

BRITISH RACING PARTNERSHIP HISTORY FOR CARS BRP 65/1(BRP 4/65) & BRP 65/2 (BRP 5/65)

Ken Gregory, Stirling Moss, and Sterling's father, Alfred Moss, formed the first ever commercially sponsored Formula 1 team; they called their business, British Racing Partnership. At first the team campaigned various racecars; Coopers, BRM, Lotus, Ferrari, ECT, but later constructed their own cars. There were three F1 cars and two Indianapolis 500 cars built by the firm.

The two Indy cars were constructed for George R. Bryant, the stepfather of racecar driver Masten Gregory. Since Masten and Stirling shared rooms on the F1 circuit, Masten became the link between George R. Bryant and British Racing Partnership.

The Indy cars were started in February 1965, and construction was completed in May 1965 at the B.R.P. works in Highgate, England. Tony Robinson, the engineering director, with the aid of Jim Chapman, George Woodward, Stan Collier, Bruce McIntosh and Peter Downie constructed the cars. The cars went from sketchpad to finished cars ready for shipping in a period of just four months, a major accomplishment for any firm.

The two cars were flown into the Indianapolis, Indiana airport, and were towed by rope to the 500 Speedway track garage. Howard Gilbert and George Salih with the aid of Jim Chapman and George Woodward, installed Ford Quad Cam engines with ZF 5 DS 25 transaxles. Masten Gregory was to drive car 65/1 (BRP 4/65) car #41, and Johnny Boyd to drive the second car 65/2 (BRP 5/65) car # 14. Gregory started 31st, and finished number 23. Boyd started 29th and finished 13th.

Howard Gilbert modified the cars for the 1966 season. Howard was the team crew chief, and Quinn Epperly added new bodywork. Johnny Boyd's car changed numbers from # 14 to #28. Boyd started the 500 as 14th and finished 22nd. Bobby Johns failed to qualify the #41 car, as he did not complete the run, but car # 41 also ran at Atlanta, GA., and Fuji, Japan.

The 1967 season had Carl Williams in car # 41, he started 23rd and finished 10th. The # 41 car also ran at Langhorne PA. Mosport Canada, Indianapolis RWP IN., Langhorne PA., ST.Jovite Canada, and the Milwaukee WI. 200-mile race. Chris Amon failed to qualify the # 28 car for the Indy 500, as he hit the wall during testing.

It should be noted here that the cars competed extremely well in 1965 as could be seen by the unbelievable driving of Masten Gregory as he started at the back of the pack and promptly made his way to forth place, before a gear box failure caused him to pull out of the race. This verifies the skills and judgment of Tony Robinson as a racecar designer. Another testament of the cars came in 1967, as

Carl Williams was running in third place when he was involved in the last lap accident caused which caused him to finish tenth.

For the 1968 season, Howard Gilbert entered two new cars called Cheetahs that he built, using some of the BRP parts. He used the spare parts from the B.R. P. cars such as, wheels, steering racks, hubs, and brake rotors.

During the construction of the new Cheetahs, Carroll Horton and his wife Diane, of Indianapolis Indiana, came to Howard Gilberts shop in California and purchased all of the remaining BRP cars and parts. Carroll had been a mechanic on the Bobby Marshman, Lotus car in 1964, and the Al Miller Ford Lotus in 1965. Carroll built the Marathon car driven by Jerry Titus, but was too slow for the 1968 Indy 500. Since I owned the Marathon car, I am sure that none of the BRP parts were used to build the Marathons. The Marathon cars were built from Lotus parts. Carroll Horton sent the car

41 tub to Michigan to have new skins formed and the craftsman would need the # 41 tub from which to make the wood bucks necessary for the fitting on the new skins. As of this date I have not verified it, but I believe that the craftsman was to be Ron Fournier of Fournier Enterprises now in Troy Michigan. That tub remained there until Walter Goodwin of Race Cars Restorations located in Indianapolis Indiana purchased it. The remainder of the BRP parts; body works for 1965-1967, suspension parts for both cars and bulk heads for the # 14 car as the tub was badly bent, remained in the loft of Carroll Horton's business, called Dominator Engines. Howard had striped the skins from the bulkheads and saved anything that was not bent. The skins were discarded.

In 1984, I went to Horton's shop and purchased five Indy racecars along with seven dyno-time only Ford Quad Cam engines, many engine parts, and all the BRP parts. It was 1987 when Walter Goodwin contacted me, and announced that he had one of the BRP tubs, and sold the tub to me. Walter had purchased the tub from Darrell Soppe. Now after 20 years the BRP cars are back together. The parts have been through a tornado that destroyed my shop in 1992, but suffered little damage.

In 2004 I went to visit Howard Gilbert in Payson, AZ. I gathered as much information as he could remember (he was then 86 years old) and went through his photos to show the changes he made to the cars. When I left Howard's, I went on to visit Joe Boghosian, in Fresno; CA. Joe had been on Howard's team in 1966, and 1967. Joe offered a lot of information on the cars and is currently looking for photos to help in the restoration.

Currently the cars are being sorted to begin the restoration. The # 41 tub is being prepped to go for laser imaging. The laser imaging will give a 3D view of the tub, both inside and out, and will be invaluable if a buck will be needed to form

the skins. I recently discovered that the original tub skins were formed over the bulkheads and no bucks were used.