



ST JAMES'S MOTORING SPECTACLE

SATURDAY 1
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STUNNING ST JAMES'S MOTORING SPECTACLE PACKS PALL MALL

**The Royal Automobile Club celebrates the very best of motoring past, present
and future with an amazing central London showcase**

Last year's inaugural *St James's Motoring Spectacle* was widely hailed as an outstanding triumph. This year's follow-up today (Saturday 1 November) built on that success with an even more impressive car-themed showcase – and an even larger attendance.

Once again, prestigious Pall Mall in Westminster, London was closed to traffic and filled with a carefully curated display of 150 exceptional vehicles celebrating the very best of motoring past,

present and future. All forms of transport were represented – from venerable Victorian pedal bikes to the latest electrically-propelled city cars and supercars. Among the highlights were the Alpine 290 and 390 and the Renault 4, each making one of their first UK public appearances at the Spectacle.

Organised by the Royal Automobile Club and blessed with welcome sunshine, the sparkling single-day, free-to-attend event took place directly outside the organisation's historic and recently restored Clubhouse. It certainly lived up to its billing, bringing the very best of automotive culture and history to the heart of the capital.

Taking pole position on Pall Mall was a special display marking the 75th anniversary of the Formula 1 World Championship. It was The Royal Automobile Club itself that organised the first-ever points-scoring F1 race at Silverstone in 1950 and paying tribute to its key role in motorsport history, a Ferrari and Williams wowed the crowds on Pall Mall.

Visitors also had the unique opportunity to have their photograph taken with the famous gold British Grand Prix trophy – most recently presented to championship leader Lando Norris in July.

Fittingly, the first to be photographed with the coveted trophy were Paul Dimoldenberg, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, and Duncan Wiltshire, Chairman of the Royal Automobile Club. The pair also officially opened the Spectacle by cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

"I'm so impressed with the fabulous display that the team has curated this year – everything from the dawn of motoring to the cars of tomorrow," said Wiltshire. "When you look at the spread over the past 125 years, you realise just how pioneering those early cars were. Back then, the industry was grappling with everything from how to steer to how to power these new machines – steam, electric or petrol – and now, all these years later, we're still tackling those same questions.

"Even more pleasing, perhaps, was seeing the wide mix of generations among the huge number of visitors the Spectacle attracted. The chance for us, as a Club, to present such an impressive showcase for all ages is very powerful indeed."

Among the many thousands of onlookers enjoying the dazzling array of cars on Pall Mall were Rowan Atkinson, who arrived driving the 1893 Salvesen steam car – believed to be the only coal (now e-coal) fired car still running – and tennis stars Katie Boulter and Alex de Minaur.

Taking place on the eve of the RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, the Spectacle featured more than 70 extraordinary pre-1905 vehicles set to depart Hyde Park at dawn on Sunday for the Sussex coast. These pioneering machines participated in the *St James's Concours*, the world's most prestigious beauty parade for vehicles of that era. Adding to the atmosphere, many participants dressed in period costume.

An expert judging panel – including TV personalities Edd China and Alan Titchmarsh – presented a series of awards, along with magnums of Piper-Heidsieck champagne, to the winning entrants.

"This is a very special gathering of people who are passionate about history and the cars that made that history," said Titchmarsh. "It's the perfect distraction, allowing us all to briefly escape the

worries of the modern world.”

The Overseas Award went to the 1901 single-cylinder De Dion Bouton entered by the Automotoclub Storico Italiano, while the Historic Award was presented to another international entry – the 1900 Clement-Panhard of Laurens Klein from the Netherlands. The Motoring Attire Award was claimed by the well-dressed crew of the 1902 M.M.C. owned by Jack Thwaites, while the Chairman's Award went to the splendid 1904 Napier of Richard Clark.

The overall winner was the recently restored 1901 Georges Richard owned by Tim Summers. “So often it's ‘big is beautiful’, but this little car presents so stunningly that it was a very worthy winner,” explained head judge Philip Oldman. “Every element is just fabulous – it was restored six years ago, but the coachwork and paintwork still look absolutely superb and, I dare say, will do so for the next 100 years too!”

At the other end of Pall Mall, the Modern Design Zone drew notable younger crowds with a stunning collection of state-of-the-art hypercars. Shining a spotlight on cutting-edge innovation and low-carbon technology, standout displays included a Koenigsegg Jesko and a Ferrari SP3.

Further underlining the evolution of motoring, the latest electric versions of two iconic city cars – the Renault 4 and Renault 5 – were displayed alongside their classic predecessors. Lotus also showcased its newest electric models, the Emeya and Evija, for visitors to admire.

Other popular attractions included a special zone dedicated to motorsport milestones. Eye-catching exhibits featured the Hyundai i30 Fastback in which Team Vertu's Tom Ingram won this year's British Touring Car Championship, a rare Lancia Delta S4 rally car, and an Audi R8 marking 25 years since Audi's first Le Mans 24 Hours victory in 2000.

Two additional displays paid tribute to 50 years of the Volkswagen Polo supermini and the Lotus Esprit supercar, both launched in 1975.

Looking ahead, Mercedes-Benz will celebrate its centenary next year – marking 100 years since Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft (DMG) and Benz & Cie merged in 1926 to form the luxury marque we know today. Anticipating the celebrations, the brand's Heritage team displayed a 1901 Benz Spider alongside a 1904 Mercedes-Simplex on Pall Mall – both will also be on the road to Brighton.

London – one of the world's most bicycle-friendly cities – also celebrated the full history of pedal power on Pall Mall. The collection spanned from veteran bicycles and early motorcycles to cutting-edge Cooler King eBikes, complemented by a dazzling selection of MotoGP and TT racing machines.

For visitors inspired by the incredible vehicles on show, an educational zone focused on sustainable technologies and the future of motoring offered interactive exhibits and career guidance. Opportunities across a range of disciplines – from restoration and heritage skills to battery technology – were showcased by participants including Imperial College, Oxford Brookes University, the Association of Heritage Engineers, the National Transport Trust and the Worshipful Company of Coachmakers.

Low-carbon fuels, which now power many veteran cars on the London to Brighton Run, were also championed by leading brand SUSTAIN.

Visitors could also enjoy shoe-shining courtesy of Jermyn Street's renowned footwear maker Edward Green, and try out the latest heritage-inspired Italian Montegrappa pens provided by The Blue Company.

The resounding success of this second *St James's Motoring Spectacle* capped off a busy *London Motor Week* for the Royal Automobile Club — a week filled with anniversary dinners, awards presentations, the *Art of Motoring Exhibition*, and the prestigious RM Sotheby's *London Sale* at The Peninsula London. The celebrations culminate on Sunday (2 November) when 400 veteran cars depart Hyde Park at daybreak for the 2025 RM Sotheby's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run.

Ends











Driven by the Royal Automobile Club

