

'World's most powerful sports car' to be unleashed at Phillip Island

The World's most powerful sports car – the Porsche 917/30 Spyder developed for the Canadian-American (CanAm) racing series – will be unleashed on the Phillip Island Grand Prix circuit during this weekend's ShannonsClassic.

Reputedly producing up to 1580HP (1178kW) in qualifying form and a reliable 1100HP (820kW) in race trim, the spectacular Porsche 917/30 with its 5.4 litre turbocharged 12 cylinder air-cooled engine could reputedly accelerate from 0-100km/h in 1.9 seconds, 0-160km/h in 3.9 seconds and 0-320km/h in 10.9 seconds, on to a top speed of 400km/h.

The 1973 CanAm winner and the 917/30's most famous driver, Mark Donohue, established a closed-circuit record in one of the Porsche team cars that still stands today, lapping the Talladega oval in Alabama in August 1975 at a speed of 355.85km/h.

The 917/30 coming to Phillip Island from the Porsche Museum in Stuttgart is chassis number 917 30 002 – one just three 917/30s built for the 1973 Can-Am racing series.

Porsche Cars Australia and the Porsche Museum have been special supporters of the Phillip Island Classic in recent years, bringing a treasure trove of famous Porsche racing and sports cars to the circuit each year for the enjoyment of enthusiasts unable to get to the Stuttgart factory.

Although the theme of the 2008 Phillip Island Classic is 'Australian Legends', the appearance of the 917/30 in the hands of Porsche Museum Director Klaus Bischof will be an undoubted highlight of the meeting.

After breaking Ford and Ferrari's grip on the Le Mans 24-Hour race with its victories in 1970 and 1971 with naturally aspirated 12-cylinder 917 models, Porsche turned its attention to the CanAm sports cars series that hitherto had been dominated by the mighty McLarens, Lolas and Chaparrals.

The Porsche 917/10 open Spyder with its 5.0 litre, 12 cylinder engines fitted with twin turbochargers developed 850HP (634kW) and enjoyed immediate success in the hands of George Folmer, who became 1972 CanAm champion.

However it was the 917 that the factory developed for the 1973 season that stamped Porsche's absolute authority on the series.

With its displacement pushed to 5.4 litres, the 1100HP 917/30 was virtually unbeatable, with Mark Donohue in the Sunoco-sponsored Penske team car winning six races in a row, leading Porsche to take places one to four plus sixth in the 1973 CanAm standings.

In fact, so dominant were the Porsches that the CanAm regulations were altered at seasons' end to exclude the 917/30 from future appearances, ironically leading to 917/30 sometimes being cited as the car that killed CanAm racing.

917/30



