



Proudly Presents

BR Engineering **BR01**



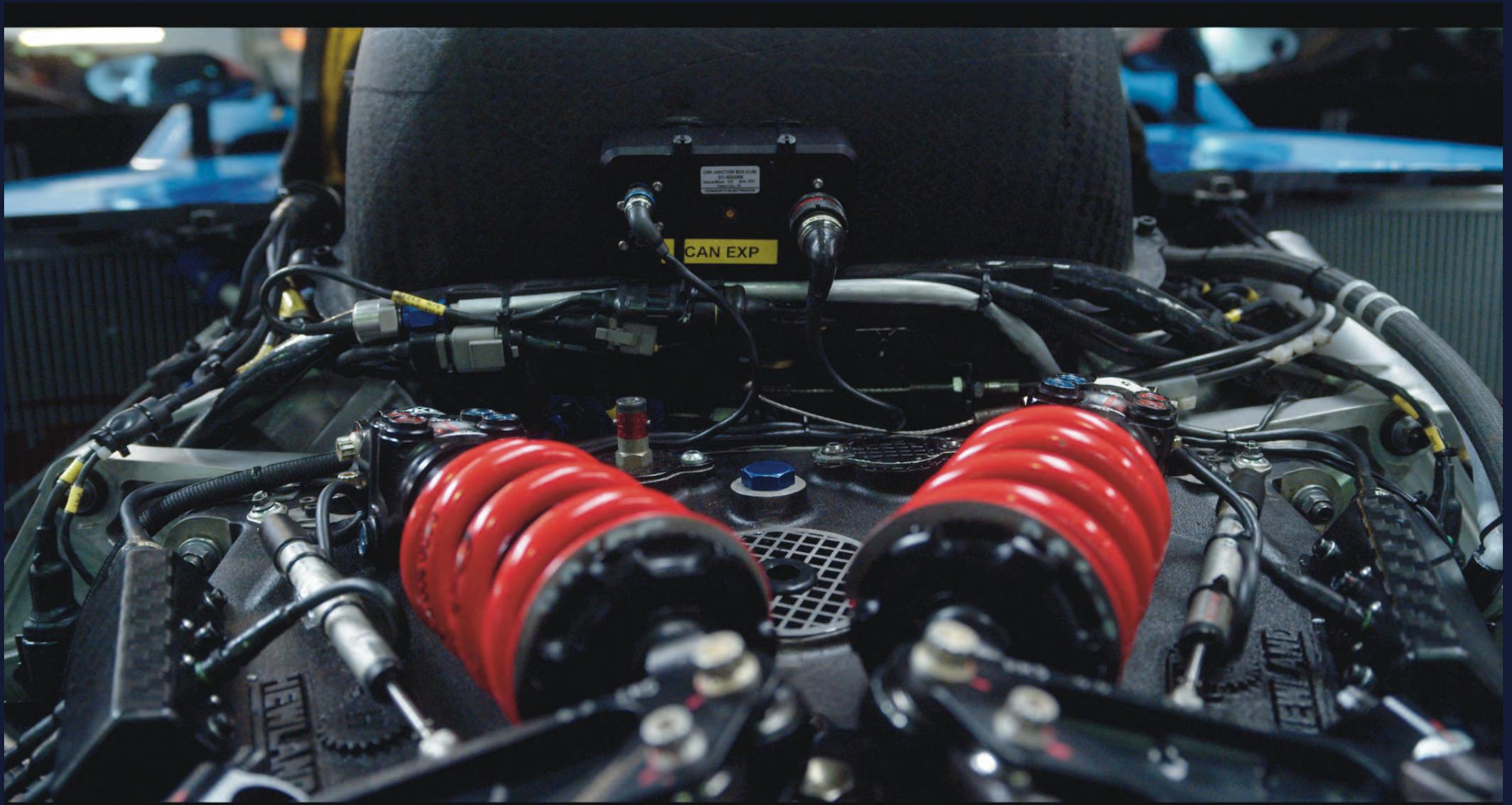
### The BR Engineering BR01 - Chassis #05.

A new constructor arrived on the international sportscar scene in 2015. BR Engineering, an off-shoot of the French-based squad that masterminded SMP Racing's GT campaigns, produced an LMP2 contender from the pen of Paolo Catone, chief designer of both iterations of the Peugeot 908 LMP1 turbodiesel.



Catone set out to build a no-compromise P2 specifically for the job in hand. Previous cars produced to the cost-capped LMP2 rules introduced in 2011 had been based on existing machinery. The ORECA 03, for example, was developed out of the Courage LC70 LMP1 designed by Catone for the 2006 season and its successor, the BR01, had its roots in the Rebellion R-One P1 that came on stream in 2014.

The team that Catone assembled around him, which included renowned Italian engineering consultancy Ycom, started with the blank sheet of paper as they conceived the car. The result was the BR01, a car that had more than a hint of the radical, unraced Peugeot 905 Evo 2 Group C car of 1992, the so-called 'Supercopter'.



That wasn't a coincidence, because Cantone had been one of the designers on the 905 Group C project of 1990-93 and engineered the French manufacturer's winning entry at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 1993.

"It wasn't necessarily inspired by anything we did on the Peugeot 905 project, either the Evo 1 or the Evo 2," says Catone, "but the BR01 was designed using all the experience of all the different projects I've worked."



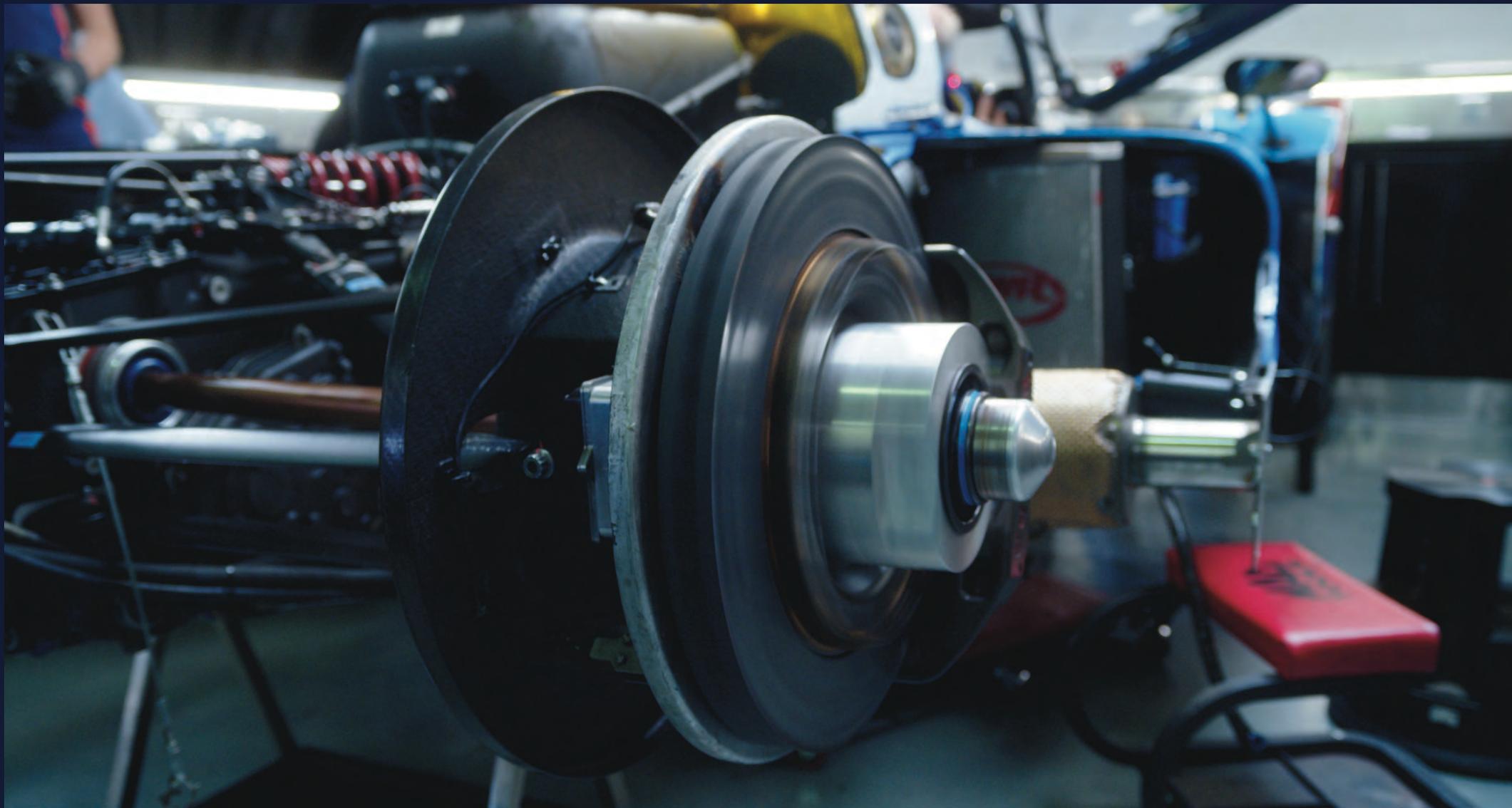
Those included a line of cars for the French Courage Competition organisation, from the C41 of 1994 through to the LC70 and its LMP2 cousin the LC75 introduced in 2007. Among their number was the C60 that the Pescarolo Sport squad took to back-to-back second positions at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 2005-06.

The aerodynamics of the BR01 were developed in the Fondtech windtunnel run by former Ferrari, Tyrrell and Renault engineer Jean-Claude Migeot. The result, says Catone, was a car that was “more efficient” than both the V12 and V8-engined 908s. “It didn’t have as much downforce, of course, because it had a lot less power,” explains Catone, “but the lift-over-drag coefficient was better.”



As per the rules of the time, the car was designed with two engine installations: it could accept the normally-aspirated Nissan VK45DE and Judd-BMW HK V8s. The chassis and major composite components of the BR01 were produced by ARS Tech on Italy's 'carbon coast' between Ancona and Pescara.

The project had begun in earnest in January 2014 with the aim of being on the grid at the start of a 2015 European Le Mans Series with the AF Corse-run SMP Racing squad, winners of the previous season's World Endurance Championship P2 crown. The car was, in fact, ready for round two of the series at Imola in May ahead of the car's Le Mans debut in June.



The BR01s had started the season on Michelin tyres, at a time when Dunlop was in the ascendency in LMP2. A switch of rubber was made for round four at Paul Ricard in September. The two cars qualified second and third, Aleshin, Kirill Ladygin and Viktor Shaytar taking a close second position. The AF-run team then made it three podiums in a row at the Estoril finale when Aleshin and his team-mates finished third.

SMP expanded its prototype programme for 2016 with twin assaults on the WEC and the ELMS, AF handling the world campaign and the French-based SMP squad fielding a single full-season entry in Europe. The BR01's season started in North America, however, with a one-off foray into the IMSA SportsCar Championship on Continental spec tyres.



Aleshin claimed the pole on a wet track in the single AF-run entry with fastest time in the session for LMP2 and Daytona Prototype machinery. An engine issue in final practice ahead of the race, however, meant the car the Russian shared by Kirill Ladygin, Nicolas Minassian and Maurizio Mediani wasn't a force in the race.

The BR01 remained on Dunlops for its WEC and ELMS campaigns, though a change in specification of the tyres favoured the more numerous ORECA and Ligier chassis. Unlike its rivals in both series, the SMP driver rosters included a true amateur rather than a so-called 'fake silver' that satisfied the letter of the rules calling for pro-am line-ups rather than their spirit.

Formula 2 regular Stefano Coletti and sometime Champ Car driver Andreas Wirth finished third in the ELMS. They never finished outside the top six and notched up a trio of podiums together first with Julian Leal, another former F2 racer, and then ex-F1 driver Vitaly Petrov.

The highlight of the WEC season for SMP came when the best of the BR01s finished third in P2 and an impressive seventh overall at Le Mans with Petrov, Ladygin and Shaytar finished third in P2.

The racing career of the BR01 was coming to an end, however. It was announced even before the car had hit the track that there would be a new set of P2 rules for the 2017 season. BRE made a tender to become one of the four licensed constructors for the new regulations, but wasn't accepted.

A year later another prototype carrying BRE badges was racing in the WEC, but the AER-powered LMP1, confusingly called the BR1, was designed and built by Dallara Automobili in Italy.