

XXIST

BRESCIA, May 3rd.

FOR a whole week before the XXIst Mille Miglia Northern Italy was under a continuous deluge of rain and some of the enthusiasm in Brescia was lacking a little, but, having seen a Mille Miglia under perfect conditions, this slight lessening in the tumult made life easier. With an entry of 475 cars, ranging from 2 c.v. Citroëns to 4.9-litre Ferraris, it can be appreciated that competition in the various classes was enormous. Naturally, the battle for the Franco Mazzotti Cup, the prize for the outright winner, was confined to the sports class for cars over 2,000 c.c., and this year the chief protagonists were Ferrari and Lancia. Both factories threw in all they had, the Rampant Horse being upheld by Farina, Gianni Marzotto, Paulo Marzotto and Maglioli, all with open two-seater 4.9-litre Ferraris. This year, for the first time in the Mille Miglia, any sports car over 750 c.c. capacity was not obliged to carry a passenger, but of the big Ferraris only Maglioli went solo, his car having a fairing over the passenger's seat and a large streamlined headrest behind his own seat. There was also a curious multitude of aero-screens and wind-deflectors, and his car looked far more purposeful than many Grand Prix cars. Piero Scotti was lent an open two-seater 4½-litre Ferrari by the factory and Biondetti had a similar 3-litre. The Lancia team consisted of four 3.3-litre cars, similar to those used in the Pan-American and the recent Sebring race; all were running without passengers, and also looked very fine Grand Prix cars. They were driven by Ascari, Taruffi, Castellotti and Valenzano, while a fifth car was brought along to the scrutineering on the Friday before the race. This one should have been driven by Villoresi, but he was still insufficiently recovered from the accident he met with during some practising when his mechanic was driving. Although the whole Lancia team were running as single-seaters they still had to have provision for carrying a passenger and at the scrutineering Renzo Castegnato, the organiser, insisted on seeing a car with the cockpit cover removed and a mechanic and driver sitting in the car. It was perfectly satisfactory and, amid cheers and laughter, he clasped young Gianni Lancia warmly by the hand and everyone was happy. In addition to the four open cars Lancias entered Piodi and Anselmi with special 2½-litre Aurelias, the former in one of the red cars used last year at Monza and the latter with a blue and cream one as used by Claes to win the Liège-Rome-Liège Rally.

Supporting the factory Ferraris were an impressive team entered by the Scuderia Guastalia, under the organisation of Franco Cornacchia, the Milan Ferrari agent. Musitelli and Pezzoli had open two-seaters and Signorina Piazza and Gerini had Farina coupés, all on the new 3-litre V12 chassis. A lone Maserati from the factory was in this class, being a hurriedly prepared two-seater version of the new 2½-litre Formula I car, with de Dion rear axle and everything. This was driven by Mantovani. Another lone entry was a 3-litre Gordini driven by Bordoni under the watchful eye of the "sorcerer" himself, but being painted red and run as an Italian entry.

Against all these cars were pitted a collection of English cars led by the two workmanlike 3-litre Aston Martins driven by Parnell and Collins. They had been practising and testing for some weeks beforehand and made worthy representatives of the Union Jack. They were not modified in any serious way from last year's cars, being the DB3S models, now with outboard rear brakes, and having nicely moulded Perspex windshields and the passenger's side of the cockpit enclosed as much as space would permit. There was a privately entered DB3 Aston Martin belonging to Meyer, the coupé body having been lowered and smoothed out since last year, and a lone H.W.M. driven by Abecassis, this car being fitted with a Jaguar XK engine and gearbox, the chassis being comprised of Formula II parts, having transverse leaf-spring and wishbone i.f.s. and de Dion rear axle on torsion-bars. Also in this formidable class were the Austin-Healey team; they had entered for the Gran Turismo class with three cars built around the production two-seater body but fitted with bolted-on "hard-tops" of the type produced in quantity for

Victory for Ascari and Lancia Under Poor Conditions

normal Jaguars, M.G.s and suchlike. None of the cars were accepted by the scrutineers as regulations for the Gran Turismo class were very strict and every detail had to conform with a catalogue sent in with the entry. It was this paperwork detail that Healeys had overlooked and no one was prepared to believe that the cars were standard production models. As a result they were transferred to the "big boys" class and those of Macklin and Chiron were run as single-seaters with cockpit fairings and small Perspex windcreens, while Wisdom took a passenger. All three cars were fitted with Dunlop disc brakes and new Dunlop magnesium disc wheels that were located by five dowel pins, the wheel being held in place by a three-eared knock-off hub nut. The 2.6-litre Austin engines were the normal power plants, fitted with twin S.U. carburettors fed by an air-duct from the front of the car, and a double-pipe exhaust system ejected from the side of the cars just in front of the off-side rear wheel. Four-speed gearboxes, manufactured for Austins by David Brown, were fitted, with central remote control. The whole of the boot was occupied by a 32-gallon fuel tank, with a large filler protruding through the lid. Considering that the cars had been prepared from standard production models they looked most effective but were severely handicapped by being a half litre down on the average of competitors in the class.

From the foregoing imposing list of cars and drivers the winner of the XXIst Mille Miglia was expected and Maglioli and Taruffi were hot favourites. Hard on the heels of the big class was the 1,500 to 2,000-c.c. class and here the battle for honours was between Maserati and Ferrari. Maseratis were running one official car, but as the 2-litre sports car is now being produced in numbers the others were prepared by the factory for the new owners, some of them being delivered just before the race. Musso was the number one driver and other Maseratis were driven by Mancini (with the special Vignale-bodied car), Venezian, Scarlatti, Bertoni, Bosisio and Cacciari; the last five being in standard production two-seater A6G models. Strong opposition to the six-cylinder cars was coming from Ferrari with four Mondial models, the new four-cylinder 2-litre on a chassis developed from the Formula II cars, with de Dion axle and four-speed gearboxes. Sterzi, Neri and Vittorio Marzotto had factory cars, the last named having the prototype with normal rear axle. A fourth Mondial was that of Cortese, entered by the Scuderia Guastalia and both his and Marzotto's car were running without passengers and with cockpit fairings and small aero-screens, the latter also having a head-fairing. Sanesi had a 1,900C Alfa-Romeo, nicely described as a Supersprint model, meaning that it looked standard but wasn't quite. A Swedish driver, Nottorp, was running a brand new Frazer-Nash Le Mans coupé, painted Italian red, and Piotti had a 2-litre Osca, being similar to the normal sports Osca but fitted with a six-cylinder Formula II type of engine. Looking rather lost amongst all this fierce machinery were three TR2 Triumphs driven by Gatsonides, Stoddart, and the third shared by Brooke and Fairman.

The 750-1,500-c.c. class, which in all such events is usually the playground of Osca, was this time being severely challenged by the young German driver Hermann with a factory Porsche. This was the open two-seater with the four-overhead camshaft engine fitted



SPORTS CAR!—Maglioli in one of the 4.9-litre V12 Ferraris in the Mille Miglia. He has just mounted the starting ramp and, as his number indicates, the time is approaching 5.45 a.m. These cars have a similar chassis layout to old 4½-litre G.P. Formula I cars.



in front of the rear axle. Cabianca was upholding Osca fortunes with some private owners backing him up. The rest of the 475 entries came from a mass of tiny sports cars in the up-to-750-c.c. class, with a good entry of French teams pitting open two-seater D.B. Panhards and Renaults against local drivers with Fiat Specials, Stanguellinis, Giaurs, Siatas and one-off specials. Naturally a big proportion of the entries was made up by the Special Series Touring categories in which almost anything could be done to the mechanical details of the car providing the outside appearance was not altered. The removal of the radiator grille from a baby Fiat could cause disqualification, but two huge carburetters, a special inlet manifold and tuned exhaust manifold were allowable. Divided into capacity groups the touring cars provided some lively competition: Panhard, Renault and Fiat battling with less than 750 c.c., more than 90 Fiat 1,100 models being opposed by lonely D.K.W., Lancia Appia and Peugeot entries in the class up to 1,300 c.c., and 1,900 Alfa-Romeos dominating the over-1,300-c.c. class. In the same way, Lancia Aurelias dominated the over-1,500-c.c. Gran Turismo class and Porsches the same group under 1,500 c.c.

As light relief to all this serious motoring that was about to take place, 20th Century Fox Films were about the place making scenes for the film production of Hans Ruesch's book "The Racer." Two cars were officially entered for the Mille Miglia, one a 2½-litre Ferrari two-seater, the other a 2½-litre Burano, this actually being an early 2½-litre Ferrari with a modified body—so well done that many people spent a long time puzzling over the origin of the car. This was driven by the American driver Fitch and the other car by de Graffenried and, keeping out of the way of the race itself, they were all set to race against each other for a few miles after the start, before withdrawing.

As is traditional, the small cars began leaving Brescia at minute intervals from 9 p.m. on Saturday evening, May 1st, the first competitor's number being 2,100. All through the night cars left the starting ramp placed in the middle of the main road out of Brescia to the east, and as the hours passed so the cars got faster and noisier and the crowds bigger and more excited. Dawn was breaking as the first Maserati went off the line with an ear-splitting yowl from its exhaust, and it was daylight by the time the big factory cars left. The noise and tumult as the Marzotto brothers roared off and then Maglioli, Taruffi, Biondetti, Ascari, Farina and the rest got away was unbelievable. Last to leave was Abecassis in the H.W.M. and that was 6.13 a.m., by which time news was coming in from points along the course.

To the first big town, Verona, the top drivers were averaging over 115 m.p.h. and the pace was fantastic bearing in mind there were 1,597 kilometres (approximately 1,000 miles) to cover. The battle of the giants was well and truly under way, but equally the battles in the various classes were just as fierce. In a race the size and

magnitude of the Mille Miglia the outright winner is obviously the hero of the day and all over Italy eyes were on these fantastic "sports cars" that are as fast as current Grand Prix cars. Impressionable people were speaking of 192 m.p.h. for the big Ferraris, for they had said last year that the 4½-litres were doing 185 m.p.h. However, Lancias, with only 3.3 litres, were never being given a maximum speed, but they could clearly do over 150 m.p.h., probably 155, so if we settle for 160 m.p.h. for the 4.9-litre Ferrari we shall not be far out, especially as Taruffi made fastest average on the initial 40-mile "blind" from Brescia to Verona. The Lancia unquestionably has better roadholding than the Ferrari, which would explain this anomaly.

During the 1,597 kilometres there were control points in eight big towns, at which the driver had to stop and have his route card stamped, while at Rome and Bologna he also had to have a punch mark made in a fibre disc attached to the steering column. None of these stops necessitated being stationary for more than five seconds, for the speed and enthusiasm of the marshals at the controls was superb; in fact, the whole organisation behind the Mille Miglia is one of enormous enthusiasm and these control marshals personify the Mille Miglia spirit. At Ravenna Taruffi was leading by 1 min. 38 sec. from Ascari and 2 min. 47 sec. from Maglioli, followed by Castellotti and Paulo Marzotto, so now the situation was clear. In spite of Ferraris 4.9 litres the Lancia team were first, second and fourth, and at the next control, Pescara, the Lancias were first, second and third in front of Maglioli, with Valenzano fifth, and this on the fastest section of the course, Taruffi's leading average being 177.257 k.p.h. (over 109 m.p.h.). Farina had gone off the road very shortly after the start, wrecking the Ferrari completely and suffering a broken arm and damaged face, while Giannino Marzotto withdrew after 400 kilometres of racing, almost admitting that the 4.9-litre Ferrari was more than he was prepared to cope with. At Aquila, after some mountain driving, the order of the first two was unchanged, with Taruffi leading Ascari by four minutes. Castellotti and Valenzano were both out with mechanical trouble, and Maglioli and Paulo Marzotto, the baby of the family, were third and fourth.

Taruffi reached Rome in 5 hr. 30 min. 19 sec., at which point the course turns north and heads back up the Apennine chain to Bologna and Brescia; he was still leading Ascari by over four minutes and Maglioli by more than 11 minutes. At this point Collins in the Aston Martin arrived in fifth place, driving hard and gaining places as the more powerful cars fell out, and he was just over 38 minutes behind Taruffi. In the other classes competition was enormous and Vittorio Marzotto, with the 2-litre Ferrari, was leading Musso by only 12 seconds. Hermann was well on form, having 15 minutes in hand over Cabianca, but in the touring class Carina was leading Dalla Favera by only 17 seconds, their 1,900 Alfa-Romeo saloons being driven at the limit the whole way. Many had fallen by the wayside and among those who did it literally was Parnell, who smashed his Aston Martin completely when he ran off the road on a fast bend near Popoli. Neither he nor his passenger, Klemantaski, were hurt, but the left front wheel and suspension was torn from the chassis, engine crankcase and gearbox shells were split and the chassis frame broken; in fact, a write-off. Others who were out were Chiron with a broken brake pipe on his Austin-Healey and Abecassis with a broken shock-absorber and a recalcitrant engine, while Meyer had spun off the road. The 2½-litre Maserati had been too hurriedly prepared and lasted only a few miles, and both factory Aurelias were out. Clearly the pace was too fast and it was a matter of the survival of the fittest, and doubts began to be raised as to whether anyone would survive, for after Rome the Mille Miglia really gets tough with the crossing of the mountain passes. The recent severe winter had played havoc with the roads of Italy and they were in a terribly rough condition, and averaging 100 m.p.h. on such roads was taking its toll. This was not a race round a billiard-table-surfaced track, it was high speed on everyday roads that you had to take as you found, pot-holes, bumps, gravel surfaces, road construction, level crossings, cobble stones and every imaginable hazard being all part of the course, and if any car was going to survive it would have to be very fit.

From Rome the mountain passes showed the point of the 4.9-litre Ferrari engines, for both Maglioli and Paulo Marzotto began to eat up the minutes they were behind the Lancias. In none of the previous Mille Miglias that have been run has the leader at Rome ever been the winner of the race. On all occasions he was either beaten on the mountain stretch or had to retire. The 1954 Mille Miglia was no exception for on the stretch to Siena Taruffi had an incident while overtaking another competitor and left the road, breaking an oil pipe in the process. Although he was able to limp to Florence all hope of winning was gone and he had to retire. This left Ascari now

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MILLE MIGLIA—continued from page 302

in the lead, much to the delight of the Italian public and Maglioli and Marzotto were now pressing hard, using all the might of 4.9-litre engine as they stormed up the Radicefani Pass. By Siena Ascari had only 53 seconds lead over Maglioli and 1 min. 52 sec. lead over Marzotto, both of these young drivers now putting all they had into their driving. Scotti had now come up into fourth place, with Vittorio Marzotto, doing a fantastic drive in the 2-litre Ferrari, now in fifth place and leading Musso by 1½ minutes. Collins, in the remaining Aston Martin, was a splendid sixth only seconds behind Vittorio Marzotto. From Siena to Florence the excitement grew, for Paulo Marzotto made up a minute on Maglioli and was lying second at the control, but Ascari had had something in reserve and had drawn away a bit. The order was now Ascari, having been driving for 8 hr. 22 min. 18 sec., second Paulo Marzotto, third Maglioli, fourth Scotti, then Musso and Vittorio Marzotto in the 2-litre cars lying fifth and sixth, respectively, only one second apart, and Collins seventh. The reason for the Aston Martin's demise was that it had run off the road and bent the rear end and broken an engine bearer, so that the prop.-shaft resting on a cross-member was all that was holding the engine in the car. Collins managed to limp in to Florence but there had to retire after a very good drive.

Now came an important part of the race, the traversing of the Raticosa and Futa passes in quick succession between Florence and Bologna, and it looked as though the power of the Ferraris was going to show. Apart from the battle for the lead there was also the struggle in the 2-litre class between Musso and Marzotto, so that at Bologna news from the mountains was awaited with tension. All the important cars were reported as having started the mountain section and when, just over one hour later, Ascari arrived at the control at Bologna it was clear that both Ferraris were in trouble. Ascari's number was 602, Marzotto's 536 and Maglioli's 545, so both Ferraris should have arrived before the Lancia. After refuelling Ascari literally tumbled away, firm in the knowledge that he had only to finish to win. Up in the mountains Maglioli had run off the road and damaged the car too badly to continue and Marzotto had broken his gearbox so that the last of the opposition was gone. The 2-litre cars, however, were still going strongly and Vittorio Marzotto was 1 min. 18 sec. in front of Musso with the last high-speed stage in front of them. Biondetti was now fourth, a long way back and looking very tired, and Scotti had an enormous accident all by himself and smashed up both ends of the 4½-litre Ferrari, but managed to limp along to the Bologna control where he retired. The General Category of the XX1st Mille Miglia had now fizzled out, Ascari was touring in to win after a very hard race, his average speed dropping to below last year's record, even though the pace had been much harder. All interest was now on the 2-litre category and the battle between Marzotto and Musso which was so close as to seem impossible after such a distance of racing. At Mantova, the course being deviated from previous years to pass through the home town of Nuvolari in homage to that "great little man," they were still only seconds apart and right to the very last of the 1,597 kilometres both drivers were going all they knew, passing through the outskirts of Brescia and over the finishing line as if on the first lap of a Grand Prix. Musso was the first to arrive, his starting time having been 5 a.m. and Marzotto arrived some 23 minutes later, his number being 523. The timekeepers did their sums and Vittorio Marzotto had won by 9 sec. after racing for 12 hours and this put him second in General Category with Musso third.

The whole race had been one of mechanical massacre, brought about partly by the furious pace set at the beginning and partly by the conditions of the roads which were worse than has been seen for many years. The weather did not improve matters, for though race day was not as wet as the previous week, conditions were always changing from fog, rain and clouds to hot sunshine and it was a very tired and dirty Alberto Ascari that won his first Mille Miglia and Lancia's first victory in this toughest of all sports-car races. As remarked last year, he who wins the Mille Miglia is some driver, and the car he uses is some sports car!

Results :

MILLE MIGLIA—Italy—1,597 Kilometres—Conditions Poor

*1st :	A. Ascari (Lancia 3.3-litre) ...	11 hr. 26 min. 10 sec. ...	139.645 k.p.h.
*2nd :	V. Marzotto (Ferrari 2-litre) ...	12 hr. 0 min. 1 sec. ...	133.080 ..
3rd :	L. Musso-Zocca (Maserati 2-litre) ...	12 hr. 0 min. 10 sec. ...	133.052 ..
4th :	C. Biondetti (Ferrari 3-litre) ...	12 hr. 15 min. 36 sec. ...	130.261 ..
5th :	B. Venezian-Orlandi (Maserati 3-litre) ...	12 hr. 27 min. 43 sec. ...	128.436 ..
*6th :	H. Hermann-Linge (Porsche 1.5-litre) ...	12 hr. 35 min. 44 sec. ...	126.790 ..
*7th :	G. Serafini-Mancini (Lancia Aurelia) ...	12 hr. 47 min. 12 sec. ...	124.895 ..
*8th :	P. Carini-Artesani (Alfa-Romeo 1900) ...	12 hr. 51 min. 52 sec. ...	124.140 ..
9th :	Leto di Priolo, C and S (Fiat 8V-Zagato), 12 hr. 52 min. 38 sec.		
10th :	G. Cabianca (Osca 1.5-litre), 12 hr. 55 min. 8 sec.		

Class Results

750 c.c., Touring :			
1st :	Rédélé-Pons (Renault) ...	15 hr. 4 min. 33 sec. ...	105.931 k.p.h.
2nd :	Galtier-Nichy (Renault) ...	15 hr. 22 min. 40 sec.	
3rd :	Guarnieri-Brancaleon (Renault) ...	15 hr. 36 min. 31 sec.	
		67 starters; 34 finishers.	
1,300 c.c., Touring :			
1st :	Madrini-Ferraris (Fiat 1,100) ...	14 hr. 30 min. 46 sec. ...	110.040 k.p.h.
2nd :	Zanetti-Adria (Fiat 1,100) ...	14 hr. 37 min. 18 sec.	
3rd :	Perdisa-Masseti (Fiat 1,100) ...	14 hr. 52 min. 55 sec.	
		95 starters; 53 finishers.	
Over 1,300 c.c., Touring :			
1st :	Carini-Artesani (Alfa-Romeo 1,900) ...	12 hr. 57 min. 52 sec. ...	124.140 k.p.h.
2nd :	Dalla Favera-Artusi (Alfa-Romeo 1,900) ...	12 hr. 56 min. 10 sec.	
3rd :	Franceschetti-Meo Polo (Alfa-Romeo 1,900) ...	13 hr. 38 min. 12 sec.	
		37 starters; 20 finishers.	
Gran Turismo up to 1,500 c.c. :			
1st :	Frankenburg-Santer (Porsche) ...	13 hr. 53 min. 50 sec. ...	114.915 k.p.h.
2nd :	Hampel-Berghe (Porsche) ...	14 hr. 11 min. 23 sec.	
3rd :	Nathan-Glockler (Porsche) ...	14 hr. 13 min. 14 sec.	
		20 starters; 13 finishers.	
Gran Turismo over 1,500 c.c. :			
1st :	Serafini-Mancini (Lancia Aurelia) ...	12 hr. 47 min. 12 sec. ...	124.895 k.p.h.
2nd :	Leto di Priolo-Leto di Priolo (Fiat Zagato 8V) ...	12 hr. 52 min. 38 sec.	
3rd :	Petrobelli-Cremonesi (Lancia Aurelia) ...	13 hr. 3 min. 42 sec.	
		26 starters; 16 finishers.	
Sports up to 750 c.c. :			
1st :	Faure-Storez (D.B. Panhard) ...	15 hr. 3 min. 16 sec. ...	106.081 k.p.h.
2nd :	Stempert-Schwarz (D.B. Panhard) ...	15 hr. 53 min. 15 sec.	
3rd :	Gagneux-Beauce (D.B. Panhard) ...	16 hr. 21 min. 40 sec.	
		46 starters; 14 finishers.	
Sports up to 1,500 c.c. :			
1st :	Hermann-Linge (Porsche) ...	12 hr. 35 min. 44 sec. ...	126.790 k.p.h.
2nd :	Cabianca (Osca) ...	12 hr. 55 min. 8 sec.	
3rd :	Strable-Spingler (Volkswagen Special) ...	14 hr. 34 min. 35 sec.	
		26 starters; 12 finishers.	
Sports up to 2,000 c.c. :			
1st :	V. Marzotto (Ferrari) ...	12 hr. 0 min. 1 sec. ...	133.080 k.p.h.
2nd :	Musso-Zocca (Maserati) ...	12 hr. 0 min. 10 sec.	
3rd :	Venezian-Orlandi (Maserati) ...	12 hr. 27 min. 43 sec.	
		26 starters; 12 finishers.	
Sports over 2,000 c.c. :			
1st :	Ascari (Lancia) ...	11 hr. 26 min. 10 sec. ...	139.645 k.p.h.
2nd :	Biondetti (Ferrari) ...	12 hr. 15 min. 36 sec.	
3rd :	Minzoni-Brinci (Ferrari) ...	13 hr. 10 min. 34 sec.	
		31 starters; 6 finishers.	

Total starters, 374; total finishers, 180.

G.P. of Nuvolari (fastest time Cremona-Mantova-Brescia—134 kilometres) :
Ascari (Lancia), 44 min. 4.8 sec.—180.353 k.p.h.

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THE RESULT OF CONCENTRATION.—Ascari shortly after winning the Mille Miglia for Lancia. Those who have seen him after winning a Grand Prix will find it easy to appreciate the strain he underwent.