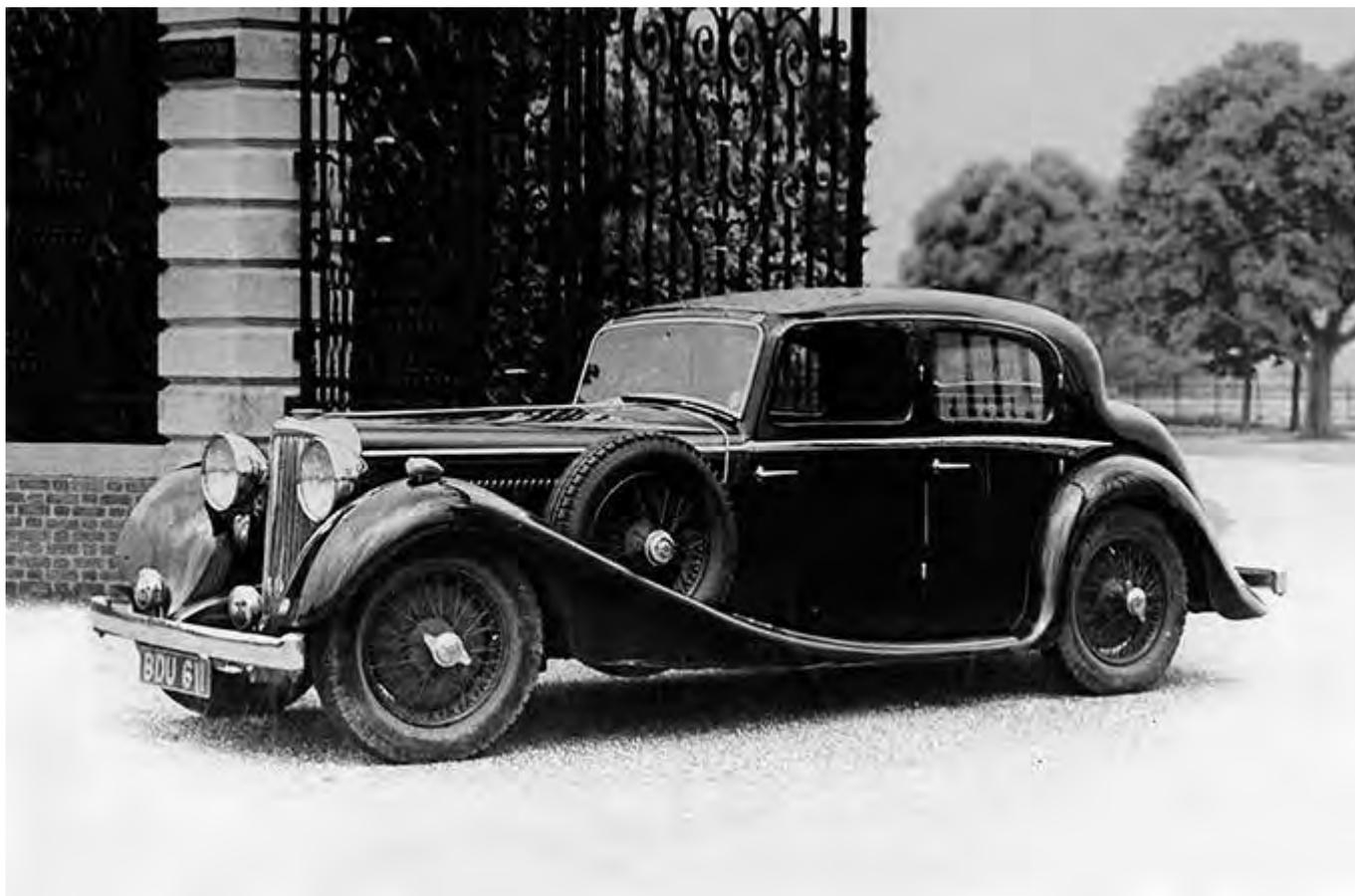


The year was 1935 when the Jaguar brand first leapt out of the factory gates. Founded in 1922 as the Swallow Sidecar Company by William Lyons and William Walmsley, both were motorcycle enthusiasts and the company manufactured motorcycle sidecars and automobile bodies. Walmsley was rather happy with the company's modest success and saw little point in taking risks by expanding the firm. He chose to spend more and more time plus company money on making parts for his model railway instead. Lyons bought him out with a public stock offering and became the sole Managing Director in 1935. The company was then renamed to S.S. Cars Limited.

After Walmsley had left, the first car to bear the Jaguar name was the SS Jaguar 2.5l Saloon released in September 1935. The 2.5l Saloon was one of the most distinctive and beautiful cars of the pre-war era, with its sleek, low-slung design. It needed a new name to reflect these qualities, one that summed up its feline grace and elegance with such a finely-tuned balance of power and agility. The big cat was chosen, and the SS Jaguar perfectly justified that analogy. A matching open-top two-seater called the SS Jaguar 100 (named 100 to represent the theoretical top speed of 100mph) with a 3.5 litre engine was also available.



1935 SS Jaguar 2.5l Saloon



1936 SS Jaguar 100

On 23rd March 1945, the shareholders took the initiative to rename the company to Jaguar Cars Limited due to the notoriety of the SS of Nazi Germany during the Second World War. William Lyons aptly stated; *“Unlike SS the name Jaguar is distinctive and cannot be connected or confused with any similar foreign name”*. The British aircraft engine manufacturer, Armstrong Siddeley, allowed Lyons to use the Jaguar name from their aircraft engine range that was in production between 1922 and 1928. Thus the Jaguar marque as we know it today was born.

With the SS100 production ending in 1940, Jaguar needed a replacement sports car in its lineup. Fast forward to October 1948 and the stunning XK120 was born. Designed and developed in just a few short months by Lyons, the XK120 went on to become a true icon. Showcasing a variation of the record-breaking 4 cylinder, 2-litre engine that was taken to Jabbeke in Belgium just a month earlier in the Experimental Jaguar XK100. It was here that Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Thomas “Goldie” Gardner broke the flying mile, kilometre and

five kilometre Class E records.



Jabbeke, Belgium, 1948 - SS Jaguar designer Walter Hassan fettling his 2litre, DOHC, cast iron block alloy head, twin SU fed engine opposite driver, Goldie Gardner.

The engine in the XK120 featured new twin overhead camshafts (DOHC), 6 cylinders and a 3.5-litre Hemi-head designed by William Heynes, Walter Hassan and Claude Baily in the dead of night during the war when they would be on fire watch in the factory in case it was bombed. The XK engine went on to power all Jaguars until the introduction of the E-Type Series 3 heralded the arrival of the Jaguar V12 engine in 1971, while the XJ6 continued in production until 1992 with the 4.2-litre version of the XK engine. So in total, you're looking at an incredible 44 year lifespan for the XK engine!

In 1950, Nick Haines and Peter Clark piloted an XK120 in the Le Mans 24 Hours, proving its

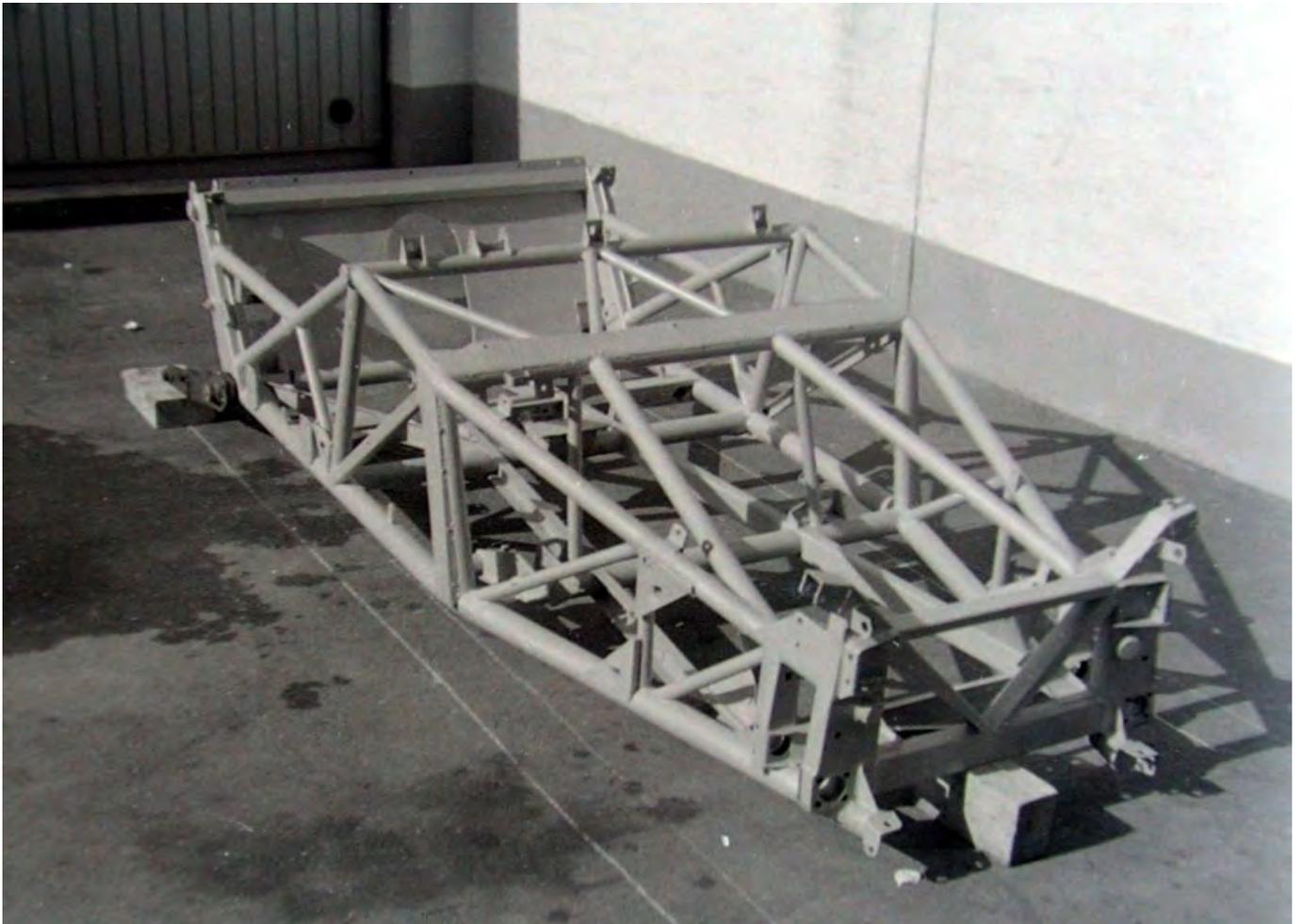
worth by finishing twelfth, while Peter Whitehead and John Marshall placed fifteenth. This convinced the company that they had the basis for a true world-beater out on the track, so chief engineer William Heynes set to work to create a competition version - the XK120-C, or C-Type, primarily for the Le Mans race.



Le Mans, 1950 - 3 Jaguar XK120s in the pits: #15 driven by Nick Haines and Peter Clark, #16 driven by Peter Whitehead and John Marshall, #17 driven by Lesley Johnson and Bert Hadley.

Using the XK120's proven engine, transmission and front suspension, Heynes devised a more rigid, lightweight tubular frame - one of the very first uses of the technique in sports car construction. The XK120's rear suspension was heavily redesigned with the half-elliptical springs being replaced by a single transversely mounted torsion bar, connected to the live rear axle by trailing arms, while torque reaction members prevented lateral movement. Rack and pinion steering was introduced, another first for Jaguar, in place of the recirculating ball type. The 3.4-litre XK engine received a new cylinder head, high-lift camshafts, racing pistons, and an un-muffled dual exhaust system, raising the motor's output to 210bhp at 5,800rpm - the XK120 engine offered 180bhp at 5,300rpm. This was

fitted with a handsome wind-cheating aluminium body, designed by Malcolm Sayer, the ex-Bristol aerodynamicist. Sayer's background in motor and aero engineering was of great importance. He understood aerodynamics and their application to other branches of science. One of the first things he did at Jaguar was to install their first ever wind tunnel. Thanks to Sayer's flair for lightweight design, the C-Type also weighed around 25% less than the XK upon which it was based. The first cars were ready in the spring of 1951 with the first three cars being hand-built in only six weeks and were the first purpose-built race cars for Jaguar. That purpose was to win Le Mans.



1951 Jaguar C-Type lightweight tubular frame.

The C-Type debuted at the 24 Heures du Mans at 4pm on the 23rd June 1951. This year marked the arrival of Jaguar on the scene, as well as a first showing for Porsche and Lancia.

They were certainly the most modern looking of the 1951 entrants but were not regarded as a threat. Aston Martin had entered five cars and there were six 4.5-litre Talbots and Ferraris also on the grid. Briggs Cunningham had brought two of his big 5.4-litre Cunninghams to Le Mans so what could the untried 3.4-litre XK- powered C-Type accomplish? The cars were entered as XK 120C models as private entries in the names of Stirling Moss, Peter Walker and Leslie Johnson - this being so that if they were a failure it would not reflect too badly on Jaguar! The drivers were not paid anything but were promised any prize or bonus money they won.



1951 Le Mans - #20 driven by Peter Whitehead and Peter Walker.

Moss, Walker and Clemente Biondetti sprinted to their cars and were away. By the end of the second lap Moss was second to one of the big Talbots driven by José Froilán González from Argentina. After three more laps Moss was in first place with Biondetti moving into third position. After five more hours Moss was still leading with the Walker/Whitehead and Biondetti/Johnson C-Types in second and third places. Moss also shattered the lap record at

105.2mph taking 4mins 46.8secs. All looked good for the Jaguar team and then Biondetti noticed a drop in oil pressure. He stopped at the pits and oil was found in the sump but none was being circulated to the engine. Nothing could be done, as the rules at the time only allowed the use of tools and parts carried in the car. So the C-Type had to be retired. Moss/Fairman and Walker/Whitehead were still in first and second places.



1951 Le Mans - Peter Walker driving at 150mph on the Le Mans straight in car #20.

The cars appeared to be going well, but then on the 94th lap Moss suffered the same fate as Biondetti and ground to a halt with a broken con-rod after Arnage corner. It appeared that a weld on the main oil feed pipe had broken due to engine vibration. Only one C-Type was still in the race and took the lead but it could still go the way of any of the other cars. Whitehead and Walker were instructed to keep engine revs down and drive as smoothly as possible. They stuck to this plan and the Jaguar performed faultlessly during the following laps. Peter Whitehead drove the final phase and took car #20 (chassis XKC003), to victory. The car was 45 minutes and 77 miles ahead of the Talbot Lago T26 GS that came in second. The C-Type had covered 2,243.886 miles at an average speed of 93.495mph. Their success at the 1951 24 Hours of Le Mans gave Jaguar tremendous publicity and put the brand on the map worldwide - in fact, the C-Type was put into limited series production, with 50 cars built by

early 1953.



1951 Le Mans winners Peter Walker and Peter Whitehead shaking hands after their victory.



The victorious 1951 Le Mans Jaguar team outside the factory.

Moss won the Daily Express Production Sports Car Race at Silverstone in 1952 and won again in the privately owned Wisdom and Cannell car at the Reims Grand Prix. Young Scottish driver Ian Stewart won the Jersey Road Race in July for the newly formed Ecurie Ecosse team and then won another two races at Charterhall in Scotland. Jaguar was on a roll. Yet, whilst Moss was racing a C-Type in the 1952 Mille Miglia, he was passed by a Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR. He then sent a telegram to Jaguar saying, “must have more speed at Le Mans”. With just a matter of weeks between the Mille Miglia and Le Mans, Jaguar set to work with a team which was led by Malcolm Sayer. They developed a streamlined “low-drag” version of the C-Type, which had a “long tail”, lower front end, revised cooling system, and 20% less drag than a standard car. Jaguar made just three examples of the C-Type Aerodynamic, and they took them to Le Mans, but the result was not a success.



Jaguar C-Type Aerodynamic prepared for the 1952 Le Mans race.

It is ironic that the plumbing of the cars was entrusted to a man named Roy Kettle, and because the cars overheated and blew head gaskets, the low-drag C-Types were named after him ever since. Ultimately, the reason behind the failures was simply a lack of testing. It just happened that Norman Dewis (chief test driver and development engineer for Jaguar from 1952 to 1985) was on the Mille Miglia and had no time to properly check the cars prior to Le Mans. With too small a pulley, the water pump cavitated, and the result was a failure of all three cars. In post-race testing, after two simple modifications, Dewis drove six hours at the MIRA proving ground with no further overheating issues.



Jaguar C-Type Aerodynamic prepared for the 1952 Le Mans race.

All three cars retired early due to these cooling issues, with the Mercedes Benz 300SL taking first and second positions in the race. Coventry's engineers realized that the C-Type required a few upgrades to remain competitive for 1953, and a final run of three cars began development. After the 1952 Le Mans race, chassis XKC002 (#19) and XKC003 (the 1951 Le Mans winning car) were destroyed by Jaguar. XKC001 (#23 that didn't finish in 1951) was also destroyed after being used as a development mule for the 1953 cars, including disc brake work - Jaguar paperwork dated 31st August 1953 states, "dismantled and parts passed to Service Department".



1952 Le Mans Jaguar C-Type Aerodynamic - #17 driven by Stirling Moss and Peter Walker. #18 driven by Tony Rolt and Duncan Hamilton , #19 driven by Peter Whitehead and Ian Stewart.

Following the disgraceful early exit at Le Mans in 1952, Jaguar left nothing off the table in order to salvage their reputation in 1953. Three brand new 'Lightweight' cars were built - their chassis numbers were XKC051, XKC052 and XKC053. In addition to being some 60kg lighter, the 1953-specification C-Type also featured a revised head with triple Weber carburettors raising the power to 220bhp and disc brakes developed together with Dunlop on all four corners. These not only helped to stop the car earlier but were also more resistant to fading and were the first ever Le Mans cars to compete equipped with disc brakes.

Frank "Lofty" England was the manager of the Jaguar Cars sports car racing team in the 1950s and later succeeded Sir William Lyons as Jaguar Cars Chairman and Chief Executive in 1970, before retiring in 1974. Despite their poor performance last year, he decided to retain the same driver pairings as 1952, with Peter Walker and Stirling Moss (car #17), Tony Rolt and Duncan Hamilton (car #18), and Peter Whitehead and Ian Stewart (car #19).

In practice the Thursday before the race a rather interesting story happened, the outcome

of which would have changed the entire history of the 1953 Le Mans! Rolt and Hamilton's #19 was disqualified because it had been on track at the same time as the car of test driver Norman Dewis, which was necessary to qualify him as a reserve. This car was wearing the same #19 stickers and Ferrari kicked up a fuss by raising an official protest. Lyons agreed to pay the fine imposed by the Automobile Club de L'Ouest (ACO - the largest automotive group in France), but "Lofty" England successfully pleaded Jaguar's case to the officials that they meant no harm and it was all an honest mistake. Fortunately for them, they were reinstated.



The 3 Jaguar C-Types await the start of the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

At 4pm on Saturday 13th June 1953, the flag fell and the whole field set off in a free-for-all race for the next 24 hours. Moss and Reg Parnell (Aston Martin) both made very good starts

from positions way down the line, obviously out to set the pace for their respective teams, as was Villorresi (Ferrari). At the end of the first lap there was a very strong impression that everyone was soft-peddalling and trying not to go too fast and Allard led the field, which was closely bunched among the faster cars.



The #19 Jaguar C-Type of Whitehead/Stewart during the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

An hour later and the order had settled down, although the average speed was enormous with over 175km being covered in the first hour by the leader, which was still Moss – followed by Villorresi, Rolt, Cole (Luigi Chinetti), Kling, Fangio, Sanesi (all three Alfa Romeo) and Fitch (Briggs Cunningham). It was now clear that the Jaguars were really a force to be reckoned with, as were Ferraris, while the Alfa Romeos looked as though they were taking the role that Mercedes played last year. The Talbots and Lancias were quite outclassed, as were the Aston Martins. The lap record continued to fall, going first to Sanesi and then to Villorresi, while the Ferrari pit forgot the regulations and topped up Hawthorn’s brake system with fluid before the specified 28 laps had been covered, thereby being disqualified. The Poore/Thompson Aston Martin was in trouble with its valve gear and then Moss

dropped the lead to Villoresi and came into his pit for a spark plug change. Hamilton took over from Rolt and lapped steadily in 4mins 35secs, which was five seconds faster than last year's record at a speed of 109.75mph, while Moss stopped again for plugs and then discovered the repeat issue was being caused by a dirty fuel filter. This was removed and the car then ran properly again, with he and Walker setting about getting back among the leaders of the pack.



The #18 Jaguar C-Type of Hamilton/Rolt during the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Through the early hours of the night the Jaguar pace continued with little slackening of speed, lapping at 4mins 46secs in the darkness, and still the Ferrari of Ascari/Villoresi hounded away at their heels, occasionally taking the lead during pitstops, while the two Alfa Romeos were comfortably in third and fourth places, apparently content to sit and wait. The Moss/Walker Jaguar was pulling up and by midnight had got back into ninth place and one

hour later was seventh. The speed and endurance of the Jaguars was nothing short of remarkable and the consistency with which Rolt/Hamilton circulated, with laps as quick as 4mins 37secs, was unbelievable. The small hours of the morning saw them still in the lead on distance and on handicap and with no sign of tiring, while the leading Ferrari was now losing ground, handicapped by having no clutch. By 3am another Alfa Romeo was out when the Sanesi/Carini car has its rear suspension collapse. Still the Jaguars went on, with the Whitehead/Stewart car now in fifth place behind the Fitch/Walters Cunningham. By now the field was reduced to 32 runners and if the pace did not slacken it looked as though many more would fall out, for it did not seem possible that the Jaguars could continue at this immense pace. Continue they did, however, and cars fell by the wayside at frequent intervals, but not the darlings of Coventry - they just went on and on, never missing a beat, while even the standard C-Type of the Belgians was running like clockwork.



The #20 Jaguar C-Type of Laurent/de Tornaco during the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

The night had been very clear and fine, but as dawn approached a certain amount of damp

mist hung about, making conditions very tiring for the drivers. Hamilton handed over to Rolt and remarked that he had just had the worst three hours of driving of his life. Their windscreen had been smashed early in the race and both were suffering from wind buffeting, but kept up the pace, nevertheless, with an average speed of well over 105mph. In the early hours all the Jaguars came in for routine pitstops; for fuel, oil and tyres and there was a moment of anxiety when the #20 Belgian car, driven by Laurent, stopped to investigate a loose plug lead just as the pits were preparing to receive Walker who was making up time fast and due to hand over to teammate Moss. The yellow car was put right and quickly shooed off, to the surprise of the driver who was unaware of the fast approaching works car.



Roger Laurent in his yellow #20 Jaguar C-Type in the pits during the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

By the time the early morning mists had cleared and the Jaguar pit was full of frying eggs and bacon, Rolt and Hamilton were still a lap ahead of the lame Ferrari which was

nevertheless still going hard. Three laps behind came the Fitch/Walters Cunningham, a lap ahead of the Jaguars of Moss/Walker and Whitehead/Stewart. Two more Ferraris followed, the coupé of the Marzotto brothers, the open Cole/Chinetti model, the 2.5 Gordini, Cunningham and Spear in last year's open car, Levegh/Pozzi with the only remaining Talbot, González and Biondetti with the first of the Lancias and the Belgian Jaguar. While everyone not driving was contemplating breakfast, a regrettable disaster happened at White House when Cole crashed in his Ferrari and was killed instantly.



The #17 Jaguar C-Type of Moss/Walker during the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

As the leaders started the last hour, both Jaguars and Cunningham began to have their bonnets split, due to fastening catches breaking and Moss stopped to tear a piece of his away, as did the leading Cunningham, while Stewart looked to be in danger of losing the whole of the side of his bonnet. All the cars were still sounding very healthy and were lapping at over 100mph, and when 4pm arrived the whole Jaguar camp relaxed, sure in the knowledge that they had cracked up the whole of the Continental opposition with a two year

old car and had more than made up for their disappointing showing of last year and their Mille Miglia retirements. Duncan Hamilton had driven across the finish line in his and Rolt's #18 car after completing 304 laps of the course. Second place was awarded to the #17 C-Type driven by Moss and Walker, while the final car of the trio, #19, driven by Whitehead and Stewart came in fourth place. As a true testament to the reliability of the C-Type, the privately entered production C-Type driven by Roger Laurent and Charles de Tornaco for Ecurie Francorchamps and wearing #20, finished in a highly respectable ninth place.



Duncan Hamilton crossing the finish line of the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans in his Jaguar C-Type #18 after having completed 304 laps of the race.



Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt sitting atop their #18 winning Jaguar C-Type after the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans.

The 1953 Le Mans race was also the first time in its 21 year history that speeds averaging over 100mph were recorded for the entire 24 hours! This momentous achievement was recorded by Tony Rolt and Duncan Hamilton driving their works C-Type and they averaged 105.85mph, thereby winning the special award for the first car to achieve more than 100mph for the 24 hours. So fast was the pace set by the leaders that the first seven finishers all averaged over the 100mph mark!