



### **Note 32**

#### **1923 Sunbeam: Exhaust valve condition post- French Grand Prix**

As in the main text, Callingham of Shell (294) stated that the winning Sunbeam had exhaust valves so badly burnt at the end of the race that it was doubtful if the car could have raced much further. Certainly it is agreed in Segrave's autobiography (763) that *Guinness'* engine had burnt valves, so that he stalled it at a hairpin on the last lap and had trouble re-starting, thereby losing a place and finishing 4<sup>th</sup>, but Segrave says he drove his own car which "*was in excellent condition*" back to England. It is the case that he had been unable to use above 90% of peak revs (756) for 86% of the race (763) without clutch slippage because of a faultily-fitted back stop but this then broke off and he had full power. The restriction must have saved his engine

The statements of Callingham and Segrave *are* reconcilable, bearing in mind that the winning engine would have had its block-cum-head removed after the race for officials to check the dimensions (Callingham, as a technical representative, may have been present). This would have offered the opportunity for the Sunbeam mechanics to do a top-end overhaul before Segrave returned to Wolverhampton.

On the other hand, Callingham, writing 13 years later, may have simply misremembered which engine had suffered.

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