

THE 1978 CUSTOMER TWIN-TURBO PORSCHE 935S



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One of the "InterScope" team's factory bodied twin-turbo 935s. This particular car won the 1979 edition of the Daytona 24-Hour race driven by Ted Field, Danny Ongias and Hurley Haywood.

The 1978 Customer Twin-Turbo Porsche 935s



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930 890 0013, The Andial/AIR modified car which, driven by Howard Meister, Rolf Stommelen and Harold Grohs, won three IMSA races on consecutive weekends in 1981.

In 1977, Porsche had campaigned a new Works car, the 935/77 that was driven by the teams of Jackie Ickx/ Jochen Mass and Manfred Schurti/Rolf Stommelen. With it, they dominated the Group Five Championship, beating their only real rival, BMW.

The factory-entered 935/77 featured several improvements over the previous year's Works car as it had a "Flush" coaming over the original rear window line which carried the air to the rear wing, this being mounted higher than the year before's car, between two vertical fins. There were also "running boards", fitted between the front and rear fenders, an attempt to govern the airflow beneath the car. Most importantly, there were twin turbochargers fitted, one per bank of the ubiquitous flat-six mechanically-fuel injected engine.



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930 890 0014 in its later Joest-bodied configuration. Joest used basically factory 935/77 bodywork but used twin air-to-air intercoolers to produce more power over a longer period than the original water-to-air intercoolers allowed.



This 1977 engine was virtually the same as that which would be used for the 1978 'customer' car. The 935 engine was of 95 x 70.4mm bore and stroke to give a capacity of 2,994 cc and, with twin-plug ignition, an improved water to air intercooler system and

scavenge oil pumps of greater capacity than those used previously, produced some 720 bhp at 7800 rpm. The engine's greatest asset, however, was not just its power. The two small turbochargers, without the inertia of the previously-used big single unit, spooled up much faster than before, virtually eliminating the turbo-lag which had made the previous year's cars difficult to drive, particularly in the wet.

The 1977 Works 935's were dominant in the World Championship for Makes Group 5 class, provoking complaints from Porsche's customers who, just twelve months previously, had paid to buy one of the thirteen single-turbo customer 935's which the factory had supplied. Porsche therefore built another fifteen cars over the winter of 1977/78, fitted with the latest twin-turbo engine, type 930/78. In addition, the fifteen cars, like the 1977 Works-entered cars had 'running boards', connecting the front and the new, removable rear fenders. A two-stage wing was fitted at the rear to improve downforce. Inside the car, the roll-cage was further improved, adding needed stiffness to a bodyshell which had had the rear bulkhead cut away to allow the intercooler to protrude into the cockpit by 7.9 inches.

Most of these fifteen cars had long and fascinating competition lives, one of them, chassis number 930 890 0012 winning the Twelve Hours of Sebring as late as 1984. This particular car had been delivered to the Kremer Brothers of Cologne and was then sold to Dieter Schornstein. I have found over seventy race results for this car alone, (there may be a few more!) and the car had been 'pensioned off' to a museum in 1983 before being dragged out once more for its final moment of glory. It ran at Le Mans in 1978, (6th overall and class win), 1979, third in class), 1980, (8th overall and class win again) and 1981, where, sadly, it retired due to fire damage.

Three 1978 935's were delivered to George Loos, the Kremer' Brothers main competitor. Loos was a property dealer who raced his cars under the "Gelo" banner. He employed the best drivers in 1978 such as Rolf Stommelen, John Fitzpatrick and Klaus Ludwig to compete in the German National Championship, or DRM, (Deutsche Rennsport Meisterschaft), as it was known for short. This national championship was so popular that it drew more crowds than the World Championship races of the period and spilled over Germany's borders, reaching into Belgium, (Zolder), and Holland, (Zandvoort). These three cars have each survived, each having led eventful lives, and all still with their original chassis.

The Kremer Brothers employed Bob Wollek of France as their driver but also prepared the cars of Schornstein, (30 890 0012), and 'Winter' (Louis Krages). One car each went to Rheinhold Joest, 930 890 0016), and one to the Max Moritz dealership, (930 890 0017).

Joest did not particularly like 935's but had a reasonable season, placing in the top six in most races whilst Manfred Schurti only did two races in the Max Moritz car before that was sold to "Victor" (the pseudonym for Vittorio Coggiola of Italy), and raced right up until 1984.



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Peter Gregg's 1978 935 in later bodywork form. Note the twin turbochargers mounted at the rear of the car.

IMSA, (International Motor Sport Association), was the body who regulated GT racing in America. Up to 1977, John Bishop, the president, had strenuously resisted the Porsche turbo cars, attempting to prolong the racing life of the normally aspirated RSR Carrera, another outstanding Porsche product. IMSA gave in to the inevitable in 1977, Porsche building ten 'special' 934's, the so-called '934 and a half' to which the RSR gave a spirited fight, one RSR still managing to win the Daytona 24-Hours. By 1978, the "customer" 935/78's were being sold to America, customers such as Ted Field's 'Interscope' team buying two, Peter Gregg of Brumos, Porsche's most successful American entrant buying one and others going to the Whittington Brothers, Dick Barbour, Vasek Polak and the John Pauls.

Of the "European" cars, 930 890 0014 was later sold to America and after winning the 1980 Daytona 24-Hour race, was sold to Moretti who, in turn, sold the car to Chet Vincentz in 1981. Vincentz converted the 935, (itself having been converted with 935/77 bodywork and twin air-to-air intercoolers by Joest), into a single-plug 934. The car raced on in this configuration until 1985.



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Bruce Canepa at the 1998 Monterey Historic Races in the last twin-turbo 935 that was built by the factory. The car has been completely restored. Note the original factory 1978/79 bodywork. Also note the typical two-piece rear wing and running boards.

930 890 0013, after its Kremer/Wollek European career of 1978/79 was sold to Howard Meister in California and modified by Andial, a company which has specialized in Porsches for its entire career. Andial radically re-configured this 935 with the aid of Dan McLoughlin of AIR who designed and made the car's new, swoopy bodywork. Powered by an Andial-built engine, '0013' won three consecutive 500-mile races, those at Mosport, Elkhart Lake and Mid-Ohio in 1981. Claude Haldi, the Swiss privateer, raced 930 890 0015, (one of the Gelo cars) for many years in the 1980's and 930 890 0022 was sold to Dudley Wood of England in 1980. Wood re-configured the car into a K3, teamed up with John Cooper and Claude Bourgoignie to win the Group 5 class at Le Mans in 1981 and place a great 4th overall. This car was being raced in National events as late as 1990 and is slated to emerge again in 2000!

The 935 was a stunningly effective racecar, particularly in its later K3 form but it was the 'customer' 1978 cars which saw the most action. Fast, reliable and, (reasonably!) good handling, they dominated their era and had remarkable individual careers.

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