

XIII GRAN PREMIO NAPOLI

Another Bad Day for Ferrari

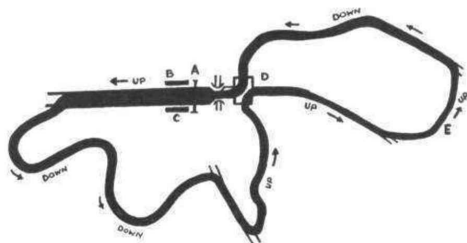
NAPLES, May 6th.

IT seems that neither the English nor the Italians can ever take any notice of one another's calendar, for once more the Naples Grand Prix was held the same weekend as the International Trophy at Silverstone. The Continental teams of Ferrari and Gordini divided their interests, while Maserati refrained from entering at either race.

The first practice period on the twisty and difficult Posillippo circuit was very lukewarm, as was the Italian weather, which was most unusual for Naples in May. Ferrari sent Castellotti and Musso with two modified Lancias, that of the former being a new car with the side panniers merged into the body as Fangio had used at Syracuse, but more important was the fact that this new car had independent rear suspension, in place of the normal de Dion layout; Musso was using the same car as he had in Sicily. The new rear suspension was far from right, and though both drivers tried it neither of them could go as fast as they did with the de Dion suspended car, and came in shaking their heads and complaining bitterly about the way it snaked about. The circuit had been resurfaced in many places, in particular at the cross-roads, and the surface was new and slippery. As a result of this the Ferrari times were many seconds down on the existing lap record, which was set up in 1953 by Ascari with a Formula II Ferrari in 2 min. 07.7 sec.

After the chaos caused by the Mille Miglia, and in view of the Monaco Grand Prix being imminent, the Maserati team had decided to miss the Naples race and concentrate on building cars for the Monagasque event, so those Maseratis that did run were privately owned. The Spanish driver Godia arrived at Modena to collect a new Formula I car ordered some time before, but, like so many Maserati orders, it had not been started on, so the factory fitted a normal 250/PI engine to the car Behra had taken to Syracuse and lent that to Godia. The Scuderia Guastalla entered their car, for Gerini, and once more Villoresi was down to drive the Maserati from the Centro-Sud Scuderia. Gould was running his own Maserati, as was Volonterio, the Swiss driver's car being still fitted with the old $\frac{1}{2}$ -elliptic-sprung Formula II chassis. The Maserati situation for the first practice period was far from good, only Godia being out, for Gould and Gerini were present but without their cars, and the Centro-Sud car was there but no driver. Manzon was also sitting about waiting for a Gordini to arrive from Paris. Just as this first period was closing, Gould's car arrived and he managed three exploratory laps, so Ferrari were happy that there was no opposition, but not too happy about the handling of the new car.

On the Saturday afternoon both weather and practice brightened up and everyone was out and about. Ferrari were still trying to make the independently-sprung car steer, but neither driver was convinced, while Castellotti was beginning to complain that the engine lacked the power of that in Musso's car. Musso was keeping quiet for fear his car was going to be given to the senior driver of the team. During practice the rear Englebert tyres were changed from 7.00 by 16 in. to 7.00 by 15 in. but the experiment was not very helpful. The idea behind the Ferrari methods was sound, for with Monaco the following week they were learning a lot that would be useful, the Naples circuit having exactly the same character as Monte Carlo, being a narrow, twisty street race; if anything the Italian course being the more arduous. Musso got to within one-tenth of a second of the lap record in his own car, while Castellotti could only do 2 min. 10.4 sec. in the i.r.s. car. They changed over and Castellotti equalled the lap record, while Musso's times dropped to around the 2 min. 10 sec. mark. Although there was no one else to approach these two drivers' times, the Ferrari team were not really happy, and when the news of the complete defeat of Fangio and Collins at Silverstone was heard on the radio during the middle of practice there were some very glum and puzzled faces in the Scuderia, while they could be heard muttering "Wanwall!" and "Connut!" The private Maseratis were all practising, as well as two private Ferraris, and Manzon was going very fast with one of the old six-cylinder Gordinis. Having no high-speed corners or fast straights, the old Gordini was very much at home and Manzon was skittering it round the twists and turns in a very spirited fashion, saying afterwards, when a time of 2 min. 12.1 sec. was announced, that "he had had a return of youth." This got him on the front row, ahead of Villoresi, Gould, Gerini and Godia, the last taking things steadily, not having driven a Grand Prix car since the 1954 Spanish Grand Prix.



CIRCUIT OF POSILLIPPO (NAPLES)

Length: 4.100 kms.

A : Start and finish. B : Pits. C : Main grandstand.
D : Straw bales in middle of X. E : Very narrow.

On Sunday morning the sun was blazing down on the bay of Naples and an enormous crowd turned out, the grandstands bulging and the walls round the edges of the circuit being black with spectators, all mounted safely some 10 feet above the roads. Castellotti's car had been converted back to normal de Dion layout and both Lancia/Ferraris were using 16-in. wheels. The start was very vague and haphazard, only Musso really seeing the flag fall, there still being many mechanics in amongst the cars. In fact, it was only when one of the mechanics shot vertically up in the air that everyone realised that the flag had dropped. Musso went away into the lead, followed by Castellotti and Manzon, and then came the rest, with Villoresi way back, having been left on the line. Clearly Castellotti was not happy and gained nothing on Musso on the second lap, at the end of which he drew into the pit and reported the oil pressure failing miserably, so the car was withdrawn and it was pretty obvious that his complaint about lack of power the day before had been justified. This left Musso completely unchallenged and all he had to do was circulate steadily and complete the 60 laps, so that interest turned to the rest of the runners. Manzon was in second place some 15 sec. behind Musso, and then came Gould, Godia and Villoresi in a tight group, while just behind them Scarlatti was driving well with his 2-litre Formula II Ferrari and keeping up with Gerini on the Maserati. Taraschi was trailing along at the back with his home-built 12-cylinder Ferrari and Volonterio was lapped on the fourth time round. Gould thought it too early in the race to mix things with the others and let them go by, and then Villoresi shook Godia off and set after Manzon. The French driver was really enjoying himself and hurling the Gordini round the corners right on the limit, the antics of the wheels being horrible to watch, for the circuit was terribly bumpy. There being little hope of the Gordini lasting the distance, Manzon was out to have some fun while it lasted, the twisty circuit suiting his temperament, but relentlessly Villoresi closed on him until he was only 3 sec. behind. While waiting an opportunity to get by, Villoresi relaxed for just a moment and then spun, the Maserati sliding across the road and striking a kerb with a front wheel. The sudden jar broke the steering column support to the bulkhead and he returned to the pits with the column lying in his lap. This let Manzon get right away, and though the mechanics wired the column back in place, and Villoresi tried again for a few rounds, it was impossible to drive the car and he was forced to retire.

Gould had begun to settle down to some steady motoring and he caught and passed Godia, now moving into third place. 40 sec. behind Manzon, who it seemed must surely break the Gordini transmission very shortly now. Godia, Gerini and the others were now a lap and more behind the leading Lancia/Ferrari and there was a general calm settling, but at the end of the 36th lap Musso suddenly drew into the pits running on seven cylinders. As the mechanic was removing the bonnet he felt water pouring onto his feet from one of the side-mounted megaphones, so he hastily refastened the bonnet and told Musso to go away quickly and not stop the engine. The Lancia/Ferrari roared off, still on seven cylinders, with liquid coming out of the bottom megaphone as if it were a hose-pipe. On the hot

ground the water soon evaporated and it was then seen that there was an awful lot of oil left, so no-one was surprised when Musso re-appeared a long time later on foot. Half way round the lap there had been a big bang and the lot had fallen out on the road. Nobody thought of telling the other drivers and Godia found himself going sideways into a tree, bending the chassis but fortunately not himself. Within the space of one lap the whole race had changed its aspect and Manzoni was now being shown the figure one from his pit, while Gould was second and Gerini third. Manzoni was tempted to slow up and nurse the car along, but he knew that Gould would then catch him, and as he was sure something would break in the Gordini before the remaining 20 laps were covered he decided to press on and enjoy himself and forget all about being in the lead. On and on he went, the distance remaining around 40 sec. between the Gordini and the Maserati, fluctuating slightly when first Gould spun, but carried on unabated, and then the Gordini did the same thing. Rather than risk bursting his engine or crashing, Gould decided to settle on second place, while Manzoni went on to the finish quite unable to believe that he was winning. The Gordini never missed a beat and on the last few laps, when it was clear that Gould could not catch up, Manzoni eased off and arrived the very fortunate winner of the XIII Naples Grand Prix.

Results :

XIII GRAN PREMIO DI NAPOLI—Formula 1—60 Laps—246 Kilometres—Hot

1st :	R. Manzoni (Gordini 6-cyl.)	...	2 hr. 20 min. 43.8 sec.	...	104,801 k.p.h.
2nd :	H. Gould (Maserati 250/F1)	...	2 hr. 20 min. 54.9 sec.	...	
3rd :	G. Gerini (Maserati 250/F1)	...	3 laps behind	...	
4th :	G. Scarlatti (Ferrari F1)	...	4 laps behind	...	
5th :	O. Volonterio (Maserati 250/A6G)	...	11 laps behind	...	
6th :	B. Taraschi (Ferrari 12-cyl.)	...	15 laps behind	...	

Fastest lap : L. Musso (Lancia/Ferrari), on 16th lap, in 2 min. 12.3 sec.—111.564 k.p.h.

Retired : Castellotti (Lancia/Ferrari), lap three, engine; Villorosi (Maserati), lap 29, steering; Musso (Lancia/Ferrari), lap 37, engine; Godia (Maserati), lap 37, crashed.

NAPLES NOTES

Not only is Naples one of the few remaining pure street races, which is real road-racing, but the circuit does not suffer by being "improved" until it becomes artificial.

By 2.30 p.m. the whole show was over and everyone had gone to lunch. In view of the prevailing heat this arrangement was a satisfactory one for all concerned and allowed the teams to get well on their way back to their factories before nightfall.

Gordini himself was present to watch Manzoni's victory, having flown direct from London to Naples early on the Saturday morning, after attending Silverstone practice the day before.

Both the Gordini win and Scarlatti's fourth place with a 2-litre car went to show that it pays never to give up. Likewise Taraschi came to rest with a defective fuel pump but went on again after a lengthy repair and finished "in the money."

For two years now the Formula 1 cars have been unable to break the lap record. It will be remembered that it was set up by the late Ascari when he was really trying to make up time, after he had lost a certain win due to throttle-pedal breakage.

After the thorough beating at Silverstone and then the debacle of Naples, the Ferrari team were very sad.

Castellotti was peeved about the way he was messed around, first with a car that would not steer, and then an engine that would not go. It was his first golden opportunity to win a Grand Prix race, and coming just after his brilliant drive in the Mille Miglia it would have gone down well.

Musso was very philosophical about his car breaking when he had an absolute sitter of a win in the palm of his hand. He just smiled, shrugged his shoulders, and looked forward to the next opportunity.

NOTES ON THE CARS AT NAPLES

The only real interest in the cars lay in the new Lancia/Ferrari with the independent rear suspension. This was on the swing-axle principle and was a very tentative affair, so built that it could be removed if desired. The normal de Dion rear-end layout was altered by cutting approximately 2 ft. 6 in. out of the centre of the de Dion tube between the radius-arm anchorages. The ends carrying the hubs and brakes, etc., were then welded to I-section taper beams that crossed each other and dropped in level down to pivot points well below the bottom of the rear drive housing. These pivots were half-type and on the ends of a plate bolted to the underside of the differential/gearbox unit and extending out behind it. The geometry of the radius-arms locating the hubs was unaltered, as were the transverse leaf-spring and the shock-absorbers, so that at a casual glance the rear end looked like a normal de Dion layout. It was not until one looked closely, down into the darkness under the fuel tank, that it could be seen that what appeared to be a de Dion

tube was not so and the crossed swinging arms could be seen. In addition, the negative camber on the rear wheels was very exaggerated; so much so, in fact, that on the first day's practice the wheels were rubbing the body on full bump. The swinging arms were anchored by ball joints to allow universal movement, for by retaining the normal double-radius rod location of the hubs, the wheels moved forwards and inwards as they rose. The pivots of the arms were about 24 inches apart, which gave a very low roll-centre, but the lack of vertical movement in side elevation probably caused some of the poor stability.

This rear end was fitted to a Lancia/Ferrari with the side tanks in the cockpit and the panniers blended into the main part of the body, while the megaphone exhausts were of the "cluster" type. After the second practice the whole assembly was dismantled, a normal de Dion tube put back in place, and the centre pivot bracket removed and replaced by the bracket carrying the side location for the de Dion.

The other Lancia/Ferrari was a normal "Argentine type," with Ferrari-modified rear end and megaphone exhausts.

Among the Maseratis there was nothing new, the four 250/F1 models being to normal 1956 specification. The Gordini was an early six-cylinder, with the 1955 twin-o.h.c. engine, five-speed gearbox and disc brakes.

SPORTS-CAR RACE

On the Saturday afternoon a sports-car event was held over 30 laps of the circuit and was confined mostly to local drivers, it being won by Bellucci with a works-prepared 2-litre four-cylinder Maserati 200S. Driving a similar car was the Italian girl champion, Maria Teresa de Filippis, who started in the back row of the grid due to missing practice, but sailed through into second place within a few laps, driving with remarkable determination. Among the other entries were 150S Maseratis, Stanguellini's, Osca's and a "special" consisting of an original A6G Maserati sports car of 1948, fitted with a 1,900 Alfa-Romeo engine and gearbox. Just as in English national or club racing, the Italians have some drivers who win regardless of the car they are using, and though Bellucci and de Filippis had the best cars they deserved and justified them, as witness the average speed and fastest lap.

Results :

1st :	L. Bellucci (Maserati 200S)	...	...	...	98.430 k.p.h.
2nd :	Sig. de Filippis (Maserati 200S)	...	...	...	18 sec. behind
3rd :	A. Sbordone (Osca 1,100)	...	...	...	1 lap behind

Fastest lap : L. Bellucci (Maserati), 2 min. 23 sec.—103.216 k.p.h.

NOTES ON THE MILLE MIGLIA CARS—continued from page 356

mountain passes. The chassis frame on these cars is built up from fairly large oval-section tubing and small round-section tubing to form a peculiar structure that is neither "ladder-type" nor space-frame, but a complicated mixture of the two. The front suspension is by wishbones and coil-springs, but there is no normal kingpin as on the Grand Prix cars. The point of each wishbone forms a pivot for rotational and up-and-down movement, and into this fits a very short kingpin, one top and one bottom, and these are part of the stub-axle forging. The rear suspension is de Dion with a transverse leaf-spring mounted low beneath the whole assembly, with the tube located centrally on a sliding joint, the attachment to the tube being on a bracket welded below the tube itself, to give a lower roll centre. The four-cylinder engine remains unchanged from the prototype which appeared at Nurburgring last year, having two double-choke Weber carburettors, eight plugs and two overhead camshafts. The four-speed gearbox bolts onto the rear of the engine and an open propeller-shaft drives to the differential unit mounted on the rear of the chassis frame. Right-hand steering is utilised and a full-width aluminium body, and with only the driver in place the left side of the cockpit is covered by a metal panel and a wrap-round windscreen is used.

The sports class, from 750 c.c. to 1,100 c.c., is the home of amateur-built "specials," early 1,100-c.c. Osca and privately-owned models from the small firms like Stanguellini and Ermini.

In the 750-c.c. class there was some factory support in the shape of two very beautiful little 750-c.c. Osca four-cylinders with twin overhead camshafts, being scaled-down versions of the factory 1½-litre cars; these being driven by Chiron and Capelli. Against these were Le Mans-type D.B. and Panhards, and special Renaults from France, Stanguellini's, Gisors, etc.

There was one more open sports class, seemingly specially designed to allow the British to win something, and it was for open cars costing not more than 2 million lire (£1,150 approximately) and of catalogue

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