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Trailblazer McCluggage's XK140 (formerly owned by Briggs Cunningham) Will Take Center Stage During MSHFA Women's History Month



The late race driver/journalist Denise McCluggage will be inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America on March 8, 2022 and a classic sports car that set the trailblazer on her motorsports path will be part of the celebration.

The 1956 Jaguar XK140 credited with inspiring McCluggage's racing career recently arrived in Daytona Beach and will be on display at the MSHFA, which is located on the grounds of Daytona International Speedway, throughout next week's two-day induction celebration, the entirety of March's Women's History Month and beyond.

The MSHFA's sold out 34th Induction Gala Presented by Toyota Racing at the Shores Resort and Spa, March 8, will see McCluggage enshrined as the Class of 2022 At Large inductee.

The once-lost, now-found Jaguar will play a special role in honoring an extraordinary woman who broke gender barriers with legendary charm and merit. McCluggage, who passed away in 2015, was nicknamed "Lady Leadfoot" by motorsports friends and affectionate rivals alike. At a time when women were not often allowed into racing pits or close to any of the action in sports dominated by men, McCluggage toppled gender barriers by participating in the sports she covered. She was a groundbreaking,

award-winning journalist known for her fearless ambition, unwavering tenacity and natural athletic ability.

A cofounder of Autoweek, she was the first journalist to be inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame. McCluggage was also the first woman to receive the Ken W. Purdy Award for Excellence in Automotive Journalism.

“Denise’s role in publishing and sustaining Autoweek, nee Competition Press, during its infancy not only kept the publication going, but played a vital role in the growth of sports car racing in America,” said George Levy, President of the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America. “This is the car that inspired all of that for Denise. “This is the car that made her want to race, and we couldn’t think of a better or more appropriate piece of motorsports history to have on display at the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America for Women’s History Month and beyond.”

“Denise was a pioneer and legend for her many talents – behind the wheel of a race car, brilliant writing and photography, and storytelling,” said Lyn St. James, the 1992 Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year and an accomplished sports car driver who will present McCluggage for induction. “To be able to see this fabulous Jaguar that was one of her first racing cars come back to life is wonderful. Denise was someone who never let a challenge go unmet. Guts and brilliance were her mantra. It is a great honor for me to be able to help induct Denise McCluggage into the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America.”