



Clockwise from left
New Velar contrasts with 1969 Velar chassis 1;
Series III-based digger voted Best of Show;
colourful sign-written Series I recovery truck;
David Brown-inspired 'Land Rover' tractor.



Dunsfold Collection Land Rover Show

Springbok Estate, Alfold, Surrey, UK 10-11 June

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LAND ROVER OWNERS might love mud more than the average motorist, but no-one was complaining about the bright sunshine that bathed the Dunsfold Collection's biennial show, held in the grounds of a home for retired sailors – in deepest Surrey. Yes, really.

Founded by enthusiast Brian Bashall and now run by his son Philip, the Dunsfold Collection is a treasure trove of unique Land Rovers, including many prototypes and experimental vehicles donated by Land Rover since the late 1960s. The vehicles are scattered over various storage units in the south of England and not normally viewable by the public, so every other year the Collection gathers them together for a fund-raising show, supported by clubs, traders and anyone with a passion for preserving Land Rover history.

Fortunately, Jaguar Land Rover itself is one of those supporters, and it brought along a

prototype of the new Velar – which made an interesting contrast with the 1969 Velar, chassis number one, that's owned by a Dunsfold trustee. Velar was, of course, a fake name used to disguise the original Range Rover during testing in the late '60s, which has just been re-adopted by JLR in a nod to its history.

The Collection fields (literally) about 140 historic vehicles at the show, which are backed-up by hundreds of privately entered Land Rovers belonging to clubs and individuals – not to mention dozens more in the public car park. Celebrity TV vet and car enthusiast Mark Evans visited to judge the Best in Show, which he decided was a bright yellow period digger conversion of a Series III Land Rover, superbly restored by Rob Maude. Wearing a long white coat, just like the operator in a 1970s Land Rove promotional film, Rob demonstrated the digger in action, delighting boys of all ages.

Another eye-catching exhibit was a 'Land Rover' tractor, reminiscent of a wartime airfield bomb tug; the quote marks necessary because this convincing machine is actually a flight of fancy, built from a cut-down Series II Landie.

Series Is of the 1950s are more popular than ever, so there were naturally dozens to pore over around the showground, many of them heavily patinated. At the other end of the timeline, the Collection had no fewer than 16 variants of the 1990s Range Rover P38a on show, and this previously unloved second-generation Rangie seems to be enjoying a renaissance among enthusiasts, now that good Range Rover Classics have become so expensive.

Add in the military Land Rovers, Belgium-built Minervas, Camel Trophy expedition vehicles – and plenty of unexceptional but well-loved daily drivers – and there was definitely more than just something for everyone.