as her cherished chariot. It was meticulously maintained throughout the couple's ownership. They used it extensively, covering plenty of ground



and embarking on regular road trips to the Mediterranean." Sadly, his friend's wife passed away. The silver stunner remained motionless thereafter. "He couldn't bring himself to use it," confirms Chris. "There was so much sentiment attached to the car. It wasn't benefitting from sitting still, though, which is why he was eventually open to the idea of selling."

RAISE THE ROOF

The pair of petrolheads reached a deal before Chris set about a light recommissioning of the W124 he'd loved for so long. The first order of business was a fresh mohair soft-top due to the original roof showing its age. "I sourced it from the same producer who made the roofs for Mercedes in period," smiles Chris. He winces when we suggest it must have set him back a couple of quid. "It's true!" he laughs, "but if you want to do a job properly, big spend is often required."

A full service followed. Anti-roll bar bushes, tyres, brake discs and pads were renewed at the same time. To bring the car back to its best, Chris also resolved the car's interior niggles, including a swap of the digital temperature gauge, the task of fixing a troublesome seatbelt butler and the reinstatement of the original Blaupunkt head unit.

Above Lashings of luxurious blue leather fill this superb Sportline's cockpit

Left Inline-six delivers plenty of poke when Chris needs it



"I'd owned a couple of W124 coupes in the past, but I'd always wanted a convertible," he continues. "When this particular car was presented to me as available for purchase, I knew I had to have it." The choice might seem unusual given his role as managing director of PIE Performance, one of the UK's leading independent Porsche specialists, but the E320 soon found its place among his fleet. "I can get my young family in and out of the car. That's a big attraction. Porsche simply doesn't offer open-top driving in a four-seater which can supply useable space at the rear," he reasons.

In a world where imitations are common, he's proud of his W124's status as a genuine factory-built Sportline. The tantalisingly named specification was introduced the W124 range in 1989, offering keener handling through a selection of suspension alterations. Firmer, shorter springs dropped the ride height by 20mm, hunkering the car over wider-than-standard fifteen-inch alloys wrapped in 205/60/15 rubber. A revised steering box with a faster ratio and three turns between locks further encouraged keen driving, whilst thicker anti-roll bars, firmer struts and a collection of uprated bushes reinforced sporting spirit.

Mercedes also saw fit to give in the Sportline's interior a luxurious reinvention. Changes included

Good sport

The W124 cabriolet didn't arrive until the 1991 Frankfurt Motor Show, seven years after the saloon first hit the streets. Starting with the coupe's body shell, Stuttgart engineers added thicker steel in a number of areas before adding a pair of diagonal braces along the new model's underside. For top-down safety, the A-pillars received extra welded inboard panels, while a rear roll bar was designed to deploy automatically within 0.3 seconds of registering an accident. A fabric top and an electrohydraulic lowering mechanism with sixty-one moving parts was also added. The result? Instant modern classic!

a smaller thick-rimmed steering wheel, electric heated front seats, individual rear seats with a burled wood divider and a Sportline-branded gear knob. "They're subtle updates," Chris comments. "Unless you know what you're looking at, you probably won't spot them. That said, it's worth noting the overall Sportline package doesn't make a W124 handle as well as a Porsche, but you can certainly tell the difference between my Mercedes and a non-Sportline version of the same model."

Trusting in the inherent ability of a well-maintained W124, Chris promoted his E320 to the role of long-distance loafer in 2017. Over 15,000 miles of use, touching every corner of the United Kingdom and braving the worst of British weather, the mega Mercedes failed to falter. "It's a fantastic machine and just so practical," beams its enthusiastic owner. "I can hop into the driving seat at any time and I know the car will always start. I really can't fault it!"

HIGHWAY STAR

2018 has been less demanding on his excellent E-Class, but that's not to say the car hasn't been used to eat many motorway miles during the past few months. Despite this silver sensation's many merits, however, Chris briefly flirted with the



DRIVER

Q&A

**CHRIS LANSBURY****First Mercedes**

A W123 coupe

Favourite Mercedes

I'd love a 1967 280 or 300SE drop-top

Best thing about your W124 Sportline

It's one of the last hand assembled, four-seater Merces

Worst thing about your W124 Sportline

I hate those bloody stupid headlight wipers!

Best thing about Mercedes ownership

Everyone I meet wants to stop and chat about the car when they see it

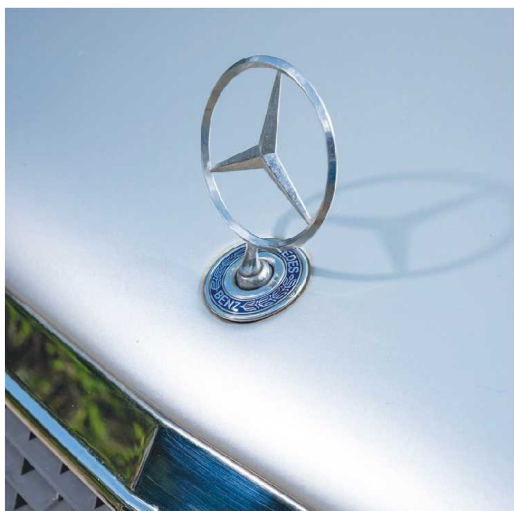
idea of parting with his treasured four-wheeler. "I wheeled it out of my garage and started to carry out a thorough clean when I realised my daughter, Violet, had never travelled in the car with its roof retracted. We dropped the soft-top, jumped inside and went for a drive. She was grinning from ear to ear! When my wife asked what our little girl thought of the car, I answered by saying it was no longer for sale!"

With the Sportline's future secure, his next aim is to strip back bodywork and treat it to a full respray.

Once the work is complete, this wonderful W124 will settle into a new role, ferrying the Lansbury clan to and from their new holiday home in Spain. A recent late night encounter with Chris's beloved Benz has further galvanised his intention to keep the car for the long term. "I returned home one evening after a day spent at Brands Hatch," he recalls. "As I pulled into my driveway, I saw the Sportline sitting elegantly in front of my house. It was a perfect picture, and I knew straightaway I was looking at a car I want to keep forever."

Above Sun out, roof down and al fresco driving on tap!

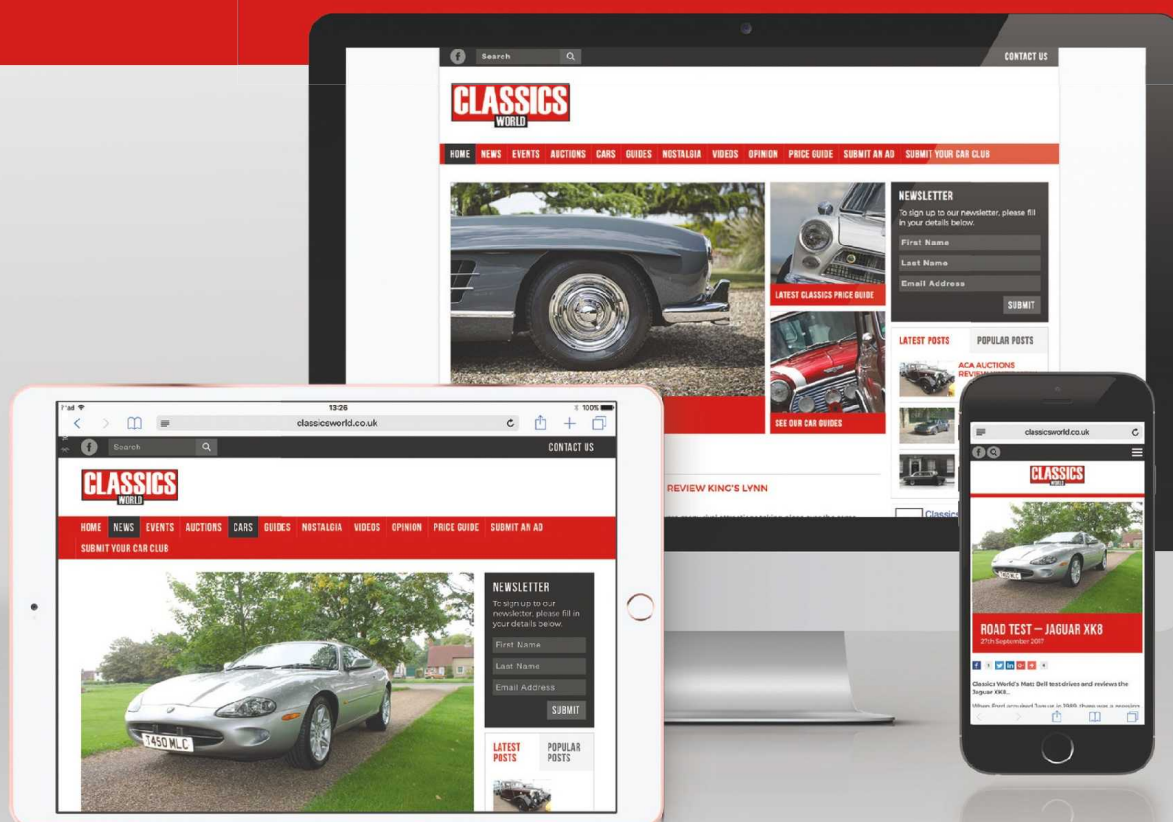
Below With so many imitations around, identifying a genuine W124 Sportline can be difficult



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BUYING *Your next Mercedes*

Buying W202 AMG

Fancy naturally aspirated Mercedes grunt at a price which won't break the bank? A C36 or C43 AMG can be yours for less than you might think...

WORDS **Dan Furr** PHOTOGRAPHY **John Colley**

Due to their motorsport origins and exaggerated features (both in terms of power and style), Cosworth-tweaked 190Es remain regarded as some of the most desirable Mercedes sport saloons ever produced. It stands to reason the 190E's successor had a lot to live up when competing for the affections of those whose blood has its own octane rating.

The C-Class arrived in May 1993, but it would be another two years before we saw the first W202 AMG. With its sights set squarely on eating into a chunk of the

sports car sector occupied by the BMW E36 M3, the C36 AMG landed with a naturally aspirated inline-six producing nigh-on 280bhp. The car looked great, performed brilliantly and shifted plenty of units, but this is an AMG we're talking about – displacement and cylinder count wasn't going to stay static for long!

The C43 AMG was launched for the 1998 model year. Packing a 4.3-litre V8 and well over 300bhp, the car didn't look wildly different from the earlier C36, but the new arrival represented a major step forward in the way AMGs were assembled following the company's assimilation into Daimler-Benz. In short, whereas the C36 was a

C280 dismantled and rebuilt in AMG trim, the C43 was purpose-built on the Mercedes production line. It was also the first C-Class to be loaded with a V8 powerplant. An estate was offered to broaden the model's appeal.

Whether you're after a C36 or C43 AMG, you'd better act fast; prices are on the rise for what are proving to be appreciating modern classics. It's true to say the contemporary M3 still hogs the limelight, but if you're after a good return of bang for buck, then the W202 AMGs might be exactly what you're looking for. Here's what you need to be aware of before inspecting your prospective purchase.



BRAKES

Mercedes raided the brilliant E55 AMG parts bin when it came to giving the W202 AMGs powerful stopping abilities. It used to be the case discs and pads were horrendously expensive, but a number of aftermarket manufacturers have satisfied owners with reasonably priced, high-quality parts. EBC Brakes, for example, offers OEM-spec rear discs with a set of brake pads in its fast-road Yellowstuff compound for a shade over £200 including VAT. Visit bit.ly/ebcbrakes

Factory rubber brake hoses deteriorate with age, resulting in a 'spongy' pedal feel. Braided hoses from Goodridge (bit.ly/goodridgeuk) will restore braking efficiency by refusing to flex under load. Pleasingly, thanks to a wide choice of finishes, Goodridge braided brake hoses can be colour-coded to match the look of the AMG you're interested in buying (which is almost certainly silver!).



HISTORY

Mercedes methods of production have always been well respected, but with the earliest W202 AMGs now getting close to a quarter-century old, it's vital you check to make sure the car you're looking at has been properly maintained. Ask to see all documentation supporting claims of servicing, repair work and replacement parts. Ensure all fluids and filters have been changed in accordance with the manufacturer's wishes. Ask what grade and content of oil has been used.

Be wary of unexplained periods of the car being off the road. If in doubt, have a full inspection carried out by a marque specialist. Enter the W202 in question's details into the DVLA's online vehicle enquiry service. It's free to use and will result in an MOT history (including all passes, fails and advisories) as far back as electronic records are stored. It'll also provide proof of mileage at the point of each test. While your web browser is open,

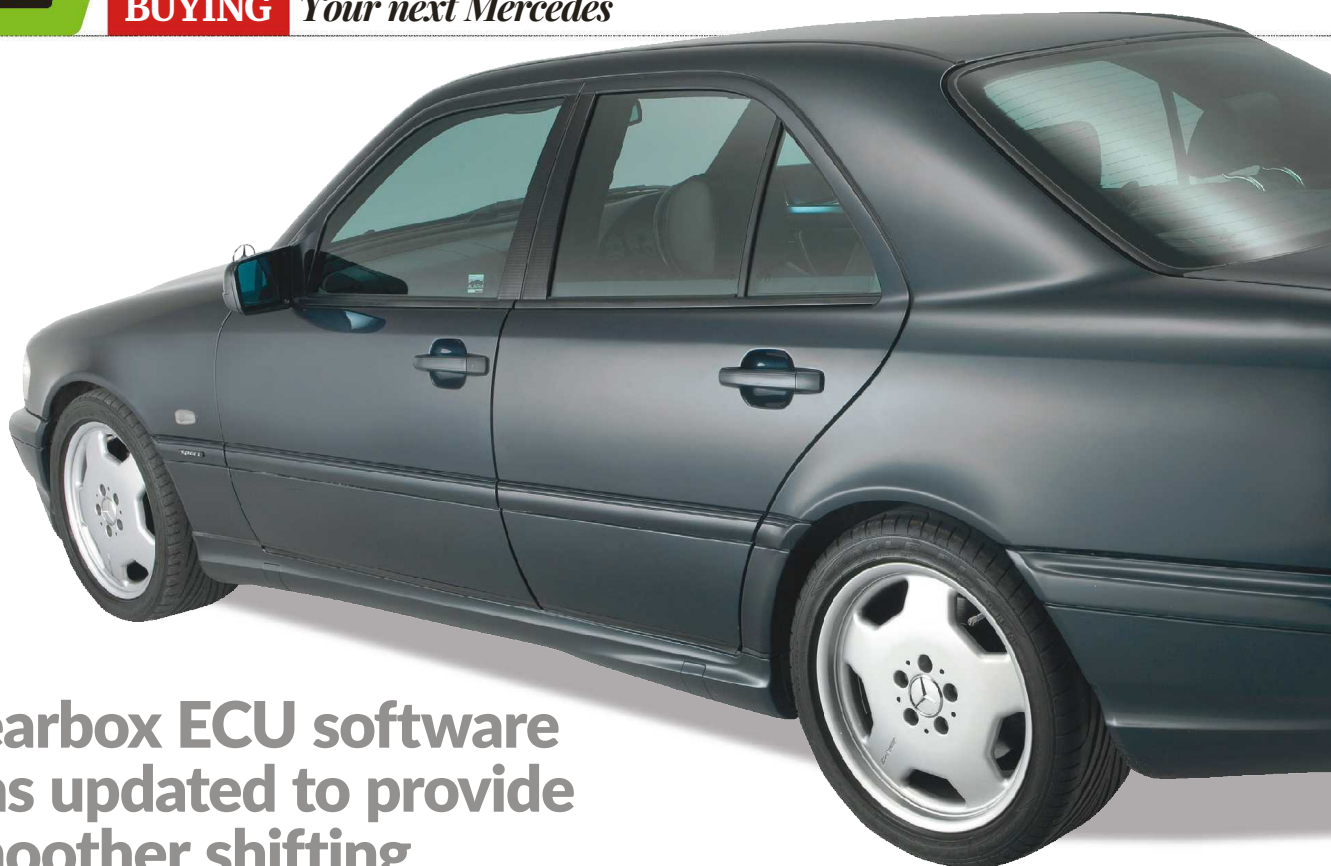
pop along to mycarcheck.com and invest a couple of quid in an online vehicle history check. You'll get instant confirmation of any outstanding finance, accident history, changes of registration and the number of previous keepers. You'll also be able to tell if the AMG you're looking at has ever been stolen or if the car has ever had a change of colour.

Consider the benefits of investing in Carly's Connected Car app, available for a wide range of Mercedes vehicles and able to tap into the car's multiple ECUs to check for correlation with the visible speedometer. The low-cost kit can detect whether data has been manipulated. Visit shop.mycarly.com for more information.

Ideally, the W202 you're looking at will have been maintained by reputable independent Mercedes specialists or a main dealer. If services have been skipped or non-specialist garages have been tasked with jobs, this may be a sign the car hasn't been correctly looked after during its lifetime.



BUYING *Your next Mercedes*



Gearbox ECU software was updated to provide smoother shifting

TRANSMISSION

Whereas the C36 engine is considered more problematic than that of the C43, roles are reversed when it comes to gearboxes. Early six-shooters were fitted with a four-speed automatic renowned for its durability, while late examples of the same car saw cog count increase in the form of a five-speed automatic which was modified after being lifted from the R129 500 SL. It's a 'box which was carried over to the C43 and is considered less reliable than the earlier unit.

Transmission upgrades were applied to the last-of-line C43s in advance of the model being discontinued in 2000. Tiptronic shifting was provided, and gearbox ECU software was updated to provide smoother shifting and better overall performance encouraging a longer service life.

The differentials fitted to W202 AMGs are known to be bombproof, with no major concerns to worry about in this area.



WHEELS & TYRES

Kerbed wheels and worn tyres are a concern when it comes to any car of the W202's age. Fortunately, help is at hand from professional wheel restoration companies, including Wheel Genie (wheelgenie.co.uk). As for the black circles, a wide range of tyres to suit all budgets and driving environments are available from Nankang, Falken, Yokohama and Toyo, but we stress this isn't an area where you should be stingy. Tyres are the only part of your car in contact with the road. Don't take risks by fitting poor quality rubber. Profiles for standard W202 AMG monoblocks are 225/45/17 at the front and 245/40/17 at the rear.

If the tyres on what you hope will be your new car are past their best, look to see if there's uneven wear on the inside edges. It might be difficult to spot, but this condition could be a sign of badly affected alignment. Fresh alignment and laser geometry is the recommended fix, and something we'd recommend after suspension upgrades. Consider the cost on top of new tyres before parting with your hard-earned dosh.



ENGINE

As its designation suggests, the C36 is powered by a 3.6-litre engine. It's a naturally aspirated six-cylinder lump producing almost 280bhp and 284lb/ft torque, but because C36 engines were hand-assembled, there's a degree of variation between cars, with some registering closer to 290bhp when tested! Top speed is 169mph.

Check the condition of oil and coolant to ensure there hasn't been contamination of one into the other. Many W202 AMG engines have been thrashed hard, with some early examples suffering regrettable head gasket failure.

The C43 is equipped with a 4.3-litre V8. It's a modified version of the M113 found in the W210 E430 and is capable of taking much in the way of punishment, a trait put to the test by lead-footed owners keen to explore the performance potential of their new AMGs. 306bhp and 302lb/ft torque was a

significant step up from the C36's power output, and as is the case with the smaller-engined W202 AMG, a lack of forced induction means galloping ponies launch from a canter in a satisfyingly linear manner. Giddy-up!

An electronic speed limiter was introduced to the C43, meaning pace is capped at the industry standard of 155mph. Providing maintenance is carried out in accordance with manufacturer instruction, and if recommended servicing intervals are observed, the car's V8 should provide hassle-free motoring. It's an engine with twin-plug ignition, so factor that into servicing costs.

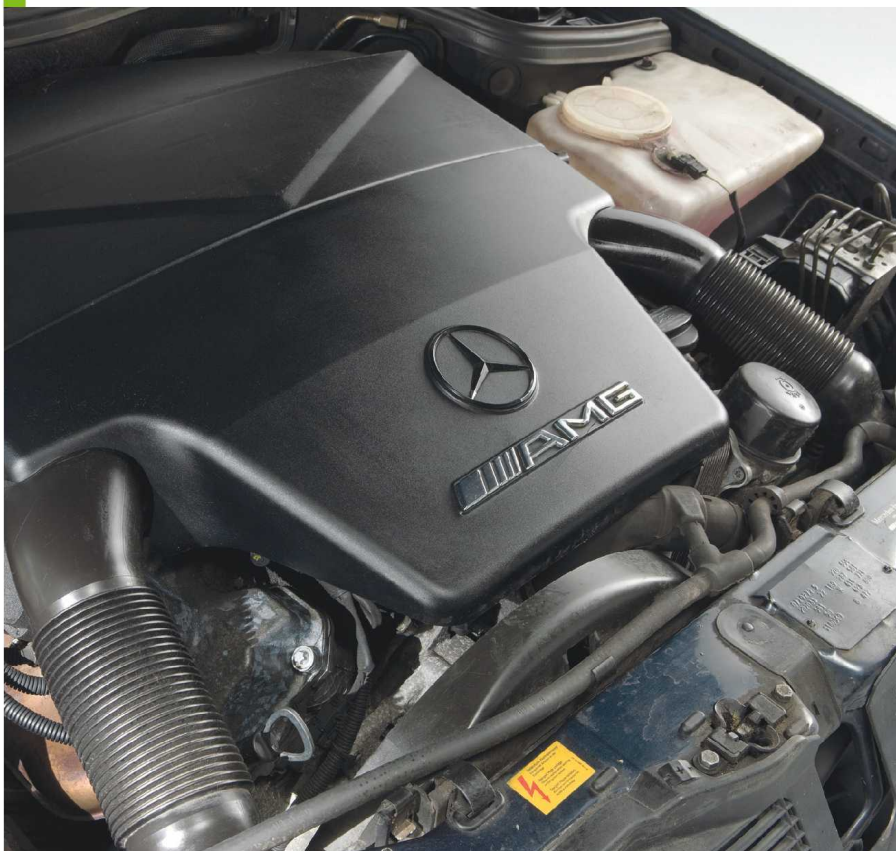
Wiring harnesses include materials prone to deterioration. Often, a completely new loom is the only solution. This can be an expensive job, so check the condition of the snakes sending information to the electronic brain of the car you're looking at.

SUSPENSION

Race-tuned suspension and a lowered ride height help the W202 AMGs to produce a purposeful stance whilst improving handling and reducing body roll. These aren't new cars, though, so bear in mind original shocks are unlikely to be in place. Your car will only perform as well as the quality of componentry fitted to it, so don't skimp when it comes to chassis kit. Thankfully, a wide range of parts are available for you to choose from, be it standard specification or uprated, the latter from companies including Bilstein, GAZ Shocks, KW and Eibach.

Rubber bushes fail with age. Those of you looking for a true 'fit and forget' solution should consider polyurethane bushes from Powerflex. Available in road or race compounds, they'll eliminate flex whilst sharpening the ability of your W202 to turn tightly into corners at speed.

The kind of wear and tear associated with any older vehicle should be considered when evaluating the condition of the car's supporting suspension equipment. Ball joints, wishbone bushes and drop links can all fail over time. Replacement parts aren't expensive. The same is true of the steering damper, which may be past its best, but can be replaced cheaply and will transform the feel of the car for the better.





BUYING *Your next Mercedes*

BODY

Metalwork is probably going to be your primary concern when inspecting any W202. These cars were built at time when the accountants at Mercedes were paying close attention to the company's coffers. As such, materials used weren't as well respected as they once were, a condition evidenced by the rusty wing bottoms commonly associated with Mercedes cars of this age. Fortunately, panels easily replaced and are readily available at low cost.

Check panel gaps and variations in colour. There may be a perfectly plausible explanation for differences spotted, but consider the possibility the AMG you're looking at has suffered accident damage. It pays to be prudent, so don't be afraid to ask questions. You might save yourself a whole heap of cash in the long run.

At first glance, there's little to tell the C36 and C43 apart from one another, but the latter was offered as a tourer. In fact, by the end of C43 AMG production, the estate was so popular it accounted for more than twenty percent of all C43 AMGs built!

Check window seals and headlight rubbers for signs of moisture ingress. Delaminated windscreens are known to be a problem for cars of this age, a complaint producing a milky stain. The only fix is new glass.



Examine carpets, door cards, side panels and front foot wells for signs of water ingress





INTERIOR

W202 AMGs are a comfortable place to be thanks to hard-wearing leather upholstery and well-considered switchgear design. The design approved for the faux-carbon dash, centre console, gearstick surround and door pillar trim is laughable, but that's the only negative to report.

Examine carpets, door cards, side panels, the centre console and front foot wells for signs of water ingress. There should be nothing to worry about, but it's better to be safe than sorry. Moisture in the passenger's front foot well might not be anything more than a blocked scuttle drain overflowing. If in doubt, have a poke.

The seller should have nothing to hide, so don't be afraid of asking

difficult questions or making requests to help you better understand what you're looking at. Oh, and make sure you press buttons. It's the best way to make sure all electrically-controlled gadgetry works as Mercedes intended!

Leather repair work has come on leaps and bounds in recent years, meaning nicks and tears previously requiring a retrim can now be restored to a high standard without attracting massive cost. Speak to the guys at Cambridgeshire-based automotive upholstery specialist, *Awesome* (awesome.eu.com) for help with all your interior repair, retrim or restoration requirements.

Late C43 AMGs were treated to power-tilting steering wheels. Check to make sure this functionality works.

PRICE

Unlike the BMW M3 they were designed to challenge, prices for used W202 AMGs dropped massively on the used car market and stayed low, partly due to owner experiences varying so wildly regarding the condition of bodywork and mechanical reliability. Additionally, horror stories of unrepairable gearboxes and rotting panels encouraged many would-be buyers to give the C36 and W46 a wide berth. Those that did take the plunge were sometimes owners who ran their cars ragged, failing to take proper care of their future classic. The good news is there are many excellent examples of W202 AMGs which have survived to the present day, and with a resurgence of interest in both models, now would be a good time to buy before prices rise any further. Here's a selection of what we found advertised online:

1998 C43 AMG

Silver paintwork, 150k miles, black leather in excellent condition, long MOT, all handbooks and service book present, bodywork in great shape, rear spoiler, wheels painted black

£5,750

1999 C43 AMG

Silver paintwork, 50k miles, left-hand drive, full main dealer service history, updated gearbox software, reverse camera, new tyres, refurbished wheels

£11,995

2000 C43 AMG

Green paintwork, 99k miles, immaculate throughout, full MOT and service history, cherished car in an unusual colour

£14,990





UNDER THE HAMMER

HAMMER TIME!

From bargains to budget busters, here's a snapshot of what's been happening at auction since the last issue of *Mercedes Driver*...

WORDS **Dan Furr** PHOTOGRAPHY **He looks a lot like the milkman**



1971 W111 280 SE 3.5 COUPE

This UK-supplied 3.5-litre V8 is so completely stunning in every way, it makes us wanna shout! Of course, this might be because the first registered keeper was none other than British pop star, Lulu. Just two respected marque specialists have cared for the car since the Scottish songstress took delivery of her mega Merc, with the current (third) owner having kept hold of it for more than thirty-eight years. The paintwork was refreshed in 2017, while a new fuel tank and period-correct Michelins were added a short while later. Lulu – then wife of Bee Gees star, Maurice Gibb – had this most prestigious of W111s delivered to her Highgate home, where she kept it for three years until an Arabian



businessman domiciled in London grabbed the car's keys. John Lewis of the King's Road in Chelsea was charged with selling the red road riot in 1981. Subsequently, an advertisement was placed in *The Sunday Times*. The car's most recent owner (a collector of classic Mercs living in the West End) spotted the ad, and the rest, as they say, is history. Complete with its correct Becker Mexico cassette player (no word on whether it was loaded with the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack), original sunroof, complete toolkit and Behr air-conditioning, it's no wonder the car created a *Boom Bang-a-Bang* when offered by Silverstone Auctions a few weeks ago. Yes, I know. Less of a wit, more of a half-wit...

1985 W123 230 CE

This four-owner car was acquired by the seller in 2010. During his ownership, the C-plater was treated to a selection of minor bodywork repairs, although the less than desirable condition of the rear wheel arches suggests further remedial work will be required in the not too distant future. MOT history from 2006 onwards, supporting paperwork for all servicing and mechanical work carried out since then, plus original Mercedes sales literature, combine with the seller's purchase receipt to build a partial history file. With distance covered topping 185k miles and those poorly arches, though, most would-be bidders stayed silent when the car was offered at Anglia Car Auctions.



UNSOLD!



1996 R129 SL500

Originally supplied by Monarch Birmingham and boasting only 55k miles from new, this superbly presented Aqua Blue R129 features a spotless Mushroom interior with Burr Walnut trim. When ordered new, the car was optioned with eighteen-inch AMG rims and has been enjoyed by three former keepers. A substantial history file demonstrates main dealer servicing and includes factory handbooks. Preserved original registration plates and an expensive, factory-supplied panoramic hard-top were also offered with this eight-cylinder SL, but not even these rare parts could tempt bidders to pass the lower estimate of £21k. Pity.



1965 300 SE COUPE



How many of you have started automotive projects, only for life to get in the way? Perhaps your dream of restoring a classic is yet to be realised? This seems to be the case for the owner of this mid-Sixties 300 SE coupe. Retired from the road in 1981, the car even wears the period-tastic Wolfrace rims so commonly associated with the hot rods of the 1970s! Described as "substantially complete" by H&H Classics, the red resto-in-waiting was offered with its original steelies and a lower estimate of just £4k. Expectations were exceeded when the car sold for more than three times that amount. Were you the buyer? Get in touch. We'd love to know what the future holds for this rare right-hooker!



SOLD FOR
£13,613



UNDER THE HAMMER

2003 W463 G270 CDI

We love the G-Wagen, which is why we were excited to see this 2.7-litre, six-cylinder diesel make an appearance at the H&H Pavilion Gardens auction a few weeks back. Left-hand drive, but registered for UK roads in 2013, the 'box on wheels' appears to have led a fairly easy life, a claim backed up by a service history highlighting low miles and a recent gearbox service. Supplied with sumptuous leather, gloss black paintwork and an MOT lasting until March 2019, the luxury SUV generated enough enthusiasm from those in attendance to break past its previously published upper estimate of fourteen large ones.



1992 R129 600 SL

SOLD FOR
£40,500



This early 600 SL was supplied new in December 1992 through Mercedes-Benz Colindale to "a member of the royal household", the very same person who offered the car for sale through Silverstone Auctions September sale. The 389bhp V12 pocket rocket has covered no more than 6,831 miles since it rolled off the production line, although in this case, low miles come at the expense of poorly observed service intervals, with only two stamps recorded in the car's paperwork regardless of time passed between fluid and filter changes. Reassuringly, the car was offered with a main dealer service to be undertaken prior to sale, and with royal provenance, the low-mile minter met expectations by fetching more than £40k.



1988 R107 300 SL

This superb 300 SL has covered just over 75k miles from new and glistens in flawless white paintwork paired with brilliantly presented half-leather upholstery. An original Blaupunkt head unit, a bulging history file and a fresh MOT formed part of the attraction when the gavel fell at the Classic Car Auctions September sale. Complete

with its colour-coded hard-top and refreshed canvas roof, the four-owner Benz features recently refurbished wheels and a spotless chassis. A ten-year stay in the sunny climes of Florida have no doubt contributed to the preservation of the car's bodywork, which wowed bidders to the tune of more than twenty-two grand.

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190

190 DIESEL



1992, 96,200 miles, £1,100. Saloon, black with grey cloth interior. MoT to April 2019. Last owner since 2001. 5 speed manual with electric factory sunroof and electric windows x 4. All round good condition. Please call 01516 390149, Cheshire. 3877

190 LE



1993, 69,000 miles, POA. Rosso metallic. Rare suspension, automatic, new battery. Massive history file. Please call 07932 174680. 2002

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C CLASS



2011, 39,000 miles, £9,999. Automatic, estate car, diesel, one owner, heated seats, full black leather seats and cruise control. Please call 07545 703474 (T). 5348

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250 SL



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320



1995, 59,000 miles, £11,450. Azure blue, beige leather, partwood steering wheel. Climate control, electric seats, 4 new tyres, new battery fsh, 11 dealer stamps, 2 keys and 12 months MoT. Please call 07902 032101, Nottinghamshire. 2895

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2004, 70,000 miles, £8,999. Approximately, Black, stunning car with full service history, leather interior, keyless entry and start and lots of extras. Please call 07545 703474 (T). 5445

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SLK



2001, 69,000 miles, £3,899. Convertible, electric hardtop, 6 speed supercharge, manual, power steering, electric windows, electric seats, full black leather seats, cruise control, 18" AMG alloys, multi airbags, remote central locking, handbooks and manual. Please call 02380 766870. (T) 1555

230



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POA. Air Louvre chrome grille surround, indicator switches (new), headlamps & cover, rear lamps, lenses, surrounds, rev counter, fuel gauge (used). Please call 01773 835462, Derbyshire. 1094

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