JARRAH VENABLES

1966 Lola T70 MkII Spider

SL71/31

One of the most successful and original Lola T70 MkIIs extant, supplied new to Sid Taylor Racing

Raced by F1 and Can-Am Champion Denny Hulme to win the British Sports Car Championship with 5 victories

Also raced by Hulme in four Can-Am rounds during 1966 plus Richard Attwood, Tony Lanfranchi & team owner Sid Taylor in other events

Known provenance and presented in superb condition. Eligible for a wide variety of events, including Goodwood's popular Whitsun Trophy

Lola's 2nd version of their T70 Spider, known as the MkII was an evolution of the MkI, but with significant improvements. The main difference was in the monocoque chassis. Instead of having an alloy to steel ratio of 40% alloy to 60% steel, the MkII used 85% alloy, to 15% steel. The panels were also riveted together instead of being spot welded. The cars designed for the FIA's new Group 7 regulations which had very few performance limitations. These were the fastest sports racing cars available and could race in new categories both in England and the USA.

SL71/31 was bought new by Sid Taylor for New Zealand star Denny Hulme to drive. Sid Taylor was the team patron, with business interests in a construction company and the renowned Steering Wheel Club. Hulme was one of New Zealand's two top drivers and at the top of his game when signed up by Taylor. Of a generation who raced in a wide variety of cars and categories all over the world, 'The Bear' as he was known was fast in everything.

1966 proved to be arguably one of his finest seasons in which he clinched not just the Formula One World Championship but also the British Sportscar Championship. At this time the latter was a highly competitive series catering for sports racing cars. The starting grids were a who's who of the finest drivers, from John Surtees, Jackie Ickx, Bruce McLaren and Graham Hill to Brian Redman, Chris Amon, Richard Attwood, David Piper & Frank Gardner to name a few.

Sid Taylor recruited experienced engineer Ron Bennett to prepare his new T70 MkII for Hulme (and on occasion Richard Attwood, Roy Pierpoint and Tony Lanfranchi, plus Taylor himself). Bennett had engineered cars for Team Elite at Le Mans, winning the Index of Thermal Efficiency multiple times, before briefly working for Midland Racing Partnership in F1.

The first round of the British Sportscar Series was the Scott-Brown Memorial Trophy at Snetterton in April. Hulme started 2nd behind Graham Hill, but went on to score the his first victory with SL71/31, beating Chris Amon and Richard Attwood. Next came the RAC Tourist Trophy at Oulton Park. Hulme again dominated, beating Tony Dean and Peter Sutcliffe. The International Daily Express Trophy Meeting at Silverstone hosted round 3, where Hulme score a hat-trick of wins in front of Chris Amon and Bruce McLaren. The fast circuit Mallory Park was the venue for round 4, the Grovewood Trophy. Hulme took his 4th straight win in front of Peter Sutcliffe and David Piper. Hulme cemented his utter dominance by taking his 5th straight victory with SL71/31 at the Martini Trophy, held at Silverstone. Here he beat Bob Bondurant and David Hobbs to the flag. Hulme skipped the Wills Trophy at Croft and retired from the Guards Trophy at Brands Hatch with engine failure.

HULME
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SIDNEY TAYLOR DENNIS HULME

SL71/31 was also driven by both its owner Sid Taylor plus talented Brits Richard Attwood and Tony Lanfranchi. Taylor took his car to 2nd in an April Formula Libre race at Mallory Park, won another Formula Libre race at Phoenix Park in July and finished 4th in the Gold Flake handicap also at the same circuit. Attwood drove Taylor's steed in the British GP support race at Brands Hatch, but retired with a puncture. Lanfranchi meanwhile drove the T70 in a race at Castle Combe (retiring, though lowering the lap record), before winning a Formula Libre race at the circuit, further lowering the lap record in the process.

In all SL71/31 took 4 outright circuit lap records with Hulme behind the wheel at Snetterton, Silverstone, Oulton Park and Mallory Park, with Tony Lanfranchi going on to clinch two more at Castle Combe and Phoenix Park. Taylor then shipped SL71/31 to America in order for Hulme to compete with it in rounds 4-6 of the inaugural Can-Am Championship. However Hulme didn't enjoy quite the same level of reliability and therefore success as he did across the pond. Mosport yielded a retirement thanks to driveshaft failure. Laguna Seca was a bit better with a 5th in heat 1 but a retirement in heat 2. Another retirement came at Riverside when Hulme's clutch failed and to cap off a poor run of reliability the gearbox failed at Las Vegas.

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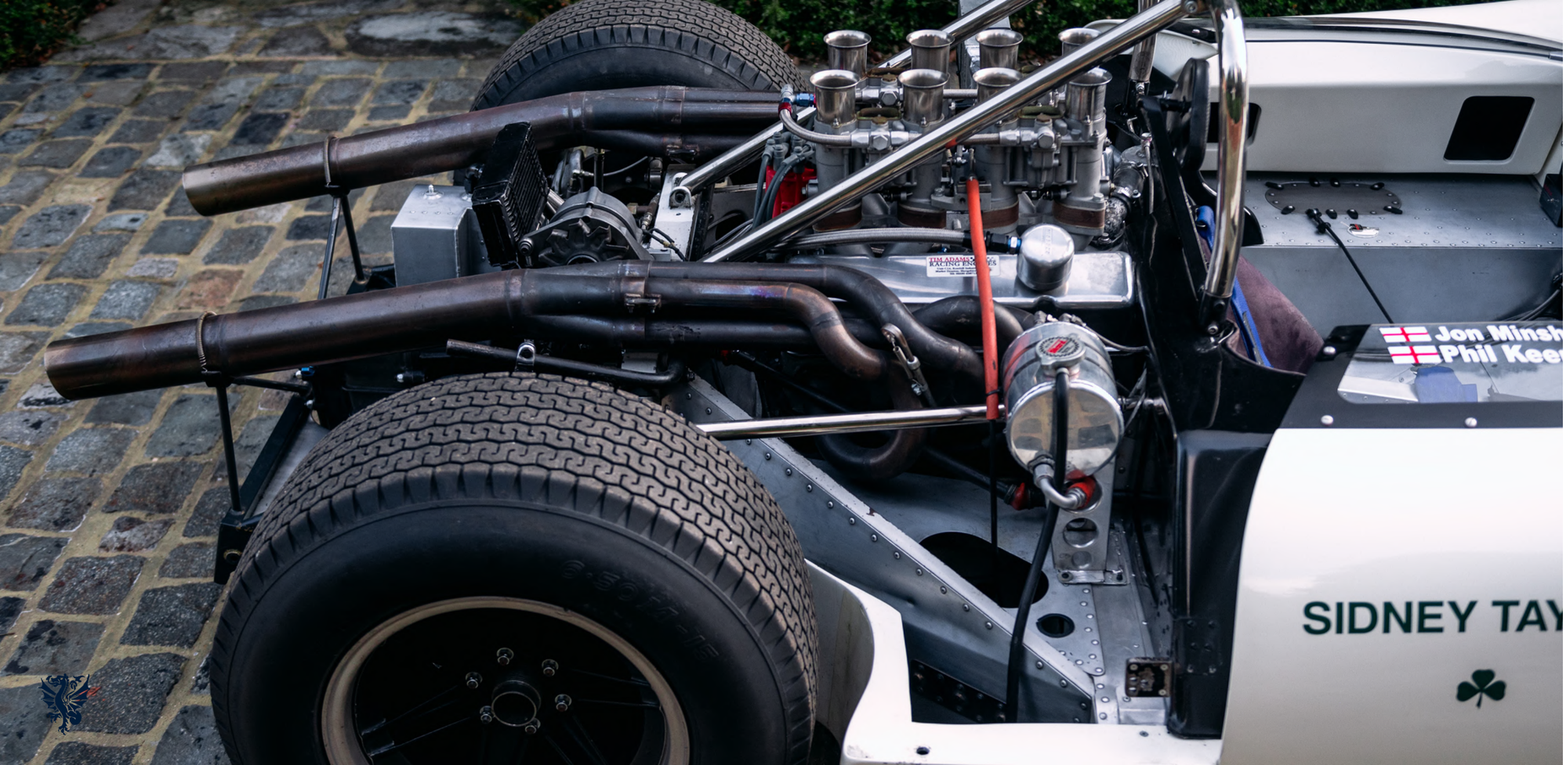

Sid Taylor had plans to purchase a Ford GT40 and Lola T70 Mk3 Coupe for the 1967 season and so he sold SL71/31 to John Scott-Davies, who soon after emigrated to Australia, taking his newly acquired Lola with him. The car had barely arrived in Australian when Scott-Davies entered it in the Surfers Paradise International 12 Hours. However a dropped valve in practice meant the car didn't start the race. A gentleman named Denis Geary then purchased it and fitted a coupe body in order to use it as a GT car on the road. One can only imagine the sight it must have been blurring past stunned Australian motorists!

6 years, and presumably many exhilarating road kms later, Geary sold the car to Matt Carrol, a film producer from Sydney. Carrol then had Kevin Shearer restore the car to it's original specification between 1980-83. Carroll raced the car four times in Australian historic races up to 1989, before it was purchased by Nigel Hulme and returned to the UK. In 1995 it was acquired by famous Belgian driver Jean Blaton (Beurlys) who raced it twice in the Paul Ricard 24 Hour historic events. In recent years the car was campaigned several times at Goodwood enjoying a podium on one occasion. Today SL71/31 presents in superb condition and is arguably being one of the most original T70 MKII Spiders. It would fit perfectly into any discerning collection and is highly eligible for the Goodwood Revival Whitsun Trophy, Members' Meeting Surtees' Trophy and Peter Auto's Classic Endurance Racing 1 series.

Racing History of Lola T70 MkII Spider SL71/31

Year	Race - Circuit	Drivers	Qualifying	Race result
10/04/66	Scott-Brown Memorial Trophy - Snetterton	Denny Hulme	Unknown	1st (lap record)
11/04/66	Formula Libre Race - Mallory Park	Sid Taylor	Unknown	2nd
30/04/66	RAC Tourist Trophy - Oulton Park	Denny Hulme	Unknown	1st (lap record)
15/05/66	International Daily Express Trophy - Silverstone	Denny Hulme	Unknown	1st (lap record)
21/05/66	Sporstcar Race - Castle Combe	Tony Lanfranchi	N/A	DNF (lap record)
21/05/66	Formula Libre Race - Castle Combe	Tony Lanfranchi	Unknown	1st (lap record)
30/05/66	Grovewood Trophy - Mallory Park	Denny Hulme	Unknown	1st (lap record)
09/07/66	Martini Trophy - Silverstone	Denny Hulme	Unknown	1st
17/07/66	British GP Support Race - Brands Hatch	Richard Attwood	Unknown	DNF
24/07/66	Formula Libre Race - Phoenix Park	Sid Taylor	Unknown	1st
24/07/66	Gold Flake Handicap Race - Phoenix Park	Sid Taylor	Unknown	4th
30/08/66	Guards Trophy - Brands Hatch	Denny Hulme	Unknown	DNF
25/09/66	Can-Am Challenge Cup - Mosport Park	Denny Hulme	Unknown	DNF
16/10/66	Can-Am Challenge Cup - Laguna Seca	Denny Hulme	Unknown	5th / DNF

Racing History of Lola T70 MkII Spider SL71/31

Year	Race	Drivers	Qualifying	Race result
30/10/66	Can-Am Challenge Cup - Riverside	Denny Hulme	Unknown	DNF
13/11/66	Can-Am Challenge Cup - Las Vegas	Denny Hulme	Unknown	DNF
04/12/66	9 Hours - Kyalami	Dave Charlton / Roy Pierpoint	Unknown	DNF
24/03/56	International 12 Hours - Surfers Paradise	John Scott-Davies	Unknown	DNS
??/??/68	Unknown Race - Hulme Weir	Denis Geary	Unknown	Unknown
??/??/69	Unknown Race - Bathurst	Denis Geary	Unknown	Unknown
??/??/69	Unknown Race - Warwick Farm	Denis Geary	Unknown	Unknown

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