



FROM THE EDITORS OF MOTOR SPORT MAGAZINE

# ITALIAN LEGENDS



STARRING: *FERRARI, ALFA ROMEO, LANCIA,*  
*MASERATI, VALENTINO ROSSI, GP HEROES,*  
*THE GREAT ROAD RACES AND MORE*

**MOTORSPORT**



6637

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## 1970 Ferrari Daytona Comp. GR-IV #13855

A very rare Ferrari Daytona GR-IV entered in the 1972 24H of Le Mans. Converted into a Daytona GR-IV Competition by Sport Auto Diena & Silingardi (Modena) in 1972 for the official US Ferrari importer Chinetti (N.A.R.T.) under the supervision of the Ferrari Factory Assistenza Sportiva and engineer Gaetano Florini. The bodywork was modified to GR-IV by Carrozzeria Auto Sport Bachelli & Villa. The car was entered in 1972 24H of Le Mans by Chinetti's N.A.R.T. with racers Jean-Pierre Jarier and Claude Buchet under the number #38 and finished a very successful 9th OA and 5th in Class. Jarier launched his Formula One career with this car. Chinetti was impressed by his skill and offered him to race in the American Championship.

After the 24H of Le Mans the car was revised by the Ferrari factory and later sold by Chinetti to the French Collector Tortora. In 1974 the car was sold by Tortora to Jean Verchère (F) who kept it for 20 years. Sold to the UK in 1994 and restored by DK Engineering between 1994-95. In 1997 it was sold to the present owner in Switzerland where it still remains. It was maintained by Graber Sportgarage and Sportgarage Ruch for the past 28 year and entered for several years in the "Shell Historic Ferrari Challenge". After a major engine damage in 2000, it received a new Piet Roelofs engine bloc. The original bloc comes with the car as well as a gearbox and other spare parts. The car is road registered and tax paid in Switzerland. It comes with a detailed Massini report, a FIVA pass, many pictures and documents as well as his Ferrari Classiche Certificate. **POA**



## 1952 Lancia Aurelia B52 Vignale Coupé

Chassis #B52-1026 is one of only 98 B52 chassis produced by Lancia. This car has a special coachwork by Michelotti-Vignale of Turin, and there where only a handful Vignale's built. All the chassis where made in right hand drive configuration. It is powered by the 2.0 Litre V-6 engine and has the correct Nardi dual carburetor conversion. A complete restoration was performed by KCA in Milan in early 1990. **EUR 365'000**



# WELCOME TO ITALIAN LEGENDS

*Forza Italia:* even if the Formula 1 roll of honour may not reflect huge Mediterranean success of late, there can be no doubting the vast scale of the contribution Italy has, and is still, making to motorsport.

Few countries can rival the list of great Italian brands: Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati, Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Ducati, MV Agusta... Or how about the driving talent: Nuvolari, Farina, Ascari, Agostini, Musso, Andretti, Alboreto, Rossi... And then there are those behind the scenes, pulling the strings: Enzo Ferrari, Mauro Forghieri, Gioacchino Colombo, Carlo Abarth, Ferruccio Lamborghini, the Maserati brothers... Without names such as these, the sport we know would be poorer.

Even when it comes to breaking competition free from the confines of a circuit, the Italians arguably did that best too, thanks to road-racing classics such as the Mille Miglia and Targa Florio where fans lined roads three-deep for a ticketless glimpse at the finest cars and drivers of

the age... talk about bringing the sport to the people.

Italy's love affair with racing goes back to the earliest days, with 'The Flying Mantuan' Nuvolari's efforts on both two wheels and four. Italy dominated the earliest days of world championship grand prix racing - the 1950 British GP at Silverstone featured Italian drivers one-two (Farina from Fagioli) and Italian machinery filling the top five (four Alfa Romeos and a Maserati). Italy would win three from four of those early world titles, and even though time has shifted success elsewhere, the nation continues to be one fuelled by passion and never to be discounted - Ferrari's recent triumphs at Le Mans following its 50-year hiatus being a prime example.

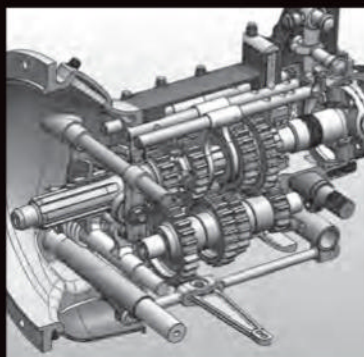
This special issue celebrates some of the icons of Italian motorsport; from circuits to stages, underdogs to unbeatables, giants to garagistes.

*Grazie ragazzi, and enjoy.*

Read more about Italy's incredible contribution to motor racing over the last century in *Motor Sport's* vast archive. Visit: [motorsportmagazine.com](http://motorsportmagazine.com)








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# THE MEN & WOMEN

**Italy has long been a driving force in motor racing. From providing talent behind the wheel to the great minds behind the biggest brands. These are the stories of some who shaped history**

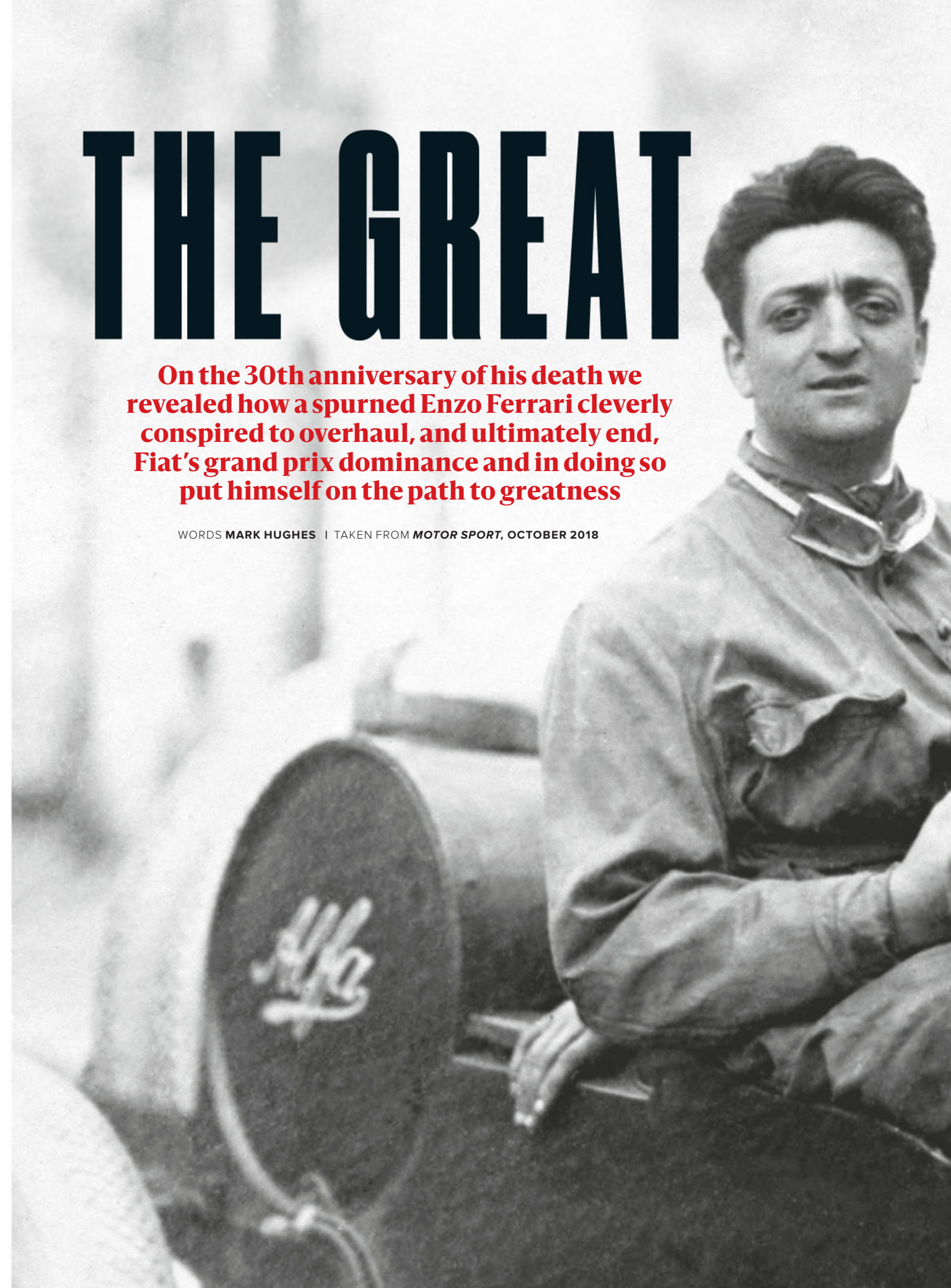




# THE GREAT

**On the 30th anniversary of his death we revealed how a spurned Enzo Ferrari cleverly conspired to overhaul, and ultimately end, Fiat's grand prix dominance and in doing so put himself on the path to greatness**

WORDS MARK HUGHES | TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, OCTOBER 2018





# IMITATION









Before joining Alfa Romeo as a driver – and skilled talent poacher – Enzo Ferrari worked as a test driver for Milanese marque CMN, following his rejection by Fiat

Whatever the 1923 Italian term was for, ‘On your bike, son,’ 25-year-old Enzo Ferrari surely uttered it as the *carabiniere* walked away empty-handed. The officer had arrived at Alfa Romeo’s Milan factory earlier that autumn day with legal papers that allowed him, on behalf of Fiat, to search the offices

of Alfa’s new designer Vittorio Jano. He was looking for racing car blueprints that Jano might have ‘forgotten’ to leave at Fiat’s Lingotto factory in Turin, when he’d recently left its employ. When that search proved fruitless so it then moved to Jano’s house – and again nothing was found.

It was Ferrari who had tempted Jano into defecting from Fiat, the same Fiat that had told a desperate Enzo just four years earlier that it couldn’t afford to give jobs to every war veteran that walked into their offices off the street, letter of introduction from his commanding officer or no. Ferrari, his father and brother recently deceased, feeling totally alone and now apparently without prospects, later described how he had walked over the road to Valentino Park that day, brushed the snow off a bench there, sat down – and wept.

With the benefit of detachment and hindsight, it’s easy to see Fiat’s points, both in 1919 and ’23. At the cessation of the war there was rather more labour available than there was space in the factories, and it would have been difficult to know to what use to put a mule-shoer anyway. While in ’23 they had already been the victims of head-hunting, Fiat’s best technical brains – the men who had conceived the fabulous epoch-making series of grand prix cars that left the rest trailing in their dust – being poached with bags of gold.

The big names were the first to go: Vincenzo Bertarione and Walter Becchia to Sunbeam in late ’22. But now the second layer of brilliant but lesser-known talent: Luigi Bazzi, a friend of Ferrari’s, to Alfa a

year later. Once ensconced at Alfa, Bazzi suggested that the guy they really needed was Fiat’s backroom technical manager, Jano. So it was that Ferrari set off to Turin on another vital errand for his employer Alfa, sucking the talent from the company that spurned him and directing it against them with targeted purpose. Fiat would not have even known the resentment it had triggered, nor how that was fuelling the depletion of its ranks.

It wasn’t just the money that was tempting them; there was resentment within the ranks, too. That was down to what would now be called the poor people skills of Fiat’s brilliant but volatile technical director, Guido Fornaca, aka ‘The Duke of Lingotto’. He was the chief ally of company founder Gianni Agnelli and a shareholder in the business. A brilliant engineer, he had conceived many of the pre-war racing Fiats as well as several series of successful road cars. As head of the technical department, his patience for imperfection was thin. But people didn’t respond like machinery to his iron will. With the whiff of social foment in the post-war Italian air – Fiat’s factory had recently been the venue for a workers’ soviet, the dissidents barring both Agnelli and Fornaca from entering – those beneath the authoritarian Fornaca, their salaries a fraction of the shareholding income of their boss and dwarfed even by their peers elsewhere, set up their own quiet little rebellions and were all too ready to defect.

The ’23 French race had been a debacle for Fiat, the fastest cars by a massive margin – way faster even than the ‘green Fiats’, as the copycat Bertarione-designed Sunbeams were dubbed – but all three retired whilst leading. The Bertarione/Becchia Sunbeam triumphed, and if that didn’t provide irritation enough to Fiat, there was also the new Delage to bug them: the previous year its designer, Charles Planchon, had been observed blatantly photographing the Fiat’s engine. And even if the Delage’s V12 layout trumped Fiat for audacity, its detail revealed the heart of its inspiration lay in Turin; the same valve angles, same bore/stroke ratio, ☐

**“Ferrari, his father and brother recently deceased, walked to Valentino Park, brushed the snow off a bench there, sat down – and wept”**



same crankcase architecture, it even had the same triple concentric valve springs! So Fornaca's mood was almost certainly poor even before his cars stopped. His frustration can easily be imagined; he'd built the most brilliant technical team of all time and now others simply plundered it. Not only plundered it - but now in Tours used that plunder to beat it! But only because Fiat had shot itself in the foot; it had lost not through insufficient performance, but sub-standard preparation. The supercharged racers had been tested on the smooth, clean surface of Monza - which was nothing like the dust-strewn public roads of Tours, pummeled to little more than farm tracks once the race cars had been let loose on it.

In the aftermath, that very evening in Tours, Fornaca had ranted about the circumstances that had led the Fiat's new-fangled superchargers to seize through ingestion of dust, throwing blame all around him. Bazzi, a proud man and a very able engineer, was not prepared to accept that, and the pair had a blazing, and very public, row.

When Bazzi had related the story to Ferrari, Enzo sensed his opportunity. "Come to Alfa, we are much smaller, more personal, good people, working on a grand prix car of our own, but we need someone with your experience." This much was apparent a couple of months later at Monza where the company attempted to enter the grand prix arena. Ugo Sivocci - a close friend of Ferrari's, the man who had thrown him a lifeline after Fiat had so glibly brushed him off - was killed testing the new Alfa there, Enzo cradling his dying friend as they took him to hospital.

Not long after crying on that park bench, Ferrari had befriended Sivocci, an ex-racing cyclist who then found Enzo a job at the small car company CMN at which he worked. Their efforts there had led to their recruitment by Alfa in 1920, as race drivers. But Enzo's role quickly evolved from there, his wheeler-dealer talents and familiarity with Milan's car racing milieu becoming increasingly valued by Alfa's racing manager, Giorgio Rimini. The Alfa racing adventure gathered momentum, taking Ferrari and

Sivocci along with it. But now this - an innocuous slide on a wet track, the slippery wet grass, the ditch beyond it, the roll, the crushing weight of the car...

But even before that catastrophe it was fairly apparent the new Alfa P1 was not made of the stuff to strike fear into Fiat's heart. Bazzi looked around him, saw the limitations of the operation and knew that Jano was the man to lick it into shape - and so Fiat was plundered further, Enzo's persuasive talents probably pushing against an open door, the deal signed off by Rimini, a glint in his eye, cigarette dangling from his mouth.

Ferrari was awe-struck by Jano's work that winter: "No description could do credit to this extraordinary man and his fertile brain. With Jano, there came over to Alfa also other technical staff of less renown. Once in Milan, Jano took command of the situation, introduced a military-like discipline and in a few months succeeded in turning out the P2."

But Jano's creation, Alfa's weapon for the 1924 season, bore a striking similarity to the Fiat, much more so even than the Sunbeams. Fiat's lead driver Pietro Bordino first set eyes upon it at Lyon, venue for that year's Grand Prix de l'ACF, the most prestigious race of the season. "Hey, if you need any parts for your new car, come see us," he was reported to have told Jano, sarcastically.

Fiat was the establishment, the world's greatest, most technologically advanced automotive giant. Its culture was one of learned, enlightened progress, its products the mechanical embodiment of intellectual rigour. Alfa Romeo was a small, regional manufacturer, not long since graduated from building Darracqs under licence, its competition arm little more than a racing shop. Enzo Ferrari was an operator, not a big company man. He hustled, sniffed opportunities and made something from them. Working for a corporation wouldn't have been his thing; he would not have worked long under Fornaca, but under the chiding, mischievous but shrewd patronage of Rimini, who gave

**"The man who had thrown Ferrari a lifeline was killed during testing, Enzo cradling his dying friend"**

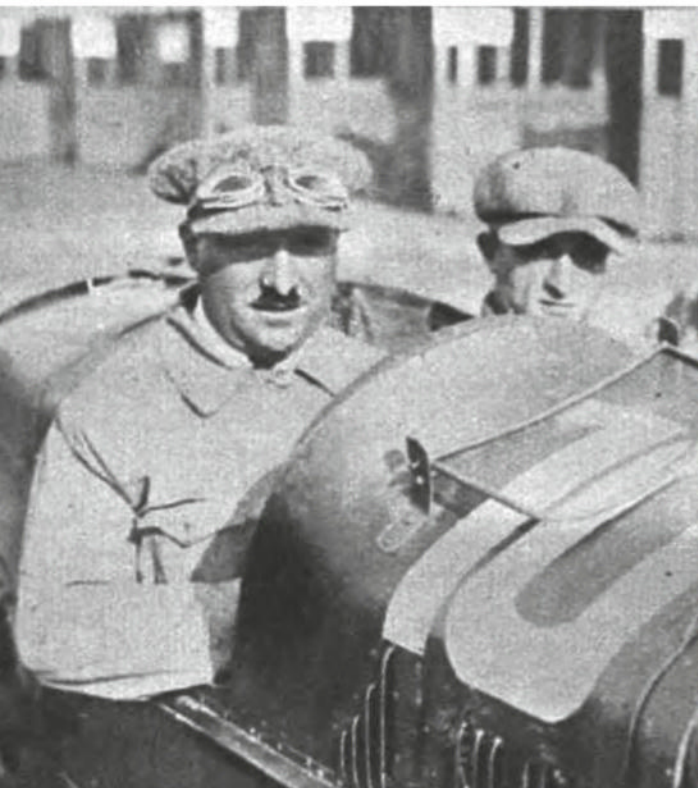






A young Enzo Ferrari  
(right) in the pits at Monza  
alongside Italian engineer  
and entrepreneur  
Nicola Romeo (middle)  
and engineer Giuseppe  
Morosi (left) in 1923





The XVIII Grand Prix de l'A.C.F took place at Lyon in August 1924. It was won by Giuseppe Campari driving an Alfa Romeo P2, copycat Fiat or not

his protégé ever more responsibility in running the racing operation. As he evidently passed successive tests, Ferrari blossomed. Shrinking back from what would have been his grand prix debut as a driver at Lyon in a P2 was perhaps one of the shrewdest moves he ever made.

Enzo caught a train home that day, but what he had helped put in place set up the operators, the chancers, the copyists, to take on and beat Fiat through superior preparation - and the second successive humiliation was the final straw for Fiat. After Bordino fell out of his fight for the lead with Antonio Ascari's Alfa because of a brake problem - for which ironically the team had no spares, despite Bordino's earlier taunt - Fornaca howled again, raged against the imbeciles under his command. "Why had the cars been driven here, wearing them out before the race had even started? We already knew the folly of this from the Targa earlier in the year when Carlo Salamano had crashed down a ravine on the way to the race, damaging the car and breaking his arm! Why were there no spare brake parts? For such stupidity we are beaten by our inferiors, our copyists - again! We train all our people, gift them the greatest environment in the world in which to learn, and they betray us. Well if all racing is doing

**"We train all our people, gift them the greatest environment in the world to learn, all for them to betray us..."**

is advertising how brilliant our engineers are, a shop window for our rivals to buy from, then we stop. We stop now, and direct ourselves to more pressing matters."

**A**lfa celebrated with the winner, Giuseppe Campari, the amateur opera singer no doubt let loose with his vocal apparatus, lubricated by vino. Alfa may have used a copycat design to triumph but it had utilised that tool more effectively, had prepared more thoroughly. Ascari had driven the car to victory in a minor Italian race, two months before - engineer Bazzi acting as his riding mechanic, listening to every little noise, observing the car's every nuance - debugging the car before it mattered. Campari had put further racing miles on it a month later. At Lyon, Ascari - the only other driver who may have been as fast as the great Bordino - took on the

leading Fiat, the pair slugging it out like a couple of heavyweights in the ring. Although that battle did for both cars, in Campari Alfa had a faster driver than any of those left in support of Bordino at Fiat once Felice Nazzaro had retired, also with brake failure. That would not have been the case had Salamano not still been incapacitated from that silly accident earlier in the year.

The big company resource of Fiat had been defeated by the sharp racing savvy of a small, independent-thinking group of racers. And it caused the corporation to leave racing. It was a theme that would be repeated many times in the sport's history with many different players. In among it all on many of those occasions would be that great agitator of men, Enzo Ferrari. Now he had prospects, oh yes; he'd barely even started. That *carabiniere* receding into the distance was just one of many challenges he would see off. ◉



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**A**lberto Ascari drove racing cars as though born to it - which, of course, he had been. Father Antonio - much admired by the formative Enzo Ferrari - had until his fatal accident of 1925 fleetingly been the world's best drivers. His son, however, would outstrip him before he, too, was killed at the wheel.

Career delayed by World War II - he had, however, driven a Ferrari in all but name in the emasculated Mille Miglia of 1940 - Alberto was turning 32 by the time of the World Championship's inauguration in 1950. Young in the context: Juan Fangio was seven years his senior.

For the next four seasons the debate would rage as to which of these two was the better. It was nip and tuck.

But for a misguided tyre swap in the 1951 showdown at Barcelona, Ascari might have denied Fangio a first world title. Handed a car advantage by Ferrari for 1952 - and in Fangio's absence due to a broken neck - he then dominated that season and much of the next to become the first back-to-back world champion.

His racing MO was to jump into an immediate lead - in the manner of Clark or Stewart - swiftly demoralise the opposition and control proceedings thereafter. Mistakes were few and far between. It was in this manner that he won nine consecutive grands prix.

If there was a weakness in his armoury it showed in the 10th race of this sequence: he led not a single lap in finishing a close fourth in the 1953 French GP at Reims - the Race of the Century - and it was left to his younger, less experienced team-mate Mike Hawthorn to take the fight to - and win against - the increasingly competitive Maseratis of Fangio and Froilán González.

Ascari could 'tiger' (Jenks-speak for battling with controlled desperation against long odds) as his charge to that year's title at the fearsome Bremgarten in Switzerland proved. But that he then tripped at the last corner in a four-way scramble - Maserati's Onofre Marimón was several laps adrift and should have butted out - for victory at Monza confirmed the suspicion that he wasn't entirely comfortable in a dice situation.

We are picking holes here.

Feeling under appreciated by Enzo - continual success had bred complacency at Maranello - Ascari allowed himself to be wooed by Gianni Lancia's overly ambitious vision of FI's future and thus spent much of 1954 on the sidelines. He qualified on the front row at Reims when loaned to Maserati,



# FERRARI'S FIRST WORLD CHAMPION

**The first back-to-back grand prix world champion, who duelled with Fangio. Alberto Ascari is unarguably one of motor racing's all-time greats**

WORDS PAUL FEARNLEY / TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT ONLINE, SEPTEMBER 2020

and was leading at Monza upon his one-off return to Ferrari when the engine let go. And when finally Lancia's D50 arrived, albeit in a less radical form than had been mooted - needs must - Ascari put it on pole at Barcelona and led until gremlins struck early.

Continuing reliability niggles - Lancia had overstretched and was feeling the pinch - blighted the launch of his 1955 campaign, too. Rival Mercedes-Benz had in the meantime upped its game, not least by the signing of Stirling Moss in support of Fangio. Ascari was under pressure like never before.

Having survived GP racing's most memorable crash - bobbing to the surface after his car had plunged into the Monaco harbour - Ascari attended Eugenio Castellotti's test of a Ferrari sports car that

they were to share in the Monza 1000km. There was no suggestion that he was scheduled to drive it that day.

Ascari was not only a stickler for detail - as evinced by his neat style behind the wheel - but also he was extremely superstitious. Yet he chose to tempt fate - and crashed to his death in a borrowed car while wearing a borrowed helmet. He was just four days older than his late father - both having met their maker on the same day of a month. That's just spooky coincidence. What's amazing - and indicative - is that car-crazy Italy has yet to nurture a driver of similar status - although Ascari did inspire a certain Mario Gabriele Andretti prior to him pursuing his ambition and talent in America. ◉



Ascari during the 1952 British Grand Prix at Silverstone. He started on equal pole after both he and Ferrari team-mate Giuseppe 'Nino' Farina set identical 1:50sec laps. He went on to win by a full lap in his 500



**"His racing MO was to jump into an immediate lead, demoralise the opposition, and control things from there"**

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# FIRST OF THE BREED

**Cold, hard and utterly ruthless. Dr Giuseppe Farina was the first man to win a world championship GP. He took pole and set the fastest lap too. Top that. Nico...**

**WORDS NIGEL ROEBUCK  
TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT* MAY 2006**





**W**hen Nico Rosberg took the fastest lap in his first grand prix, in Bahrain, it was pointed out to him that he was only the fourth driver in history to achieve this feat. Keke's boy doesn't miss much: yes, he was pleased to be one of only four, but smilingly suggested that really it was three, the fourth being merely the driver who set fastest lap at the first world championship grand prix...

The race in question was, of course, the Grand Prix d'Europe, at Silverstone in May 1950, and the man who set the fastest lap also took pole position and won the race – and doing it all, what's more, with a patched-up collarbone. He then went on to become the first world champion.

Giuseppe Farina. A mellifluous name for a racing driver. And it was Dottore Giuseppe Farina, no less, his doctorate being in law.

Farina, nephew of the celebrated 'Pinin', was born in 1906 and won several major races with Maseratis and Alfa Romeos in the 1930s. As with Hermann Lang, it was his tragedy that the Second World War took away what would surely have been his greatest years.

The family had been wealthy. By the time he was 17 'Nino' had resolved to race, and to that end began speculating on the stock market. After some initial success he

lost the lot, and more, and his father was required to bail him out.

Farina Snr must have been an understanding fellow. "I told him why I had been trying to raise money – to buy a racing car – and he bought a couple of Alfa Romeo sportscars, which we both raced..." By 1936 Giuseppe had been invited to join Scuderia Ferrari and, when Tazio Nuvolari left for Auto Union two years later, he became Enzo's number one driver.

Already Farina had the reputation of a man to be approached with care. A patrician figure out of the car, he was an utterly ruthless one within it. In the one-off Deauville Grand Prix of 1936 he impatiently shoved Marcel Lehoux off the road, and in those days this was not the almost trifling matter it has become today, when the cars are strong, the run-off areas huge. Lehoux was killed, and the same fate befell László Hartmann, another who tangled with Farina, at Tripoli.


Years later a young Stirling Moss would encounter Farina: "He was a great driver, and I loved his style at the wheel – that relaxed, arms outstretched way he had. I thought it looked so good that I copied it!"

"On the track, though, Farina was a bastard, completely ruthless – dangerous. And the worst of it was that he'd behave exactly the same way with an inexperienced guy. If he was lapping you, boy, you'd better make sure you didn't get in his way – he'd

just push you off the road. In those days there genuinely was a different attitude to what we used to call dirty driving, and you really didn't come across it very often. But he was something else."

When racing resumed after the war Farina was a member of the Alfa Romeo factory squad, his team-mates Achille Varzi, Felice Trossi and Jean-Pierre Wimille. In 1946 he won the Grand Prix des Nations at Geneva, but left Alfa towards the end of the year and didn't race at all in '47. The following season he was back, now with a privately-entered Maserati, in which he won the first post-war Monaco Grand Prix. By the end of the decade the world had changed for Alfa Romeo. Varzi had been killed at Berne in 1948, and Wimille (in a Simca-Gordini) at Buenos Aires in early '49; a few months later Trossi died of cancer. For the 1950 season it was to be the three Fs: Fagioli, Farina – and Fangio.

The incomparable Juan Manuel was the best driver in the team, but in 1950 there really wasn't that much to choose between him and Farina. If Fangio won at Spa, Reims and Monaco, so his rival triumphed at Silverstone, Berne and Monza, and when the points were totted up Farina was world champion.

The following year, though, he won only once, at Spa, and by now Fangio's main opposition was coming from Ferrari's 

**"When on track, Farina was ruthless, dangerous... he'd push you off the road"**



The first of his kind: Farina takes the chequered flag at Silverstone in 1950 to win the inaugural world championship grand prix for Alfa Romeo



Alberto Ascari. Farina could no longer be considered Italy's top driver, and it did not sit well with him.

At the end of 1951 Alfa Romeo withdrew, whereupon Farina joined Ascari at Ferrari. It was a thankless task, ultimately, for coming were the years of Alberto in his pomp. From June '52 to June '53 he did not lose a single world championship grand prix, and his team-mates were left to pick up the scraps. Farina won at the Nürburgring in '53 only because Ascari's car, for once, failed him.

There were, though, plenty of non-championship victories, and it was by any standards a fine season for a man of 47 – who had not a thought of retirement in his head.

In fact, it would have been a good moment to call it a day. By 1954 Ascari had left for Lancia, leaving Farina as de facto number one at Ferrari, but he had a bad accident while leading the Mille Miglia and then, almost immediately, a much worse one in practice for the *Supercortemaggiore* sportscar race at Monza, when his car's fuel tank was punctured by a broken driveshaft and the cockpit was enveloped in flames.

By the time he had got the car stopped Farina had been severely burned. "For the rest of that summer, and the winter as well," he remarked, "I had to regard myself as an irritating invalid..." Convalescence was by no means complete by the beginning of

1955, but still he flew off to Argentina for the first grand prix of the year.

It was not a great time to be a Ferrari driver, for the ill-handling 'Squalo' was by then not competitive with the Mercedes W196, and Farina was increasingly dispirited.

At Spa, though, there was an opportunity for him to display all his warrior qualities, good and bad. While Fangio and Moss rushed away, Farina had a ferocious scrap for third place with the Lancia of Eugenio Castellotti.

At 25 the debonair Castellotti, a protégé of Ascari, was very much the darling of Italian motor racing, and therefore guaranteed to raise Farina's hackles. Every trick in the book he pulled that day, on one lap edging the Lancia dangerously close to the pits on the run down to Eau Rouge. No pit wall in those days, of course: the mechanics had to scatter.

Ultimately Castellotti's car failed, and everyone felt relief when the young man pulled in, safe. Farina went on to finish third, but he was a minute and a half behind the Mercedes, and angry.

"I went to see Ferrari and asked him not to make me drive any more, as I felt it was a waste of time battling against the Germans, and I didn't come back to racing until Monza. By then Ferrari had acquired the Lancia D50s. I was scheduled to race one and I set the fifth-best time in practice, but

we had bad tyre problems and the cars had to be withdrawn." Essentially that was the end of Farina's career, although he made a couple of unsuccessful attempts to qualify for the Indianapolis 500 in 1956 and '57. Thirty-odd years on I bought a 500 programme, signed by every '56 competitor, including Farina. "That's amazing," said an expert friend. "Farina's autograph is much rarer than Ascari's, or even Nuvolari's. He never liked signing autographs..."

No more he did, and it was the same with interviews, and even relationships with other drivers. I once asked Fangio what he had thought of Farina, and he rolled his eyes. "He was... strange. When a driver was hurt he never went to visit him in hospital, and once, when I did that for him, he asked me why I had. 'Because I felt sorry for you,' I said, 'and wanted to wish you well.' You should feel happy," he said. "One less to beat next weekend..."

"Farina was not in the category of Ascari or Moss, but he was still a great driver. Very fast, although I didn't like to go too close. But on the road – a madman! Completely loco! I hated to drive with him in traffic!"

In 1966 Farina was involved in the making of *Grand Prix*, and at the end of June set off to drive to Reims for the French Grand Prix. Near Chambéry he encountered freak weather, and died instantly when his Lotus-Cortina crashed on an icy road. ●

Farina leads Alfa Romeo team-mate Jean-Pierre Wimille in the Grand Prix des Nations at Geneva in 1946. This was one of the first major motor races following the end of the war. Farina and Wimille dominated, winning a heat each before Farina took the final glory



PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES





Clockwise from left: Enzo Ferrari (left) speaks with Farina during testing, the pair had an up and down relationship. Above: (L-R) Alberto Ascari, Juan Manuel Fangio and Farina, three icons of the sport. Right: Stirling Moss with Farina at the Supercortemaggiore sports car race at Monza in 1956



**"Farina was not in the category of Ascari or Moss, but still a great driver"**





# **“Fangio told me I drove too fast”**

**Always feisty and competitive, Maria Teresa de Filippis was the first woman to make a grand prix grid. And the determination the Maestro saw then is still evident today**

**WORDS ROB WIDDOWS / TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT, FEBRUARY 2012**



**I** have recently spent some time with a remarkable woman, so spirited, so passionate, so bright-eyed. And she is 85 years old. We salute the first woman to race in a world championship grand prix, now the grand old lady of motor racing.

On May 18, 1958 Maria Teresa de Filippis drove onto the streets of Monte Carlo in a Maserati 250F, the car that Juan Manuel Fangio had used to win his fifth world championship the previous year. This was a big moment, not only for Maria Teresa but also for the sport. Women in the 1950s were popular in the pits, but not in the cockpit.

Born in Naples into a wealthy family, de Filippis has never been one for toeing the line. From childhood she was headstrong, knew her own mind. Her aristocratic and competitive father, Conte de Filippis, masterminded the electrification of large parts of rural southern Italy while running many successful companies. He had steered his daughter towards horses, and for a while she was happy in the saddle, and very competitive; keeping up with three brothers had stiffened her resolve.

"My brothers, they had a bet that I could never be a really fast driver," she says, eyes flashing. "So my father, he gave me a Fiat 500 - I was 22 and I won my first ever race in that car. And that is how it began - after the horses, it was cars. I loved the speed, the thrill of it."

By 1954, the 28-year-old was winning races across Italy and finished runner-up in the Italian Sports Car Championship, racing her own Urania-BMW, a more powerful Giaur, then an OSCA. The wins kept coming and de Filippis began to think about a move to single-seaters. Eyebrows were raised about a woman who had the nerve to take on the men in a man's world.

"It never worried me, all of that," she says. "I just wanted to race. My father helped me, of course; he inspired me to succeed in whatever I chose to do. My mother didn't object too much either - because I was winning. She liked that, you know. Physically it was not a problem, not in the sports cars anyway - I was fit, riding horses and competing all the time as a teenager."

There are three of us involved in this chat - Maria Teresa and her husband Theo Huschek chipping in with translation. There is clearly a deep bond between husband and wife, married for half a century and working as a team.

"You have to understand," Theo dives in, a look of amused admiration in his eyes. "Maria Teresa is a very determined woman,



De Filippis took part in five world championship grands prix, this is her fourth, in Portugal in her Maserati 250F run by Scuderia Centro Sud

## "Why would I want to go to Ferrari? Just because I am Italian? No..."

not afraid of anything, and nobody can tell her what to do, or not to do. And she can be intolerant, passionately so, when someone stands in her way or insults her intelligence."

Earlier in the day de Filippis had given short shrift to a young reporter who wanted to ask her about Formula 1. What had been the problem, I wondered?

Theo laughs heartily.

"She was asked how she dealt with sponsors when she was in F1. Sponsors? My God, Maria Teresa is from one of Italy's richest families. There were no sponsors, no managers. She raced her own cars, made her own decisions, and even at Maserati she took no orders. Just because they were men, that didn't mean they could tell her what to do."

De Filippis is smiling: "That is why I went to Maserati, and why I never wanted to go to Ferrari. Why would I want to be at Ferrari? Just because I am Italian? No. I did not want to be commanded by Mr Ferrari. I spoke to him and I told him I didn't want to drive for his team. In those days he would say one word and everybody jumped. That was not for me. Also, I felt there was no real culture, no real depth to it all. At Maserati it was more a family concern, with more real people and they were easier to talk to. And I could take my own car to the team, that was important for me."

"Let me tell you, Maria Teresa is not at all a normal person," adds Theo. "She was taught privately, taught the values of the real world at that time - honour, engagement, responsibility, things like that - and they never talked about money. It was not worth speaking about in the family. The attitude was that nobody was going to tell a de Filippis what to do."

Maria Teresa had built a reputation through the lower formulae for having exceptional courage, even being a little too brave at times. Moving to the Maserati Grand Prix team in 1958 was by far her biggest challenge yet.

"Fangio told me I drove too fast, that I should try to go a little slower," she says, her face alive with the memory. "But I was never anxious, I didn't feel any fear. These men in F1, they were my heroes - Fangio, Ascari, Villoresi - and they were good to me. I never had any problems with the big drivers, only the smaller ones who didn't like it when I beat them. I admired Fangio, as a person and a driver, because he was a simple man and he worked very hard to achieve all the success he had. Nothing was given to him. On the track I called him my 'race father' because he treated me so well, so normally, and I admired him for that. He was a gentle man." 🟠



In those far-off days de Filippis was a glamorous addition to the pitlane, a tough driver but also a beautiful young woman - a fact that did not escape her many admirers. But she won't be drawn into tales of romance, let alone any revelry, in the heady world of grand prix racing.

"The relationships within the team were influenced by the older drivers. They were all older than me so they would protect me from anything like that. I could look after myself, you know, and when things became too intense or too vulgar then I would joke with them, make fun of them, and they would go away."

Tony Brooks, who raced against her in 1957, backs this up: "There must have been a bit of chauvinism - not much has changed there, F1 is pretty macho - but she was well able to cope. She was an attractive lady, and I believe she was courted by Luigi Musso, but she was admired not only for her beauty but also for her courage in a racing car. She had guts, and was respected by her fellow competitors. I thought it was absolutely great she was in grand prix racing."

In her book, *La Signorina F1*, de Filippis describes the challenge of Monaco in a Maserati 250F. But the book is now out of print, so to hear it from the woman herself is a pleasure.

"*Si, si, va bene*, I tell you," she begins, gesticulating for me to listen. "For Monte Carlo, I was aware there was some craziness, something missing in my head. Everybody was encouraging me, they say 'Maria Teresa, pay attention when you drive in Monte Carlo'. But I had courage, maybe too much, and the limit of my fear was perhaps too far away. I was not frightened of speed and that's not always a good thing."

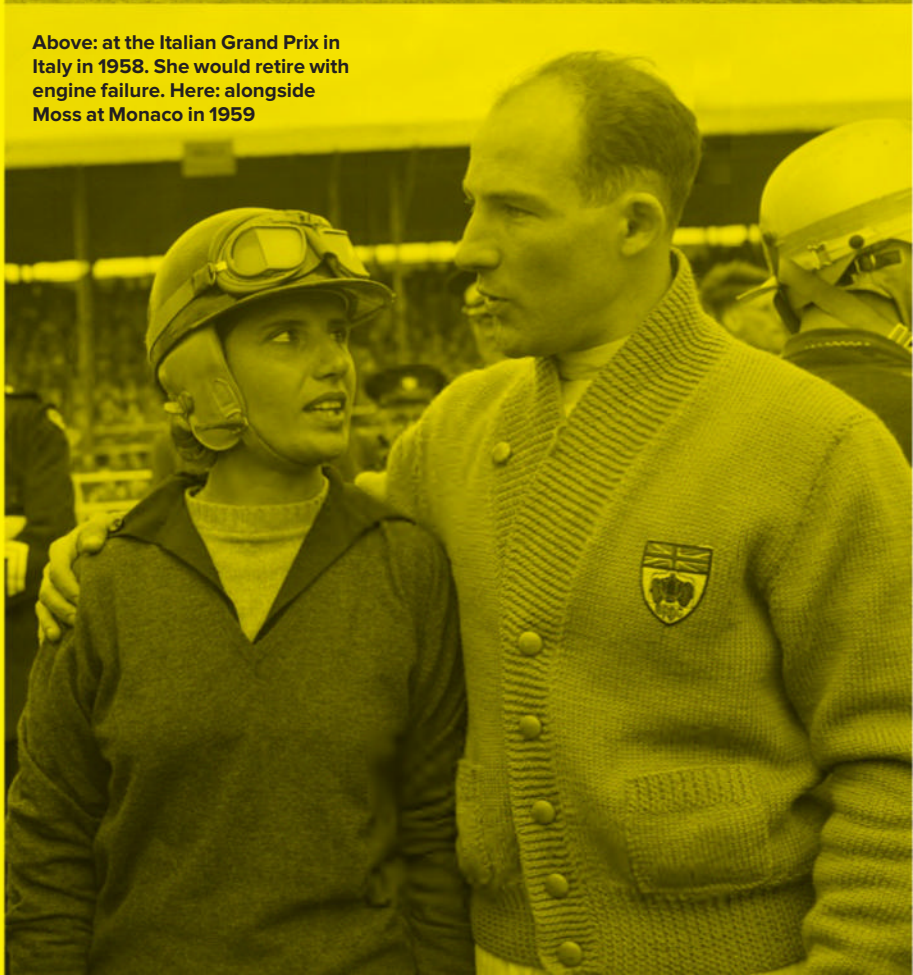
"I was at the limit of my physical stamina - the steering on the 250F was so heavy in the slow corners," she says, moving around in her seat as if perched in the cockpit of the Maserati, leaning her head to one side. "It was OK at speed, but in the bends it was very tiring. That was one of my problems in Monte Carlo, it was man's work there, and I came to the point where physically it was too much. At somewhere like Spa it was not a problem. But nobody expected me to win in Monaco, so in those circumstances I could do what I wanted with no shame."

In the end, she failed to qualify for the race, but a point had been made.

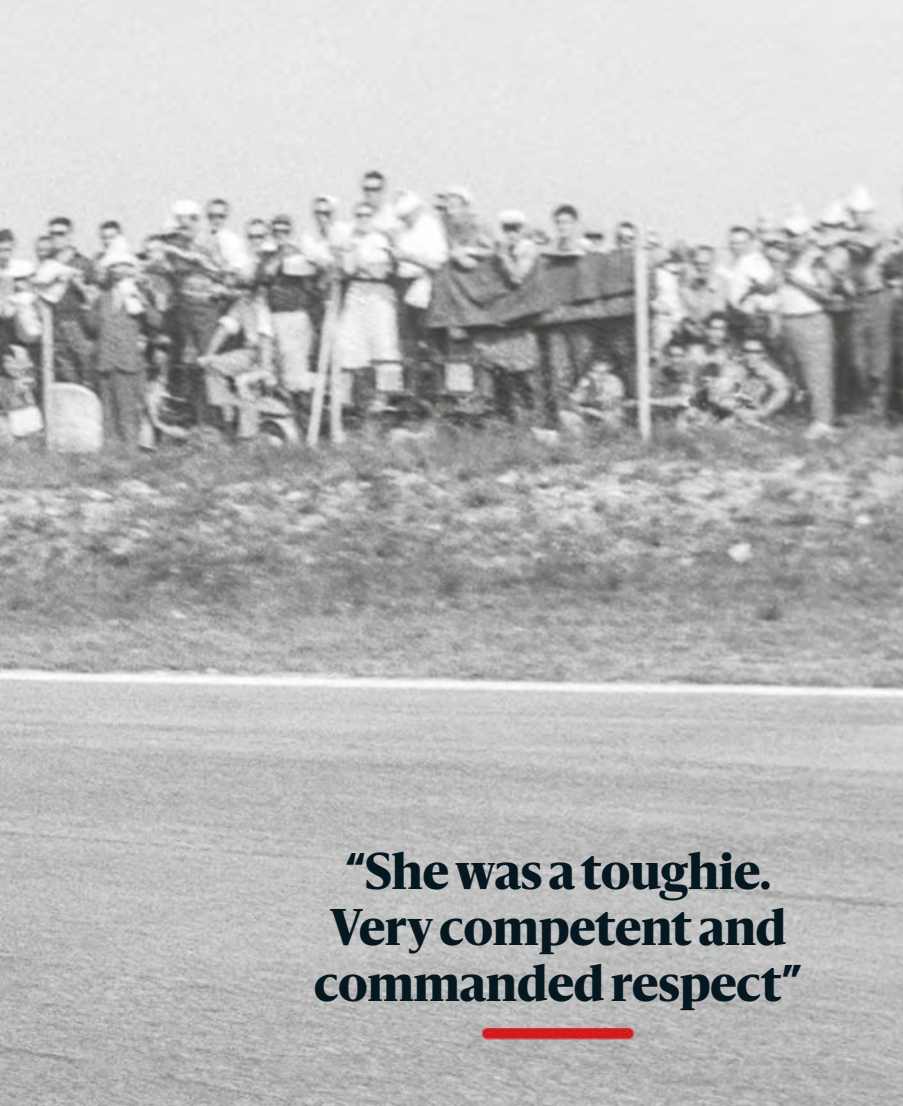
As she talks, Theo grins: "She was always known as '*pilotino*' because she was by far the smallest person racing. The older people, they still call out to her - 'hey, *pilotino*' - but there are less and less of them now."



Above: at the Italian Grand Prix in Italy in 1958. She would retire with engine failure. Here: alongside Moss at Monaco in 1959







**“She was a toughie.  
Very competent and  
commanded respect”**

**D**e Filippis took part in three more GPs in 1958 with the Scuderia Centro Sud Maserati team, finishing 10th in Belgium and retiring in Portugal and Monza. But she had made an impact on those around her.

“She was a toughie, and full marks to her for having a go,” observes Brooks. “She didn’t run at the front but she was very competent, commanded the respect of the men, and she played the game. I never heard anything negative about Maria Teresa, and remember she’d done very well in sports car racing with her OSCA.”

For 1959 de Filippis joined forces with Jean Behra, only to walk away from racing that August in tragic circumstances.

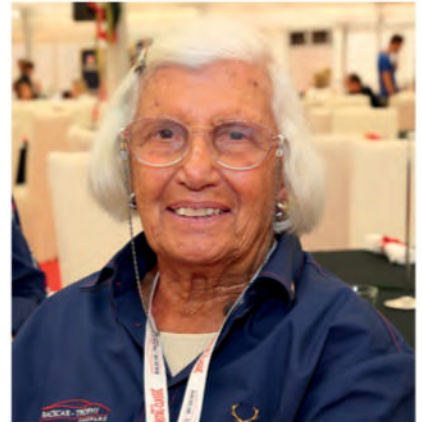
“For the ’59 season Jean had built the Behra-Porsche in Modena, based on an RSK, and this car was built for me to race,” she explains quietly. “There were many, many delays and the car was ready just in time for second practice in Monte Carlo. The gearbox was from an RSK, so the gears were much too high for the circuit and I could not qualify. So Hans Herrmann had a go, and

Wolfgang von Trips, and neither could get the car onto the grid. Stirling Moss advised me not to go any further in the car, there was no way to qualify, and that was that.

“Then, in August, I was supposed to race the car at AVUS. But Behra had had a fight with Ferrari and left the team, so he was without a drive and offered to go to AVUS with me to help run the car. I said ‘no, it’s your car, you must race and I’m not going’. In the sports car race that weekend Behra was killed and that was just too much for me. So tragic, too many friends dying.”

De Filippis turned her back on the sport, went away to start a family, and it was not until 1978 that she returned to the fold, joining the *Club International des Anciens Pilotes de Grand Prix F1* (Grand Prix Drivers’ Club) and re-establishing old acquaintances.

“I have got to know Maria Teresa much better since her involvement with the *Anciens Pilotes*,” says fellow member Brooks. “When we were racing we were all so absorbed in our own teams that we really only met at the dinners we had after the grands prix. She’s a remarkable lady.”



Indeed. She became the club’s vice-president in 1997 and was made honorary president days before celebrating her 85th birthday last October with a party in Modena, hometown of Maserati.

These days she lives a quiet life near Milan, but her work for the club keeps her in touch with the sport for which she still has a passion.

“I like to go to some events, I like the atmosphere of the historic races, the old cars that I remember,” she says. “But I like not so much the modern racing. Very little remains of the sport we knew when all the drivers were friends and spent time together. I watch some races on television but so much of what the modern drivers say is so predictable. Maybe they are not as free as we were in our time.”

Free she most certainly was, and is. Predictable she is not. These days, when out and about with the *Anciens Pilotes*, de Filippis is besieged by autograph hunters clutching photographs and copies of her book. She captured the imagination of people inside and outside the sport, was admired for her skill and bravery, and above all for her free spirit.

As Theo and Maria Teresa walk away she takes my arm, flashes me a conspiratorial smile and says. “You want to know more, maybe you need to read the book, no? Many more stories!”

To this day, the only other women to follow her example and make a world championship grand prix grid were Lella Lombardi and Desiré Wilson (although the latter was in the 1981 South African GP, later stripped of its championship status). One day we will surely see another woman on the Formula 1 grid, but de Filippis will remain the original, feisty pioneer who proved that gender need not be a barrier. *Salute La Signorina!* ●



# SHE MADE HER POINT...



**...or at least half of one. Lella Lombardi remains the only woman on F1's score sheet, but her passion brought impressive racing achievements elsewhere, too**

**WORDS PAUL FEARNLEY / TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT APRIL 2015**









At the wheel of her March-Ford and on her way into history. Lombardi's sixth place in the 1975 Spanish GP and Montjuïc made her the only female to score in F1



**F**ormula 1 was at its most macho: James Hunt was having sex for breakfast; the 'Monza Gorilla' was muscling a works March; and, on a hill overlooking Barcelona, officials, team bosses and drivers were at each others' throats.

Though officials erected barricades and bosses manned the barriers because the drivers were rightly unamused by Montjuïc's laughable Acme Inc Armco, the latter would eventually kowtow and race with a collective madness - bar world champion Emerson Fittipaldi, who stayed true to his word and refused to start.

The joyless Spanish Grand Prix of April 1975 ended in tragedy when the rear wing of Rolf Stommelen's leading Hill failed with catastrophic result: dead bodies pinned beneath its wreck. Even Jochen Mass, declared the precipitate winner after 29 laps, scrambled from his McLaren with a face like thunder and threatened violence to smug officials.

Hardly man's finest hour.

Newcomer Lella Lombardi, at just 5ft 2in, had wisely kept her head down - unlike her hairy-chested March team-mate.

Vittorio Brambilla was one of only two to set a time on Friday afternoon. He eventually qualified fifth, from where he triggered a first-corner pile-up. Pitting on lap seven because of flat spots, he would, amid the chaos, recover to finish a lapped fifth. One place and one lap behind him was Lombardi: the first - and to date - only woman to score a point in a world championship GP, but in a half-points race.

"But the Nürburgring was her best drive," says March co-founder/designer Robin Herd. Lombardi finished seventh in August's German GP, despite a puncture. "That's the one I remember. Quietly impressive, it was much better than her Montjuïc performance.

"She wasn't one of those tossers that arrive in F1 from time to time. She wasn't

there to make up the numbers. We knew what she'd done beforehand and clearly she was very capable."

Maria Grazia Lombardi had spent 10 years climbing racing's rungs, beginning with the Monza-based Formula 875. With assistance from her partner Fiorenza, sister and brother-in-law, the 'Lella' cover was soon blown by newsworthy results and, by 1967, she was contesting Italian F3 in a Branca-Ford. It was too much too soon. Progress would require a backwards step first. Lombardi won the Fiat-engined Formula 850 Championship of 1970 in a Biraghi, scoring four victories at Monza against future F1 DNQ-ers Alberto Colombo and Giorgio Francia. After a further two category victories in 1971, at Monza and Vallelunga, she returned to F3 in 1972 and, with her Lotus 69 running under the Jolly Club umbrella, finished 10th in the standings.

She finished 10th again in 1973, with a best of second place at Casale, in a Scuderia Italia Brabham BT41. She also beat Maurizio Flammini's March to win a heat at Vallelunga.

This was Lombardi's breakthrough year. By the time she arrived at Monaco in early June she had scored half of the six victories that would make her Italy's Ford Escort Mexico Challenge champion. ●

**"She wasn't there  
to make up the  
numbers. Clearly  
she was capable"**





A promo shot in front of Tower Bridge to advertise the 1974 Race of Champions at Brands Hatch. Lombardi stands with her Lola T330-Chevrolet F5000



Now she impressed racing's international set by finishing 12th in F3's most prestigious race. The likes of Tony Brise, Brian Henton, Alan Jones, Larry Perkins and Danny Sullivan didn't even make Monaco's final.

"That was the first time we saw her," says John Webb, the UK's most go-ahead promoter of the period. "She performed exceptionally well. We'd just started the ShellSPORT Celebrity Series [for Escort Mexicos] and my wife Angela invited her to compete at Brands Hatch in July. She won [from the third row, beating Jacques Laffite and Mike Wilds] and we became very friendly and kept in touch.

"Jackie Epstein was running a Formula 5000 team out of Brands and we persuaded him to give Lella a try that winter. She impressed him not only with her driving but also by her mechanical knowledge and feel. Towards the end of the test she pitted because she correctly thought that the car was developing a puncture; not severe but enough to make a difference."

Lombardi thus joined the ShellSPORT Luxembourg squad for the '74 Rothmans F5000 Championship and her Lola T330 wore 208 as a nod to the famous radio station's frequency.

Her team-mate was established series front-runner Ian Ashley: "She was the first woman racing driver to seriously impress me. Those were not easy cars to drive - basically a Formula 2 with a big, tall lump stuck in the back - but she got quicker and quicker during the year. If she'd been a bit more glamorous perhaps more people would have noticed."

Fourth at Brands Hatch at the first time of asking, Lombardi matched that result at Monza, Oulton Park and Mallory Park during a consistent campaign: she finished all bar the last of 18 rounds to be fifth in the points.

Qualifying was more problematic, but by the end of the season she was only two tenths shy of Mallory Park pole-sitter Ashley; the gap had been 4.6 seconds back in March.

It was clear that the 'Tigress of Turin' - a geographically misleading nickname coined by a lazy press - would not be disgraced should she be given an F1 opportunity. In fact she had already come close to making her GP debut.

"The £5000 we spent renting a car from Bernie Ecclestone was our only investment in Lella," says Angela Webb. "She lived well and had little trouble getting sponsorship. She stayed in Italy and flew to each race, yet never asked for expenses. That's unusual for a racing driver.

"She was charming but stubborn and independent, and a tremendously careful road driver. I went with her from Snetterton to Norwich once: 30mph all the way. Painful. People were staring and peeping. She didn't care.

"She did her own thing. She wasn't interested in fashion and usually wore trousers if she was in civvies. She had an image to keep: 'I'm tough so don't mess with me'. She was a loner, really. No entourage. She never brought a girlfriend.

"Her sex and sexuality were not topics of conversation in the paddock. She was judged purely as a racing driver. The boys ganged up and got horribly rough on the track - filthy tricks, kart-style - but she could look after herself. She was tough and had great duration."

That £5000 investment stretched to a year-old Brabham BT42 sponsored by Allied Polymer Group and run at the British GP at Brands Hatch by Hexagon Racing, with help from Epstein. Lombardi was within 1.1 seconds of John Watson's sister car by Thursday's end and had improved by three tenths when a broken driveshaft denied her a final Friday push.

Nine tenths shy of the grid, she had, in a better car admittedly, lapped as quickly as Tom Belsø and faster than Vern Schuppan, John Nicholson, Howden Ganley, Wilds and Leo Kinnunen.

*Motor Sport* correspondent Denis Jenkinson reckoned hers, "A game try. Anyone seriously expecting the Italian girl to qualify for a place on the grid must show a lamentable knowledge of Grand Prix racing today, but this is no reflection on her efforts, which were very commendable."

**P**hilanthropic enthusiast Count Zanon agreed - and offered March £50,000 to run Lombardi in F1 in 1975.

"We'd been a disaster in terms of sponsorship since bursting into F1 in 1970," says Herd. "We were too busy building production racing cars. So we were perfectly happy to have Lella. It wasn't a publicity stunt. In fact we got zero PR from it. She wasn't a publicity seeker. BBC News came to her first test with us at Goodwood and she wanted to know why. That she was a woman was an irrelevancy to Lella. She was a racing driver first and foremost. She was very professional and we enjoyed







Lombardi worked her way into F1 through the junior slopes. Left: with Christine Beckers at Daytona in 1977 ahead of the Firecracker 400 NASCAR event

working with her. Delightful. No trouble. She spoke okay English by then, plus I'd worked with so many Italian drivers that I could almost speak the language."

Something, however, did get lost in translation. After a crash during Monaco practice, Lombardi would complain consistently of a quirk with her 751: understeering badly into corners, its rear end would suddenly 'fall over' into a big oversteer when power was applied.

Herd: "Max [Mosley], a much better engineer than people might think, asked me if he could borrow Vittorio for a few laps. Vit would come back in and say, 'Yeah, yeah, car's perfect'. But I don't think he ever did a flying lap in that car. I totally trusted him. On reflection, however, he was probably looking after himself."

Enjoying his most competitive spell of F1, and with time against him at 37, the oldest man in the field can perhaps be excused his lack of concern for a friend and future co-driver. Only when Ronnie Peterson described the same handling characteristic in 1976 did the penny begin to drop.

"We gave Ronnie a new chassis for Monaco after his 'misunderstanding' with Carlos Reutemann in Belgium," says Herd. "He did a few laps and said, 'It's neutral. It's

perfect'. The damaged monocoque was still in the workshop so we took it apart - and discovered a crack in its cast-magnesium rear bulkhead. Poor Lella, she'd had bad traction all along. I feel sorry for her and wonder about it even now."

Peterson's return from Lotus after the Brazilian GP also signalled the end of Lombardi's time with March. (She'd already been farmed out to Williams at Watkins Glen the previous October, when her FW04 conked on the warm-up lap.) Though Zanon, a huge fan of Peterson's, smoothed matters by helping her find employment elsewhere, the transition was not without problem.

She failed to qualify RAM Racing's BT44B at Brands - where Divina Galica, the Webbs' latest fast lady, outperformed her - and in Germany the car was impounded by court injunction.

A very distant 12th place at the next race, Austria, was Lombardi's final GP. Bar a disappointing appearance at a Mallory Park round of the 1979 Aurora AFX F1 Championship in Zanon's FW06, it would be sports cars, GTs and saloons from here on. Lombardi had had experience of sports-prototypes in the 1975 World Championship for Makes, finishing sixth at Mugello and a class-winning fourth at Monza in Equipe Elf

Switzerland's 2-litre Alpine A441, co-driven by Marie-Claude Beaumont.

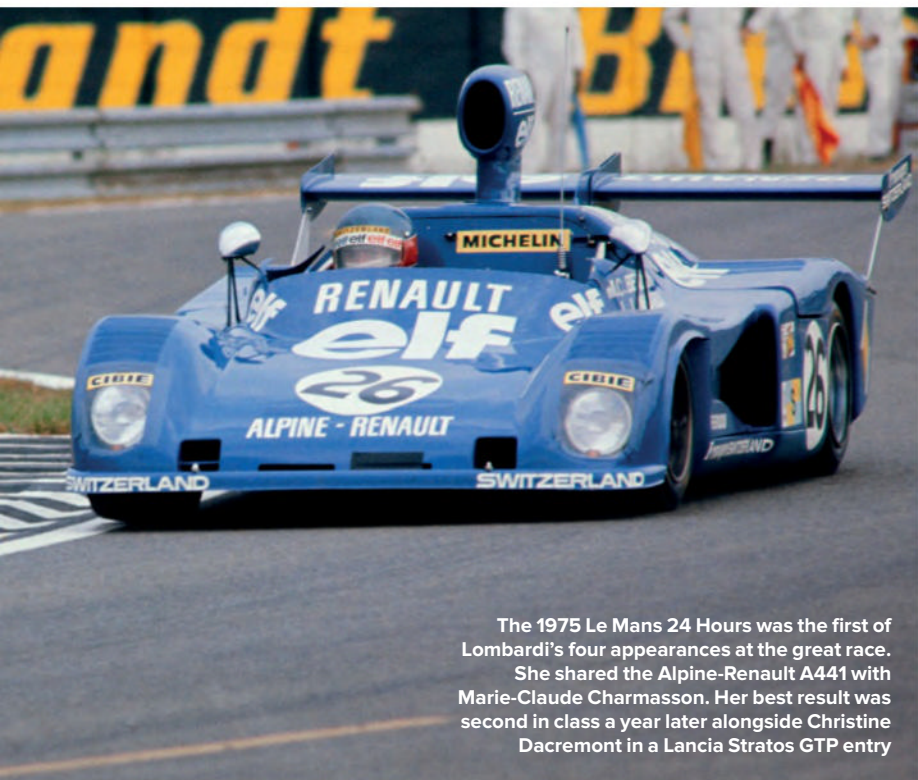
And in 1976 she shared a Lancia Stratos Turbo with Christine Dacremont at Le Mans and finished 20th - one lap and one place ahead of the Cosworth DFV-powered Inaltera of Jean-Pierre Jaussaud, Jean Rondeau and Belgium's Christine Beckers.

"Initially we had wanted Inaltera as a sponsor," says team manager Vic Elford. "But its boss Charles James wanted to be involved lock, stock and barrel. He was very ambitious and so we signed big names - Jean-Pierre Beltoise and Henri Pescarolo - to show that we meant business."

"Inaltera [a wallpaper manufacturer] was about to launch in America in 1977 and so we entered the Daytona 24 Hours, too. And because it's usually the woman of the house who makes the major interior design decisions, we decided to run an all-female driving crew. Lella was my recommendation. She had done F1 and so knew the business. She always worked hard, was easy on the car and understood how to get what she wanted from it. Stamina was no problem, either, because you couldn't drive flat out back then and expect to last the distance."

Lombardi and Beckers qualified fourth at Daytona, but crashed out after 78 laps 🟢





The 1975 Le Mans 24 Hours was the first of Lombardi's four appearances at the great race. She shared the Alpine-Renault A441 with Marie-Claude Charmasson. Her best result was second in class a year later alongside Christine Dacremont in a Lancia Stratos GTP entry

when a slower Porsche suffered a blow-out as Beckers drew alongside. And they finished 11th at Le Mans, despite a long delay because of an electrical glitch that stranded Beckers without engine or headlights; her resourceful fix surprised the team.

"Lella was the perfect co-driver," says Beckers. "She was much more concerned by the settings than I was, great with the mechanics and very speedy. But she wanted me to be just as fast and was always giving me tips and help.

"She was passionate about racing. She was not interested in music, reading, culture or anything else. Just racing - and fishing."

Lombardi's uncanny knack of pulling fish from the sea became apparent when they stayed on NASCAR boss Bill France's boat in the Bahamas. With Elford's help, Lombardi and Beckers had accepted an invitation to contest Daytona's Firecracker 400 on Independence Day, along with home star Janet Guthrie. Fresh from bridging the Indy 500's gender gap, and contesting the Winston Cup on a shoestring, Guthrie was dismayed by the Europeans' red-carpet welcome. Feeling this to be an overt bid by NASCAR to discredit her operation, her offer of help to these sisters-in-arms, though genuine, was made through gritted teeth.

Lombardi, in contrast, had nothing to lose and charmed the media by peeking over the language barrier.

Elford: "When asked in a press conference how she was coping with such a hefty car, she replied, 'I don't have to carry it, I just have to drive it'."

She admitted privately, however, that it "felt like riding a buffalo" and, unsurprisingly, Guthrie, who had finished a fine 12th in that year's Daytona 500, outqualified her by nine places. But the Italian would outlast the American in the race. Having coped with her Chevrolet's worsening transmission problem, Lombardi chose not to restart after a long stoppage for rain and was classified 31st.

"Sometimes Lella told us that she could have been rich and famous if she had stayed in America, but her feeling for Italy triumphed," says Giusy Remondi of Lella Lombardi Autosport. "She remembered how foreign people appreciated her, but at the same time she wanted to be known in Italy despite the difficulties of being accepted in a very male world."

Long and successful associations with Osella and Alfa Romeo followed. It was in one of the former's nimble BMW-engined 2-litre prototypes that Lombardi became the

first woman to win a round of an FIA-sanctioned world championship: the 1979 Enna Six Hours, co-driven by hillclimb specialist Enrico Grimaldi. Later that same year, partnered by Giorgio Francia, she won the Valtellina Six Hours; they would win the 1981 Mugello Six Hours, too.

Thereafter she turned her attention to the European Touring Car Championship and played an important role in Alfa's quartet of titles from 1982 by notching numerous class wins in its Group A GTV6 alongside a gamut of co-drivers: Anna Cambiaghi, Antonio Palma, Giancarlo Naddeo, Francia and Rinaldo Drovandi.

The subsequent 75 V6 model was less successful and so Lombardi, though she had managed an eighth place in the 1986 Spa 24 Hours co-driven by Drovandi and Roberto Castagna, switched to a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth for 1987. After a difficult and unrewarding ETCC campaign she skipped the final round at Nogaro - due to illness.

"I first met her that year when she and Fiorenza asked my husband Bruno to help create a team," says Remondi. "She was sure of her illness by 1985. She told me she'd been hit on her breast during a sailing trip and it hurt very much. But she was a fighter and never gave up even through the operations.

"She would often speak of sacrifices. She wasn't rich - her father was a butcher - and, with no sponsors to begin with, she slept in her truck to save money. She worked hard to get what she wanted. She had the strength of a man but a woman's sensibility: she was kind and transmitted serenity. She and Fiorenza were a beautiful couple, reserved; the spotlight was never on them.

"Lella only complained about the inequality of Formula 1 - because nobody had listened to her about changes for the car.

"On her deathbed she asked us to continue the team to preserve what she had achieved. We miss her passion, determination and modesty."

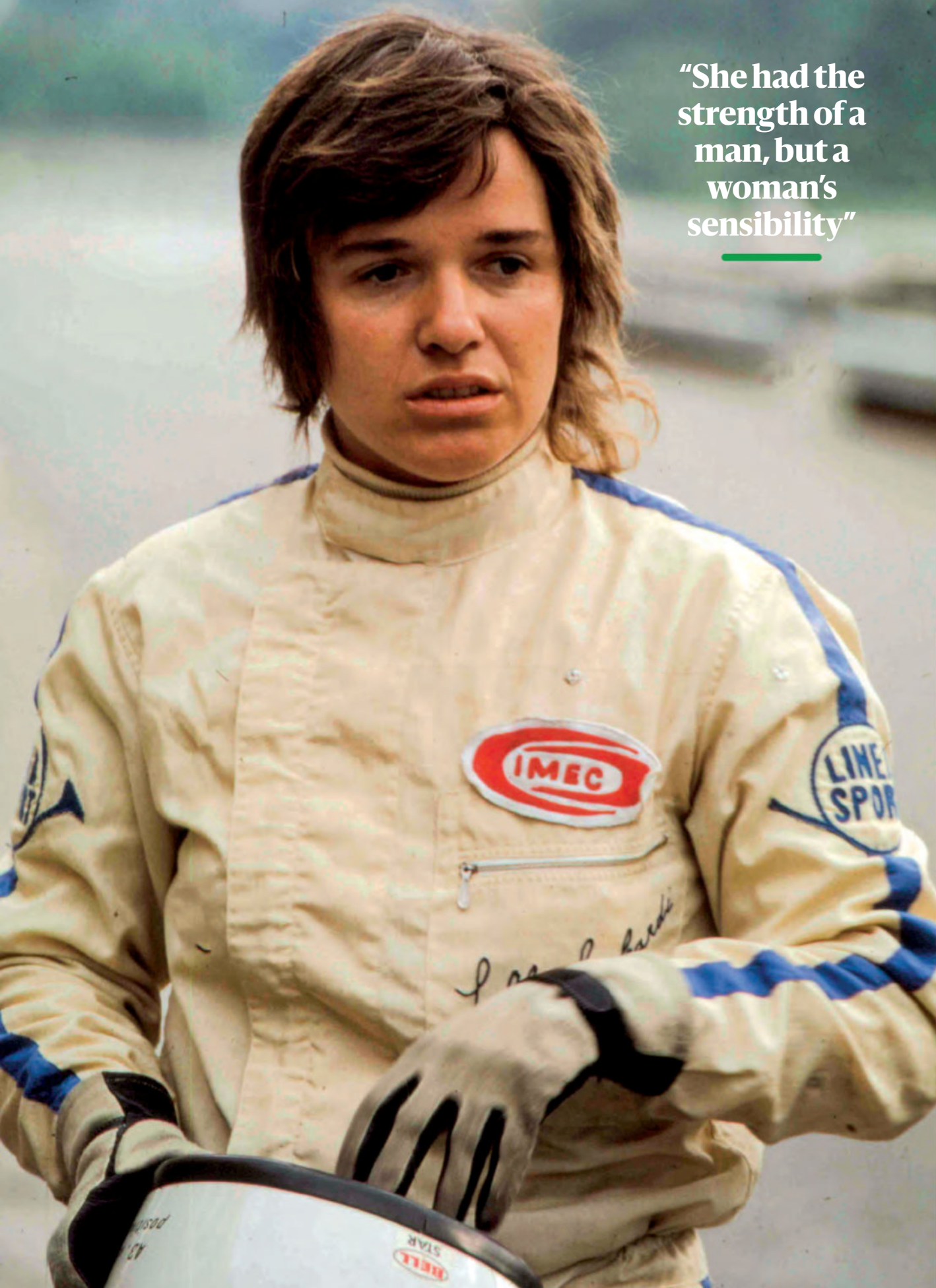
Lombardi checked into Milan's San Camillo Clinic in February 1992 and died on March 3, just days short of her 51st birthday. (She'd knocked off a year or two to avoid another prejudice.)

She is commemorated by a bust in her birthplace Frugarolo, near Alessandria, and her eponymous team in Lombardy exists to this day. Her legacy, however, was assured 40 years ago when, on a hill overlooking Barcelona, she scored that half-point and proved her point: "I am not a feminist, only a free and independent woman." ●



**"She had the  
strength of a  
man, but a  
woman's  
sensibility"**

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A man wearing a light-colored fedora-style hat and dark-rimmed glasses is smiling broadly at the camera. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, and a banner with the text "de lang die lw veilighe" can be seen. The man is wearing a dark-colored button-down shirt.

# ENZO'S

## RIGHT-HAND MAN



**Doug Nye hears how a young Mauro Forghieri was catapulted from the workshop shadows to become the key figure behind Ferrari's motor racing operations during the 1960s**

TAKEN FROM  
**MOTOR SPORT AUGUST 2019**

**M**auro Forghieri - for 27 years the chief engineer of Ferrari's racing operation - was on fine form. Ten days earlier, this tall, rangy man of enormous accomplishment had celebrated his birthday. Now 84 - but going on 60, and bright as a firework - he had been recalling bygone events at his home in Magreta, one of the sprawling village communities dotted around the Italian city of Modena.

My Genoese friend Franco Lombardi - himself a great Ferrari and Maserati authority - was with us, and we had just driven to the neighbouring village of Casinalbo for lunch.

Forghieri is, justifiably, a well-recognised local celebrity around these parts. Franco and I were reading the lunch menu while he chatted up a pretty waitress. She gamely played along and took our order as Mauro charmed.

Here was the engineer to whom Mr Ferrari had entrusted sole technical responsibility for the Maranello racing department, back on October 30, 1961. "I remember, it was a Monday. Ferrari called me to his office and said 'You are now

responsible for all the motor sport activity and testing...' Bam. Just like that," says Forghieri. "I was only 26. How could that be? I told him 'Are you mad? I don't have enough experience.'

"But Ferrari said 'Listen - you just do your job and I'll do the rest.'

"I had worked a short time at Ferrari as an intern in 1957, when Andrea Frascchetti was chief engineer, but after completing my engineering degree at Bologna University my dream was to join a gas turbine company in America.

"My father Reclus worked at Ferrari for many years. Ferrari had sometimes asked my father how I was doing at university. And finally - as I waited to hear from America - Ferrari told my father he wanted to see me. He told me that Frascchetti - who had been killed testing a car at Modena in 1957 - had spoken well of me. 'Why not come and work here to gain experience, at least while you wait for America?' I joined in January 1960... and stayed until 1987."

His startling elevation followed the infamous 'palace revolution' at the end of the 1961 season, when chief engineer Carlo Chiti, team manager Romolo Tavoni and



**Far left: Forghieri in his pomp. Left: With Enzo Ferrari and Chris Amon during the 1965 Italian Grand Prix**

PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES



five other senior figures were summarily shown the door. They had tried to present a united complaint to Mr Ferrari about the increasingly erratic interference in their duties by Signora Laura, his quite dotty wife and co-owner of the company. But too fearful to complain to the Old Man's face they had engaged a local lawyer to write a letter to him, which they all then signed.

This was taken as a less than manly affront, while such internal - indeed 'family' - matters with a lawyer, an outsider, were utterly unacceptable.

Mr Ferrari did not explode into one of his celebratedly theatrical rages, his screaming normally being audible many metres from his office. His response was much more frightening. He just grimly had a quiet interview with each of the seven, and as they left another functionary handed them each a notice of immediate dismissal. With the Ferrari team and top echelon decapitated, Forghieri was given command.

He recalls: "I was dazed, but excited. And I had confidence in the great technicians there. During my intern period back in 1957, Frascchetti was considering a rear-engined car as one option for racing. Of course, he worked - with the great Alfa Romeo and Lancia designer Vittorio Jano contributing - to develop the first Dino V6-cylinder cars for Formula 2 and then Formula 1. He gave me the centre section of a chassis frame to design and to do the stress calculations and so on. I think that was for the V6 monoposto. He taught me the importance of having a rigid chassis.

"Jano was the consultant. He would come down to Modena from his home in Turin and stay for a few days at a time in the Hotel Albergo on the Via Emilia. You say he is remembered as having been a very cold and serious man. I can only say he was very human to me. And in fact, so was Laura Ferrari - she was always very nice to me, too.

"Luigi Bazzi was also from pre-war Alfa Romeo. His daughter married a friend of mine. Bazzi had the greatest and widest experience. He was capable of doing everything in the factory, and I mean everything - *tutto!* He was always thinking and questioning and suggesting. And his ideas were always good. For any question, any problem, Bazzi could find a solution.

"I had learned from all their great experience. And there were the other engineers, like Angelo Bellei and Franco Rocchi - Jano and I did the Formula 1 V8. When the project began I asked for him to become involved. Bellei was in the production department, in charge of road

car design and development. But we were all really friends working together. Casoli worked on *millimetri* [millimetres] - such was his eye - and he was great for modelling too - he came from Reggiane, the aircraft maker. And Bazzi was in the test department.

"Enzo Ferrari had loved the 12-cylinder Packard. He never forgot that. The V12 has a natural balance, and a V12 is easier to design and to set up but expensive to manufacture. Chinetti and other friends encouraged Enzo Ferrari to build a V12. The Banco di Modena and other friends provided the money for him to do it.

"Many of his early workers were drawn from Minganti in Bologna, the big machining company. Hah - they had a good basketball team. I used to play basketball to a good level. In 1939 my father worked with Bazzi, Giberti and Ferrari in his small factory in Modena, making the parts for what became the Alfetta. I think they made four of them.

## **"Ferrari had a great understanding of human weakness"**

And this car became almost unbeatable. My father worked specially in the Alfa Romeo factory and after the war with Ferrari he became chief of the machine shop.

"When I was small my great interest was aeroplanes. Into my teens I was always drawing planes, but never jets. I thought they were boring. Nothing to see. All the planes I drew had propellers. Papa made propellers during the war..."

Tall bespectacled Mauro would grow quickly into his chief engineer role, known for his colourful, sometimes explosive personality, for his diligence, his imaginative design talent and above all for his industry. It was under his leadership that Ferrari replaced its obsolete-technology 'sharknose' Formula 1 cars of 1961-62 with the lightweight spaceframe, fuel-injected V6 cars driven notably by John Surtees and Willy Mairesse in 1963. He also masterminded development of a sweet-handling rear-engined V12 sports-prototype in the P-cars of 1963-64, leading on to the P2-3-4 designs of 1965-67.

For the Ferrari 158 and 1512 F1 designs of 1964-65, Forghieri took Ferrari into 'aero' monocoque chassis construction with the stressed aluminium skin panels riveted to an easily repairable frame of small-diameter tubes. He and his colleagues designed the little 1600cc and 2-litre Dino V6 prototypes, and then 3-litre F1 V12s for 1966-68. He directed the programme in which the front-engined 250 GTO series culminated in the roofed-in rear-engined 250LM Berlinetta.

We talked in broad-brush terms about his career, with some specifics in sharper focus. He speaks with genuine fondness of Mr Ferrari. When the Old Man died in 1988 and I had to write an obituary, I had asked Mauro to comment on what had been Mr Ferrari's greatest talent. After much thought he replied, slowly - "He was a man with a great understanding of human weakness." Words he left unspoken could have been - I believed - "and how to exploit it..."

It is plain that over their many years as employer and chief engineer, Ferrari and Forghieri fought many battles, as often with one another as they did united against outside rivals. Mauro: "He would make his unhappiness absolutely clear and he would certainly shout and scream. But even from quite early, because he knew my father so well and had known me from such a young age, I was able perhaps more than some others to shout and scream straight back!

"My father was a strong man. All the Forghieri men have been strong - strong opinions, strong views, not afraid to state them. My grandfather had been a close friend of the young Mussolini, but later their political views moved apart. My grandfather left Fascist Italy and lived in France, where he wrote some very critical things about Mussolini in the French newspapers. I remember my father then coming home several times, injured, having been beaten up by the Fascists.

"He would have heard them criticising his father, so he would stand up for his Papa and they beat him. But even then he would not keep quiet. It got so bad that he was advised to move out of Modena, to somewhere quiet for him and for his family. We ended up for a while in Naples, but through much of the war we were in Monaco where my father serviced and repaired high-quality cars - Hispano-Suiza, Alfa Romeo, that kind of thing. The big man of the regime in Modena helped us move to Naples, where father worked in the Ansaldo aeroplane plant. We had quite a nice





Clockwise from top:  
Forghieri completing  
checks on a 1512 at  
Silverstone, 1965; Bandini  
ready to go in front of  
Forghieri and Phil Hill at  
the Nürburgring, 1962;  
the 1967 330P4; with John  
Surtees at Le Mans, 1964







At just 26, Forghieri inherited all of Ferrari's racing activities. Left, top: Le Mans 1967 with the P4; Left, bottom: Clay Regazzoni, 1976



## "Racing against Ford at Le Mans was both difficult and expensive"

house there in the Parco Caruso area, 20-30 houses in the Arco Felice village.

"I loved the place. I would draw designs for planes there - always propellers of course - and then started two years of university in Modena, studying maths and physics. I got a place in the University of Bologna to study mechanical engineering. It had fewer than 600 studying all disciplines, so it was an honour to go there. The professors were really very good. Some were often called to the US to consult on their specialities..."

From 1948, Ferrari's racing programme was always designed to promote sales of the production cars, which income was reinvested in further racing, year upon year.

Mauro: "After Ford America had failed to buy the company in 1964, Fiat gave a little more support but racing against Ford at Le Mans for example was difficult and expensive. You ask which of our cars I recall most proudly? The P4 sports-prototype. But that was an expensive project. It diverted too much attention and too many resources from F1. We had to stick with the V12 engine through 1968-69 when it was outdated technology, too long, too heavy. Then the Fiat-Ferrari deal was made and I saw how happy Ferrari was with that result. He took me away from direct responsibility for racing and I worked in a new Advanced Studies Office, first in the old Scuderia building in central Modena, then later at Fiorano.

"With a small group of designers and technicians - Salvarani, Maioli, Marchetti, Panini, Lugli and Piccagliani - we worked

on what became the 312B flat-12 for 1970. We worked on a four-wheel-drive scheme for it. Ferrari wanted to demonstrate our advanced technology to Fiat but we ran out of time, so came out with rear-wheel drive only - then the FIA banned four-wheel drive! The flat-12 project had also been started with the American Franklin aero company interested, but they did not last long.

"Ferrari always loved engines and paid close attention to our progress, and I would see him every day. The 312B cars with Ickx and Regazzoni were very good, but began winning too late in 1970, and after a good start to 1971 we had terrible trouble with Firestone tyre vibration. Suspension changes I had made were partly blamed, in connection with the tyre troubles.

"Our results dropped. Ferrari and I - well, there was much screaming from both sides. Fiorano had just opened and the Advanced Studies Office and I were moved there. Ferrari fell ill. Fiat put Sandro Colombo in charge of the racing side and in 1973 the first Ferrari B3 was really bad.

"Ferrari then recovered. He was back - full of energy - and he called me back to

improve the B3 while producing the Advanced Study for a way forward in F1 - which was the B3 'Snowplough'.

"I calculated that the aerodynamic downthrust of a full-width sports car body was so much greater than the slender cigar F1 designs of that time, that we should make a surface form about 75 per cent that of a sports car, with a merged-in front wing, central mass concentration, radiators each side between the front and rear axles and short wheelbase for agility. From this test car came the B3 of 1974, which Niki Lauda and Clay Regazzoni showed could win, and then the next step was the transverse gearbox 312T of 1975 - and our first F1 World Championship since Surtees and our V8 in 1964. I would say the 312T, the P4 and of course the 312P Boxer sports of 1971-72 are the most satisfying Ferrari designs for me..."

Tantalisingly, in any conversation such as ours, one can merely scratch the surface of Forghieri's long, busy and often dazzling Ferrari career. Latterly, into the 1980s, he found himself presiding over younger, variably capable, ambitious and forceful engineers, each eager to stamp their own design signature upon the Prancing Horse. For some of them Forghieri became old-school, an obstacle. Some he found

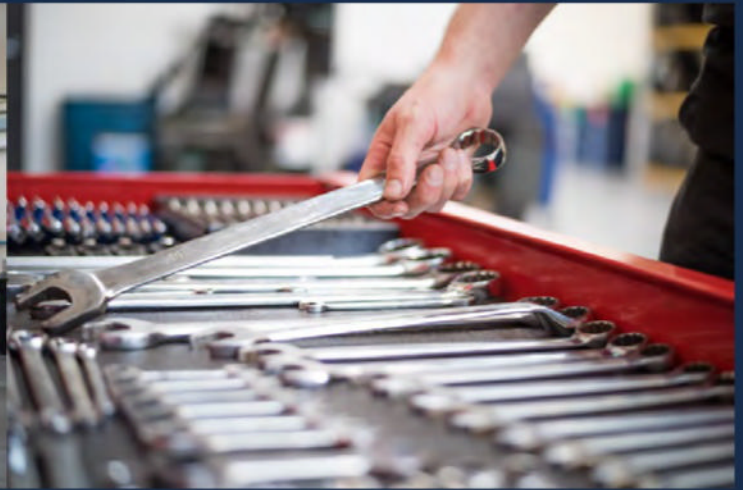


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simpatico, others not. He recalls: “Harvey Postlethwaite came in from England to introduce us to aluminium honeycomb chassis technology. It was good but very quickly we realised carbon composite could be better still. I say to Harvey, ‘OK now what experience have you got with carbon composite?’ - and the answer was almost none! So we learned together. But Harvey fitted in very well with the Ferrari way, with our ‘family’. The language of the factory had never been simple Italian, but Modenese dialect which can be very different. Harvey learned it in weeks. He was very popular. Others did not fit so well...”

They had the Lauda years, the Gilles Villeneuve flair that ended in catastrophe and the V6 turbo years. Forghieri also found himself spending much time protecting Ferrari’s interests in FISA/FOCA political conflicts and debating with the FIA itself, as well as masterminding and directing new racing designs.

Frictions with Marco Piccinini and Piero Lardi - Mr Ferrari’s natural son - led to

Mauro regretfully (yet perhaps typically noisily) telling the Old Man he wanted to resign. Vittorio Ghidella of Fiat suggested a change of departments, from racing to Ferrari Engineering. Mauro worked two final years with Ferrari away from F1, but often Enzo would seek his opinion and reaction to matters arising.

The final Forghieri Ferrari was 1987’s 408/4RM prototype, which was displayed at the Detroit Motor Show. It was judged too complex and innovative to enter production and Maranello built the 348 instead. Fiat’s Ghidella - whom Forghieri had come to count as an ally - was beset by mainstream Fiat problems into 1987 - the Old Man had lost much of his once-total power and was fading fast. Ferrari at Maranello and Fiorano had become a much-changed company.

At the Geneva Motor Show, sometime Ferrari racing director Daniele Audetto met Forghieri and told him that Chrysler’s Lee Iacocca wanted him to work for their latest acquisition, Lamborghini. After his 27 years and five months at Ferrari, Mauro accepted.

One detects enduring hurt over the fact that some of his long-time colleagues there did not, ultimately, show as much support for him as perhaps he would have shown for them - but still he has many fond memories.

“We were truly a family. Our life was our work, total commitment... for little pay. We were not just colleagues... we were brothers. There were a few days when our work succeeded and results made Ferrari very happy. There were days when he was not.

“Strangely Ferrari was much more on our side when we were losing. When we were winning he would drive us hard. He would shout at us. Some of us were able to shout back. Maybe not many were willing to do that. But I was both able and willing... and I did shout back at Enzo Ferrari and - sometimes - he would listen and come around to supporting me. At other times... well, not so much.

“But I am happy with my life experience. And I am always thankful for the huge confidence that Ferrari had always shown in me...” ◉

**“Ferrari would shout at us, and some of us were able to shout back. Many were not willing to”**



Forghieri talks with Gilles Villeneuve in his 312T4 at Zolder in 1979. The Canadian would take three wins and finish second in the championship that season



### 1964 Ferrari 158 'Aero'

Designed with and for John Surtees, the 'Aero' 158 had a semi-monocoque fuselage in which a lightweight internal tubular frame was stiffened by riveted-on aluminium stressed skins. Its 1.5-litre 4-cam V8 was another small masterpiece encouraged by veteran consultant Vittorio Jano. Development came good late-season in 1964 as *Il Grande John* won the German and Italian GPs and clinched the World Championship.



### 1967 Ferrari 330P4

The ultimate P-car of the rear-engined V12 sports-prototype series Mauro had developed from the initial 3-litre V12 250P of 1963. Input from such drivers as Surtees, Parkes, Scarfiotti, Bandini and Amon helped the World Championship-winning 250Ps, the P2s and P3s culminate in the definitive big-budget 4-litre, 4-cam 330P4. This car crushed Ford at Daytona '67, finished 2-3 at Le Mans and won the 1967 world title.

## Forghieri's fabulous designs

Mauro Forghieri co-created some of Ferrari's greatest cars. Here are his three favourites – plus two more (Dino and 158) that we chose



### 1972 Ferrari 312PB

Forghieri's Ferrari flat-12 cars ranged from the original 1.5-litre 1964-65 F1 1512, through the 2-litre 1969 European Mountain Championship-winning 212E to the 3-litre 1970-80 312 F1 series. In 1971 the 312PB 'thinly disguised F1' sports-prototype had some sensational outings driven by Ickx and Regazzoni. For 1972 Ferrari ran a full works flotilla of flat-12 312PBs, winning every World Championship race they entered – a *tour de force*...

### 1975 Ferrari 312T

Mauro cites the magnificent 1975 F1 World Championship-winning 312T as the single-seater design of which he is most proud. A flat-12 with its central mass concentration augmented by the transverse gearbox, it carried Niki Lauda to his first F1 title, winning the Monaco, Belgian, Swedish, French and US GPs in his hands. Team-mate Clay Regazzoni won Ferrari's home Italian GP. The 312Ts then followed up by winning the first three GPs of 1976.



### 1966 Ferrari Dino 206SP

Forghieri tends to dismiss this enduringly gorgeous little 2-litre V6-engined sports-prototype design as having been a hurried, imperfect and never fully developed expedient to give Fiat a Porsche-bating campaign to back the production Dino model's marketing. However, these compact, agile, elegant little P-cars in miniature have a glamour that no Porsche can approach...





Chinetti Jr scored his best Le Mans result alongside Bob Grossman aboard a NART Daytona in 1971. They were fifth overall

# Expanding the family

**OK, technically he's American, but few can argue the impact the Chinetti family and its NART team had for Ferrari. Without Luigis Sr and Jr, the brand may never have broken through Stateside**

WORDS RICHARD HESELTINE / TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, JANUARY 2013

**T**his clearly is not a yes-man. Warm, animated and quick to laugh, Luigi Chinetti Jr is winningly indiscreet. He has just voiced his opinions on the (over)usage of the *Cavallino Rampante* on products unbecoming of Ferrari's heritage and is now ruminating on the evils of PR speak.

He is, in short, excellent company. But then his opinions are formed from experience. As variously a Ferrari concessionaire, racer, designer and son of multiple Le Mans winner Luigi Chinetti Sr, he has plenty of it.

In Modena to oversee assorted restoration projects, 'Coco' also lets slip that he's working on a new coachbuilt Ferrari which will lead to a revival of the NART name. "I was thinking on my way over here," he muses, "what am I, an adolescent masquerading as a man, or a man masquerading as an adolescent? I'm 70 years old and still messing around with cars. One of these days I'll get a real job."

Somehow we doubt it, but then in many ways Chinetti was indoctrinated from the start. "You know, my mother never wanted me to get involved in the whole car thing," he counters. "Nor did Dad, at least to begin with. You have to remember what it was like back then. Dad came over to the US ●







during the war - he was part of Lucy O'Reilly Schell's Indy 500 team and, just like René Dreyfus, he never went home. In those days you needed a sponsor during the naturalisation process and Dad's was [illustrious Chevrolet engineer] Zora Arkus-Duntov; can you believe that? But it was tough and I swear if Dad hadn't have been a famous racing driver, having an Italian surname would have been a difficult obstacle for me to overcome. Italians weren't real popular in the States at that time. Anyway, I grew up in New York and, at my mother's insistence, I attended one of the best schools; my classmates included General MacArthur's son and one of the Guggenheims. We then moved to Connecticut when I was 12. Anyhow, Dad won Le Mans for the third time in 1949, which was also Ferrari's first victory in the 24 Hours, and he pretty much established Ferrari in the US. Then in 1958 he set up the North American Racing Team. It was hard not to be influenced by that."

More than 100 drivers raced for this often underfunded équipe, active until 1982, with the NART acronym also being applied to several show cars conceived by Chinetti Jr. "I didn't so much get involved in the business as butted in. Dad introduced me to driving without upsetting my mother: he went on a business trip and left a car in the garage with the key in the ignition and dealer plates on the passenger seat. What was I supposed to do? I was 17 years old and it was a gold Ferrari 250GT Pininfarina coupé, that I remember. From there I got involved at the shop, first as a broom pusher and then as a valve grinder. I eventually became a demonstration driver, which was an important position. One of our customers once asked me, 'What's the pedal on the left for?' I replied, 'It goes with the stick in the middle...'"

With equal predictability, it wasn't long before he embarked on a racing career of his own. "You call that a career?" he scoffs. "Before I did any road racing I entered the '65 Shell 4000 rally in a Ferrari 330GT 2+2 and seem to remember being disqualified for driving across someone's lawn. Anyway, my first proper race was at Watkins Glen in our old 275P the following year. I then shared it with Charlie Kolb at St Jovite. That thing was outgunned, but we were running second to Lothar Motschenbacher's McLaren when an Elva crashed in front of me and I drove through his fire. The P got burned up, but not too badly. I still own the car.

"My aspiration, if you can call it that, was to be a good second driver. I was happy to be a number two guy to a really good



Luigi Chinetti Sr and Lord Selsdon after their 1949 Le Mans win for Ferrari. Chinetti Jr is on the left

number one. I thought I had the potential to be pretty good, but I did relatively few races." It's just that those he did start tended to have the names 'Le Mans' or suchlike somewhere in the title. "I took the view that if I wasn't able to race all that often, and don't forget NART only entered a small number of races each year, then I would make the most of any opportunity that presented itself. The thing is, after the accident at St Jovite, I didn't race again until the Daytona 24 Hours in 1970."

**N**ART had hedged its bets that year, entering six cars for the January classic. "People would ask me, why are you driving a 250LM? I mean that thing was old. I would answer 'It's all I got'. That was true. It was just an obsolete racing car that was sitting in the shop. I swear nobody wanted it, but then I convinced Gregg Young to take it on for about \$9000. When we got to the Speedway, the car was jumping out of gear and the brakes didn't work. The gearbox specialist from the factory rebuilt it but he told me quite bluntly that ours wouldn't be a long race. The gearbox in the LM always was the weak link and ours began to jump out of gear again soon after the start. The damn thing then resolved itself, but I swear the 'box went bye-bye the second the race was over. We did OK, I guess." They finished seventh overall.

"A few months later, I shared our 312P coupé with Tony Adamowicz in the Sebring 12 Hours, but the water pump shaft broke so our race was run pretty quickly. I couldn't

see well out of the coupé and realised that both ends of the car were too heavy so we set about modifying the whole thing. We came up with a really light spider body. Nestor Garcia-Veiga, Alain de Cadenet and I were fifth in the '71 Daytona 24 Hours in it and I finished fourth overall and first in class in that year's Sebring 12 Hours sharing with George Eaton. That was a wonderful car."

He has rather less affection for the 365GTB/4 Daytona in which he made his Le Mans debut in '71 alongside Bob Grossman. "It was an OK taxi, but a bit of a comedown after the prototypes. That was a really difficult race for me as I was on Dad's home field. He was a legend at Le Mans and I was a wannabe. I was so slow in practice, it was embarrassing; what a cold shower. The night before qualifying I called my wife and told her about my problem. She then told me, 'That's not your only one - I'm leaving you'. For good reason, I might add.

"Anyway, the next day things happened in a big way. I asked Teodoro Zeccoli, who had raced for us previously, what gear he was using for Maison Blanche. He said he was taking it near flat in fifth. Great - I was in the upper end of third! Anyhow, I managed to qualify and remember Dad telling me how to nurse the engine to last the distance when Masten Gregory interrupted, saying, 'Coco, you listen to your old man. He knows this goddamned place.' Coming from someone who'd won there for us in 1965 - which was Ferrari's last win in the 24 Hours, let's not forget, well... At any rate, we finished fifth overall and got the Index of Thermal Efficiency prize. I didn't really care for GTs,



though. When we were running prototypes, we’d treat them as mobile chicanes: we’d cut them up, do awful things. It was a different story when you were on the receiving end! Later on, we built a Daytona with a ‘cheater’ nose: if you looked closely, it didn’t have front fog lights. There wasn’t room for any. We raised the back a little, too, but nobody ever figured it out.”

And it was aboard this car and the team’s 512M that Coco would enjoy one final hurrah as a driver. “I did Le Mans three times, Daytona and Sebring a bunch of times, but there never was any money. NART was a small team, and we rarely had the latest equipment. I think there were maybe four or five mechanics.

“Anyway, my hero growing up was the record breaker Ab Jenkins and, over a few drinks back in early 1974, a group of us came up with the idea of going to Bonneville. We had the cars just sitting in the shop. We went to our sponsors and told them it would cost about \$30,000 and we’d return the money if we didn’t set any records. No pressure! We then started looking for drivers. There was Milt Minter and me and then we thought, ‘How about Paul Newman and Graham Hill?’ We went to NBC but they didn’t think we’d get Newman, but he was just great and it was through him that we got the CBS TV deal.

“Of course, we got out there and it was big! We had a 10-mile oval course on the salt and the highways department put up stakes so you had at least some idea of where you were going. They also dragged the course to eliminate as best they could the bumps, holes and cracks in the salt. It was like driving on gravel. I went out there in the 512M and the left-rear tyre blew: it took out a chunk of bodywork. I was going flat out - about 220mph - at the time. Our guys managed to patch it together again, though.”

The team left Utah having set International Class C records at 10 miles (174.763mph), 500 (171.255mph), 500 miles (166.173mph), and 1000 kilometres (166.445mph).

“We had a blast. I remember us travelling back to base in Wendover, 15 miles away from the salt. The M went on the trailer, and I drove the Daytona on the road. There was a gas tank where the passenger seat would have been and I was driving to the hotel with my then-girlfriend wedged in somehow. The road was as straight as a



**“I did some interesting things, and didn’t disgrace the family name”**

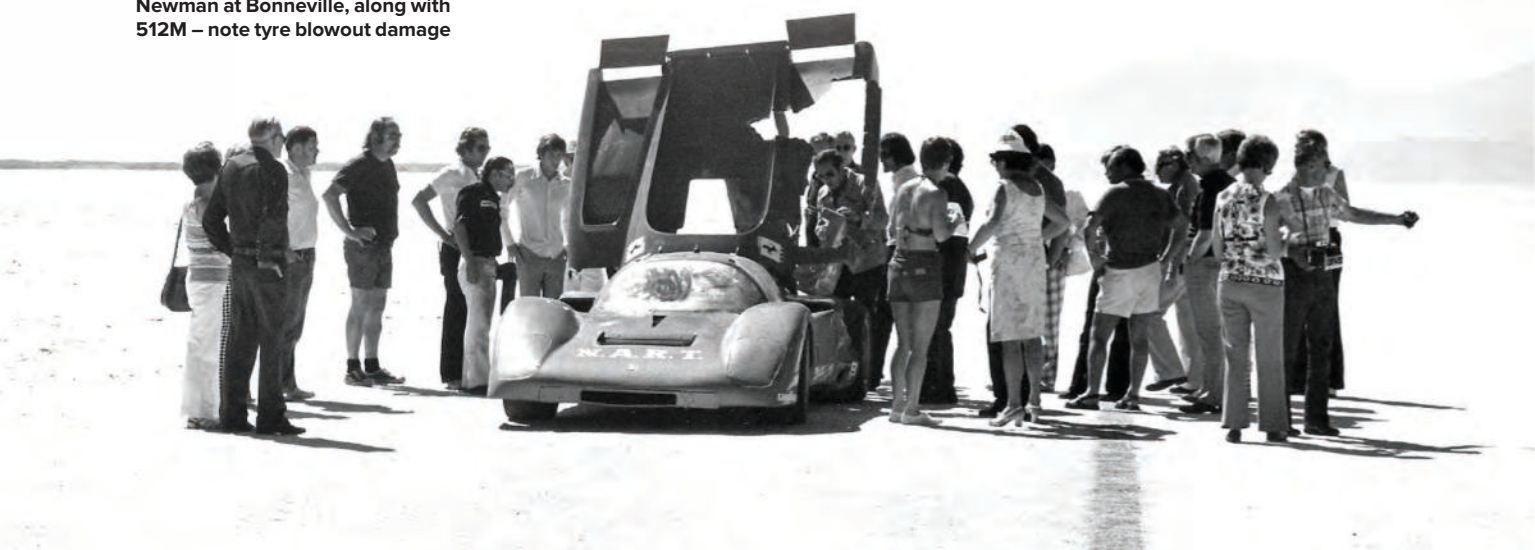
die and I was going through the gears when in the distance I just about made out the shape of a car - it had a gold shield on the door and a light on the roof. By the time I went past it I was flat out. We got to the hotel and I shouted to the guys, ‘We’ve got problems!’ They took the car into the garage, jacked it up and took off the wheels. They were underneath the Daytona and I was in my room by the time the cop arrived. He was madder than hell!”

**W**hile the NART squad would continue into the following decade, Chinetti sold the US Ferrari concession in the mid-70s. “We had nothing to sell,” he says. “Seriously, nothing was homologated for the US aside from the Dino 308 GT4. One arrived in the shop, finished in brown with a mint green interior. I just stared at it and thought ‘How has it come to this?’ I knew the game was up.”

In the meantime, Coco has continued to intermittently release NART-bodied Ferrari road cars, past collaborators including the likes of Giovanni Michelotti and Alfredo Vignale. “I loved those guys. They were true artists but really humble, too. They wouldn’t stick their noses in the air at guys like me. It was the same on the racing side. The true greats, guys like Colombo, Lampredi and Forghieri, would never crow about their achievements.”

Nor, it must be said, does Chinetti. “I have no idea how I’m perceived,” he ponders. “I guess - hope - that anyone who is interested in racing history will acknowledge that I did some interesting things and that I didn’t disgrace the family name. I’m just glad I had the chance to do those races and that I can say, ‘I was there and I did that’. That’s pretty nifty...”

**Above and right: with Paul Newman at Bonneville, along with 512M – note tyre blowout damage**



**Uncovering  
the lost**  
**genius**  
**of Uncle**  
**Carlo**

**Hot tempered yet kindly, determined yet soft-hearted, opinionated but a natural team builder.**

**Enzo Ferrari thought him vainglorious, but Carlo Chiti had much to be truly proud of.**

***Paul Fearnley* portrays a design and engineering genius whose reputation took years to recover from one misstep**

**TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT SEPTEMBER 2021**







Modena, May 1960:  
designer Carlo Chiti  
in conversation with  
test driver Martino  
Severi; Enzo is  
listening alongside





TZ models were Autodelta's flagships but more humble GTAs brought the prizes. Below: Chiti oversees early 156 testing at Modena in 1961. Enzo watches while Forghieri makes notes





**B**espectacled, portly and soberly overdressed – raincoat (often even come shine) and a penchant for Borsalino hats, business suit, cardigan/pullover/tanktop, collar and tie – he was instantly recognisable at Scuderia Ferrari. Yet Carlo Chiti has largely become a forgotten figure despite his many achievements during a short but fecund spell at Maranello and later, and for very much longer, at Alfa Romeo via Autodelta. We'll gloss over his disastrous ATS interlude for now.

He joined Ferrari from Alfa as replacement chief engineer for friend and fellow Tuscan Andrea Frascchetti – killed testing an F2 Dino at Modena in 1957 – and thus was at the helm when Mike Hawthorn became Britain's first Formula 1 world champion. Before Phil Hill could become America's first three years later, Chiti, having overseen the final championship grand prix win for a front-engined car, achieved the seemingly impossible: he coaxed Enzo into 'putting the horse behind the cart'. His subsequent rear-engined 'Sharknose' designs put Ferrari firmly, albeit briefly, back on top in F1 and assured its sports-racing hegemony – bolstered already by Chiti's front-engined Testa Rossa iterations – until long after his summary exit.

For he was among eight key staff whom in November 1961 united to complain about pay and conditions – and Enzo's wife. Stirred by son Alfredino's death in 1956 and her husband's infidelities, Laura had been taking a keener interest in the company, as was a principal stockholder's wont. Acting as her chauffeur/guardian at races did not sit well with Chiti, while Laura's lack of diplomacy made for an easy target in a macho world. Her slapping commercial manager Girolamo Gardini was the trigger for the walkout. Some of Enzo's renegade 'generals' trailed back after a month or so, quietly re-pledging allegiance. Opinionated and voluble, cultured and erudite, Chiti was not among them. Enzo blamed external causes for that – but not before letting slip this about Chiti in his 1962 book *My Terrible Joys*: "A man of vast theoretical knowledge equalled only by his eagerness to win a reputation for himself."

Two bulls in a field.

Though Chiti would eventually be roundly upstaged by his successor Mauro Forghieri, he had laid down vital groundwork: installing a small wind tunnel at Maranello; a belated acceptance of disc brakes and fibreglass; and a low polar moment that pre-dated Forghieri's *Trasversale* gearbox by 13 years. The engine, tending towards simplification under Chiti, was no longer undisputed king. According to the ruminative Phil Hill, this "more holistic approach" meant that the F1 Sharknose had been "built the way a racing car ought to be"; he would join Chiti at ATS for 1963.

The latter project was too soon shorn of the financial impetus promised by Count Volpi di Serenissima and became a motor racing byword for laughable incompetence. So bad was it that Chiti would spend 16 years restoring his F1 reputation through Alfa Romeo GTs, saloons and sports-prototypes, and as an engine supplier to McLaren, March and – to much greater effect – Brabham.

"Chiti never criticised Enzo Ferrari," says Andrea de Adamich, who drove with aplomb all of the above bar the Brabham. "He always spoke well of him. Though he never spoke of his past successes."

Maybe so, and yet...

"I think it was always Chiti's aim to return to F1, to beat Ferrari," says Bruno Giacomelli, the lone driver upon Alfa's long-awaited return to grands prix. "He never said anything about it but, believe me, it was what he'd had in mind since the day he left."

"It was only because of Chiti that Alfa did F1. No Chiti, no way! There was always a fight against Alfa Romeo. They had won world titles with Farina and Fangio, and for sure they

didn't like Autodelta. Plus Alfa was a state-owned firm losing 200 billion lire a year.

"So we had to enter F1 softly, without too much glamour. We didn't even have a proper truck. They put us at the end of the pit lane [at Zolder in 1979], with no garage for our materials. And we showed up with an old car. We did only five races that season."

Born in Pistoia in December 1924, Chiti earned an aeronautical engineering degree at Pisa University - he also studied chemistry - and joined Alfa Romeo's Experimental Department. Early excitement, including the 6C 3000CM that Fangio drove to second place in the 1953 Mille Miglia, faded quickly as the Milanese company throttled back. Thus he arrived at Ferrari brimming with ideas corked by frustration. There, however, he would fall between two stools being neither old school nor a young thruster as a burgeoning company was incorporated.

**H**is second spell with Alfa was necessarily a steady burn after ATS. Captain of a buffeted ship, he did his utmost to shield and encourage those within an unlovely walled compound that evoked a correctional facility and harboured organised chaos and innovative endeavour in roughly equal measures. This involved his tempering a volcanic temper - the revolver kept in a drawer was sometimes fired in frustration at the office ceiling - via a big heart and a soft touch for small stray dogs, be they three-legged or one-eyed, which he rescued and sheltered at the factory.

"During practice at a Buenos Aires 1000km a dog crossed the circuit in front of the pits," says de Adamich. "Chiti was fat but fantastically agile when needed; he ran onto the circuit to save it. And one of the dogs at Autodelta would immediately arrive, protected by Chiti, whenever it heard money in the coffee machine; it wanted the sugar."

"Ferrari was more professional," continues de Adamich, whose single-seater ambitions took him to Maranello from 1968-69. "But not so relaxing. No human relations; Enzo never spoke with his mechanics. But Chiti was a fantastic human being. Autodelta was his family and he 'lived' in the workshop. Only Bruce McLaren was like him in racing. He was everywhere. He had complete responsibility. Engineers like him don't exist today because everybody specialises. He did everything, like Forghieri at Ferrari, but it was harder to have a relationship with Mauro. Of course, they were not perfect in all capacities; they were a little bit overlooking everything."

Nascent Auto-Delta, founded jointly with Alfa dealer Ludovico Chizzola in Udine and

registered in March 1963, was first intended to make existing products more competitive for others. Before the end of 1964, however, it had been drawn to Alfa's bosom - and lost the hyphen in the process - at the farming hamlet of Settimo Milanese. Empowered to get a once sporting marque racing (and rallying) again as its official competitions department - prototypes, engines, team - it would perform the role the Scuderia Ferrari had in the 1930s: to enable Alfa either to bask in glory or deflect defeat.

The beautiful and successful TZ2 of 1965 was its first standalone, but it was the neat and nifty wheel-waving GTA that truly brought home the bacon: nine ETCC titles - four drivers' and five manufacturers' - from 1966-72 that make it arguably the greatest touring car. The sports-prototypes were not so fruitful, the elegant T33/2 generally lacking the speed and reliability of rival Porsche. The eventual breakthrough came in 1971 with the 3-litre V8 T33/3 monocoque: Alfa Romeo's first world championship race victory for 20 years.

"We were beating Porsche 917s driven by Siffert and Rodríguez when a circuit was slippery," says de Adamich, who scored that Brands Hatch win alongside Henri Pescarolo. "I returned because [Giuseppe] Luraghi, president of Alfa Romeo, promised me a V8 for an F1 project: with McLaren [in 1970], it was 100% me; with March [in 1971], Chiti directed. The McLaren was fantastic to drive, but the engine was uncompetitive. The other issue was the McLaren engineer who came to Autodelta and made suggestions about its prototype. Chiti didn't like this and started talking with March. They needed money and free engines, so were not criticising."

The flat-12, promised but never delivered to March, that followed was clearly a direct challenge to Ferrari, although it being routinely swept aside by V12 Matras in the 1974 World Championship for Makes proved that more work was needed.

"We reckoned that Ferrari's flat-12 had a good 30-40bhp more than a Cosworth DFV," says Brabham designer Gordon Murray. "As a percentage, that was huge in the 1970s, and we felt we needed a '12' to remain competitive: Porsche wanted quite a bit of money for theirs; Autodelta's, I believe, was free."

As a result of this deal, Alfa's 1975 sportscar programme, bar its second Targa Florio win since 1971, was farmed out to Willi Kauhsen's Cologne-based team. That it won seven of nine rounds to secure the World Championship for Makes that season was a backhanded compliment.

"We didn't win races; we absorbed them," says Derek Bell, scorer of three of those wins



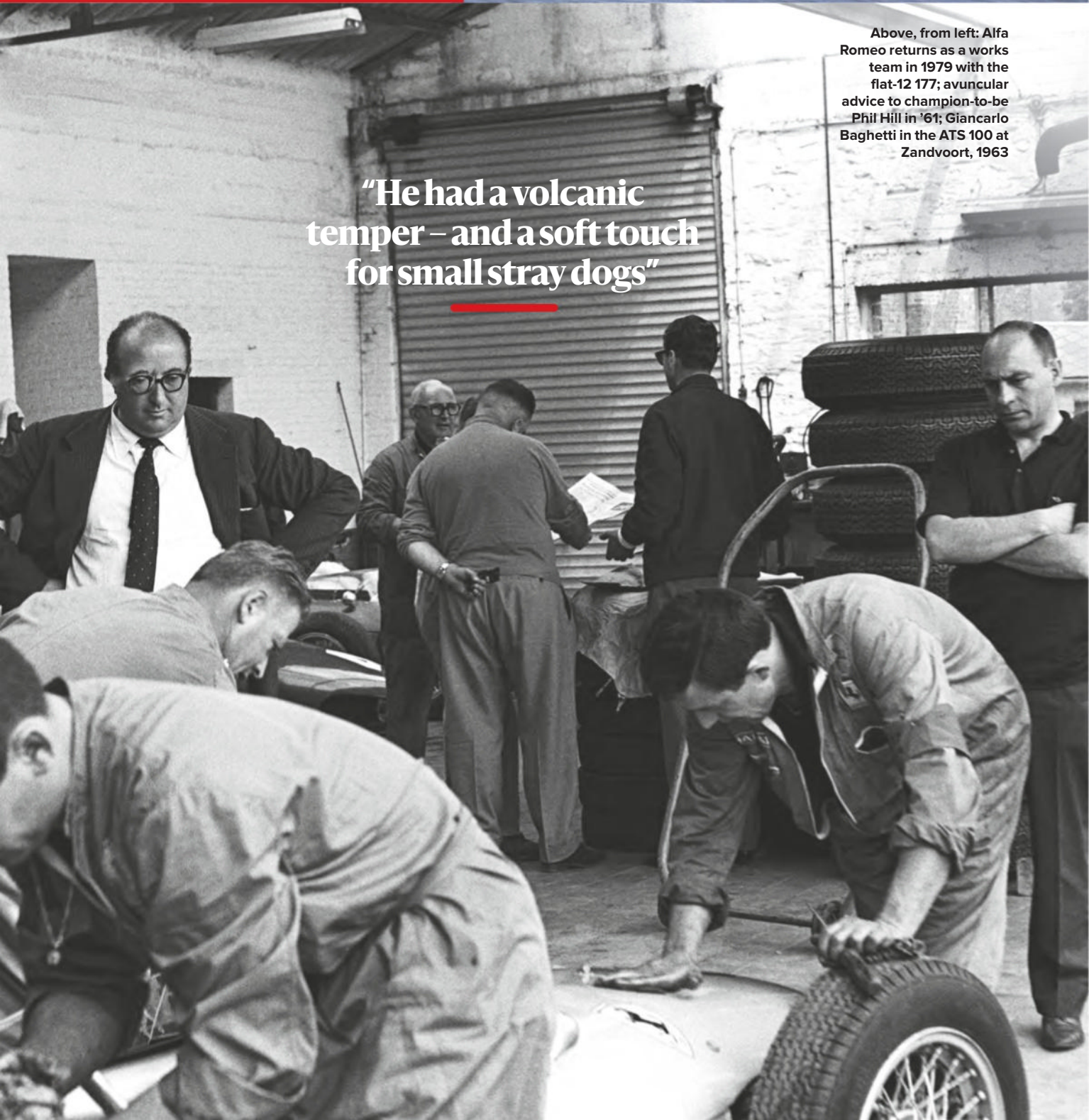
Chiti watches Ferrari mechanics work on the 156s. He oversaw every aspect of his cars from drawing board to pitlane, especially once he moved to Alfa and Autodelta





Above, from left: Alfa Romeo returns as a works team in 1979 with the flat-12 177; avuncular advice to champion-to-be Phil Hill in '61; Giancarlo Baghetti in the ATS 100 at Zandvoort, 1963

**"He had a volcanic temper – and a soft touch for small stray dogs"**





alongside Pescarolo. “The Alfa was a bloody good car. Sounded wonderful. But the [turbocharged] Alpine-Renault should have won all the time. We used to go like hell and hoped they would fall out. They did.

“I never saw anyone from the factory - Chiti was never there - and as far as I know the cars stayed at Willi's. I'm sure Autodelta was doing a wonderful job rebuilding engines and getting them to us, that it was a more cohesive relationship than we imagined, but it was a German operation in my opinion.”

Autodelta's hands-on relationship with Brabham in contrast endured a tricky start.

“Had I developed BT44B and stayed with Cosworth we could have had a much more competitive 1976-77,” says Murray. “The bad side of Autodelta was they couldn't control themselves. They tried different stuff all the time and I didn't know about all the changes.”

When finally it was persuaded to provide a base-spec engine for 1977, Autodelta called it Tiger. Its development was Super Tiger.

“I should have won twice that season,” says John Watson, whose BT45B came within half a lap and a cup of fuel of victory in the French GP at Dijon-Prenois. “The engine looked fantastic. Had it been around in the early 1970s, when it would have been more appropriate, it would have won lots of GPs.”

Murray: “Slowly we made it lighter, more reliable, less thirsty and we were pretty competitive by 1978.”

Niki Lauda scored two wins as Chiti came within five points of beating Ferrari in a constructors' battle. “But ground effect had turned up and the engine was the wrong shape. So Autodelta built us a V12 for 1979, in about three months. They were excellent when a quick reaction was needed.

“It had been the same with the Fan Car [in 1978]. We had about two-and-a-half months to conceive, design, build and test it before the Swedish GP, and Autodelta went into overdrive. That it was successful vindicated us sticking our necks out, and Chiti was as disappointed as I was when [team boss] Bernie [Ecclestone] asked us to withdraw the car under pressure from the other constructors.”

That rushed V12 for 1979 proved unreliable; Brabham was using a Cosworth before season's end. The supposedly hard-

nosed Lauda walked away. Though he had sensed its winning potential, a V8 felt boring after a 12.

Murray, to a lesser degree, was conflicted, too: “There was a lot of mutual respect. Those old boys of the 1960s and 1970s had so much experience that instinctively they knew what to do, what was right, what was wrong. Chiti was a genius in his own way. You needed people like him when teams were small, for leadership and decision-making.

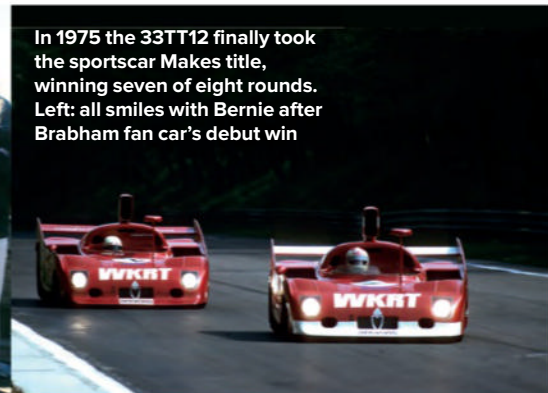
“He was a good sport, too. Once, he took us all out for dinner and there I did my trick whereby I run my hand slowly through a flame without burning myself. Chiti picked up the candle on the table in front of him, stuck it in his mouth and kept it there for 10 seconds or so. When he took it out it was still alight.”

Watson: “He was like a character from a Fellini film: a big man by then, those glasses, sweat pouring off him. He had a penchant for wearing a knotted handkerchief when it got hot, and would put his feet in a bucket if he

## “You needed people like him for leadership and decision-making”



Again the collar and tie: Chiti in repose. Right: favoured 'son' Giacomelli set pole at '80 US GP; Brabham foray - Murray and Lauda with Chiti



In 1975 the 33TT12 finally took the sportscar Makes title, winning seven of eight rounds. Left: all smiles with Bernie after Brabham fan car's debut win





was really overheating. But there was a great aura about him. His reputation was considerable and I respect people like that."

Many of Chiti's legion of drivers called him 'Uncle', and he formed very strong bonds with the likes of Richie Ginther, Lucien Bianchi and Teodoro Zeccoli, whose feedback he trusted.

"He could be very tough," says Giacomelli. "He had a temper: *Toscanaccio*. It means many things Tuscan - a strong character, but easy to wind up. But we respected each other. I read in an interview [with Chiti's medical professor son Arturo] that I had been like a son to him. He never told me that! But it was one of the best days of his life when I qualified on pole at Watkins Glen [the final GP of 1980]. At dinner that night the atmosphere was fantastic. We were right up there, at the end of our first full season."

New recruit Patrick Depailler had predicted that Alfa the constructor would win a grand prix in its first full year back - and it almost came true.

Giacomelli: "We had lost Patrick [in a Hockenheim testing crash] two months before and the responsibility was on my shoulders. Alfa and Chiti supported me. Watkins Glen was supposed to be a coronation of all the hard work we had done. I was leading, not

relaxed but comfortable: fantastic grip, fantastic balance, using 500rpm less yet getting quicker. Then we had a failure that we'd suffered a couple of times before: an ignition coil.

"I had already tested the car for 1981 and set a new record at Alfa's Balocco test track. The prospects were good. I signed for two years. Then skirts were banned and Goodyear retired and we had to start over. For half that season we ran 6cm above the road while other teams invented systems to lift and drop their cars. Chiti said, 'We cannot cheat like that. We are a big company with a reputation.'

"Then Gérard Ducarouge arrived - I think it was Chiti's decision to hire him, but then they fought - and he modified the car. It was fantastic by the end of the season. Again." Third at the Las Vegas finale was so nearly second and might have been a win but for a half-spin and a struggle seeking reverse. "Then they changed the regulations again... to flat bottoms."

Ducarouge's carbon-fibre 182 showed early promise in 1982 - de Cesaris set pole at Long Beach and ran out of fuel in sight of victory at Monaco - but Alfa would officially withdraw. It was a reshuffle: Paolo Pavanetto's Euroracing was handed responsibility for the F1 cars from 1983, Chiti was put in charge

of engine design - a demotion no matter how you dressed it up.

He had, however, been experimenting with twin turbos as long ago as 1977, when T33SC won all eight rounds of a lacklustre World Sportscar Championship. Alfa's 1.5-litre V8 thus equipped for 1983, de Cesaris would lead and set fastest lap at Spa before retiring from second, and finish second at Hockenheim and at the Kyalami finale - but an increasingly isolated and embittered Chiti was on his way out, to establish Motori Moderni in Novara. While Euroracing was scoring a big fat zero in 1985 - leading to total retreat from F1 by cash-strapped Alfa - newcomer Minardi was striving with Chiti's V6 turbo for three seasons without troubling the scorers.

Chiti's final F1 venture sadly smacked of ATS: the much-derided 3.5-litre flat-12 for the Coloni Subaru debacle of 1990.

He died of a heart attack in July 1994.

"We had three full seasons," says Giacomelli. "We needed five at least. What we did in the circumstances was fantastic. And our best car was the 179 of 1980, built and developed under Chiti's direction. Italians thought him eccentric, too, but, believe me, he was very clever, cleverer than people thought. Sadly his intelligence wasn't used in the best way it could have been." ◻



On the wane: despite past glories, Chiti's Motori Moderni projects struggled. Here at Brands in '85 he muses on how to boost Minardi's performance





# CONTI





# PARTIRÒ

(TIME TO SAY GOODBYE)

**After 26 seasons in the saddle and nine world championships, Valentino Rossi's career on two wheels has finally reached the finish line. *Mat Oxley* pays tribute to the MotoGP maestro**

TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT JANUARY 2022





Clockwise from top left: throughout his career, Rossi has raced as No46 – a number often used by his father Graziano, who himself was a world championship bike rider from 1977-82; aged 20 in a London photoshoot in 1999, the year he took the 250cc title; like father, like son in 1997, with Graziano on a 1970s Morbidelli racer while Valentino is on his 125cc Aprilia; some of Rossi's fanbase – he has 5.5 million Twitter followers; Doctor on the go – in Italy 'doctor' is sometimes used in reference to highly respected people; still smiling after all these years, here at the Spanish Grand Prix, May 2021





The scenes in the Petronas garage after Rossi's final race in Valencia on November 14, 2021



**T**he most remarkable grand prix career - in Formula 1 or MotoGP - came to an end at Valencia, Spain, at 2.42pm on November 14.

Valentino Rossi finished his 432nd GP in 10th place, the 42-year-old Italian going down fighting at the end of a mostly grim final season in MotoGP.

Rossi, who dazzled GP racing for more than two decades, had been in freefall during his final few seasons, due to machinery issues and the fact that time waits for no man, not even a superman.

So let's focus on his distant glories, not his recent failures.

Rossi in his pomp was unique - one man transforming an entire sport with his speed and his *joie de vivre*. Until he arrived in the spring of 1996 motorcycle racing was a mostly dour, macho pursuit, not so much something to be enjoyed but endured - pitiless two-stroke engines, dead eyes and broken bones.

Somehow Rossi changed all of that, all on his own. True, riders still break bones, and worse, but modern MotoGP events are joyful affairs, full of colour and clamour, a



**"One man transforming a sport with his speed and *joie de vivre*"**

rock and roll petrolhead party. All this began in the late 1990s as a new breed of race fan flocked to racetracks to see the clown prince in action, wowing the crowd and performing outlandish post-race theatrics which, in his own words, "switched on the emotions of normal people".

For example, my girlfriend at the time watched the 1997 Japanese GP from home in London while I was at the track. Rossi led the 125cc race by a few metres until he got too greedy with the throttle when exiting Suzuka's chicane on the penultimate lap and got spat off.

He landed heavily, sat dazed on the grass for a while, then limped back to pitlane, all the time grinning and waving to the crowd.

"I thought I could win," he told us that afternoon. "Now I just think I'm an idiot."

My girlfriend - to whom motorcycle racing meant nothing - became a fan that very day and millions of other girlfriends, grannies and grandads followed, like children in thrall to the Pied Piper.

A few months later Rossi won the Italian 125cc grand prix at Mugello, his first victory at the venue which later became his holy of holies, the hillsides surrounding the track 🟡



turned yellow by his legions of fans dressed in VR46 merch. That day he rode his victory lap with a blow-up doll strapped to the seat hump of his Aprilia, the words 'Claudia Schiffer' scrawled across the doll's body. This was a deliciously cheeky dig at Max Biaggi, Italy's haughty reigning 250cc world champion, who had been making sure he was seen out and about with supermodel Naomi Campbell.

Rossi and Biaggi became bitter enemies and in 2001 duelled for the premier 500cc world championship. During the Suzuka race Biaggi elbowed Rossi onto the grass exiting the guardrail-lined 120mph sweeper that takes riders onto the start/finish. Two laps later Rossi outbraked Biaggi's Yamaha into Turn 1 and gave him the finger. Four months later Rossi won the title and Biaggi never really bothered him again.

Of course, none of Rossi's fun and frolics would've been possible if his riding talent hadn't been otherworldly, taking him to more premier-class grand prix victories than anyone else in history.

His career statistics are mind-boggling: 432 grand prix starts across three categories over 26 seasons, 115 victories (89 in the premier 500cc/MotoGP class, 14 in 250cc GPs, 12 in 125 GPs) and a total of 235 podium finishes, including a tantalising 199 in the premier class.

For the first dozen or so years of his GP career Rossi was mostly unbeatable. Over 13

seasons he won nine world championships: one 125cc, one 250cc, one 500cc and six MotoGP. There were bad times, of course, but he always bounced back.

Despite his speed, Rossi didn't rule motorcycle racing by creating radical new riding techniques, as 'King' Kenny Roberts had in the late 1970s (sliding the rear tyre) and Marc Márquez did in the last decade (sliding the front tyre). What he did was bring an artist's approach to the science of racing, perfecting each process, like Jimmy Page playing guitar or David Bowie writing lyrics. (This analogy isn't entirely out of place - Rossi was born in 1979 but his favourite bands are 1970s rock bands.)

"For me the racing line is like a poem," he once said.

Rossi built his legend in the final two years of the 500cc class, riding evil half-litre two-strokes that made close to 200hp, via a perilous torque curve and with no traction control. These were cruel weapons, responsible for ending the careers of the three riders who had ruled the sport immediately before him: Wayne Rainey, Kevin Schwantz and Mick Doohan.

"The simple truth is that no bike in the world can match a two-stroke 500," he said later. "I loved its violent character - the front tyre never on the ground and the rear tyre simply all over the place. Either you rode her or she punished you. There was no middle ground for you."

Rossi entered the premier class with Honda, riding its NSR500 two-stroke, and stayed with the company in 2002 and 2003, riding its sublime 990cc RC211V four-stroke, still considered the greatest GP bike of all time by racing connoisseurs.

The first two seasons of the new four-stroke MotoGP championship were his strongest, with an average of 22 points per race from a possible 25. However, the brilliance of Honda's five-cylinder vee caused its own issues. The RC211V's utter dominance (29 victories from 32 races in 2002 and 2003) convinced Honda that the machine mattered more than the man. Rossi disagreed, so off he went in a huff to ride Yamaha's hopeless YZR-M1 (two wins in 2002, zero in 2003).

Here was proof that Rossi preferred a challenge to an easy cruise to gold and glory.

**A**gainst all the odds, together with archly pragmatic chief mechanic Jeremy Burgess and Yamaha engineers, Rossi fixed the M1 in a matter of days. At the 2004 season-opening race he beat Biaggi, now riding an RC211V, by two tenths to become the first (and so far, only) rider to win back-to-back premier-class races with different brands of motorcycles.

Rossi's unlikely Yamaha successes quite rightly elevated him to the status of motorcycling deity. How could anyone do what he had done? But he had done it, ☉

**"The truth is that no bike in the world can match a two-stroke 500"**







## The Doctor: what a ride

**Born** February 16, 1979

**1990** Begins his career in karts, winning the regional championship in Italy in his first year. He raced on four wheels until 1992.

**1993** Competes in his first bike race, as part of the 125cc Italian Sport Production Championship.

**1994** Wins the Italian Production title on a factory Cagiva Mito.

**1995** Wins the Italian 125cc title with Aprilia, finishes third in the European championship.

**1996** Makes his motorcycle grand prix debut in the 125cc world championship, riding for Aprilia. Finishes ninth in the points.

**1997** Rossi's first world title arrives as he scores 11 wins and 13 podiums for the 125cc Aprilia factory team.

**1998** Remains with Aprilia for his debut in the 250cc division. Wins five times on his way to second in the championship. Takes the title with nine wins the following year.

**2000** Rossi switches to Honda and graduates into 500cc racing. Two wins leaves him second in his first year, before the title again falls his way in year two, with 11 victories.

**2002** Motorcycle racing's premier class is renamed MotoGP and Rossi becomes its leading light, taking back-to-back championships for Honda, amassing 20 wins across the first two years and 31 podiums.

**2004** Moves to unfancied Yamaha and immediately makes the team a winner, claiming back-to-back titles again. Becomes the only rider to win back-to-back MotoGP races on different brands of bike.

**2009** Scores his sixth, and final, MotoGP crown, with six wins for Yamaha, narrowly beating Lorenzo.

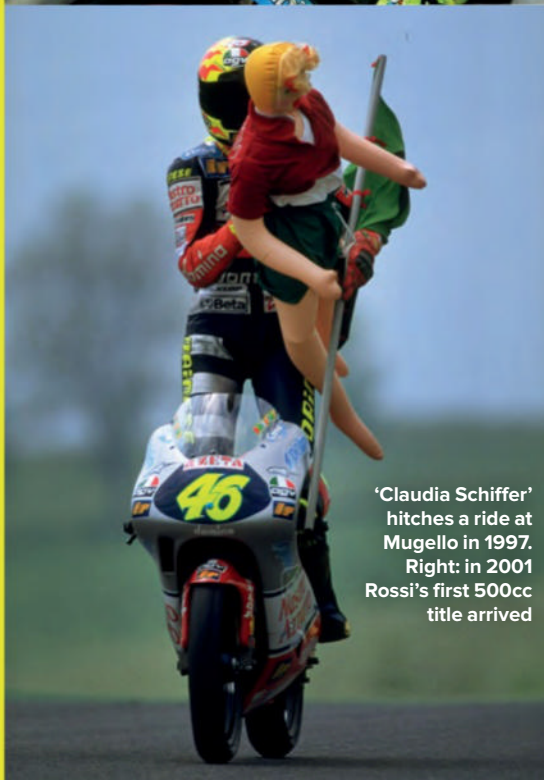
**2017** Rossi's final MotoGP win (his 76th) comes in the Dutch GP at Assen.

**2021** After four tough and winless years, Rossi retires after the MotoGP finale in Valencia.



Impressing the Brits at Donington Park midway through the 1999 season taking a fourth of nine wins. Left: 1997, at 18 years old

In 2002, the premier class was renamed MotoGP – and Rossi was unstoppable



'Claudia Schiffer' hitches a ride at Mugello in 1997. Right: in 2001 Rossi's first 500cc title arrived





Rossi's last MotoGP win came in 2017 but in 2018, when this photo was taken – at Phillip Island, Australia – he was still among the frontrunners, finishing the season third with Yamaha





although not always with the gentlemanly poise of his days at Honda.

An inferior machine required nefarious tactics. Rossi had his elbows out whenever he fought for victory aboard the M1 and woe betide anyone who wanted a fight.

Rossi didn't invent the warrior style of racing, but he certainly globalised it. Whenever he got nasty with his rivals millions watched and applauded, including a very young Márquez, sat at home with his mum and dad, absorbing every move and every detail.

In fact Rossi's ruthlessness had always been there. No one gets to the top of pretty much any endeavour without a ruthless streak, without that willingness to see rivals fall off the ladder, while they keep their eyes looking upwards and take the next step towards the top.

Rossi had won his first two world titles as a teenager with Aprilia, a small Italian brand, where the family feeling was strong. However, even then the shiny, happy youngster had that ruthless edge, which in those days he saved for behind closed doors. Twice during his three seasons as an official Aprilia rider he threatened to quit the factory if his bosses didn't do exactly what he wanted.

During his first seven seasons at Yamaha Rossi fought against faster bikes and then a new breed of faster rider, most notably Spanish team-mate Jorge Lorenzo and Australian Casey Stoner.

"They are like sharks circling around me," he told journalists while fighting for his final world title in 2009. "If I am not

strong I know they will eat me in one bite. They look at me with a little bit of blood flowing and maybe they think, 'OK, now is the time.'"

Rossi fully understood that age and guile can still beat youth and a bad haircut, for a while at least.

Eventually Lorenzo's presence in the Yamaha garage drove him out and into the arms of Ducati instead, which turned out to be arguably the biggest mistake of his career. He spent two years with the Italian brand, but didn't win a single race.

## "Rossi didn't invent the warrior style of racing, but he globalised it"

"Sometimes you have the feeling that you've wasted your time," he said at the end of those two seasons.

Yamaha took him back in 2013, Rossi slowly building to his epic title challenge in 2015. Already in his late thirties he came within five points of beating Lorenzo for the championship. Rossi believed that some of his rivals - Lorenzo, Márquez and his Honda team-mate Dani Pedrosa - had conspired to prevent him from winning a tenth world title, but in truth he wasn't

quite fast enough. He won four races to Lorenzo's seven.

After that Rossi's results collapsed. Not so much because he was too slow, but because in 2016 MotoGP switched from Bridgestone tyres to Michelins and from tailor-made factory software to spec Magneti Marelli software. Yamaha struggled more than the others to adapt its M1 to this new technical reality. Even now Yamaha isn't quite there, relying upon the talents of its latest young recruit, Fabio Quartararo, to ride around the electronics to win the 2021 MotoGP crown, its first of the Michelin/Magneti Marelli era.

Meanwhile Rossi finished his final season 18th of 21 full-time riders, his 2020 and 2021 results further compromised by a new rear slick, which didn't fit his riding style.

A gloomy end to a previously glittering career? Not really.

Rossi isn't stupid. If he already knew in 2009 that the youngsters were coming after him, he knew what the future held. But he needed the thrill of motorcycle racing too much to quit, until he had no real option to continue.

"I was worried about Valentino when he was finishing eighth or ninth," said Burgess (who Rossi unwisely sacked at the end of 2013) a couple of years ago. "But he was quite at ease with himself at his age and where he was in his life, so he wasn't going to panic and go ballistic trying to take himself back to first place."

Mechanic Alex Briggs, who worked with Rossi for 21 seasons, also understood 🟡





## A day of emotion as the greatest looks back at his last ride...

Valentino Rossi's last race was better than anyone had expected, him included: "It's very easy when you've said, 'OK, I'm stopping,' to give up but after Portugal [his penultimate race] I spoke with my team and I said, 'In Valencia we have to give the maximum because it's the last race and I don't want to arrive last'. It was very important to make a good result. It wasn't easy, but I wanted to try, because the most important for me was to be strong in the race. I felt the motivation and concentration like I had to play for the

championship, because the last race is very important – you will never forget it.

"It was a great emotion for me. I rode very well, I never made any mistakes and I gave the maximum from beginning to end. I finished in the top 10, so this was one of my best races of the season and I enjoyed it. It means I closed my career with the top 10 riders in the world and this is so important for me. After the race we did some serious casino and we enjoyed it, like I'd won the championship. It was something I'll never forget."



Reunited with all the bikes from his career in Valencia. Above: Rossi was satisfied to finish 10th and ended the season in 18th position



The end of a chapter, but what's next for Rossi and his adoring fans?



the ongoing decline. “Valentino isn’t 20 any more,” he said recently. “Think about it, you go on some mad circus ride when you’re 20 years old and it’s fun. Get on that same ride now and you go, ‘Whoaaaa!’ Why is that? It’s just your brain.”

Rossi won his final MotoGP race at Assen in 2017, so he was winless for his last four seasons. And yet couldn’t kick the habit, even after he came close to death during the 2020 Austrian GP at Red Bull Ring, when a fallen, airborne motorcycle flew past at high speed, just centimetres away.

“It was so scary, terrifying,” he said after taking the restart of the red-flagged race 40 minutes later. “Taking the restart was a very difficult moment, but I think I didn’t have any choice because I don’t want to say ‘Ciao, ciao!’ to everybody and go home yet.”

The bike that came so close to killing him belonged to Franco Morbidelli, the first rider signed by Rossi’s VR46 Riders Academy to

## “It was scary. Taking the restart was a very difficult moment”

foster young Italian talent. Morbidelli was the first VR46 rider to win a world title and next year there will be three or four VR46 riders in MotoGP, plus VR46 teams in all three classes: MotoGP, Moto2 and Moto3.

Rossi will therefore split his time between his MotoGP commitments and his nascent car racing career, driving a Kessel Racing Ferrari 488 GT3 in sports car events. Rumours suggest he may also have his eyes set on a Le Mans Hypercar project.

The man himself is keen for his move into car racing next year, wherever it may be. “Next year I will race GT, I still don’t know which championship, because it can be the WEC but can also be European Le Mans Series or GT World Challenge,” he said ahead of his final MotoGP race. “I need to understand also my level and my speed. I’d like to race LMP2 or the Hypercar... but there the level of the drivers is very high, so I don’t know if I’m fast enough. We will try to understand next year.”

Will MotoGP ever have another rider like Rossi on the grid? It is highly unlikely in any of our lifetimes. ●





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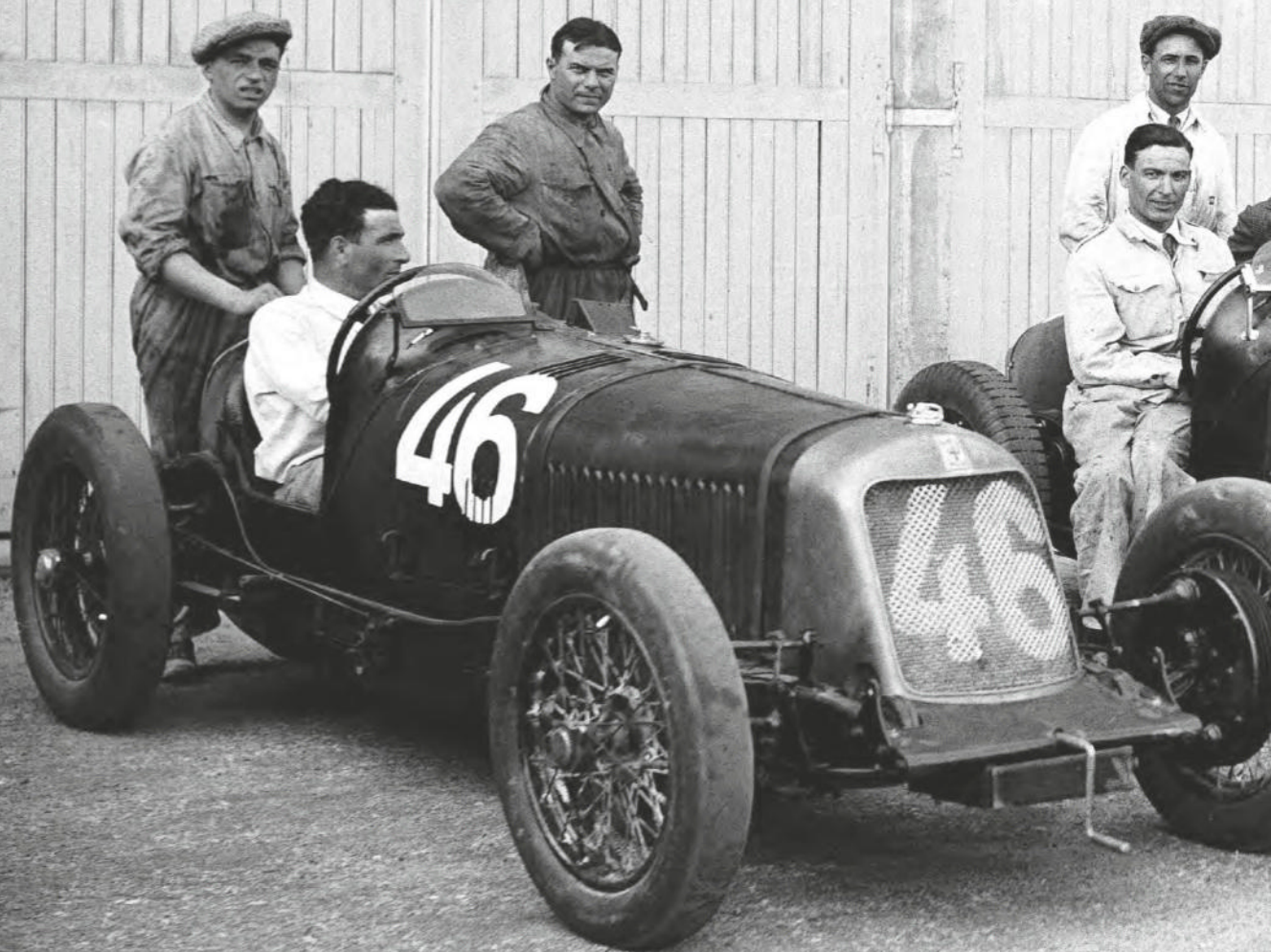




# Belle macchine

The award-winning biography *Maserati: The Family Silver* tells the story behind the foundation of one of Italy's great marques. Author *Nigel Trow* explains how he came to write its captivating history

TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT JANUARY 2021







The Maserati team before the 1931 French Grand Prix at Montlhéry, which was held over 10 hours. From left, the 26Ms of Clement Biondetti/Luigi Parenti, Luigi Fagioli/Ernesto Maserati and René Dreyfus/Pietro Ghersi. Biondetti/Parenti would fare best, finishing third





Maserati's production line, full of 3500 GT models. The marque produced 2226 between 1957-1964

It took a long time. In the 35 years following my first trip to Modena in 1965, I wrote much about Lancia, with Maserati a happy memory. Then, at the turn of the century, the old Bolognese firm clicked back in focus. An A6G Allemano coupé was advertised in *Motor Sport* for a sum I could afford. I didn't buy it, but the idea of a new Maserati history took root.

Cars for their own sake never interested me. Shape, engineering, provenance and history are what matters. All cars have history, of course, but it is not always worth writing. I surveyed the Maserati literature and discovered that, other than the comprehensive Luigi Orsini and Franco Zagari book *Una Storia nella Storia - 1945 ad oggi*, no other complete account existed. Many excellent model histories, but no deep study. I made notes.

When I turned up for the first time in 1965 at the factory on Modena's Viale Ciro Menotti I knew little of the company's background, other than that it had moved there from Bologna in 1940, three years after Adolfo Orsi bought it. It was an unostentatious red-brick place, wholly suited to the Maserati style and the people I was to meet. A warm, casual

openness characterised both. "Of course you can see it all. Just ask." Not like Ferrari, which I had visited the day before. There, I had been given a 275 GTB to photograph, which was nice but no, I couldn't see the factory, and no one was available to talk. The staff pulled the covers off a couple of old Testa Rossas, a V12 and a four cylinder they wanted to get rid of. Would I like to buy one - £1000 each? (They were still kicking around in Milan 18 months later. The price had risen to £1500)

Maserati's attitude to its old race cars was more protective than its Maranello neighbours. It would sell them, of course, but at the time of that first visit it also looked after anything that it had ever built since 1926. From the eponymous Tipo 26, through the singular monoposto racing cars and thrilling two-seaters to the latest glamorous road cars: if

**"In Italy, knock on the right door and others open"**

Maserati had built it, Maserati welcomed it back to the workshop. Wandering through them was delicious, seeing the Shah of Persia's special 5000 coupé among its lesser siblings particularly so. This peacock among swans symbolised much about the company. The sense that all were valued equally, of mutual respect between owner, management and workforce was characteristic. Within the necessary hierarchy normal Italian conventions were observed, but in a way that generated an easy atmosphere. During the early years, the brothers Maserati ate with their mechanics. In the modern, bigger company the same spirit survived.

By the time I began researching *The Family Silver* in 2000, much had happened. After years of financial turbulence, during which the company ostensibly withdrew from racing in 1959, it had been taken over by Citroën 10 years later before falling into the hands of Alejandro de Tomaso, who cajoled the Italian government into buying it for him in 1975 only to crash it by 1993 into the arms of Fiat, which scooped it up, closed it down and then eventually resurrected it in 1996 with the beautiful 3200 GT. Phew! Forty-five years that changed everything.





Nigel Trow during his Maserati visit. Left, from top: Nino Vaccarella in a Tipo 61 'Birdcage'; turn left for the workshops

Yet in essence, nothing had changed. The factory I arrived at on September 21, 2000 was still the old place revamped. Those brick buildings housing workshops where cars were once hand-built on trestles now contained sophisticated assembly lines, but the feel of the offices and archive was unchanged.

I had arrived in Modena the day before, after a weary drive down from France with my wife Kate. Adolfo Orsi Jr, with whom I had been in correspondence, had booked us into a hotel between Carpi, where he lived, and Modena. Orsi, whose grandfather - also named Adolfo - had bought the company from the surviving Maserati brothers, Bindo, Ernesto and Ettore, was and is a knowledgeable auto historian whose help was to prove essential to the whole project. That help began immediately, when we were hustled off to the opening of a new industrial museum in Bologna to meet the Turin-based engineer Alfieri Maserati - nephew and namesake of Maserati's founder, and son of Ernesto Maserati, who took charge of the firm on the death of his older brother in 1930.

In Italy, introductions are everything. Knock on the right door and others open. The following day Adolfo took me to the factory

and introduced me to Ermanno Cozza, the company archivist, who immediately allowed access of all the doors and drawers to his capacious files, knowledge and memory. Here was a treasury of documents. Cozza had joined Maserati in 1951 aged 18 as an engineering apprentice. When I first met him he had retired from the bench as head of engine testing some years earlier. With grey hair and an open face, he had carried the disciplines of engineering over to his efficient organisation of the archive. Little that I asked for could not be produced promptly, and his recall of mechanical history was prodigious.



Alfieri Maserati and Guerino Bertocchi in the Tipo 26's debut at the 1926 Targa Florio

Had it not been for his willingness, the time it took to work through the material available would have tripled.

I spent a most happy week with him. There were hand-written build sheets for each and every car, frequently annotated with modification details; first owners were named, all the facts and figures of each chassis, even fuel constituents and lubricants were listed and sometimes invoices were available. Then there were photographs. Whatever I selected was photocopied and ready by the end of the day. What I could not copy were the full-size drawings on hangers. These were just too big, and probably fragile. This was one of the matters that worried me. Unlike archives today, this one was just a big office with stuff in files. The hanging drawings needed proper air-conditioned archival protection. What happened to them, I don't know.

An equally willing source was Adolfo Orsi Jr himself, whose *Historica Selecta* collection, housed at his house near Carpi, was thrown open to me. Orsi, like Cozza, was equally engaging and generous. His library and extensive photo archive, covering much more than Maserati, were remarkable. Together, we had several excellent lunches and dinners





Prince Bira at Brooklands in 1938 aboard his Maserati 8CM



New Maserati MC20; (above) Maserati's HQ has been in Modena since 1940

discussing Maserati. I learned much from him about his grandfather and his father, Omar, family details that gave life to the text. These are what give sense to motor history, which always needs a broad historical and social context. Adolfo, in conversation, emphasised the significance of photographs to the historian but for me, photographs without the fullest context only show, but explain little.

After 10 days in Modena, Kate and I went north to Turin, a city we love and have visited for 60 years. I was there principally to do more research in the National Automobile Museum, and also to talk to Alfieri Maserati Jr, whom we had met in Bologna. The museum had previously been the Carlo Biscaretti di Ruffia collection, where I had undertaken earlier research with help of the curator Donatella Biffignandi. She remained in charge of the research department in the new museum, and was giving me desk space to search through the collection of *L'Auto Italiana* and other periodicals held in the library. This occupied several days of intense reading, with gaps for conversations with Alfieri and the opportunity to look at his collection of paintings by his non-mechanical uncle, Mario. Unsung, other than for his design of the Maserati trident

symbol, Mario was a painter deserving more attention today than he is given. Compared to his rather unexceptional townscapes and still-lives, the figurative work he produced has intensity and clarity of execution. The portraits stand apart from the sitter, and have about them a slightly sinister otherworldly aura that perhaps only his taciturn brother Ernesto might have grasped. But who's to say?

I finished off this first trip at Lancia, about which I have written much. I was coming to see that Maserati and Lancia had many things in common, but from very different founding philosophies. Each was the product of a man with clear views and particular ideas. Maserati was made in the image of Alfieri, a racer at heart, and his three brothers. These were

**“Other than for his trident design, Mario deserves more attention”**

passionate Bolognese engine men pursuing horsepower. Vincenzo Lancia, who had also raced, built road cars, trucks and military vehicles and had international ambitions. Both were sociable family men, and both insisted on high-quality engineering. Where they differed was in aspiration and outlook. Although Alfieri had spent two years in Buenos Aires working for Isotta Fraschini early in his career, he and his brothers were deeply loyal to Bologna, their adopted city. Colin Davis, son of Bentley Boy Sammy Davis, wrote that they gained as much pleasure from winning a local hillclimb as a grand prix. Piedmontese Lancia differed in being an engineering industrialist at heart, with national and international ambitions.

Researching *Maserati: The Family Silver* required several visits to Modena. Gradually, as the influence of Fiat and Ferrari expanded, the factory grew increasingly corporate. Security grew and staff wore passes. But it still remained welcoming. On my last visit, I drove down in my Lancia B20 Series 6, the most civilised of the Aurelias. As I walked towards security after parking, a hand fell on my shoulder. “*Bella macchina*,” said a man as he passed me. ●



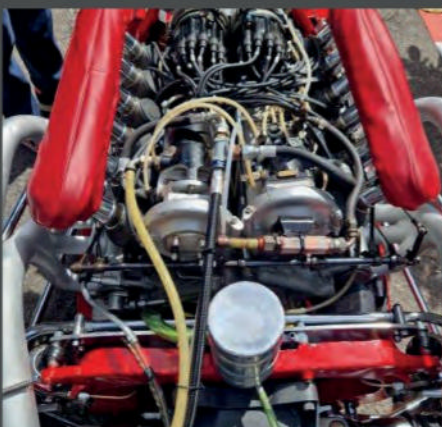


# "In Vendita"



## 1966 Cooper Maserati T81 F1-5-66

Chassis 5 of seven built for the 1966 formula one season. This beautiful 3ltr Cooper powered by a Maserati 4-cam V12 engine and monocoque chassis was sold new to the brilliant private owner/driver Joakim Bonnier. Its first race at the 1966 BRDC International Trophy race in the May at Silverstone Jo came 3rd, a great start to his 66 season. Over the next couple of years he campaigned well and managed a 1st place at the Coppa Autobil Revue at Monza on the 28th May 1967, a couple of other podium finishes throughout his 2-year ownership. Joakim sold the car soon after its last race at the South African Grand Prix to the Donington Museum where it remained on show for 40 years. Exhibited at the 2011 Retromobile show Paris and sold shortly after. This unique car with limited ownership is totally restored, ready and available . . . . . P.O.A



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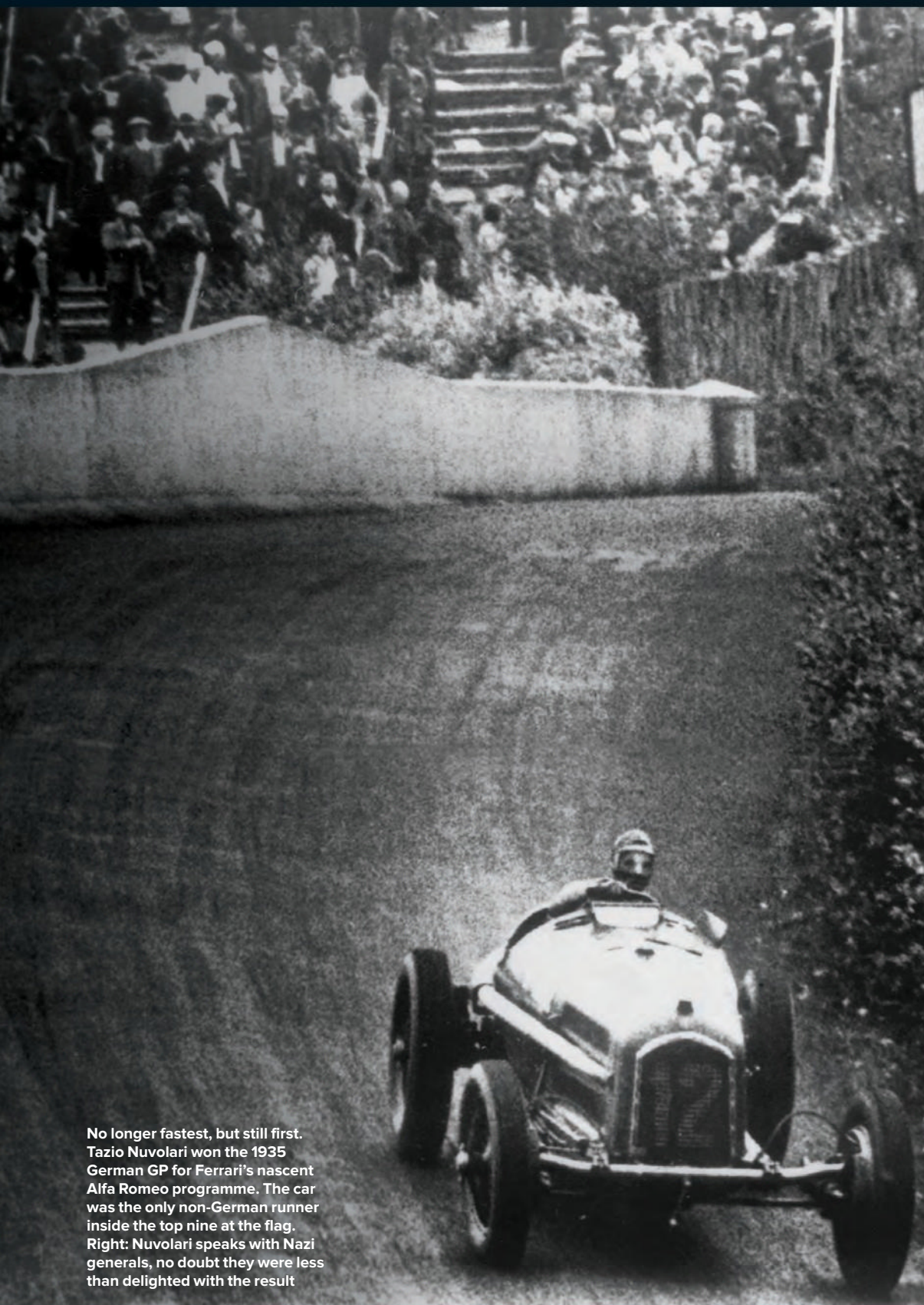


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No longer fastest, but still first. Tazio Nuvolari won the 1935 German GP for Ferrari's nascent Alfa Romeo programme. The car was the only non-German runner inside the top nine at the flag. Right: Nuvolari speaks with Nazi generals, no doubt they were less than delighted with the result







# The car that beat Hitler

**Tazio Nuvolari's victory in the 1935 German GP remains among the most significant in motor racing history. It was partly the way he drove his Alfa, but mostly the political context**

WORDS RICHARD WILLIAMS TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, MARCH 2017

Adolf Hitler was first to take advantage of the opportunity offered by modern international sport to ambitious leaders looking for ways of demonstrating the irresistible power of the forces at their command. Very soon after he and his National Socialists came to power in 1933, all sports organisations connected to religions and other political parties were banned outright. The head of the existing national sports office, Theodor Lewald, was removed when he was found to have a Jewish grandmother. Into Lewald's place, charged with developing a new generation of champions, came Hans von Tschammer und Osten, a member of the SA, the paramilitary wing of the Nazi party. The new Reichssportführer sat at the head of the Deutscher Reichsbund für Leibesübungen (DRL), the Third Reich's national league of physical education, an umbrella body to which all individual sports bodies now reported.

If Hitler's athletes were to be promoted as higher beings, thus fulfilling the Führer's belief in the inherent superiority of the Aryan race, then so were German engineers. Before 1914, teams from Mercedes-Benz and Opel had competed successfully in Grand Prix racing. Between 1918 and 1933, however, the French and the Italians fought for supremacy: Bugatti and Delage versus Alfa Romeo and Maserati. By giving his blessing to a revived Mercedes team and the new Auto Union outfit, Hitler brought Germany back into the equation.

On his order, the two teams divided an annual grant of 450,000 Reichsmarks (the equivalent of about £2.5 million in today's values) between them, leaving each to find at least four times that sum from their own resources in order to meet their racing budgets. The high standards applied to German engineering were seen in the supercharged straight-eight Mercedes W25 and Dr Ferdinand Porsche's mid-engined V16 Auto Union Type A. Making their debuts in 1934, they seemed to represent a leap into a new era of technology.

So when Tazio Nuvolari won the 1935 German GP at the Nürburgring in Scuderia Ferrari's beautiful but obsolete Alfa Romeo Tipo B, it represented a serious blow to National Socialist pride. Luck played a part when the leading Mercedes of Manfred von Brauchitsch blew a tyre on the last lap and handed the race to Nuvolari, who had been entertaining the crowd of 330,000 by "driving like a demon", in the words of *The Autocar's* racing correspondent. ●



Legend has it that in the expectation of a home victory, the public address system was equipped only with a recording of *Deutschland Über Alles*, and that Nuvolari had to produce his personal copy of the *Marcia Reale* to be played in honour of his victory. The Italian anthem rang particularly hollow in the ears of Korpsführer Adolf Hühnlein, the sour-faced head of German motor sport, a veteran of the First World War and of the unsuccessful 1923 'beer-hall putsch' in Munich.

Five months later, a second reverse for the Third Reich's sporting heroes came in very different surroundings when Germany's footballers travelled to play England at White Hart Lane - a poignant choice, given the traditionally strong Jewish following of the ground's home club, Tottenham Hotspur - in a match that had been the subject of controversy since its announcement. A headline in a London evening newspaper read "JEWS UP IN ARMS" and the Trades Union Congress unsuccessfully petitioned the government to call the whole thing off. England played poorly against opponents concentrating almost wholly on defence, but managed a 3-0 victory.

When the teams met again in Berlin in May 1938, two months after the Anschluss, the British ambassador had to plead with the England players to give the Nazi salute during the German national anthem. Despite misgivings, they complied before thrashing the home side 6-3 in front of a crowd of 110,000.

In the Olympic summer of 1936 the Führer's countenance was darkened by the feats of the USA's James 'Jesse' Owens, who took the gold medals in the men's 100m, 200m, 4x100m relay and the long jump. This affront to the Nazi doctrine of the racial inferiority of black people was impossible to ignore. But not all Germans shared Hitler's prejudice. Luz Long, the silver medallist in the long jump, might have been the very image of the Aryan superman, but he and Owens left the arena with arms linked and their friendship survived even Long's battlefield death in 1943, in the form of continued correspondence between Owens and his erstwhile opponent's family.

A further German-American friendship sprang up during the two heavyweight boxing matches held at Yankee Stadium in New York between Max Schmeling and Joe Louis, respectively the former and future world champions. Schmeling was 30 when

they first met in 1936, and Louis 22. The German stopped the American in the 13th round, but it was Louis's manager who managed to secure a title fight against Jim Braddock for his man, at which the Brown Bomber acquired his world championship.

Schmeling's chance to dethrone Louis came two years later, but the referee stopped the contest two minutes into the first round, when he was knocked down by Louis for the third time.

Later, as the owner of a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Germany, Schmeling was able to give financial assistance to a struggling Louis and even helped to pay for his funeral in 1981. Schmeling himself died in 2005, aged 99.

Finally there was the 1938 German Grand Prix, won by Dick Seaman in his Mercedes. Now Korpsführer Hühnlein had the unwelcome duty of sending a telegram to inform Hitler that his showpiece event had been snatched from his German champions by a 24-year-old Englishman. According to the winner's friend and biographer Prince Chula, this was "As if a German had batted better than Bradman in Australia [or] a Frenchman had outplayed Babe Ruth at baseball in America."

On the best day of his young life, Seaman could not ignore the protocol, but his Hitler salute on the victory rostrum must have been the limpest and least enthusiastic ever witnessed. ●



**Top:** The England football team (in white) argued against having to give the Nazi salute ahead of their game in Berlin in 1938. They did thrash the Germans 6-3 though. **Left:** Jesse Owens and Luz Long remained friends, despite the war

## "Owens' success was an affront to the Nazi doctrine of the racial inferiority of black people"



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# Can't better an Alfetta

**At the dawn of the world championship, Alfa Romeo set the bar high with its grand prix cars. Doug Nye tracks their success**

TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT DECEMBER 2019

**F**rom 1946 to 1951 – for an entire generation of fans – Alfa Romeo's works grand prix car – the immortal 'Alfetta' – set the gold standard. Through that period these 1500cc straight-eight supercharged cars were the standard-setters of their time. Even when the Alfa Corse factory team took a sabbatical from racing during 1949 and Ferrari blossomed to brief dominance, the Prancing Horse was widely regarded as just the understudy, merely keeping the legend's seat warm while it took a financial breather.

Through those years – during which the old-established grand prix formula renamed (from 1948) as 'Formula A' or 'Formula 1' – the ever-developing series of Alfa Romeo Tipo 158/159 cars contested 42 top-flight races. They won 38 and reigned unbeaten through 1947-48 and 1950. Alfa Corse used the greatest drivers of its time, and it took an all-new 4½-litre unsupercharged V12 Ferrari to knock the ageing cars off their hard-won pedestal in 1951 – not that Alfa's finest believed that was, in fact, the case...

From its racing introduction in 1938, the Alfetta's power grew progressively from around 195bhp to a stunning 425bhp – thanks to some 42 lbs psi supercharge boost

– by 1951. In inverse proportion, its fuel consumption plummeted to barely 1.6mpg. The unsupercharged 4.5-litre V12 Ferrari 375s which toppled the Alfa did so by being almost as fast, and needing fewer refuelling stops. Not quite tortoise and hare, but close.

Giovanni Battista Guidotti – pre-war chief tester turned post-war racing manager of Alfa's experimental department – once told me how the project to build a 1500cc racing Voiturette car (for the GP2 category of its day) had begun – sub-contracted to the marque's Modena-based quasi-works team, the Scuderia Ferrari. "It was at the 1936 Italian GP at Monza, when Ferrari was there and he said to my chief, engineer Jano, and me: 'Look, your best driver, Nuvolari, finished second and the Germans have won again. We cannot match their money and effort in the grand prix class. We should build a 1500 to race Maserati's four-cylinder, which is winning the class. We can beat them, and there will be no Germans!'."

"Jano said, 'No, I am too busy, too much to do'. Ferrari replied: 'You send me your best man, I will supply the Lambrusco and Zampone...'" – Modenese wine and the local delicacy of stuffed pigs' trotters – "...and you do the manufacture, and we'll get the job done between us". ◉

Giuseppe Farina sits ready for the 1950 British GP, the first Formula 1 World Championship event. He would head an Alfetta 158 top four at the finish

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At the time, Jano was busy with designs for a 4.4-litre V12 GP car for 1937 – the Alfa Romeo 12C-37. It flopped... Jano was fired.

In May 1937, Jano's No 2 for 13 years, Ing Gjoachino Colombo, was posted to Ferrari's Modena works to produce the proposed new 1500. His task was eased by the fact that the design office at Portello, Milan, was at that time involved in drafting proposals for a new Tipo 316 V16 Grand Prix car for the 3-litre supercharged GP Formula taking effect in 1938. It was logical to design a potent 1500 from one bank of that 3-litre GP engine.

Where the V16's gear-train drive to the twin overhead cams and other ancillaries was at the rear of the engine, unlike other Alfa eights in which it had always resided amidships, Colombo juggled it to the front of his engine, shortening the crankshaft.

He drew two aluminium block castings, 58mm bore x 70mm stroke providing 1497cc. The crankcase was cast Elektron alloy, with steel cylinder liners, and the crankshaft ran in eight main bearings with a ninth subsidiary. Lubrication was dry sump. The twin-overhead cam engine was supercharged by a single-stage Roots compressor, boosting at an initial 17.6psi. In testing at Modena this 1500 developed 180bhp at 6500rpm. By its race debut six months later, Alfa Corse had 195bhp at 7000rpm – 130bhp per litre.

This engine and a four-speed transaxle were mounted in a twin-tube steel chassis with trailing-arm and transverse leaf-spring suspension. A slender body featured a raked potato-chipper grille. Relatively short-distance *vetturetta* racing allowed 'just' a 37.5 gallon tail tank. It would grow, and proliferate with side and scuttle tanks.

Guidotti: "Four cars were built at Modena and virtually completed in every detail there, then the management set up Alfa Corse at Portello; Ferrari came to us as manager and we ran from the factory." This was a move which Alfa Romeo MD Ugo Gobbato had ordered. Mr Ferrari fitted like a star-shaped peg in a square hole, and he soon opted out.

During 1938 the new Alfettas contested four races, made 14 starts, won twice in the hands of Emilio – brother of Luigi – Villoresi, but had eight retirements. Bearings were a weakness, and for 1939 needle roller big ends were adopted and main-bearing oil feeds improved. The engine now achieved 225bhp at 7500rpm – 150bhp per litre.

At the opening 1500cc Vetturetta race of 1939 – at Tripoli – Mercedes-Benz shook the Italians with its late-entry W165 V8s.

Villoresi kept the revs down in his Alfetta and finished third; three other Alfettas failed. The cooling system was changed and its working pressure increased. Engine lubrication was again modified, and the cars coincidentally rebodied to virtually their final form. Of four more races that year, they won three. Their drivers included 'Nino' Farina, Clemente Biondetti, Francesco Severi and Carlo Pintacuda. But on a black day at Monza – during a press reception – Emilio Villoresi was killed in one of the cars, and during practice at Pescara '39 Giordano Aldrighetti also crashed fatally.

The needle-roller-bearing 1939 cars appear in some records as the '158C' model, and six new cars were constructed for 1940. A seventh car with experimental de Dion rear suspension emerged as the '158D'. At Tripoli in 1940, before Italy entered the war,

## “Alfa's team comprised Fangio, Farina and Fagioli – the Three Fs”

four of these works 158s finished 1-2-3-5 in the absence of Mercedes-Benz. Then Mussolini ill-advisedly took Italy to war.

After the Italian surrender in 1943, amidst German occupation of northern Italy, the works cars were stored – some in a cheese factory, some at Melzo east of Milan, others in Brianza to the north. Factory test driver Consalvo Sanesi told me how: "We took it for granted we would be racing again and went looking for the cars and parts. It took about a month to remember where they all were. They were so covered in grease it was difficult to grab hold of them! But preparing them for racing was not hard..."

Two of the Alfettas re-emerged for the 1946 St Cloud GP in Paris, but works drivers Jean-Pierre Wimille and Farina both retired.

During the war years, Jano's replacement as Alfa Romeo chief engineer, Wifredo Ricart (recalled disparagingly by Guidotti and Sanesi), had built two rear-engined flat-12 1500cc racing cars, the Alfa Romeo Tipo 512s. Sanesi covered some 4000 test kms in these 'Italian Auto Unions'.

Though consistently slower than the 158s, their two-stage supercharging "worked well". It was then adopted on two 158/46Bs driven by Farina and Varzi for the GP des Nations in Geneva. Through 1947 the 158s met no serious opposition. A further improved 158/47 was developed, using an enlarged low-pressure supercharger which on the test-bed gave 310bhp, still at 7500rpm. This found weaknesses in the Elektron crankcase-castings as areas around the main bearing housings cracked. Tie-rods were inserted, bracing the main bearing caps to the blocks.

The 158/47 actually emerged in 1948, when tragically Varzi toppled it over in wet practice at Berne, and was killed as the aero-screen split his face. Wimille won the Italian GP on the 158/47's race debut. In the Monza GP, Wimille and Trossi finished 1-2 in 158/47s, with Sanesi third and Taruffi fourth in 158s.

But Varzi was dead. Wimille was killed that winter driving a Gordini in Argentina and chain-smoking third driver Count Carlo Felice Trossi died of cancer. Robbed of drivers, short of money (and engineer-power), Alfa withdrew from racing for 1949. At that point, the 158s in their various forms had won 13 consecutive races.

However, money was then raised to support a works team return for 1950, funded thanks to Director Pivarelli of Alfa's Como branch, whose whip-round amongst national dealerships raised 200 million Lire sponsorship. The company's new driver team would comprise Juan Manuel Fangio, Giuseppe 'Nino' Farina and Luigi Fagioli – the famous 'Three Fs'. None was a spring chicken: Fangio was 39, Farina 44 and Fagioli 52. But back in those days experience and reputation could trump youthful promise...

In their comeback, at the 1950 San Remo GP, Fangio opened his account by defeating the new unsupercharged V12 Ferraris. In their first F1 World Championship race – the series-opening British GP at Silverstone – Farina, Fagioli and guest driver Reg Parnell (also 39) finished 1-2-3 after Fangio retired. But in the Belgian GP and at Geneva the 4.1-litre Ferraris posed an increasing threat. The team drivers had kept revs in hand to preserve their ageing, though properly 'lived' power units, while Ing. Nicolis had squeezed more boost pressure to gain another 20bhp. Some described this development as creating the Alfa Romeo 159 model.

Fangio won the Monaco, Belgian, French, GP des Nations and Pescara races – Farina the British, Swiss, Bari, ●



## FRONT SUSPENSION

Trailing-arm front suspension with low-mounted transverse leaf spring, plus both telescopic and friction-disc dampers. Massive finned front brake drums mount inboard of wire-spoked wheels to aid cooling

With soaring power, supple suspension and fine brakes, the 158 grew from voiturette into a post-war grand prix winner. This example was reassembled by Jim Stokes Workshop for the late Peter Giddings with new main chassis members, tanks and body (here removed)

## MIDSHIP SYSTEMS

Outboard fuel line with change-over tap; inboard left-hand gear change with linkage to rear gearbox/final-drive 'transaxle' assembly. Transaxle oil tank slung beneath cockpit. Left pannier holds engine oil, right holds extra fuel

## TAIL TANK

Alcohol fuel brew used was 98 per cent methanol, extreme valve overlaps being provided to cascade cooling fuel through the cylinder – hence the 159's ultimate 1.6mpg consumption

## ENGINE

Straight-8 cylinder DOHC engine with single-plug per cylinder ignition – bore and stroke 58mm x 70mm, capacity 1497cc. Twin side-slung Roots-type superchargers drew air/fuel mixture from triple-intake carburettor. From 1937 to 1951 blower boost soared from 17.6lbs to over 40

## STEERING

The worm-and-wheel steering box is sited centrally on the front end of the steering column, with a drop-arm actuating a longitudinal draglink to the steering bell-crank up front. The curving outboard exhaust demanded aluminium shrouding to protect the driver's right arm

## COCKPIT

Driver leg space between the two pannier fuel tanks. 'Italian-conventional' foot pedals with right-side brake, centre throttle, left-side clutch. Drive from clutch on rear of engine to transaxle input is by securely caged open prop-shaft

## REAR SUSPENSION

Finned rear brake drums are smaller diameter and narrower than the fronts. Swing-axle rear suspension features another low-mounted transverse leaf spring with both telescopic and friction dampers, plus longitudinal radius rod location

## THE STORY CONTINUES...

The pictured car has been rebuilt by Jim Stokes Workshops Ltd. It was built up from a trove of original works team parts for the late collector Peter Giddings. Readers can see how the project was completed via our website.



**"The cars were superior to all our competitors. I am convinced they would still have been winning if we had continued into 1952"**

---



International Trophy and Italian GPs. The Italian took that inaugural Drivers' World Championship title ahead of Fangio, and Alfa Romeo was finally on top of the world.

Into 1951, when in February Colombo returned to the fold from Ferrari, the '159' engines were being run to 10,500rpm on the bench, and endurance tested at 9500. The superchargers produced higher boost, absorbing more power (eventually some 135bhp), while 8500-9000rpm was the race rev limit - and fuel consumption soared.

More power, higher speeds and fuel-bloated weight highlighted the original swing-axle rear suspension's limitations. A de Dion system was adopted while the new 4.5-litre unblown Ferrari V12s closed the

performance gap. Fangio took over Fagioli's Alfetta to win the French GP (just) at Reims-Gueux in July 1951 - the 158-series' 34th victory since 1946. But next time out, at Silverstone for that year's British GP, José Froilán González of Ferrari beat the Alfa Romeos at last in his unblown 4.5. Ascari in the same car then beat the Alfas again in the German GP. The history books say the Alfetta was at last in eclipse, but Alfa Corse disagreed with that statement.

Guidotti: "Handling was our problem, not power. The de Dion rear end improved the situation, but was not a complete cure. It took us some time to discover why."

Sanesi: "I drove many miles testing the 1951 cars; the increase in power from around

350 to 420bhp meant the old swing axles were inadequate. The de Dion rear suspension was better, but I realised the problem was actually the old chassis, which were flexing under the extra weight, power and loadings."

Guidotti: "At the Nürburgring those chassis frames, which were physically old, began to crack but we had the new 159s."

The true 159s had superstructure tubes added to improve torsional rigidity and beam strength. Alfa archivist Luigi Fusi classified these cars as 159M (*Maggiorata*: 'increased'). Now fitted with massive scuttle air intakes feeding the hungry induction, the Alfa Romeo 158/159 series had at last reached its final form, running 42.6lbs psi





The start of the French Grand Prix at Reims on July 2, 1950. Fangio (6) leads at the start in front of Italian drivers Farina (2) and Fagioli (4). Between them, Alfas would win six of the year's seven grands prix

supercharger pressure and delivering an absolute maximum of 425bhp at 9300rpm.

Guidotti: "At Monza in the Gran Premio d'Italia we failed and Ferrari won again, but it was not because theirs was the better car. Our cylinder heads were old and overstressed, the material had deteriorated with age and several were found to be porous. We then used newly-cast heads for the championship-deciding Spanish Grand Prix at Barcelona.

"I broke the lap record in practice, and Fangio won both the race and the World Championship. On the main straight there, I saw 310kph [192mph] and the engine accelerated to that speed vividly, with no flat spots at all."

At that point - with Fangio securing Alfa's second consecutive World Championship title - the board decided their R&D people really should concentrate upon production first and foremost, and therefore announced the firm's withdrawal from Formula 1.

Guidotti summed up the 158/159 Alfetta series as follows: "Throughout its life the car was ahead of its competitors, its engine was very powerful and smooth, with 50/50 weight distribution on half-full tanks, very stable roadholding, basic understeer, but a shape which did not fly at speed. This was very important: some cars did fly, our car did not. The brakes were the best of their time, a major part of the car's success, and

Jano's clutch - made from Duralumin and steel multi-plate - was a masterpiece - reliable and it didn't suffer if oil leaked onto it. The suspension then was Colombo's masterpiece: the transverse leaf springs were as soft as an American car's on the straight - the car riding perfectly over bad surfaces - while as it rolled into a corner, bump rubbers came into contact with the spring, shortened its effective length and so stiffened the suspension to give the car maximum roadholding.

"Telescopic dampers braked the big suspension movements while friction dampers braked the little ones. The *Cento-cinquant'otto* and *Cento-cinquanta nove* (158 and 159) were superior to all competitors, and I am convinced they would still have been winning if we had continued racing into 1952..."

I asked contemporary works team driver Sanesi what the works Alfetta was like to drive. He said: "Beautifully balanced, a big steering wheel with low ratio making them light to handle even with fuel tanks full. The brakes were very good. They distinguished our cars from the rest. But the driving style which I copied from Wimille was to use the brakes very lightly, to be neat and smooth because hard braking meant slow lap times.

"And when the brakes got hot the drums would go blue, and when I came back into the pits with blue brakes the mechanics would pull my leg: there was always this combination between bad times and blue brakes, and a rev counter tell-tale over the limit too! The brakes and rev counter tell-tale were always the first things they checked. With 8000 revs allowed and 8500 on the tell-tale as well as slow times, they would all make fun. They would never miss the opportunity!"

Sanesi's successor as Alfa's chief test driver was Guido Moroni, who had joined Alfa Romeo as a boy in 1938, ran in the 1950 Monte Carlo Rally, then co-drove with Fangio's Argentine protégé Onofre Marimón in the 1953 Mille Miglia. Into the 1980s he had often driven the Alfa Museum's surviving 159 "runner" and he backed up Sanesi completely: "It is a fine, vivid car, with much power. You have to be light and smooth on the throttle to get the best from it. The steering is lighter than you expect and the brakes good for their type. The gearchange is direct, not heavy - you drive the car and understand why it was so successful. We at Alfa Romeo really are so proud of it". ◉



Amid a sea of prototypes from big-hitters, Abarth's efforts provided pretty variety. This is Paolo Gargano and Giovanni Fasano's Abarth 2000 on the 1973 Targa Florio



# THE AUSTERE MR ABARTH

**His cars were exotic rivals to the likes of Ferrari and Porsche, but Carlo Abarth himself was a man not to be trifled with**

WORDS DOUG NYE / TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT JANUARY 2009

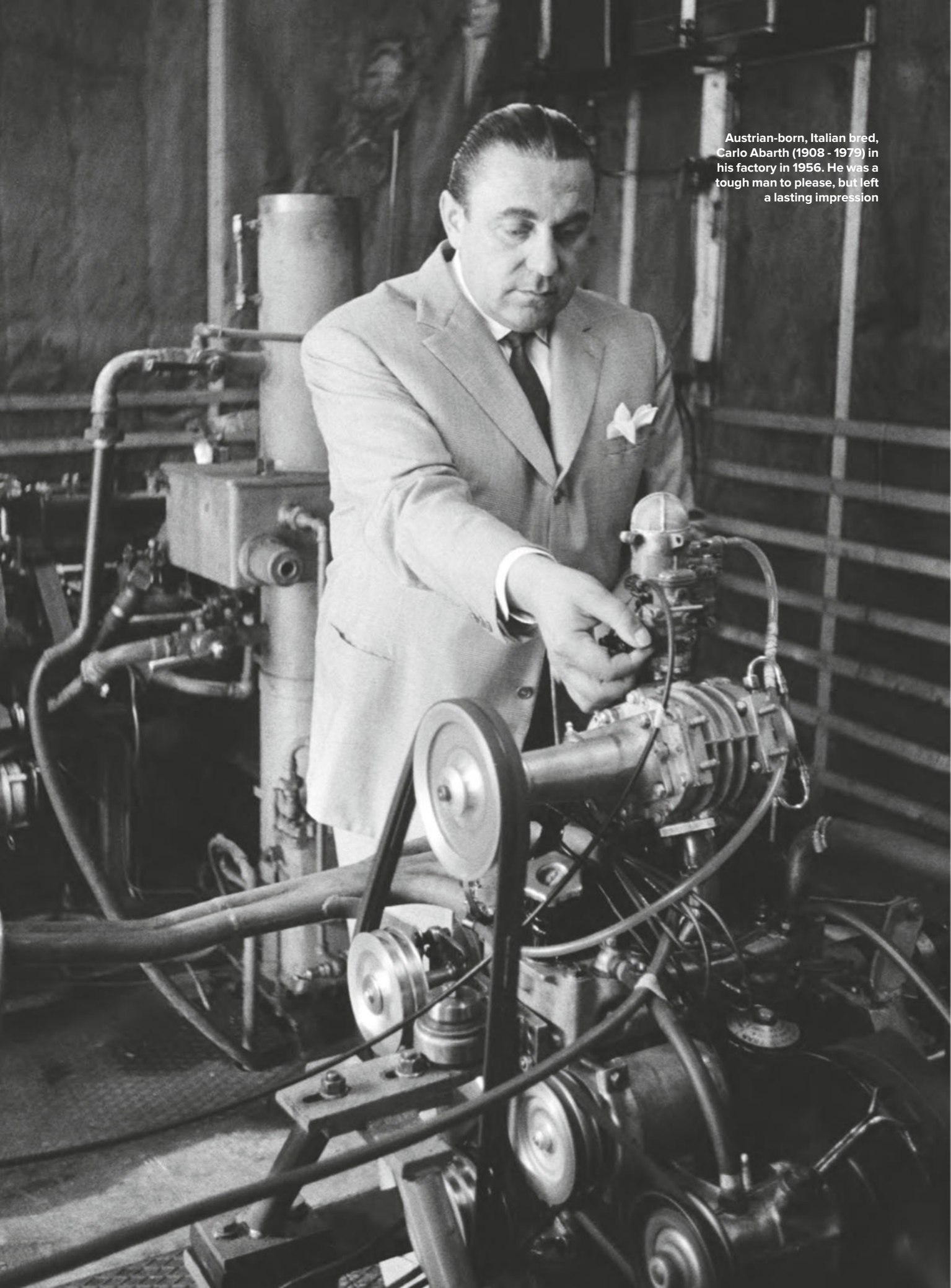
**A**barth cars have always been something of a Cinderella marque in my mind. They had and still have an enthusiastic following, not only in Continental Europe but also most notably in the USA and Japan.

I think my indifference to Carlo Abarth's finest efforts was imbued by simple lack of personal exposure to them. The only ones I really recall running regularly on British soil were Bobby Buchanan-Michaelson's admittedly very lovely GT Berlinetta and the Anstead brothers' boxy Fiat-Abarth baby saloons, with their engine cowl significantly propped open to help cool the frenzied clockwork within. I actually drove one of John and Jean Aley's in an extended record run at Snetterton, covering myself with ignominy by being called into the pits for a perverse bollocking - delivered by the redoubtable Jean - for going too fast.

By the time I began to follow endurance racing around Europe, the Abarths I saw were - for my taste - far more impressive than those hordes of small-capacity GTs 🚩



Austrian-born, Italian bred,  
Carlo Abarth (1908 - 1979) in  
his factory in 1956. He was a  
tough man to please, but left  
a lasting impression







Abarth leans across his latest sports racer, with Hans Herrmann at the wheel. The German drove for Abarth from 1962-1965, scoring multiple wins in the small-engined classes before moving to Porsche

and production-based Topolini which somebody no doubt loved but which to me provided nothing but background noise. The works sports-prototypes always seemed especially exotic, perhaps because they were perennially unfenced against the cutting edge of Porsche, Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Matra and Gulf-Mirage's finest. The Sport 2000 first grabbed me in the paddock at the Nürburgring in 1967, rear clamshell open to reveal the engine dangling outboard behind the curvaceous Spider's back axle. Like the Porsche 911 such an arrangement looked to me like demanding a triumph of development over intelligent design. A couple of years later a more functional-looking sports-prototype emerged as the V8-engined Abarth 3000 in which little Art Merzario followed his works team predecessor - Peter Schetty - by earning a place with Ferrari. But one of Abarth's most prominent exponents in the 1960s had been the Dutch driver Ed Swart, later to achieve such great success with his Canon-sponsored 2-litre Chevrons - particularly the B19 - and in recent years still pedalling a Formula 1 Shadow in American 'Vintage' events.

Ed - whose father was a Dutch Fiat distributor - was reminiscing about racing the little Fiat-Abarth saloons in the mid-60s. I told him I had never formed any real picture of Carlo Abarth's personality and asked what was the Austrian-born, Italian industrialist really like? Ed replied: "Very old-time Austrian. You could picture him as the product of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Very severe, very strict, very serious. He had a routine in his factory - at the end of every afternoon he'd summon his senior engineers and managers to his office. They would all have to line up, standing, and all in their white coats. And he'd go along questioning

them on what they'd done today. Woe betide any who hadn't done everything expected. And then he'd tell each of them what he expected them to do the next day - and then it was 'dismissed', and they'd all file out. You didn't make jokes with Mr Abarth."

Ed recalled the 1965 Nürburgring 500Kms - something of an Everest for small-capacity endurance racing at that time, with the entry headed by up to 1300cc sports-prototypes, while Ed's Fiat-Abarth saloon contested the 850cc Touring Car class. Abarth cars won five of the classes, but were beaten overall by the Bianchi brothers - Lucien and Mauro - in a works Alpine-Renault. Ed won his class after driving the entire 20 laps solo in his 850. He recalled: "Mr Abarth came up onto the podium with us, then we walked back into the paddock together. I was feeling pretty pleased with myself, but he didn't say anything. Then as we were walking along he rummaged about in his coat pocket, and just said 'Oh - you did a good drive - ummm, have this' - and he gave me an apple!

"That was Carlo Abarth..." ●

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anybody who  
hadn't done  
as expected"**



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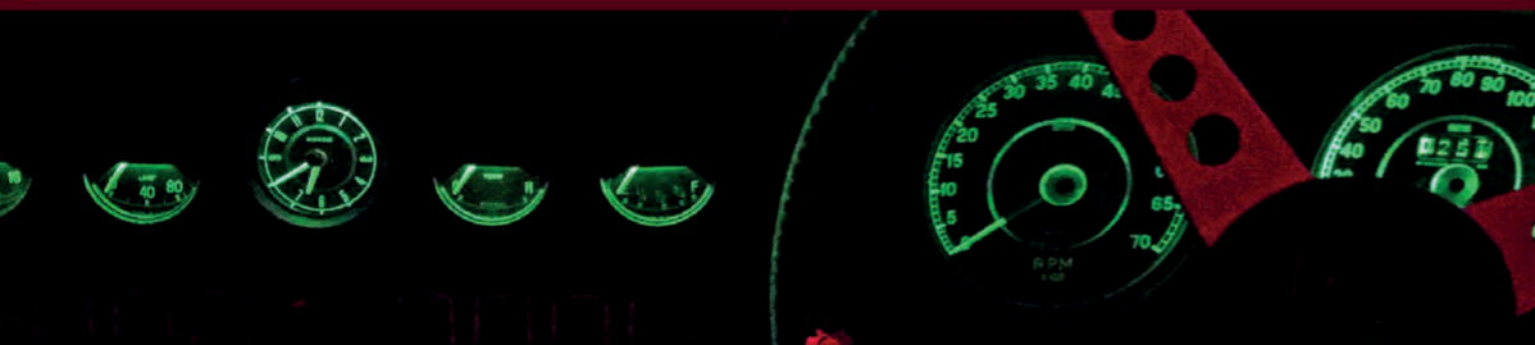
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# PURE



# ALFA

**The Italian constructor enjoyed a grand prix renaissance in the early 1980s. Now one chassis is back in action, revived by driver Bruno Giacomelli. *Paul Fearnley* tells the story**

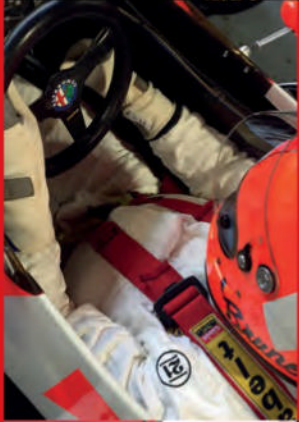
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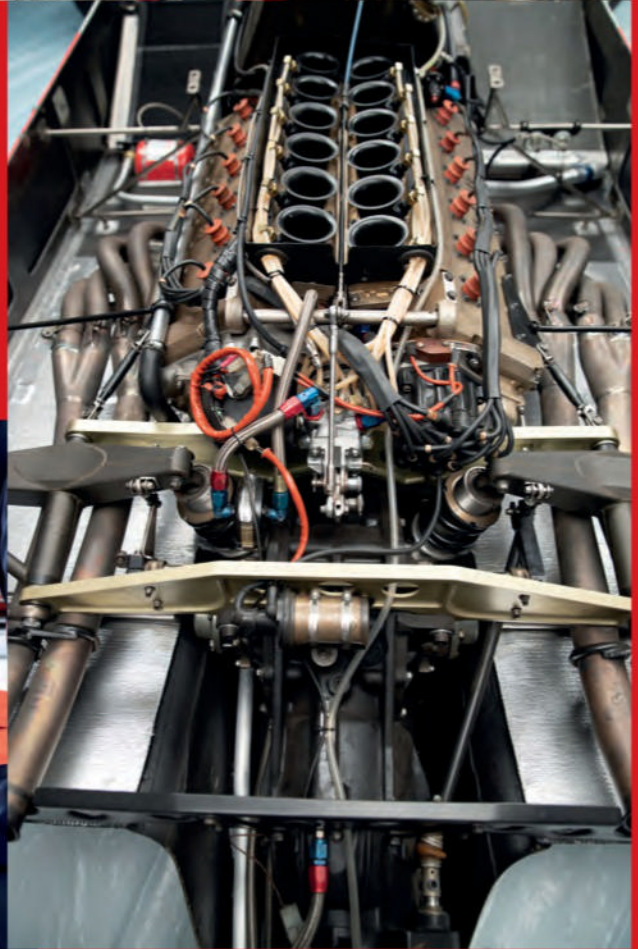


After 27 years locked in his mother's garage, the Alfa required a seven-year restoration to get back on track





Clockwise from above; the Alfa is full of date-correct details, with Giacomelli insisting on originality; the Carlo Chiti 60-degree V12 engine developed 530bhp in period, but had to have extensive restoration work to correct a bagful of issues, such as seized pistons and a pesky corroded water pump; new stickers in place for the test; Giacomelli saddles up for his first runs in the refreshed car at Varano





**F**or 27 years it sat - up on blocks, under a cover - in his mother's suburban garage: last in line of an evocative motor-sporting bloodstock... a full works grand prix Alfa Romeo, designed, built and run by the brand.

The car was a (parting) gift to Bruno Giacomelli after a fourth season spent in Formula 1 with *Ingegnere* Carlo Chiti's Autodelta SpA. That was 1982. Their agreement, however, had been struck in October 1980, a few days before the GP of the United States.

"I was in a strong position after Watkins Glen [Giacomelli had led convincingly from pole until halted by an electrical gremlin] and I signed a two-year contract," says this ex-British Formula 3 and European Formula 2 champion. "And I insisted that they gave me a car at the end of each season. Chiti didn't want to, to begin with, but he was a good guy and made sure that I got cars in perfect working order."

Giacomelli took delivery of both - a 179B, chassis 03, and a 182 - on the same day: 20 December 1985. "I had to insist a lot."

The latter was the work of ex-Ligier designer Gérard Ducarouge and featured the first all-carbon F1 tub - made by Roger Sloman's Advanced Composites of Heanor, Derbyshire - to emerge from female moulds. Powered by Chiti's 60-degree V12, it showed well initially, particularly on street circuits - Andrea de Cesaris was on pole and led at Long Beach and would have won in Monaco given a splash more fuel - but its performances tailed away thereafter.

"I had done all the development work," says Giacomelli. "It was a clean car, with good power - we had 530bhp - and on the weight limit. I set a lap record for non-turbos testing on the short circuit at Paul Ricard."

"I got on very well with Andrea. He was fast, but I was more meticulous, more precise. When the team started falling in love with him, it was not really listening to me any more. And I don't like to shout and bang my hands on the table."

Giacomelli, let go late, would sign with Toleman for 1983, while de Cesaris remained at a restructured 'Alfa Romeo': the beleaguered state-owned manufacturer



Giacomelli in the 182 at Long Beach in 1982. The car fared well on street circuits, with team-mate Andrea de Cesaris starting this race on pole - becoming F1's youngest pole-sitter at 22 years 308 days

would farm out the design and running of its F1 cars to Paolo Pavanelli's Euroracing for the next three seasons.

"I was busy getting on with my career and the rest of my life and I almost forgot that I owned this 182," says Giacomelli. "My mother - she was one of my biggest fans - was its guardian. But eventually I knew it was the right time to put my hands on it again."

The car was wheeled back into the daylight in May 2012 and transferred to long-time Autodelta engineer Renato Melchiorretto, his twin sons Andrea and Daniele and daughter Manuela, the A, D and M of ADM Motorsport. Better known for its involvement in junior formulae, running the likes of future two-time Le Mans 24 Hours winner Earl Bamber, this was to be the Milanese team's first historic restoration.

"Renato had started as an engine man at Autodelta but, when Ducarouge arrived [in 1981], he became a chassis expert, too," says Giacomelli. "So he knew everything about this car. That was very lucky because there are no drawings, nothing; everything from Autodelta is lost. But we did it without pressure. No hurry. They never worked full-time on it. And I was the supervisor. I trained as an engineering draughtsman for three years before I became a racing driver and the technical side of the sport has always fascinated me, so I enjoyed this project a lot."

All seven years of it.

Its most onerous task was the water pump, its original magnesium casing having been ruined because someone - ahem - had forgotten to drain the coolant.

Mario Tollentino, another Autodelta man, an early advocate of CAD and the designer/reworker of the subsequent 184T and 185T, helped greatly with this part of the project.

Giacomelli: "He didn't have anything from those days - can you believe it? - but he had kept working in motor sport [in F1, sports cars and rallying, for AGS, BMW, Dallara, Hyundai, Lamborghini, Volkswagen] and he had a great enthusiasm for our project."

"If you have the drawing, it's not a problem. But we had nothing. So we had to look at the piece itself and, even after a 3D scan, we double-checked the interactions of the shafts, built a dummy and changed some measurements before establishing the definitive part to be cast and machined."

"We could have made it in aluminium but I wanted to stay with magnesium. But I didn't want people to think that it was an original part, so I had it painted a strange colour rather than be chemically treated, which used to turn parts golden."

Elsewhere, three pistons had seized in the bores of their wet liners. The gearbox - an Autodelta casing - was split to reveal perfect Hewland internals, complete with a brand-new crown wheel and pinion. Koni shocks were disassembled and rebuilt; this company's former representative in Giacomelli's hometown Brescia had not only attended the tests at Balocco back in the day but also kept his detailed notes. The Magneti Marelli distributor and the metering unit ◻

**"There are no drawings, nothing; everything from Autodelta is lost"**



for the Lucas fuel injection underwent the same processes - the latter being the only part sent to the UK for renewal.

New gaskets, new bearings in the uprights, new pipework, new stickers, new skirts, refurbished wheels - and the car was ready for a 15-mile shakedown at a chilly Varano, near Parma, in December 2019.

Giacomelli: "People were asking if I was excited to drive it again, and I kept saying, 'No.' I am *razionale*. For me, this is normal. Remember, I was a part of the development of this car: the seating position; its steering wheel; the dash and its instruments. I had decided all these things. Yes, very many years ago, but still I knew exactly what to expect. I knew all the good work that we had done. I jumped in, started the engine, spun the wheels, went sideways a bit, and drove onto a wet track. On slicks. Normal. It ran perfectly and really I felt a sense of achievement from that.

"I'd sold my 179B many years ago, but I kept the 182 because I felt it was an important car, even though it had never won any races. It's pure Alfa. That doesn't exist now. It's just a badge and a brand today."

But which 182 is it?

A bewildered Denis Jenkinson wrote in *Motor Sport* in 1982: "When you see an Alfa Romeo engineer making notes on a technical sheet about a specific car and there is no engine or chassis number on the sheet you begin to wonder if the Autodelta racing department works to any sort of system."

Its previous aluminium chassis at least had plates glued to them - these could and would be swapped about, warns Giacomelli - but 182's carbon item carries no identifying marks. (That's how it left Derbyshire and how it is now.) Thus the scuffed piece of paper bearing Autodelta's letterhead and Chiti's signature that is in Giacomelli's possession is priceless: it confirms his car as chassis 01. Except that even Bruno is not entirely sure if that's right.

The car's rebuild revealed professionally repaired damage to the tub's right-front corner. Might this be the car - 02, reportedly



Giacomelli poses alongside the ADM team. This car was its first historic restoration. It is more accustomed to running modern F3 and F4 cars. Below: oversteer on fresh tyres at the test



- which De Cesaris stuck in the wall while chasing Niki Lauda's leading McLaren at Long Beach? Sloman recalls one of the batch of five (or six) chassis - Chiti initially ordered a dozen - being returned for repair, but is unable to remember the precise date and circumstances.

Or is it the chassis which Giacomelli drove that crisp March day in the South of France, when all was new and promised so much; in which he qualified third at Monaco and briefly held second before a badly heat-treated driveshaft broke; and which pitched him into the Brands Hatch catch-fencing when its rear wing failed on the 175mph downhill approach to Hawthorns?

"It's very difficult to see a Formula 1 car from this period that doesn't have pieces missing or that are wrong," he says. "That's normal in historic racing today. My car is complete, after being stored for almost 30 years in a garage, where nobody touched it. It still has its complicated underbody wing. It has the later style of engine cover from 1982 - but it's exactly how it left Autodelta and came to me."

The pandemic stymied plans to demonstrate the car in 2020, but again *razionale* Giacomelli is prepared to wait. The car is stored safely - minus its coolant! - in readiness for the next right time. He might sell in the future, when provenance will be all-important - and likely quibbled over - but for now he knows exactly what he has: a genuine and moving - in both meanings - tribute to his Alfa Romeo *fratelli*.

"I wanted Gérard - I phoned to tell him that the car's restoration was progressing - and Mario - he was ill, but we didn't know - and also Andrea to see the car run again," he says. "Sadly they have all gone now. So, too have my Autodelta mechanics."

And Bruno's mother Rachele, who rode Moto Guzzi in the 1950s, passed away three years ago, aged 101. Hers was a strong life that spanned the works Alfa Romeo grand prix cars of Tazio Nuvolari, Juan Fangio and her beloved son. ●

## "It's difficult to see an F1 car of this age that doesn't have bits missing"



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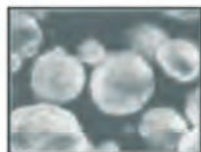
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The Ferrari 312T, which heralded one of the Scuderia's greatest decades, pictured for the first time in decades



# MARANELLO'S LOST MASTERPIECE



**One of the great grand prix Ferraris has emerged after decades hidden from public view. Here, *Doug Nye* explains its significance and reveals how a revolutionary design reignited an ailing Ferrari in the mid-1970s**

TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, AUGUST 2020



Chassis no023 was only ever driven by Lauda and remains in exactly the state the Austrian left it





**T**o Mr Ferrari, the only Formula 1 car that mattered was his current one; retired grand prix cars were redundant. But that's not how many of us may see it. Old F1 cars, whether they carried great drivers to famous wins or became over-optimistic duds, represent more than simply money. They represent our memories, their provenance connecting us to our past, or even to years and decades before our own lives, to times that exist only in old photos, films, books and magazines. Old F1 cars matter. And the one you see here, pictured in the metal for the first time in 30 years, matters more than most - perhaps most of all.

Ferrari 312T chassis '023' carried Niki Lauda to four of his five grand prix victories in a dominant 1975 campaign in which he took the first of his three World Championship titles, ahead of two more race wins early in 1976. In many ways this is the car upon which Niki Lauda's legend was built. The story of how this car re-emerged, almost exactly as Lauda left it, right down to the scuffed seat and worn steering wheel, is told later on. Suffice to say this car is arguably the perfect example of an 'old F1 car'.

The Ferrari 312T also represents the best of the 1970s, a decade that grows ever more radiant the further we travel from it. To many who lived through them, those years were a bleak hangover to the golden optimism of the '60s - but in F1 terms, they were wonderfully garish, loud and brash to match the clothes, music and wallpapers of the time. To Ferrari and its 70-year unbroken F1 history, the decade represents a glorious reawakening. Mauro Forghieri created a car in which the blunt-speaking, buck-toothed Austrian - initially considered by many to be little more than just another upstart pay-driver - snatched

Jackie Stewart's unclaimed crown as the benchmark racing driver of a new generation.

From 20 available world drivers' and constructors' titles, Ferrari claimed seven in the 1970s, a tally matched only by Lotus. Tyrrell and McLaren shared the rest, three apiece. More than mere statistics, more than the unprecedented constructors' title hat-trick between 1975-77, the 312T represents the spirit of a blazing age in which Ferrari finally unlocked all its pent-up potential that went largely untapped since the 1950s.

But where did the root of that Ferrari and Forghieri dominance come from? The answer begins in 1974 and the decision by Maranello to end its time and money consuming sports car programme to focus entirely on returning


to the fore in F1, beginning with the curiously angular 312B3 flat-12.

The design was developed into a successful machine, but failed to bring Ferrari its first constructors' title in over 10 years, partly due to the relative inexperience of its lead driver. Of course, the driver was Lauda, and he was paired with the hugely experienced and capable Clay Regazzoni.

Ferrari's F1 focus, and the completion of its private Fiorano test track, situated just across from the main Formigine Road factory, enabled it to test constantly, and Lauda was always available. He realised his future, and the team's, depended upon exploiting all advantages. After creating a new F1 car, Ferrari could run extensive tyre testing for Goodyear.

If five differing wing sets were available, then Ferrari would test each pair individually, studied and extended to its potential in great detail. Every minor alteration and change would simply be tested fit to bust until the sun went down and the brief Emilian dusk settled over Fiorano. Since it had this luxury of its private test track, there was never a problem with booking public circuits, while transporting the cars from the factory to test venue meant wheeling them out of the shop door.

Once Ferrari had all these assets in place, it was able to tackle F1 more seriously than any rival. In this way, it could compensate for some distinct shortcomings, particularly in chassis engineering, which would occasionally leap out of the bushes and beset the team in coming years, notably once aerodynamics became increasingly sophisticated.

But for three halcyon years, 1975-77, Ferrari was on top of its game. It became the first F1 team in history to put together a hat-trick of three consecutive constructors' titles - a remarkable feat at the time. 



**“Once thought  
a pay-driver,  
Lauda snatched  
Stewart’s  
benchmark”**

Lauda cleverly managed an alling 312T to hold off Fittipaldi and claim the Monaco '75 win, Ferrari's first victory there in 20 years





When its 1974 campaign ended in the United States Grand Prix at Watkins Glen – where the drivers' title was decided between Regazzoni's Ferrari 312B3-74, Jody Scheckter's Tyrrell and eventual winner Emerson Fittipaldi's McLaren M23 – Ferrari took stock.

Its *direttore tecnico* Mauro Forghieri could reflect upon a year of adequate flat-12 engine reliability, though failures at the Österreichring and Monza proved costly. The 312B3-74 chassis survived without major changes, other than detailed aerodynamic tweaks, but Forghieri felt the basic concept offered more potential.

It was actually on September 27, 1974, before Ferrari set off for that US GP, that the new year's prototype 312T model was unveiled to the press at Fiorano. Forghieri in effect was following Derek Gardner of Tyrrell and Robin Herd of March's path in '72, seeking further concentration of mass within the wheelbase to produce a highly nimble car, which might seem too nervous to the average F1 driver, but which the likes of Ronnie Peterson or Niki Lauda could turn into a formidable weapon.

Where the 1974 car's suspension coil-spring/damper units had been mounted on each side of the chassis footbox, with a spidery forward tube subframe picking up the leading elements of the lower wishbones, the redesigned 312T tub carried all its major front suspension components on the forward face of its monocoque's front bulkhead.

Long fabricated top rocker arms actuated steeply inclined Koni dampers, with co-axial

## **"In testing at Fiorano, Lauda found the new car far more demanding"**

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tapered wire rising-rate coil springs, whose feet were anchored in a cast magnesium tray, fitted to the bulkhead. The monocoque's front end was considerably narrower than its predecessor, and the tub used Ferrari's familiar hybrid construction technique in which the stressed-skin structure was reinforced internally with steel strip and angle framing.

Disc brakes were mounted outboard at the front, inboard at the rear. Up front, a system of links and levers actuated an exquisite little anti-roll bar, which was bracketed to the centre of that assembly, and a trailing top link from the upper arm fed back into the tub, passing through an air duct section designed to feed water radiators slung either side, just behind the front wheels. Long side ducts fed air through oil coolers each side ahead of the rear wheels, while beautifully moulded GRP body sections included a sharp-pointed shovel nose, with a full-width airfoil wing. Sidepods served the regulation deformable structures, which

overlapped the monocoque sides. The cockpit surround and engine cover-cum-tall airbox were formed in one moulding, smoothing airflow onto the centre-strutted rear wing while curled flip-ups moulded ahead of the rear wheels faired airflow around the broad Goodyear tyres.

Rear suspension was by reversed lower wishbones, replacing the original toe-steer restricting parallel-link system in an apparently retrograde move, although it saved weight. Like McLaren, Ferrari felt it could control toe-steer with careful set-up tweaks in assembly.

Compared to the 1974 312B3 model, the wheelbase of this new Ferrari 312T was increased nominally to 99.1in, while front track was 59.4in and rear track 60.2in.

The most significant technical innovation was the new transverse gearbox, which mated conventionally to the rear of the flat-12 engine, but with most of its mass concentrated ahead of the axle line, within the wheelbase, thanks to its gearwheel shafts being aligned laterally instead of longitudinally, as was the norm. Gearbox input turned through 90-degrees by bevel gears to enable the gearbox shafts to be arranged laterally, final-drive then being via spur gears. *Ingegnere* Franco Rocchi's hugely experienced engine team had worked hard on the flat-12 engine, and in its latest form, 500bhp at 12,200rpm was being claimed.

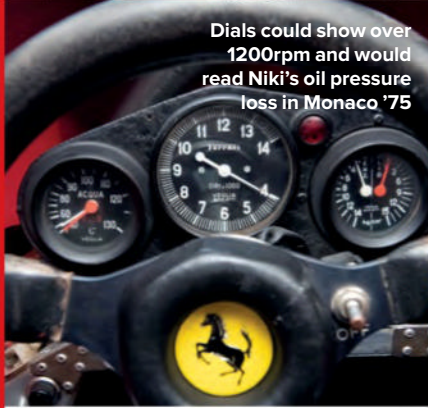
In testing at Fiorano, Lauda found the new car far more demanding to drive than the B3-74, as predicted, but equally, its ultimate limits seemed much higher, and with







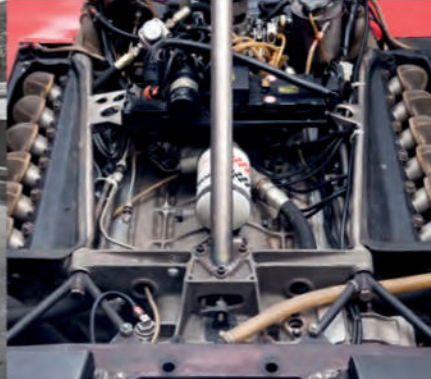
312T '023' is as it was when it raced. Left: Lauda at Monza '75, where he sealed his first title



Dials could show over 1200rpm and would read Niki's oil pressure loss in Monaco '75



Lauda was sixth in Austria '75, the flat-12 (right) struggled in wet race after taking pole



practice, he was able to drive closer to those higher limits for longer. The maturing driver was soon lapping Fiorano at 1min 13sec, compared to Art Merzario's best of 1min 14.2sec set in the original Forghieri B3 car 15 months before.

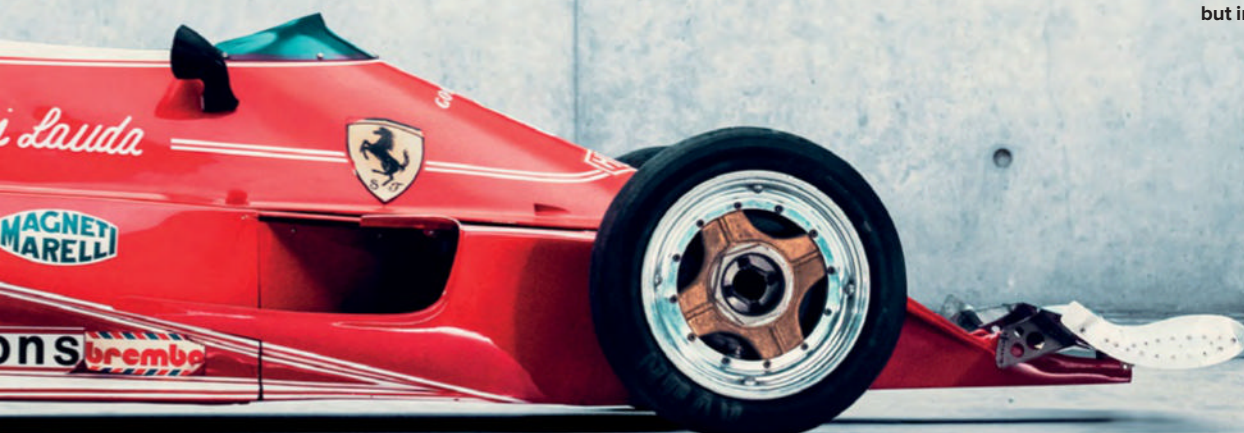
At Vallelunga, further testing meant Lauda lapped in 1min 7.5sec, a second inside the best B3-74 testing time of 1974. Back-to-back testing between the B3-74 and the new 312T at Ricard-Castellet proved the new model's superiority. When the team returned from racing the old B3-74s in South America at the start of 1975, Lauda got down to 1min 11.9sec at Fiorano, and two brand-new 312Ts were readied for the trip to Kyalami for March's South African GP.

Niki drove the prototype car chassis '018' while '021' was for Regazzoni. The intervening two chassis numbers '019' and '020' were, according to Ferrari, allocated to the last two B3 models. Neither of these raced; '019' was heavily damaged in a testing accident and subsequently broken up, while '020' went into storage for potential future display duties before sale to a private collector.

Chassis '018' remains isolated as the 312T prototype, and '021' began the transverse-gearbox flat-12 series, which would encompass the future types 'T2' to 'T5' and included 26 further Ferrari chassis built during 1975-80.

Lauda won the minor non-championship Silverstone International Trophy race in the new 312T's second outing. He then added victories at Monaco, Zolder, Anderstorp, ●

Sleek 312T went against the grain with not only its gearbox, but in suspension and aero design too





# Ferrari 312T

## *Chassis #023 F1 grand prix race history*

Date	Race #	Race	Driver	Result
11.05.1975	12	Monaco Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	1st
25.05.1975	12	Belgian Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	1st
08.06.1975	12	Swedish Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	1st
19.06.1975	12	British Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	8th
07.09.1975	12	Italian Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	3rd
05.10.1975	12	US Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	1st
25.01.1976	1	Brazilian Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	1st
06.03.1976	1	South African Grand Prix	Niki Lauda	1st
28.03.1976	1	US Grand Prix West	Niki Lauda	2nd

Chassis no023 was also the T-car at the 1975 Austrian GP, plus the Spanish and Belgian GPs in '76. It had a 100 per cent race finishing record, and won a total of six grands prix, twice the number of any other T-series chassis built between 1975-80.

Into the unknown: Niki Lauda hits the streets of 1976's new F1 grand prix at Long Beach. Lauda finished second to Ferrari team-mate Clay Regazzoni





## “Ferrari’s power, reliability and handling was by far the fastest in Formula 1”

Ricard-Castellet and Watkins Glen, while team-mate Regazzoni won the minor ‘Swiss GP’ at Dijon. Such success brought Ferrari its first constructors’ title since 1964 and Lauda his first drivers’ title. Ferrari made 30 starts that season, including the initial B3 outings in South America and South Africa - where Regazzoni raced one of the older cars - and it achieved eight victories from 24 finishes. Ferrari added one second, four thirds, two fourths, three fifths, two sixths, a seventh, eighth and ninth, as well as a lowly 13th.

Lauda and Regazzoni amassed nine pole positions and six fastest laps during that memorable Ferrari season. They proved that the combination of their skills and the latest Ferrari’s power, reliability, and now handling, was by far the fastest in F1.

Lauda only failed to finish once - the Spanish GP at Barcelona, in which he and his team-mate collided on the opening lap. Ferrari’s first *transversale* F1 season was the more competitive 1970s equivalent of Mercedes-Benz domination in the ‘50s.

This was despite the new car’s debut at Kyalami in which Lauda crashed ‘021’ during practice when he slithered off on another car’s spilt oil. His engine lacked power during the race, and it was later found that its fuel metering unit drive belt had stripped some teeth and slipped, restricting output to some 440bhp, less than the rival Cosworth DFV.

Lauda’s Silverstone victory marked the debut of the third 312T to be built, chassis ‘022’. Another new chassis, ‘023’, was then made ready for Niki’s use at Monaco and he won, despite falling oil pressure towards the finish caused by leakage through a defective pump seal. The engine was dangerously close to seizure in the final laps, with Lauda sensibly declutching and coasting through the corners, while Fittipaldi’s McLaren closed rapidly just before the finish to no avail. Regazzoni crashed ‘018’ heavily at the chicane.

For the Belgian GP, new exhaust systems were fitted to improve low-speed pick-up. Normally the three front and three rear cylinders on each bank fed individual



tailpipes. Now a balance pipe linked the front and rear set of manifolds each side before they merged into a titanium twin exhaust. One of the pipes split in practice, so the older system was refitted. Lauda had another manifold split, and he lost 300rpm on the straights for the last dozen laps but won by 19 seconds.

Anderstorp's Swedish GP was a lucky Ferrari win. Lauda took second when one Brabham faltered, and he took the lead in the last 10 laps when the other slowed due to increasing track debris on its rear tyres, while Ferrari's harder rear tyres were unaffected.

The fifth 312T, '024', made its debut at Ricard-Castellet for the French GP but its engine failed early on, sidelining Regazzoni. Lauda drove '022' away into the Mediterranean heat haze. Despite late understeer due to tyre wear, he was uncatchable.

The rain-swept British GP at Silverstone became a lottery, but Ferrari was never in contention once Regazzoni spun from the lead and Lauda had a bungled stop for rain tyres.

While Lauda had luckily won in Sweden at Brabham driver Reutemann's expense, Reutemann won at the Nürburgring at Lauda's expense, Niki leading handsomely until a tyre puncture. The Austrian GP was another rain-stopped farce, then for the major Italian GP at Monza, Ferrari introduced new cylinder heads to improve mid-range torque for the slow-speed chicanes. Yet one of the new engines had failed in pre-race testing on Regazzoni's '024', so

## "Lauda beat Hunt, but Ferrari's lead over its rivals had reduced"

Lauda's '023' used a standard unit. Regazzoni – the Italian-speaking driver – was given the 'high-torque' race engine. They started 1-2 and finished 1-3, Regazzoni victorious in front of a delirious *tifosi* while Lauda, handicapped by a minor damper problem, fell behind Fittipaldi's McLaren after holding the lead for 45 of 52 laps. Ferrari's finishes and Niki's points haul sealed the titles for Ferrari and Lauda. Monza-headed engines were then used at the Watkins Glen finale.

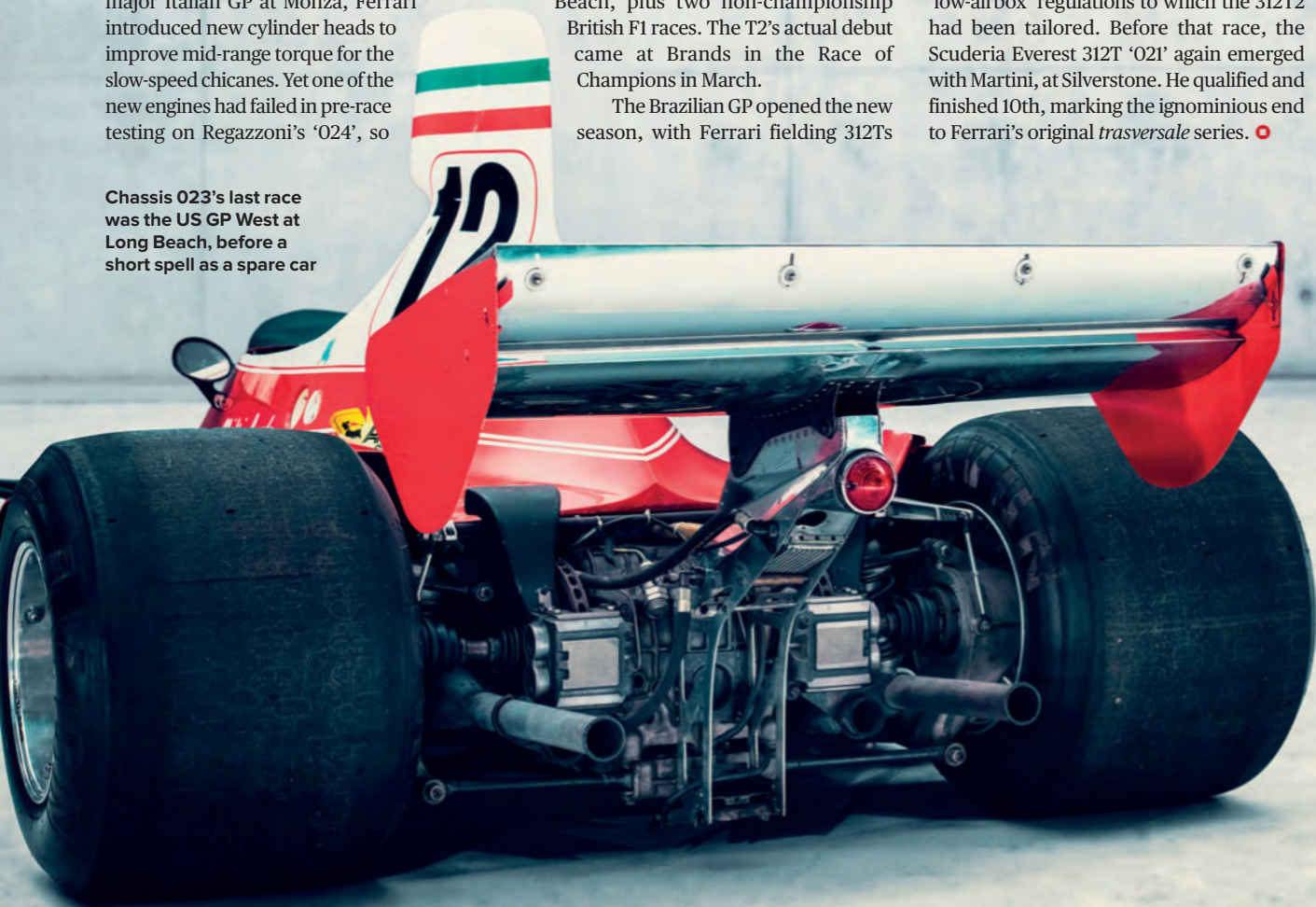
Eleven days later, on October 26, 1975, Ferrari's '76 car, the 312T2, was unveiled at Fiorano. Its development was similar to the 312T, but the previous year's cars would run into the first races of the new season. For the 312Ts, this meant the 1976 Brazilian and South African GPs, as well as the US GP West at Long Beach, plus two non-championship British F1 races. The T2's actual debut came at Brands in the Race of Champions in March.

The Brazilian GP opened the new season, with Ferrari fielding 312Ts

'023' for World Champion Lauda and '024' for Regazzoni, the Austrian winning from pole while Regazzoni led before a stop to change a damaged tyre. At Kyalami, Regazzoni's '022' broke its engine, while Lauda's '023' was hampered in qualifying by an oversized tyre, leaving McLaren to steal pole. Lauda led the race, but from lap 20, his car's left-rear tyre began to deflate. His brake balance reversed during the race yet, by clever use of lapping backmarkers, he managed to hold off Hunt's McLaren long enough to win by 1.3sec. He also set the fastest lap, but it was now evident that Ferrari's 1976 advantage over the opposition was nowhere near as marked as it was in '75. A new T2 made its debut at Brands Hatch while old '021' appeared on loan to Scuderia Everest for Giancarlo Martini, as part of a new Fiat/Ferrari effort to bring on young Italian drivers. Martini qualified second slowest and then crashed on the warm-up lap when a brake snapped.

The proven 312Ts '023' and '024' were driven by Lauda and Regazzoni at Long Beach. Regazzoni dominated as he took pole, led all the way and won, while Lauda took second after flat-spotting a tyre and gear selection woe. This was the final appearance of the factory 312Ts as the next race was the Spanish GP in which it introduced the new 'low-airbox' regulations to which the 312T2 had been tailored. Before that race, the Scuderia Everest 312T '021' again emerged with Martini, at Silverstone. He qualified and finished 10th, marking the ignominious end to Ferrari's original *trasversale* series. ●

Chassis 023's last race was the US GP West at Long Beach, before a short spell as a spare car





# How Enzo's greatest car re-emerged

Hidden for decades, chassis 023 was rediscovered in a dusty warehouse like something out of an *Indiana Jones* film

Ten years. That's how long Tom Hartley Jnr tracked Ferrari 312T no023, featured here, before he finally landed one of the most prestigious deals of his career. Best known for buying and selling supercars and classics, Hartley Jnr is also a serial dealer in Formula 1 grand prix cars, but he's choosy. "Unless it is very special in a different way, the cars I look to buy are those that won a grand prix," he states. "For me, history is all about a car that won, and which races it won. As long as it won a grand prix, then I'm interested."

As he admits, that narrows the market. Consider the afterlife of hard-working F1 cars, and it soon becomes clear how few there are in existence with certified winning provenance. After a season's racing, some became B-spec iterations for the next year; some – and this specifically and most infamously counts for Ferrari – were broken up without a thought of their future; and when it comes to the grand prix cars that really count, those that won the most races and perhaps a championship in the hands of one of the greats, if they survived, are usually impossible to prise out of the hands of the owner. That's why Hartley Jnr coveted no023.

"What makes no023 special is it didn't just win multiple races, it won six over two seasons – and a world title [in 1975]," he says. "It was only ever driven by one driver too, and that was Niki Lauda. Perhaps

there's a Michael Schumacher-era Ferrari that can match such an illustrious history, but that car is of a different era; the two can't be compared".

So how on earth did he buy it? "I'd been offered the car several times in the past by brokers," says Hartley Jnr. "We all knew its whereabouts and who owned it. Enzo Ferrari sold it to his friend Pierre Bardinon, who had the finest Ferrari collection in the world. Then Jacques Setton, another coveted French Ferrari collector and a guy who was friendly with Bardinon, asked Enzo which was his most successful grand prix car. He was told this one and where it was. He went to buy it from Bardinon, who told him he would only sell it if it was part of a package deal. So, he bought four or five cars from Pierre in order to get this car. Over the years, Jacques has dwindled his collection, and the only car he kept was this 312T. I'd made some strong offers, but I don't think they were ever getting passed on to Jacques."

"Then a few months ago, I decided one Saturday morning to call him up direct. I did so, and 30 minutes later I bought it. The car had been kept in the same spot in a bonded warehouse in Switzerland for 30 years. He'd



Lauda's Ferrari was stored in the same place for 30 years, and was found covered in thick dust

owned it for around 37." Why sell now? "If you don't sell it when you are his age, when do you sell it?" says the dealer. "He's got a fantastic return when you think about what he paid, and how much I paid. We would all say yes..."

The moment Hartley Jnr first clapped eyes on his purchase comes almost straight from an *Indiana Jones* movie. "I flew out to inspect the car and took Rob Hall with me, a good friend who prepares and maintains my grand prix cars. It was mind-blowing. It had an inch thick of dust on it, but it was all there. There was clear evidence of its last outing, a general patination all around the car. When Ferrari sold it to Bardinon, it was 'as is' state and that's how it was sold to Setton."

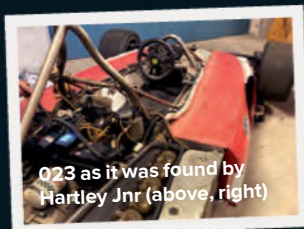
What next for 312T no023? Hartley Jnr bought its sister no022 at Gooding & Co's Pebble Beach auction last year, then sold it on. All he'll say is: "We have agreed to sell the car, and it is going to a very special Ferrari home." But right now, he says it is downstairs in his bar,

next to Hunt's 1976 title-winning McLaren M23... Numbers? Don't ask. But Hartley Jnr bought no022 at the Gooding auction for a reported \$6m – and that chassis 'only' won the 1975 International Trophy and French GP. "This car [no023] should not be restored, it's about preservation," he says. "It would be sacrilege to restore it. We will send it to Ferrari to be

recommissioned. Ferrari is the best in this era of their GP cars. They have the personnel, knowledge and all the drawings. It was due to go, but it's delayed because of Covid.

They will probably open the engineup, change the ancillary items and rebuild it so it can be started and driven. It's probably never going to be raced."

The Ferrari 312T bestrode F1 in the heart of a golden era. Quite simply, it is one of the great grand prix cars. This particular chassis, with its direct relevance to Lauda, is a treasure that deserves better than gathering dust in a warehouse. Let's hope the new owner brings it out to show it off to an appreciative world.



023 as it was found by Hartley Jnr (above, right)



LANCIA DELTA

# DELTA







# BRAVO

**Lancia's rallying exploits arguably outweigh its circuit racing achievements. So to commemorate the legend on stage, we got to grips with two versions of its fearsome Delta**

WORDS MATTHEW FRANEY / TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, OCTOBER 1997



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**I**n the mid-1980s, world rallying entered its most awesome period - it was also its darkest. Technology had brought four-wheel drive to the sport, allowing cars to grip harder, brake later, accelerate earlier, and the new Group B rules demanded a homologation run of just 200 cars, clearing the way for manufacturers to build highly specialised rally machines noted for both their prodigious power, but also frightening speeds.

After struggling on against the odds with its ageing 037 Rally, Lancia created what many now regard as the archetypal Group B machine, the Delta S4. In front of me now, on a quiet road in northern Italy, rests that behemoth of its era; an evocative reminder of an unrestrained past. Not only is the Delta the most powerful rally car ever built, it is also the machine that claimed the life of driver Henri Toivonen, Lancia's world champion in-the-making.

The Italian marque's riposte to its hi-tech rivals, the Audi Quattro and Peugeot Turbo 16, the Delta S4 was unveiled to the media at the end of 1984, a year before its spectacular but brief entry to the world stage. Four-wheel drive with a unique in-line four-cylinder 1.7-litre

engine that had both a supercharger to produce formidable low-end power and a KKK turbo to provide the high-rev grunt. The Delta was developed throughout 1985, making a brilliant debut on the RAC Rally that November. Britain's world championship round was usually an event that Lancia avoided, and the Delta arrived in the United Kingdom among rumours of fragility and concern about its handling and power levels. It was classic Italian sandbagging. In the hands of Toivonen, the S4 swept to a convincing one-two as its rivals fell away.

The Delta's success lay in the radical route that Lancia had taken at the new car's conception. Gone were 20 years of monocoque-based Lancias, the S4 being built around a lightweight tubular spaceframe with the engine, unlike the Audi, mounted amidships, giving the four-wheel drive brute greater poise and considerably less understeer than its rivals. Suspension came in the form of wishbones front and rear, the latter using twin dampers to improve poise, with power transmitted through a five-speed Hewland gearbox to the centre differential from where the driver could adjust the power distribution. ●





Pulling tight the six-point harness as I contemplate what lies ahead of me, the interior of the S4 is stark, functional but curiously antiquated. Ridiculous images of film footage from early space missions flash through my mind. Aluminium reflective foil lines the dividing wall between my neck and the 500bhp behind it, and a grey alloy dash sweeps across the cabin, punctuated only by large square red warning lights, which seem to have no purpose other than decoration. Just one ominously large dial commands your attention, a rev counter that enters its yellow stage at 8,500rpm, a red line at 9,000. To the right of the leather wheel, now worn shiny with use, sits a switch numbered one to four indicating the variations in available turbo boost. Boost that you know is set to redefine your opinions on what constitutes real acceleration.

Carbon sheets line the cockpit walls, joining the spaceframe tubing, and it quickly becomes clear that this is more a purpose-built race car with body panels haphazardly dropped on top than a simple rally car. Reaching for the ignition it dawns on me that the Delta S4 has just one purpose: to go as fast as possible from A to B. It catches on the first press of the starter, filling the car with a mechanical din. No throaty roar or glorious scream that you would find emanating from Lancia's earlier 037 or Stratos, but an aural assault so distracting that I have to pause before depressing the heavy racing clutch and engaging the dog-leg first.



Lancia was a star attraction of rallying's most dangerous era, but Toivonen and co-driver Sergio Cresto's deaths on the 1986 Tour de Corse brought about Group B's end. Below: Toivonen and Neil Wilson gave the Delta S4 a winning debut on Rally GB in 1985



Earlier in the day, Gino Macaluso, the car's owner, told me with a smile how the Delta pulled with ease from tickover in any gear, its torque curve almost unstinting throughout the range. Rolling slowly through an asphalt hairpin, I exit facing a slight incline with a humpback bridge perhaps 300 yards away. The needle shows barely 1000rpm as I grit my teeth and stamp hard on the throttle.

Fighting in vain to stop my head slamming back into the seat, my neck muscles are simply incapable of resisting the forces that are trying to push me back into the engine compartment. In the time it takes to blink, the needle is rushing up to the red line, second gear beckoning and the bridge already upon me. The Lancia is geared to pull no more than 50mph in its lowest gear, but with second and third offering just a few miles an hour more each time and no





**“Lancia’s works drivers used to say they tackled events as if they were driving a dragster”**

discernible flat spot whatsoever, the acceleration is formidable. Debutants in Formula 1 cars often comment on the difficulty they have in simply focusing on the horizon as it rushes towards them. The Delta offers that sort of experience.

Weighing in at under 900kg and producing nearly 300bhp per litre, it is a struggle to even get your hand off the wheel and down to the gearlever under full acceleration. This is a brutal machine - its attitude and reaction to changes in throttle almost feral. In a straight line I was never convinced that it was entirely under my control, whereas in the corners it simply wasn't. The gearbox remains notchy at any revs, but clanks through quickly nevertheless, and as I grabbed second, mounted the bridge and plunged down towards a quick right-hander, my speed was

still relentlessly increasing. A quick flick on the wheel and the Lancia turned in surefootedly but not that reassuringly. The steering was light and as quick as you would expect from a competition vehicle, but grip levels from the 255/50 Michelin tyres were not immense and it was clear that they were struggling to cope with power that was forever trying to push the car straight on. A small prod on the rock-solid brake pedal slows things enough to get the nose back on line, but not the one first intended.

The Delta is not an understeering nightmare, simply a short wheel-based car with huge power. Rush up to a corner and floor it and you get what you deserve. Lancia’s works drivers in 1986 used to say that they tackled many events as if they were driving a dragster: maximum acceleration on every straight followed by

an off-throttle roll through the bends. Any time lost there would soon be made up on the next flat-out section.

Only one man really tamed the S4, wrung more from it than any other Lancia driver: Toivonen.

The Finn could do things which made his colleagues shake their heads in disbelief; but eventually even he was unable to control the Delta on the frighteningly quick Tour de Corse in 1986.

Toivonen’s fatal accident shook the rallying community and rang the death knell for Group B. Earlier in the year catastrophe had already struck in Portugal when a Ford RS200 flew into the crowd killing several spectators. The second fatal accident of the year was one too many for the sport’s governing body, which banned the supercars for the 1987 season. ●





**W**hat replaced them was Group A, forcing manufacturers to build 5000 production vehicles and, most importantly, limiting power outputs to 300bhp. Lancia, as ever, responded in typical fashion, turning the Group B Delta into the Delta HF in just a few months. The new car stormed to the manufacturers' title in its first season, a victory that signalled the beginning of world rally domination never imagined by the marque's rivals. Between 1987 and 1992, no manufacturer got a look in, Lancia winning six makes' crowns on the trot and four drivers' titles for good measure. In its final guise as the Delta Integrale in 1992, it won eight out of the 10 rallies in the season, taking the title by a country mile from Toyota.

Surprisingly, one of the events where the Lancias failed to take maximum points was

the Safari; a rally it had won on three of the last four occasions. Juha Kankkunen took second spot on the African plains, and it is this very Integrale that rounds off this remarkable group test. The most obvious contrast between the Integrale and the S4 comes when you look over your shoulder. Not since the very early days, and the little Fulvia saloon, had Lancia run a front-engined car. Now, four models later, the Delta's 2-litre Garrett-turbocharged four-cylinder block sits transversely in front of the driver, some neat packaging wedging the block, turbo, intercooler and six-speed gearbox into the confined area. In comparison to the purpose-built Group B car, it is the motorsport version of sardines, and must have made servicing major components a real problem.

In its full Safari trim, the Integrale sits tall and proud, its colossal springs and

**"The Integrale's suspension turns potholes that would destroy your road car into mere distractions"**

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Clockwise from far left: The Delta HF Integrale proved a formidable weapon. This is Philippe Bugalski/Denis Giraudet on the 1992 Monte Carlo; Didier Auriol/Bernard Occelli pleasing crowds on their way to victory on the 1990 Tour de Corse; Safari Rally spec included new suspension, a huge bull bar and a mandatory machete

Bilstein dampers giving the Michelin tyres a good eight or 10 inches of clearance under the wheel arches. To cope with the fast, often flat-out stages across the African continent the Lancia runs just a small rear wing, and heat reflective material inside the rear windows helps to keep out the pervasive desert sun. To get an idea of just how tough the conditions on this marathon rally can be, a small thermometer in the cabin starts at 100F and ends at 150F.

All around this purposeful rally car are incongruous reminders of how these high-tech machines set out to tackle an event like the Safari. A carbon dash with electronic rev counter lights the way to 8,000rpm, expertly spaced aluminium drilled pedals peek out through the suede wheel that reaches deep into my chest. But look behind the co-driver's seat and an enormous machete - mandatory

for all competitors in case of getting stuck in undergrowth - is strapped to the door and a huge 'roo-bar' for fending off rocks and large mammals bolts squarely across the front.

With its Safari set-up untouched, we take the Integrale away from the Tarmac and head for a fast, sweeping dirt road lined with potholes and random piles of deep, crunching gravel and stones; the perfect test of both traction and suspension.

A light, springy clutch action and featherlight power steering give no indication of the potential of this remarkable machine. Snicking into first gear I accelerate hard along a short straight barely wider than the car itself; a whisper of turbo lag is soon replaced by formidable and linear acceleration that picks up the Delta and throws it forward. The deep, grooved tyres cut their way through gravel which is at times a good five inches

deep, the car gaining speed as if on flat, smooth asphalt. Suspension more compliant than you could possibly imagine turns potholes that would break your road car in two into mere distractions, the Lancia's pitch and attitude hardly changing. Heading towards the first of what looked like a mini-Grand Canyon, my first instinct was to lift, certain that to drop in it would mean an instant trip off-road. The reality was quite different, the Integrale so much more at home in these inhospitable conditions than its driver.

The true test of this car is to ask it to do things that you know no other would be capable of: braking from 90mph into a sharp corner in just 20 or 30 metres; cornering on loose shale at speeds that would shame a sports car on the road. The Lancia does it all with room to spare.

Smash the brake pedal deep into the floor and the four-pot Brembo brakes grip so hard that speed just falls away, whatever the surface. There is very little feel through the pedal but that is almost an irrelevance when the brakes are so efficient.

The whistle and flutter of the turbo wastegates sings out as you point the car towards the apex of a corner and then just accelerate hard away, the rear end shimmying nervously as the car fights to put the power down through the lighter rear wheels. I ran out of road and courage way before the Delta ran out of power or grip.

This is technical prowess at its highest, a fitting tribute to the Lancia marque and a worthy winner of a world championship. Just 20 years earlier, Italy's hopes were pinned on a little red and black road car as it fought its way to victory on the 1972 Monte Carlo Rally. Less than one generation later, cars unimaginable to drivers such as Sandro Munari were proudly keeping the Lancia name at the top of world rallying. With its current Fiat paymasters drawing tight the pursestrings, hopes of a Lancia return to the world rally stage may be wishful thinking. In the meantime the Delta S4 and Integrale are fitting reminders of what the single most influential name in the sport achieved. ●



# BLOODLINE



**J**ust look at them. There aren't many cars that give you the same feeling that Lamborghinis do. There's something primal about them. Aggressive, untamed, dramatic, almost... evil. We're at Silverstone and a storm is brewing overhead. Actually, a lightning fork in the background would set this scene off nicely. We've a few spots of rain, but no luck with timely electrostatic.

It may not have the longest history in motorsport, but Lamborghini has well and

truly stepped up a gear in recent years. With the formation of its Squadra Corse factory racing arm in 2014, the Italian firm has absolute control over its racing range for the first time since the mid-1990s. Former Ferrari F1 team boss Stefano Domenicali is CEO, and the brand is on a roll in GT racing.

It all started with the Diablo Super Trophy back in 1996, when a fledgling SRO Motorsports Group convinced Lamborghini to start a single-make series, with Stéphane Ratel promoting it. That laid the foundations for the GT3 category we have today in many

ways, but after that series finished in 2002, the firm largely took a step back from racing. Under new ownership by the Volkswagen Group from 1998, the brand was remodelling its road car range as the Diablo was retired with no suitable alternative for racing available - the flagship Murciélago was too expensive and the Gallardo had yet to come along. The net result was Lambo being absent from racing for the next eight years.

It re-entered the sport with the single-make Super Trofeo series in 2009 - using a modified Gallardo LP560-4 - that was largely



# OF THE BULL

Lamborghini's return to GT racing has been swift and brutally successful on multiple levels. *Robert Ladbroke* takes a look at the current range of racing Huracáns and meets their maker

PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES ROBERTS/JEP / TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT, OCTOBER 2019



designed and built by third-party partner Reiter Engineering in Germany. For Lambo, it was a marketing exercise, but soon grew, sprouting sister series in North America, Asia and the Middle East. Now, only the Porsche Carrera Cup and Ferrari Challenge can boast a similar global championship reach.

Lamborghini finally had the momentum, reputation and machinery to make itself a real force in GT racing, and committed to re-opening the factory motorsport division.

"Our racing history may not be as intensive as other brands, but motorsport

has always been in our DNA," says Maurizio Reggiani, Lamborghini's chief technical officer. "We ran class one [P1] Powerboats for many years [through the mid-1980s], making naturally aspirated V12 engines to produce 1000bhp and achieve 220kph on water, so our motorsport story is perhaps not as short as people think. As for circuit racing, for us it was always run as a marketing tool, with our engagement being as little as possible. But then the board wanted to do something more serious and our first decision was to put motorsport

under research and development and take control of it in-house. That way we can design the cars the way we want, and give our customers the sort of quality they expect from Lamborghini."

The two race cars here are the first true products of Squadra Corse - the Huracán Super Trofeo Evo and GT3 Evo - flanking their progenitor, the Huracán Performante.

But what level of engineering goes into each step on the newly founded Lambo racing ladder, and how do you turn a rapid road car into a ballistic GT3 Batmobile? ●



# HURACÁN PERFORMANTE

“If you have a good base car, it is much easier to develop into a race car, and the Huracán is the best model for this category of racing,” says Reggiani. But why that specific model?

“When we developed Squadra Corse, we had the choice of two models - the flagship Aventador or the Huracán. The Aventador is the pinnacle of Lamborghini, in terms of performance, technology... and price. It has a full carbon-fibre monocoque and a 770bhp engine. It would have been killed under Balance of Performance [BoP] in GT racing, so the Huracán was better placed.”

And by “better placed” he doesn’t mean it sits in the Aventador’s shadow, because the Huracán Performante has enough sporting credential of its own. In 2017, it caused an upset when test driver Marco Mapelli took a camouflaged version around the Nürburgring Nordshleife in 6min 52.01sec to set a new production car record. That’s 5sec faster than the Porsche 918. Not bad for a car costing £215,000 - around a third of what you’d have to fork out for a 918 when they were actually available.

At the heart of the Performante is a 5.2-litre V10 engine derived from Audi. It produces 630bhp and 442lb ft of torque at 6500rpm. The car’s already lightweight at 1382kg, with carbon fibre bodywork.

“What the Performante achieved around the Nürburgring was extraordinary,” says Reggiani. “It’s based on a different technical solution of four-wheel drive with

active aerodynamics. For motor racing, many of these things aren’t allowed, but we knew we had a good performance base, so we focused on taking the parts we couldn’t use out.”

Giorgio Sanna is Lambo’s long-serving test driver, and now its head of motorsport. He was in charge of developing the road

map to turn an already quick car into a world-beating GT racer, and assembling the staff to do so within Squadra Corse.

“It was fundamental to develop the competence and knowhow within Squadra Corse,” Sanna says. “Motorsport is a particular business, and you must have the right people and the right competence to do it well. When making a race car, you must take into account its application, and that’s not just the application of the car from a driver’s point of view but from a team’s view too. A race car must be easier to work on, to maintain and be repaired. And there are fundamentals that have to carry across from the road car to the race car.

“Lamborghini’s principle is not just fast and fastest, it’s also being easy to drive and have good handling behaviour. We have many gentlemen drivers in the Super Trofeo series who are Lamborghini owners on the road and they must feel that link between the road and race car. We’ve even fed back from the race cars to improve the road ones. We have a good exchange of technical data between road and race.”

Huracán Performante conquered the Nürburgring, before spawning two race versions. It’s used as the Super Trofeo safety car



**Price** £215,000

**Engine** 5.2-litre V10

**Power** 631bhp

**Torque** 443lb ft @8000rpm

**Top speed** 202mph

**Weight** 1382kg

**Transmission** 7-speed sequential with dual clutch, four-wheel drive

**Suspension** Double wishbones all round

**Brakes** Carbon-ceramic discs 380x38mm front, 356x32mm rear with six-pot calipers front, four-pot rear



# HURACÁN SUPER TROFEO EVO

Now we're talking. As good as the Performante is, it's not a race car. And the race cars are why we're here. So, how racey is the Trofeo against its road-going sibling?

Simple answer in terms of basic componentry is... not a lot. Simple answer in terms of performance is... massively.

As a single-make series, or 'Cup' spec car, it's the little things that add up to make the Super Trofeo a full-blooded racer. But all development comes at a cost, so Squadra Corse has been careful not to overdo things. The car has to be accessible, designed as an entry-level or intermediate step into GT racing for either Lamborghini owners or aspiring drivers looking to learn the ropes ahead of the wider world of GT3 competition.

"The chassis is the same as the road car, and we designed it so we can build the race cars on the same production line as the road cars, with no race-specific build queues," says Reggiani. "Having the cars assembled on the production line gives a quality assurance, as the process scrutinises everything - from depth and alignment to tubing and the clamping of every component. I think we're the first in the world to develop this sort of technique."

The chassis is the same architecturally, but benefits from being 45 per cent stiffer thanks to the addition of the mandated crash structure. The engine is exactly the same as the Performante road car, with only the airbox and exhaust systems being changed,

and a motorsport ECU is fitted. That creates a key difference in the engine's mapping, reducing power to 620bhp and limiting the top speed to around 170mph. It can't match the 202mph of the road car, but that level of performance is simply not needed.

"We've never had a driver say: 'these cars are too slow, you could use with more power'," says Sanna. "We restrict the top-end performance slightly to benefit acceleration. If we left the engine alone completely, it would be too much in the race car."

"We don't use any titanium or different camshafts in the Super Trofeo engine, it's really standard barring the ECU. We even use the road car's suspension because it's already twin wishbones all round, we just add a racing [two-way] adjustable damper."

The big difference is aerodynamics. Squadra Corse has partnered with single-seater and sports car giant Dallara, and uses the Italian firm's facilities for aero testing. The result isn't just an increase in performance over the road car, the Evo is also a big step up above the older Super Trofeo, which was introduced in 2015.

Lamborghini cites an 8% reduction in drag and a 3% increase in aero balance. Also notable on the Evo are the heavily reworked rear aerodynamics, including a roof-mounted air ram, small shark-fin engine cover and extra intakes

and outlets around the rear bumper to improve airflow through the chassis.

"We work with Dallara across both the Super Trofeo and GT3 cars," explains Sanna. "With the Super Trofeo we are not forced to follow the regulations that restrict GT3 development so we have more freedom. We use the Super Trofeo to experiment and develop new technical efficiency and engineering that may be useful to the next generation of GT3 car. The drag resistance on this car is very low, which makes it good in a straight line. The shark fin makes it stable and predictable through fast corners, which is what you want for an amateur driver. If you look at the Super Trofeo grid, the gap between the novice drivers and the more experienced is very close, and that tells us we've made a car that looks after its drivers, that's accessible to help them close the gap."

There are reliability upgrades, like beefed-up radiators and oil coolers, an X-Trac six-speed sequential gearbox, racing clutch and lightened flywheel. A nine-setting traction control system and 12-setting ABS system are also included. ☀



New Super Trofeo features heavy aero changes, especially around the engine cover. Above, stripped-back cabin

**Price** £260,000

**Engine** 5.2-litre V10

**Power** 620bhp

**Torque** 421lb ft @6500rpm

**Top speed** 170mph

**Weight** 1270kg

**Transmission** 6-speed sequential (X-Trac) with racing clutch and lightweight flywheel, two-wheel drive

**Suspension** Double wishbones with rigid bushing, front/rear anti-roll bars and two-way adjustable Öhlins dampers

**Brakes** Steel discs 380x35mm front, 355x32mm rear; six-pot calipers front and four-pot rear; 12-position racing ABS system





The Huracán GT3 has proven successful across all classes of the Blancpain GT Series; Pro, Silver and Am. Above right: there's a big step up in driving complexity with the GT3, with more modes, settings and screens

## HURACÁN GT3 EVO

GT3 has come an awfully long way since its formation in 2005. Back then cars could be developed cost-effectively by brands using stock chassis with a conversion kit of parts. Technical advancement across 15 years has changed that, and a modern GT3 is now a ground-up, purpose-built racing machine.

GT3 has grown to be the first truly global category since the glory days of Formula Ford. If you own a car, you can race it pretty much anywhere, any weekend. And if you're a young and aspiring driver, there's arguably not a better career route at the moment. So, they have to be good, and Lambo's offering is proving to be one of the best, having won multiple Blancpain GT Series rounds since

its introduction last year, and across all classes too - Pro, Silver Cup and Amateur.

But to create it, Lamborghini had an issue. Engineering a GT3 car takes specialist experience, which Squadra Corse didn't have when it opened. So it looked to parent firm Audi. The first Huracán GT3 was developed on a unified platform with the R8 LMS GT3. They shared a chassis, suspension, and engine. The Huracán GT3 began life as an Audi in a dress. The Evo has changed all that.

"For year one [2015], we wanted to develop the Super Trofeo and GT3 platform side-by-side," says Sanna. "But we had a lack of experience so we worked with Audi Sport Customer Racing on a common chassis and drivetrain. Now, we have four years of experience from that. The Evo is completely separate from the Audi now. We have a different engine from the Performante

[which is engineered in Hungary from an Audi block] and we develop internally the suspension, the aero [again with Dallara] and the electronics. Four years ago the structure we have now wasn't existing."

Against its siblings, the GT3 Evo is lower, wider, more aggressive and, at least to the eye, more simplistically styled.

The chassis is made from aluminium and carbon fibre and sits 27mm wider than the Trofeo's, and that extends to an extra 45mm with the aero appendages. The bodywork is carbon, the suspension retains its double wishbones but uses uniball joints and four-way adjustable dampers. The wheelbase is 28mm wider and the Pirelli slick tyres are an inch larger everywhere.

But by far the biggest difference lies in the aero. Much development has gone into allowing air to flow over, through and under the GT3's chassis, producing downforce.



“The level of aero in a GT3 car is now like a Formula 3 car,” adds Sanna. “It’s why a lot of drivers coming from F3 and F2 are immediately fast because they have the aerodynamic understanding - this is the biggest difference to the driving.”

The one thing that doesn’t improve is the power. While BoP means engine output and restrictors are constantly changing, the GT3 Evo is hit more than most. Due to its aero efficiency it pays a heavy price in terms of grunt, usually running at around 450bhp. That’s 170 down on the Super Trofeo, and even further from the Performante road car.

How does that affect performance? On the same track in the same conditions, the leading GT3 Evo laps 1.8sec faster than the Super Trofeo. Even though Silverstone is a power circuit. That’s aero for you.

The car we have here is one of Barwell Motorsport’s, the British team with close links to Squadra Corse as an official factory supported team for both British GT and the European Blancpain series.

Barwell boss Mark Lemmer says: “The Lambo is perhaps the most extreme high-downforce GT3. It’s quite pitch-sensitive, which means the angle of the floor to the ground and the way the air’s managed underneath the car is a very sensitive area. You need experienced engineers to use the right spring and damper settings, and it also changes the way the driver handles the car because pitch changes with how you brake.



“A GT3’s strength is never its acceleration or top speed. Down the straight this will hit top way before the Trofeo, but the difference is in the brakes and the cornering. You brake so much later and the aero means you have a much greater minimum speed through the corner, so you can accelerate earlier too.

“The systems on the GT3 are unbelievable. We have an extra mechanic just to look after the electronic systems, and an extra technician to manage the data during the big races. We have multiple

## “The aero on modern GT3 cars is now similar to that of Formula 3”

screens in the car with lap times, rear-view, rear radar that tells you closing distances - which is great in the dark when the driver just has a blur of light behind. The amount of wiring is four-fold over a Trofeo car.”

Does it require stringent and often costly maintenance?

“The engine is fairly stock, because the aero out-performs it,” adds Lemmer. “The [Hör] gearbox is proven and the suspension, hubs and drive-shafts are all designed for endurance racing. The area we do have to constantly maintain is the carbon aero parts, like the floor, splitter, diffuser and sills. Because the cars are so aero heavy and run low to the ground at tracks where there are bumps or depressions - like Brands Hatch or Spa - the car’s actually touching the floor quite a lot. We have to replace or repair elements after almost every event, especially the rear diffuser. The Trofeo cars run around 15mm higher so don’t have that issue.”

Reggiani has the final word: “We look at the Super Trofeo as the university, and the GT3 as the PhD. The GT3 has to compete against different brands, whereas the Super Trofeo races against itself, so they need different development. The Huracán GT3 is the closest in relation to the street car it’s based on in terms of dimension and wheelbase, because we started with a car born to be already similar to a race car.”

The lineage is clear through all three, but each result is surprisingly different.

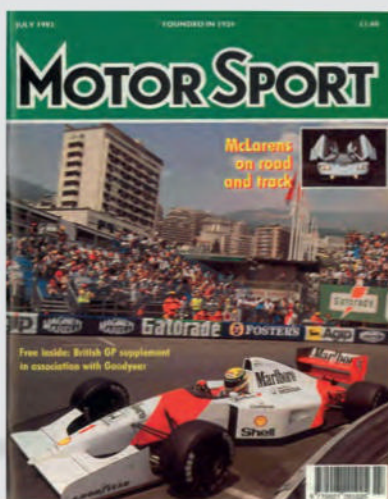
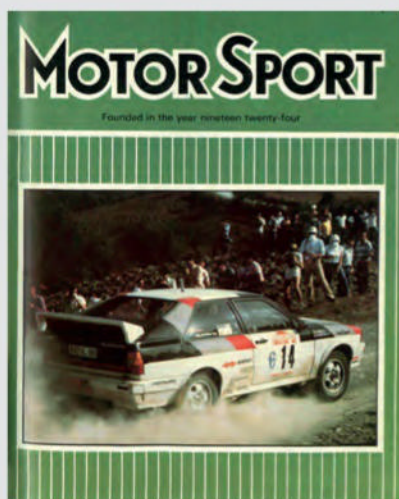
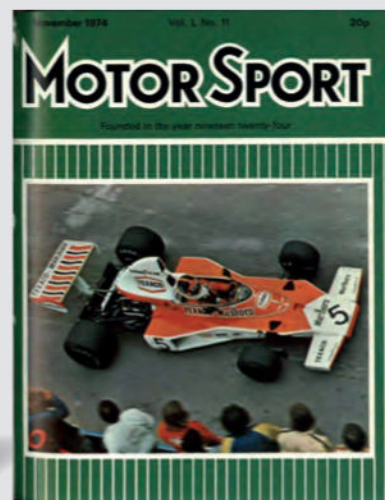
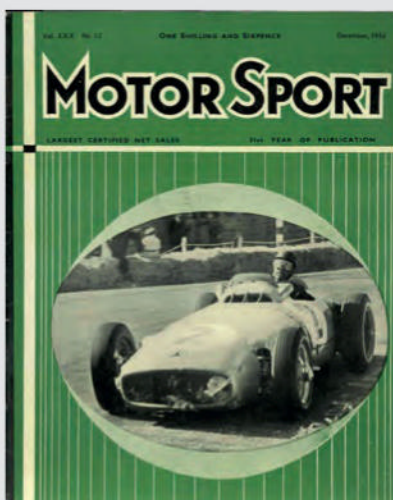


The GT3 has a notably different stance to the others: wider, lower and more aggressive. It’s also no longer an Audi R8 in a dress

- Price** £360,000
- Engine** 5.2-litre V10
- Power** 450bhp\*
- Torque** 439lb ft @6500rpm\*
- Top speed** 150mph
- Weight** 1230kg\*
- Transmission** 6-speed sequential (Hör) with racing clutch and lightweight flywheel, two-wheel drive
- Suspension** Double wishbones with uniball all round, four-way adjustable Öhlins dampers; three-way adjustable anti-roll bars front and rear
- Brakes** Steel discs 380x34mm front, 355x32mm rear; Brembo six-pot calipers front, four-pot rear; 12-position racing ABS system

\*Changeable according to BoP grading









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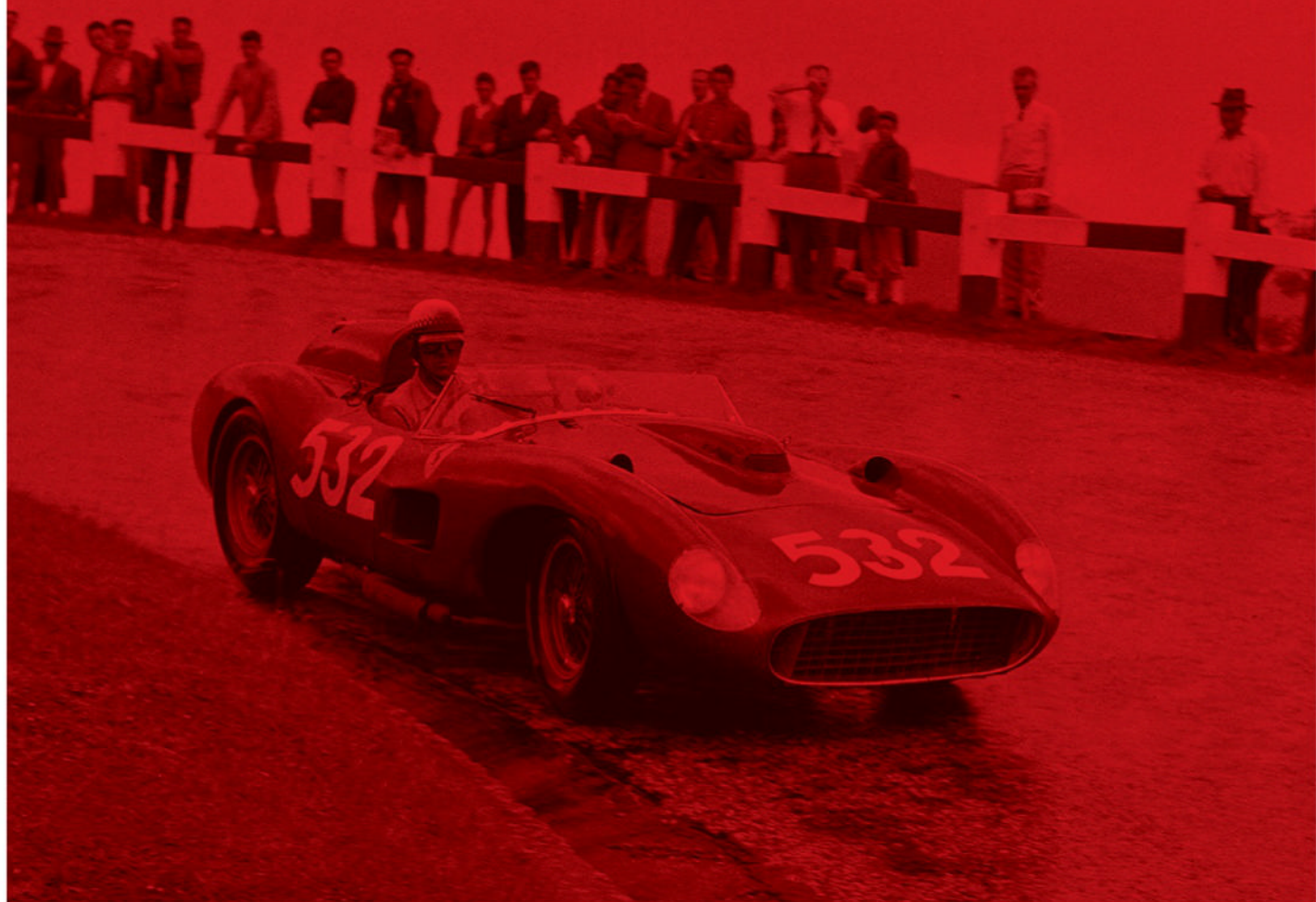


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# THE MOMENTS

**From conquering the early days of the world championship to free-wheeling through town centres lined with spectators, Italy left its mark on the sport in more ways than one**





N I K I L A U D A

# FERRARI'S F1 'QUICK-FIXER'

**Yes, he's not Italian, but considering the contribution Niki Lauda made to turning around an ailing Ferrari in the 1970s, he more than qualifies for mention. Lauda brought speed and steel to Enzo's team, making it a winner once more**

WORDS ALAN HENRY / TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT, MARCH 2005









**W**atkins Glen paddock, Sunday October 5, 1975. Niki Lauda is next to me in a queue for a helicopter. A queue, mind. No special treatment here. An hour or so earlier he had hopped out of his Ferrari 312T at the end of the United States Grand Prix after nailing his fifth win (sixth if you include Silverstone's non-championship International Trophy) of the season – a season in which he had secured Ferrari's first Formula 1 World Championship for 11 years. Putting them into the context of their time, Lauda's achievements had saved Ferrari's reputation in much the same way Michael Schumacher's have done over the last decade.

Fast-forward almost 29 years to the 2004 Australian GP. Not much changes: I am shooting the breeze with Lauda in an F1 paddock. Except this time the interruption is human, not mechanised: Michael Schumacher, sleek and groomed in white T-shirt and designer jeans, moves in to chat. Lauda, the very antithesis of F1 'high fashion' in his crumpled jeans, sloppy sweatshirt and scuffed Timberlands – a cross between an off-duty mechanic and a binman – smiles and listens, hands stuffed in pockets. Niki has always been thus. But this is a very different Schumacher: no trace of arrogance or confidence, just respectful good nature. They are equals in F1 status, but Michael happily defers to the older man. You can sense his admiration for this veteran who put Ferrari back on the F1 map, back when Schuey was only six.

Even by the time Niki joined Ferrari in 1974 there was every sign that he was something special. BRM team manager Tim Parnell had no doubt: "You could see straight off that he had that little bit extra; up to that point I had never seen such dedication. Niki also came into F1 at a time when physical fitness had become an issue; he worked away at it and became what I can only describe as 150 per cent fit. He was terribly serious about his racing. It never surprised me that he made it to the top."

But Niki admits, with a sly grin, that switching from BRM to Ferrari at the end of 1973 involved something of a risk: "Louis Stanley, the boss of BRM, had already signed me for 1974 and '75 when I ran out of sponsorship during the course of the year ('73). It was one hell of a gamble but I had no other choice. Then when I signed for Ferrari it was also a big risk because I knew I would have to fend off legal action from BRM as a result. But, really, it was obvious



by then that BRM was going nowhere and that if I wanted to have a chance of making it as a professional driver I had to accept that Ferrari deal. If I'd turned it down I don't think it would have been offered again."

Enzo Ferrari had watched Lauda manhandle his BRM P160E round Silverstone in the opening stages of the 1973 British Grand Prix (he leapt briefly to second place from the fourth row at the restart), but he would later give credit to Clay Regazzoni, the Swiss driver who was returning to Ferrari in '74 after a fruitless year with BRM, for the decision to sign Lauda.

"It was he (Regazzoni) who encouraged me in my choice of the racer I had been considering since the British Grand Prix to fill a gap in the team for 1974," wrote Enzo. "Regazzoni told me: 'Lauda is young and unknown, but he seems to be bright. I think he could do a lot with Ferrari.'"

And there was a lot to be done, for Lauda had joined the Scuderia at one of its lowest ebbs. Having missed two mid-season GPs altogether, it ended 1973 as a one-car team and joint sixth (with BRM) in the constructors' standings with just 12 points to its name.

**Above: two men who turned Ferrari's fortunes around, first Lauda, then Schumacher. Below: with Forghieri and di Montezemolo (bottom)**





But there was reason for hope, remembers Niki: "When I thought about the facilities I'd experienced with my previous F1 teams, March and BRM, I just could not believe what was available at Ferrari. My first impression? 'Why don't they win all the races?' But of course I was new to it all and didn't understand the subtleties of working with the Italians."

To be fair, the Italians themselves were still wrestling with that ticklish problem. Fiat, which had been funding Ferrari since 1969, had decided to take a much more active role and to this end plonked a young Luca di Montezemolo, go-ahead scion of the Agnelli family, into the role of team manager. He was there to protect Fiat's interest – but he did much more than this, handling the unpredictable Enzo with respect and honesty, greatly reducing the team's Whitehall Farce antics and shielding Lauda from what politics remained. These two men swiftly became great allies: the prototype Schumacher and Jean Todt.

Enzo, though, was still capable of some very theatrical gestures.

Lauda: "I suppose, as a pragmatic Austrian, that the whole sense of drama was difficult for me to understand. But I like to think that I was pragmatic enough to play the game the way they wanted me to. For

example, when I first drove the B3 at Fiorano I told Piero Lardi, who was translating for his father Mr Ferrari, that the car was s\*\*t. Piero nervously told me that I really should pull my punches. So I said that it had too much understeer, which it did. So Mr Ferrari told me that I had a week in which to lap one second faster round Fiorano, otherwise I was out. So we made the modifications and delivered the result. It was a piece of cake, actually."

That 'we' was another reason for hope: Mauro Forghieri was back. After a disappointing 1972 Ferrari's long-time race designer had found himself sidelined at Special Projects and replaced by Sandro Colombo. This ex-Innocenti designer took the unpopular step of having the new F1 car's monocoque built in the UK by TC Prototypes of Northampton and then oversaw a season of spiralling apathy and pathetic results. Forghieri was recalled to the team by Fiat before August's Austrian GP, and he revamped the B3 in just 20 days. It proved only a marginal improvement, but it was a start.

Forghieri was not averse to the occasional madcap tantrum himself – but he was brilliant, had a point to prove and was mulling over a big idea. A formidable talent capable of designing all aspects of a race car,

he'd been worn down previously by his concurrent team manager role of Ferrari's F1 and sports car outfits. But this pressure had been eased by the arrival of di Montezemolo and the abandonment of the sports car programme after 1973. Forghieri was thus able to forget his 'Ross Brawn' role and concentrate on his 'Rory Byrne'.

**L**auda and Forghieri did much more than dial out that understeer. During an intensive winter of R&D at the new Fiorano track (another major plus) the B3 was extensively reworked: for 1974 it featured a much-revised weight distribution – its cockpit being positioned further forward to accommodate more of the 47-gallon fuel load in the centre of the car – and many aerodynamic improvements. Its 3-litre flat-12 now boasted 485bhp at 12,200rpm, a useful 20bhp more than the best of its Cosworth rivals. Lauda used it to great effect to put in the foundations of his reputation and begin the restoration of Ferrari's. He took comprehensive wins in Spain and Holland, recorded nine poles and two fastest laps, and led in South Africa, Monaco, France, Belgium, Italy and Canada. He wasn't flawless – he got tangled up on the first lap at the Nürburgring having started from ●

**"Mr Ferrari told me that I had a week in which to lap one second faster round Fiorano, otherwise I was out"**



Lauda joined Ferrari from BRM amid controversy for 1974, but was quick to prove himself, helping the B3 become a winner in just his fourth grand prix



pole – but he was also denied wins at Brands and Mosport by late dramas: a slow puncture and a crash caused by the unflagged detritus of somebody else's off. He finished fourth in the overall standings, while the slower but more consistent Regazzoni fell just three points shy of the title. It had been a sensational turnaround... and Forghieri had yet to unleash his big idea.

Towards the end of 1974 Mauro told Lauda that he was thinking of using a transverse-mounted five-speed gearbox fitted ahead of the rear axle line on his '75 design.

"I admit," says Lauda, "I was sceptical of the advantages it would offer. Forghieri was talking about reducing the car's polar moment of inertia by concentrating all the mass as close to the centre as possible. I'd been through all that with Robin Herd and the March 721X back in 1972, so I thought, 'No thanks'. But Mauro persuaded me this would be different. And it was.

"I didn't fully appreciate the advantages it would offer because it seemed such a big change from a chassis about which we knew everything. But the 312T (*Trasversale*) really did possess totally neutral handling and a wide torque curve. It was a true gem, a lasting monument to Forghieri's abilities."

Despite the new car's apparent technical potential its race debut was held back until

the third round of the 1975 world championship, the South African GP at Kyalami. So Niki started the season on a gentle note with the old B3, finishing sixth at Buenos Aires and fifth at Interlagos. Then he crashed the 312T in testing in South Africa and could only finish fifth there. It was a huge disappointment. But the car's performance shortcoming was explicable.

"When the team got it back to Maranello they examined my engine very closely," says Niki. "They found that the belt driving the fuel metering unit was slipping so badly that the engine was around 80bhp down. There had been criticism in the Italian media of our poor showing in South Africa and this had sapped morale in the race shop. So I suggested that we take a B3 and a 312T over to Fiorano for a back-to-back demonstration. I set a time in the B3 and then broke the track record in the 312T. And everybody was happy again."

Prior to the start of the European season, Lauda ran in the International Trophy. On the open spaces of the Northants aerodrome he just fended off the McLaren M23 of reigning world champion Emerson Fittipaldi to give the *Trasversale* its first win. Satisfying, but a bit too close for comfort.

"Emerson was certainly the man to beat in 1974, but James Hunt's Hesketh had led

the opening stages at Silverstone," remembers Lauda. "I switched off the rev-limiter and gave it a quick burst to 12,800rpm, but it didn't make any difference." Niki made the mistake of mentioning this to the press and was rewarded when an Italian paper suggested he had been fortunate to win after abusing the engine.

The first European round of the championship was at Barcelona's superb Montjuich Park, but the race took place amid a furore over track safety. The guard rails were poorly installed and the drivers threatened a boycott, only to reverse this stance and compete after the governing body had intimidated them. Niki was on pole, but Mario Andretti's Parnelli tipped Regazzoni's 312T into its sister car on the run to the first corner, eliminating it from a race that would unfold into bitter tragedy when Rolf Stommelen's Hill vaulted a barrier and killed four onlookers standing in a prohibited area. Lauda's girlfriend of five years, Mariella Reininghaus, a usually serene member of Salzburg's brewing dynasty, accused Niki and his colleagues of being hypocrites: "You should be ashamed of yourself."

At Monaco Niki was again on pole – "I'd pulled so much out of the bag to beat Tom Pryce's Shadow to pole that I was trembling when I got out of the car" – and ran away

## "Ferrari was an amazing place and Forghieri was a genius"







Above: the scenes of championship victory at Monza in 1975, in front of the tifosi. Lauda on the way to the first of five wins in '75, at Monaco. Left: a drivers' group photo in Brazil, 1975



with the race. Victories followed in the Belgian and Swedish GPs, the latter being a particularly satisfying success given that the Anderstorp track didn't seem to suit the 312T's handling characteristics. Then came a memorable Dutch GP at Zandvoort – and a defeat at the hands of Hunt's Hesketh 308.

"James was my kind of guy," says Niki. "We would become cast as rivals but we'd been close friends ever since we'd been in F2 together in 1972 and I'd come over to live in London for the first time.

"James drove beautifully that day, but the wet/dry conditions meant the odds stacked slightly in his favour because I was grappling with a wet-weather set-up on a drying track, and also I didn't want to risk my championship challenge. Scoring more points was the most important thing."

And second was perfectly adequate. Niki now had 38 points, 13 more than Carlos Reutemann, who was driving Bernie Ecclestone's Martini Brabham BT44B, and 17 ahead of Fittipaldi. And he would need that cushion as the next few races yielded a mixed bag. He ran away with the French GP at Paul Ricard, leading from start to finish

from pole, but then his bid began to unravel. In the chaotic, rain-spoiled British GP at Silverstone he lost a wheel in the pitlane after a fumbled tyre stop and was trailing out of the points when a huge thunderstorm brought proceedings to a halt, with Fittipaldi the winner. A puncture dropped him back to third place at the Nürburgring after he'd led the first nine laps. And then he splashed home sixth before his home crowd at a sodden Österreichring in Austria, his race compromised by a dry set-up.

"Austria was a disappointment," Niki recalls ruefully, "because the flat-12's wide powerband gave us a potential advantage in the wet, which, on this occasion, the wrong set-up eliminated.

"I still thought that we had the edge overall, but although we were consistently scoring points, these minor problems were getting in the way of things. We certainly should have won more races in 1975."

Even so, the championship was there for the taking a race early, and in front of the tifosi at Monza, too. Despite a minor problem with a rear damper, Niki paced himself to third place behind Regazzoni and Fittipaldi. It was enough to clinch the first of his three world titles.

"It was strange. Almost an anticlimax," says Lauda. "There was a mixture of satisfaction and sense of achievement. But so much had happened during the previous four years that it seemed much longer since I'd originally started in F1.

"Ferrari was an amazing place and Forghieri was a genius. We had the best car, but I like to think that I made good use of it."

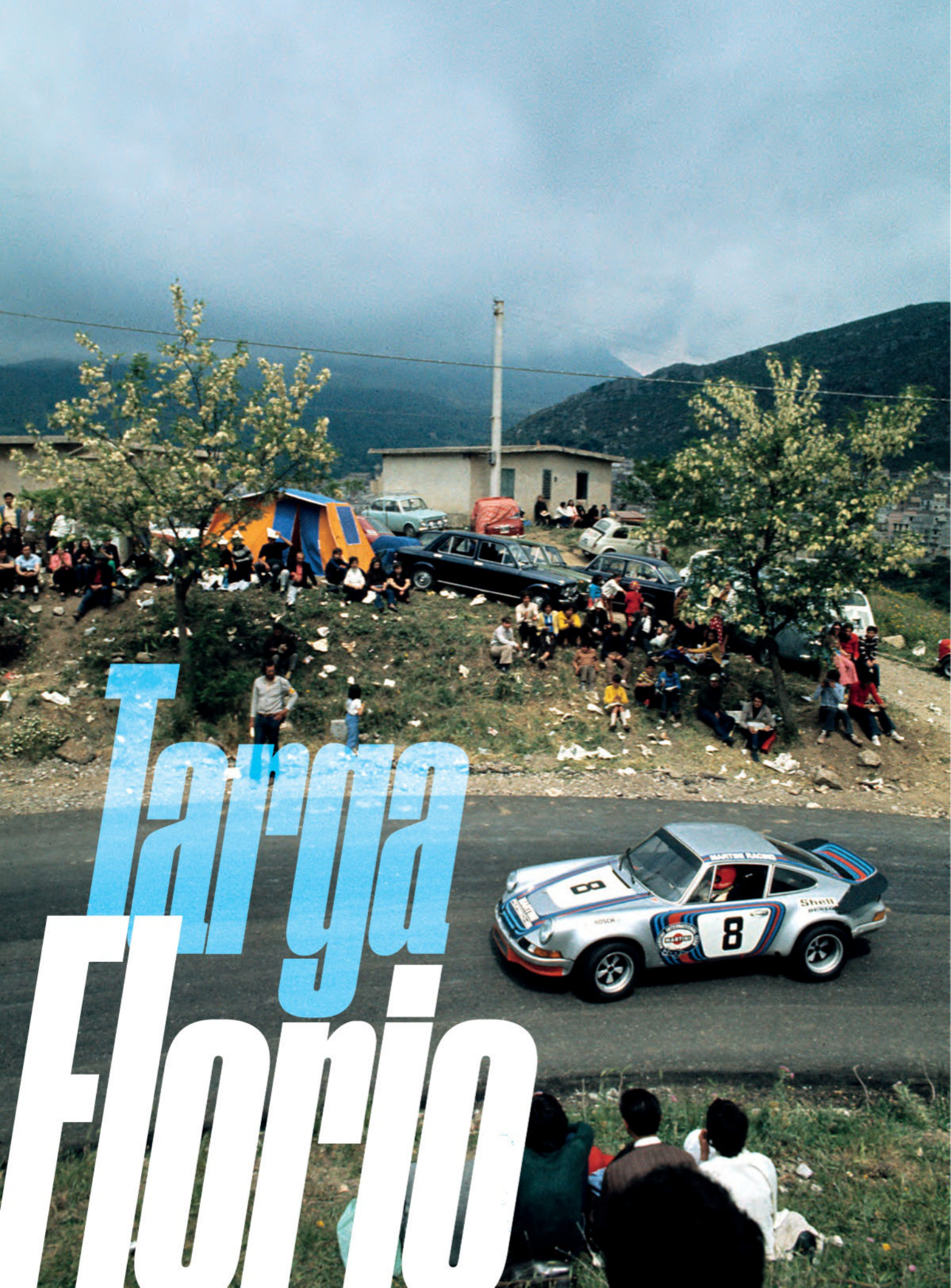
But how good was Lauda?

It can be difficult to assess. Most fans remember him post-accident: canny and astute, but not the fastest. People forget that he scored 18 GP poles in 1974-75. And in '76, before the Nürburgring fire, he had exhibited Schumacher-style dominance: first, first, second, second, first, first, third, retired, first...

There's no doubt that Lauda and Schumacher understand where each is coming from. They both pulled an ailing team – Formula 1's most famous name at that – around and behind them, minimising its negatives, maximising its positives. Lauda was denied the long period of pay dirt success that Schumacher's initial Ferrari spadework brought him, but his turnaround years at the Scuderia certainly bear comparison with Michael's.

That's how good Niki Lauda was. Schumacher knows it and is happy to show it. And so should we be. ☉



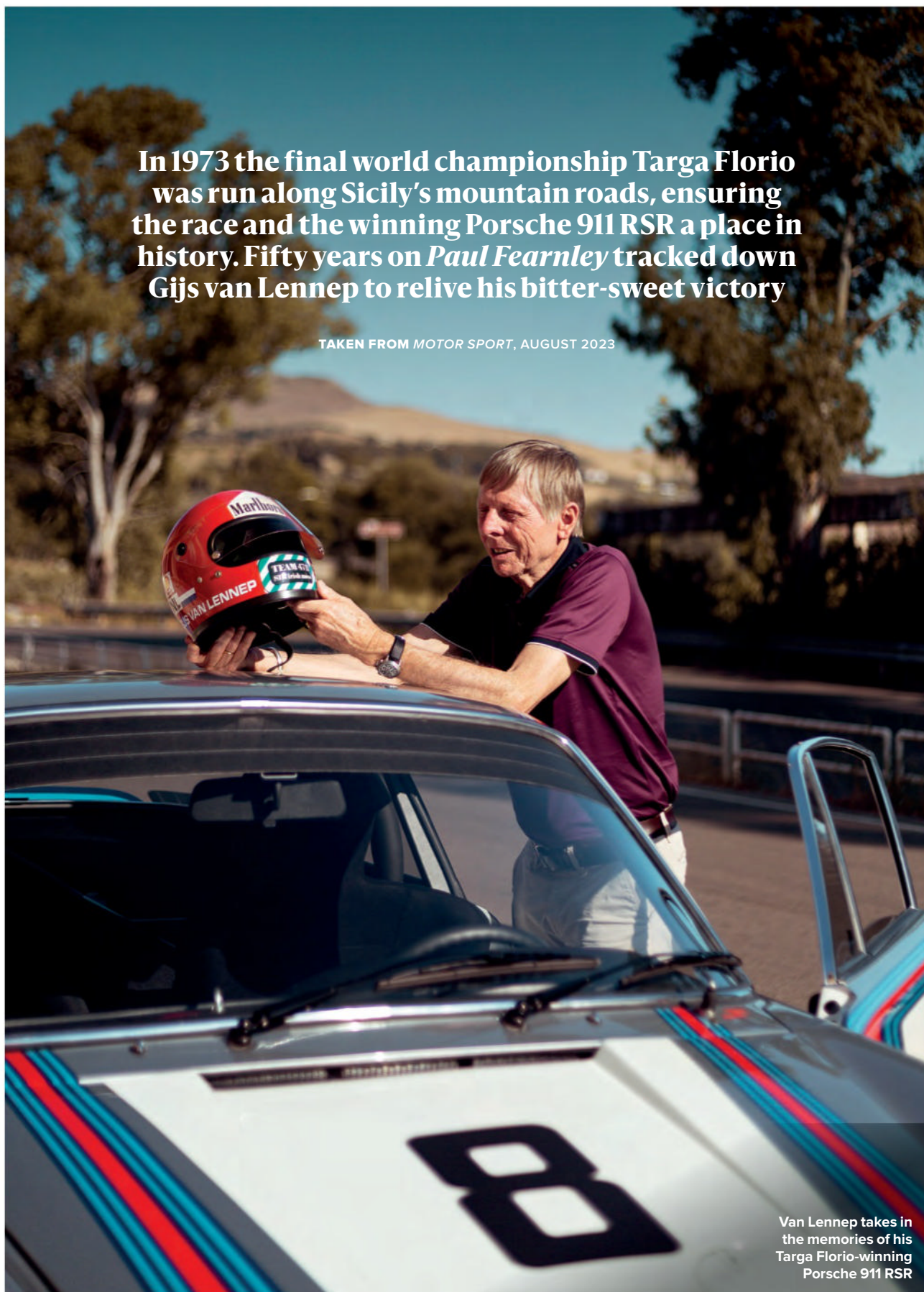


# Targa Florio



**In 1973 the final world championship Targa Florio was run along Sicily's mountain roads, ensuring the race and the winning Porsche 911 RSR a place in history. Fifty years on *Paul Fearnley* tracked down *Gijs van Lennep* to relive his bitter-sweet victory**

TAKEN FROM MOTOR SPORT, AUGUST 2023



Van Lennep takes in the memories of his Targa Florio-winning Porsche 911 RSR





Careful on the gearbox, not so on the tyres. Van Lennep lifts a wheel as he makes the most of the RSR's traction. Right: even the local *Carabinieri* indulged in spectating

**P**orsche had gatecrashed the Targa party a total of 10 times since 1956. The word on the streets of Cerda, Collesano and Campofelice, however, was that an 11th win was highly unlikely. For not only was Porsche's 'prototype' sports-racer of 1973 nothing more than a souped-up GT car, but also the 57th running would likely be the final flowering of Sicily's throwback road race.

"I think we knew that it would be the last one," says Gijs van Lennep, the Dutchman slated to share the fastest of three works Carrera RSRs with Swiss Herbie Müller. "But that didn't matter to us beforehand. We were just practising, practising, practising: a whole week; at least five or six laps a day. We never thought about winning because of those 12-cylinder Ferraris and Alfas, but we knew that we should finish because ours was a very reliable car."

Van Lennep is now 81. Dubbed the best Dutch driver of the 20th century he can count two Le Mans wins plus a handful of Formula 1 starts for Williams and a European F5000 championship to his name. But he is proudest of his Targa victory.

Van Lennep's three previous Targa starts from 1970 had involved full-shot prototypes: fourth on debut in Racing Team AAW's Porsche 908/2, co-driven by ill-fated

Finn Hans Laine; second in the Alfa Romeo 1-2 of 1971 aboard a T33/3 co-driven by Andrea de Adamich; and a crushing first-lap retirement because of a blown engine when "all geared up to win" alongside Vic Elford – "the world's best all-round driver" – in an Alfa T33/TT/3.

An RSR was a very different proposition. Porsche's endurance hand had been forced by the introduction in 1972 of a 650kg minimum for 3-litre prototypes. No longer able to compensate for a lack of power and therefore compete with the F1-engined 'two-seater grand prix cars' of its rivals, Stuttgart chose instead to race, develop and promote its new-generation 911 road rocket.

"We spent two weeks in January at Paul Ricard: we made the RSR, more or less," says van Lennep. "We changed the whole rear suspension: sawed it off, welded it back on, etc. Meanwhile: 'OK, Gijs, the other car

is ready with 40 litres. Empty it!' Another 40 laps. Tired after every day, but I was in fantastic condition by the end of it.

"Testing was so good with Porsche. They would change something on the car that made it two-tenths faster. Then they took it off, and you would be two-tenths slower. Put it back on: two-tenths faster. Only then would they move to the next thing. That's how we did it."

More often entered as a prototype to allow freedom of development with a view to improving the breed without upstaging loyal GT privateers, the base result was an extra 30bhp for 50kg fewer: 330bhp on (eventually) slide throttles; and 890kg, minus a spare wheel.

Though visually similar bar a duck-tail spoiler extended to the body's full width, plus muscular arches containing wider tyres on centre-lock mag-alloy rims from the Can-Am 917/10, much was changed under the skin. There was lighter, stiffer aluminium rear semi-trailing arms with rubber bushes swapped for Unibal spherical joints; upper front suspension struts adjustable for camber and caster; stub-axles mounted higher on the strut for lowered ride height; stiffer, variable-rate titanium springs with Bilstein dampers; and Porsche four-pot calipers clamping ventilated and perforated discs on titanium hubs, also taken from the 917/10.

**"Unofficial  
practice was  
more dangerous  
than the race"**





The air-cooled flat-six, bored out by 3mm to 2993cc and red-lined at 8000rpm, featured cam-adjustable Bosch fuel injection, twin-spark heads with larger ports and valves, wilder cams and a 10.3:1 compression; titanium deemed too expensive, its conrods were polished steel. Power was fed from a single-plate racing clutch to a limited-slip differential via a Type 915 five-speed gearbox that was standard bar ratios and a front cover incorporating an oil pump circulating through a separate cooler.

Though operating in somewhat of a category limbo, this very handy weapon scored a sensational victory on debut - even before its GT homologation date - at February's Daytona 24 Hours, courtesy of Florida's Brumos Racing and drivers Peter Gregg and Hurley Haywood. Martini Racing's campaign in the European rounds of the World Sports Car Championship began with an eighth place at Vallelunga in March, followed by: ninth at Dijon-Prenois; a rare retirement (engine) at Monza; and fifth at Spa-Francorchamps. Van Lennep and Müller also won the non-championship Le Mans Four Hours held after the official April test.

The Targa Florio, with its innumerable twists and turns, incessant lumps and bumps, was ideal RSR territory - yet in official practice it was still more than 3min



Rolf Stommelen/Andrea de Adamich's prototype Alfa should have walked it, but crashed out.  
Below: RSR interior



Abele 'Tango' Tanghetti's blazing Chevron. Above: The second-placed Lancia of Sandro Munari/Jean-Claude Andruet



slower than the fastest true prototype, 1972 winner Arturo Merzario's Ferrari 312 PB having got within 2.5sec of the lap record. Porsche's long shot, however, shortened somewhat when Clay Regazzoni, new to this island race, somersaulted an Alfa Romeo T33/TT/12 to destruction.

There must have been something in the Madonie mountain air (the circuit rose to 1970ft): Andrea de Adamich crashed the second Alfa, albeit with less serious consequences: suspension and bodywork; Jacky Ickx, also on Targa debut, was seen driving a Ferrari minus its nose; and pacesetter Merzario was halted by a failed fuel pump. Porsche wasn't immune either: Giulio Pucci, son of Porsche's 1964 winner Antonio, wrecked his RSR and would race a T-car/bitsa.

Van Lennep's was an oasis of calm in comparison: "[Unofficial] practice was more dangerous than the race. For there was something around every corner: ladies dressed in black on a mule getting wood for the burner; or sheep all over the road. I crashed an Alfa road car once. Ill with fever, I shouldn't have been driving. But no: 'Take my car! Do half a lap and then go to the hotel.' I met a lorry. It didn't go very well. No injury. No problem. But the front wheel on my side was back a bit.

"Herbie was a very professional guy and a really good driver. He had won the Targa 🟡





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**"Now you knew no lorries were coming. Even on blind corners, you could use all of the road"**



Balcony views as Alfa Giulia GTA flashes past in 1973. Mario Litrico and Ferragine finished 20th





Van Lennep  
and Herbert  
Müller celebrate  
the spoils in 1973

## “The Targa was very tiring: 700-800 corners and 1500 gear-changes every lap. It kept you busy”

in 1966 in a Porsche 906 co-driven by [Willy] Mairesse, so he knew where to go. Ours was a good match. I don't think there was much difference in our heights: I'm 176cm [5ft 9in] and he was maybe 2cm shorter. So our seats were the same. Actually, maybe I had a bit more padding because my back was not so good. We both set the car up, too; we were always the same like that. We did springs and shockers, softer, softer all the time, so that it was like a road car over the bumps. We made it very easy to drive. We had a long first gear for the hairpins - the RSR was heavy but had good traction - and a short second, third and fourth, very close together so that we were always in the right rev range, and a long fifth for the long straight. Most of the time we were using second and third. The change was a bit heavy because of the synchromesh, but not too bad. Plus we were young, strong guys.

“Even so, it was more physical than Le Mans. You were not going so fast, but that didn't matter. You soon get used to velocity. At the ‘old’ Le Mans we used to say that we had 6km to rest every lap - even at 355km/h [220mph]. The Targa was very tiring: 700-800 corners and 1500 gear-changes every lap. It kept you busy. The weather was hot, too. And we had no drinks in the car.”

Concentration was key to this time-trial - cars were released individually at 20sec intervals - on a 44.7-mile circuit littered with every conceivable hazard and lined by spectators. The fastest Porsche operated as though in a bubble while others' dreams burst: Merzario, paired with Sicily's own Nino Vaccarella, suffered a rear puncture on the first lap and soon would retire because of a broken driveshaft likely caused by running on the rim; Ickx, bemused by the whole scene, landed in a ditch on the third lap; and de Adamich, having inherited a large lead after three laps by co-driver Rolf Stommelen, promptly wrecked his front suspension against a Lancia Fulvia.

“We were second when I got in the car,” says van Lennep. “[Andrea] must have been so angry. He could have won so easily. But I was happy he was out. He had been cross with me in 1971. He asked my wife, ‘Why did Gijs not go a little faster on the last lap? We could have won!’ But we were 1-2 and I was happy with second, 1min behind. Plus Carlo Chiti [the boss of Autodelta] was very happy with me because I drove three laps within 9sec of each other. Plus it was orders.

Vaccarella was to win. Normal. So we took it easy. I knew exactly what to do. So this time I was thinking, ‘OK, this is justice.’”

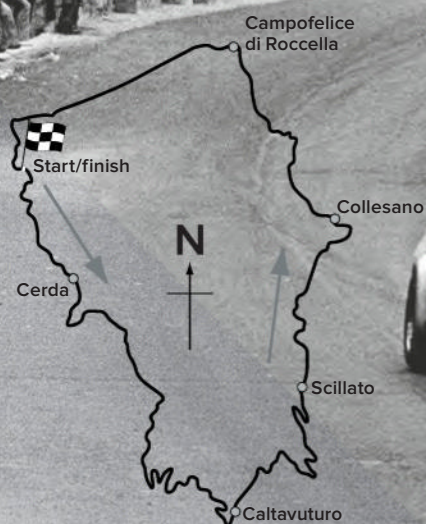
Seven surprisingly lonely laps lay ahead and the right balance had to be struck: “I can't remember seeing anybody; OK, maybe some small Lancias. I didn't catch one and nobody came after me. The people in slower cars were looking out for you and would let you past. And there were marshals with flags. So I had no fights on the track.

“The other funny thing was that you had practised all week - but now you were on a new sort of track. During unofficial practice you had been much slower - though still too fast actually - because often you used only half of the road, just in case. But now you knew that no lorries were coming and, even on blind corners, you could use all of the road. Different lines in lots of places and suddenly 4-5min faster: a big change.

“[Forever] lap record-holder Leo Kinnunen was in our second car, so we couldn't slow right down. We were 8min in front of him by the end, so Herbert and I must have been driving very fast - but not too fast. That's what we were very good at: keeping concentrating. Full focus. One little mistake on the Targa could be vital. ●



No traffic through town:  
unlike the daunting  
unofficial practice days,  
race cars ran unimpeded  
through the streets





"Ickx was one of the best ever - a great guy. I won Le Mans with him in 1976 - but he didn't know the Targa very well; or not good enough at least. He didn't test very much. I don't think he liked it. Whereas I liked it a lot. I liked to do rallies in the winter - five Monte Carlo and five Tulips - and I am a bit of a street racer. I am very precise, or at least I try to be. That's what the Targa needed. You can always make a mistake, of course, but you are not supposed to.

"I did a lot of racing with Herbert in 1973 and 1974, and he never made a mistake. He made our fastest lap in this race. He did three laps. Then I did three. He did three

more and I did the last two. If you added our three laps together our times were exactly the same. I was a bit more consistent.

"And the team thought maybe I was a bit easier on the car. I always said, 'Be nice to the car and the car will be nice to you.' With Porsche's gearbox, you have to wait in the middle a bit. You don't win races like these by changing gear ridiculously fast. You must go faster through the corners; tyres, you can put on again quickly."

But no mistakes were forthcoming. The remaining laps were reeled off, and the winning margin over the Lancia Stratos crewed by Sandro Munari - a winner in 1972

- and Jean-Claude Andruet was more than 6min. It might have been closer had not these renowned rallyists been hampered by a broken seat. No matter, Porsche had turned it up to 11.

"Win a big race in a car that looks like a road car and it's good PR," says van Lennep. "The locals liked to have an Italian car winning, of course, but they were pleased for us. OK maybe not completely. But, yes, they were excited. If you win the last Targa Florio - and I have been five or six times to Sicily in the last 50 years - you are a hero there. The older people know - the latest generation doesn't know so much

**"The locals liked to have an Italian car winning but they were excited for us"**

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about the Targa – but even today if you stop in a town square to have something to eat and drink somebody will recognise you: ‘Gijs!’ In no time at all 200 people will come from everywhere. It’s very nice.

“You can win Le Mans – I did twice – but if you win the Targa Florio, especially the last one, for me it is the better achievement, even though Le Mans is the bigger, more important race.”

It was hoped that the CSI meeting scheduled for Indianapolis might save the Targa Florio; there was talk of a new purpose-built track. Instead, unable to meet new mandatory safety requirements, the

Piccolo delle Madonie circuit was stripped of the World Sports Car Championship status that it had held for almost 20 years. The deaths of British privateer driver Charles Blyth in 1973, whose Fulvia collided with a Fiat towing another competitor’s 911S during unofficial practice – Merzario was one of the first on the scene of the accident – and of a spectator mowed down by an Italian-driven Renault-Alpine had in truth ended any hope of a reprieve.

Remarkably, given the race’s brutal nature, just nine people were killed across its 61 runnings from 1906: five drivers and a riding mechanic plus three spectators. 📍

## Friends reunited

The day van Lennep and R6 returned to Sicily

What do you do if you have just finished restoring one of the most important Porsches ever to turn a wheel, back to the spec in which it achieved its most enduring victory? If you are Lee Maxted-Page, founder of the eponymous Porsche specialist, you put the car on a lowloader and return it to the scene of its triumph.

“We thought it would be rude not to,” says Lee of his decision to ship the Porsche 911 RSR (known as R6), from the company HQ in Essex to Sicily. “We just rocked up with the car – it wasn’t road registered – and we also brought Gijs van Lennep with us. It was a very cool day. At one point the police turned up and asked us what we were doing, but when we explained that this was the car that won the last Targa Florio they said, ‘Fine!’”

Maxted-Page spent months restoring the car back to its Targa Florio specification after it had been rediscovered in the US. You can read about the project as it got underway in the May 2018 edition of *Motor Sport*. The finished car is a remarkable tribute to van Lennep’s victory: “We got Norbert Singer’s race notes from the factory and returned the car back to the very same set-up it had in April 1973. Gijs couldn’t believe it – the gear ratios, everything, was as it was when he last drove it.”

The Maxted-Page team didn’t stick around too long in Sicily however: “After a while you got the feeling that you were being watched,” he says. “We didn’t want to outstay our welcome.”

The restored car’s latest outing was at the far less menacing Goodwood Members’ Meeting, which you can read about overleaf.





# I'll have a Martini – shaken and stirred

Racing driver and TV presenter **Karun Chandhok** takes the reins of the restored 1973 Targa titan

Growing up, I was never really someone excited by supercars or GT cars, apart from a Ferrari F40. My world revolved around Formula 1 and while the Indy 500 and Le Mans were on my radar, it was impossible to follow it living in India in the late 1980s or early 1990s. If I'm honest, I was also never a Porsche fan growing up and always thought the Ferraris had a magic that tugged at your soul in a way that a perfectly engineered German machine never could.

However, all this changed when three years ago I drove a 911 GT2 RS, GT3 RS and a Turbo S within three weeks at three different tracks. I suddenly was angry with myself for missing out and my mission has now been to try and experience more 911s from history and make up for lost time!

The team from Goodwood was kind enough to ask if I would like to drive a 911 RSR at this year's Members' Meeting. I obviously said yes but only later realised it was the 911 RSR – known to enthusiasts simply as 'R6'. This car won the last ever world championship Targa Florio in 1973 and the sister car won the Daytona 24 Hours earlier in the year against the

prototypes. Imagine if a current road car went to a round of the World Endurance Championship and beat all the prototypes outright. We would never imagine that happening, but that's exactly what happened at Daytona in '73.

It really was a bit odd sitting in the driver's seat as the pedals feel off-centre to the actual seat. I felt as if the lower half of my body was angled to the right but once you get moving, it's not even a consideration. What is slightly confusing is the gap between the brake and throttle pedals, which means that you can't really heel-and-toe on a downshift, but need to have your foot completely off the brake and double de-clutch with your left foot while giving it a good blip with your right one.

The steering wheel is much bigger than I imagined but the

**“The brakes on the R6 were excellent in terms of feel and retardation”**



bit that really wasn't comfortable was how much the gear lever moved. Considering the drivers in the '70s were in 24-hour races, it's clear that comfort was a lower priority!

When you fire the engine up, the magic truly begins. The sound of that gorgeous 2.8-litre engine is superb. Release the clutch and the raspy growl as you get towards the shift point at 8000rpm is absolutely brilliant and epitomises everything that a burly 1970s sports car should sound like. The driveability of the engine is exactly what you would imagine from a Porsche. There are no real dips in the torque curve, nothing unpredictable in terms of surges of power when you're looking for traction coming out of a corner and just usable power whenever you want it.

The chassis balance felt like it ticked every box that you expect from a 911. I've always considered the confidence

inspiring neutral chassis balance to be a signature trait of the Porsches much more than their Italian competitors or the McLarens. Driving the R6, you really understand that this focus on creating a well-balanced car is something that runs deeply in the DNA of the 911 going back more than 50 years.

What is different is that a car from the 1970s is a good chunk lighter than anything that comes out of Weissach these days. That is no reflection on Porsche, but just a simple fact across the entire automotive industry which produces bigger and heavier cars these days to meet the safety norms as much as consumer wants.

This makes the R6 light and responsive and great fun to drive. The brakes on the car were excellent both in terms of feel and retardation. Under braking, the car pitches just the right amount to create the weight transfer you need to get



Swapping the Florio for the flora of Goodwood's Members' Meeting. Chandhok gets to grips with the 911 RSR



the nose into the apex without any instability on the rear, which is so important with a rear-engined car. If you have any movement on the rear under braking, the mass of the engine would make it harder to manage, but this isn't even a consideration.

Once you come off the brakes and get to the apex the car gives you a lot of confidence to carry the momentum and pick up the power early. This balance must have been so useful on events like the Targa with high speeds on the narrow, winding and often dusty roads.

The car has been restored by Porsche specialist Maxted-Page and it has done a superb job. It's one thing to make it look right but mechanically it was perfect. Often when you drive the older cars, you get misfires or a long brake pedal or a clutch that's tricky to use, but clearly this rebuild has been a labour of love and the results show.

But a growing feeling was that it was trusting too much to luck.

"The spectators were right on the side of the road," says van Lennep. "Parked, sitting everywhere. They were so keen. But they were never crazy like a rally crowd. There was none of this dancing in the middle of the road. But what if you get a sudden flat or something breaks? One day someone was going to take out not one, but 10, 20, 30 people."

Targa struggled on as a national event for four more years, but the big names drifted away. When an Osella not prevented from running minus its rear bodywork and integral wing crashed into the crowd in 1977,

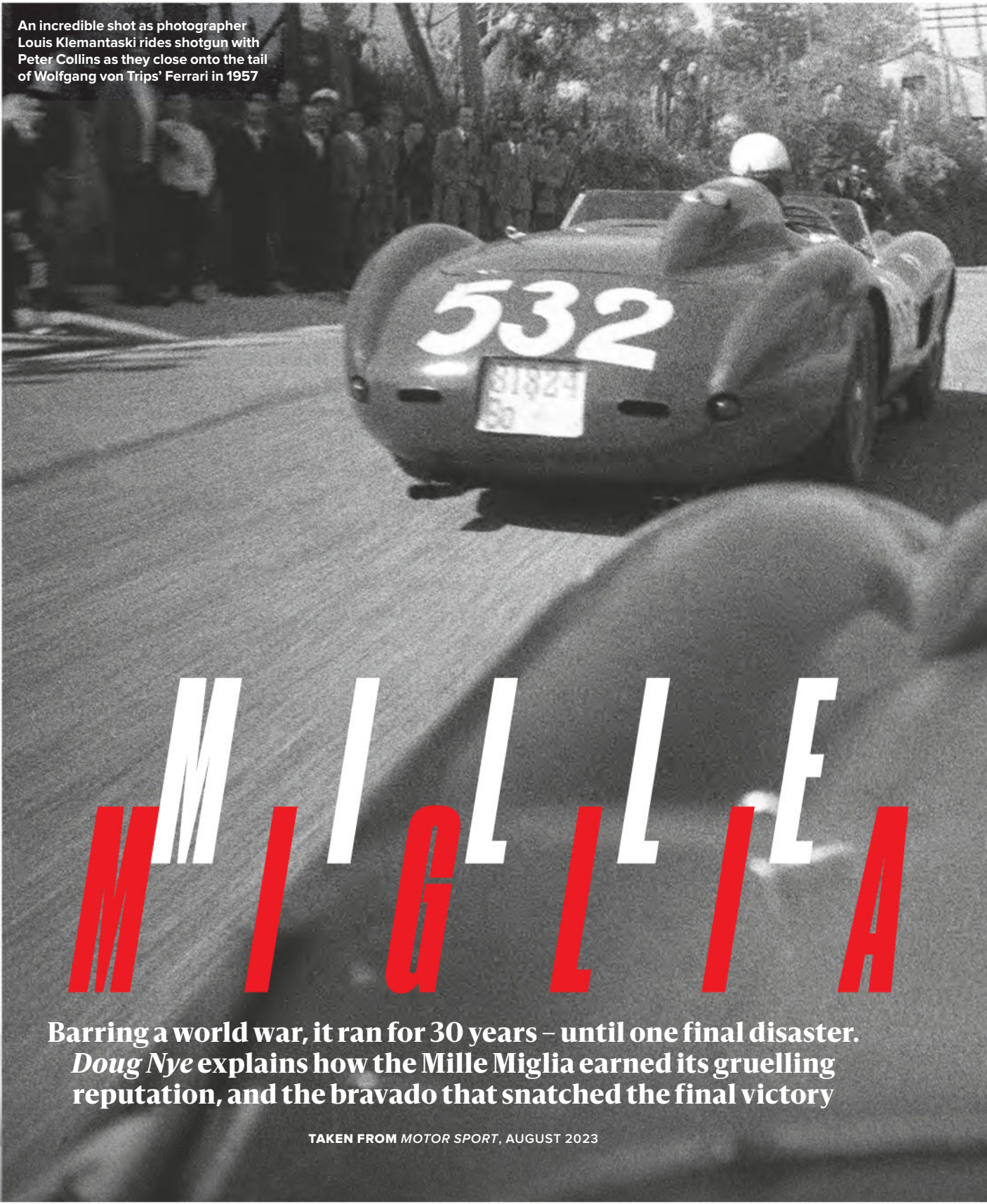
killing two and injuring several, the *Carabinieri* stepped in to stop the race after four laps. Even the locals knew this game was up. What replaced it was a stage rally, which from 1984 to 2011 would hold European Championship status.

"It was a good decision," says van Lennep. "But I would have gone back [in 1974]. Because it was not so fast: about 220kph [135mph] by the end of the straight. We did a 125 fastest lap in the race and, with stops for tyres and petrol, averaged 115. At Spa, we averaged 245. That was dangerous. I would never go back there. But the Targa? I'd go there today if I could. It's in my heart." ●



**"The crowd were right by the side of the road. What if something broke?"**





An incredible shot as photographer Louis Klemantaski rides shotgun with Peter Collins as they close onto the tail of Wolfgang von Trips' Ferrari in 1957

# MILLE MIGLIA

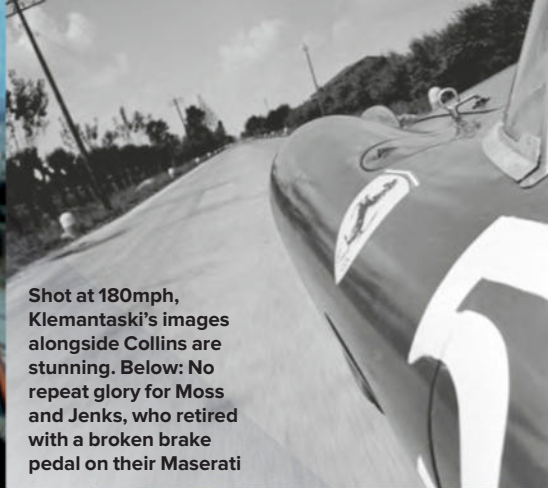
**Barring a world war, it ran for 30 years – until one final disaster. *Doug Nye* explains how the Mille Miglia earned its gruelling reputation, and the bravado that snatched the final victory**

TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, AUGUST 2023









Shot at 180mph, Klemantaski's images alongside Collins are stunning. Below: No repeat glory for Moss and Jenks, who retired with a broken brake pedal on their Maserati



Taruffi congratulated by his wife, Isabella, after his victory. Top: riding with Collins



It has been asked, what did the Romans ever do for us? Around 29BC Agrippa had the Roman mile standardised at 1620 yards. Two millennia later, Benito Mussolini's Fascists obsessed about establishing a prestigious new 'Roman Empire'. From 1933 fellow narcissist Adolf Hitler followed a similar route in German terms. For both, motor racing seemed an ideal stage upon which nation and national industry could strut.

While the French had firmly established their great *Grand Prix de l'ACF*, in 1906 - the first truly national motor race to join it as a perennial series was the *Gran Premio d'Italia*, first run near the Italian industrial city of Brescia in 1921. When the infant Gran Premio was moved to Milan's new Monza autodrome for 1922, proud Brescians felt slighted.

Counts Aymo Maggi and Franco Mazzotti combined with local sports manager Renzo Castagneto and motoring journalist Giovanni Canestrini to create a spectacular rival race from Brescia to Rome, then back to Brescia; close to 1000 Roman miles - literally 'Mille Miglia'. The new race was first run in 1927, rapidly becoming the most prestigious sports car event of them all, in period, exceeding even the four-years older Le Mans 24 Hours.

It ran annually from 1927-38, when an awful accident left 10 spectators dead and 26

injured. Not run in 1939, a diminished version re-emerged over nine laps of a 62-mile public road loop - Brescia-Mantua-Cremona-Brescia - in 1940. As early post-war as 1947, *il vero Mille Miglia* (round-Italy) was revived; Alfa Romeo winning for the 11th time. The new Ferrari marque won six more in 1948-53, before double defeat by Lancia, then Mercedes-Benz, 1954-55. In 1956, Ferrari made it seven.

And so to 1957. Ever since that year's 24th 'proper' Mille Miglia, it has been recalled more for a ghastly accident, than for its near fairy-tale result... Within 30 minutes of the winner crossing the Brescia finish line, news flashed in from Guidizzolo, 25 miles back. Ferrari's 28-year-old Spanish driver, the Marquis 'Fon' de Portago, his American passenger 40-year-old Ed Nelson and nine spectators - including five children - had been killed following an Englebert tyre burst at 150-160mph. Within days Italy's great road race was banned irrevocably. Bare months had passed since the death of Enzo Ferrari's son Dino. Now the still-grieving father found himself blamed for the catastrophe, vilified by the press, the Catholic church, the Pope himself.

But more happily, consider one man's racing story of that last ever 'proper' Mille Miglia. By 1957, 50-year-old Piero Taruffi -

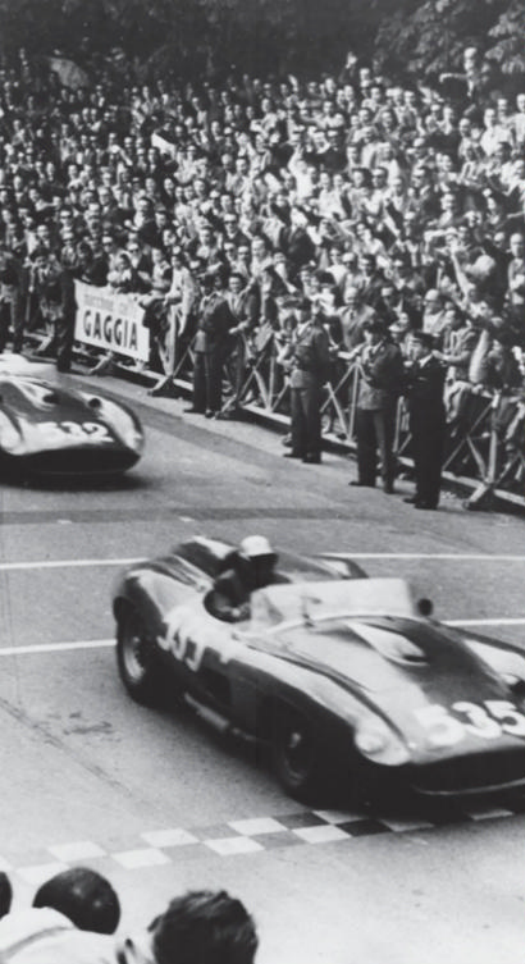
'The Silver Fox' - was an Italian racing icon. He had contested 15 Mille Miglie. He had longed to win, but third for Alfa Romeo in 1933 and fifth for Maserati '34 had been his best. Now Mr Ferrari had invited him to drive a works-entered 3.8-litre 4-cam V12-engined Ferrari 315 Sport - then to retire, alive...

Taruffi: "Luck had never come my way. Twice I crashed, with Lancia and Maserati, but three times, always in Ferrari, transmission failure. In 1957 I set out feeling marvellous. I knew the course by heart; my race number was '535' - for me lucky, because it added up to 13! Behind me was no one formidable except Moss [Maserati 450S]... but he retired shortly after the start. I caught [team-mate 'Taffy'] von Trips before Pescara, just as [team leader Peter] Collins completed his fill-up."

Taruffi attacked on the 405 miles from Pescara to Bologna, on challengingly twisty Appenine roads. He saw vivid black tyre marks from wheel-spin: "It could only be Collins, as I had already passed Trips. Absolutely determined to finish this time, I started the Pescara-Rome stretch with great care. To spare the transmission I used the high gears and avoided changing gear [for] corners.

"At Rome I had lost five minutes to Collins; I should have to hurry... On





Left: Taruffi leads von Trips across the line in a formation finish. Here: Ferrari team leader Eugenio Castellotti ahead of the 1955 race. He would be killed shortly before the 1957 edition

acceleration, the wheels bouncing off the ground, my rev counter often went past the limit. [But] by Viterbo 50 miles on I had not gained much; I realised that, even if I kept it up, I could not catch him and might well come unstuck...

"Between Florence and Bologna the transmission began to make a nasty noise. 'This is it', I thought. At the Bologna control it was raining. Ahead lay the long straight sections of the Via Emilia, slippery in places. Full throttle in fourth at 125mph [caused] wheel-spin. I had decided to stop, when I learned from Ferrari himself that 20 miles on the rain had stopped. When I heard Collins had transmission trouble I restarted [as] a loudspeaker announced von Trips was passing through Livergnano 10 miles behind. I tried to avoid gear-changing and to accelerate gently, easy because there are few corners from Bologna-Brescia. I kept down to 130mph.

"With less than 60 miles to go I began to glimpse a red car in the mirror... it caught

me... von Trips. I made a rapid calculation; we still had half an hour to go... I had a lead of three minutes. If von Trips could average 12-15mph more than me he would win, and as there were no team orders he might well do so. I sped up to 150-155mph and waved him down, he obliged for a bit. Finally he made overtaking signs and came past. We were just coming into Piadena. Because it formed part of a special timed section..." [for the Gran Premio Nuvolari, fastest time over 82 miles Cremona-Mantua-Brescia] "...I had made a special study there. After a long straight of about 2½ miles (the road weaved through Piadena)."

He knew that in one turn he could use a layby there - if vacant - to take a faster line. "On the apex of the bend there was a big house with a colonnaded portico. It seemed to block the view but... by looking through the outside arch one could glimpse the line [and] gain time by using the lay-by [beyond]. About 450 yards, another 'blind' left-hander about 10mph faster... the same with the next

bend [then] straight for more than three miles. As we approached Piadena, Trips, who had been driving hard to shake me off, was about 200 yards ahead... about 100 yards short of the esses he... braked. I realised I could pass. I... aimed left and across the layby. Looking through the portico the road was clear. I lifted very slightly, 150 yards and accelerated again at 50 yards. From there I did not lift at all - Trips was only a few yards ahead... I was able to pass him on the run out. In those few yards I had not only wiped out Trips' lead, but also given him the impression I was the better driver... I signed to take it easy, and he very sportingly did so. I did not know it yet, but those few bends had set the seal on my victory, the last and most coveted win of my life..."

At the finish line Taruffi and Trips took the flag in line astern. 'The Silver Fox' was engulfed. His wife Isabella embraced him. He gasped how wonderful it was to have finished for once. "But you've won, darling! You've won!". Taruffi: "Not believing, I made her repeat it again and again... Collins, after leading for most of the race, had blown up 125 miles from the finish."

And the great Piero Taruffi then began his long, much-respected, retirement, winner of the last Mille Miglia. It was fitting. Born and bred, he was a Roman. ◻

**"Those few bends had sealed my victory, most coveted of my life"**



# THE GODFATHERS OF MOTORCYCLE RACING

**As MV Agusta prepares to return to mainstream motorcycle racing, we reflect on Count Domenico Agusta. He built one of the great grand prix teams of the 1960s and 1970s, but behind the scenes his family also had a darker side**

**WORDS MAT OXLEY / TAKEN FROM *MOTOR SPORT*, SEPTEMBER 2018**









Agusta won its last grand prix race in August 1976, when Giacomo Agostini rode to victory in the West German 500cc Grand Prix at the Nürburgring. Yet despite being out of grand prix racing for the past four decades the Italian marque still ranks as motorcycling's fourth most successful constructor, behind Honda, Yamaha and fellow Italian brand Aprilia.

This statistic gives some measure of the stature of MV Agusta, a name that once resonated in the world of motorcycling as Ferrari still does in the car world. Between 1952 and 1976 MV Agusta took 275 grand prix victories and 75 riders' and constructors' world championships across the 125, 250, 350 and 500cc categories. More than half of those race wins were achieved in the premier class, leading to a unique run of 17 consecutive 500cc riders' world titles; a record unthreatened even by Honda.

MV's roll call of riders reads like a who's who of motorcycling greats: Giacomo Agostini, Mike Hailwood, John Surtees, Phil Read, Les Graham, Carlo Ubbiali, Tarquinio Provini, Luigi Taveri and many more.

All these riders were the princes of Agusta, but they were as nothing to Count Domenico Agusta, the mysterious, aloof, domineering aristocrat who ran his racing business like a feudal empire. The story of the Count, his family and his motorcycles is a tale of glory, tragedy, controversy, chicanery and expensive legal proceedings; a kind of petrolhead's *Dynasty*. ◻



Count Domenico (second right) consults his riders during a post-practice debrief at Monza in September 1958. The riders are Tarquinio Provini, far left, Enzo Vezzani, in the cap, and Carlo Ubbiali









Left: The Agusta clan.  
Corrado, Domenico,  
Contessa Giuseppina,  
Vicenzo and Mario

It all began in the early years of the 20th century, when Count Giovanni Agusta left Sicily for northern Italy, where he built his first aircraft, the AG1, four years after the Wright brothers had made history in the US. Following the First World War the Count founded the Agusta aviation company, but died soon after, leaving eldest son Domenico in charge. When the Second World War ended, the new Count had a problem. The Paris Peace Treaty shrank the Italian air force, terminating Agusta's lucrative military aviation contracts, so he had to think quick to save his high-tech business and keep his employees in work.

At that time Italy needed cheap transport, so that's what Agusta provided: low-cost two-stroke motorcycles. Inevitably, it wasn't long before the company went racing to promote its products.

In 1948, Meccanica Verghera Agusta - based outside Milan - dipped its toes into the shallow end of the racing game with its

five-horsepower 123.5cc two-stroke of 1948. The bike was good enough to win that year's Italian 125cc Grand Prix at Monza, only recently reopened following repairs to fix damage caused by a VE Day parade of Allied armour.

However, by the following summer, MV's two-stroke had been overtaken by the four-strokes of Mondial, from Milan, and Moto Morini, from Bologna. By now, the Count was in his element in the racing world. He was a natural at scheming and wheeling and dealing. At the end of 1949 he signed two great engineering brains from Gilera, based in nearby Arcore. Italy's so-called Motor Valley was in full swing.

Piero Remor had designed the four-cylinder Gilera engine that dominated post-war grand prix racing. Arturo Magni was Gilera's chief mechanic, who would stay loyal to MV for the rest of his life.

The Count had yet to win a world championship in any class, but already had his eyes set on the greatest prize of them

all, the class of kings, where Gilera's mighty four-cylinder 500 did battle with Norton singles and AJS twins. The Count's first 500 - a Gilera clone - made its race debut at Spa-Francorchamps in July 1949, just six months after Remor had put pen to paper in MV's Cascina Costa race shop.

Two years later the Count sealed the biggest deal of his life. This new contract had nothing to do with racing but would bankroll his competition team and make racing history for the next quarter of a century. In 1952 Agusta aviation started building helicopters under licence to American manufacturer Bell. Hugely profitable contracts with the Italian navy, the Shah of Iran's air force and other dubious militaries once again became fundamental to the Count's business. Although MV Agusta continued to sell small numbers of exotic road bikes, from this moment on racing was a hobby for Count Domenico. Helicopters made him a fortune, which he spent on racing. 🍷

## "Iran's air force and other dubious militaries became fundamental to the Count's business"



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John Surtees flies on the Isle of Man TT in 1956. He won the Senior race on MV's 500 with an average speed of 96.57mph



Franco Bertacchini leads  
Agusta's 500cc four-cylinder  
brigade at Cesenatico in 1951.  
Below: John Surtees puts pen  
to paper as Count Domenico  
Agusta leers over him



Aviation technology also served him well on the racetrack. His grand prix bikes were constructed using the same high-tech casting, forging and machining techniques used in the manufacture of his helicopters.

In the autumn of 1950, Agusta signed Les Graham, the 1949 500cc world champion and a decorated Lancaster bomber pilot. Graham was very technically minded and was charged with knocking MV's cumbersome and troublesome 500 four into shape. Although the Count was something of a control freak, he realised he needed help. Graham put his many years of racing knowhow to work, reducing the four's cylinder bore to cure piston failures and improving handling by reworking the chassis and replacing the shaft drive with chain drive. The pair became good friends, Graham's family setting up home in the Count's holiday villa on Lake Lugano, which became known as Casa Gram.

In September 1952 Graham made Agusta the happiest man alive by winning MV's first 500cc Grand Prix, at Monza, beating Gilera's Umberto Masetti by 58 seconds. Giuseppe Commendatore Gilera was so incensed that he protested, claiming MV's engine was oversized. It wasn't.

Sadly, this chapter of the story didn't end well. Graham was killed during the 1953 Isle of Man Senior TT, when Agusta's 500 threw him off at the bottom of Bray Hill. Less than two years later talented Rhodesian Ray Amm lost his life during his MV debut at Imola. The Count's motorcycles by now were getting a bad reputation.

John Surtees was therefore a brave man when he travelled to Cascina Costa in October 1955. "After Ray was killed, they came to me and said, 'look, we want you to join us'," Surtees recalled of the visit. "I said, 'I'd like to try the bike first'."

Surtees duly tested the MV and signed a contract with the Count, but not before he had been given the onceover by the

family matriarch. Giovanni's widow, Giuseppina, visited the Count's office dressed in mourner's black to assess the young Briton from behind her veil. Asked many years later if the family's way of doing business was like something out of *The Godfather*, Surtees replied: "perhaps it's the Italian way".

Surtees carried on from where Graham had left off, utilising his Norton expertise to further refine the MV's handling. The very next year he won the Count his first 500cc world championship, the first of seven 350 and 500 titles. However, Surtees was never friendly with his new master.

"He always wanted to create an aura around himself - everything he did was about simply increasing his social standing," said Surtees. "He seemed to enjoy making things difficult for you. When the MV 500 really needed a new frame the only way I could raise the problem with him was by booking myself onto the same train travelling back from Spa to Milan!"

Indeed the Count's truculence proved the final straw that eventually pushed Surtees into quitting motorcycles entirely and instead moving into car racing. History is often made in strange ways. ●







Giacomo Agostini on a 350cc MV3 at the 1970 350cc Isle of Man TT. Agostini called the IoM TT course "the best in the world" – but finally refused to race there

**T**he next step in MV Agusta's conquest of the racing world came at the end of the 1957 season. And once again it was the Count planning and plotting. The European motorcycle industry had boomed in the post-war years but fell into a slump in the late 1950s as cheap scooters and small-capacity cars came onto the market. Thus all the Italian motorcycle factories - Gilera, Moto Guzzi, Mondial and MV Agusta - agreed to withdraw from racing. Then the Count changed his mind - MV would race alone.

For the next eight seasons MV was the only name in 500cc grand prix racing, the factory lording it over penniless privateers, who worked their way around Europe, struggling to put fuel in their Nortons and food in their stomachs.

Aussie Jack Ahearn was one of those skint racing gypsies. "I got tired of the bloody MV riders," he said. "God, you'd swear there was no one else in the world racing a motorbike. All the news was always about MV - but there were 30 other blokes racing who never got a mention."

The Count couldn't care less that MV had no competition. He was in his element, playing the Godfather of the paddock, effectively deciding who would be crowned 500cc world champion at the end of each

season. Even his best riders were never allowed to forget who was in charge. Giacomo Agostini, who joined the firm in 1965, still remembers his first meeting with the Count.

"I had an appointment to see him at 4:30pm," Agostini recalls. "I wait outside his office and finally he see me at 10:30. When I go inside it's a big room, very dark, all the trophies on the wall. His desk is high up, like an altar in a church, and he's there with a small light on his desk."

"Who you are?"

"I'm Agostini."

"What do you want?"

"I want to race with your bike."

"But my bike is a difficult bike. Can you ride my bike?"

The Count asked his secretary to book Monza for a private test session the following day. Agostini arrived to see a line of traffic cones laid out stretching down the start-finish straight.


"It costs a lot of money to book Monza, but he wants me to ride slalom like I used to do in gymkhanas when I was a boy, and I am already three-times Italian champion! The Count, he liked to play with you in that way."

MV finally got some serious competition when Honda entered the 500

class in 1966. Surely, the Japanese factory would win the day, as it had already done in the 125, 250 and 350cc categories?

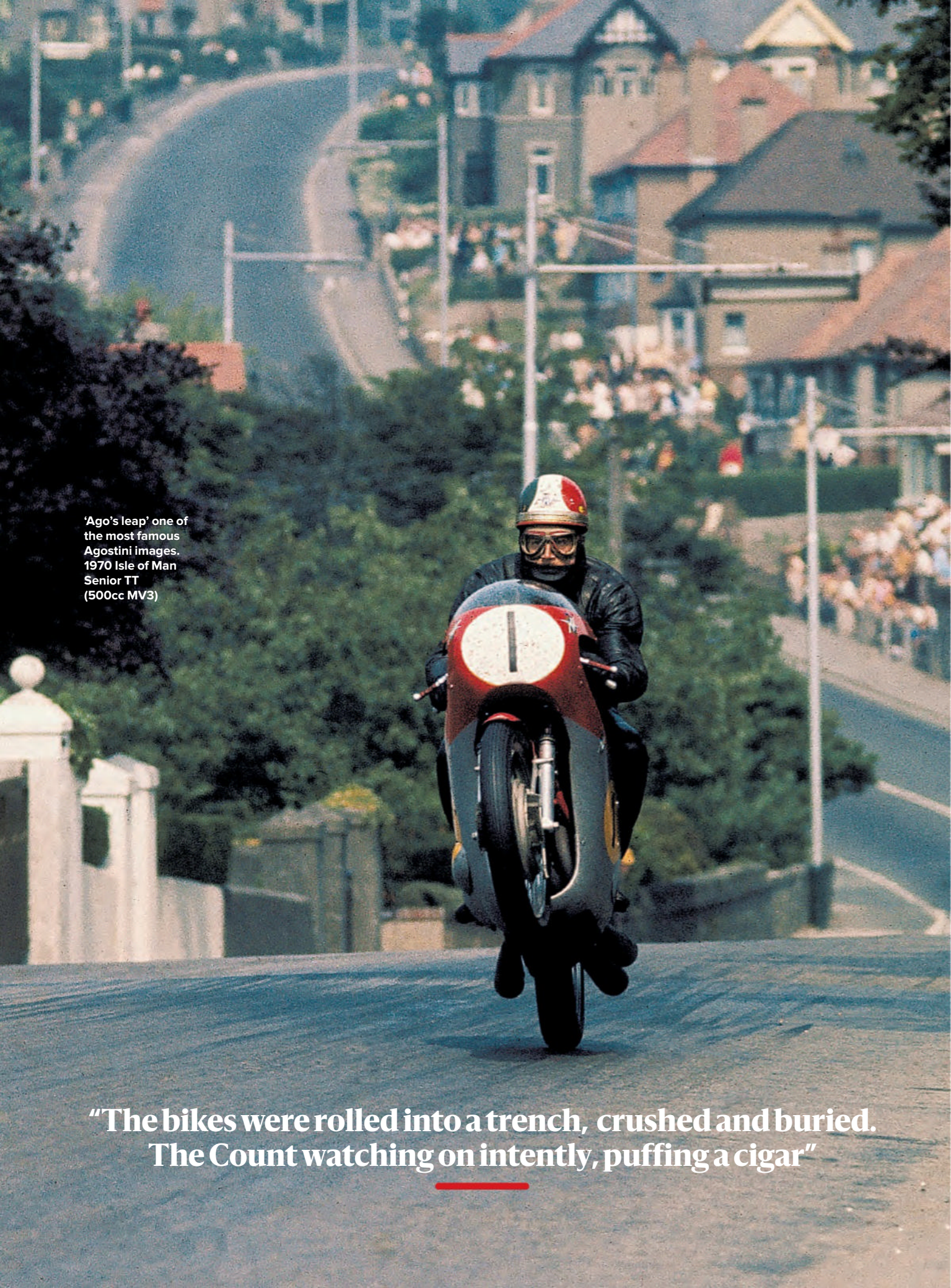
The 1966 and 1967 seasons were surely the Count's proudest. Agostini was equipped with the latest iteration of MV's ageing four-cylinder 500. First time out, Honda beat MV by 26 seconds.

The Count's reply was as brilliant as it was unexpected. At round two the Italians turned up with a 420cc version of their three-cylinder 350, which was soon further enlarged to 489cc. The triple handled better than the Honda, allowing Ago to beat Honda's Hailwood to the title; a feat he repeated the following season, after which Honda withdrew, once more leaving MV Agusta in glorious isolation.

Again, the Count's bikes became unbeatable. No surprise then that he had a paranoia of his technology being stolen, so he preferred to destroy most of his machines at the end of each season. Legend has it that the motorcycles were taken to a secluded part of the Agusta facility, where a large trench had been excavated by a digger. The bikes were rolled into the trench, where they were crushed and buried; all the while the Count watching intently, puffing on a cigar. 







'Ago's leap' one of the most famous Agostini images. 1970 Isle of Man Senior TT (500cc MV3)

**"The bikes were rolled into a trench, crushed and buried.  
The Count watching on intently, puffing a cigar"**

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**T**his fabulous, romantic and slightly creepy era ended in 1971 when the Count died of a heart attack. Younger brother Corrado took over the helicopter and motorcycle business, while Corrado's son, Rocky, inherited the family title and took charge of the race team. Count Rocky was very different from his uncle. Young and flamboyant, he signed Phil Read to partner Agostini, hardly a match made in heaven, because the Briton and Italian weren't the best of friends.

"Rocky liked to be big boss: 'I'm Count Agusta, the team owner', I think he was jealous of me," says Ago. "Phil wanted to be friends with him, so always told him the bikes were fantastic, even if they weren't."

MV Agusta's four-strokes had finally met their match in Japan's burgeoning two-stroke technology. Agostini could see that two-strokes were the future, so he defected to Yamaha. He won the two-stroke's first 500cc title in 1975, before briefly returning to MV the following year. There was talk of a new MV boxer-four for the 1977 season, but it was obvious that the four-stroke's reign was already over. MV's empire was crumbling and the pressure showed, especially with Count Rocky. During a row in an Italian nightclub he threatened Yamaha's team manager with a gun. He was disarmed and the incident hushed up.

Although the race team shut up shop at the end of 1976 and MV sold its last road bike in 1980, Agusta aviation was still growing. In the 1970s the company started building its own helicopters, including the hugely successful A109. In 2000 Agusta merged with the British Westland company to become AgustaWestland.

Rocky dabbled in car racing and lived a playboy lifestyle, chartering a plane to fly 68 guests across the Atlantic for his wedding in Washington DC; or as one reporter noted, "68 beautiful people attached to 136 beautiful kneecaps".

Corrado died in 1981, triggering a bitter and costly dispute over his inheritance between Rocky and his stepmother, Francesca Vacca Agusta, Corrado's second wife. In the 1990s the Count moved to South

Africa, where he invested in vineyards and luxury tourism. There he became close friends with fugitive mafioso Vito Palazzolo, who had jumped jail in Switzerland to make a new life in Africa, where he dealt in gold, diamonds and uranium. His dealings with Agusta and African businessmen were revealed in the Panama Papers. Palazzolo was extradited to Italy, where he remains in a high-security prison.

Meanwhile Corrado's widow was accused of laundering bribes of £10 million for former Italian prime minister Bettino Craxi. The Countess fled to Mexico but was extradited to Italy where she was convicted and given a suspended sentence. In January 2001 she disappeared from the family's Portofino mansion, formerly owned by Lord Carnarvon, who had helped discover Tutankhamun's tomb in Egypt and died shortly after, prompting the legend of the Mummy's Curse. Francesca's body was

found several days later, washed up on the French coast. Homicide was suspected, but the riddle of her death remains unsolved.

Rocky also had his troubles with the law; in South Africa he was convicted of bribing government officials. He died earlier this year in St Moritz, Switzerland, following a long illness. His passing was significant, because he was the last member of the Agusta dynasty to be involved with its legendary motorcycle racing operation.

The Agusta name may have been tarnished by scandal, but the motorcycle brand has returned from the dead. In the 1990s Claudio and Gianfranco Castiglione, who had earlier saved Ducati from collapse, bought the MV name and commenced production of a new range of superbikes. However, the company has changed hands frequently, with names like Mercedes-AMG and Harley-Davidson taking either full- or part-ownership. MV's most famous customer is Lewis Hamilton, who has owned several MV superbikes and has put his name to a limited-edition machine, the F4 LH44.

MV Agusta is now back in the ownership of the Castiglione family, run by Claudio's son, Giovanni. He recently announced that MV will return to grand prix racing next year, albeit in Moto2, requiring his machine to use a spec Triumph engine. ●



Lewis Hamilton on his MV Agusta Custom Dragster RR LH44 Superbike

**"Count Rocky became friends with Vito Palazzolo, who dealt in gold, diamonds and uranium"**



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# 1953

## GRAND PRIX OF FRANCE

Maserati's early talisman, Juan Manuel Fangio, in action aboard his A6GCM Formula 2 car at Reims in 1953. The Argentinian would fall just one second shy of victory (Mike Hawthorn won in his Ferrari) but this would be the first of Fangio's three second places. His win in the final race of the season at Monza signalled that times were changing in the drivers' championship. Ascari won this one, but Fangio would go on to become unbeatable for the following four years.





# 100 YEARS OF MASERATI



**It seems so improbable: a century has elapsed since Alfieri Maserati set up shop in Bologna, initially carrying out general engineering work and perfecting his own brand of spark plugs**

**WORDS** RICHARD HESELTINE / **TAKEN FROM** *MOTOR SPORT*, NOVEMBER 2014

Scroll forward to the present, and his surname is synonymous with exotic GTs and illustrious racing cars. Alfieri and his siblings forged a legend, one that cannot be distilled into an attention-grabbing soundbite. For all the trackside glory and showroom success, there have been just as many calamities, pratfalls and bankruptcy hearings. It's what makes the Maserati narrative so compelling: the soap opera boomerangs of serial ownership, Italy's political machinations and the pressure of outside forces have shaped one long fantastical yarn, one that is festooned with enthralling details.

As Maserati celebrates its 100th year, it is chasing new markets (think of a Modenese SUV, and then stop thinking) and German opposition in the premium saloon car sector. It craves big numbers and there is every possibility that it will give rivals a bloody nose. That said, the old guard is understandably concerned about Maserati's cross-pollination with 'lesser' brands, and with good reason, but Maserati has rarely been on a firmer footing in its entire existence.

Join *Motor Sport* for an A-Z tour - 100 years of a marque that captivates and infuriates in equal measure. ●





### A Alfieri, Giulio

This Parma-born engine designer and chassis engineer was once the heart of the competition department (above). Alfieri devised most of the great Maserati road and race engines prior to leaving for Lamborghini in the mid-70s (he helped turn the firm around with the Quattrovalvole V12). His bulging CV included the Tipo 61 'Birdcage', the V8 that powered the 450S sports-racer and the compact V6 inserted into cars such as the Merak and Citroën SM. He also had input into the V12 F1 engine employed by Cooper in 1966-67, and engineered the fabulous Bora supercar, if only in part.

### B Brothers

Officine Alfieri Maserati was founded on December 14, 1914 in Bologna, Italy by Alfieri Maserati, with brothers Ernesto and Ettore Maserati joining the firm at the end of WW1 (top). Bindo Maserati joined the company in 1932 following the death of Alfieri. The brothers

stayed on after the marque was acquired by Adolfo Orsi in 1937, under a 10-year contract, but their relationship with the new regime wasn't a happy one.

Ernesto, Ettore and Bindo left in 1947, setting up shop in a disused part of the original factory in their home town of Bologna to build small-capacity racing cars. Because Orsi owned the rights to their surname, they contrived the extravagant alias *Officina Specializzata per La Costruzione di Automobili - Fratelli Maserati SpA*. Or OSCA to its friends. With Ernesto as designer, Ettore the artisan and Bindo running the show, the trio ushered in their first model, the MT4 (Maserati Type 4), in 1948. OSCA was soon at the forefront in the 1100cc tiddler class, often in contention for outright wins, too. After dabbling in Formula 1 (and F2), the brothers wisely stuck to sports cars, the highlight being victory in the 1954 Sebring 12 Hours for Stirling Moss and Bill Lloyd aboard their MT4 1450.

### C Chrysler

Much has been made of Fiat's Chrysler and Maserati brands sharing DNA, not least within the motoring media. There is every reason to worry: marque types remain traumatised by the last time Chrysler and Maserati collaborated; one that remains a lesson from history. The risible Chrysler TC by Maserati (to give the car its full title) married a modified Chrysler K-car platform with assorted four- and six-cylinder engines, only one of which was made by Maserati. Production began in 1989 and ended in '90. Shock. 🍷



## 1957 LE MANS

The four-cylinder 200SI (né 200S) was a successful production sports-racer, with 28 being made in two years from 1955. However, while Maserati endured a torrid showing in the 1957 Le Mans 24 Hours, the privateer 200SI of Léon Coulibeuf and José Behra (right) fared no better. The car dropped out after 136 laps with a fuel leak.





# 1934

## NICE GRAND PRIX

The major players lead the Nice Grand Prix, 1934. René Dreyfus (number 20, Bugatti 59), Achille Varzi (28, Alfa Romeo Tipo B P3) and Tazio Nuvolari (2, Maserati 8 CM). The three brands led the way during grand prix racing's early years. Varzi would win this one, from Philippe Étancelin's Maserati, with Nuvolari setting fastest lap.





# 1947

## JERSEY ROAD RACE

One of the lesser-remembered Formula 1 venues is Jersey and its 3.2-mile Saint Helier road circuit. It staged grands prix for four years between 1947-1950, then hosted one further sports car race in 1952. Louis Chiron stands over his 4CL ahead of the start, although the #7 Maserati in the distance driven by Reg Parnell would beat him to the flag. Maserati holds the lap record that will never be beaten – a 2m00.0s (96.00mph) – thanks to Luigi Villoresi in 1949.





**D de Tomaso, Alejandro** Middling racer, prolific car builder and canny (some might say Machiavellian) industrialist who bought Maserati in the mid-70s (*above*). He didn't use much of his own money, though. Instead, the Italian government provided backing to the Benelli motorcycle firm (which de Tomaso controlled), which in turn bought the firm and installed de Tomaso as its principal. Maserati subsequently opted for volume manufacture with the Biturbo, the marque's reputation taking a battering thereafter as warranty claims mounted up.

**E Emilia-Romagna** This region of northern Italy is home to Maserati and a certain other red-car maker. Oh, and let's not forget Lamborghini, Pagani, Ducati and countless specialist suppliers. It really is the country's 'motor valley'.

**F Fiat** De Tomaso sold out to Fiat in 1993, by which time Maserati was on its knees. Closer ties with Ferrari ensued, not least with sharing technology, but these have since loosened.

**G Grand Turismo** Few marques ever 'got' the gran turismo concept quite as completely. The firm has produced some of the great GT cars, be it the many variations of A6G, the 3500GT, 5000GT, Mistral, Sebring, Mexico, Khamzin and, of course, the mighty Ghibli.

**H Hug, Armand** This Swiss racer drove Maserati sports cars and single-seaters. He won the 1938 Bern Grand Prix aboard his privateer Maserati 4CM, which raised several eyebrows. He was awarded a works drive for the following year's German GP, only to crash a week earlier while practising for the Albi GP. The accident left him paralysed.

**I Indianapolis 500** Wilbur Shaw (*below*) claimed back-to-back wins at The Brickyard aboard an 8CTF in 1939-40. The 'Boyle Special' belonged to, cough, 'colourful' Chicago union leader, Michael Boyle (aka 'Umbrella Mike'). Shaw was leading the '41 event only for a broken wheel to deny him

a possible hat trick. The venue also lent its name to the Indy GT car from 1968.

**J Juan x2** Juan Manuel Fangio and the Maserati 250F are inextricably linked, El Maestro claiming a win for the model on its 1954 Argentinian Grand Prix debut, while also taking his fifth and final Formula 1 World Championship title in 1957 with the works team. It crowned his stop-start involvement with the marque, which stretched back to the late '40s. However, the factory team also folded in 1957. A deal with Argentina's Juan Perón government, for the supply of milling machines, resulted in a major cashflow crisis after the regime was deposed in 1955. Contracts counted for little (the same being true of a similar arrangement with the Spanish government), and Orsi was left with a gaping hole in his coffers. Maserati almost went to the wall as a consequence, but there was light at the end of the tunnel: the marque's first proper volume-built road car was about to come online. The Touring-styled 3500GT broke cover at the '57 Turin Motor Show and soon found custom. Without it, the marque would likely not have seen out the decade.

**K Kyalami** Maserati's swansong as a winner in Formula 1 was as engine supplier to Cooper. Pedro Rodríguez's 1967 South African GP win at Kyalami was also the last world championship-level triumph for the British constructor. The Kyalami name was also employed on an angular coupé from 1976. It was essentially a restyled De Tomaso Longchamp with Maserati running gear (and a much better car than that sounds). 🍷







# 1956

## MONACO GRAND PRIX

By the mid-1950s, Juan Manuel Fangio and Maserati were at the height of their powers, yet it wasn't all about the Argentine on the driving strength. Freshly signed from Mercedes, Stirling Moss upstaged Fangio at Monaco, sealing one of his two grand prix wins that would help him to second in the drivers' championship that year – an all-too familiar result.







# 1969

## MONACO GRAND PRIX

Maserati bowed out of Formula 1 in low-key style at the 1969 Monaco GP in May, the firm's 2983cc 'Tipo 10' V12 powering the Cooper T86B driven by Vic Elford. The supreme all-rounder steered Colin Crabbe's privateer entry to seventh place (out of only seven finishers). The race also marked Cooper's final appearance in a points-paying grand prix.



**L 'Lucky'** Lloyd 'Lucky' Casner's Team Camoradi maintained Maserati's standing as a player in top-flight sports car racing after the works team pulled out at the end of 1957. Stirling Moss and Dan Gurney claimed the 1960 Nürburgring 1000Kms aboard the team's Tipo 61, Casner teaming up with Masten Gregory to win in '61. The charismatic American's famous luck ran out when he crashed fatally during the 1965 Le Mans test weekend in John Simone's Tipo 151/3.

**M Monza** The Temple of Speed: scene of many a Maserati test session, racing success and media launch.

**N Nuvalari, Tazio** The 'Flying Mantuan' was a prolific winner for the works team in 1933-34. He also claimed his last major victory in the July 1946 Albi GP, at the wheel of a 4CL.

**O Orsi, Adolfo** This self-made industrialist's Gruppo Orsi empire encompassed numerous businesses that sustained the marque's involvement in top-flight motor sport. He bought the marque in 1937 and moved operations from Bologna to Modena.

**P Pininfarina** This Turin styling house has shaped Maseratis (A61500, Quattroporte V etc), but the 1954 A6GCS Berlinetta is arguably its greatest contribution to marque lore.

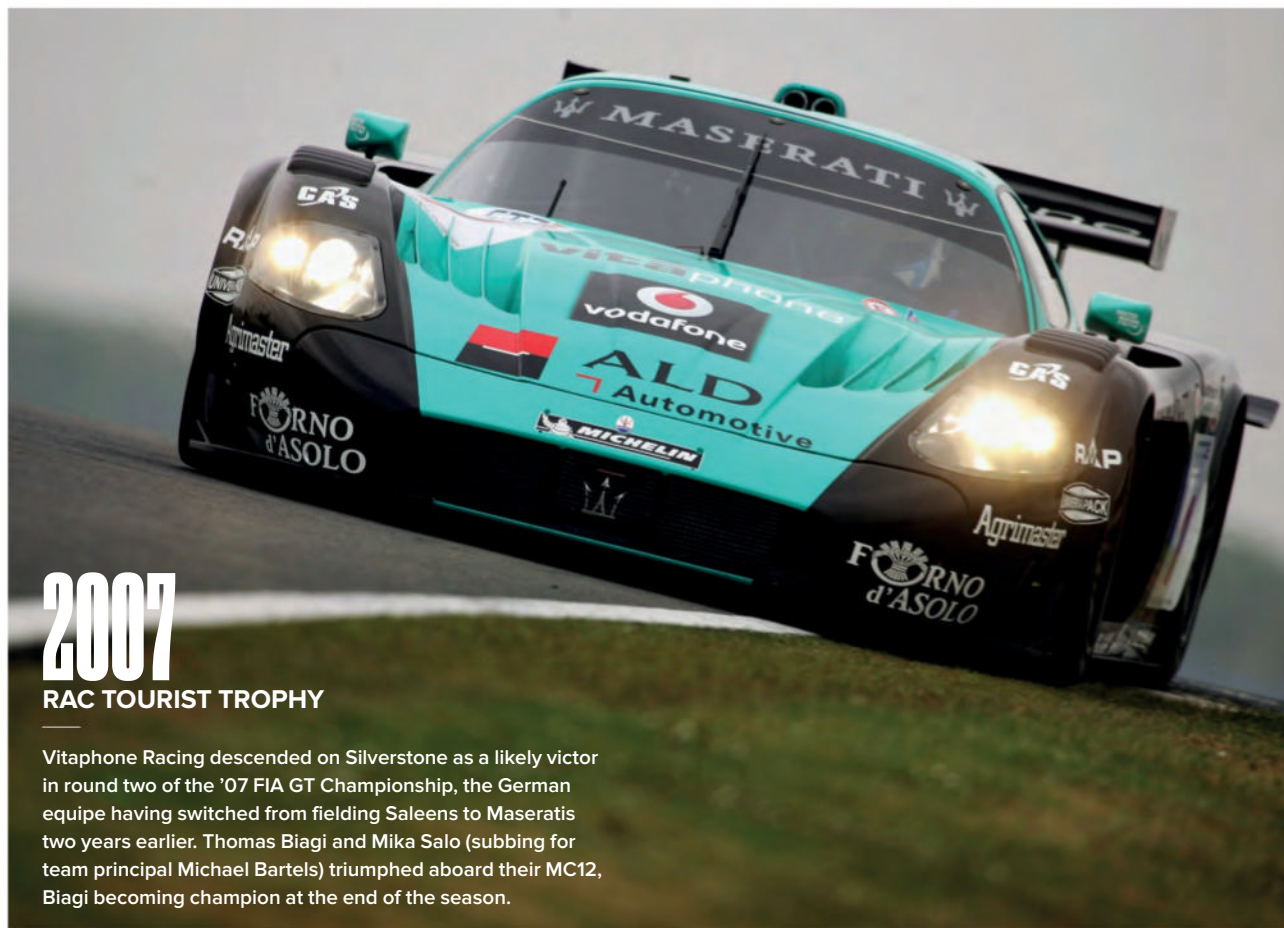
**Q Quattroporte** Maserati established the QP template with a V8-engined, Pietro Frua-styled super-saloon in 1963 (*above*), and subsequent generations have captivated in equal measure. More recently, the QP has become a successful - if unlikely - racer in the V8 Superstars series.

**R Racing return** Maserati returned to motor racing in an official capacity in late 2004, after 37 years away (*below*). Up to 2009 the Ferrari Enzo-based MC12 claimed 40 wins from 94 FIA GT race starts.

**S SM, Citroën** The alliance of Citroën and Maserati in 1968 led to arguably the greatest/worst GT car of its era; a masterpiece of French style, Italian design and French/Italian reliability. Its Alfieri-conceived V6 engine was also used in the Quattroporte II, Maserati Merak and Ligier JS2. ◉







# 2007

## RAC TOURIST TROPHY

Vitaphone Racing descended on Silverstone as a likely victor in round two of the '07 FIA GT Championship, the German equipe having switched from fielding Saleens to Maseratis two years earlier. Thomas Biagi and Mika Salo (subbing for team principal Michael Bartels) triumphed aboard their MC12, Biagi becoming champion at the end of the season.

### T Tipo 26

The first Maserati car and also its first race winner: it claimed ninth overall and class honours on its competition debut, the 1926 Targa Florio, with Alfieri Maserati at the wheel. His riding mechanic, Guarino Bertocchi, remained with the firm for 50 years. He tested every road and racing car to emerge from the mid-20s to the 1970s - often on the public roads!

### U USA

Aside from Maserati's Indy wins, the marque also claimed a 1-2 finish in the 1957 Sebring 12 Hours. And that is before you factor in everything from Vanderbilt Cup entries to SCCA triumphs.

### V Villoresi, Luigi

Something of a Maserati constant, 'Gigi' became a works driver in 1938, and a winner the following season, only for World War II to interrupt his career. He returned to the marque in the immediate post-war years, but then jumped ship to

arch-rival Ferrari. He rounded out his front-line career with a return to Maserati, racing a works 250F at world championship level despite being well into his forties. In addition to his many wins in single-seaters, Villoresi also claimed sports car honours for the marque on the Targa Florio in 1939-40.

### W Water

Maserati also built race engines for hydroplanes, the 450S unit for example enjoying a lengthy career in Europe and the US long after the car itself had faded from memory. Briggs Cunningham was one such entrant.

### X X-Files

There have been countless experimental cars and prototypes that were rarely seen in public, if at all. Among the most tantalising of the last 30 years was the mid-engined Chubasco from 1990 which remained a one-off (and non-functioning) supercar.

### Y Putting the 'y' in 'spyder'

Maserati was the first Italian manufacturer to switch from 'Spider' to 'Spyder' for an open production car. We're still annoyed.

### Z Zagato

This most characterful of Italian coachbuilders features prominently in Maserati lore. From its rakish form for the 16-cylinder Tipo V4 of 1930 to the GS Zagato Coupé of 2007, it has produced umpteen memorable outlines. And while a variety of *carrozzerie* left their mark on the sublime A6G54 of the early to mid-50s, Zagato's offering was beyond masterful. Typically, it went its own way and shaped a series of pared-back road racers rather than tinsel-laden flights of fantasy. They still stack up as landmark Maseratis. By contrast, the less said about the Frank Costin-conceived, Zagato-interpreted 450S of 1957 the better. As for the Zagato-assembled Biturbo Spyder - well, it was only a subcontractor...





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