Putting on the Ritz.......... 

OK what’s the excuse this time? Why the radio silence for the past few months?

Well rather than answer that I think we should jump back behind the wheel for another triple stint.........the first laps should be about a recent event that I was lucky enough to be invited to, a celebration of **25 Years of GT Racing** hosted by SRO at the Palais Brongnian Paris.
The former French stock-exchange was a suitably imposing venue for such a celebration. The Great and the Good of GT racing turned out for an action packed evening in Paris.
Everywhere I turned there were stars and outside there were cars, from the Venturi Trophy and 1992 to the latest Blancpain racers, via BPR, FIA GT, GT3, GT1 World Championship and Lamborghini Super Trofeo.
Seeing some of the participants for the first time in many years was emotional for me, from Laurence Pearce to Michel Neugarten or Ray Bellm to Thomas Bscher, the memories came tumbling back.
We are all a little older, greyer but even faster than we were back in the day, at least that is what we told each other.
Stéphane Ratel was the star of the show, without his vision and hard work over the years none of us would have assembled on a chilly November night in the heart of Paris. He had saved endurance racing from oblivion in the early ’90s and his actions helped the ACO rebuild their Great Race. The following evening I was flicking through the channels when I stumbled upon “Stones in the Park”, some of Mick Jagger’s moves looked very familiar……..

Of course Stéphane has assembled a great crew of people over the quarter of a century, none more important to the cause than Patricia Kiefer, though she prefers to remain out of the limelight. No such modesty was permitted on this night when the achievements of SRO and its crew were saluted by the GT paddocks.
The others who have steered the SRO ship over the years were also present; Jürgen, Patrick, Olivier, Benjamin, Jean, Gustave, Lucette, Jacquie, Laurent, Claude, Sophie, Mike, Richard, Bernadette, Fiona, Valerie, Adelheid, Sébastien, Anthony and many others that I have not encountered in the SRO family, if I have missed someone out I apologise.
Speaking with Audi’s Dr Ullrich before the event I learnt that he is in the final few weeks of his stellar career with the German giant, time waits for no man, motor sport will miss him.
The 828 guests who sat down to dine and celebrate were treated to various entertainments from SRO’s Mike Scott’s excellent videos about the racing down the years to the undoubted charms of the ladies of the Moulin Rouge. well it was Paris.
It was a night to remember..................

John Brooks, December 2017