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1965 FORD GT40

Built to take on the might of Ferrari, the Ford GT40 was one of those rare racing cars that not only successfully challenged the opposition but also comprehensively defeated it, winning Le Mans four successive times from 1966 to 1969.

In the hands of future Formula One constructor Guy Ligier, GT40 P/1003 was the first GT40 to claim a victory in Europe. It ran under the Ford France banner for Ligier through the 1965 and 1966 seasons before passing on to Jean-Michel Giorgi, who continued to race it as a Ford France car. During that time GT40 P/1003 was only ever out-performed by another GT40 on four occasions!

In Ligier's hands it debuted at the 1965 Nurburgring 1000 Km's, co-driven by Le Mans winner Maurice Trintignant. Ligier then gave the GT40 that historic first European win at Magny-Cours and followed it up with another victory in the Trophee du Cognac. There were class wins on the Chamrousse and Mont-Dore hillclimbs, with further competition that season at the Ollon-Villars mountain hillclimb and one final victory at Albi.

The following season Ligier, with close friend Jo Schlesser, took the class win and fifth overall at the Nurburgring 1000kms, before 1003 was bought for the 1967 season by the aforementioned Giorgi.

Giorgi continued where Ligier had left off. With Henri Greder co-driving, he and 1003 took an incredible class win in the Targa Florio, finishing an almost-as-astounding fifth overall. Exactly two weeks later, with the same driver pairing, the GT40 repeated its class win at the Nurburgring 1000kms, coming home seventh overall this time.

The Reims 12 Hours followed one month later, then another class win at Magny-Cours. 1003 ran what would prove to be its last race as a Ford France car in October 1967 at the Paris 1000kms at Montlhery.

Having had just one British owner for over 30 years, GT40 P/1003 ranks as one of the most original in existence. It signifies a momentous chapter in the motor sport history of both the Ford Motor Company and that of France, making it one of the most important GT40's in the world.

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