



Keith Blumel Photography

A PROPER REBODY

THE UNCOVERED STORY OF THE REBODIED
340 MILLE MIGLIA S/N 0294 AM
BY HISTORIAN KEITH BLUEMEL

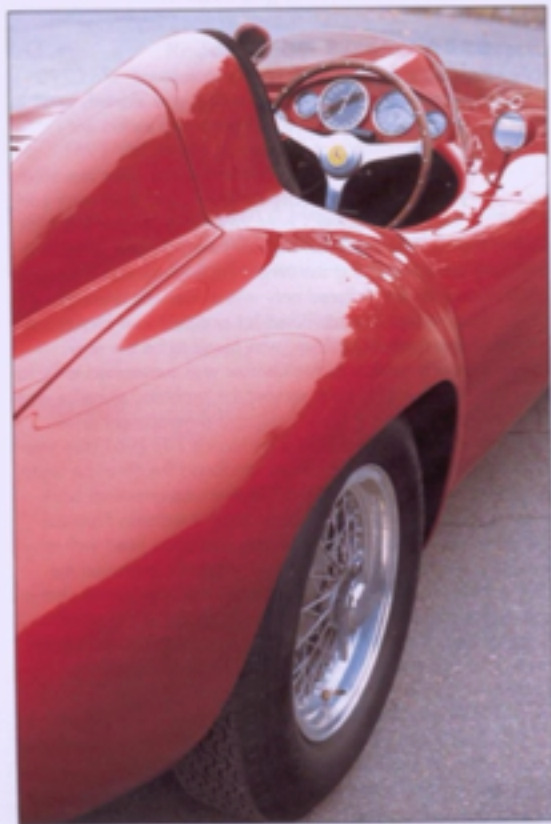


Keith Blumel Photography



Leif Skarstedt Photography

This is all that was needed to go racing, and we have talked (rhapsodized?) in the past about the simplicity of it all - large steering wheel, handy gearshift, just enough gauges and switches. Curved windscreen and circular cockpit opening, plus that long head rest, only made it better.



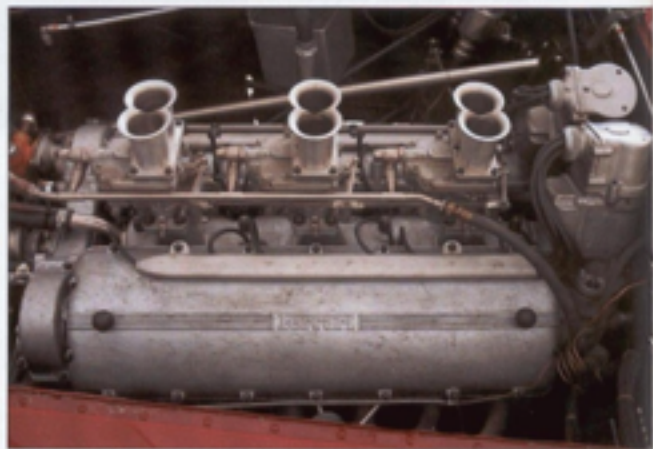
Leif Skarstedt Photography

340 MM



Karl Brunel Photography

The original Touring Spyder body was a bit square and stodgy, and already Ferrari was looking to the sweeter racing style proposed by Sergio Scaglietti. When s/n 0294 AM was wrecked, Ferrari proposed that Scaglietti rebody it in the svelte and lithesome style seen here.



Much power for the day - 280 bhp from 4.1 liters. This Lampredi engine was the strongest powerplant at the time, and in 1953, at the height of its reputation. It would be several more years before it was supplanted for good.

A VERY SHORT BRIEF OF THE TYPE...

A total of ten 340 MM models were produced during 1953, two with spyder bodywork by Carrozzeria Touring, five with spyder bodywork by Vignale, and three with Pinin Farina berlinetta bodies. Chassis number 0294 AM was the fifth example produced based on chassis number sequence, and was thus exactly halfway through the production of the series. It was thus also the second of the spyder examples bodied by Touring.

AN OPINION TO BE SHARED BY OTHERS...

Personally, I do not think that this spyder creation by Touring was one of the best examples of their work, appear-



The original Touring spyder body on 340 MM, s/n 0294 AM, in 1953 at Silverstone with Mike Hawthorn winning the Daily Express Trophy.

ing rather staid when compared first, to the concurrent Vignale spyder offering, with the latter's tight voluptuous curves and chic detailing, and second, to the supreme elegance of line of the Pinin Farina berlinetta.

THE BASIC PACKAGE...

The model was powered by a 4.1 liter version of the single overhead camshaft per bank, long block, Lampredi designed V-12 engine, fitted with triple four barrel carburetors, and normally twin magneto ignition, all to produce a claimed 280 bhp. The engine was mated to a four speed, plus reverse, all synchromesh gearbox, with a universally coupled drive shaft to the rigid rear axle. It had independent front suspension with a transverse leaf spring, Houdaille lever shock absorbers and an anti-roll bar. At the rear there were semi-

elliptic springs, Houdaille lever shock absorbers, and twin tie rods at each side to firmly locate the axle.

FAMOUS AND INFAMOUS CAREERS...

The Factory competition career for this series was quite short, basically only the early months of 1953, as the Factory upgraded two examples to 375 (4.5 liter) specification for the Le Mans 24 Hour Race in June, neither of which finished. A 340 MM PF berlinetta was also entered by the Factory for Giannino and Paolo Marzotto, and this finished fifth overall, behind the all vanquishing Jaguars (1st, 2nd and 4th) and the Cunningham CSR (3rd) that spoiled a complete podium for them. The only other Ferrari entry that year was another 340 MM, this time a Vignale spyder, entered and

driven by Luigi Chinetti with Tom Cole. Unfortunately, this retired as the result of an accident in which the latter died. Prior to Le Mans, Villoresi and Cassani in a 340 MM Vignale spyder, s/n 0280 AM, had won the Giro di Sicilia on April 12, and the same car had taken victory in the Mille Miglia on April 25-26, driven by Giannino Marzotto and Marco Crosara.

S/N 0294 AM INTO THE FRAY...

The example featured here, chassis number 0294 AM, originally constructed with a spyder body by Touring, made its competition debut as a Factory entry in the 1953 Mille Miglia driven by Luigi Villoresi, partnered with Pasquale Cassani. It retired. Some sources record retirement due to an accident, others due

to axle failure; perhaps it was axle failure due to an accident, or vice versa! Subsequently, it made only one further appearance as a Factory works entry, at Silverstone in England, on May 9, 1953. This was in the Production Sports Car race, at the BRDC Daily Express International Trophy Meeting, where Mike Hawthorn drove it to victory.

INTO PRIVATEER HANDS...

Less than a month later, Ferrari sold s/n 0294 AM to its first private owner, Hans Ruesch from Switzerland, although the car was then road registered in Modena on registration number MO 30111. Prior to the sale, the full width Plexiglas screen and the wiper assembly were removed, although a flat aero screen forward of this on the driver's side was retained. However, this was narrower and deeper than the original, with a curve to the top edge and a different surround frame. Initially, it had a small centrally mounted rectangular rear view mirror in the air stream, which presumably was affected by air

pressure on its rear face, and was soon replaced by a more practical circular racing style rear view mirror.

Within a week of taking delivery, the new owner had the car in the Isle of Man, off the west coast of England, for the British Empire Trophy race on the Douglas road circuit. There he finished a creditable third overall and second in class, the race being won by Reg Parnell in an Aston Martin DB35. His next outing was a month later on home ground at the Vue des Alpes Hillclimb, where he won his class and finished sixth overall. Unfortunately, his only other appearances with the car both resulted in accidents. The first was on August 9th in the Circuito di Senegallia in Italy, where the car first appeared with the hood painted white (perhaps an unlucky omen?), and the second was in the Gran Premio Supercortemaggiore at Merano in Italy on September 6th. The latter accident was of major proportions, where the body was virtually destroyed and the chassis damaged. This was to be Ruesch's last race with s/n 0294 AM, as it was returned to the Factory for repair, and then went the USA via Luigi Chinetti in 1955.

A NEW SET OF CLOTHES...

The repairs to the chassis and various mechanical parts to put the car back into running order were carried out on Factory job sheet (commessa) reference number 672/AC, with invoice reference 397/54. At this time, the original Touring spyder body was considered beyond economical repair and was also dated in design, so the rolling chassis was given to Scaglietti to rebody in the style of the then current 750 Monza model. It should be remembered that this was the period of the start of the association with Scaglietti, as the main competition body builder for Ferrari; thus it was logical that the rebody should be entrusted to his company. Taking this logic a little further, they had only produced one basic design for Ferrari at that time. This was the one used on the 500 Mondial and the 750 Monza models, albeit with some slight differences between the two, so it was a simple matter to stretch the design to match the longer wheelbase and wider track of the 340 MM. The family resemblance is clearly evident, and could probably be best described as looking like a Monza after a course of steroids.

It has worn this body style from then onward to the present day.

OFF TO AMERICA...

The early history of the car in the United States has been unclear, although Antoine Prunet believes that it was part of Tony Parravano's stable (see Cavallino 96, page 5). This would explain its disappearance for over a decade, until it was sold via Luigi Chinetti to Dieter Holterbosch of New York in 1966.

AND A RETURN TO RACING...

He retained the car for over twenty years until 1997, using it in historic races and gatherings, even travelling to Europe with it for the historic Mille Miglia a couple of times.

The newest owner uses the car in historic racing, and he has had a replica of the original fuel tank constructed to house a safety fuel cell, with the filler non-return flap neatly



Keith Blumel Photography

sited in the filler neck, beneath the original aluminum quick release cap. The original tank has been retained in storage to maintain the pedigree. During 2001 it underwent a complete engine rebuild, plus a general overhaul, with renowned mechanical ace Gianni Torelli in Campagnola Emilia, Italy. In 2002 it returned to action during the historic racing season, and is looking forward to a full 2003.

For more on the 340 MM, please see Cavallino 52, 53, 55, 58, 87, 89, and 96.

Keith Blumel is a leading Ferrari historian and author, and is a consultant to the Factory when they need outside research done on the older cars. He also conducts researches for owners on the histories of their Ferraris. In addition, he has also written several guidebooks on Ferrari, which are required reading.

PRODUZIONE DELLA 340 MM...

Chassis:	Body Style:
0268 AM	Spyder Touring
0280 AM	Spyder Vignale
0284 AM	Spyder Vignale
0286 AM	Spyder Vignale*
0294 AM	Spyder Touring**
0318 AM	Berlinetta Pinin Farina* - PF job # 12235
0320 AM	Berlinetta Pinin Farina* - PF job # 12236
0322 AM	Berlinetta Pinin Farina* - PF job # 12237
0324 AM	Spyder Vignale
0330 AM	Spyder Vignale

* Upgraded to 375 MM mechanical specification by Factory.

** Fitted with a Spyder body by Scaglietti in 1954, in the style of the 750 Monza.

N.B. Chassis number 0236 MM is reported to have started life as either a 342 America or a 340 MM PF berlinetta, but PF records show it as a 250 MM model, job # 10957, and the Factory records it sold as a 250 MM model.