

AUTOMOTIVE

Bentley brings back iconic Blower in limited-edition model

March 21, 2019



The Bentley Blower inspired the Continental GT No. 9 Edition by Mulliner. Image credit: Bentley

By SARAH RAMIREZ

British automaker Bentley Motors is releasing another collector's vehicle, as the marque reimagines its past to celebrate its centennial.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The Continental GT Number 9 Edition by Mulliner joins the Mulsanne W.O. Edition as a special model that pays tribute to Bentley's legacy. These vehicles draw attention to the automaker's past while emphasizing the innovations of the last century.

"The release of the limited-edition positions Bentley as a race car brand by reminding consumers of its storied history," said Julie Blackley, communications manager at [iSeeCars](#), Woburn, MA. "This puts Bentley in class with Ferrari and Lamborghini rather than Rolls-Royce."

Ms. Blackley is not affiliated with Bentley but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Bentley](#) was reached for comment.

Rebuilding history

Hand built by Mulliner, the automaker's bespoke division, the Continental GT Number 9 Edition is inspired by the Bentley "Blower" raced by Sir Henry "Tim" Birkin during the prewar era.

Mr. Birkin won the 1929 and 1930 Le Mans behind the wheel of a Bentley 6.5 Litre model, the original No. 9. The car had been adapted from its original 4.5 Litre engine with a supercharger, against the wishes of W.O. Bentley, the automaker's founder.

The Continental GT Number 9 Edition is a limited release marking Bentley's 100th anniversary

The motor sport icon also finished second at the 1930 French Grand Prix when Mr. Birkin raced the Blower against lighter Bugatti models. With a weight of two tons, the Blower is believed to be the heaviest car ever entered in a Grand Prix.

Bentley shared a short film, including archival footage, offering a look back at the Bentley Blower and how its racing

spirit is reflected in the limited-edition.

In the spirit of Bentley's first 100 years, only 100 models of the Continental GT Number 9 Edition will be produced.

Number 9 Edition models have a number 9 on the grill, similarly to the original Blower, and the exterior color can be either classic black or Viridian, a modern interpretation of the era's classic racing green. The cars also have an 18-carat gold-plated No. 9 exterior badge.

The interior has gold-plated organ stops and green leather seats with an embossed "B" logo. Each vehicle features a wood insert from the seat of Mr. Birkin's 1930 No. 9 Le Mans race car in the Bentley Rotating Display.

"The car's gold accents symbolize the golden age' of Bentley, which celebrates the beginnings of the No. 9 race car," Ms. Blackley said.

Centennial celebrations

Last summer, Bentley Motors began celebrations for its 100th anniversary with a cinematic campaign reflecting on its long history of innovation and craftsmanship.

The short film, "Together we are Extraordinary," tells the story of Bentley and its achievements, starting with founder W.O. Bentley. Much like Bentley itself, the new film uses advanced technology to create a striking end result.

Bentley's film detailed the brand's origins and its evolution through its newest model, the Continental GT ([see story](#)).

Mulliner also paid tribute to brand founder W.O. Bentley with the Mulsanne W.O. Edition.

Production of the Mulsanne W.O. Edition was also limited to 100 vehicles, and celebrates the 8 Litre, the last car Mr. Bentley designed for his eponymous brand.

Similarly to the Number 9 Edition, each Mulsanne W.O. Edition includes a sliver of the original crankshaft from W.O. Bentley's personal 8 Litre car ([see story](#)).