

# USED & APPROVED

Pre-owned Porsches put through their paces by the *Porsche Post* team

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## Ex-Carrera Cup 997 GT3 offers track day thrills

Former race cars don't simply rust away in dark corners of team garages, they live on. This is especially true of GT3 Cup cars, as this 997 from Parr Porsche demonstrates

WORDS AND PICTURES: **CHRIS POLLITT**

**T**o the uninitiated, the life of a race car might seem like a short affair with the assumption understandably being that no more racing means the end of the line. That's certainly not the case though as Parr, the long-standing West Sussex-based Porsche specialist, keenly proves.

Parr's expansive workshop plays host to an array of Stuttgart's finest machinery, with a significant number boasting racing pedigree. Although the race cars make up a smaller percentage of Parr's usual business they're no less important and the company has a stellar motorsport pedigree. Race Porsches may arrive in lower numbers than the road cars that grace the workshop, but that doesn't mean the time, effort and enthusiasm they afford is

anything less. This also remains true of the race cars on hiatus, like the GT3 Cup car you see here – it is Parr's job to find these cars a new life – and they usually do.

So what of this de-livered machine? Well, to start with it's a Cup car built by Porsche back in 2007. The first racing it saw was in Scandinavia as part of the Swedish Cup Championship where it competed until 2008. After that it was shipped to the United Arab Emirates where, in 2009, it competed in the UAE GT Championship. In 2010/11 it was piloted by Jonathon Simmonds and Phil Quaife, at which time it became a championship winning car. However, in 2012 its life became more sedate, with trackdays becoming its staple.

Modifications have already been made in readiness for its next lease of life. A new,

matching, OMP bucket seat is now affixed beside the driver while an aluminium kick-plate gives any brave future passengers something to push against when it all gets a bit, well, hairy! Other than that, the car is as it was from new in terms of specification at least.

If this were a road car, you'd anticipate crisp lines, flawless paint and an interior ready to welcome you with open arms. This isn't a road car though, it never was and it never will be. In fact this is a tool more than it is a car. It's a piece of machinery honed and perfected to do one job and one job only: campaign around a circuit as fast as possible. As such, the paint isn't there to provide visual stimulus, it's simply white – a base on which sponsor livery could be placed. The metalwork carries the occasional imperfection or chip, most notably the off-side front wing that has clearly been teased back

into shape after a minor 'racing incident'. It's never been subject to a heavy hit, it's merely picked up the characterful visual afflictions that any racing car worth its salt should.

The interior is a sparse chamber filled with tubular steel and switchgear, complete with heavy, easy to distinguish labelling – it's no nonsense. It's designed to make you focus on what's unfolding through the vista offered by the screen. Creature comforts are represented only by holes and fixings to which they would have mounted had this shell gone down the 'road' assembly line. The prominent position of the upright shifter for the sequential gearbox, the tank for the fire extinguisher and the doors completely void of innards all further drive home the dedicated purpose of this car.

While it could be refreshed and entered into a race series, the real appeal is as a track toy. £50k is a big number to tag onto a plaything, but stay with us, there's logic behind the thinking. For starters, you're dealing with a purpose-built car. A road car, while great on the road and fun on the track will always be that – a road car. Yes, harnesses and sticky tyres could sharpen things up, but it will never be a racer. You'll reach a point where you can't push it any harder – not safely at least.

Then there's the consideration that while you're hammering your Porsche around, you're actually hurting it. Nothing terminal of course, but it is wear and tear beyond the normal limits. And let's not forget the

psychological hindrance that comes from tracking your pride and joy – the fear of going off the tarmac can be overwhelming, thus dulling the fun.

It's not a case of tracking a road car being the wrong thing to do, more a case of that particular option having limits, both for the car and you. Doing it in this ex-racer, however, will be the step up that will bring with it an entirely new outlook in terms of trackdays. This car is focused on one task with no compromises at all, which will deliver a more visceral and exciting experience from the off. It's something you'll have to learn and adapt to, and while it may well be a daunting prospect to begin with, this GT3 Cup car will reward you as you push harder each time you get behind the wheel.

This is no 'old' race car either. The 3.6 engine has just 20,531km on the clock and it's only seen 27 hours since being rebuilt by Parr. It's been given a full health check, too, from bumper-to-bumper, ensuring that it's ready to be used. Motec real-time telemetry with additional brake pressure and steering sensors have been added to further improve the package. We're not all professional race drivers, but making the leap from a fast road car to this will develop skills and unearth talent and abilities hitherto unseen. Not every used car can offer that!

As for the logistics of owning such a car, you're probably the resident of one of two

camp. You're either looking at this, thinking "yes, I have the space and time, I'd love to own something like that" or you're currently saying something along the lines of "well, great, but I have no idea how to look after a race car". In the case of the former, there's nothing stopping you! If, however, you're adopting the latter train of thought, worry not. Parr, thanks to the company's ability and expertise, can offer an 'arrive and drive' facility. Parr store the car, maintain it, deliver it – complete with mechanic – to six track days of your choice throughout the year and then, when you're done, they take it away with them.

Furthermore, Parr's expertise and knowledge of the racing world can offer the new owner important, if not crucial, facilities and services. Yes, there's the maintenance mentioned previously, but there's also insurance and race tuition on offer. All these extras do of course come at a cost, but it's not as much as you'd anticipate, especially for the peace of mind along with a very real opportunity to increase and develop your driving ability in the process.

It's a given that an ex-race car isn't going to be for everyone. However, if you're heavily invested in trackdays, if you simply don't want to continue risking the metal of your road car or even if you have racing aspirations, this car could be the way to go. This GT3 Cup car and Parr are, combined, a prime example of how to get even more out of a Porsche. **PP**



### DETAILS

- 997 GT3 Cup Car
- £49,995
- Built in 2007
- 20,531km



### OPTIONS

Fully built in race specification by Porsche, meaning car still has chassis number. Passenger seat has been fitted along with foot rest. Three sets of wheels, and 2012 specification Premier bag fuel tank available



### VERDICT

The track is the only place this car can call home, which means it's the perfect car for the driver who wants to get more from track days or who may even want to move into motorsport. All for a fraction of what the car cost to build.



The height of sophisticated luxury this GT3 is not, but it will not fail to thrill



Parr can be contacted on 01293 537 911 or via [www.parr-uk.com](http://www.parr-uk.com). They are located at 5 Faraday Centre, Faraday Road, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 9PX. Opening hours are 8:00am until 5:30pm Mon – Fri, 8:30am – 12:30pm Saturday. Booking by appointment is encouraged.