

## Press Release

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# Overview of Volvo Racing History

Volvo may have a reputation for safety first, but it has also proved itself as a titan of top-level touring car racing throughout the world. The Swedish manufacturer is one of the few to have tasted victory in the discipline's hallowed Triple Crown - the European Touring Car Championship (ETCC), the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) and the legendary Bathurst 1000 in Australia.

Until 1984, Volvo's most notable motorsporting activity had come in the late 1950s and early '60s, when its Amazon model was a success in the grueling European rallies of the age, held over marathon courses all over the continent.

Encouraged by the efforts of Swedish Privateer Thomas Lindstrom, Volvo entered the ETCC in 1984 with its three-liter turbocharged 240 Turbo. It was a learning year, which was capitalized on spectacularly in '85, when the 240 defeated work teams from Rover and BMW to win the title.

There was one more season in '86, but the team only managed to bring the 240 Turbo three more victories.

The ETCC was on the skids by now, but over the course of the next decade the BTCC exploded in popularity. Volvo entered the series in 1994 with a most unusual weapon - the 850 Estate.

Run by the TWR motorsports organization, the car had the last laugh, due mainly to some storming performances from Volvo's talented young Swede, Rickard Rydell.

With a conventional 850 saloon the following year, Rydell and TWR used their lessons from the Estate to take a record 13 pole positions and third place in the championship, a position they matched in '96.

The more aerodynamic S40 replaced the boxy 850 for '97. It was a learning year, Rydell taking fourth in the championship before sweeping all before him in '98 and winning the coveted BTCC title. For good measure, he teamed up with Australian veteran Jim Richards to win at the Bathurst 1000 as well.

Rydell again led the attack in '99 in his bid for a second title, winding up in third place in the championship, in what proved to be Volvo's final year in the BTCC.

In 2001 and 2002 Volvo took its new sedan, the S60 into the ETCC with the English based Prodrive team and after a developmental year secured a creditable 8 podium places in the second season, with Rickard Rydell again leading the charge. At the end of 2002, Volvo announced its withdrawal from the international racing scene.

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