

An Evening with David Richards CBE at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu.



David Pender Richards CBE is the chairman of Prodrive, chairman of the Motor Sports Association, former chairman of Aston Martin, and a former team principal of the BAR and Benetton Formula One motor racing teams.

Courtesy of a member of the Friends of the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu I spent a fascinating evening listening to an informal chat with Dave Richards about his life in motorsport. From his early career as a professional rally co-driver through to forming Prodrive and his BMW team winning three consecutive British Touring Car Championships (BTCC). Then with Subaru and the talented Colin McRae, and later Richard Burns, winning in 1995 the double of the Drivers' and Manufacturers' World Rally titles.

Onto Formula One and when Flavio Briatore was fired as Director of the Benetton team, Dave took over as team principal, and later he restructured the BAR team before selling to Honda in 2004. In 2007 he led a consortium of investors, together with Kuwaiti backers whom he had known from his early days, to buy Aston Martin from Ford Motor Company.

More recently with his company Prodrive, he has positioned them at the forefront of advanced technology projects in the aerospace, marine and defence industries, including the development of low carbon technologies, lightweight composite structures and niche vehicle design with specific expertise in electric vehicles.

Dave is a very unassuming, charming, likeable guy who entertained the audience and we should all be thankful he didn't become a boring bean counter accountant when he left school.

