

Brabham Bt45



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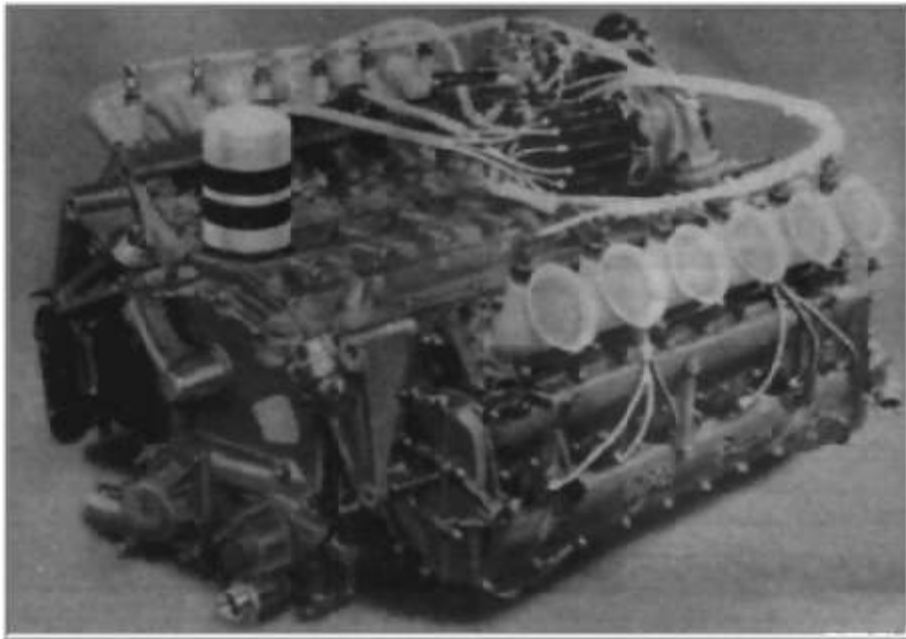
Gordon Murray - Is a commentator for F1 (today)

In any discussion of successful Formula 1 car design, Murray's acclaim is universal. Going back in time, Gordon startled the Grand Prix circus when his 1974 Brabham BT44 design dominated a few races, won the Austrian Grand Prix and took 1st and 2nd at Watkins Glen to end the season. Not bad for a 28-year-old South African who learned mechanics from his father and developed design skills through art courses in high school and technical drawing later on.

When Murray was chosen by then-Brabham team owner Bernie Ecclestone to be the head designer on the team in October 1972, he threw himself into the work with abandon, developing the beautiful BT42 in just three months. He also designed a prototype 3-liter sports car for Le Mans, which ran successfully for 21 1/2 hours until Chris Craft spun off in the wet while running in 4th place.

Murray's success at Brabham continued with the BT45 F1 car, and he later stunned onlookers again with the Brabham-Alfa BT46 for the 1977 season. The car used surface-mounted heat exchangers instead of conventional radiators for water and oil cooling, built directly into the double-skinned monocoque body. He also added air jacks, à la Indy cars, digital monitoring of engine functions and an onboard electronic lap counter. But the car didn't work that well. The real innovation, however, came with the BT46B for 1978, which was a "fan" car that stuck to the track like glue, won its first race, and was then banned.

The Brabham Alfa Romeo BT45



The flat Alfa Romeo engine reached up to 520 horse powers and was used both in the different BT45 and BT46 models.

BRABHAM ALFA ROMEO Bt46



Motor Racing Developments Ltd. presented the original version of the Brabham Alfa Romeo BT46 in autumn 1977.



The car was still in the livery of their title sponsor Martini & Rossi and had got lateral heat exchangers instead of normal oil and water radiators.



The regular version, here the BT46/6 with Nelson Piquet in the cockpit, has got the water radiators in the nose scone, the oil coolers

were hidden in the winglets ahead of the rear tyres.

The BT46/6B fan car in action with Niki Lauda behind the wheel. The water radiator had been transferred into the back with a big ventilator behind the gearbox. The oil coolers remained in the little wings. Reigning world champion Niki Lauda with the BT46 fan car ahead of his team mate John Watson. The nose has got normal front wings.

