

Every factory 962C outing (here's Le Mans 1988) is detailed



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A pinnacle in Porsche's history



BOOK REVIEW
ULTIMATE WORKS PORSCHE 962 – THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY
Serge Vanbockryck
RRP £850

Do you need another book about the Porsche 962 on your shelves? If you think the answer is

no, better change your mind. That's if you want to fork out £850 for this magnum opus by Serge Vanbockryck.

But there's another problem beyond the lofty price tag – this is Vanbockryck's second work on the great Porsche prototype that started life as the 956 Group C car, and not the last if the Belgian completes his odyssey to write the definitive history. So, here, you're not getting the full story of the seven-time Le Mans 24 Hours winner.

This three-volume work amounting to 1400 pages, as the title *Ultimate Works Porsche 962 – The Definitive History* suggests, focuses on the factory chassis, so just 16 Group C 962C cars and the three GT1-class Dauer 962 LM Porsches of 1994.

Its predecessor, *Ultimate Works Porsche 956*, also published by Porter Press International, looks at the 10 956s

employed by the Stuttgart marque's in-house squad. Given that there were a further ninetysomething customer versions of the 956 and 962 (its long-wheelbase cousin) built by the factory and not far short of 100 specials developed by privateers around the original concept, there's no telling how many more pages are to come and at what cost.

But then Vanbockryck was never going to be brief because he has been working on his 956/962 history for more than 30 years. He first mentioned it to this writer back in 1991 and was already three or so years into his quest. He says he set out to be definitive because in the late 1980s, when the first raft of books on the car he loves were emerging, he spotted inaccuracies and inconsistencies.

This is the kind of work that gets labelled a collector's book (and there is a special £1750 edition autographed by many of the drivers featured that goes by that name), but the reality is that it's a history book. And one far too good to loiter unread on the coffee table.

Vanbockryck, best known these days as Corvette Racing's European PR man, but once a journalist and TV commentator, has put in the hours of research. The late, lamented Motorsport Images photocopier was never the same after he gave it a

hammering over the course of two visits to the Autosport offices – he copied every story in which the 956/962 was mentioned!

More pertinently, he spent hundreds of hours in the Porsche archive at its museum in Stuttgart, tracked down images of windtunnel models no longer retained there, and had what probably should be called unprecedented access to the contemporary documents of the IMSA sanctioning body in North America.

That's key because it was IMSA's steadfast refusal to allow the 956 into its GTP class that resulted in the development of the 962 – with the driver's feet behind the front-axle line – in double-quick time for the 1984 Camel GT Championship.

The opening chapter tells the full story of how the 962 came to be. It describes the interplay between Porsche and IMSA, and is, quite frankly, fascinating. Another highlight is the chapter explaining how the privateer Joest Racing squad beat the Rothmans-sponsored 962Cs with its 956 at Le Mans in 1985. Vanbockryck almost certainly buries age-old rumours that there was anything untoward involved.

The author's completist approach means there are effectively reports of every race at which the factory – whether the in-house team or later Joest – was represented with



Porsche legend
Derek Bell with
Vanbockryck

the 962C. Volume three is essentially an appendix, with detailed chassis records of the 19 cars, as well as in-depth profiles of all the drivers to grace their cockpits. Unnecessary? Not to Vanbockryck and presumably the publisher of such a work where size appears to be everything.

If you're a fan of the 956/962 or just have a deep love of sportscar racing, and don't have that £850 to spare for one of the 962 copies of the regular or limited edition, I don't know what to say. It's either start saving or wait in hope for some kind of abridged version.

GARY WATKINS



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MotoGP Valencia GP review

Francesco Bagnaia clinched the 2022 MotoGP world championship after finishing the Valencia Grand Prix in ninth place – with title rival Fabio Quartararo fourth – as Alex Rins took an emotional Suzuki-swansong win. Lewis Duncan and Oriol Puigdemont are back with The Tank Slappers Podcast for the final time this season to analyse all the action.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Sao Paulo Grand Prix F1 World Championship

Round 21/22
Interlagos, Brazil
13 November
TV Live Sky Sports F1,
Sun 1755
TV Highlights Sky Sports F1,
Sun 2130, Channel 4, Sun 2255

Rally Japan

World Rally Championship
Round 13/13
Nagoya, Japan
10-13 November
TV Live BT Sport 1, Fri 2300,
Sat 0430, BT Sport 2, Sat
2300, BT Sport 3, Sun 0500

TV Highlights BT Sport 2,
Fri 1600, BT Sport 3, Sat 2000,
Mon 0100, Red Bull TV, Fri
1300, Sat 1300, Sun 1300

WEC

Round 6/6
Sakhir, Bahrain
12 November
Livestream on
motorsport.tv, Fri 1340,
Sat 1030
TV Live Eurosport 2,
Sat 1030

World Touring Car Cup

Round 8/9
Sakhir, Bahrain
11-12 November
TV Live Eurosport 1,
Fri 1600, Sat 0645

World Rallycross

Round 6/6
Nurburgring, Germany
13 November
TV Highlights BT Sport 7,
Sun 1400

UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch BARC

12-13 November
CTCRC Allcomers, Ginetta
Junior, Hyundai Coupe Cup,
Intermarque Silhouettes,
JSCC, Super Saloons/
CMMC Tin Tops

Anglesey BRSCC

12-13 November
Clubsport Trophy,
Race of Remembrance



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