

LUKE WOS GO

IN THIS SPECIAL FEATURE, we catch up with Luke Wos, a recent addition to the Masters Paddock, whose racing heritage spans several decades alongside his father. Renowned for his daring car selections, Luke races in the Masters Gentlemen Drivers grid, manoeuvring both a Reliant Sabre Six and a Turner 1650 with finesse. Sharing a father-son passion for endurance racing, he embraces the challenges head-on, showcasing his passion for historics. Find out more on Luke's racing journey and the path that led him to Masters!



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INTRODUCING LUKE WOS

Having campaigned both a Reliant Sabre Six and a Turner 1650, Masters Gentlemen Drivers competitor Luke Wos isn't known for his obvious choices in historic racing cars. Wos has been the driving part of a lad-and-dad team for several decades now, he has turned towards the challenge of Masters' 90-minute pre-66 GT Gentlemen Drivers races only fairly recently, as he and his father enjoy the endurance aspect of racing. We talked to Luke ahead of the Silverstone Festival.



“WE CAME TO RACE WITH MASTERS, BECAUSE IT’S A LOVELY ATMOSPHERE AND HAS NICE TRACKS”

HOW DID YOU GET INTO HISTORIC MOTOR RACING?

“My father always raced classic cars as a hobby – and I don’t think I missed an event that my father raced at since I was 8 years old. The car that I sometimes race and also run in Gentlemen Drivers is the Reliant Sabre Six that he’s had for 34 years now which is now up for sale. The racing itself is just a consequence of working on the cars. We enjoy working on the cars, developing them, and trying new things. We don’t have a professional team running us; it’s my father and I as the team, and I think because of that, we’re more in tune with the cars. My father started off rallying and then got into circuit racing. Then followed the natural progression as I started driving, but first I had to finish my A-levels. My mum was very safety-conscious and if I was going racing, she wanted it not to be in a single-seater. And so we started off with a Reliant Scimitar GTE which we made more and more competitive. It had an Essex V6 engine in it and that’s why we got a Marcos with the same V6 engine. My father set out testing the Marcos because he took a year out as we were warned for a father and son never to do a first season together because someone had been in an accident. So he took a year out and built the Marcos. That was over 20 years ago now. I was racing the Scimitar, and while he was testing the Marcos, he had a heart attack. His doctors advised him to stop racing, and so he ended up getting involved with setting up the Classic Sports Car Club, because he wanted to stay in motorsport and enjoyed the social aspect. And so I raced the Marcos, and that then led into a ’69 Corvette that we raced for 10 years, here on the continent and in America. But my father’s got a passion for sixties British sports cars with a fibreglass body, as he loves the shape of a GT car you can get with a fibreglass body – hence the Turner. It’s because we enjoy long-distance racing, particularly on the continent. We’ve done the Spa Six Hours four or five times now, in a friend’s Mustang, but the Turner has been built to be a Six Hours car. In class against MGBs and Granturas it should do very well. So that’s why we came to race with Masters, because it’s a lovely atmosphere and has nice tracks. It was time for a change, and we love everything from the hospitality to the people, and the distance of the race suits us well.”

“OF COURSE, IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE MORE POWER, BUT WE LIKE THAT, AND IT IMPROVES MY DRIVING SKILLS.”



WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST MASTERS EVENT?

“Probably three years ago, I’m not sure whether it was here at Silverstone or at Brands Hatch before we came here. It’s our home circuit at Silverstone, and we always wanted to do the Silverstone Classic. We have another Turner here this weekend, so that’s going to be interesting – very similarly paced cars, and Nikolaj [Mortensen] is equally a quick driver. So it’s going to be a good test this weekend. I’ve got track knowledge but he’s got some good experience, and he’s definitely got a lighter car because we’ve built the car for six hours by adding strength in a lot of places. What he has on weight advantage, I have on track knowledge. Against the 911s, Granturas and MGBs, the Turner should do well. Of course, it would be nice to have more power, but we like that, and it improves my driving skills. I sometimes race Citroen 2CVs – I find that great fun and also a huge advantage because you have to find the right line and carry momentum, which of course lends itself to a small-engined car, so that’s where we have to make up the difference.”

ARE YOU IN IT TO WIN IT – OR IS IT JUST FOR FUN?

“Oh, it is just for fun, but I’m very competitive also. So absolutely everything we’re doing, we’re going out to win. No compromises, but safely as well.”

IS THE PREPARATION MORE FUN THAN THE ACTUAL DRIVING? OR THE OTHER WAY AROUND?

“I think it’s 50-50. The hours spent cursing the car and working on the car. And, of course, if we damage the car, we’ve got to find the time to fix it. But it’s nice developing a car. Before the Turner we had the Corvette for ten years. And we kept making it more reliable and quicker. We didn’t plan on selling the Corvette but you get to a point with a car where there’s nothing more you can get out of it. Then it’s time to move on. So we’re obviously driven by developing and tuning the Turner to get the most out of it.”

“WINNING OUR CLASS IN THE SPA SIX HOURS IN 2015, IN OUR SECOND ATTEMPT IN A MUSTANG”



AND YOUR FATHER HAS COMPLETELY STOPPED DRIVING NOW?

“He did since his heart attack. He’s not got back in a racing car. But he enjoys seeing me on track and the car going well. As for other team mates – in 2021 in the Six Hours I did four of the six hours, and again this year. Budget permitting I’d probably do the full six hours! So I think we’re a stronger team as a smaller team. I do get asked to drive other people’s cars from time to time, and I do enjoy that as it gives me more experience. But yes, it’s a tough one. We like the longer distance, but then who to share with is another question. I don’t think by any stretch of the imagination I’m the fastest driver out there. I think if there’s more time to come in the car, it’s from me. But I like to think I’m consistent. And so on the longer distance races, you don’t have to be the fastest. But you have to be there at the end and you have to be consistently at a good pace. That’s what I pride my driving on – just being safe and fairly quick.”

WHAT WAS YOUR BEST DAY IN MOTOR RACING?

“Winning our class in the Spa Six Hours in 2015, in our second attempt in a Mustang. We were by no means the fastest but we were consistent, trouble-free and clever on strategy. My father and I have done it so long now, we’re very much on the same page. We know what each other’s going to do if there’s a safety car – and with the refuelling, of course. My father is the numbers man, he loves all that. He goes back and looks at all the times from previous years to find out when he thinks the petrol station is going to be clear. And so all those little aspects of motor racing is what drives us. We won that year purely because of strategy, consistency, and being there at the end. That’s something we’ve been trying to repeat since. Strategy-wise, in a Gentlemen Drivers race, you have the timing of the pit window, negotiating traffic, and dealing with safety cars, so experience counts for a lot of that. I think this is my 22nd consecutive season of historic racing. And hopefully, there’ll be 22 more! Every track, every event has a different vibe, a different feel. And it just makes you come alive.”



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AND YOUR WORST DAY?

“That’s a tough one because we’ve had some quite good results. So I don’t think we’ve had any sort of spectacular crashes or failures, but we took the Turner to Spa for the 2020 Spa Summer Classic, and on the first lap of testing, we cracked the block. And so, yeah, the worst day is a new car, fresh out of the box and all the little things that are going to break and test your patience. Five years down the line, you forget it’s taken you four and a half years to get to that point. Because as you get faster, you push the brakes harder, the suspension harder, and you break more things. So it’s the early days with a new car and all the hard work, all the hours, to then go to a circuit, and it will be over in five minutes. It was a long drive there and a long drive back!”

BEST CAR YOU EVER DROVE?

“I like them all, but probably the Corvette. There are mixed emotions with the Corvette, as out of the last nine races we did with the Corvette, we had eight wins and a second place, most of which were big events like Spa. But with that came a pressure to succeed, an expectation to do well. When we got that car going well, it was going very well. So, the race was always ours to lose. It was ten years of hard work, getting it to a point where it was very quick. I very much enjoyed it at that point – but then you almost get bored.”

AND THE WORST CAR?

“I enjoy every car, really, but the Turner is testing me at the moment. We’re still at that stage where we’re finding more pace every time we take it out, but we’re moving the weak link along the chain every time. I think we’re just coming out the other side of it. But we’re at that stage where we’re about three years in. We probably only do half a dozen races a year, most of them long-distance, so there’s a lot of effort that goes into it. We don’t have an unlimited budget to go testing. At the minute, light is at the end of the tunnel, but we’re at the stage where the car has pushed us to our limits. Then the suspension fails. Brakes fail because they’re running hotter because you’re going quicker. The engine’s getting hotter because you’re revving more. So every time we take the Turner out now, the end goal is just to finish because we’ve had so many DNFs. But I think we’re on the tipping point.”

“YOU WOULD FIND NOT JUST HALF A SECOND, YOU WOULD FIND SECONDS!”



YOUR FAVOURITE CIRCUIT?

“It’s a bit cliché, but probably Spa. We did the Nürburgring a lot on the Nordschleife, we’d go twice a year, every year, and did that for about eight years. Every time you go back, you have more experience, better track knowledge. You would find not just half a second, you would find seconds! And I did the Nordschleife for the first time two weeks before I did Spa for the first time. Everyone raves about Spa but it was a bit of an anti-climax when I went to Spa two weeks after the Nürburgring! We’ve been going to Spa twice every year for the last few years now. And last year I set the lap record for an FIA ’65 notchback Mustang in qualifying for the six-hour, beating a pro driver that had the record before that. I’m proud of that because I’m just a club racer and the slowest item in the car. So that is why Spa has become my favourite because it’s been kind to me.”

WHY DOESN'T MASTERS GO TO...?

“I did Monza once, and that was special, with it being in the town as well. But it’s difficult – our budget only spreads so far, so we have to pick between national and European events. Even if they did some of the bigger events, it’d be harder for us. I’ve got a young family, and I’m taking time off work at WOSPerformance, my company based in the UK and the US that manufactures starting and charging systems. Travel takes longer if you go to Spain or Italy. We’re proper club motorists – we still take all our own tools and trailer the car ourselves. That’s why we try and pick the blue-ribbon events, do fewer of them but longer distance. So, for us, we’re still at that stage where we’ve built the car for a purpose – ultimately, for the Six Hours. We did very well at the Spa Three Hours with the car last year. We didn’t expect to do well in class, but we got second in the class, which shows great promise. However, the Sabre is up for sale right now, as we have two pre-’66 GT cars with FIA papers and I can only race one at a time. The Turner will naturally do better in class, even though the Sabre is rarer and you can do some more prestigious events. So I think if the Sabre was to sell, I’m thinking of getting something more modern. So I’m looking at this new GT4 series that Masters are doing, because ultimately it’s fun and a new experience. I’m being tempted with the more modern custom-built race cars, with readily available spare parts and items that are lifed and warranted. So yes, potentially next year, we look at something like that.”

“THE FACT THAT I CAN HAVE MY FATHER ALONG, RUNNING ME, SPANNERING WHILE I’M DRIVING, AND THEN SPENDING HOURS WORKING ON THE CAR TOGETHER, I THINK IS SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL.”

THE RIVAL YOU FEAR OR RESPECT THE MOST?

“Well, I suppose today it has to be Nikolaj Mortensen. He’s a quick driver, and it’s a quick car. The Turner is quick in class, not just on paper, but I have a point to prove on my home circuit. We’re very closely matched so I’m going to be tested this weekend. The pressure is on. I’ve followed Nikolaj and his results, and I’m really pleased that we get the opportunity to race him. It’s going to be a close one.”

YOUR BEST MATE IN THE PADDOCK?

“It has to be my father. We enjoy it so much and I’m just very lucky to be able to do it with him. We both absolutely love the sport. The fact that I can have him along, running me, spannering while I’m driving, and then spending hours working on the car together, I think is something very special.”

