


ICONIC[®]
AUCTIONEERS

18TH OCTOBER 2023

**FORD RALLY BEAST FROM THE WILD YEARS OF GROUP 'B' RALLYING -
1986 FORD RS200 EVOLUTION - 12 MILES FROM NEW - LEADS ICONIC
AUCTIONEERS NEC MOTOR SHOW SALE NOVEMBER 11TH
GUIDED AT £500,000 - £700,000**



Unquestionably one of the most desirable Fords in recent history with its incredibly low mileage, exceptional originality and status as one of only four right-hand drive Evolutions and arguably the only one built by Ford, this RS200 Evolution is in a class of its own, a reminder of the wild days of Group 'B' rallying.

The Ford RS200 occupies a unique and somewhat tragic place in the world of motorsport. This exceptional machine, meticulously designed for the tumultuous era of Group 'B' rallying, saw its potential obscured by a series of unfortunate events. The RS200's limited production, its iconic status and its reverence within the automotive community are well-deserved. For many, the RS200 holds a special place in their hearts, whether they grew up racing it virtually on gaming consoles or fondly recall its exploits on the rally stage.

The RS200 Evolution serves as a poignant symbol for the RS200 itself. It was there, it was built, and it was immensely capable. However, unforeseen circumstances rendered the car surplus to requirements, and it never had the opportunity to showcase its full potential. With its distinctive design, extraordinary power and confident handling, this RS200 Evolution is a significant piece of Group 'B' and Ford rally history. It is unquestionably collectable, and anyone who has had the

privilege of seeing or driving an RS200 can attest to a unique and thrilling experience. While this RS200 Evo has no reason to hit the road again, it's comforting to know that sometimes, your heroes are just as impressive as you imagine them to be.

When rallying enthusiasts discuss their favourite eras, it's likely that the wild years of Group 'B' will top the list. This period was marked by unrestricted and unhinged machinery, with designers and engineers pushing the boundaries to extract maximum performance from turbocharged, four-wheel drive monsters. Among these, the Ford RS200 stood out for all the right reasons. While other manufacturers like Audi, Peugeot, and Lancia adapted existing production cars for Group 'B', Ford took a bolder approach, creating a purpose-built Group 'B' car from the ground up.

Ford, a long-time participant in rallying since the introduction of the rear-wheel drive Escort, found itself without a competitive contender when Group 'B' became prominent in the World Rally Championship. Their initial attempt with the Escort RS1700T was a failure, pushing them to start afresh. The outcome was the RS200, even though they were three years behind schedule. The design was courtesy of Ghia, with Reliant of Shenstone handling most of the bodywork. The chassis engineering was entrusted to Formula 1 experts, Tony Southgate and John Wheeler. Four-wheel drive was crucial, and the RS200 featured a space-frame chassis, Kevlar bodywork and a mid-mounted engine designed by Brian Hart. It also boasted a front-mounted gearbox for improved balance and a variable torque-split differential from Ferguson, making it a formidable rally car.



The RS200 showed promise with Kalle Grundell's third-place finish in the 1986 Swedish Rally. However, the Group 'B' era came to a tragic end due to multiple accidents involving drivers and spectators. The combination of lightweight rally cars with 600bhp racing at high speeds through crowds led the FIA to discontinue Group 'B' at the end of 1986. Consequently, after just one year of competition, the RS200's full potential remained unrealised. Nevertheless, the car found success outside the WRC, driven by Stig Blomqvist, Malcolm Wilson, Mark Rennison, and Mark Lovell. Mark Lovell clinched the British Rally Championship with his RS200, and the car excelled in Rallycross, securing victories across Europe and back-to-back British Rallycross Championships in 1987 and 1988 with Mark Rennison. In 1986, an Evolution RS200 driven by Stig Blomqvist set a Guinness World

Record for the 0-60mph acceleration time at 3.07 seconds, a record that stood for an astonishing 12 years.

Group 'B' regulations required the production of at least 200 road-legal vehicles, however the end of Group 'B' meant that only 144 RS200s were completed. Ford had planned to produce 20 'homologation' examples of the new RS200 iteration in compliance with Group 'B' rules, however after the class was abruptly dissolved, they decided to modify 20 of the existing RS200 chassis. These were known as the RS200 Evolution, and later, four additional examples of the upgraded RS200 Evo were produced, bringing the total to 24 cars.

One of the most significant differences between the standard RS200 and the Evolution is the engine. The original RS200s were powered by a turbocharged 1.8-litre 16-valve Cosworth BDA engine, known as the BDT. In standard form, it produced 250bhp, while in full race spec, it generated around 500bhp. RS200 Evo models featured a larger 2.1-litre version of the BDT, known as the BDT-E, which was developed by British engineer, Brian Hart. This engine had a bespoke, thicker-walled aluminium cylinder block and an upgraded turbo system. Power outputs varied, but they were estimated to be between 500 and 650bhp. The physically larger engine necessitated modifications to the chassis and firewall.



We are proud to offer RS200 Evolution #086, an exceedingly rare and well-preserved example. Out of the 144 RS200s ever truly built, only 24 were official Evolutions. Among those, only four were right-hand drive, and #086 is believed to be the only right-hand drive example built by Ford rather than being a later conversion. This RS200 Evolution is arguably the lowest mileage RS200 in the world, having covered a mere 12 miles from new across its three owners.

#086 was one of three cars originally purchased by Gary Baker in 1988 for European Rallycross racing, but it never saw action. It was stored from 1988 until 2011, when renowned rally collector and competitor Jim Avis acquired all three cars. Our vendor purchased the car from Avis in late 2011, and it has been stored in his temperature-controlled workshop alongside an impressive collection of Ford rally cars.

Mechanically, #086 is in excellent condition. It starts, runs and drives remarkably well despite its minimal mileage. The original paint presents well, and while there are some storage marks on the body, the car remains in impressive overall condition. Since 2011, it has made only two public appearances, being displayed with the RS200 Club at Lydden Hill and then at Silverstone Circuit in 2023.

This RS200 Evolution retains its originality, including its original paint. While some parts show signs of use, it's important to remember that RS200s were built for competition, and every part was designed to be easily replaceable. The car's history file contains the original purchase invoice and other pertinent documents, including a current V5C showing just one former keeper.



More information about this car and any of the other 150+ cars and 245 motorcycles entered into the NEC Classic Motor Show Sale on 11th & 12th November, please see www.iconicauctioneers.com. If you have a Collectors' Car, Motorcycle or collection that you are interested in selling, please contact our team for a free no obligation valuation on +44 (0) 1926 691 141 or enquiries@iconicauctioneers.com.

For more information please contact:

Harry Fox-Edwards
+ 44 (0) 7398 872 032
harryfe@iconicauctioneers.com

IMAGES

For further high-resolution images please contact:

Penny Tyler
penny@iconicauctioneers.com
+44 (0) 1926 691 141

ABOUT ICONIC AUCTIONEERS

Iconic Auctioneers, formerly known as Silverstone Auctions, started in 2011 and rebranded in August 2023. It is

a world-class, specialist auction house for the sale of classic cars, competition cars, modern supercars and all types of collectors' cars, as well as modern and historic motorcycles and items of automobilia.

As one of the UK's leading auction houses they hold the exclusive automotive auction rights for some of Europe's biggest motoring events such as The NEC Classic Motor Show, The Silverstone Festival, Supercar Fest, MCN Motorcycle Shows and many more.

The team are passionate about seeking out the finest cars, motorcycles and collectibles and connecting them with right buyers from around the world, which has helped them achieve a number of record-breaking auction prices on behalf of vendors.

The company has achieved the following impressive statistics:

- Held 87+ auctions (as of August 2023)
- Sold 5,200+ cars and motorcycles (as of May 2023)
- Total sales in excess of £270m (as of May 2023)
- Customers in over 30 countries
- No seller's commission charged on vehicles entered with no reserve

More about Iconic Auctioneers can be found on their website iconicauctioneers.com, by emailing enquiries@iconicauctioneers.com or by calling +44(0)1926 691 141.

Head Office and Registered Address: Iconic Auctioneers Ltd. The Forge, Harwoods House, Banbury Road, Ashorne, Warwickshire, CV35 0AA.