

### 2009 EVENT REPORT

Paul Hudson - Dorking Start - Alfa Romeo GTV - written up for the Daily Telegraph Motoring Online

Aviva MSA Classic 2009 at Silverstone

A wide variety of classic, historic and plain interesting cars converged on Silverstone from all over the country.

A clash of dates with the Goodwood Revival didn't appear to dent the popularity of the Aviva MSA Classic run for old cars, which took place on Sunday. A grand total of 763 cars out of 800 entrants set off from nine starting points around the country, all converging on Silverstone for laps of the Grand Prix circuit. The oldest was a 1902 Oldsmobile, the most recent were made in 1988 – unlike other events for interesting cars, the MSA Classic has a rolling 20-year eligibility rule, meaning that this year a host of "modern classics" such as the Peugeot 205 GTI, Porsche 944 and 924, Toyota MR2, late Ford Capri, BMW M3 and Jaguar XJS were entered, providing their owners the rare opportunity of participating in a major classic event.

As before, there was also a shorter, 40-mile route based on Silverstone for owners of veteran and Edwardian cars.

My chosen start at Dorking – the other starting points were Andover, Bath, Chelmsford, Cheltenham, Chester, Norwich, Nottingham and two routes radiating from Silverstone – was teeming with a huge variety of cars made between 1930 and 1988 and their enthusiastic owners as my Alfa Romeo 1750 GTV was flagged away.

The 165-mile route was slightly longer than last year's, taking in the Museum of Army Flying at Middle Wallop, the Williams F1 Grand Prix collection at its factory in Grove and the splendour of Claydon House near Buckingham.

Although this allowed a lot more driving than the route used in 2008, the increased mileage meant that it was quite a long day for many crews. It was also marginally less scenic, but anything that avoids the major conurbations of the south-east and the Thames Valley has to be applauded, while the stretches taking in the A3 and A31 towards Winchester at least allowed the cars some high-speed running.

The arrival at Silverstone was better organised this year, with the bonus of two laps of the full circuit courtesy of a voucher presented along with the finishers' medals. After a stint on the track, the cars had a chance to cool while owners milled in the sun to appreciate a mouth-watering array of machinery.

Not everyone was so fortunate, however – my commiserations go to the owner of the Mercedes SL that expired within sight of Silverstone.

Thanks are due once again to everyone involved in the organising of the event, including the hordes of efficient yet courteous personnel at all of the checkpoints. Next year, the rolling 20-year rule means that cars built before December 31, 1989 will be eligible – models launched that year include the Vauxhall Lotus Carlton, Mazda MX-5, front-wheel-drive Lotus Elan, Citroën XM, Alfa Romeo SZ, Ford Fiesta Mk3, Land Rover Discovery, Volvo 440/460 and even the Skoda Favorit.

If you own one of these, or indeed any eligible car, now is the time to visit [www.msaclassic.co.uk](http://www.msaclassic.co.uk) to register.

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#### The MSA Classic

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