



60th anniversary of the Jaguar D-Type at Goodwood, 12-14 September, 2014

By Nigel Atherstone



The Goodwood Revival is held over 3 days every year during September. The highlight of this year's event was the 60th anniversary of the D-Type's introduction. There was a parade around the circuit on the Friday and Sunday, with a twenty-five minute race held on the Saturday.

The organisers of the Goodwood Revival, organised a race especially in honour of this incredible race car. Thus the Lavant Cup, was this year, open exclusively to D-Type and XKSS models. It is believed to be the largest gathering ever of these special cars, at one venue.

There were 27 D-Types and 6 XKSS's entered for the parade, although not all participated in the main race. Although I have seen D-Types previously, it was the first time ever for me to see an XKSS. Not only was there 1, but 6 of these extremely rare cars on view. Do bear in mind only 17, if my memory stands me correctly, were ever put on the road.

These cars came about since Jaguar, who were struggling to sell D-Types towards the end of their production run in 1957, decided to convert D-Types into road cars, thus making them more appealing to the public. There was a disastrous fire at Jaguar's Browns Lane factory, where many XKSS' were destroyed, prior to them ever being driven.

Thus the 17 examples which were sold, are much rarer than D-Types, of which 50 odd were produced, I believe.

Walking into the paddock at Goodwood and seeing all these pedigree cats parked side by side, is a memory I shall always cherish. These cars all have a continuous history, each one different from the other. Some were raced, some were crashed, others led a fairly sheltered life, yet they are all winners in their own right.

Although I took many photos of the cars in the paddock, it was unfortunate that the upright poles in the pit garages restricted the view of the cars.

When standing in front of No. 6, the 1955 Le Mans race winning car, driven by Mike Hawthorn and Ivor Bueb, and talking to other Jag enthusiasts, one of the guys asked me if I would like my photo taken next to this car - he could clearly sense my passion for the model. I could not refuse, so do pardon me bragging, by including the photo of myself next to this historic car - I could not help myself on this occasion, becoming totally weak in the knees!



Unfortunately it is not possible to be in two places at once, for, although I would have loved to have seen them all gathered on the start line, I decided instead, to position myself at a good vantage point to watch the race. I chose to watch from St Mary's which was, in my view, one of the best spectating points on the circuit. To watch the cars, parade round in close formation, prior to the start, was quite an amazing sight. Then, when the race got underway, the big cats were roaring round the circuit, driven as intended, with Gregor Fisker, who drove the third place car claiming: "it was the most fun anybody can have with their clothes on!" Gary Pearson, who campaigns his D-Type regularly took the honours.

Saturday, 13th, at Goodwood 2014, was undoubtedly one of the highlights of my life. To think that I was initially not intending to attend this year's event, yet when it became apparent that the D-Type would be the featured marque, and I then tried to obtain a ticket to no avail, since they were all sold out, I became most despondent. Very fortunately for me, I had met one of the team of marshals, when visiting the 72nd Goodwood Members Meeting in March, who very kindly had an extra ticket. Thank you to Martin Shalders and Martin Greenslade for making this dream come true!

Then for me, the "cherry on the top", after watching the Jaguar race, was to see 2 Lancaster bombers, flying in formation with 2 Spitfires and 1 Hurricane. There is only 1 flying Lancaster in the UK, and the other example, which is Canadian owned, was brought over to the UK only for this summer - when next anybody will see a sight like that again is anyone's guess. Likewise, when will we ever see such a gathering of D-Type and XKSS Jaguars again?

Attending Goodwood 2014 was a huge privilege, for which I felt very blessed!

Nigel Atherstone

More photographs on the following pages





