**Lotus pays tribute to Ayrton Senna’s first F1 victory during TABAC Classic GP at Assen**

* **Historic Formula 1 car with which Ayrton Senna claimed his finest victory makes an appearance in the Netherlands**
* **Lotus 97T in the iconic black-and-gold livery one of the highlights at TABAC Classic GP (5-7 September)**
* **Senna’s lead mechanic Chris Dinnage chases Lotus F1 car around Assen circuit, in the presence of Ayrton’s nephew Bruno Senna**
* **Brazilian ambassador to the Netherlands attends tribute to Senna**

**London, UK - 2 September 2025**

Forty years after triple Formula One World Champion Ayrton Senna scored his historic first F1 victory in the Lotus 97T at the Estoril circuit (Portugal) in the rain, Lotus will commemorate this very first Senna victory during the TABAC Classic GP at the TT Circuit Assen. In the presence of Bruno Senna – Ayrton’s nephew – and the Brazilian ambassador to the Netherlands, Ayrton Senna's lead mechanic Chris Dinnage will get behind the wheel of the legendary car, dressed in the familiar black-and-gold livery, for some unforgettable laps on the Assen circuit during the classic event (5-7 September). Seeing ánd hearing this iconic Senna car is without any doubt going to bring back glorious times for visitors of the event.

21 April 2025 marked a milestone in Lotus’ and Formula 1’s history books: the 40th anniversary of Ayrton Senna's first Grand Prix victory. That milestone coincides with the year when Formula 1 celebrates its 75th anniversary, a period during which Lotus enriched the top class of international motorsport with numerous cutting-edge innovations that nowadays still define the technology of today's F1 cars.

Chris Dinnage, Classic Team Lotus Team Manager and at the time Ayrton Senna's lead mechanic during that very first, now legendary victory in 1985, pays a fitting tribute at the Assen circuit together with Bruno Senna in the same Lotus 97T Formula One car. Dinnage boasts an impressive track record at Lotus. Not only was he, alongside Senna, the lead mechanic for drivers like Elio de Angelis, Nelson Piquet, Mika Hakkinen, Johnny Herbert and Martin Donnelly; he is also the one who has driven the most Lotus race and street cars in the world. The Lotus 97T is owned and run by Clive Chapman and Classic team Lotus.

**Senna's best win**

Ayrton Senna's victory at Estoril four decades ago was a masterclass in driving in the rain, with the Brazilian lapping almost the entire field and scoring the first of his 41 Formula 1 victories. Senna himself also considered this performance the best of his career and dismissed the widespread belief that his victory at Donington in 1993 was his best race. Senna was quoted as saying: “*No way! I had traction control there. It was a good win but compared with Estoril ‘85 it was nothing.*”

The Lotus 97T itself was a pioneering race car and was the first to feature vertical aerodynamic innovations behind the front wheels for airflow conduction, which eventually evolved into the highly advanced barge boards, a defining feature in contemporary F1 aerodynamics. Lotus’ tribute at the TABAC Classic GP in Assen solidifies the connection between Lotus and Ayrton’s impressive rise in Formula 1, celebrating the golden era of turbocharged racing and the spirit of innovation that defined both the driver and the team.

**Emotional and historic moment**

*"For Team Lotus, Ayrton’s arrival was a defining moment,"* explains Clive Chapman, Managing Director of Classic Team Lotus*. "His talent, technical acumen and relentless drive helped the team move forward. This anniversary allows us to relive that magic and honour his legacy. Lotus’ tribute at Assen promises to be an emotional and historic moment confirming Senna’s lasting influence on motorsport."*

**Ayrton Senna**

Ayrton Senna was a legend, and by the time he won his first world championship, he had already transcended his sport and become a global superstar. Ordinary people, usually not interested in motorsport, were fascinated by his personality and by his sometimes uncompromising driving tactics. The three years that Ayrton Senna drove for Team Lotus - from 1985 to 1987 - were one of the most exciting periods in motorsport history. Not only did titanic battles rage between the four leading teams - Lotus, McLaren, Williams and Ferrari - in the second phase of the powerful turbo era, rivalry between the best Formula 1 drivers was also well documented both on and off the track.

**Lotus 97T technical data**

**Year of Production:** 1985 **Examples Built:** 4 **Engine Type:** Turbocharged Renault EF4 V6 **Engine Size:** 1492cc **Engine Power:** 780-850bhp **Length/Width/Height:** 4,21m/2,14m/1m **Wheelbase:** 2,77m **Weight:** 539kg (regulation)

The TABAC Classic GP will take place from 5 to 7 September at the TT Circuit Assen. More information about the event is available on the TABAC Classic GP [website](https://www.classicgp-assen.com/).

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**Notes to Editors**

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**About Lotus**

Lotus is a global performance brand built on solid foundations and a rich heritage. Since the formation of Lotus in 1948, it has been pioneering true automotive innovation, introducing cutting-edge technologies and designs to meet its uncompromising vision of how a car should look, perform and feel. Lotus Group is made up of a high-performance sports car business, Lotus Cars, and an all-electric luxury mobility provider, Lotus Technology. Together, we are setting a new standard for automotive excellence.

The **[Lotus Press Site](https://www.lotuscars.com/en/press/news)** contains news, images, films, technical specifications and full details of current models, as well as heritage cars and engineering technology.

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