



FORD
ESCORT WRC

R4 FMC
CHASSIS M-SPORT #29



FORD ESCORT
WRC | R4 FMC | CHASSIS M-SPORT
VIN | SABTVR03268005799
1ST REGISTRATION (UK) | O9/O1/1998
CHASSIS | M-SPORT #29



CAR BUILT BY M-SPORT IN 1998, FOR FORD'S OFFICIAL PROGRAM IN THE WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP, IN THE COLOURS OF VALVOLINE. IN 1998 JUHA KANKKUNEN CONTESTED SIX WORLD RALLIES WITH THE CAR, RESULTING IN THREE PODIUM FINISHES.

- ▶ One of 15 Escort WRCs built by M-Sport for the official Ford program
- ▶ Car that finished second in the 1998 Rallye Monte Carlo Rally and on the podium in Rally Finland and Acropolis Rally the same year
- ▶ 59 victories in the hands of Mats Jonsson in Sweden and Norway, between 2003 and 2016
- ▶ Asphalt configuration
- ▶ Returned to its official 1998 Rallye Monte Carlo livery
- ▶ Delivered with all the documents of the British registration and through time, the roll-bar certificate, the tank certificate, the original homologation form + options variants (VO), various technical documents and the complete history





HISTORY

EXCEPTION

FORD ASKED THE FIA FOR AUTHORIZATION TO BUILD ITS NEW WRC BASED ON THE GROUP A ESCORT RS COSWORTH.

► FORD, BOREHAM, M-SPORT AND THE ESCORT WRC

In the World Rally Championship, the new World Rally Car regulations came into effect for the 1997 season. In order to attract new manufacturers to rallying, these regulations were both more liberal and less expensive than those of the classic Group A. They made it possible to start from a two-wheel drive model with a sub-2-litre engine, to build a World Rally Car with four-wheel drive and 2.0 turbo engine. In one year, 20 copies of the car were to be built.

► The main condition, however, was that this model had to have a series production of 25,000 copies per year. A volume never reached by the Ford Escort RS Cosworth, whose production was to end in 1996 any-

way. Its descendant, the future Ford Focus, was not to appear until 1998... If the brand wanted to continue its commitment to rallying, Ford had to find a solution.

► Through its Motorsport department, based in Boreham, the manufacturer therefore asked the FIA for authorization to build its new WRC based on the Escort RS Cosworth. Without this, Ford would not be represented during the 1997 season. The condition was that the other manufacturers involved would give their agreement as well. This was the case and the development of the new car began in June 1996.

► In just six months the Boreham team led by Philip Dunabin, the new chief engineer of the Ford Motorsport department, completed the design of the manufacturer's

new weapon, the Ford Escort WRC. The first of the two prototypes built – based on Gr.A versions – made its first outings mid-October.

► On November 3 the new Ford Escort WRC was officially presented to the media in a Repsol livery, the day before the start of the Rally Catalunya – Costa Brava – Rally de España, the final round of the 1996 World Rally Championship. Until then, the Ford Motorsport division – based in Boreham in Essex, in the east of England – was in charge of Ford's official rally program. But now, it was in the midst of change. And although the burden of producing the 20 kits necessary for homologation fell to Boreham, it was indeed Malcolm Wilson's M-Sport organisation which was entrusted with the official program for the 1997 season.

Technically the new Ford Escort WRC was quite different from the Group A version of the Ford Escort RS Cosworth. It had a new, more compact IHI turbo, adapted to the 34 mm restrictor, but also a different exhaust manifold. The injection was also profoundly modified, with the use of eight injectors instead of four. The locations of the intercooler and the radiators were also adapted.

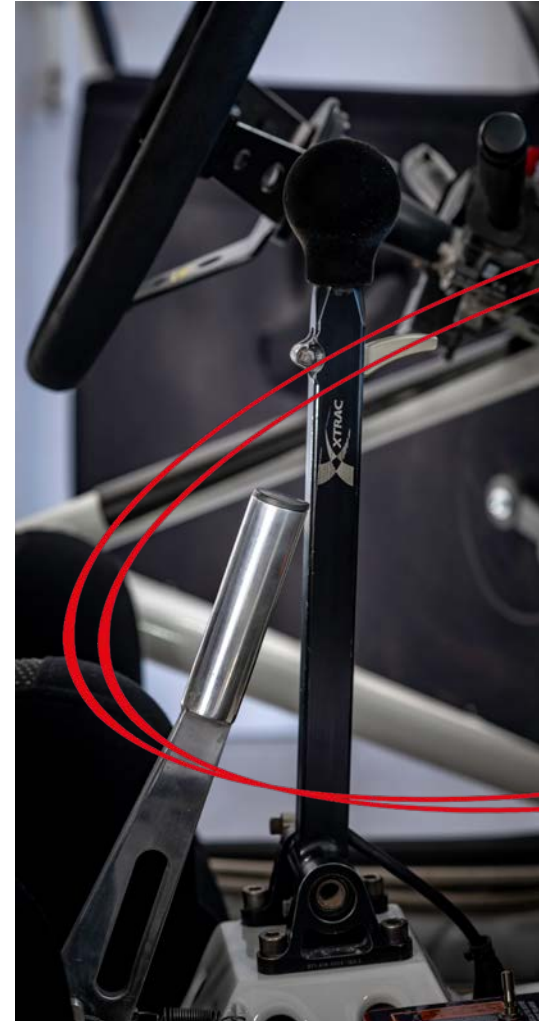
- ▶ Aerodynamically, the use of a new, more sculpted front bumper was accompanied by the arrival of a much less spectacular rear wing, which offered more downforce while reducing aerodynamic drag. The car also had a better weight distribution, with a rear central position of the 80-litre fuel tank, the spare wheel and the 40-litre water tank, water used to cool the intercooler and the brakes in particular. The most important evolution was the new architecture of the rear suspension. The semi-trailing arms of the Escort RS Cosworth were replaced by an independent suspension with MacPherson struts, based on a new tubular subframe that was both lighter and stronger.
- ▶ For the 1997 World Rally Championship, M-Sport again put its trust in Carlos Sainz, third in the 1996 championship, driving the official Ford Escort RS Cosworth Gr.A. His

teammate for the season was to be Armin Schwarz. But with the funds promised by the German driver not arriving, he was replaced by Juha Kankkunen after six rallies.

▶ In the Rallye Monte Carlo, the opening round of the season, Carlos Sainz offered the new Ford Escort WRC a first podium, thanks to its second place behind Piero Liatti. Armin Schwarz finished just off the podium in the second works car. The Spanish driver repeated that result two weeks later, in Sweden.

▶ The Escort WRC took its first win in the hands of Carlos Sainz at the Acropolis Rally in June, when M-Sport even scored a 1-2, thanks to Juha Kankkunen. In Indonesia, Sainz took a second win, on his way to third in the World Drivers' Championship. Represented by M-Sport, Ford Motor Co. Ltd finished second in the Constructors' Championship.

▶ During the course of this first season, M-Sport used nine different chassis for the official program, some of which were based on converted Gr.A cars. Already in 1997, various privateer teams, such as MLP or RED in particular, set about building Ford Escort WRCs dedicated to privateer programs, based on the kit supplied by M-Sport.



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NINE

M-SPORT USED NINE DIFFERENT CHASSIS FOR THE OFFICIAL PROGRAM, SOME OF WHICH WERE BASED ON CONVERTED GR.A CARS.

CONCRETE

This Escort was returned to its official 1998 Rallye Monte Carlo livery, which included a tribute to Roger Clark, MBE.



The car was built for asphalt rallies – it was so light that it had to carry ballast to respect the minimum weight imposed by the regulations.



Chassis #29 of the Ford Escort WRC is one of the 'new' chassis built by M-Sport for the 1998 season.



In 1998 the Ford Escort WRC evolved slightly, with a new turbo and a lighter body.

► In 1998 – when the development of the future Ford Focus WRC was started quickly and in the greatest secrecy, with the road model having not yet been revealed – the Ford Escort WRC evolved slightly, with a new turbo and a lighter body. Carlos Sainz having joined Toyota – which also led to the departure of Repsol as the main sponsor, replaced by Valvoline – Juha Kankkunen now had Bruno Thiry as his teammate, who was replaced by Ari Vatanen at the Safari Rally and in Portugal, after the Belgian driver was injured during the recce in Kenya.

season with a third in Great Britain, the Ford Escort WRC's record remained stuck on the two wins scored by Carlos Sainz in 1997. In total, and in two years' - time, some forty Ford Escort WRCs were built, ten of which were based on an Escort Gr.A. After more than thirty years the official career of the Ford Escort in the World Rally Championship came to an end during the 1999 Swedish Rally in February, with the final appearance of a works Escort WRC in the hands of the young Petter Solberg. A month earlier, the Focus – freshly homologated – had made its debut in the Rallye Monte Carlo.

► Although Juha Kankkunen scored 6 podium finishes in 1998, and Bruno Thiry ended his

The car competed for the first time in the 1998 Rallye Monte Carlo, in the hands of Juha Kankkunen.



SIX

OF THE SIX WORLD EVENTS CONTESTED BY THIS ESCORT WRC CHASSIS #29, ONLY ONE RETIREMENT WAS TO BE DEPLORED, AFTER KANKKUNEN WENT OFF THE ROAD IN SPAIN.

| FIFTY-NINE WINS

BETWEEN 2003 AND... 2016, MATS JONSSON WAS TO OFFER THIS ESCORT WRC #29 A RATHER INCREDIBLE NATIONAL RECORD, WITH NO FEWER THAN 59 VICTORIES IN NEARLY 150 RALLIES.

► R4 FMC – M-SPORT #29

Chassis #29 of the Ford Escort WRC is one of the 'new' chassis built by M-Sport for the 1998 season. It was entered for the first time in the 1998 Rallye Monte Carlo, in the hands of Juha Kankkunen, with the registration "R4 FMC". Although the Finn had not such a good start as his team-mate Bruno Thiry, he managed to climb to second place after 7 of the 18 stages. It was in this position that he ended the rally, setting the fastest time in SS 8, the mythical and 36.72 km long Sisteron-Thoard stage.

► The car was built for asphalt rallies – it was so light that it had to carry ballast to respect the minimum weight imposed by the regulations – and chassis #29 made its return in the works team at Rallye Catalunya in April, still in the hands of Juha Kankkunen. The Finn had to retire after going off the road. Three weeks later, he did the Tour de Corse with "R4 FMC", finishing in ninth. Chassis #29 was then converted for gravel, and entered for the Finnish driver at the Acropolis Rally,

Finland and Australia, resulting in a 3rd place in Greece and Finland, and 5th down under. Of the six world events contested by this Escort WRC chassis #29, only one retirement was therefore to be deplored, after going off the road.

► In 1999, this Escort WRC contested two events in the hands of Finnish privateers: Timo Hulkkonen had to retire in the Arctic Rally (ERC), as did Janne Tuohino in the Rally of Great Britain (WRC).

► The Ford Escort WRC #29 regained its reliability that had characterized the car during the 1998 season with its new owner, Swedish driver Mats Jonsson. Driving Fords since 1997 in his national championship – which he was to win no fewer than 17 times in his career – Mats Jonsson replaced chassis #44 of the Escort WRC after four seasons of loyal service by chassis #29, now registered "TLW 097", for the 2003 season. Between 2003 and... 2016, Mats Jonsson was to offer this Escort WRC #29 a rather

incredible national record, with no fewer than 59 victories in nearly 150 rallies. Successes achieved on snow and gravel, in Sweden and Norway. At the end of the 2016 season, chassis #29 went to Spain and the Past Racing team, which gave Dani Sordo the opportunity to compete at its wheel during the 2017 Rallye Festival Trasmeria. During the same year, another world class driver was at the wheel of the car, during the Portuguese Rally Spirit Altronix Show: Ari Vatanen.

► Another rally star was at the wheel during the 2018 Rallye Festival Trasmeria: Harri Toivonen, Henri's younger brother and son of Pauli Toivonen. Although it was then registered with the Spanish "5293 JZB" number plate, the Escort WRC #29 was back in the livery in which it still is today in the MY Vintage Gallery, i.e. the "Ford - Valvoline" colours in which Juha Kankkunen finished second in the 1998 Rallye Monte-Carlo. Better still: it again has its legendary "R4 FMC" registration now.





TRACK RECORD

R4 FMC | M-SPORT #29

1998

FORD MOTOR CO. LTD/M-SPORT | WRC

DRIVER :

JUHA KANKKUNEN (FIN)

- ▶ **Rallye Monte-Carlo**
2nd place, 1 fastest stage time
- ▶ **Rallye Catalunya ◦ Rallye España**
Retired (crash)
- ▶ **Tour de Corse ◦ Rallye de France**
9th place
- ▶ **Acropolis Rally**
3rd place, 1 fastest stage time
- ▶ **Rally Finland**
3rd place, 2 fastest stage times
- ▶ **Rally Australia**
5th place, 1 fastest stage time

1999

LPM HUMAN HEAT

DRIVERS :

TIMO HULKKONEN (FIN)

▶ **Arctic Rally**

Retired

JANNE TUOHINO (FIN)

▶ **Rally of Great Britain**

Out of time

2003-2016

DRIVER :

MATS JONSSON (S)

▶ **150 rallies** (Sweden and Norway)

59 wins & 48 podium finishes



TECHNICAL SHEET – R4 FMC

▶ Group/Class	A/8
▶ Homologation form	A5466 (20/01 WR)
▶ Homologation	1/1/1997
▶ Engine	Cosworth YBT, 4-cylinder in line
▶ Displacement	1,973 cm ³
▶ Power and torque	300 hp @ 5,500 rpm / 490 Nm @ 4,000 rpm
▶ Turbo	IHI RX6 E2
▶ Electronic management	Ford/Pectel T6
▶ Transmission	X-trac 6-speed sequential gearbox
▶ Type	All-wheel drive
▶ Chassis & bodyshell	Monocoque steel chassis, Ford CT120 platform
▶ Front suspension	McPherson struts with lower wishbones and stabilizer bar, coil springs, Reiger gas shock absorbers
▶ Rear suspension	McPherson struts with lower arms, coil springs, Reiger gas shock absorbers, anti-roll bar
▶ Weight	1,230 kg
▶ Livery	1998 Rallye Monte Carlo – J. Kankkunen / J. Repo



YVES MATTON
Y.MATTON@MYVINTAGE.BE