

McLaren's step up to Hypercar for Le Mans

McLaren will return to the peak of endurance racing from 2027 and are set to battle the powerhouses of Ferrari, Porsche and Toyota in Hypercar at Le Mans.

It will be the first time the reigning Formula One constructors' champions compete in the top classification of the World Endurance Championship since 1998.

McLaren said they are ready to, once again, make their mark on the stage of endurance racing, with Zac Brown, CEO of McLaren Racing, saying: "We're back."

The Woking-based team hope to return to the "glory days" of the 70s, 80s and 90s, when they completed their Triple Crown, consisting of wins at the Indianapolis 500, Monaco Grand Prix and Le Mans 24-hour.

They are the only team to complete the hat-trick, with Johnny Rutherford's win at the 1974 Indianapolis 500, Alain Prost's Monaco GP win in 1984, and a win at Le Mans in 1995, nearly 30 years ago.

The 24 Hours of Le Mans welcomed McLaren to the Hypercar classification, saying: "This strategic decision marks a clear statement of intent: McLaren is ready to rekindle the glory days of its endurance racing past."

Their inclusion comes after two manufacturers announced their entry into the sport, which will see at least 11 Hypercar teams on the grid in 2027.

In December 2024, Hyundai's Genesis Magma Racing, a South Korean manufacturer, announced it would join the Hypercar classification in 2026 in a two-car effort.

Ex-Formula One Team Principal Cyril Abiteboul will lead the team, while reigning WEC champion André Lotterer and Luis Felipe 'Pipo' Derani will become the inaugural pairing for the GMR-001 car.

McLaren's inclusion in the WEC will synchronise with Ford's entry in 2027, as the American team seeks to add a fifth Le Mans victory to their collection, reminiscing their maiden win in 1966, when the GT40 finished first, second and third at Le Mans, with Bruce McLaren, ironically, and Chris Amon winning the race.

Le Mans said: "The arrival of these high-profile competitors is a testament to the ever-growing allure of the FIA WEC's Hypercar class and the 24 Hours of Le Mans - a stage where the world's biggest automotive names battle for supremacy at motorsport's most iconic race."

From 2027, McLaren will be competing in all three major championships, IndyCar, Formula One and WEC, so could they aim for the triple crown in a single season?