

Porsche 718 RS 60 Spyder

The 718 RS 60 Spyder recorded a number of stunning victories, both in the World Supercar Championship and in the European Hill Climb Championship.

Porsche developed the 718 RS 60 Spyder for the 1960 season. This car featured a decisive modification: whereas its predecessor – the 718 RSK – had featured a cubic capacity of 1,498 cc, the Carrera engine in the new model boasted an increased capacity of 1,587 cc. This was implemented in response to a technical rule change by the FIA, which had raised the cubic capacity limit from 1,500 to 1,600 cc for the 1960 racing season.

In order to comply with the new FIA regulations, the 718 RS 60 Spyder included extra enhancements such as a much higher windscreen and a larger cockpit. The tubular frame was also modified accordingly. The FIA also required that a top be fitted: although the use of this was not mandatory when racing, it did at least have to be present in the car. The requirement for a boot measuring 65 × 40 × 20 centimetres was an equally curious stipulation. In March 1960, Edgar Barth demonstrated to reporters that this rear compartment located above the gearbox could indeed accommodate a small suitcase.

The 718 RS 60 Spyder was also fitted with an entirely new rear suspension comprising two wishbones, the lower of which was combined with a trailing arm. In coupling this development with significant improvements to the front axle, Porsche showed how the upgrades were additionally aimed at ensuring even better driving characteristics.

It soon became apparent that the higher windscreen was causing difficulties. As this had a tendency to fog up in the rain and sustain heavy soiling, it was necessary to attach extra windscreen wipers – on the inside.

Overall victories in Sebring and in the Targa Florio, where the 718 RS 60 Spyder triumphed against competitors featuring a larger cubic capacity, saw the car nicknamed the 'giant killer'. Porsche finished runner-up in the World Supercar Championship despite earning the same number of points as Ferrari: as the Italian manufacturer had recorded one more podium finish, this enabled them to win the title by a whisker. Nevertheless, the 718 RS 60 Spyder went on to take spectacular victories in the USA and in the European Hill Climb Championship. Heini Walter recorded wins in the mountain races at the Schauinsland in Freiburg, on Mont Ventoux – the 'Windy Mountain' – and in Ollon-Villars on the way to securing a third consecutive title for Porsche.