

Rennsport Reunion Legends: Vol. 3

04/08/2023 Celebrating the motorsports stars that have helped make Porsche legendary in the run up to Rennsport Reunion 7

Atlanta. At Rennsport Reunion, we celebrate the stories and accomplishments of legendary drivers that gave their all for Porsche. Each week leading up to the event, we will showcase drivers and share their stories. These are the heroes of Rennsport Reunion 7 for the week of August 4: Rob Dyson, Chris Dyson, John Fitzpatrick, Elliot Forbes-Robinson, and Bob Garretson.

Rob Dyson

Inspired at a young age by a visit to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Rob Dyson decided to go racing. In 1974, he formed Dyson Racing, bought a Datsun 510 and entered a Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) regional race at Watkins Glen, taking a win in his first race. He continued in regional and national SCCA championships through to the early '80s, winning a National Championship in 1981. Turning professional in 1983, Dyson made the step up to IMSA GTO and participated in several Trans-Am races with a Pontiac Firebird.

By 1985, Dyson wanted to step things up another level. He bought Porsche 962 (chassis 101) to compete in IMSA GTP—with immediate success. He and co-driver Drake Olsen won their first race at Lime Rock. Two more wins followed in the 1985 season. In 1986, Dyson Racing bought another 962, chassis 120, and took three wins. In a streak of consistency, Dyson Racing claimed another three wins in 1987. By 1988, factory teams were flocking to the IMSA GTP series, but Dyson Racing managed to fight back with an impressive two wins that season and represented Porsche again in the 1990 and 1991 seasons, securing multiple podiums and a race win at Tampa.

Dyson continued racing through the in the IMSA GrandAm and American Le Mans Series eras, with notable success: a win at the 1997 24 Hours of Daytona, IMSA Drivers' and Teams' Championship wins in 1997 and 1998, ALMS LMP900 Championship in 1999, and ALMS LMP1 Drivers' and Teams' Championship wins in 2011. Running two Porsche RS Spyders in the ALMS, Dyson Racing helped propel Porsche to the Manufacturers' title in 2007 and 2008.

Chris Dyson

Chris Dyson is a current Trans Am National Series race car driver, running under his own CD Racing banner, defending back-to-back championship wins in 2021 and 2022. Prior to establishing the CD Racing brand, Dyson experienced great success driving for Dyson Racing, the team founded by his father, Rob Dyson. As well as delivering on-track results for the family team, Chris Dyson has also played a major part in growing and managing the team in his role as Sporting Director.

As a driver, Dyson's professional start came in 2001, appearing in the last two races in the Grand-Am Road Racing Championship. He didn't have to wait long for success; he finished the 2002 season with five wins, placing him second in the Drivers' Championship and earning the Rookie of the Season award. A switch to the American Le Mans Series in 2003 proved to be successful, with Dyson taking four wins and the LMP675 Drivers' Championship title. A strong campaign in the 2005 season resulted in a runner-up finish in the Drivers' standings.

Dyson drove one of the two Porsche RS Spyder LMP2 cars in the 2007 and 2008 ALMS seasons, leading to second place in the 2007 Teams' Championship for Dyson Racing and contributing to Manufacturers' Championship wins for Porsche in both seasons. 2011 brought another ALMS Drivers' Championship title in a Lola-Mazda, followed by a second-place finish in the 2012 season. In 2015, Dyson raced a full season, with one win and a further three podiums, in the Pirelli World Challenge in a Bentley Continental GT3.

John Fitzpatrick

Three-time Porsche Cup winner, John Fitzpatrick is regarded as one of the best Porsche race car drivers of his era. He started out in the British Saloon Car Championship with little race experience, placing second in his first full season in 1964. In 1966, Fitzpatrick added his name to the list of BSCC

champions in a Ford Anglia. From the early '70s, his focus switched to the European Touring Car Championship and sports car racing.

His next major success came behind the wheel of the Kremer Porsche 911 S, winning five of the nine races of the inaugural European GT Championship, sweeping the title with more than double the points of his nearest rival. This performance sealed him the coveted Porsche Cup. 1974 brought another European GT title win, this time in the Porsche 911 Carrera RSR, and the Porsche Cup for a second time. Fitzpatrick continued winning races in multiple championships throughout the rest of the '70s, most notably with Kremer Racing and Gelo Racing—both teams racing with the iconic Porsche 935.

1980 was another stand-out year for Fitzpatrick. Having signed with Dick Barbour Racing to drive their Porsche 935 K3, he won the IMSA GT Championship, achieved a class win at Le Mans and was awarded the Porsche Cup for a third time. In 1981, he formed John Fitzpatrick Racing and experienced success racing Porsche 935s and 956s.

Elliot Forbes-Robinson

Elliot Forbes-Robinson, best known in racing circles as "EFR", started winning races in the late 1960s, and more than four decades later he was still in top form. His first professional win came in 1969 behind the wheel of a Porsche 911 at the Sears Point Trans-Am round, finishing ahead of four factory teams. In 1970, he raced, and won, in SCCA National events in a Porsche 914/6 with Richie Ginther Racing – the same team that gave him his first 24 Hours of Le Mans start in 1971 in a 911 S. He posted wins in Super-Vee from 1971 through 1973 and won the title in 1974 with seven race wins. 1974 was also the year that he began to strike form in sports car racing, posting wins at Road Atlanta and Laguna Seca in a 911 Carrera. He spent the late '70s and 1980 racing in Can-Am, with the likes of Jacky Ickx, and recorded several wins—placing runner up in the 1979 season. EFR made regular appearances in Porsche race cars in the '80s, particularly in 1984 when he took GT class wins at Riverside, Watkins Glen, Pocono and the 3 Hours of Daytona Finale in a Porsche 924.

He posted overall wins at the 24 Hours of Daytona in 1997 and 1999, as well as a class win in 2000, with Dyson Racing. 1999 also brought championship in the inaugural ALMS season and the United States Road Racing Can-Am Championship. EFR continued to race, and win, in various categories long after—marking a racing career spanning five decades.

Bob Garretson

Bob Garretson began his racing career on Southern Californian drag strips in the 1950s, but he rose to fame in sports car racing in the '70s and '80s. Garretson, having settled in the Bay Area, worked in the computer business around the time that Silicon Valley was beginning to take off. He invested some of his earnings in setting up a Porsche repair shop in Mountain View.

In 1978, he joined Dick Barbour Racing to manage the team and drive one of their Porsche 935s and won the 12 Hours of Sebring. Garretson survived a horrific crash at the 24 Hours of Le Mans but continued with Dick Barbour Racing for the 1979 and 1980 seasons, scoring numerous podiums—including a third in class at Le Mans in 1979—in what was a dominant period for the team and for the Porsche 935. Through customers of his Mountain View Porsche repair shop, Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, Garretson secured sponsorship from Apple Computers for the 1980 season. The result was the iconic Apple-liveried 935, featuring the famous "Don't upset the Apple Car" decal on the rear fender.

Garretson formed his own race team in 1981, under the name Garretson Enterprises. The team achieved immediate success by winning the 24 Hours of Daytona and achieving a class podium at the 24 Hours of Le Mans later in the season. All told, a win and two further podium finishes earned Garretson the World Endurance Championship for Drivers title. He took a podium at the 24 Hours of Daytona in 1982 and took part in selected races in 1983 before retiring from competitive racing. He continues to be a Porsche enthusiast and maintains a close association with the Porsche 356 registry.

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Image Sublines

Path: media/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Rob Dyson Anniversary Photo
Subline: Rob Dyson celebrates 25 years of racing.

Path: media/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Rob Dyson
Subline: Rob Dyson in the 1986 IMSA 24 Hours of Daytona

Path: media/Images/img_3.jpg
Title: Chris Dyson speaks with his Father Rob
Subline: hris Dyson speaks with his father Rob Dyson

Path: media/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: Chris Dyson in RS Spyder
Subline: Chris Dyson behind the wheel of a Porsche RS Spyder.

Path: media/Images/img_5.jpg
Title: John Fitzpatrick
Subline: John Fitzpatrick (left) at the 1980 24 Hours of Daytona.

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Title: Fitzpatrick 1977 Nurburgring 925 2nd PL
Subline: John Fitzpatrick takes 2nd Place at Nurburgring in 1977.

Path: media/Images/img_8.jpg
Title: Forbes-Robinson 1988 Daytona 962
Subline: Elliot Forbes-Robinson drives a Porsche 962 at Daytona in 1988.

Path: media/Images/img_10.jpg
Title: Garretson 1982 24h Le Mans No. 77 953 K3
Subline: Bob Garretson wheels the No. 77 Porsche 953 around a curve at the 1982 24 Hours of Le Mans.

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