

TVR AT LE MANS 2003



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Embargo: Immediate

TVR AT LE MANS 2003

TVR, Britain's largest independent car maker, is entering two racing versions of its awesome 215mph T400R cars into the 24 hour race at Le Mans on June 14th and 15th, marking the company's first return to the "world's greatest motor race" since 1962.

TVR has joined forces with De Walt Race Sport of Salisbury to compete at Le Mans in a British designed and built car from a British owned manufacturer, run by a British team and driven by British drivers.

So, in keeping with the nature of the bid, TVR's campaign for Le Mans 2003 was launched last month on the flight deck of the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Invincible.

Run by team principal and lead driver Richard Stanton, the squad is composed of engineers from Race Sports Salisbury, Chamberlain Engineering and from the TVR factory. "We could have taken a foreign car, but we wanted to prove that a British manufacturer can take on the majors," said Richard. "I have wanted to take a TVR to Le Mans for a long time now. There's also some national pride at stake. We want to show that a 'proper' British car - owned, built and powered by British engineers and technology - can succeed without foreign help."

Last week, as the cars left his Blackpool factory, Peter Wheeler, Chairman of TVR, said: "As the race weekend gets closer, the whole firm has been getting more and more nervous. I know that everyone has put their best into it - we'll now just have to see how it all works out."

Ben Samuelson, Head of Motorsport at TVR said: "The season has already got off to an extremely good start! We took the first car to the 12 hour American Le Mans race at Sebring in March and it ran virtually faultlessly straight out of the box. It even finished sixth in class, which is some achievement as the Florida circuit is famous for being a car-breaker! We then managed first, second and third at the British Empire Trophy at Silverstone last month, which has not been managed since Aston Martin did it in 1956. We're now just hoping that we don't let down all our supporters, especially the thousand TVRs which we are expecting to be heading across Northern France for the race this weekend."

THE CAR

The car itself is an engineering marvel, closely based on the flagship Tuscan 400R model. TVRs have always been fast, as spectacular to drive as they are to look at. With the T400R, those traditional strengths have been taken to an altogether higher level. Its stunning bodywork is all carbon fibre; its massively strong chassis uses aluminium honeycomb to greatly improve its stiffness, and its hugely powerful engine is connected to TVR's own six speed sequential gearbox. It is TVR's technological *tour de force*, a 215 mph showcase for TVR's abilities.

The heart of the T400R is TVR's own Speed Six engine. Seen in both Cerbera and Tuscan models and in production since 1996, it develops a healthy 400 bhp out of its four litres without recourse to turbocharging. 60 mph comes up in less than 4 seconds but it is from there to its top speed of 215 mph that the Tuscan 400R road car really leaves the competition standing. Designed from the ground up with the aid of sophisticated CAD/CAM software, the rigidity of the steel chassis is added to significantly by the race-type rollcage and the use of aluminium honeycomb and carbon fibre for the floor. Also a first for a roadgoing TVR is to have adjustable dampers whereby customers will be able to fine-tune the suspension set up of their T400Rs for road or circuit use. Brakes are powerful ventilated discs all round with four piston callipers at the front with a high performance option of even bigger discs and six piston callipers for even better stopping ability.

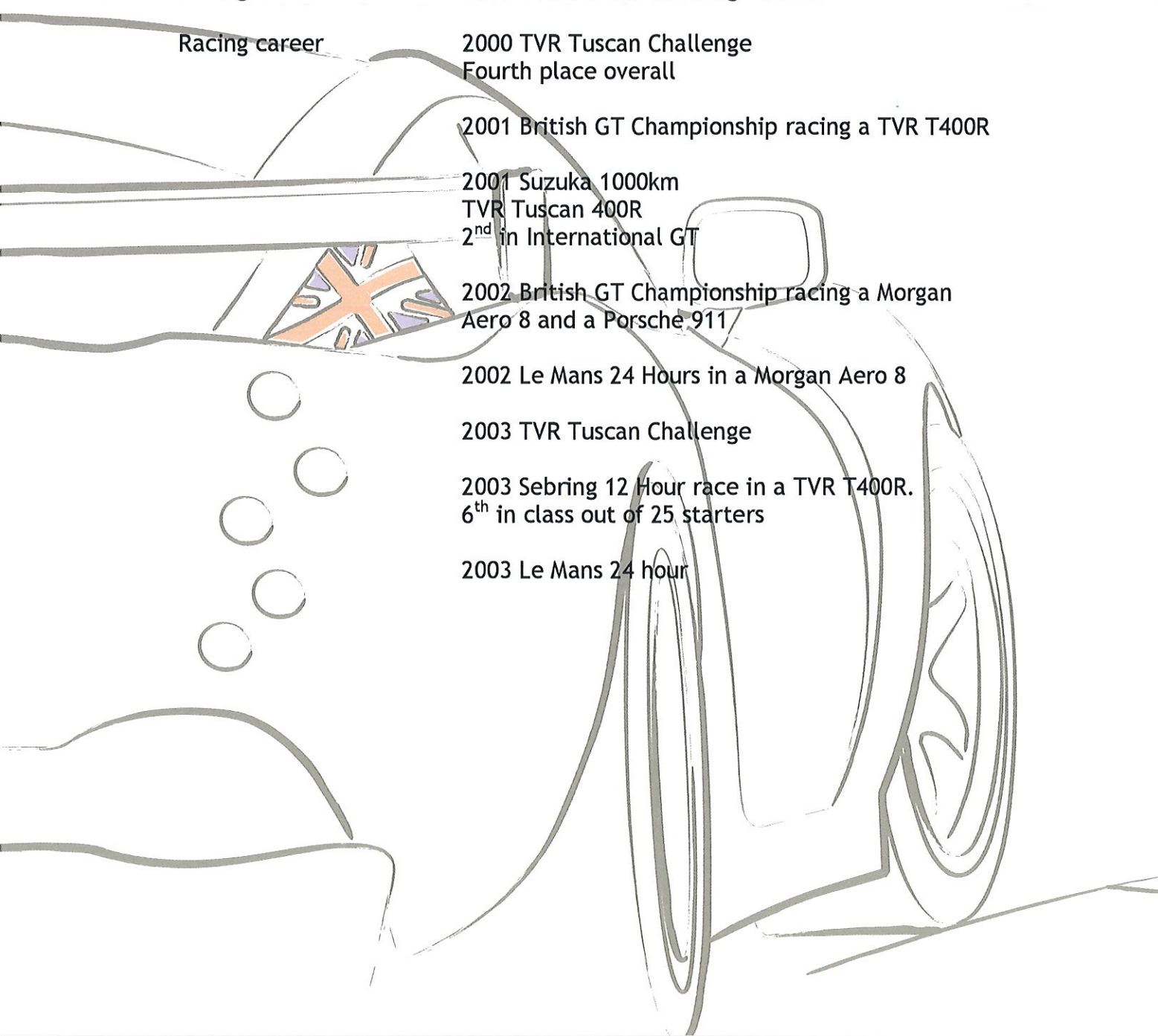
You can count the number of road cars that have had all-carbon fibre bodywork on the fingers of one hand - McLaren F1, Ferrari F40 and now TVR T400R. More normally found in the aerospace or Motorsport industries, this material is expensive but is extraordinarily light and strong.

Aerodynamics have played an increasingly significant role in the design of TVRs over the last few years and the T400R take this to the logical next level. A lot of attention has been paid to drag and lift with the result that its coupé shape owes most of its form to the demands of the aerodynamicists. A phenomenally low drag co-efficient of 0.32 is the result of all this attention to detail and its virtually flat floor, front splitter and rear diffuser work together to give it unparalleled high speed stability.

The interior of the T400R reflects its sense of purpose with a distinctly minimalist style pervading the interior. Unusually, the carbon fibre and aluminium structure of the car is highly polished and left on show, giving the cabin a utilitarian but extremely high quality feel. The seats of the road car are unique to the model and are manufactured from carbon fibre but trimmed from the highest quality Scottish hides.

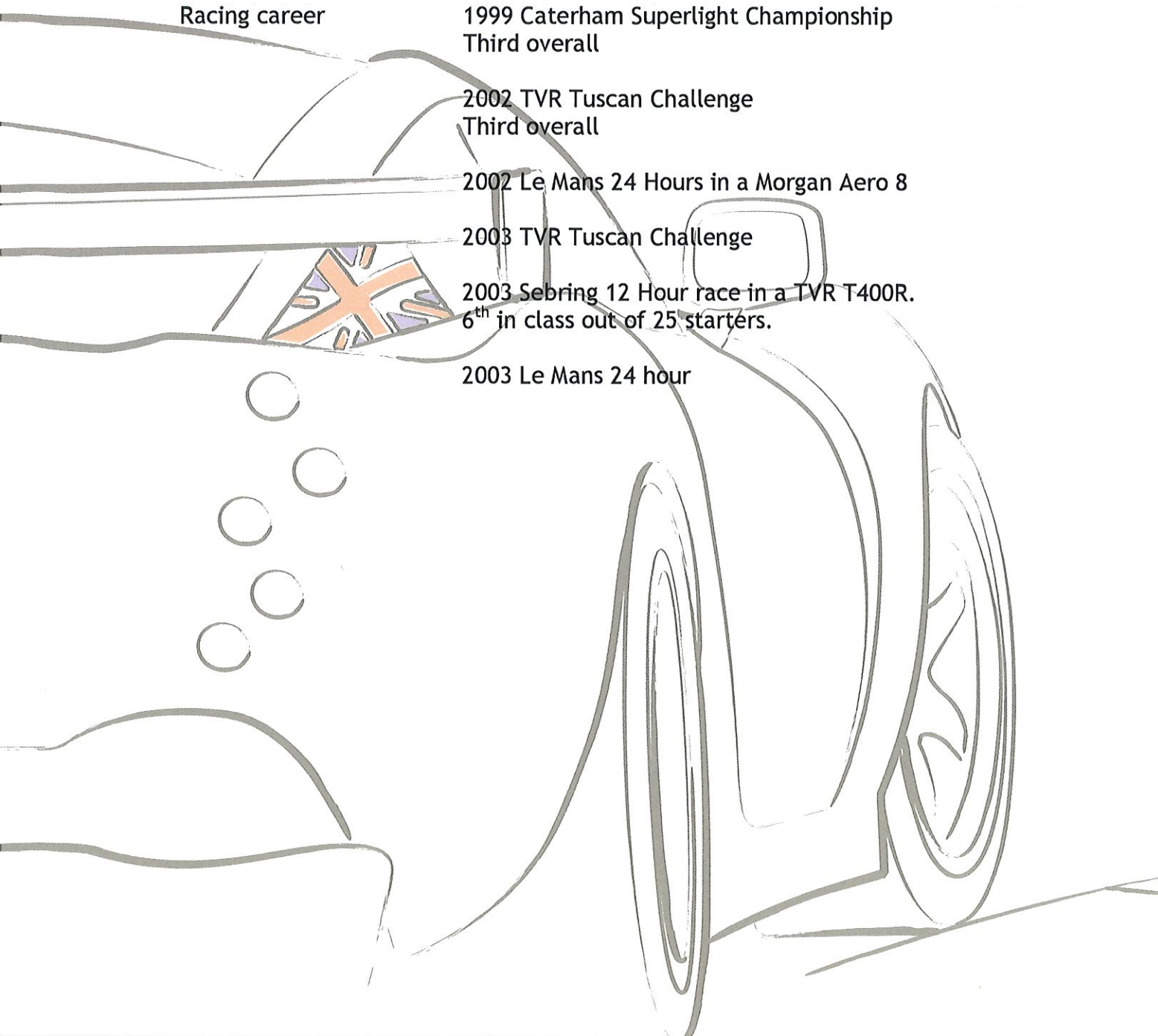
DE WALT RACE SPORTS SALISBURY DRIVER PROFILE RICHARD STANTON

D.O.B.	08/03/62
Home Town	Salisbury, Wiltshire
Occupation	Runs a construction business
Racing debut	1999 TVR Tuscan Challenge Series
Racing career	2000 TVR Tuscan Challenge Fourth place overall 2001 British GT Championship racing a TVR T400R 2001 Suzuka 1000km TVR Tuscan 400R 2 nd in International GT 2002 British GT Championship racing a Morgan Aero 8 and a Porsche 911 2002 Le Mans 24 Hours in a Morgan Aero 8 2003 TVR Tuscan Challenge 2003 Sebring 12 Hour race in a TVR T400R. 6 th in class out of 25 starters 2003 Le Mans 24 hour

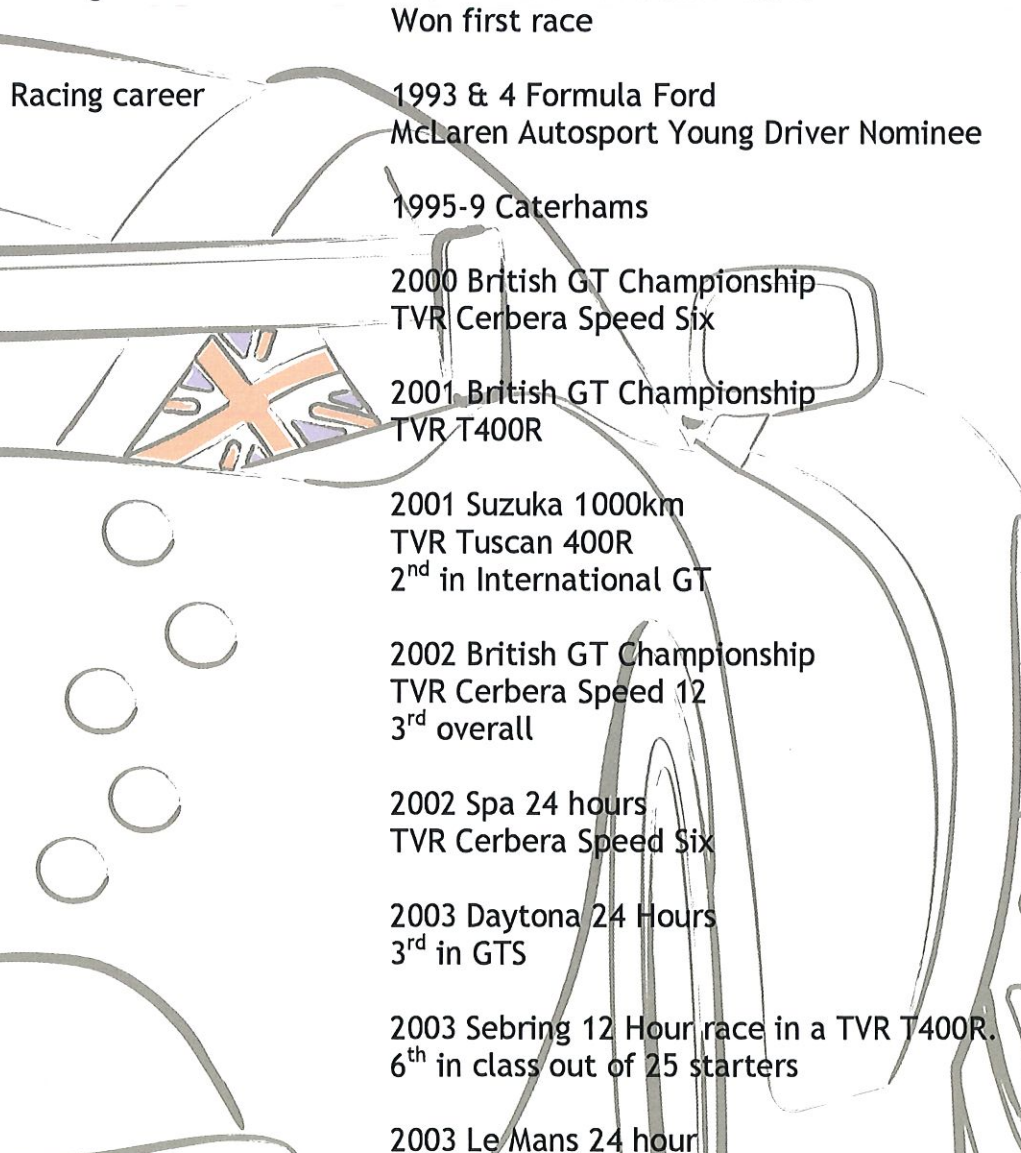


DE WALT RACE SPORTS SALISBURY DRIVER PROFILE RICHARD HAY

D.O.B.	18/08/64
Home Town	Droitwich, Worcestershire
Occupation	Managing Director, Hay Fisher Film & Broadcast
Racing debut	1997 Caterham Scholarship Won seven out of the eight races.
Racing career	1999 Caterham Superlight Championship Third overall 2002 TVR Tuscan Challenge Third overall 2002 Le Mans 24 Hours in a Morgan Aero 8 2003 TVR Tuscan Challenge 2003 Sebring 12 Hour race in a TVR T400R. 6 th in class out of 25 starters. 2003 Le Mans 24 hour



DE WALT RACE SPORTS SALISBURY DRIVER PROFILE ROB BARFF



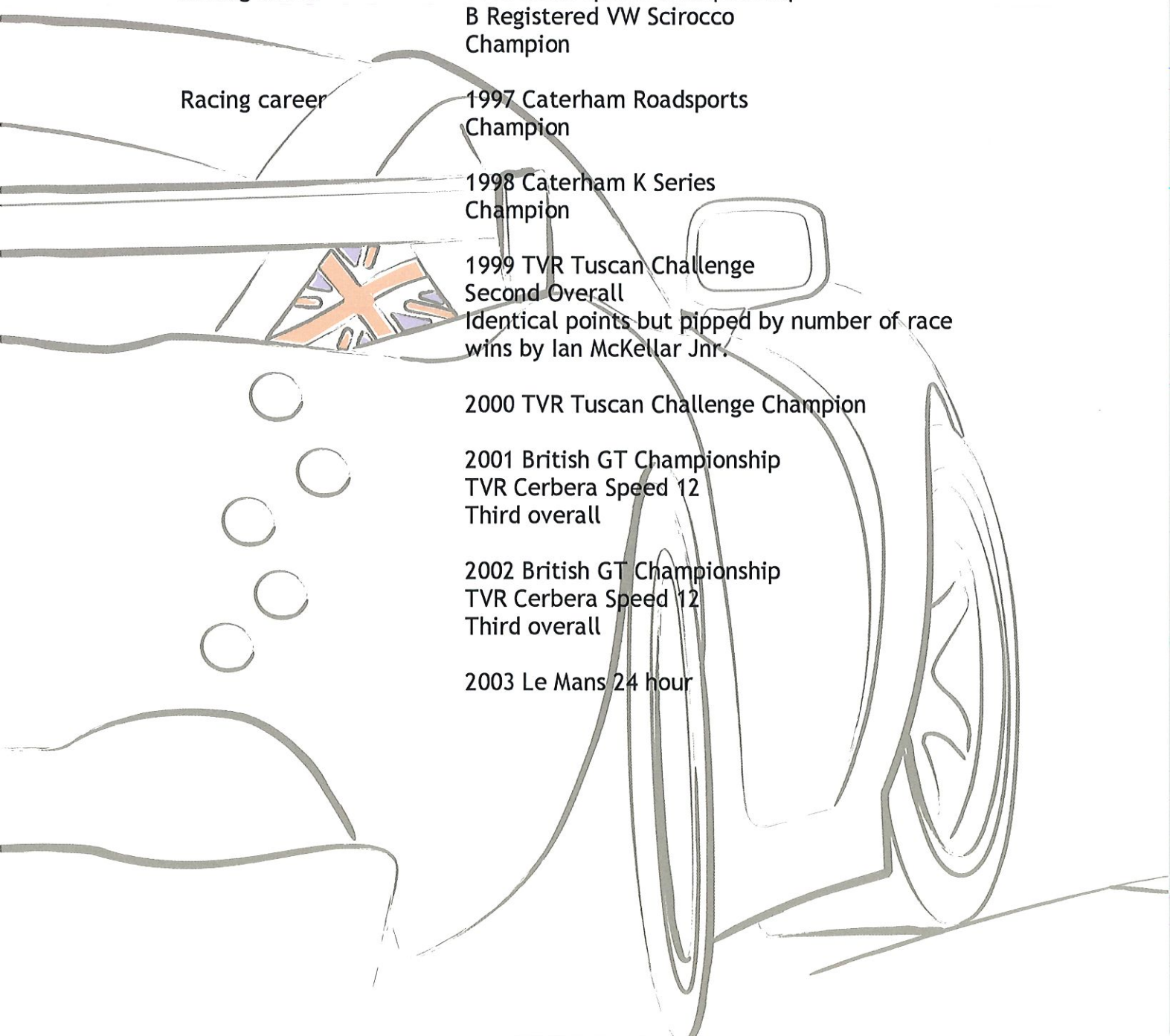
D.O.B.	16/11/74
Home Town	Brackley, Northamptonshire
Occupation	Senior Racing Driving Instructor, Silverstone
Racing debut	1993 Formula Vauxhall Junior Won first race
Racing career	1993 & 4 Formula Ford McLaren Autosport Young Driver Nominee 1995-9 Caterhams 2000 British GT Championship TVR Cerbera Speed Six 2001 British GT Championship TVR T400R 2001 Suzuka 1000km TVR Tuscan 400R 2 nd in International GT 2002 British GT Championship TVR Cerbera Speed 12 3 rd overall 2002 Spa 24 hours TVR Cerbera Speed Six 2003 Daytona 24 Hours 3 rd in GTS 2003 Sebring 12 Hour race in a TVR T400R. 6 th in class out of 25 starters 2003 Le Mans 24 hour

DE WALT RACE SPORTS SALISBURY DRIVER PROFILE TIM SUGDEN

D.O.B.	26/4/64
Home Town	Leeds
Occupation	Racing Driver
Racing debut	1977 100cc Junior Britain Karting Rolled (!)
Racing career	pre 1990 Karting British Champion & Captain British Team 1990-5 British Touring Car Championship - BMW 1990 Formula Renault 3 rd in Championship 1991 Formula 3000 1997 British GT Champion 1998 British GT Champion Le Mans 24 hour Fourth overall McLaren F1GTR 1999 British GT Championship Second overall 2000 & 2001 FIA NGT Porsche 911 GT3 2002 British GT Championship Second in class 2003 FIA NGT 2003 Le Mans 24 hour

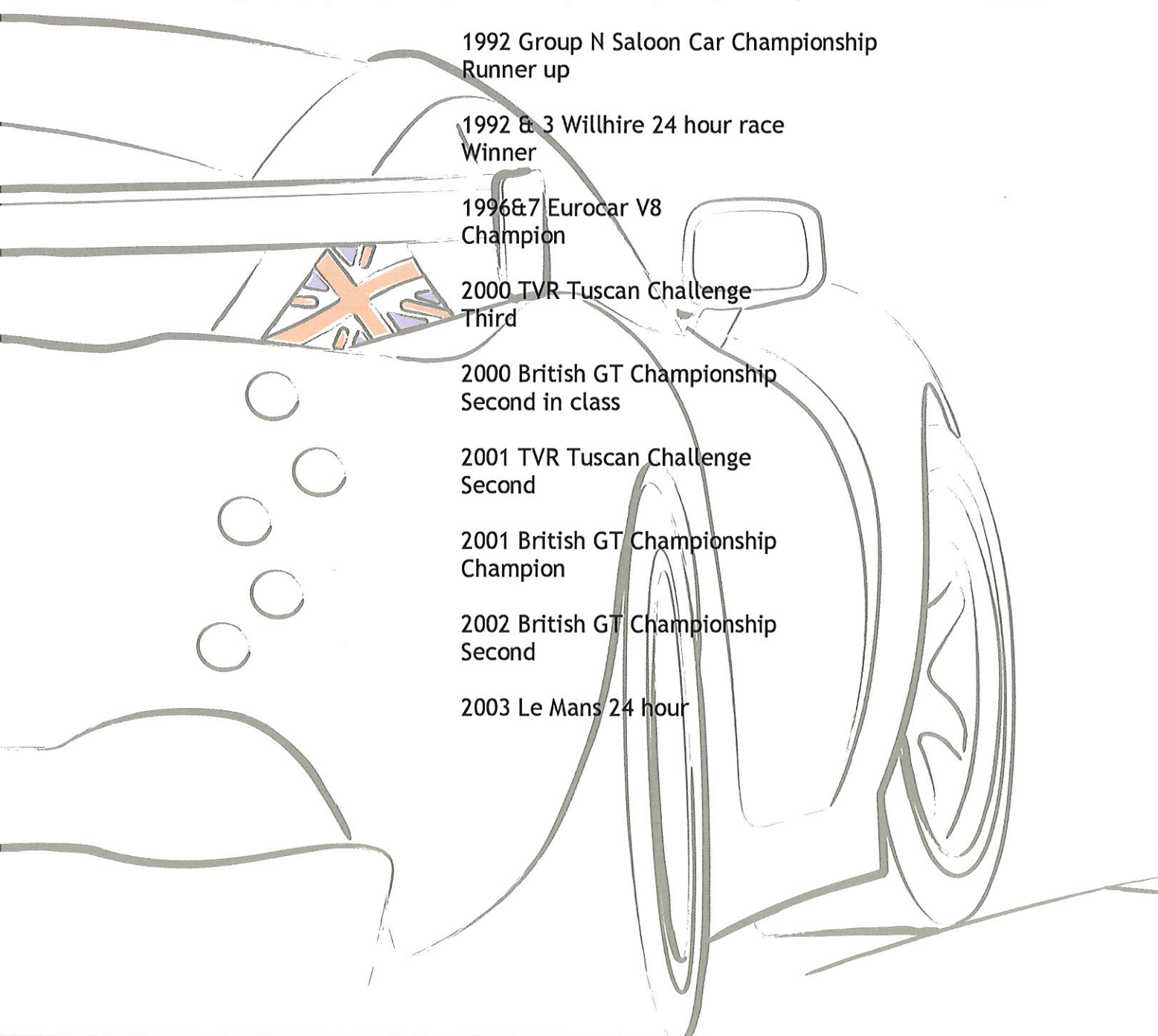
DE WALT RACE SPORTS SALISBURY DRIVER PROFILE MICHAEL CAINE

D.O.B.	13/8/69
Home Town	Cambridge
Occupation	Sales Manager, Castle TVR
Racing debut	1995 Road Sports Championship B Registered VW Scirocco Champion
Racing career	1997 Caterham Roadsports Champion 1998 Caterham K Series Champion 1999 TVR Tuscan Challenge Second Overall Identical points but pipped by number of race wins by Ian McKellar Jnr. 2000 TVR Tuscan Challenge Champion 2001 British GT Championship TVR Cerbera Speed 12 Third overall 2002 British GT Championship TVR Cerbera Speed 12 Third overall 2003 Le Mans 24 hour



DE WALT RACE SPORTS SALISBURY DRIVER PROFILE MIKE JORDAN

D.O.B.	17/02/58
Home Town	Sutton Coldfield
Occupation	Runs a race team called Team Eurotech
Racing career	1987 & 1991 Porsche Cup Champion 1992 Group N Saloon Car Championship Runner up 1992 & 3 Willhire 24 hour race Winner 1996&7 Eurocar V8 Champion 2000 TVR Tuscan Challenge Third 2000 British GT Championship Second in class 2001 TVR Tuscan Challenge Second 2001 British GT Championship Champion 2002 British GT Championship Second 2003 Le Mans 24 hour



NOTES TO EDITORS

The Le Mans race is the most famous motor race in the world, part of the triple crown of motorsport alongside the Monaco Grand Prix and the Indy 500. It has been held every year (other than during the war) over 24 hours on public roads since 1923. It attracts 250,000 spectators with up to half of them crossing the Channel to get there.

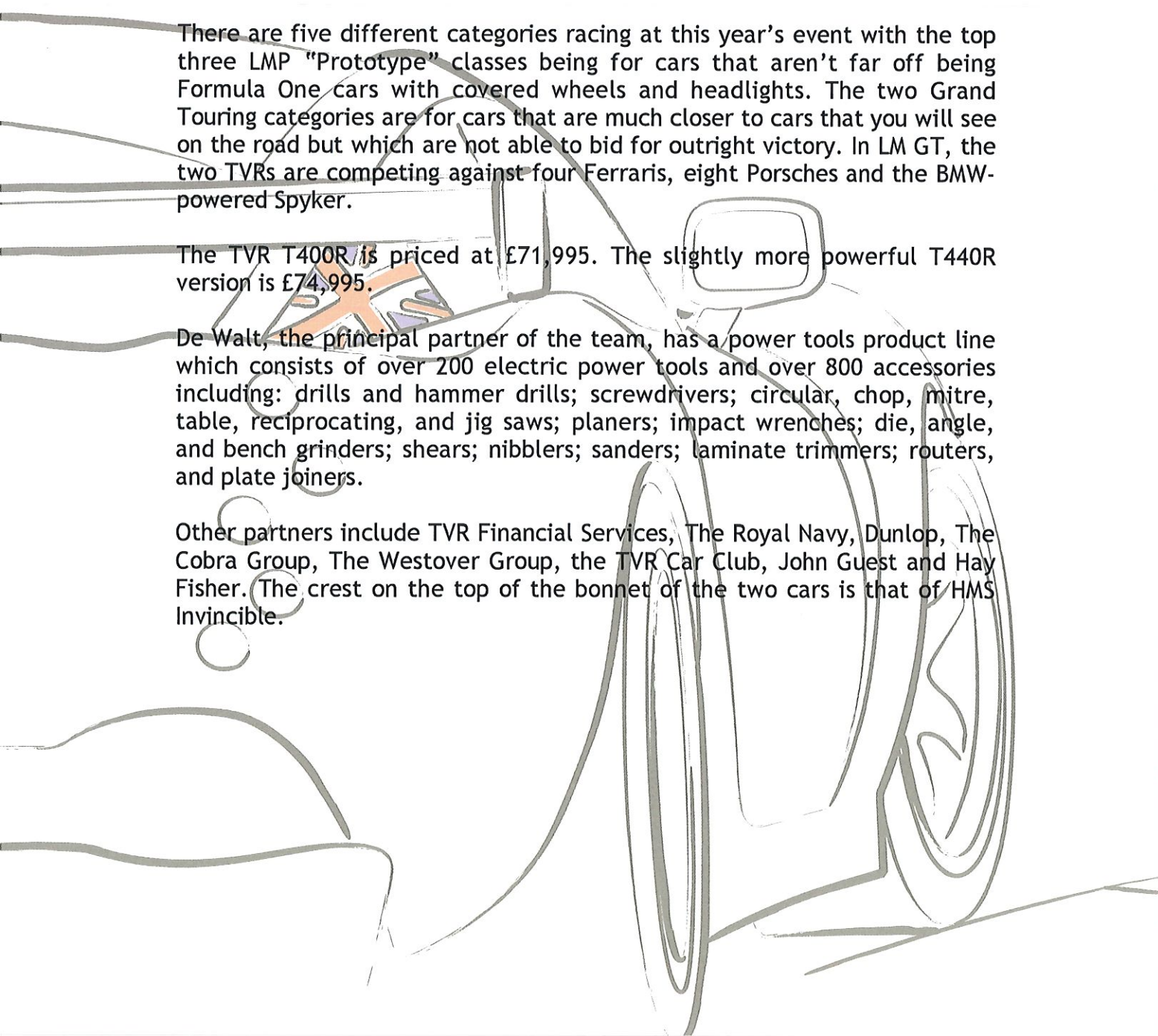
Manufacturers have always chosen to test the durability and pace of their cars at Le Mans. Nowadays, huge international conglomerates such as Volkswagen and General Motors enter teams to promote brands such as Audi, Bentley and Chevrolet.

There are five different categories racing at this year's event with the top three LMP "Prototype" classes being for cars that aren't far off being Formula One cars with covered wheels and headlights. The two Grand Touring categories are for cars that are much closer to cars that you will see on the road but which are not able to bid for outright victory. In LM GT, the two TVRs are competing against four Ferraris, eight Porsches and the BMW-powered Spyker.

The TVR T400R is priced at £71,995. The slightly more powerful T440R version is £74,995.

De Walt, the principal partner of the team, has a power tools product line which consists of over 200 electric power tools and over 800 accessories including: drills and hammer drills; screwdrivers; circular, chop, mitre, table, reciprocating, and jig saws; planers; impact wrenches; die, angle, and bench grinders; shears; nibblers; sanders; laminate trimmers; routers, and plate joiners.

Other partners include TVR Financial Services, The Royal Navy, Dunlop, The Cobra Group, The Westover Group, the TVR Car Club, John Guest and Hay Fisher. The crest on the top of the bonnet of the two cars is that of HMS Invincible.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF TVR

1947: The TVR story begins with a young engineer, Trevor Wilkinson, building himself a light alloy special based on an Alvis Firebird rolling chassis.

1949: The first TVR chassis is designed and built, out of tubular steel as they still are today. However, this one has a Ford sidevalve engine in the front.

1956: By now TVRs are being sold in the U.S. with GRP bodywork and Coventry Climax engines.

1958: The production of the Grantura is well and truly under way. By the standards of the day, the Grantura is fast, agile and good-looking. Indeed something of a TVR formula has emerged: strong tubular steel chassis covered in good looking bodywork and propelled by a strong engine to give impressive performance at a very reasonable price.

1962: TVR's works team competes in the endurance races at Sebring and Le Mans.

1963: A major milestone is reached with the introduction of the first TVR Griffith, which is fundamentally a Grantura with a modified chassis and a big American V8 under the bonnet. Performance of these cars is very much in the AC Cobra league, enough to severely embarrass the Jaguars and Ferraris of the day.

1966: The ownership of TVR is stabilised in the hands Martin Lilley. Since that day, TVR has only ever had two shareholders. Over the next few years the company gradually grows with the Grantura being replaced by the Vixen and the Griffith by the Tuscan V8.

1970: TVR moves to its current factory in Bristol Avenue, although the site has grown enormously over the last 30 years.

1972: The M series is introduced which serves TVR extremely well through the seventies. As the years progress the M is sold in fixed head coupé, hatchback, convertible and turbocharged forms, the last being the first British production turbocharged car and quicker accelerating than a Porsche 911 Turbo.

1980: The Tasmin is introduced with dramatically modern new body, new chassis and a new engine. Power comes from the Ford 2.8 unit and there are Coupé, Convertible and 2+2 models.

1982: TVR's current owner and chairman, Peter Wheeler, takes over and almost immediately authorises development the first of the Rover V8 engined TVRs - the 350i.

1987: A new chapter in TVR's history is introduced with the birth of the S. Although it looks superficially like the M Series, it is in fact an all-new car and with its stunningly low price, it sees production almost double in a year.

1988: The ultimate evolution of the Tasmin is introduced - the 450 SEAC. It produces a massive 324 bhp from a TVR modified 4500cc V8 engine and has bodywork made out of Kevlar, shaving 300 lbs off an already light kerbweight.

1989: The first race of the TVR Tuscan Challenge takes place at Donington and is won by Jeff Allam. The fastest one make sportscar series is still going strong today after fourteen seasons.

1992: The first of the modern Griffiths is delivered to its eager owner. So successful was the Griffith that an order is taken every eight minutes on average at its first Motor Show and is immediately acclaimed as a modern classic.

1993: The TVR Chimaera goes into production, since when more than 10,000 of which have been built, making it the most popular TVR ever.

1996: The first roadgoing TVR with a TVR designed and built engine, the Cerbera, is launched. Thanks to five years of development and two years of gruelling testing in the Motorsport arena, the Speed Eight engine has among the highest power and torque to weight ratios of any normally aspirated road engines for the road.

1997: TVR's second engine to be designed from a clean sheet of paper makes its production debut. The Speed Six engine benefits from the latest motorsport technology but with its six cylinders in line it is firmly part of the tradition of the best of the British sportscars.

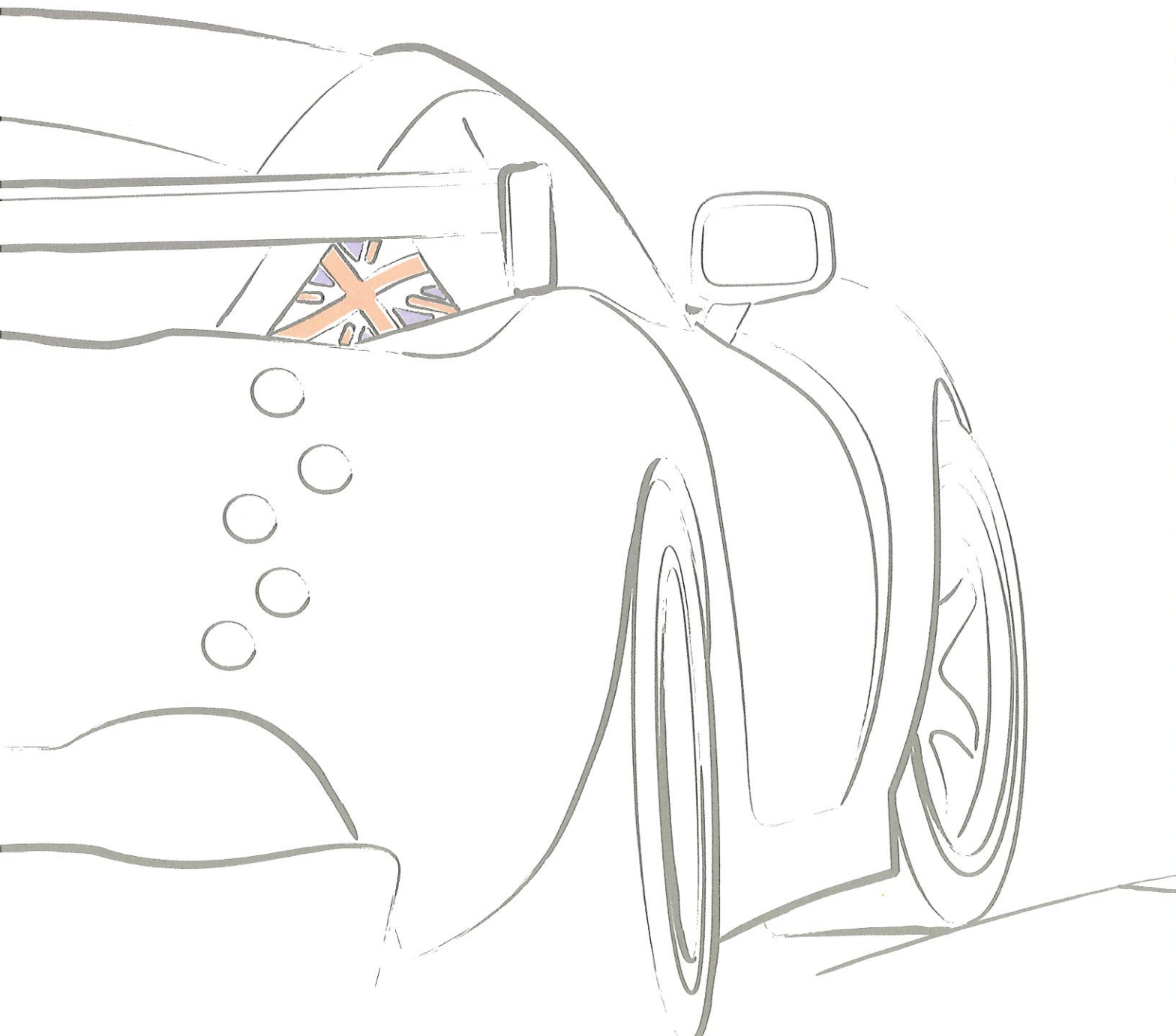
1998: TVR's third engine makes its competition debut as TVR moves up to the GT1 class. The mighty Speed 12 is powered by TVR's own 880 bhp, 7.7 litre V12.

2000: Deliveries of the new Tuscan begin and it rapidly becomes TVR's best selling model. The Cerbera Speed 12 is also introduced with the racing version scoring a maiden win at Silverstone in its very first season.

2001: The Tamora is introduced to bring a new level of accessibility to the TVR range and enjoys a rapturous reception from the motoring press.

2002: A new generation of TVR coupés is shown at British International Motor Show. The T350 as well as the T400R and T440R take TVR into a new sector of the marketplace.

2003: TVR re-enters the international sporting arena with T400Rs being campaigned at Sebring and Le Mans.



HUGE STEP FORWARD FOR LE MANS NEWBOYS

In a very encouraging first Le Mans qualifying session, the TVR T400Rs made significant progress on their testing pace. After a lot of time spent testing on British circuits and in the windtunnel, the cars are much quicker than they were in May and informal study of the speedtrap information has shown that the cars are going nearly twenty miles an hour faster. Already, Tim Sugden has gone a huge thirteen seconds faster than the fastest testing time and both cars are safely within the percentage limits to ensure that they will be able to start the race on Saturday.

The number 91 car of Richard Stanton, Richard Hay and Rob Barff did not have the greatest of luck, suffering from a puncture and an engine problem which cut short its session. Indeed, Rob has not yet qualified and so has his work cut out for the next session. However, the number 92 car suffered from no such concerns and is already into the top ten of its class without anything like all the car's potential being explored.

"Although it is encouraging that the car has qualified," said Rob Barff, "we still have to dot some is and cross some ts and qualifying all the drivers will be our priority today."

Richard Hay added "when I had a puncture, I came to a rest by the speed trap on the Mulsanne and the marshals were kind enough to show me the figures. The improvement is simply enormous. The most frustrating thing was that I was parked by the bar at Les Hunaudières but had to stay with the car in case I was wanted on the radio. I did think of giving my crash helmet to a marshal and asking him to take a message but thought better of it!"

Tim Sugden said "I am really encouraged by how we went last night and feel that there is a lot more time to find in the car this evening."

The main qualifying session is tonight and the team is optimistic that greater things are on the cards for the two T400Rs before Le Mans qualifying is over.

For further information, please contact Ben Samuelson at TVR on +44 7976 442602.

Embargo: 00:01 hrs, 12th June, 2003.