

simulations and computer prediction programmes, as part of the information-gathering and build-up to Jaguar's return to the great race – but based on the USA-built Group 44 XR-5 concept. Now the development of a full racing version of the V12 engine with four valves per cylinder moved to the top of Jaguar's agenda, with TWR EngDiv. It involved resurrecting a previous in house project Jaguar had started and then stopped. The prototype four-valve heads had been cast by the factory, but not machined.

TWR also had to play a waiting game during 1983 as TWR were in the junior formula, compared with the Lee Dykstra-designed IMSA space frame sports car Group 44 was using in the IMSA series. This USA team looked to be the logical one to carry out Jaguar's assault on Le Mans and had gained experience in the similar IMSA series with its own Daytona 24 Hour race. The USA was where Jaguar sold most of its cars, and Jaguar USA Vice-President Mike Dale had a close working relationship with Group 44 owner Bob Tullius from the late 1970s when Group 44 was winning in the USA, but Broadsped in Europe was not. Mike Dale was highly respected in the Jaguar organisation, and his patronage of Group 44 carried considerable weight.

It was EngDiv, however, that had been selected to develop the original Jaguar four-valve castings into a future Le Mans engine. This was a vital move to keep TWR in the loop, with one foot firmly in the door for future race programmes outside Group A. Controlling the future engine programmes would put us in a strong position through supply and knowledge when TWR eventually ran Group C cars of its own at Le Mans. The XJS was just a stepping stone to this higher category.

The Group 44 space frame car, at around 940kg, was at a competitive weight in the IMSA series, but by being 80-100kg over the Group C weight limit of 850kg, it looked like the wrong long-term choice. Being second in a supply chain via the USA for chassis and parts would not work for the TWR team, which was looking to move up to Group C as soon as the ETCC series was won. Alarmingly for TWR, Jaguar had signed to build six new Group 44 chassis in September, convinced they were what TWR would later use because Jaguar had spent a considerable amount of money on its concepts and construction. TWR could not live with that if he were to dominate the future racing programmes for Jaguar,