

Speed Hillclimbing

"The very essence of the Ferrari Owners' Club"

Club members of long standing will recall the beginnings of our Club, which was started by Ferrari owners who were members of the Bugatti Owners Club (BOC). Understandably, they were familiar with Prescott hillclimb, the home of the BOC, and in the seventies there were many Ferrari V12s to be seen in action there. Inevitably the new Ferrari Owners' Club had members who were keen on speed hillclimbing, and by then BOC were running a Ferrari class at meetings at Prescott, a venue we visit today. In the eighties the 308 series cars were proving very popular for motorsport, and soon there was a Club championship evolving. This developed over 30 years, with a variety of sponsors.

Pirelli Tyres have been our sponsor for the past 20 years and now the series title has become the Pirelli Ferrari Hillclimb Championship (PFHC). Over the years there has been always been a rich variety of Ferrari tipos taking part. As well as the many 246s, 308s and 355s, in the past we have seen examples of 212 Barchetta, 250SWB, 275GTB, Daytona, Boxer, and Testarossa. In more recent times we have enjoyed 360 Modena, 550 Maranello, 430, 458 Italia and many others through to the latest 488.

In order to cope with the potential differences in performance of these tipos, a Performance Equaliser Percentage (PEP) is applied to competitors' times. This adjustment to each competitor's actual time makes for a level playing field, so that a competitor has an equal chance of success no matter which Ferrari tipo he drives. The F355 is the zero reference for the PEP and if you drive a 308GTB the tariff is minus 4.5%; with a F430 you have 2.0% added to your actual time. In a 308 you are unlikely to win the Ferrari class on scratch but you could gain maximum Championship points thanks to the application of the PEP factor. At the hillclimbs we also run a Club handicap competition, so regardless of your car's potential your driving skills can be rewarded.

The Pirelli Ferrari Hillclimb Championship is usually run over twelve rounds with the best eight scores to count. It isn't necessary to compete in every round: competitors may do as many or as few rounds as they wish. One of the many pleasures to be had from taking part is the appeal of the venues, most of which are in beautiful parts of the country. It can mean a day or two away at the weekend but there is a lot of fun to be had even when not competing. The ambience of Shelsley Walsh, the oldest motorsport venue in the world, is unique. Equally exciting are Harewood in Yorkshire, Gurston Down, Prescott, and Loton Park. Most of the hills are really challenging to drive, and although speeds are rather slower than on circuits it all seems much faster in reality. Although titled a hillclimb championship there have always been included at least a couple of sprint meetings.

More detailed information is available from the Championship Co-ordinator Anne Swift, who will be happy to answer any queries you may have. Anne can easily be contacted at annemswift@btinternet.com or by telephone on 01757 702053. Since this is a Motorsport UK Championship it is necessary to register to take part.

"Speed Hillclimbing is the very essence of The Ferrari Owners' Club" are the words used by our Chairman Nigel Chiltern-Hunt when he spoke at the recent PFHC Prizegiving Dinner.