



PAUSE FOR REFRESHMENT.—The TR3 is pictured at Andermatt while the occupants refresh themselves with a bottle of a well-known American beverage.

**The Assistant Editor
takes a TR3 to
Italy to visit the
Maserati, Abarth
and Lancia factories**

IT is seldom possible to move very far in this mechanical age without making use of the internal combustion engine (in fact many people would change the "t" of internal for an "f") and for the motoring journalist it is almost impossible, and so when the question of a holiday came up, the idea of lazing away in a boat was dismissed instantly, if indeed, the thought ever came to mind. At the time when deliberations were being made it was announced that the Italian Grand Prix would be held on the combined road and banked circuit and as the writer had been unable to visit either of the Monza 500 mile races he quickly took the opportunity of arranging to visit Milan for the duration of the race. The problem arose of how to get there and what to do for the other ten days or so. Since a high mileage would probably be covered a car with a brisk pace was called for and Standard-Triumph solved the problem by offering a TR3 for a prolonged test. As we had not tested this popular sports car for some time and the writer was particularly short of experience with it, we accepted the offer with alacrity.

Having noticed the increasing popularity of the Maserati 3500GT in this country we approached Colin Murray Ltd. of Fleetwood the Maserati Concessionaires and they quickly intimated that Officine Alfieri Maserati would be pleased to see us and might even have a demonstration car available. Later, there came increasing rumours of a new and intriguing Lancia model and a tentative approach to

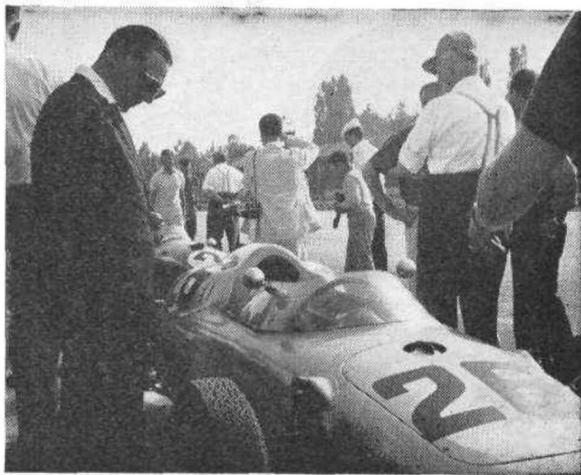
BY COVENTRY TO MODENA



WAITING FOR TEST is a Maserati 3500GT in which Maserati head tester Bertocchi took the Assistant Editor for some brisk lappery on the Modena Autodromo.

Lancia (England) Ltd. brought the reply that Lancia would be pleased to see us and perhaps loan us a test car but that much of the factory was closed to the public due to rebuilding. Finally as we would be in Turin to visit Lancia a trip to the Abarth factory was also included in the schedule.

On the appointed day the TR3, in British Racing Green arrived and two large suitcases, typewriter, cameras and many other small oddments were stowed in the boot (which already contained a large Continental touring spares kit) and on the shelf behind the seats. The short drive to Southend in pouring rain did nothing to dispel previous enthusiasm for the TR3 and we eagerly awaited some clear Continental roads to endorse these impressions. Having landed at Calais Airport the efficient and helpful French Customs quickly cleared us through and the TR was soon heading for Arras, Charleville, Luxembourg and our final destination of the first day, the Schloss Hotel at Trarben-Trabach in the Moselle Valley. During intermittent rain the Triumph cruised at between 60 and 80 m.p.h. depending on road conditions, the firm springing being the retarding influence on speed, as the engine is perfectly willing to go much quicker. Some of the steeply cambered and very bumpy French roads had to be negotiated with caution especially when meeting an oncoming vehicle but the Dunlop RS4s showed no sign of slip under these conditions.



LOOKING FOR IDEAS for next year's Formula? John Cooper in dark glasses and Enzo Ferrari (in braces) study one of the works Porsches which took part in the Italian G.P.

The exhaust note has always been criticised on the TR series but inside the cockpit of the latest model the noise level is very low and it may well be that the fruity note has been toned down a little. Indeed the comparative quietness was partly blamed for a speeding fine incurred in Luxembourg. A policeman suddenly leapt out from behind a house, whistled us to a stop and politely informed us that we had been travelling at 120 k.p.h. and the speed limit was 60 k.p.h. and would we give him 200 francs please? The old dodge of not understanding the language failed in this instance as he addressed us in faultless Oxford English. Our only consolation was that about seven out of ten cars were apparently being caught in his Radar trap.

The normally beautiful Moselle Valley was shrouded in mist but is well worth a visit from those not addicted to acquiring lurid sun tans, and the rather "moorish" wines produced along the banks of the river are particularly palatable. Our journey next day lay along the lower reaches of the Rhine which is a more industrialised area and not so pleasant as the upper reaches. On the more twisting roads the benefits of the overdrive, which operates on second, third and top were appreciated especially as the box was still rather stiff in spite of having some 7,000 odd miles on the clock. A detour was made to visit pretty Heidelberg, unfortunately crowded with several thousand other people with the same idea and we quickly returned to the Autobahn for Stuttgart and our night stop. Dinner was taken at the *Fernsehturm*, literally "far-seeing tower", which houses a T.V. transmitter and is a must for anyone with a head for heights. The food is quite delicious but one can spend £10 on a meal for two.

From Stuttgart we wended our way in leisurely fashion to Zurich, where the police are fortunate enough to use Alfa Romeos for patrol cars but where the wholesale use of parking meters caused us to



ELEGANCE BY VIGNALE.—For those intending Maserati purchasers who prefer open air motoring Vignale make this handsome two-seater which is slightly smaller than the coupe, but no cheaper!

circulate for several minutes looking for a parking spot. After spending an afternoon in this motorists' paradise we departed for Lucerne, which remains exactly as it was on our last visit some ten years before.

The willing Triumph was then pointed towards Italy through William Tell's birthplace at Atdorf, on to Andermatt where we paused to photograph the car against a snowy backdrop and then over the longest of the Alpine passes, the St. Gotthard where the overdrive once again came into use, the descent being made in second and overdrive second with the Girling disc brakes being so sure that the idea of fade never came into our thoughts. The Swiss/Italian border was crossed at Chiasso where the petrol companies vied with each other in showering us with presents and we made sure to have the petrol coupons stamped, although a recent drop in the price of petrol in Italy makes it not a great deal more expensive than in Britain.

The little town of Cernobbio, on the shores of Lake Como was our base for the duration of the Italian G.P. which had by then deteriorated into a Ferrari demonstration run with consequent lack of interest. In fact the whole of Italy seems to have suffered a sudden revulsion against the motor car and the recent tightening of traffic regulations seems to have affected the exuberance of most drivers and especially the drivers of more powerful cars. Those we met and talked to all insisted that the police were just waiting their chance to "throw the book at them."



OVER THE OPEN ROAD.—The Pavesi Autogrill which straddles the Autostrada del Sole near Milan enables visitors to watch the cars flashing by underneath. It would add to the interest if indicators could be placed in the restaurant giving the speeds of approaching cars, although a Maserati 5000GT coming through at its advertised 190 m.p.h. would probably create havoc in the kitchens.

On the day after the Grand Prix the Triumph was nosed on to the *Autostrada del Sole* at Milan and headed for Modena. The TR cruised at an indicated 100 m.p.h. in overdrive top at 3,800 r.p.m. with complete lack of fuss with oil pressure at 60 lbs. per sq. in. and water temperature never going above 170 to 180 degrees in spite of the heat of the sun. At the Maserati factory, which hides itself away in a quiet street in Modena with no signboard to help one find it, we were greeted by Signor Mazzi who took us on a short tour of the factory where we saw numerous examples of the 3500GT model in various stages of production. He explained that Maserati were concentrating almost entirely on this model at present although both a 1,500 c.c. and a 5-litre car are scheduled for production soon. He explained rather apologetically that the Maserati was just a British car with an Italian body as Girlings provide the brakes (although Maserati make the actual disc), Salisbury the rear axle, Lucas some electrical components and Connolly leather is used for trimming, while the Germans provide the ZF gearbox. Maserati do not even make the body as Touring of Milan build the four-seater coupé and Vignale makes the shorter two-seater tourer.

At this stage Guarino Bertocchi the former Maserati chief racing mechanic and now head tester was ready to take out a Vignale tourer for its first run. We were offered the passengers seat although Bertocchi intimated that he would not be able to go very quickly as

run we were able to assure him that he had gone quite quickly enough for us and we did not press him to take us out in a fully run-in car. He took the car through its normal first checks, looking for unusual noises and rattles, braking heavily from high speed with hands-off steering and then when we were away from the town he wound it up to over 120 m.p.h. on the Smith's speedometer (the car was destined for the United States) and entered a left hand bend at impossible speed using the crumbling edge of one side of the road and clipping the hedge on the other side. This was followed by a blind humped back bridge which he took at the same speed and although teeth were clenched and grab-handles grabbed the Maserati flew over as if the bridge did not exist. Back at the factory he had a coupé to test with two prospective buyers ensconced in the rear seats and once again we were offered the front seat. This time he headed for the Modena Autodromo which has recently been resurfaced with tarmacadam. Here he put the Maserati through its paces for several laps, flicking the heavy car through the two S-bends with his arms completely crossed but never moving his hands from the quarter-to-three position and using absolutely every inch of the road but never frightening any of the passengers.

Back in the factory Signor Mazzi explained that they had only been pushing the 3500GT for about a year and were quite happy with results, having already sent fourteen cars to Britain in spite of

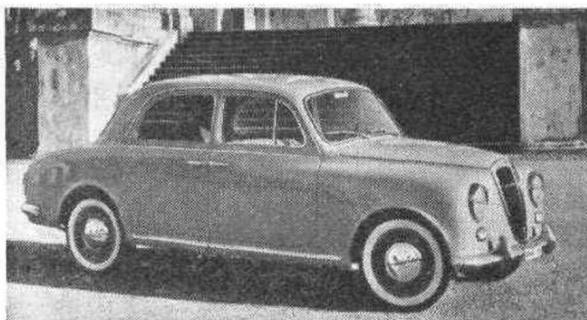


UGLY DUCKLINGS.—Waiting to be turned into swans by Abarth are a batch of Fiat 600 chassis which will be fitted with the beautiful bodies provided by Allemano and Zagato and powerful engines by Abarth.

its price tag of almost £6,000, although he was pleased that the Maserati undercut the Ferrari in Britain. Asked why the Maserati was not seen in competition Signor Mazzi explained that they were building the 3500GT to be a perfectly tractable road car (Bertocchi demonstrated this by doing 20 m.p.h. in top gear) and were not interested in racing it. Such cars as the Facel Vega were completely successful despite the lack of a competition record and they hoped the Maserati would be the same.

During our tour of the workshops we were shown the 5000GT model which has been seen at the Turin Show and which will undergo some styling changes before being released as a production model next year as it looks rather Americanised at present. The engine gives 375 b.h.p. and Bertocchi has seen a top speed of 315 k.p.h., during testing of the 5000GT. Since this represents over 190 m.p.h. one tends to be sceptical but he also claims to have driven from the Maserati factory along the *Autostrada del Sole* to the centre of Turin in 30 minutes, which represents the sort of average speed to make the mind boggle. The Maserati factory are also rather proud of their record in racing boats as the 5-litre engine is fitted to the current European and World Championship winning craft.

The competition department was fairly quiet with only a couple of the "birdcage" sports cars under construction and there was no sign of the rumoured rear-engined machine. Signor Mazzi stressed that the factory were not interested in racing any more as a works team but one had the feeling that this was more a matter of monetary consideration than anything else as the factory has, of course, gone through financial difficulties in recent times.



POPULAR QUALITY.—Italy's most popular quality car, the Lancia Appia has a waiting list of over six months which should be alleviated when the new factory is in production.

Leaving the Maserati factory we took to the *Autostrada del Sole* once more and paid our 1,500 lire for the journey back to Milan. Highly taxed British motorists would probably quibble at paying such an amount but the Italian gladly pays up for the pleasure of driving long distances without fatigue and as the toll varies according to engine size the Fiat 500 and 600 drivers who constitute the major part of Italian traffic get away quite lightly. Lunch was taken at the pleasant Pavesi restaurant which straddles the *Autostrada* near Piacenza so that the motorist can watch his fellow drivers flashing beneath him while he lunches. More of these restaurants are planned when the *Autostrada* is extended, an idea which could well be copied in Britain. Following the excellent signposting we were quickly through Milan and on the *Autostrada* for Turin the surface of which has deteriorated over the years. However, 90 m.p.h. cruising was possible in places on this three-lane road and for a time company was kept with a Fiat 2100, showing the speed potential of these popular cars. In Turin we made for the Abarth factory in the northern part of the city, where we were met by Signorina Isadora, Carlo Abarth's secretary who gave us a conducted tour of this pleasant and surprisingly large factory. A large part of the factory is devoted to the production of exhaust systems for various cars and enormous numbers are exported, especially to the United States. Very few British cars are catered for as they are sold in such small numbers in Italy although we did notice that the Ford Anglia and Sunbeam Alpine were quite popular. These exhaust systems are attractively finished in matt black with the Abarth emblem, although some are supplied as original equipment in which case they are painted grey. In the experimental shop we noticed a Chevrolet the car was brand new and not run in. However, at the end of the



BODY BY ALLEMANO.—The Abarth 850 is one of the most popular Abarth productions and is sold in quite large quantities to the United States, although its high price in Britain hampers its sales here.



PLENTY OF LIGHTS.—The Lancia Flaminia two-door, two-seater coupé will reach something like 120 m.p.h. in comfort. The open version of this coupé will be shown at Earls Court for the first time this year.

Corvair and a Fiat Giardiniera being "measured up" for exhaust systems.

The main Abarth production is centred around the Fiat 600 chassis which arrives from the factory in its bare state without an engine. The various bodies are grafted on by Allemano and Zagato while Abarths attend to the engine, which in extreme cases means the addition of a twin overhead camshaft cylinder head, boring out to 750 c.c. and a power output of 64 h.p. at 7,600 r.p.m., giving the coupé a top speed of 112 m.p.h. The engine can also be obtained in 850-c.c. form giving 73 h.p. at 7,000 r.p.m. All engines are carefully run-in on the test bed and the Weber carburettors are carefully tuned before installation in the chassis.

The most recent Abarth model is the 2200 which is based on the Fiat 2100 chassis. This is fitted with a very handsome coupé or cabriolet body and the chassis and engine are considerably modified. The engine is given three Weber double-bodied 40DCOE carburettors and a compression ratio of 9.5 to 1, which endows the sleek coupé with a top speed of over 120 m.p.h. The standard drum brakes cannot cope with this performance and recourse has been made to Dunlop disc brakes for all four wheels. This sleek looking coupé will be seen for the first time in Britain at the Earls Court Show where, as Signorina Isadora ruefully admits it will sell for nearly £4,000. However, connoisseurs will undoubtedly seek out this handsome car.

In the dispatch bays were numbers of cars ready for delivery, inhibited for their long sea journey to the U.S. These mainly consisted of the 750 and 850 models in various stages of tune together with one or two 2200 models. After looking round the works we were taken for a drive in an 850 demonstration car, which proved to have particularly comfortable seating and generous leg room for a tall person together with adequate luggage space behind the two seats. The suspension is particularly praiseworthy as it gives a steady pitch-free ride in spite of the short wheelbase. As the run



IT'S A FIAT.—Abarth have now turned their attention to the amelioration of the Fiat 2100. Fitted with three Weber carburettors, Dunlop disc brakes and a handsome four-seater body, the Fiat-Abarth 2200 is capable of speeds in excess of 120 m.p.h. and will be seen in England for the first time at the Earls Court Show.

was made in the outskirts of Turin there was little opportunity to assess acceleration or road-holding.

Passing out of the gates of this well organised and spotlessly clean factory which produces over 1,000 of these delightful little cars every year, we saw on a notice board by the factory workers' clocking-in machine a notice proudly telling the employees of the fine effort put up by a Fiat-Abarth at Nurburgring the previous week-end—surely a wonderful incentive to build better cars.

Our final call lay at the Lancia factory to the west of the City where a Lancia Flaminia four-seater coupé awaited our attention. Here we were greeted by Mr. Hemelik, an Englishman who has chosen to live in Italy, who reiterated the previous statement that the factory was indeed closed. This is because of the considerable expansion undergone by Lancia who have previously only made cars in very small quantities. All commercial vehicle production has been moved to another factory while additional factory space is being erected near Turin to cope with increased production. Naturally much of this increase is designed to cover the introduction of the new Lancia model which will not be released until the Turin Motor Show in November. Despite its expected high price in Britain the specification should, like that of the Abarth 2200, attract the connoisseur.



ABARTH INTERIOR.—The comfortable seats and handsome steering wheel of the Fiat-Abarth 2200 look inviting to the keen driver. Unfortunately it will cost £4,000 in Great Britain.

A test driver took the Flaminia to the outskirts of the city and then handed the car over to us for our impressions. The 2½-litre V6 engine is very quiet and the four-speed gearbox with floor-mounted lever (which is spring loaded towards third and top) is easy to use with practically unbeatable synchromesh. The steering is remarkably light for such a large car and provides one of the major charms of this car. Seating is exceptionally comfortable both front and rear, with ample leg room for four people. The car could be taken up to an indicated 160 k.p.h. (100 m.p.h.) with no sign of fuss from the engine which would rev. to 5,500 r.p.m. in the gears with apparent ease. On a hilly section this large car was flicked round bends with no appreciable effort from the driver while body lean was not apparent, the ride remaining as level and as pitch free as it had on main roads. One can readily understand why there is a six months' waiting list for this and other Lancia products and it must be a matter of regret to any British enthusiast who has tried a Lancia that they are so expensive in this country.

After a rapid sight-seeing tour of Turin including the buildings for next year's celebration of the Unification of Italy and a tour round the Lancia dispatch plant it was time to leave Italy and point the Triumph towards Calais once more. On this journey it averaged 48 m.p.h. at 26 m.p.g. using 80 m.p.h. as a cruising speed and despite a rough ride in the mountains it developed no rattles and consumed no oil at all. If not the best car for Continental cruising it is certainly one of the best available to British drivers for under £1,000 and deserves its fine reputation.—M. L. T.