

# "I LOVE DRIVING AND RACING... BUT I LOVE THE HISTORY EVEN MORE"

Featuring FIA Masters Historic Formula One &  
FIA Masters Historic Sports Car Driver

**Jason Wright**



Jason with Derek Hill, son of 1961 World Champion Phil Hill, at Imola.

”

*I remember my father reading Denis Jenkinson's report of the Mille Miglia to me as a bedtime story...*

## I GOT A REAL KICK OUT OF THE HISTORIC TRACKS...

**Q. How does an American end up racing in Europe?**

I've lived here most of my life, I'm really a European. And I was practically brought up with racing. When I was a kid, my father always had motoring magazines such as Road & Track etc. and he used to tell me about the Mille Miglia - I remember him reading Denis Jenkinson's report of the Mille Miglia to me as a bedtime story!

I only started racing at 40, with a Lotus Eleven, in the European Championship that took me to the Nürburgring, Zandvoort, Monza and all over Europe. Everyone drove around towing their cars on a trailer then and we got start money - well actually, you got paid when you finished the race! I did all the work myself. Then I got a Lotus Elite, did the Coppa d'Italia, Tour de France, rallies in a Porsche 2.7 RS and then started racing the Nordschleife with the Elite. I got a real kick out of the really historic tracks - the banking at Monza and Montlhéry. That was really romantic...



Jason in his Lola T70 Mk3b, Brands Hatch

## I'D SEEN A SPORTS CAR RACE AT SILVERSTONE AND THOUGHT... THIS IS WHAT I WANT TO DO

**Q. You've been with Masters for a long time. Can you remember your first-ever Masters event?**

Everything kind of progressed from the early days. I'd seen a sportscar race at Silverstone that went into dusk, and thought, this is what I want to do. So, I went looking for a Chevron B8 to race but then the Lola T70 that I still race today showed up and I bought that instead! My first Masters race was Mugello in 2007. I feel like I'm linked to Masters in some kind of strange way; together with Carol Spagg and Peter Hannen we created the Gentlemen Drivers series and also the Sports-Racing Challenge. Ron took over both series from Carol in 2006, and they morphed into what they are today - Masters Gentlemen Drivers and the FIA Masters Historic Sports Car Championship. I'm still the Italian editor to Carol's magazine but did you know that I used to do my own Jenks-style Continental Notes in Historic Motor Racing News? Jenks (Denis Jenkinson), was an outspoken journalist for 3 decades, partnered Moss in the '55 Mille Miglia and was one of the most influential people in my life...



*Did you know I used to do my own  
Jenks-style Continental Notes in  
Historic Motor Racing News?*

**Q. Best car you ever drove?**

My Shadow DN8! Once you've tasted that you never go back, it's just the greatest car in the world. I never thought about another F1 car, I'm really attached to this thing.

**Q. And the worst?**

I'm very fussy about what I drive, so in truth I haven't had any nasty stuff to deal with.

**Q. Your favourite circuit?**

The Nordschleife! It's a road in the country. Most circuits today, people are not thinking about the consequences of going off. Apart from that, Zandvoort is magic too, that's one of my favourite tracks.

**Q. Why doesn't Masters go to...?**

I'd like to go back to Monza. Imola or Mugello would be great too. Dijon, Jarama, Estoril - I liked all of those.



Masters Driver, Jason Wright



Jason in his Shadow DN8 at the Oldtimer GP

**Q. Are you in it to win it - or do you race just for fun?**

I love driving and the racing but I love the history even more. Sure, I like to win but what I really want is a shiny car on Sunday. That's my prize.

**Q. The rival you respect and fear the most?**

The couple that I would like to beat are Leo and Simon. But, they are a tough team to beat. Simon always seems to pull out that little bit extra when he needs it. He's an exceptional driver and knows his stuff too.

## THE WINE IN THE TRUNK GOT SMASHED FROM THE IMPACT!

**Q. Your best mate in the paddock?**

Michael Gans, of course. We share a lot of passions, and a sense of humour.

**Q. Your best day in motor racing?**

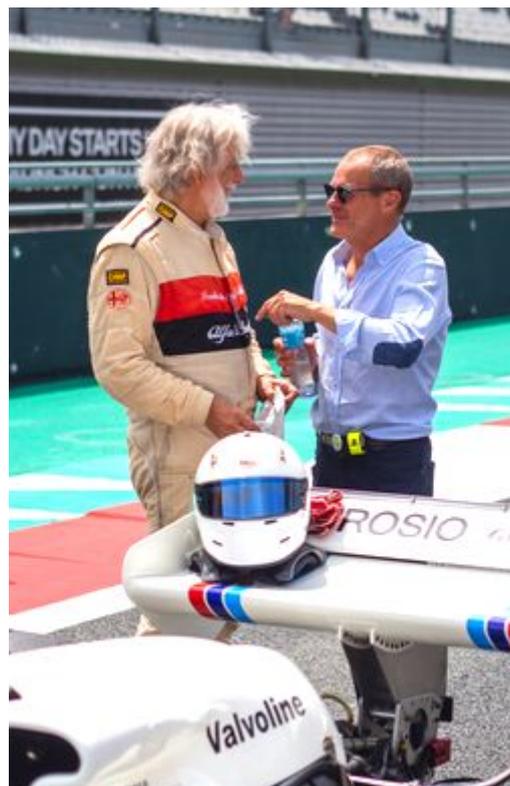
It must have been the early nineties at Monza, in my Lotus Eleven. Patrick Peter's BPR Series was racing there, and I put together a race with Tojeiros, D-types etc. I was totally in the zone in that car, I never had that experience again. Then I broke a driveshaft and didn't finish, but it was supercool.

**Q. And your worst day in racing?**

That came at Silverstone, towards the end of the nineties. First I crashed a friend's TZ. I got on the wet grass and was completely a passenger. Then I blew up my T51. The day after was my birthday. I crashed into a post with my Mercedes, and the wine in the trunk got smashed from the impact... The car was reeking with alcohol!

**Q. You like your cars and will even go as far as creating them if they don't exist anymore - like the Ferrari Sharknoses. Which car would you still like to own or (re)create?**

I would like to build another Sharknose! The Giancarlo Baghetti car, the car in which he won at Reims. It's substantially different, the driver sits lower, it has different suspension. And I still have lots of bits...



Jason chats to Martin Stretton at Magny Cours

”

**My Shadow DN8...it's the greatest car in the world!**