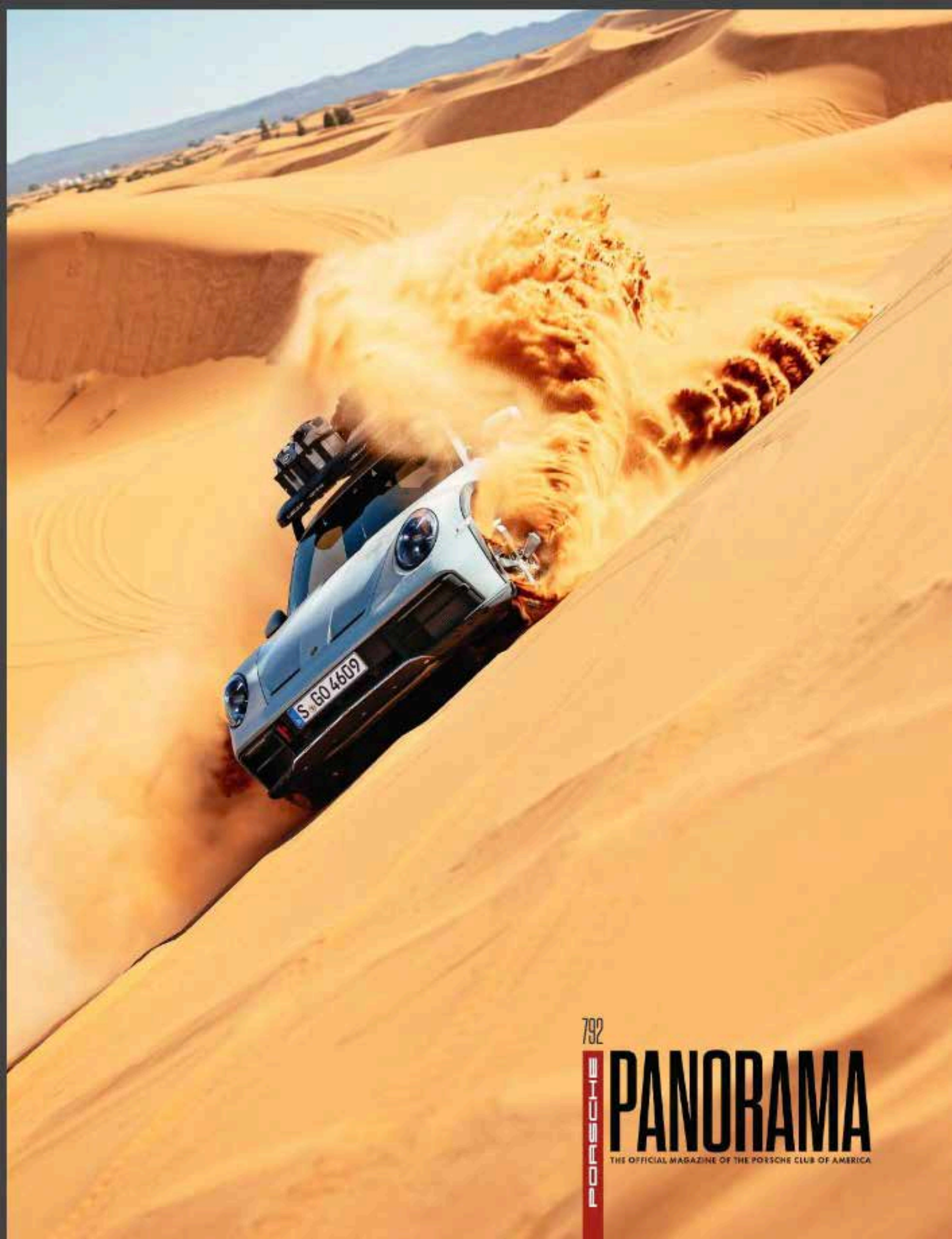


The Miracle at Daytona

Text by Sean Cridland

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PHOTOS BY LIONARD TURNER



The Miracle at Daytona

BRUMOS RACING'S WIN
STILL SHINES 50 YEARS LATER.

STORY BY SEAN CRIDLAND

WHILE PORSCHE FANS didn't have much to celebrate after this year's edition of the Rolex 24 at Daytona, the previous Tuesday night, just an hour up the road in Jacksonville, the Brumos Collection threw a gala event celebrating the 50th anniversary of their first overall win in 1973. That's when Peter Gregg and Hurley Haywood stole the thunder from Roger Penske's team to give the Porsche 911 Carrera RS its first FIA World Endurance Championship victory.

The party was a grand evening that feted Haywood, crew chief Jack Atkinson, and other surviving 1973 Daytona team members Eckart Schneider and Paul Willison, with many other Brumos drivers, crew, and friends from over the years. The event toasted one of the most significant sea changes in sports-car racing history, when Porsche 911 variants such as the Carrera RS, the 934, 934.5, and 935 began a run of domination that lasted into the early 1980s. But it was also a celebration of the Brumos brand because Daytona of 1973 was the first race in which one of the 911s ran in what is now the most recognizable livery in racing.

Left: In 1973, Brumos drivers Peter Gregg and Hurley Haywood scored the first overall victory for a GT-class Porsche in FIA international competition during the debut of the 911 Carrera RS.

Upper right: The Brumos Collection celebrated the 50th anniversary of that event. On stage are (left to right) crew chief Jack Atkinson, driver Hurley Haywood, Jim France of Daytona/IMSA, and Dan Davis of the Brumos Collection.

In 1973, it was shocking for a GT-class Porsche to take an overall victory in a *Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile* (FIA) championship race. But the FIA already was moving away from the ultra-sophisticated and hyper-fast prototype classes of the 1960s and early 1970s toward slower and more affordable production-based "silhouette" cars that looked very close to those sold to the public.

From 1966 onward, specialized racing cars such as the Ford GT, the Ferrari P4 and 512, the Chaparral 2F and 2G, and the Porsche 908 and 917 were machines that pushed every limit of engineering, technology, and speed. Though exciting to watch, they also were worrisome to the FIA and the national sanctioning bodies for being too expensive and too fast, pushing performance boundaries beyond what the tracks of that era could safely handle.

When the all-conquering Porsche 917 was made obsolete for the 1972 season by rules designed for 3.0-liter prototypes like the Ferrari 312P and the Matra MS650, Porsche referred back to its development of the 911. What started as the 911 S became the 911 T and 911 R, then the 2.5-liter 911 ST with which the 24-year-old Haywood took his second IMSA GT championship during the 1972 season.

With a project conceived by Rico Steinemann, supported by Ernst Fuhrmann, overseen by Manfred Jantke, and headed by Norbert Singer, the 2.7-liter (2.8 for racing) Carrera RS was born through some development work with Helmut Flegl teaming with Mark Donohue.

Building on that platform, Porsche adopted a "win on Sunday, sell on Monday" approach for its latest and

as yet most powerful variant of the 911 with improved chassis stiffening, bigger brakes, better cooling, and obvious aerodynamic improvements. There was just one problem: there weren't enough of the cars in early 1973 to homologate them as GT cars. In fact, the Porsche factory had only two cars ready for the FIA season opener at Daytona, and they would have to run in the prototype class against the much more powerful and faster bespoke racing cars from Matra and Mirage.

ONE OF THEM went to Porsche's representative in the Can-Am series, Penske Racing. The other most logical team to get one of the new cars was Peter Gregg's Jacksonville, Florida-based Brumos Racing team. While Penske's operation might have had the bigger name and the advantage of Donohue's hands-on development driving, it was Brumos who had far more experience with running 911s on the track.

Gregg had been a Porsche stalwart in the Under Two Liter class of SCCA's Trans-Am series since its inception. He had raced in factory 904s and 906s at Sebring, Daytona, and Le Mans. He pulled duty racing Porsche's C-production 914-6s in SCCA National competition during 1970, and he was co-champion with Haywood in 1971 during the inaugural year of the IMSA GT series. He even had raced a 911 in NASCAR's Grand-Am series, its version of the SCCA's Trans-Am. It was an advantage that would pay handsomely when they hit the Daytona banking in early February of 1973.

The most common apocryphal story says that when Gregg's crew chief Jack Atkinson took delivery of their Carrera RS, he had the crew completely disassemble



LEONARD TURNER

the entire car to look for any weakness and found a loose flywheel. Atkinson has disavowed that version of the story many times, notably in the stage presentation at the Brumos 50th Anniversary celebration, and in this author's volume two of *BRUMOS: An American Racing Icon*.

ATKINSON SAID HE was preparing the team's 1972 911 ST for Daytona as late as January 17—just two weeks before the race—when Gregg told him to drive to New York's JFK Airport to pick up their new car. His response: "What new car?" According to Atkinson, Peter Gregg was noted for keeping secrets, even from his own crew. He and the new car arrived back in the Brumos race shop off First and Main in Jacksonville on January 20. Daytona prep work didn't start until the following Monday. There was no time to disassemble and rebuild the whole car. Instead, they looked at every system for soundness and added a few tweaks of their own.

The flywheel story can be traced back to the practice session for the 1972 IMSA finale at Daytona the previous November. Gregg ordered Atkinson and the crew to install a freshly delivered engine from Porsche, despite their other engine being in fine shape. Assuming that the engine was the same as their earlier one, Atkinson anticipated no problems. Then that engine came apart in the last pre-race session. A postmortem revealed that



the new engine had shorter bolts holding the flywheel in place—short enough that there was no room for lock washers. Atkinson figured that the European courses didn't put the same kind of stresses on the engine, so the German engineers saved a few grams of spinning weight by shortening the bolts and leaving off the washers. But at Daytona, the harmonics of sustained higher rpms while running on the banking spun the nuts right off.

When the new RS arrived, Atkinson found the same feature and resolved the issue with several generous daubs of green Loctite and torquing each nut to 21 kilograms, compared with the specified 17 kilograms. As

The Brumos Porsche Carrera RS qualified well behind the prototype cars of Matra, Mirage, and Lola at Daytona, but was competitive with the much more powerful Corvettes. Left: Peter Gregg and Hurley Haywood compare notes after taking a historic Daytona victory, the first of four for the Brumos team in the 24-hour classic.

The Porsche 911 ST of 1972 carried Haywood to his second IMSA GT championship and was the immediate predecessor of the Carrera RS. Critics said its orange paint scheme showed poorly in black-and-white print publications.



BILL WARNE



The Penske-entered No. 6 car driven by Mark Donohue and George Follmer was favored by racing insiders for the win, but Gregg and Haywood hounded the Sunoco-sponsored entry until it broke.

a point of professional courtesy, Gregg called Penske to alert him of the problem, although maybe a little too close to the race for the Penske crew to start tearing things apart. For the Sunoco-sponsored Penske team, Gregg's call was regarded as a distracting subterfuge, something for which the former naval intelligence officer was well known.

Unfortunately for Penske and crew, they discovered the problem firsthand during the race when they were forced to retire on lap 405, compared with the winning Brumos entry of 670 laps. As for the prototype cars, the Mirage M6 driven by Mike Hallwood and John Watson lasted 366 laps.

The other Mirage driven by Derek Bell and Howden

Ganley lasted 179. The Matra MS670 of François Cevert, Jean-Pierre Beltoise, and Henri Pescarolo lasted 267 laps. That left only GT cars such as Corvettes, Camaros, and Ferraris in the race, which the new Porsche easily outran.

THE ONLY REAL drama for the Brumos Porsche team came in the early morning hours of that Sunday, when a flock of seagulls was suddenly startled from its floating perch on Lake Lloyd, parallel to the back straight. They flew directly into the path of Haywood, who was cruising by at a healthy 180 mph, shattering his windshield and lodging in the mesh protecting the front-mounted oil cooler. Fortunately, no mechanical damage was done,



By early Sunday morning, the Brumos car had a lead of more than 30 laps until a flock of seagulls nearly destroyed the car's windshield. A replacement was donated by a Porsche-driving fan.

and Gregg and Haywood, known then as "Batman and Robin" on the sport-car racing circuit, won by 22 laps.

REGARDING THE NOW-UBIQUITOUS Brumos colors, once again, most of the origin stories are apocryphal, some are mythical, each only partially true, but most are well off the mark. During the summer of 1972, Gregg took delivery of the non-turbocharged 917-10 for his participation in the Can-Am series. At its first race in Mosport, Canada, it was painted white, soft blue, tan, and sky blue, in a pattern designed by Gregg's wife, Jennifer, to imitate the surf breaking on the beach near their home. Most people thought it odd, and told Gregg so. By the next race at Road Atlanta, the car arrived in monochromatic robin's-egg blue and ran that way for several races until just before the race at Donnybrook in Minnesota.

Brumos legend Bob Snodgrass and well-known racing photographer Hal Crocker are both credited with telling Gregg that the blue color of the Can-Am car and the orange they ran their 911s in during the previous

season didn't register well in the mostly black-and-white print that most publications such as *Autoweek* and *National Speed Sport News* ran. Brumos cars should stand out more readily.

Just before setting off on a business trip to Germany in July of 1972, Gregg instructed crew member John Patton to have the car painted in the whitest white they could find, and to have two wide stripes—one red and one blue—painted down the center, abutting each other. Patton took it to Jacksonville painter Lee Walker. When

Atkinson's day planner shows that the team didn't take delivery of the Carrera RS until January 20, 1973—two weeks before the race. Gregg's hand-written notes project race wear and maintenance.

JANUARY 1973											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31							

Daytona 1973 24 Hrs.

Pre-race projections - Carrera 2.8 liter

Tires L.F. (Goodyear 9.30-15 D3494) 293 laps
 R.F. (" " " ") 293 laps

LR (Goodyear 24.5x10W-15 D3554) 148 laps
 R.R. (" " " ") 100 laps

Brakes: Front - 290 laps
 Rear - 1000 laps (NO CHANGE)

Oil : Practice engine: 1 qt = 78 laps
 Race estimate: 1 qt = 55 laps

Fuel: 28.5 gallons usable = 54 laps
 (107 lbs) = 7.5 MPG approx
 = 1 hour 52 min. at lap time 2:05

P.H. Gregg / BRUMOS RACING



The now-standard Brumos colors were evolving during the summer of 1972 on Peter Gregg's Can-Am Porsche 917. It started the season with a four-color montage reminiscent of waves breaking on the beach. After only one race, the four colors were replaced by a more standard blue.



JACK WHESTER
RICHARD TURNER



BIL COOPER

Patton told the painter he needed to leave the following day to get to the upper Midwest, Walker balked. To do what Gregg wanted, he'd have to paint either the red or blue, then wait for it to dry completely, then paint the other color, taking more time than they had. But if he put 2 inches between the stripes, he could mask them individually and paint them in rapid succession. Patton was worried Gregg wouldn't like it, but he knew that arriving late was the worse option.

THE CAR RAN in white with the two wide red and blue stripes that weekend—no Brumos “sweep” on the side—and Gregg qualified his then-turbocharged car in fourth, with the same bodywork as the Penske cars, behind only Donohue, George Follmer, and Denny Hulme, and ahead of the previous year's champion, Peter Revson. Unfortunately, he crashed it badly enough during pre-race warmup to have it sent back to Germany for repairs. He then crashed it again at Laguna Seca a month later, requiring yet another trip.

When it returned to California just before the Riverside series finale, it was completely white. “Wavy Davey” Kent of Creative Car Craft re-created the wide blue and red stripes on the car, then added the Brumos “sweeps” that he had seen painted on the side of the

team's Ford F-850 transport truck.

The Brumos design that became famous over the decades was fully born at the 1972 Riverside Can-Am race. For Daytona, Gregg flew in Kent to paint both the RS and the car driven by Andrew Carduner and Jacques Bienvenue in the new Brumos color scheme. As noted in Atkinson's day planner, it took Kent four days to complete the appropriate striping on the two cars, which ran as No. 59 and No. 58.

Though Penske's team was well known for its deep Sunoco blue with yellow pinstriping, the new patriotic colors of the Brumos cars captured the imagination of racing fans and looked great through photographers' lenses. Great enough so that the Daytona 1973 Brumos paint job became one of the most instantly recognizable racing team liveries in the world, and has remained so for 50 years.

Though it's been nearly 10 years since Brumos competed in a professional road-racing championship, this past year David Donohue drove a Brumos-liveried Porsche 911 at Pikes Peak as people celebrated the return of the Brumos colors to the American sports-car scene. Yet, it all started more than 50 years ago...and for some of the attendees of the celebration at the Brumos Collection, Daytona 1973 seems like yesterday. 🏁

The first appearance of the red and blue stripes on a white background came at the Dennybrooke, (Minnesota), race, but the famous Brumos “sweeps” didn't appear until the end of the 1972 season at the Riverside Can-Am finale. The 1973 Daytona race was the first time the now-ubiquitous colors appeared on a 911-based car.