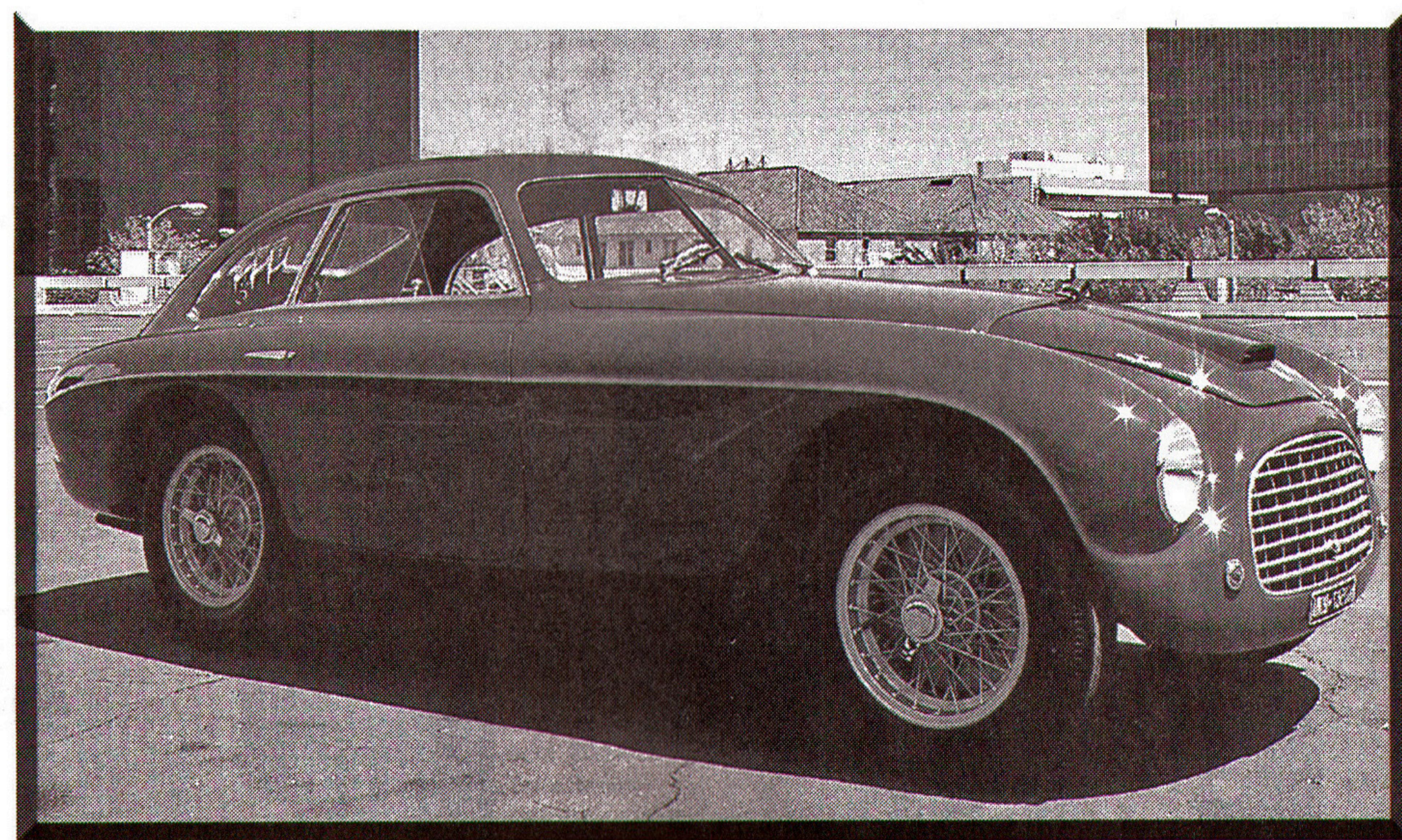


FERRARI Market Review & Buyer's Guide

1947 Ferrari Tipo 166 Le Mans Berlinetta

Chassis number: 020 I
(believed to be ex-02C)
Engine number: 020 I



This Ferrari Touring Berlinetta is believed to be chassis number 02C by many leading authorities, including the late Stan Nowak, David Seielstad, Tito Anselmi and Gianni Rogliatti. As such, this is one of the most important Ferraris extant.

Ferrari wanted to develop a powerful, reliable and smooth competition motor using a V12 configuration. So, in 1945, he had Enrico Nardi visit Gioacchino Colombo, the designer of the successful Alfa Romeo 158 'Voiturette.' Colombo agreed to design the new 1½-liter V12 engine that Ferrari wanted built for his upcoming competition cars. Working in modest surroundings with engineers Colombo, Giuseppe Busso and eventually Aurelio Lampredi, Ferrari was quickly able to accomplish that vision.

The first Ferrari was brought out for display on March 12, 1947, at Maranello, Ferrari's new factory. In April, chassis number 02C was completed and road-tested by Franco Cortese and Giuseppe Farina. 02C received a skimpy, cigar-shaped body that had cycle fenders to make it even lighter and easier to handle in a street race with tight corners. The Tipo 125 12-cylinder initially produced only about 50 to 60hp, far below the expected 118hp, and much development work was needed before the engine could be made to deliver 90hp reliably.

On May 11, 1947, both Ferraris drove the 60 miles to Piacenza for their first race. After practice, Farina got into an argument with the team, claiming the sister car had more power and that he should drive it. Farina was summarily dismissed, leaving Cortese to drive the sister car which, having led the race, retired with three laps to go when the fuel pump failed.

Years produced	1947-50
Number produced	12
SCM Price Guide	\$700,000 - \$900,000
Original list	\$10,000
Chassis #	Frame, right side between suspension and firewall
Engine #	Right side, rear of block above starter motor
Tune-up	\$1,500
Distributor cap	Good luck.
Ferrari Owners Club	8642 Clela Street; Downey, CA 90241. 562/861-6992
Ferrari Club of America	15812 Radwick Silver Springs, MD 20906
Web site:	FerrariOwnersClub.org ferrari@softhome.net
Alternatives	Maserati Ghibli SS, Bizzarrini Strada

Two weeks later, Cortese took the Ferrari marque to its historic first victory at the Grand Prix of Rome and followed that up with another victory on June 1 at Vercelli. For Ferrari's next race on June 5, Cortese used chassis 02C at the Terme di Caracalla circuit. Cortese collided with Taruffi during the race and was forced out - but not before equaling Taruffi's fastest lap. On June 15 at Pavia, on the circuit of Vigevano, Cortese secured a class victory in 02C followed by an outright victory in 02C at Varese on the Colle Compigli circuit.

It was now time for one of motor racing's legends, the great Tazio Nuvolari, to drive 02C, winning a first in class on July 6, 1947, at the Forli circuit. At the Coppa Luigi Arcangeli in Parma, Nuvolari simply dominated proceedings, with Cortese taking a dutiful second place. Factory notes say the engine was changed between practice and the race because Nuvolari had destroyed the valve gear in one head.

During the winter of 1947-48, a testing accident occurred and 02C was equipped with new cycle-fendered bodywork. The chassis then was fitted with the larger Tipo 166 engine and competed in a number of events in 1948, including the Mille Miglia, in which it was driven by Cortese and Marchetti. It retired before finishing this race.

According to David Seielstad in "The Prancing Horse," issue #123, "At some point in time the serial number is altered to 020I. The block shows clearly that the C was over stamped with an 0 and an I added at a different angle."

It was a trick of the trade, especially for companies short on funds, to refurbish their old race cars and sell them as new. To quote Gianni Rogliatti, "The factory at that time was little more than a machine shop, and they were bent on going to races as much as possible, so it is likely that sometimes they re-numbered a chassis for want of a new one."

After 1948, the stripped 02C chassis lay at Maranello until purchased on August 12, 1949, by Ferrari's Rome agent, Franco Cornacchia. He sent the chassis to Touring to have them fit it with one of their new Berlinetta bodies, which was designed by Carlo Bianchi Anderloni. The pretty little Berlinetta prototype that Touring produced on the 020I chassis was delivered to Cornacchia's showroom on January 6, 1950.

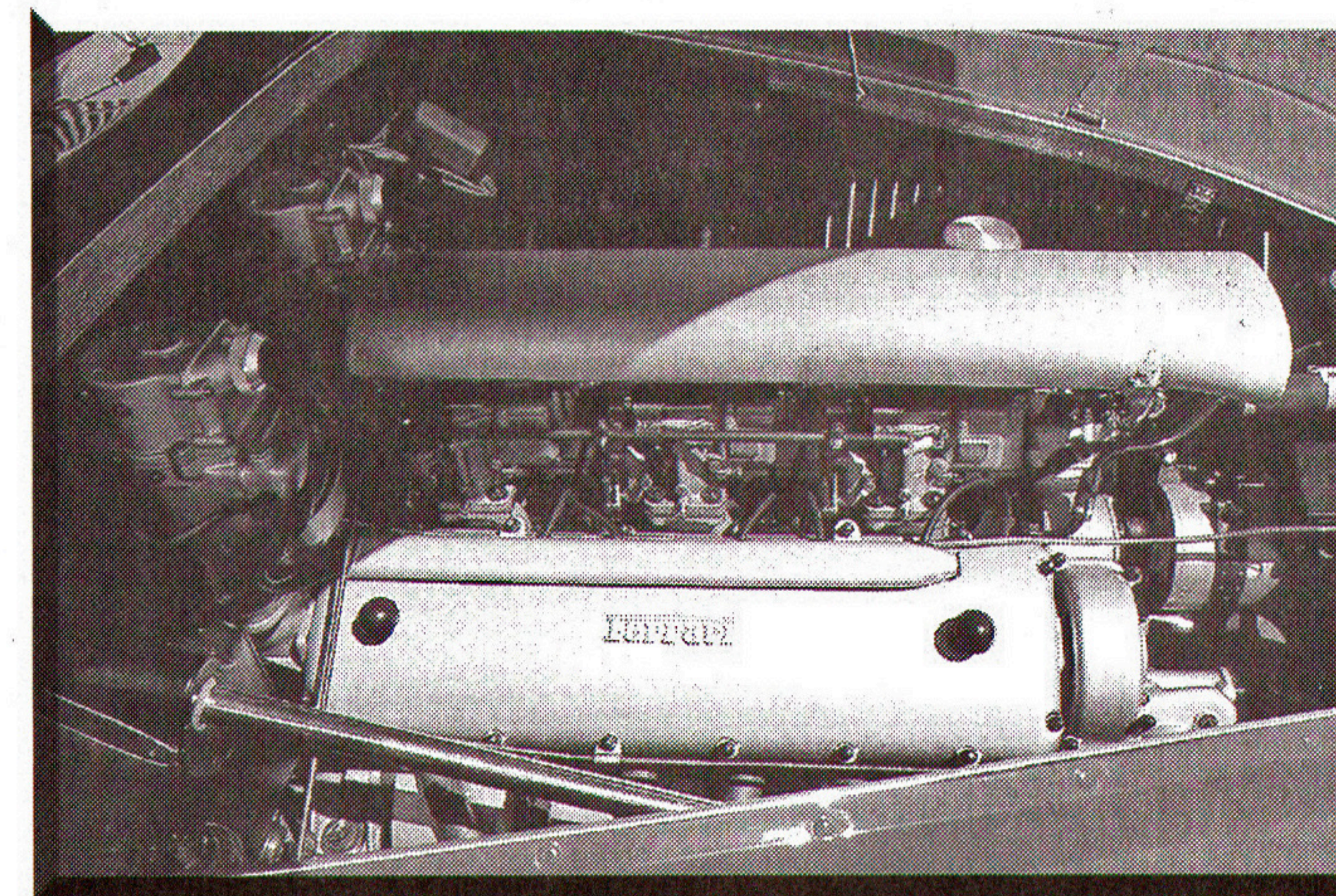
On January 20, a "Certificate of Origin" was issued, but it was not until April 5 that Cornacchia managed to sell this "new" car to one Giovanni Rota of Milan. Rota had the car registered MI 146140. He raced the car in the 1950 and 1951 Mille Miglias, partnered on both occasions by Luigi Toscana, and retired both times probably unaware that his "new" car had appeared in the race in 1948.

Rota sold his Ferrari in February 1952. Its next owner, Edward Griffin, brought it to the U.S. in 1955, and it passed through several collectors' hands. During one pass, it received a compete restoration by Steven Griswold and in 1975 won the Hans Tanner Award for Best Overall Ferrari at Pebble Beach. Following another restoration by Bob Smith Coachworks, 020I won its class at Pebble Beach in 1995 and won both a First and Platinum prize at the Ferrari Nationals. In a recent conversation, Smith recalled that 020I was highly original, retaining nearly all its original Touring Berlinetta coachwork. Only the floor panels had deteriorated beyond repair and needed replacing.

Chassis 02C/020I is one of the most historically significant Ferraris extant. Unusually, the car is also largely original and unmodified since 1949, with its spectacular and original Touring coachwork and an excellent, continuous provenance. It is eligible for the Mille Miglia, Ferrari Challenge, Colorado Grand and similar type touring events as well as being a welcome and important entry at any number of Concours events throughout the globe.

The Ferrari described here was sold at Christie's auction at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles on June

19, 1999, for \$910,000, including Christie's buyer's commission. Aside from the chassis number confusion (which will be discussed later), this car's important early history, coachwork dating from 1949, originality, continuous provenance and its condition amply support the price paid, which was at the low end of Christie's estimate and in line with the SCM Price Guide.

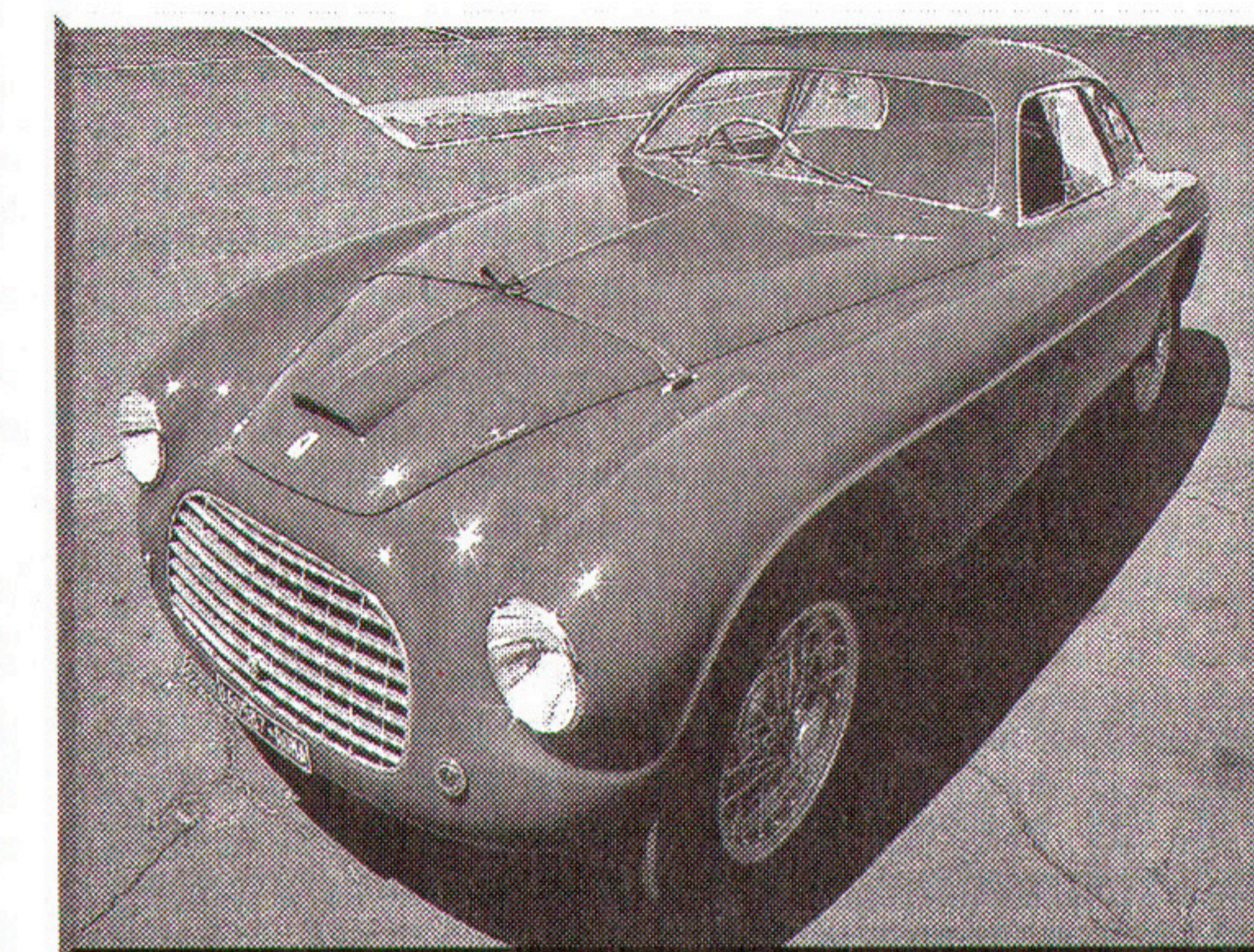


All racing teams operate with one imperative: to keep entering and winning races. Other considerations are secondary. Frequently that means cannibalizing one car - maybe it isn't competitive or is no longer in compliance with race rules or class structure - in favor of outfitting a newer car. It also may mean as-

sembling a surplus racing car into something that can be sold to a paying customer. Constructors understandably show no concern for future collectors, for whom they have little regard in the days leading up to a race. In 02C's case, Ferrari saw cash flow in the stripped frame, but couldn't expect to foist off on Cornacchia a "new car" with a 3-year-old chassis number.

Their answer was to round off the C into a 0.

Collectors' valuation of chassis history is becoming more important in the market. Because of this, experts' opinions and inferences also become increasingly important in developing the likely history of particular cars. For 02C/020I, particularly important is its long-standing existence in the passionate gazes of collectors (and the avaricious glint in the eyes of brokers). Since its claim to chassis number 02C was scoped out in the early '70s, it has had no substantial challenge to its



stature, giving the new owner considerable comfort.

Also well-documented is the fact that there is another 166 that has a generally accepted claim on the "2C" chassis number, s/n 0002C. Given the known propensity of the factory to

swap and re-use during the period, this similarity of chassis numbers isn't surprising, and both cars are accepted as integral parts of the early history of Ferrari.

While 020I has lost its visual identity as the early Ferrari Spyder Corsa 02C, its status as an early 166 touring berlinetta is undeniably enhanced by its chassis' history and that chassis' accompanying aura, which still resonates from the touch of "Figlio del Diavolo," Tazio Nuvolari.

Ferrari expert Michael Sheehan says, "Any Ferrari of

this vintage has 'stories,' but few are as well-documented as this one."—Rick Carey

(Photos and description courtesy of auction company.) ♦

