

AUTO

# LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

*Brabham's BT62 is a world-class track offering from one of racing's most winning dynasties*



If sons are meant to surpass their fathers, David Brabham has a more difficult challenge than most: His father, Jack Brabham, was a legend in the motor racing community before his passing in 2014 at age 88. Jack not only owned a Formula 1 team and racecars but also raced his vehicles himself, winning 14 grand prix and three world championships. The legendary Australian remains the only driver to have won an F1 World Championship in a car of his own design and construction, in addition to competing in many of motorsport's most storied races, like the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the Indy 500.

To be fair, David has achieved his own racing glory, having won Le Mans himself. But his greatest challenge, in both preserving his father's legacy and building one of his own, is that of replicating his father's success in building world-class racecars. Under Jack Brabham's leadership, the Brabham Racing Organization crafted some of the most dominant single-seater racecars in the '60s and '70s until it ceased racing in 1992. So if Brabham Automotive is going to reach new heights under David's leadership, the only acceptable place to do so is right where his father did: on the track.

*Text by* KEITH GORDON



Jack Brabham, 1967

More than a decade in the making, the relaunched company debuted its maiden production, the BT62, in May. Named BT in honor of the company's original founders, Brabham and Ron Tauranac, the track-focused supercar proves worthy of the Brabham name. The beast boasts a weight of only 972 kg, and houses a truly "heavy-weight" power plant—the Brabham 5.4-liter, 32-valve V-8 engine, producing 700 bhp and 492 ft/lb of torque. This mid-engine layout, paired with a Holinger six-speed motorsport sequential transmission, provides the excellent balance needed to control a car with 720 bhp per metric ton.

On the track, weight is the mortal enemy of speed, so Brabham went to extremes in cutting kilograms wherever possible. Much of the car is made of carbon fiber, including, but not limited to, the body panels, front splitter, rear diffuser, rear wing, and even the barge boards and floor. The detachable steering wheel, custom-made by Brabham, is also made of the weight-saving material. The BT62 relies on Brembo carbon-on-carbon brakes, which keep it stable through the weight shifts of deceleration with the support of double wishbone suspensions at the front and rear, assisted by the car's ability to create massive amounts of downforce with its aggressive aero package and rear wing. The company claims the car more than doubles its effective weight when seeking the grip of friction for turning and braking.



Jack Brabham races the BT19, a car of his own construction, to victory at the 1966 French Grand Prix



Brabham announced a run of 70 units for the BT62, the first 35 of which are painted with liveries honoring each of the company's 35 Formula 1 GP victories. At a base price of around \$1.3 million, it is an expensive toy for use exclusively on racetracks (the cars aren't meant for public roads), but given the numerous supercar options available to today's millionaire and billionaire clientele, standing out means a lot—and the BT62 is already forcing the industry to take notice. After disappearing for a couple of decades, Brabham is back at the front of the pack.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BERNARD CAHIER/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF BRABHAM AUTOMOTIVE (3); KLEMANTASKI COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES. OPPOSITE: COURTESY OF BRABHAM AUTOMOTIVE