

Hurley Haywood – master of endurance

From Le Mans to Daytona and Sebring – Hurley Haywood has won every classic endurance race. Almost all of his victories were celebrated in a Porsche.

American Hurley Haywood is one of the most successful drivers in the history of endurance racing. Even though he is not one of the most well-known racing drivers in Europe, his record makes for impressive reading: five first-place finishes at the 24 Hours of Daytona between 1973 and 1991, three victories at the 24 Hours of Le Mans between 1977 and 1994, and a win at the 12 Hours of Sebring in 1973. He claimed top position in all of these races for Porsche, with models ranging from the 911 Carrera RSR to the 962 C. In the 1973 Canadian-American Challenge Cup series, Haywood came third with a 1,100 hp Porsche 917/10 behind Mark Donohue and George Follmer.

Haywood's career is closely linked to that of his racing colleague Peter Gregg. 'I was driving a Corvette when Peter told me I'd better buy a Porsche if I wanted to be really successful,' says Haywood, remembering a conversation in about 1970. Gregg and Haywood formed a team and won many races in the USA. In 1977, Haywood was invited to join the works team for Le Mans. Ferry Porsche said, 'I am pleased to welcome an American in the team. There is one thing you should know: we don't pay a lot of money, but you can win with our car.' Indeed, with Jacky Ickx and Jürgen Barth, Haywood won the 24-hour race, which people thought was already lost after a long break for repair work. Back in the USA, Haywood explained that a Le Mans victory in Europe is worth as much as a win in the Indianapolis 500 in America. Although Haywood may not have been the fastest works driver, the reliable American had a conservative style and was a strong addition to the works team at races like Le Mans, where he always secured great success.

Peter Gregg became a friend and business partner outside the cockpit. Together, the pair set up a car dealership chain in Florida. The starting point was Brumos Porsche, founded by Gregg in 1971 – a team that was also very successful on the race track, where it appeared in the traditional colours of red, white and blue. After Peter Gregg's death in 1980, Haywood became even more involved in the company. He also works as a sports driver training instructor and raced in the 24 Hours of Daytona until 2012.