



# LARA CROFT SPONSORS IAN JACOBS RACING

**The 1999 Privilege Insurance British GT Championship**

## **Lara Croft and Ian Jacobs Racing collaborate to become distinct contenders for the GT Championship title!**

With over fourteen million Tomb Raider games sold and an undisputed status as the world's most successful virtual heroine, Lara Croft now sponsors the Ian Jacobs Racing team for the 1999 GT Championship: a sport capable of matching the fast pace of her own lifestyle. Only content when in pole position, she shares much in common with the IJR team. Lara's dynamic image will dominate the IJR car, her unmistakable curves rivalled only by those of the circuit.

The 1999 Championship races will take place at some of the greatest Grand Prix circuits in England and Europe including Silverstone, Brands Hatch and Spa (Belgium). Once again, GT Championship racing will support the most prestigious Motor Race in the UK: the British Grand Prix, held at Silverstone in July. With a huge track audience plus millions of TV viewers, the IJR car's unique livery is guaranteed to attract considerable attention from both fans of the sport and Lara Croft.

### **The IJR Venturi 400 GTR**

Race cars from this very successful French manufacturer have been a mainstay of European GT racing for the past 6 years. The example now owned by IJR is considered the finest GT2 Venturi yet built, having been totally stripped and re-built, for improved high speed cornering and traction, enhanced reliability and greater power. These factors, together with experienced drivers, David Smith and Ian Jacobs, make the IJR Venturi a highly competitive front runner in the Championship.

### **Driver Histories**

David Smith started racing back in 1973, but only became a full time racing driver once he had retired from playing Professional Cricket. His career spanned 23 years, during which he played for Surrey, Worcestershire and Sussex, scoring over 20,000 first class runs and attaining the record for the highest score in a NatWest Trophy Final at Lords. David also represented England in the West Indies. In 1995 his Autobiography, 'Larger than Life' was published.



Driver Histories contd.

Previously the 1998 Rover 'K' Sports 1600 Championship winner, David has recently moved up to GT Racing. With many years of experience and a championship title already under his belt, his professional sporting experience and burning ambition to race in the Le Mans 24 Hours are widely recognised as an exciting combination capable of great success.

Ian Jacobs has been involved in the higher formulas of motor racing for many years, not only as a Formula 3 and GT driver, but also as a race engineer, with success in Formula First and most recently with David Smith in Sports 1600. Ian is highly respected in the racing world for his no-nonsense, professional approach, which can be seen in the superb preparation of his cars. Ian has over 50 race victories along with a GT2 lap record at Donington Park plus an unrivalled record for the most Formula 3 Pole Positions, previously held by Ayrton Senna.

### **Race Programme and Information**

1 <sup>st</sup> May	Oulton Park
31 <sup>st</sup> June	Snetterton
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Brands Hatch Grand Prix
1 <sup>st</sup> July	Silverstone Grand Prix
8 <sup>th</sup> August	Donington Park
22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Silverstone
5 <sup>th</sup> September	Croft
26 <sup>th</sup> September	Spa Belgium
10 <sup>th</sup> October	Silverstone

Lasting 50 minutes each, GT Championship races require compulsory driver changes halfway through. Other marques entered for this season include Ferrari, McLaren, Porsche, Lotus and Jaguar. An average grid comprises around 30 cars.

### **Media Coverage**

All races are televised and media interest is amongst the highest for any National motor racing Series.

During the 1998 Privilege GT Championship, terrestrial, satellite and cable channels reported increasing viewing figures over the previous year. As well as Eurosport and Sky Sports programmes, BBC1 also featured race coverage on 'Top Gear Motorsport', reporting audiences of 2-3 million. ITV also featured a series of 8 one-hour programmes dedicated to the Privilege Insurance Championship.

For the 1999 Championship, Channel 4 has commissioned a new series of 10 half-hour programmes to cover the races. Further details to be confirmed.



Press Launch



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