



Déjà Vu of Porsche 911 2.4 S - Part 2

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Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972) in company with a 991 GT3 and a 993 Carrera, on a tour of Cork, Ireland, March 2015

And here comes part 2 of Déjà Vu of Porsche 911 2.4 S where the car will be returning to the spot where it all went so terribly wrong. We published [part 1](#) back in November last year, but our blog was down for a few weeks - so sorry for the delay.



Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972), Cork, Ireland, March 2015

During the car's rebuild, the 911 received a new bonnet, a new roof, one new door, two new wings, the front slam panel and the engine cover panel are also all new. When Dave Whelan acquired the car back in 1988, it was Guards red but the day it left the factory, on 9 February 1972, it had been Sepia brown. Whelan again, "Sepia brown was a flat colour, but to my mind, a Porsche is a sports car and I wouldn't feel comfortable with a brown sports car. We finally settled on this colour, which is Porsche black grey, as is found today on the modern 2011 RS."



The Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972) parks up along Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way, March 2015

For a period of ten months, from September 1971 to July 1972, Porsche fitted the oil tank in the wing behind the driver but in front of the rear wheels. This brings the weight, about 12kg including oil, inside the wheelbase of the car but importantly, it brings the weight away from the back of the car. Today the car is very light, and weighs in at just 1025kg.



The interior of the Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972) is typical for the model, and contains very few changes from standard...apart from the fact that the passenger seat was missing!

From previous cars he'd owned, Whelan had a fibreglass rear bumper and a stainless steel dual outlet exhaust, and to replace both of those would have cost thousands of Euros, so he opted for the non-original parts. In the interior he fitted a lightweight RS carpet set, and also saved a good few kilograms by not fitting seats in the back, as Dave said, "I'm never going to carry any people in the back." The car at this time was only fitted with a driver's seat as the fixtures and fittings for the second seat had not arrived in time for fitment when Whelan collected his car. If you ask those who know, the early left-hand drive 911 is considered the better car to drive because the relationship between the seat and the pedals is correctly aligned. In the right-hand drive car this relationship is compromised with the pedals being offset to the left, forcing you to sit with your bum to the right and your feet angled slightly to the left, which is an unnatural position.



Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972), Cork, Ireland, March 2015

Sitting in the driver's seat, you can see the tips of the headlights, and according to Whelan this helps you to plant the car within millimetres of where you want it to go. With many years of 911 racing behind him, Dave Whelan is eminently qualified to comment, "The car is very well-balanced even with the engine at the back, which means you can drive the car rather like a hammer and steer it without actually turning the steering wheel. By just letting off the brakes progressively or even suddenly, you can trail-brake the car which will cause the back to steer and turn into the corner, which means that your front wheels will be pointing straight and therefore create less drag. This means the car will go faster around the corner, and faster out of the corner."



Déjà Vu of Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972)...Dave Whelan returns to scene of the car's last rally just before its accident during the West Cork Rally in 2000



The same car, the same corner, the same driver...fifteen years on! Dave Whelan was keen to recreate the same photograph as the one taken on the day, minutes before its accident.

So this long account brings the story of 'ZT 911' towards its finale, when the author was invited by Dave Whelan to chart the return of his 2.4 S to the location of its accident a decade and a half back - Déjà Vu of Porsche 911 2.4 S. The trip from West Wales to Cork is not that arduous, and the Irish roads, besides being superb, are in many places devoid of traffic. Our trip from Cork up into the hinterland was wonderfully scenic, and trailing behind a 911 was a pleasure, and it wasn't difficult to see why this was the route chosen for the West Cork Rally. We arrived at the point where Dave had to negotiate a traffic island back in the 2000 rally, and set about recreating the scene, fifteen years after the real thing. A few noisy laps of the traffic island brought a rather stern-faced resident out of her house, but before she could deliver her tirade of advice or abuse, we were on our way...job done! It wasn't far from this very point that Dave had his accident, and so the feeling of Déjà vu must



have been very poignant for him.



Dave Whelan takes his fully restored Porsche 911 2.4 S (1972) for a drive down a quiet country road near Cork, Ireland, March 2015

Although a proper ride in the car was not possible as the passenger seat was not in the car, an impromptu run down the road sitting in the back amongst fire extinguisher and other paraphernalia was all that was needed to get an idea of the car's performance. The engine noise was very evident, but so too was the feeling of being in a well sorted, compact, race-bred sports car. The time and money spent on bringing this piece of history back to life will be fully justified, and 'ZT 911' will now travel to events like the Le Mans 24-Hour race or the Nürburgring Oldtimer Grand Prix with its owner as a spectator.

Written by: Glen Smale



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