



JARRAH VENABLES



1959 BRM P25

Chassis: 2010



One of the most successful and original Lola T70 MkIIs extant, supplied new to Sid Taylor Racing

Raced by F1 and Can-Am Champion Denny Hulme to win the British Sports Car Championship with 5 victories

Also raced by Hulme in four Can-Am rounds during 1966 plus Richard Attwood, Tony Lanfranchi & team owner Sid Taylor in other events

Known provenance and presented in superb condition. Eligible for a wide variety of events, including Goodwood's popular Whitsun Trophy





British Racing Motors, or BRM as it was affectionately known, was one of Great Britain's most iconic Formula One teams. Founded after WW2 by ex-racing driver Raymond Mays and engineer Peter Berthon to bring sporting glory to Great Britain. The BRM project was very much billed as the national Grand Prix team. This was significant because at the time, national pride was still very much a core element of Grand Prix teams' identities.

BRM's first car, called the P15, was dubbed 'Britain's Greatest Racing Car'. It was a hugely ambitious and complicated design featuring a spectacular 1.5-litre supercharged V16 engine capable of 400+bhp at a staggering 12,000 rpm. Developing and racing such a car required huge amounts of funding and many engineering collaborations, so in order to achieve this, Mays and Berthon created the British Motor Racing Research Trust. They persuaded twenty two of Britain's leading automotive and engineering companies to support their endeavour. Despite its staggering performance the P15 ultimately proved frustrating for BRM across several seasons and iterations, with the company eventually being wound up in 1953.

BRM was ultimately saved by the Owen Organisation who kept the endeavour as a whole and Berthon was tasked with creating a simpler, more reliable machine for the new forthcoming 2.5-litre F1 regulations. Berthon opted for the simplicity of a 4-cylinder all-aluminium twin-cam engine that would sit in a lightweight space-frame chassis.

The engine breathed through a pair of huge twin-choke Weber carburetors (the only step away from BRM's all-British supply policy), and produced over 250 bhp. The P25's space-frame chassis featured double wishbone and coil spring suspension at the front, and coil springs with a DeDion rear axle. The use of brake discs at the front was completed by a unique, inboard rear disc mounted on the back of the transaxle gearbox. From 1955, the Type 25 (or P25 as it widely became known) development would spread over several years as the car initially proved unreliable and tricky to drive.

Although the design was simpler, reliability was again a constant issue and it wasn't until midway through 1958 that the P25s finished a race. It is said that the signing of Jean Behra for the '58 season was pivotal in ironing out the P25's handling issues, and indeed the results began to improve. A fifth place at Monaco in 1958 was the best result yet, followed by second and third place at Zandvoort.

Ultimately the P25 proved popular with its drivers and was a much more competitive machine in its 1958/59 guise. 1959 would see the P25's best results with Jo Bonnier winning the Dutch GP at Zandvoort, which was indeed BRM's first F1 victory, followed by Stirling Moss' second place taking 2nd in the British GP at Aintree (in chassis 2510).



By that time however, the mid-engined Cooper revolution had begun, and BRM hurriedly began designing the new P48. Albeit being mid-engined, the P48 had a somewhat similar chassis and suspension design, and used the same engine and gearbox. As a result, most of the P25 cars were used as donor cars, and so today only one totally original example exists.

Chassis 2510 was one of two cars built for the 1959 season. It was raced once as a works entry when driven by Ron Flockhart in the Monaco Grand Prix, where he qualified 10th, although he spun into retirement after 64 laps. Soon after it was loaned to new team, British Racing Partnership [BRP], which was well funded, enjoying sponsorship from British hire-purchase company Yeoman Credit. BRP brought in Britain's biggest star of the time, Stirling Moss to drive the P25 in both the French and British Grands Prix.

Moss immediately proved his worth by qualifying 4th and fastest of all four BRM entries. However in the race with Moss pushing hard in very hot conditions, he spun and stalled. He tried in vain to push start the car himself, he collapse from exhaustion and was later disqualified for receiving outside assistance. However he did earn fastest lap of the race and a new lap record in the process.





Two weeks later Moss was back in 2510 for the British Grand Prix at Aintree. Qualifying 7th, Moss drove brilliantly and worked his way up to 2nd place after 75 laps and shared fastest lap with Bruce McLaren. For the final race of 2510's short career, German driver Hans Herrmann was chosen. Qualifying 11th Herrmann was pushing the P25 hard in the race, only to suffer brake failure as he arrived into the Sudschleife (South Loop) corner. 2510 barrel-rolled down the escape road in a spectacular fashion, throwing Herrmann clear underneath as the car rolled overhead.



Rather miraculously he escaped with very minor injuries, but the crash was the end of 2510's active career. The whole incident was captured in what became a rather famous series of photos. Fast forward to the late 1960s and budding collector Tom Wheatcroft negotiated to purchase a huge amount of BRM's spare parts from the 1950s and 1960s.

Wanting a P25 for his new Donington Museum, Wheatcroft commissioned the reconstruction of a P25 making perfect use of his extensive newly acquired spares inventory. Wheatcroft elected to call the car 2510, since the original had been crashed in spectacular fashion by Hans Herrmann at Avus in 1959, and so the car was painted BRP's iconic shade of pale green. It isn't recorded if the original crash-damaged chassis of 2510 was amongst the spares Wheatcroft bought from BRM.



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