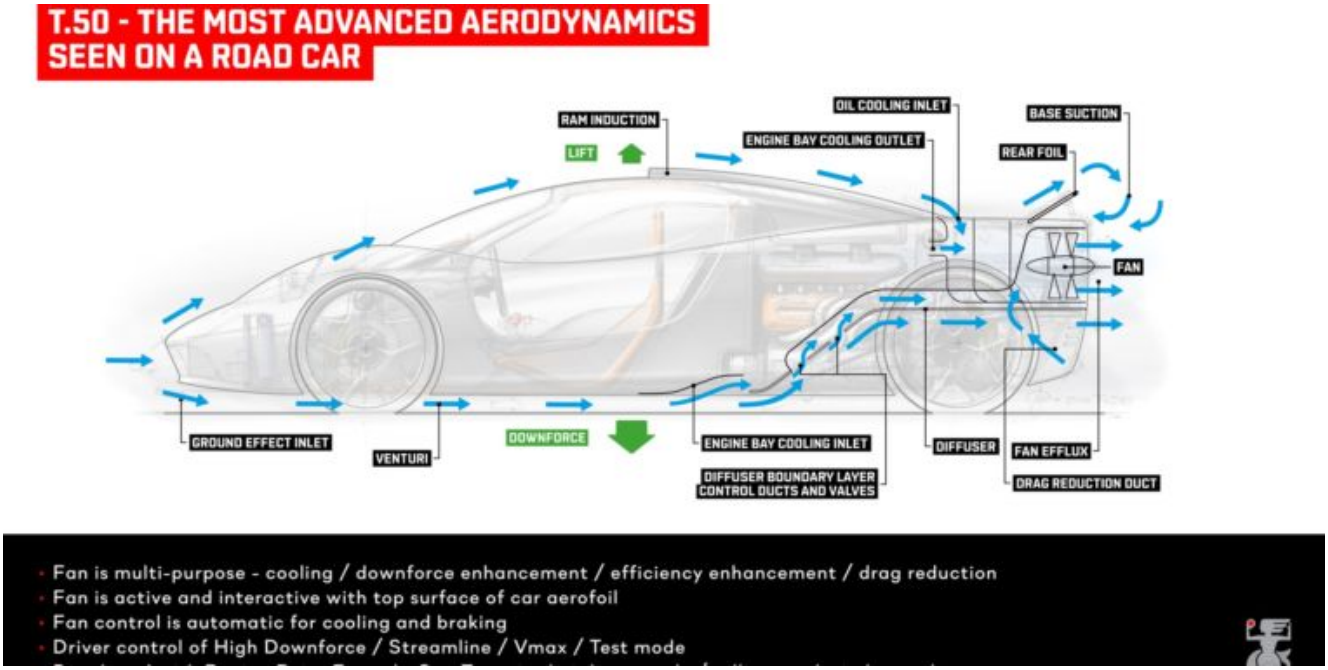
Suction fans, a V12, and manual gears for Gordon Murray's new car



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- This is our best look yet at the Gordon Murray Automotive T.50. There's a lot of McLaren F1 design DNA in there.
  Gordon Murray Design
- Murray stands next to a McLaren F1 at the Quail during Monterey Car Week, 2019.
  Jonathan Gitlin
- Gordon Murray Design
- A reproduction of a page from the McLaren F1 brochure—you can compare this with the preceding diagram to see the similarities between the two designs.

Jonathan Gitlin

- Gordon Murray's sketches of the Brabham BT46B, McLaren F1, and T.50.
  Gordon Murray Design
- The T.50 sketch on its own.
  Gordon Murray Design
- A pressure plot showing the aero before the fan is activated.
  Gordon Murray Design
- With the fan in use, you can see the changes both to the airflow at the top of the car as well as underneath.
  Gordon Murray Design

It's true, I'm a Gordon Murray fan. And not even for his exploits as a designer of Formula 1 race cars—he had retired from the pressures of competition by the time I got interested in the sport in 1993. It has always been about his road cars for me, specifically the McLaren F1. At the time, there was a bit of a supercar craze happening; every month or so a new mid-engined machine would show up with claims of 200mph and a hefty six-digit price tag. Some of them even made it into production. But when the F1 appeared it instantly made them all old news.

But 1994 was a long time ago, and the first F1s are old enough to wear antique plates. The recipe is definitely dated: a naturally aspirated V12, a six-speed manual transmission *with clutch*, and no driver aids, not even ABS or traction control. That does indeed sound dated compared to the current crop of hypercars, which boast megawatts of hybrid or electric power and gigahertz of processing power to tame it all. But Murray believes there's still merit in doing things the old way, which explains his T.50 supercar, new images of which were sent out recently.

Unlike some of his other recent designs, this one will be built in-house and carry the Gordon Murray Automotive name. The design brief has always sounded to me like an evolution of

the F1 design, particularly a three-seat layout with the driver in the middle, a naturally aspirated V12 and six-speed manual transmission, and a mere 2,161lb (980kg) curb weight. But a couple of the images we were sent make that link explicitly clear—compare the shape of the roofline, windows, and engine covers in the rear three-quarter view with an F1, for example. Or, compare the aerodynamic sketch of the T.50 with a similar sketch from the McLaren brochure.

Aerodynamics are important to the T.50—Gordon Murray Automotive is working with the Racing Point F1 team, using its wind tunnel to give the car more advanced aero than anything ever seen on a road car. At the rear of the car is a 15.7-inch (400mm) ground effect fan that sucks the car to the ground, an idea that Murray tried out in Formula 1. Active aerodynamics have been banned in F1 pretty much ever since (technically from the following year), but there are no such restrictions here, and the T.50 also features active rear aerofoils and a number of different selectable profiles that include a "streamline mode," which cuts drag to boost top speed and fuel efficiency, and a high-downforce mode.

"I've dreamt of delivering a road car with a ground-effect fan since I designed the Brabham BT46B F1 racing car in 1978," Murray said in a statement. "The system on the T.50 is much more sophisticated than the Brabham's and will benefit enormously from Racing Point's expertise and resources."

The engine in the T.50 will be a bespoke 650hp (485kW), 331lb-ft (450Nm), 3.9L V12 from Cosworth with a 12,100rpm redline and a 48v mild hybrid system that can add 30hp (23kW) of extra boost for up to three minutes at a time. Note: this is an entirely different engine to the turbocharged V12 that Cosworth is also developing for the Aston Martin Valkyrie hybrid.

We have to wait until May 2020 to see the final design of the T.50 at its official unveiling, with deliveries scheduled to

begin in 2022. Just 100 will be built, so they'll be ever so slightly more exclusive than the F1, of which 106 examples were built. At more than $2.6 million (£2 million) each, there's nothing retro about the price tag, but if you ask Murray, he'll remind you that's still a fraction of what you'd have to pay to buy an F1 these days.

Listing image by Gordon Murray Design

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