

Rennsport Reunion Legends: Vol. 7

01/09/2023 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 September 1: Jackie Oliver, David Piper, Brian Redman, and Chris Robinson.

Jackie Oliver

London-born Jackie Oliver honed his race craft driving Minis in the Swinging Sixties. Following some notable success in the British Touring Car Championship, he was selected to drive for Lotus in 1966, finding a seat in Formula One following the 1968 death of Jim Clark. Dogged by mechanical unreliability and team politics, Oliver's GP career would not reflect his widely acknowledged ability to mix with F1's elite, and it was in sports cars that he found greater acclaim.

Oliver drove at the 24 Hours of Le Mans for John Wyer Automotive, competing initially in a Ford GT40.

Paired with another future Porsche stalwart Jacky Ickx, Oliver won the 24 Hours in 1969, just ahead of the factory 908 driven by Hans Herrmann and Gérard Larrousse. He returned to La Sarthe in 1971, this time driving a Porsche 917 Langheck alongside Pedro Rodriguez. Their car would lead the field from the start and for much of the early part of the race before mechanical issues forced it to retire at dawn. But, overall, '71 was a stellar year for Oliver nonetheless, contributing to World Championship wins and podiums for Porsche.

Oliver also enjoyed considerable success in Can-Am, winning the title for Shadow in 1974 before going on to found the Arrows F1 team three years later.

David Piper

Veteran Porsche privateer David Piper began his motorsport career shortly after World War II, competing in local hill climbs and sprints in his native England. He began circuit racing in the mid-1950s and by the end of the decade had purchased a Lotus 16 formula car with which he competed in both F1 and F2.

During the 1960s, Piper raced privately owned sports cars all around the world, often finished in his distinctive green livery. He was one of the few customers to acquire a Porsche 917 directly from the factory and one of the very first non-works drivers to compete in the new Group 5 prototype. Piper and Australian Frank Gardner drove an early example of the future icon at the Nürburgring 1000km in May 1969, finishing eighth overall and second in class. Later that year, Piper and fellow Englishman Richard Attwood won the Kyalami 9 Hours aboard Piper's own 917, chassis 010, a car he still owns today.

Piper was also instrumental in the creation of the movie *Le Mans* with Steve McQueen, lending the production his own cars and allowing a camera to be fitted to the John Wyer 917 K he was driving in the race. Tragically, Piper suffered a high-speed tire blowout at the corner known as "Maison Blanche" and subsequently lost his right leg below the knee.

Brian Redman

Like several of his British contemporaries, Lancashire-born Brian Redman juggled a challenging career in late-sixties Formula One with considerably greater success in the golden era of sports car racing.

Having proved his mettle in Jaguar E-Types and Lola T70s at national events, Redman found himself competing on the world stage for the first time in 1966, driving a Ford GT40 with Peter Sutcliffe at the 1000 km of Spa in the World Sportscar Championship. The following year, he would make his first appearance at Le Mans aboard a John Wyer Automotive GT40. Only one year later, Redman would win the 1000 km of Spa and the Brands Hatch 6 Hours, victories that brought him squarely to the attention of Porsche.

A works driver by the start of 1969, Redman steered the factory-entered 908 to five wins in his first season with Porsche, topping it off with a third place in the newly arrived 917 at the 1000km of Zeltweg in August. After another highly successful year driving the Porsche 917 in 1970, Redman was lured away to Ferrari, but returned to Porsche via Dick Barbour Racing at the end of the decade. Driving various privately entered iterations of the Porsche 935, Redman won the 12 Hours of Sebring and 24 Hours of Daytona amid countless other podium finishes. In a career that stretched past the millennium, Redman also enjoyed outings in the Porsche 962, finishing second at Daytona in 1988, and could still be found racing a 911 at the same event some 10 years later.

As if anything further was required, Redman solidly locked his place in Porsche Motorsport lore in 1999 when he planted the seed for Porsche Rennsport Reunion by organizing the Porsche 50th Anniversary Reunion held at Watkins Glen International. The gathering was so well received that Bob Carlson, then head of Public Relations of Porsche Cars North America (PCNA), and Redman announced a fully Porsche supported reunion would take place in 2001. Redman remains linked to the event attending each subsequent Porsche Rennsport Reunion.

Chip Robinson

Born in Philadelphia in 1954, Chip Robinson started his career racing in Formula Fords and became the SCCA Northeast Division Champion in 1982. He progressed to the Super Vee Championship the following year, taking five podiums and placing second overall in the 1984 season. For 1985, he found a seat in Group 44's Jaguar, competing at Le Mans and scoring six podiums in the IMSA GTP Championship – plus a win and a further three podiums the following season.

Driving a Porsche 962 with team-owner Al Holbert, Robinson won the '87 championship, the highlight of a closely fought season being overall victory at the 24 Hours of Daytona alongside Holbert, Derek Bell and Al Unser Jr.

Robinson has also competed at Le Mans on several occasions, including driving a Porsche 962C for Joest Racing in 1987, the team and car for whom he made two further appearances at Daytona and Sebring in 1993. Robinson retired from professional racing shortly after and has since worked as race director in variety of open wheel categories.

Image Sublines

Path: media/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Jackie Oliver Daytona 1971
Subline: Jackie Oliver before taking 1st Place at Daytona in 1971 in his No. 2 Porsche 917 KH Coupe.

Path: media/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: David Piper
Subline: David Piper wheels a 917 at Nurburgring in 1969.

Path: media/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Redman 1971 917 KH Coupe of the Martini Racing Team 1000km race No.8.jpg
Subline: Brian Redman drives the No. 8 917 KH Coupe in a 1971 race.

Path: media/Images/img_8.jpg
Title: Chip Robinson
Subline: Chip Robinson behind the wheel of the No. 14 at Daytona in 1987.

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