**THE RETURN OF AN ICON: Lotus and Bruno Senna Celebrate Ayrton Senna’s First F1 Victory at Estoril**

* **The Lotus 97T returns to Estoril, exactly 40 years after Ayrton Senna's first Formula 1 victory.**
* **Ayrton's nephew, Bruno Senna, will drive the car in tribute of this historic moment.**
* **The Lotus 97T was a pioneering race car, featuring innovations such as early bargeboards, which remain a staple of modern F1 aerodynamics.**
* **This will be a celebration of the turbocharged era of racing, showcasing the lasting impact of Lotus innovations in Formula 1 history.**

**London, UK – April 9, 2025**

April 21 marks a historic milestone in the Lotus and Formula 1 history books—the 40th anniversary of Ayrton Senna’s first Grand Prix victory. To honour this iconic moment, the same Lotus 97T Formula 1 car that Senna drove to his legendary win at the 1985 Portuguese Grand Prix, will return to the Estoril circuit for the first time since that triumph. Driving the car will be his nephew, Bruno Senna, commemorating one of F1’s most defining performances.

The event unites two major celebrations: the 75th anniversary of Formula 1 and the pivotal role Lotus played in shaping its legacy. It serves as a tribute not only to Ayrton Senna but also to the engineers, designers and all the drivers who propelled Lotus to racing greatness.

Ayrton Senna’s victory at Estoril was a masterclass in wet-weather driving, with the Brazilian lapping nearly the entire field to claim the first of his 41 Formula 1 wins. Senna also regarded this performance as the greatest of his career, and dismissed the widely held belief that his 1993 Donington win was his finest drive: Senna was quoted 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 devices behind the front wheels for airflow management, which eventually developed into the highly sophisticated bargeboards, which remain in modern F1 aerodynamics.

The tribute event solidifies the connection between Lotus and Senna’s remarkable rise in Formula 1, celebrating the golden era of turbocharged racing and the spirit of innovation that defined both the driver and the team.

**Clive Chapman, Managing Director of Classic Team Lotus said:** *“For Team Lotus, Ayrton’s arrival was a defining moment. His talent, technical understanding and relentless drive helped push the team forward. This anniversary allows us to relive that magic and honour his legacy. Bruno Senna’s commemorative drive at Estoril promises to be an emotional and historic moment, bringing the past full circle and cementing Senna’s enduring impact on motorsport."*

**Bruno Senna commented** *“It will be an incredible feeling to drive this iconic car, marking the beginning of a series of victories and achievements by my uncle. This celebration will bring together fans from all over the world and shows how Ayrton Senna remains a powerful name in motorsport, and a positive influence on society in many ways - from educational impact to sustainable innovation, and as a movement that continues to inspire generations to persue their dream and never give up."*

Before heading to Estoril, the Lotus 97T will also be running at the 82nd Goodwood Members' Meeting on the 12th and 13th April, acting as a fitting send-off before its homecoming lap in Portugal.

**Ahead of the 82nd Members’ Meeting, The Duke of Richmond CBE DL, said**: "*Goodwood has always celebrated motorsport’s greatest icons, and it's an honour to host the Lotus 97T ahead of its return to Estoril. Seeing the legendary car on track once again will be a fitting tribute to Ayrton Senna's legacy and a special moment for fans, who can see the car in action again at the Festival of Speed in July."*

Lotus will be sharing all stories, interviews and reactions across social media, and the historic lap will be filmed and shared by various media outlets, including Sky Sports F1.

***Ends***

**Notes to Editors:**

**Ayrton Senna**

Ayrton Senna was an enigma, and by the time of his first world championship he had already transcended his sport to become a global superstar. Ordinary people, not usually interested in motorsport, were fascinated by his personality and enthralled by his sometimes-uncompromising driving tactics.

The three years that Ayrton Senna drove for Team Lotus, 1985 to 1987, was one of the headiest periods in the history of motor racing. Not only were titanic battles raging between the four leading teams – Lotus, McLaren, Williams and Ferrari – in the second phase of the powerful turbo era, rivalry between the top Formula 1 drivers, on-and off-track, was also well documented.

**97T Details**

Year of Production: 1985

Examples Built: 4

Engine Type: Turbocharged Renault EF15 V6

Engine Size: 1492cc

Engine Power: 780-850bhp

Length/Width/Height: 166/84.5/39.5in

Wheelbase: 107in

Weight: 1188lb/539kg (regulation)

**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 electric luxury mobility provider, Lotus Technology. Together, we are setting a new standard for automotive excellence.

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

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