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1996 SUBARU IMPREZA

1996 Subaru Impreza WRC97/001

- 001, Prodrive's famous prototype Impreza developed in partnership with Colin McRae for the 1998 season
- Winner of the 1998 Boucles de Spa Alphonse Delettre, before further victories with Procar Italy
- Rallied extensively in Ireland and the UK from 2002-2007 picking up 11 wins and a number of podium finishes
- Restoration by Prodrive, fully documented in a custom hardback book. Accompanied by all-important "gold book"

With the introduction of the World Rally Car formula for the '97 season, Prodrive of Banbury developed the world-beating two-door Impreza WRC virtually from a blank slate. This is chassis 001, the prototype Impreza WRC 97, extensively tested by the legendary Scots rally driver Colin McRae, and the foundation of Subaru's 1997 triumph in the WRC championship.

Liberated from the earlier production-oriented Group A rules, throughout 1996 the two-door Impreza WRC was designed by Prodrive engineers led by technical director David Lapworth with consultant Peter Stevens, designer of the McLaren F1. The primary test and development car for Prodrive and McRae, 001 today represents one of the most significant of all historic rally cars.

Son of five-time British Rally Championship winner Jimmy McRae, Lanark-born Colin was British Rally Champion in 1991 and 1992 in the Subaru Legacy RS, and in 1995 became the first British driver and youngest person to secure the WRC Drivers' title. His exuberant performances with co-driver Nicky Grist led the Subaru World Rally team to three consecutive Manufacturers' titles in 1995, 1996 and 1997, earning McRae a well-deserved MBE.

After 001 was unveiled at the Rallye Catalunya in late 1996, sister cars saw victory in eight of 14 WRC events of 1997, and scored 119 stage wins. In their distinctive blue and yellow livery, the Impreza WRC 97 claimed the 1997 manufacturers World Rally Championship, with McRae runner-up in the drivers title by only one point.

In private ownership 001 secured a win in the 1998 Boucles de Spa Alphonse Delettre with Belgians Grégoire de Mevius and Jean-Marc Fortin. Later earning victories with Procar Italy, she was extensively campaigned in Ireland and the UK through 2007.

Under new ownership in retirement, this Subaru WRC was restored by Prodrive itself, becoming the motorsport firm's first heritage build. Retaining its original and exceptionally stiff Prodrive shell, and rebuilt using ultra-rare original SRT parts from Prodrive's own stores, the restoration was extensively featured in Octane.

An accompanying book documents the restoration and is hand signed by Prodrive and MSUK chairman David Richards – who writes "Congratulations on acquiring a very special car." Re-mapped to run on high-octane pump fuel, 001 is the ultimate road-going rally car.

A symbol of all the many rallying triumphs of the late Colin McRae, 001 will be an important addition to any discerning collection of significant competition cars, and highly suitable for. events.

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