



Mercedes-Benz Classic

Press Release

5 May 2025

Mercedes-Benz racing driver Jochen Mass has passed away

- 1989 Le Mans winner with the Sauber-Mercedes C9
- Popular Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador at the wheel of Silver Arrows
- Mentor of the Mercedes-Benz Group C Junior Team

Stuttgart. Jochen Mass, former Mercedes-Benz racing driver, Le Mans winner, and long-time brand ambassador for Mercedes-Benz Classic, passed away on 4 May 2025 at the age of 78. His golden era in motorsport stretched from the 1970s into the 1990s. One of his career highlights was his overall victory at the 1989 24 Hours of Le Mans with the Sauber-Mercedes C9. After retiring from active racing, Mass continued to inspire fans by driving famous vehicles from the Mercedes-Benz Classic collection at numerous events.

“Jochen Mass had a captivating way of recounting stories from his long and distinguished career. As our brand ambassador, he represented us for many years and inspired our brand’s fans with his approachable, friendly manner. He knew how to bring our classic legends to life with his immense knowledge and experience. I always valued the exchange with him. It was always a personal highlight to bring the Mercedes-Benz racing icons onto the road with him.”

Marcus Breitschwerdt, CEO Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH

From Formula One to Group C

Jochen Mass was born on 30 September 1946, in Dorfen near Munich and grew up near Mannheim. His varied racing career took him from touring cars all the way up to Formula One. In 105 Grand Prix appearances, Mass amassed 71 World Championship points with McLaren and Arrows, achieving eight podium finishes, and won one Grand Prix. This makes Mass the most successful German Formula One driver of his era. One of his greatest triumphs was his victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1989 with his Sauber-Mercedes C9. Three years later, he switched into team management in the German Touring Car Championship (DTM). Mass maintained his close links with Mercedes-Benz after his active career, appearing at numerous classic car events as a Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador.

Jochen Mass’ career started as a sailor on the world’s oceans. After completing an apprenticeship as a mechanic, he embarked on his multifaceted motorsport career in 1968, racing touring cars for Alfa Romeo and as a works driver for Ford from 1970 to 1975. In 1972, he won the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps alongside Hans-Joachim Stuck in a Ford Capri 2600 RS. At the same time, he competed in Formula 2 and was runner-up in the 1973 European Championship driving a Surtees TS15. In the same year, Mass made his Formula One debut at the British Grand Prix in Silverstone for the Surtees team.

After his years in Formula One, Mass competed in the 1984 Paris–Dakar Rally, in a Mercedes-Benz 500 SLC (C 107) for Albert Pfuhl's team. With the title of German Sports Car Champion under his belt in 1985 and more than a decade as a works driver for Porsche (1976 to 1987), he joined the Sauber-Mercedes works team in 1988. Driving the first Silver Arrow since 1955 – the Sauber-Mercedes C9 in 1989 – Jochen Mass claimed victory at the legendary 24 Hours of Le Mans alongside Manuel Reuter and Stanley Dickens, and finished the season as runner-up in the World Endurance Championship for Prototypes. In 1990, Mass took on the role of mentor to the three Mercedes-Benz juniors who would later rise to greatness in their careers: Michael Schumacher, Karl Wendlinger and Heinz-Harald Frentzen. During the 1990 Group C season, the trio shared a Mercedes-Benz C11 with Jochen Mass and achieved numerous successes. In Le Mans 1991, Jochen Mass, Jean-Louis Schlesser and Alain Ferté were forced to retire their C11 after 21 hours, despite holding a commanding lead, due to a technical fault. At the end of the year, Mass concluded his career with a fifth-place finish at the World Championship round in Autopolis, Japan. In 1992, Jochen Mass took part in a balloon race across the Atlantic, and from 1993 to 1997 he was a Formula One commentator on television.

Brand ambassador at the wheel of a legendary Silver Arrow

Legendary Mercedes-Benz racing driver Sir Stirling Moss once described Jochen Mass as “a driver with an extraordinary feel for racing cars and great expertise, who is well-versed in the racing history of all eras”. That is how it happened that Mass took part in numerous historic events on behalf of Mercedes-Benz Classic. Among other events, he took part in the 2005 Mille Miglia – half a century after Stirling Moss's legendary victory in this famous road race with the Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR. At the time, Moss said of Mass: “Jochen is a kindred spirit to me.”

Whether supercharged touring cars from the W 06 series, a Grand Prix racer from the first Silver Arrows era, a Group C racing car, the 300 SLR from 1955, or a Mercedes-Simplex from the early days of the automobile: As a brand ambassador, Jochen Mass captivated audiences at many renowned classic car events at the wheel of the brand's historic racing vehicles. He was a regular guest at the prestigious Goodwood Festival of Speed, where he embraced the culture of celebrating historic motorsport. In 2024, he said of his drive in the Mercedes-Benz C11 at Goodwood: “That of course stirs emotions and memories of the challenging world of motorsport over 30 years ago. In Goodwood, the companions of those days come together – drivers, teammates, mechanics, engineers. The Festival of Speed never fails to inspire me with its unique atmosphere and incredible variety.”

Contact:

Peter Becker, +49 (0) 176 30 909 790, peter.becker@mercedes-benz.com

Julia Löwenstein, +49 (0) 151 58 610 215, julia.loewenstein@mercedes-benz.com

Frank Scheibner, +49 (0) 160 8 680 266, frank.scheibner@mercedes-benz.com

Enquiries by email to classic@mercedes-benz.com or online at www.mercedes-benz.com/classic

Press photographs and more press releases: media.mercedes-benz.com

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Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH

“Heritage creates Future” – committed to this guiding principle, Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH, as a wholly owned subsidiary of Mercedes-Benz Group AG, is responsible for the entire range of historical topics of the brand with the three-pointed star with various divisions.

The Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart is one of the best-known and most popular automotive museums in the world, comprehensively presenting the fascinating history of the automobile since its invention in 1886 and bringing the history of the brand to life for a wide audience in a unique way. Other

historical sites relevant to the brand include the Gottlieb Daimler Memorial in Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, the birthplace of Gottlieb Daimler in Schorndorf and the Carl Benz House in Ladenburg.

The Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in Fellbach serves as a centre of excellence for classic cars with the three-pointed star. In addition to an exclusive vehicle trade business, the experts offer services and restorations for classic Mercedes-Benz vehicles and are the first port of call for genuine parts. With access to original vehicle documents in the archives, which document, preserve and maintain extensive evidence of the history of the company and the brand, Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH has a globally unique and unrivalled knowledge base.

In order to bring the special history of Mercedes-Benz to life, Mercedes-Benz Heritage GmbH takes part in a large number of renowned historic automobile events and trade fairs all over the world. Classic cars from the collection of over 1,000 vehicles are available for this purpose. In addition to communicating the brand's history, the focus there is also on the exchange with the recognised Mercedes-Benz brand clubs and the classic community.

Captions

25C0091_001

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2024 Goodwood Festival of Speed at the Mercedes-Benz C11 Group C racing car. In 2024, Mass sat in this car for the first time since 1990. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: D839550)

25C0091_002

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2023 Goodwood Festival of Speed. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: D118630)

25C0091_003

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2017 Goodwood Festival of Speed. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: D401974)

25C0091_004

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2017 Classic Days at Schloss Dyck. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: D416675)

25C0091_005

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2014 Goodwood Festival of Speed. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: D120607)

25C0091_006

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2014 Goodwood Festival of Speed featuring the Duke of Richmond and Gordon (left), creator and host of the Festival of Speed. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: 15A706)

25C0091_007

Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassadors Jochen Mass and Klaus Ludwig (left). Photo from the 2014 Historic Trophy Nürburgring. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: 14C309_109)

25C0091_008

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from 2012 with the Mercedes-Benz 750-kg Formula racing car W 125. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: D130173)

25C0091_009

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo from the 2012 Goodwood Festival of Speed featuring the Mercedes-Benz 750-kg Formula racing car W 125. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: D1200)

25C0091_010

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver (left). Photo from the 2012 Goodwood Festival of Speed featuring racing drivers Paul Stewart (centre) and Bernd Schneider (right). (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: D1183)

25C0091_011

Mercedes-Benz & Friends 2011, Berlin-Tempelhof. Group photo of Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassadors. Front row, from left to right: Jutta Benz, Ewy Baronin von Korff-Rosqvist, Jochen Mass and Dieter Glemser. Back row, from left to right: Klaus Ludwig, Hans Herrmann, Bernd Schneider and Roland Asch. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: 13C802_01)

25C0091_012

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo at the wheel of a 1902 Mercedes-Simplex 40 hp during the super sports car track test in 2010. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Archive: 10C441_104)

25C0091_013

Jochen Mass, Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador and former racing driver. Photo as co-driver alongside former Mercedes-Benz racing driver and Mercedes-Benz Classic brand ambassador Sir Stirling Moss at the wheel of the Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR racing car "722" (W 196 S) at the start of the 2005 Mille Miglia in Brescia, Italy. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: MM2005_3)

25C0091_014

Team photo of the Mercedes-Benz Group C team taken on the occasion of the 480-kilometre race in Montreal, Canada, on 23 September 1990. On the right, the Mercedes-Benz C11 Group C racing car with car number 1 from the winning team of Jean-Louis Schlesser and Mauro Baldi, on the left, the C11 with car number 2 from the driver team Jochen Mass and Karl Wendlinger. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A90F1605)

25C0091_015

Mercedes-Benz C11 Group C racing car. Photo from the 480-kilometre race in Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium, on 3 June 1990. Jochen Mass and Karl Wendlinger (number 2) win the race. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A90F848)

25C0091_016

Mercedes-Benz C11 Group C racing car. Photo from the 480-kilometre race in Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium, on 3 June 1990. Jochen Mass and Karl Wendlinger (number 2) win the race. Photo of the pit stop and driver change. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A90F850)

25C0091_017

Mercedes-Benz C11 Group C racing car. Photo from the 480-kilometre race in Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium, on 3 June 1990. Jochen Mass and Karl Wendlinger (number 2) win the race. Photo of the pit stop. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A90F853)

25C0091_018

24 Hours of Le Mans 1989, 10 to 11 June 1989. Sauber-Mercedes C9 Group C racing car with car number 63, the vehicle of eventual winners Jochen Mass, Manuel Reuter and Stanley Dickens. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 89F603)

25C0091_019

24 Hours of Le Mans 1989, 10 to 11 June 1989. Pit stop of the Sauber-Mercedes C9 of Jochen Mass, Manuel Reuter and Stanley Dickens. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 89F630)

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24 Hours of Le Mans 1989, 10 to 11 June 1989. The entire Mercedes-Benz team with the Sauber-Mercedes C9 Group C racing car. Mercedes-Benz achieved a double victory in the race and also secured fifth place. The overall winners in the car with number 63 were Jochen Mass, Manuel Reuter, and Stanley Dickens. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 89F584)

25C0091_021

24 Hours of Le Mans 1989, 10 to 11 June 1989. Photo of the Sauber-Mercedes C9 Group C racing car after crossing the finish line. From left to right: Vehicle of the victors Jochen Mass, Manuel Reuter and Stanley Dickens (number 63), vehicle of the second-place finishers Mauro Baldi, Kenny Acheson and Gianfranco Brancatelli (number 61), and vehicle of the fifth-place finishers Jean-Louis Schlesser, Jean-Pierre Jabouille and Alain Cudini (number 62). (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: A90F550)

25C0091_022

24 Hours of Le Mans 1989, 10 to 11 June 1989. Driving shot of the Sauber-Mercedes C9 Group C racing car of the eventual winners Jochen Mass, Manuel Reuter and Stanley Dickens (number 63). (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 11_PI130YMotorsport_24HoursofLeMans_Sauber-MercedesC9_1987-1989)

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Jochen Mass. Photo from 1989. (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 89F498)

25C0091_024

Sauber-Mercedes Gruppe-C-racing stress C 9/C 11, test drives in Le Castellet. Jochen Mass with the Mercedes-Benz Junior Team Karl Wendlinger, Heinz-Harald Frentzen und Michael Schumacher (from left to right). (Photo signature of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Archive: 00168303)