

FERGUSON P99

STIRLING MOSS DRIVES FERGUSON P99 AT GOODWOOD FESTIVAL OF SPEED 2005

Formula 1 Champion, Sir Stirling Moss, relived history this weekend at Goodwood when he drove the Ferguson four wheel drive P99 which he last drove in 1961 when together they won the Grand Prix at Oulton Park.

The Ferguson P99 (“Project 99”) is the only four wheel drive car ever to have won a grand prix. After its immediate success four wheel drive was banned in the world of Formula One. As Sir Stirling said this weekend “once I knew the track was wet I was guaranteed to win”. This visionary car was also the first to have disc brakes and experimented with anti-skid braking on hill climbs, winning the British Hill Climb Championship driven by Peter Westbury in 1964.

Mothballed since 1969, it recently moved to the Ferguson Family Museum in Freshwater where it has been restored to working condition over the last year by Barry Snow of Calbourne Garage helped by Peter Warr who originally worked with Harry Ferguson, and still works with the family. With its original paintwork intact, but with every working part examined and restored over the last 12 months, the engine first fired up on Thursday afternoon with Barry at the wheel. Barry, who maintains Duncan Waite’s rally cars, assisted by Duncan, Ian Turner and Tony Cole took P99 to Goodwood early on Friday where Sir Stirling successfully completed the hill climb at 10.00 on Friday morning.

The car was originally designed by Harry Ferguson Research, as in his later years Harry Ferguson believed that building a Formula One car incorporating his team’s inventions would lead to the adoption of those inventions in the motor industry. The first car to adopt the Ferguson system was the Jensen FF – later the Ferguson Formula four wheel drive system was widely adopted by rally cars. Harry Ferguson teamed up with Tony Rolt, winner of the 1953 Le Mans 24 Hours, and Freddie Dixon to design the Ferguson cars.

P99 and a restored Jensen FF along with tractor and aircraft exhibits are on show in the Ferguson Family Museum in Freshwater. Group visits can be arranged by appointment.

