



LFANATIC

March '03

Newsletter of the Alfa Romeo Owner's Club - Wisconsin

Calendar:

Mar 15(Sat) Bo's car
April Colin's ?
May 3 Hillclimb in New Glarus
June 15 Brit Sport. Field Day
July 3-6 Nat. Convention-Miami
July 11/13 Iola Car Show

July 12/13 Miller Club
July 17/20 Festa Italiana
July 17-20 B Redman Historics
Aug 3(Sun) ICAMS
Sept 27/28 Fall Challenge-Chicago AROC

Bartolata's, Slattery's, Al's, VSCDA??????

Club Event: Restoration / Hanging Out--March 15(Sat)

Bo Monroe is in the process of restoring a 1953 1900TI, a factory-prepped entrant in the 1954 Carrera Panamericana. He'll put on a brief show-and-tell of this piece of Alfa history at 11:00 am at his interesting place in Barneveld; afterwards, lunch at the Grumpy Troll. Space is TIGHT so please RSVP if you're planning to attend. Directions/RSVP: 608.924.9700 or bo@forza-mm.com



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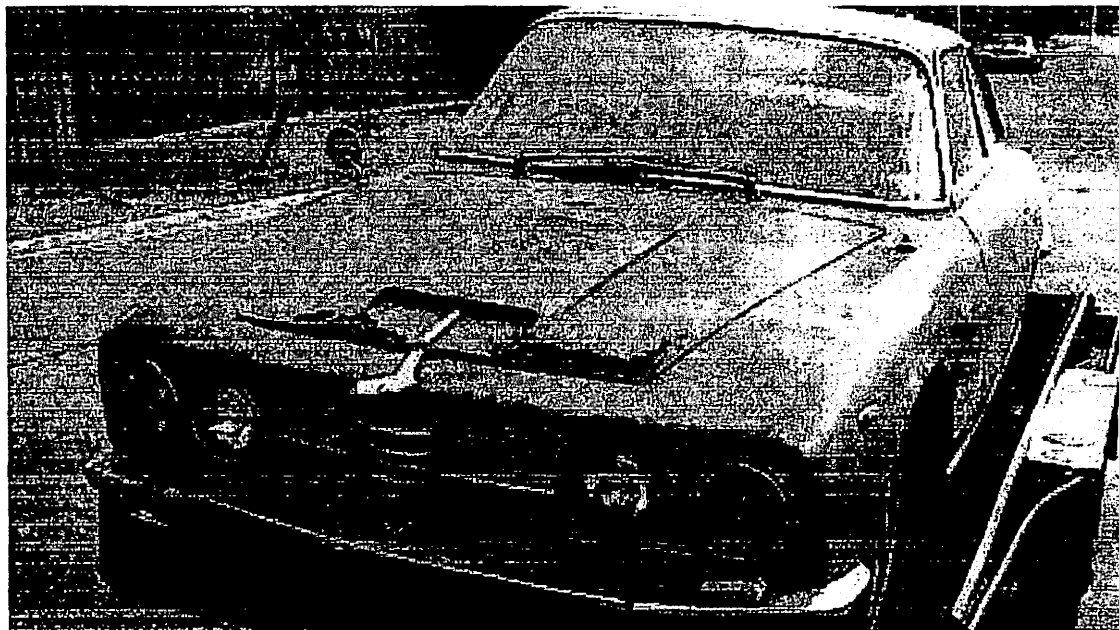
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MEMBERSHIP is \$60 per year and
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newals or new memberships may be
sent directly to the National Office.

NEWSLETTER ONLY: \$12/year. For
non-Alfa owners. Call Editor.

EDITOR'S MISCELLANEA

Reina news: the plan is to be consolidated on Capitol Dr by the end of summer. The Scorsone shop will move to the Burnam location....Also moving is Al Pinkowsky!! to 520 A Capitol in Pewaukee. More....Welcome to new member Mark Severtson in Oregon....Molto excited new Alfa owners: the Whitfords with a '95 quad cam 164 that Russ assures me is *fast*. And, Bill Hall excitedly bought a white pristine 2600 sprint from Nevada that he's tried to buy for years. His fourth 2600 sprint?...An engrossing yet depressing website: (from Aust., a tale of rust repair, and more): <http://members.iweb.net.au/~pstor/2600stuff/2600.htm>Speaking of Australia, I've recently read 4 great books (need ideas?), and adventurer Jessica Wirth returned a month ago....The handsdown site-of-the-month winner: <http://italspeed.com/> (an Alfa ambulance !!!)...Of course there is always Bo Monroe's alfacentro.com -- it never ceases to amaze with something interesting and helpful....Please let our advertisers know you appreciate their support....Finally, as the foglia green repaint nears completion, Brad Trick smiles more.



George:

I want to tell you a little bit about our 1900TI sedan, aka "#265."

An Alfa Romeo 1900 berlina bearing the s/n 07291 was discovered in Guatemala by a fellow named Ira Lewis in 1991. He was primarily interested in it as a source of parts for a 1900C series coupe he was restoring. He was surprised to find that this derelict sported twin carbs, tube headers and other trick parts. He got in touch with his friends Carter Hendricks and Peter Marshall; they recognized it as a TI and thought it had to be one of the cars Alfa sent to the last running of the epic Mexican road race, the V Carrera Panamericana, in November 1954. Though Ira judged it to be beyond restoration, Carter pleaded with him not to scrap the car. Finally Ira said "fine, you buy it," and offered the car to Carter and Peter. Carter jumped first, and arranged to have the car shipped to his shop in St. Louis.

When Carter unpacked the crate he found a sad, rusty old hulk which had been crashed and poorly repaired. He had hoped it might be Sanesi's classing winning car #251, but it didn't match the serial number of that or any of the other team cars. Still convinced that the car had to be from the Carrera, he dug further. The breakthrough came when Carter found an old photo of a wreck from the race, an Alfa bearing #265. The damage on the car matched the photo. Now things made sense:

The reason the car was found in Guatemala is that it was the car of the Guatemalan entry of Antonio David Cerezo Ruiz. After learning this from Carter, Ira went through the Guatemala City phone book, dialing each and every Cerezo by turn, asking "were you in the 1954 Carrera?" until finally a voice said "Si, and no one has asked me about it in 30 years."

From there Carter set upon a very thorough and painstaking task of documenting 07291. Amazingly, Cerezo had kept everything, even shipping records and of course the car's race log. Carter didn't stop there; he continued to research the Carrera itself and the whole history of the 1900, which was so pivotal to the success of Alfa Romeo after WWII. He interviewed Cerezo, and corresponded with Sanesi, Mantovani, Bonini, as well as Giuseppe Busso (head designer of the 1900, Giulietta, Giulia, etc.) and Ing. Landsberg (designer of the 1900TI's special camshafts). He tracked down and interviewed every surviving Alfa team driver, including other privateers from Mexico and Argentina. He obtained film footage of the race never seen anywhere, and through serendipity and perseverance managed to obtain original large format photo negatives of 07291 taken during scrutineering, just a few days before the race.

According to the records at Alfa Romeo 07291 was built on Christmas Eve, 1953. Later the next year this car and 11 other chassis were turned over to the competition department to be specially prepared for the Mexican road race. The original plans had called for six cars to be built for private entrants from Latin America, competing in the new 'Turismo Europeo' class. However it seems that as the idea sunk in Alfa decided to add their own squadra of aces, led by head test driver and 159 pilot Consalvo Sanesi. Also on the team: Bruno Bonini (works test driver), Sergio Mantovani (Maserati GP pilot), Piero Carini (Turismo Champion) and Mario Della Favera. All had achieved success racing 1900s in Europe. Mexican Jose Solana was the only foreigner on the Alfa team. He was a veteran

of the previous Carreras, and won his place through the urging of Dott. Camisa, one of the fathers of the Carrera PA and the head of AR Mexico.

Joining the team cars was a formidable slate of privateers. Guido Mancini from Rome had run the '53 Carrera in a Ferrari 375MM, finishing fourth. He brought over his black TI for the race. There were two Argentinians, Airaldi and Llano, both very fast, but in the event both crashed out. Adolfo Velasquez owned a speed shop in Mexico City and had helped Italian teams in previous Carreras. Enrique Fluchaire was also from Mexico, a veteran of spectacular and terrifying crashes in previous Carreras. As it turned out he did not start, as it seems he could not convince his co-driver to get back into a car with him!

Antonio David Cerezo Ruiz was an up-and-coming racer from Guatemala. He had just two races under his belt in a little Opel Capitan, and though he had been fast, the Carrera was a huge step up for him. He purchased the Alfa with the help of a generous subsidy, buying the TI for half the price of a standard berlina. Even still, he spent every peso he had and had no money left for gas or food. Fortunately he was able to secure small sponsorships from Mobil Oil and Bull (an office equipment company).

The works and privateer cars were prepped more-or-less identically, but the total extent of the preparation is not clear. A "standard" TI started with a high degree of special equipment --usually associated with the later 1900CSS-- which included twin Solex 40PII carburetors, hot cams, oversize valves, 'banana' tube headers, a strengthened gearbox, huge, helically finned brakes with air scoops and more. Additional preparation for the Carrera started with the addition of an extra fuel tank, aircraft safety harnesses, external hood releases and hood hold-downs. The team cars were equipped with bug deflectors on the hoods. Our car was found with a carefully lightened flywheel, and it seems certain that this modification was done in Italy before the race. Cerezo tells that just prior to the race one of the Alfa mechanics handed him a re-curved distributor wrapped in a cloth, saying it would be worth several km/h. There is also talk that the cars may have been lightened, but exactly in what manner is not certain.

The Alfas were triumphant in the race, easily sweeping the Turismo Europeo class while beating all the American small stock cars in the process. Sanesi led the Alfas to a 15th overall finish. In the early, difficult stages they were especially impressive as they embarrassed the mighty Lincolns on the treacherous mountain roads approaching Mexico City. Indy winner Billy Vukovich was so taken by the little Alfas that he pleaded for a test drive (which was promptly arranged.)

Cerezo ran out of luck on those same tricky mountain roads. It was on the second day, in the third stage when they came down upon a sweeping corner before a bridge. The corner was peppered with gravel due to the off-road exploits of previous racers. Cerezo had too much steam on and knew that he was going to lose it. Rather than drive off of the bridge he opted to steer for the embankment. The car hit a large boulder and somersaulted onto the railroad tracks below. It landed upside-down, skidded for a distance down the tracks on its roof, finally ground to a halt. Word went out that Cerezo and his co-piloto, Virgilio? Palachios, were gravely injured -- even killed, by one account. In fact, they walked away.

After the race the car went to Mexico City, where it took a year to disassemble and repair the terrible damage. Cerezo then brought it back home to Guatemala -- after many hassles

with the authorities. He used it on the street for a year or so. When he was divorced, his wife got the car in the settlement. It went to her family's coffee plantation in the highlands of Guatemala where it spent the next 30 or so years. Eventually it broke down for good, was sent to Guatemala City, put up on blocks and forgotten until Ira Lewis happened upon it.

Meanwhile, Alfa had left all but one of the team cars behind, and one by one it seems they were used up and destroyed. Today only #265 [07291] and one other, that driven by Solana --#257-- are known to exist. The Solana car is in Mexico City. Sanesi's car #251 was last seen in Monterrey in the 1970's. It is said that "the richest man in Mexico" had a very high bounty on that chassis, but it has yet to surface.

Carter started to restore 07291, getting as far repairing the extensive rust to the floors and straightening the chassis, still bent after the crash many years ago. Unfortunately, the project stalled, and faced with too many interesting projects and not enough time and resources, decided he should let it go. Meanwhile, my father and I had been looking for a suitable car to take to Italy to run in the Mille Miglia, and while we weren't looking for a project, when we learned of this car being available, it was irresistible.

To say "the car has many needs and we have a very ambitious timetable" would be making a pair of serious understatements. But the 1900 community is a tight one, and help and encouragement is coming literally from all over the world. Carter remains on board as a sage advisor and source of inspiration. Our own Rex Chalmers is building the motor, transmission, and rear axle. I am doing the remaining metalwork. Many parts still need to be sourced, and much of what we have is broken, rusted or demented. So it is a daunting task, but it will get done. Viva numero 265! Viva la Carrera!

--Bo Monroe



1957 ALFA ROMEO CABRIOLET GENEVA SHOW CAR Here in Wisconsin !!!

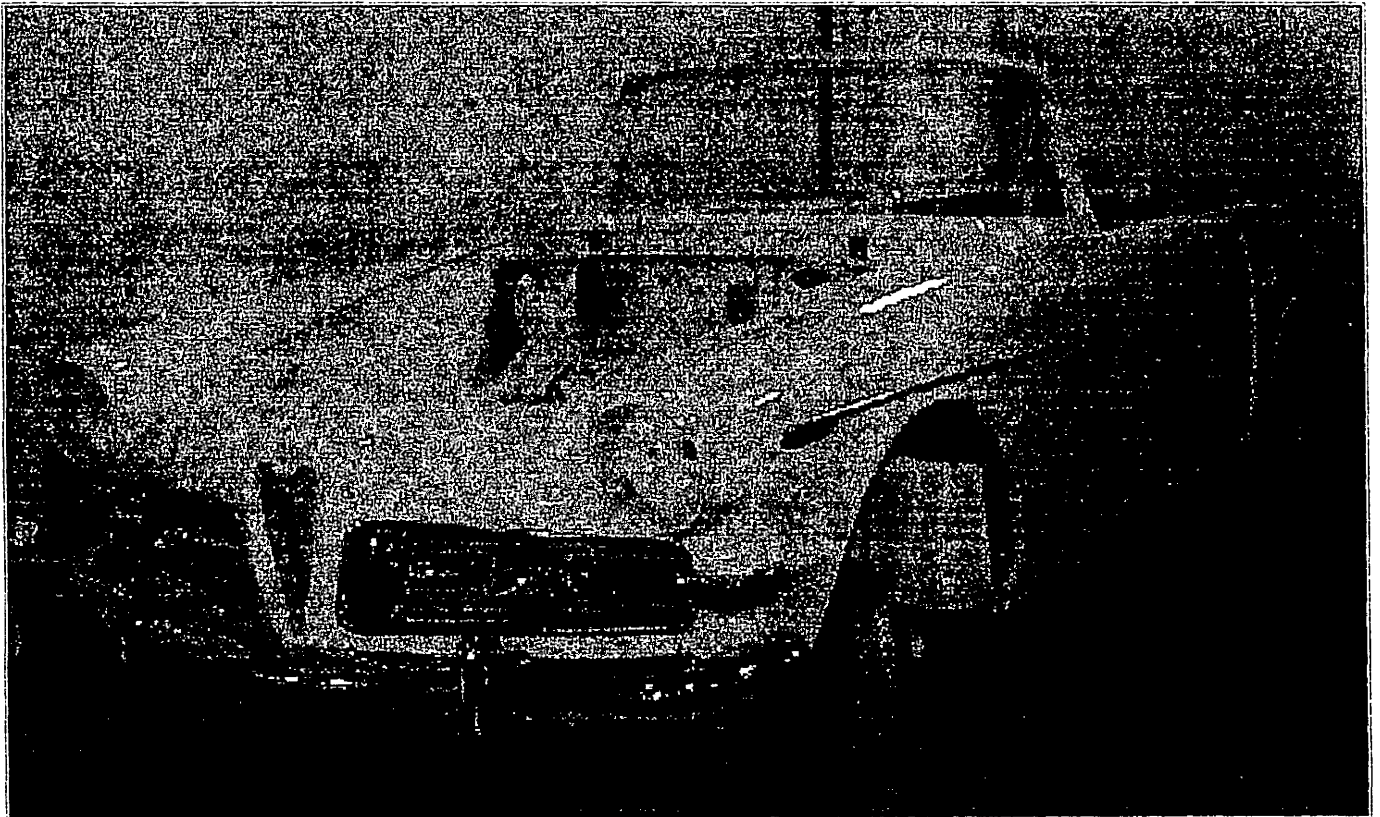
Jim Johnson, a Janesville area friend of Tom Caulfield, wanted an interesting car. Tom and friend went to see various vehicles including a Maserati, but nothing seemed quite right until Tom found this Alfa in Switzerland (thru a mailing--close to Mulhouse, where it had been it's full life.) The original thought was to do some minimal work to get it to be a driver. One thing led to another and seven year's later it is perhaps one year away from being back on the road with much more work being done than originally planned.

Built on a 1900CSS chassis, the car has an aluminum body by Ghia-Aigle (Swiss). Galvanic corrosion (steel and aluminum do not like each other--the less noble aluminum goes away) caused considerable extra work to get things back in order. Car was judged to be fairly large by the reaction of some of the attendees. As seen at the event, the car interior, engine, transmission, steering wheel, and top are not yet installed. The car is painted an ivory cream color and will have a red leather interior (redone by a craftsman in Janesville.) I believe these are both the original colors. Car is being done to very high standards but is not intended to be a national show car. It should do well in regional showings however. The owner wants a classy "driver". The trimwork, bumpers and grill were redone (remove dents, kincks, scrapes) and rechromed by Motion Products to impeccable condition. Tom says he had a hard time explaining to Jim why the Motion Products work on the trim cost as much as it did (the round number is \$15k!). There is a lot of chrome on the front including a beautiful intricate grill. Even the trunk latch hardware was chromed.

The Borrani wire wheels with old Michelin X tires were off to the side. The wheels and tires have been purchased. The transmission (I believe Tom said it was a 5 speed) was seen under a bench in the shop and is actuated by a column shifter. Did not get to see the engine. It was stored away in a sealed plastic bag in a back room. It had even compression, ran smoothly, so was left alone. The gas cap is accessed by a opening the trunk lid; AND, QUITE A SIGHT IN THE CENTER OF THE LID, the Ghia-Aigle LUGANO script and the large wings of an eagle above. Alfin drum brakes looked great.

We must have another event at Pernott's when the car is fully completed!!

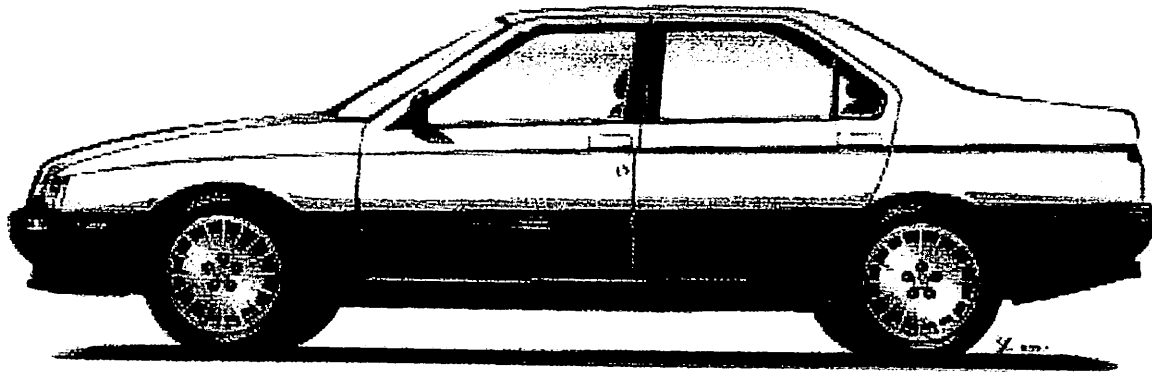
--Gary Schommer & committee



affordable sports

By GARDIN JENKINS

Illustration by STEVEN CAVALIERI



1991-95 Alfa Romeo 164

ALFA ROMEO BROUGHT the 164 sedan to the U.S. in 1991 to replace the aging and quirky Milano. The cars shared some common DNA, especially under the hood, but while the Milano was a traditional rear-wheel-drive Alfa sedan, the 164 was a modern, front-drive luxury car—a \$27,500-and-up BMW 5 Series competitor. Also unusual for Alfa, the 164 shared its platform with three other corporate stablemates, including the Saab 9000.

The Milano's classic 3.0-liter 60° 12-valve twin-cam V6 was updated for the 164. Output was raised to 183 hp at 5,800 rpm and 189 lb-ft of torque at 4,400 rpm in the L version, 200 hp and 195 lb-ft of torque in the S. Zero to 60 times were in the mid-7-second range, and the 164 was available with either a 4-speed automatic transmission or a much rarer (in the U.S., anyway) 5-speed manual. Alfa commissioned Pininfarina to design the body, and its flowing lines still look good today.

Good braking for the 3,325-lb sedan was provided by vented discs front and solid discs rear that sat inside relatively skinny 15-inch wheels. MacPherson struts at all four corners delivered a comfortable, well-balanced ride.

The 164 was extensively redesigned for 1994, with the L becoming the LS and the S becoming the Quadrifoglio. The exterior was updated with new bumpers, grille and wheels, while the

Quadrifoglio, like the S before it, received a unique body kit. Inside, the flashy but bewildering center console was toned down and simplified, and the instrument panel received new gauges.

Both versions received a new 4-cam engine with 4-valve heads and a new ECU and ignition. Power was increased about 15 percent (up to 230 hp in the Q) while torque rose about seven percent. The Q also received electronically adjustable shock absorbers.

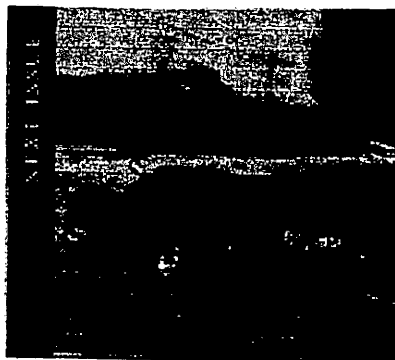
While the 164 was quick and handled well, Alfa technicians complained it wasn't much fun to drive. Feedback was muted and the front-drive configuration didn't lend itself to controlled powerslides—two classic Alfa values.

As with many Alfa Romeos, the 164 has its share of problems. The electrical system is spotty, with displays and lights flickering and cutting out sporadically. The radiator's cooling fan is suspect, so

watch the temperature gauge. Expect the electronically controlled HVAC system to be problematic, a very expensive repair in the '94-'95 cars. Electrical problems with window switches and sunroofs are common, too.

The older twin-cam engine has proven more reliable and cheaper to repair than the 4-cam. A rough idle hints that one or more of the cam belts have jumped a tooth; replacing the belts on a 4-cam costs \$2,000. The very popular automatic transmission often dies after around 90,000 miles, a repair that adds up to \$4,000 in parts alone on a 4-cam. The biggest problem, however, is that all 164 parts are getting hard to find.

Almost 7,000 164s were sold in the U.S., so they're pretty easy to find. The '91-'93 models range from around \$2,500 to \$9,000, while the rarer '94-'95s start around \$8,000, with Qs sometimes advertised for almost \$17,000. ●



It's A Bird, It's a Plane

No, it's a Zonda: A Pagani Zonda C12S to be exact. Though it's powered by a 7.3-liter Mercedes-AMG V12, the Zonda is built in Italy. And not just anywhere in Italy, but in Modena—the supercar capital of the world. In addition to Pagani, we visit Lamborghini, De Tomaso, Edonis and, oh yeah, Ferrari.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

It was great to see such a solid turnout at the Wisconsin Auto Museum in January. Those who were able to make it were rewarded with a relaxing event and the opportunity to catch up with Alfisti they might not have seen in a while. Debbie and I both really enjoyed it.

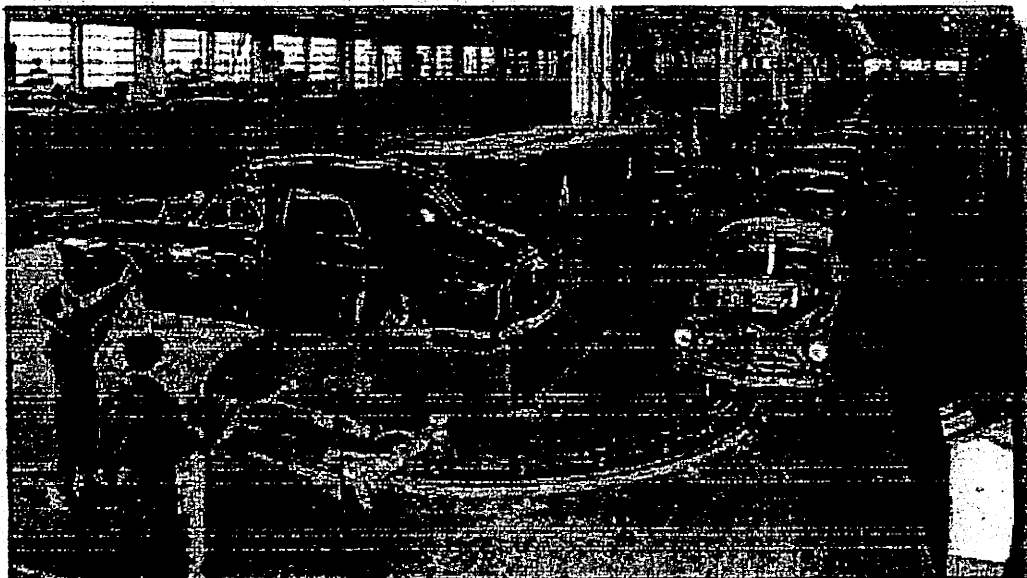
Mike Besic did a great job in his presentation at our annual banquet, sharing his experiences in helping set a world speed record at the Bonneville Salt Flats last August. We thank the Besics'; Mike, Dianne, and son Mike for joining us. I wish to thank our door prize sponsors, ALFASPORT, Besic Motorsports, GT Motorsports, Reina International Auto & Vespa, and Slattery's Automotive Service for their donations of door prizes. Because of their generosity, no one went home empty handed! In our short business meeting that evening, the leadership of our club was again voted in. I had a chance to acknowledge the contributions of our officers, those of Bo Monroe our recent Webmaster and introduce Steve Wirtz our new Webmaster. I wish to further acknowledge the contributions of George Meikrantz, our dedicated editor. George, thanks for your continued efforts. You are the glue, (and paper, and print and staples) that help us do the things we do.

Thanks Steve and Suzanne Wirtz for hosting the Milano Tensioner Tech Session. Great soups were served and enjoyed. As others have said, "we have a great club, with the nicest people". Check out our web-site. Steve and Suzanne have put together a quiz (with answers) to test your Alfa knowledge.

I recently viewed THE GRADUATE starring Dustin Hoffman, Katherine Ross and Anne Bancroft. As most of you know, a young Dustin Hoffman tools around in a way cool Duetto. I'll admit, I sought this movie out at my local library because I miss the sights and sounds of my ALFA in winter. Interestingly, my whole family enjoyed what I sometimes refer to as one of the "classic ALFA movies". Check it out. It's a great movie!

We have another exciting year in the works. Dates are locked in for the New Glarus Hill Climb (thank you Tom Caulfield!) and the Italian Car and Motorcycle Show is again at the Italian Community Center. There are a few spots open on the calendar and I ask your input on events that might be of interest to you. Let me or one of the other officers know. I recently received an e-mail from Don and Linda Brubaker of the Chicago chapter of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club (CAROC) inviting us to plan with them some joint events. Don is the new chapter president. The proposal is exciting and we'll keep you posted on what develops.

Don't forget to mark you calendars for the March event at Bo's. You won't want to miss the opportunity to learn firsthand about this historic Alfa. Finally, check out the biscotti at www.cabbibosbakery.com My favorite is the cinnamon-almond.

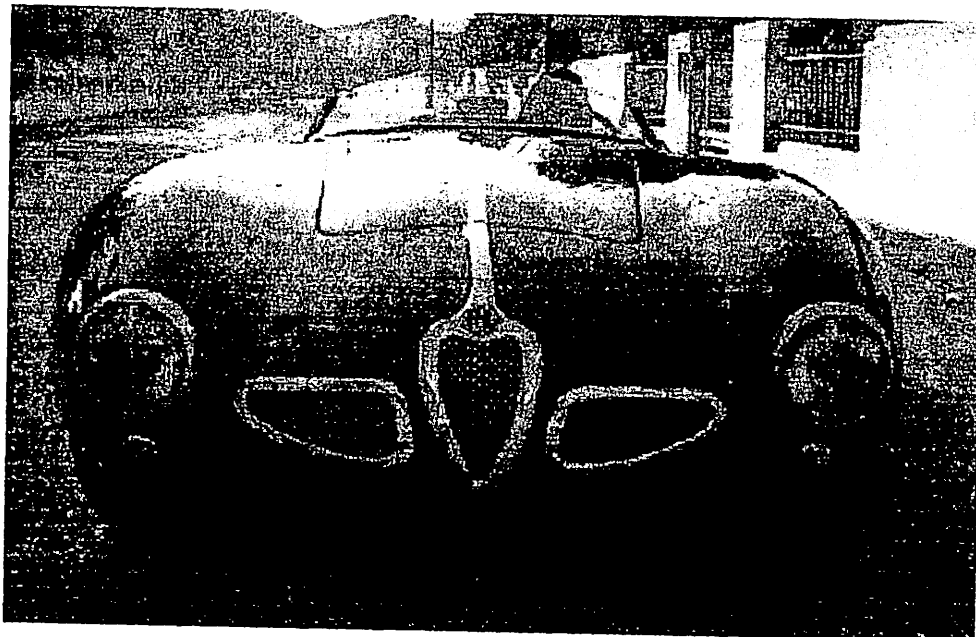
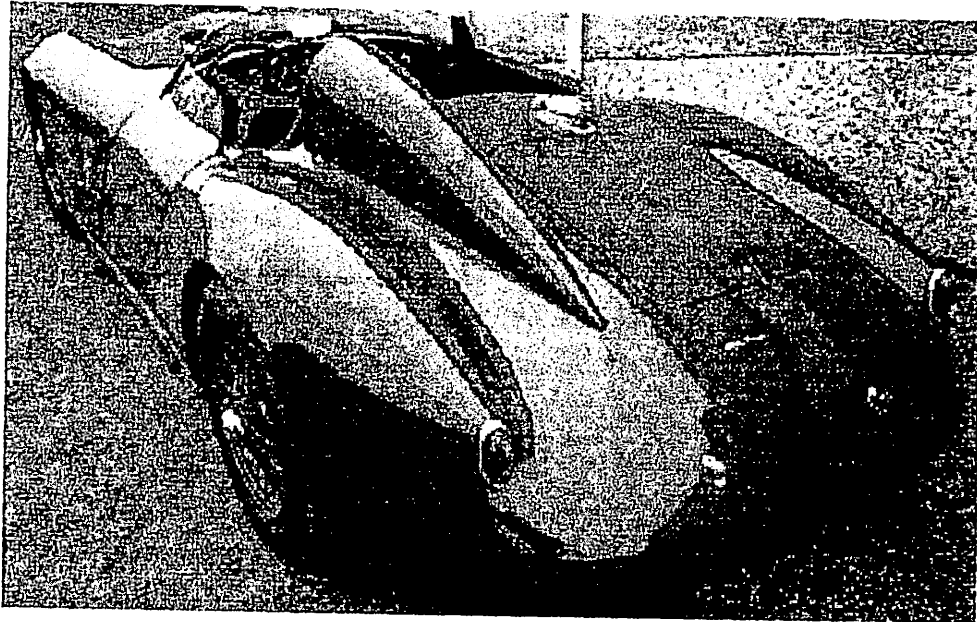


ALFA ROMEO The Spirit of Milan - Styles

This is a 218 page Alfa book you'll want to own! What i found refreshing was the non pompous, verbose or "clever" style (Milan is Milan rather than Milano). And, the format of a half page of text, and a photo for the other half. Photo size is an overlooked book parameter: too small is not good, and full page photos severely limit cars covered. Yours truly is not a fan of coffee table books; i want to learn, and meat is essential. With Styles, the size tradeoff is right--a number of excellent quality black & whites and a half page of informative text. When people are significant, the text is in a box to set off the special important nature of the person/topic. The book has balance.

Alfa Romeo has a heritage of enviable racing success and mechanical refinement / evolution, and it's all included. The type 158 159 Gran Prix cars have considerable emphasis. Racing drivers are solidly covered. Tidbits of special interest are: Villa d'Este was a concours, 1936 was the lowest year of production (16), there are 3 1/2 pages about the war, the Gran Prix cars amazingly saved with spare parts by being walled in in a cheese factory, the aero designs, mention of postwar road rollers and taxis (Alfa also made production of 3,925, the first year of 100,000 production, the surprisingly high Montreal production of 3,925, the concept cars of the '70s, and the Grand Prix engines of 4, 8, 10, 12 cylinders. A wonderful read !

--George





Al Pinkowsky

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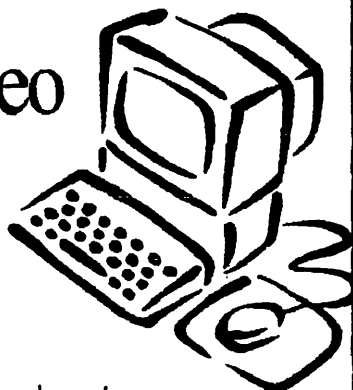
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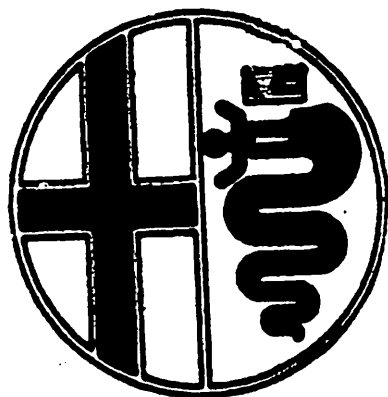
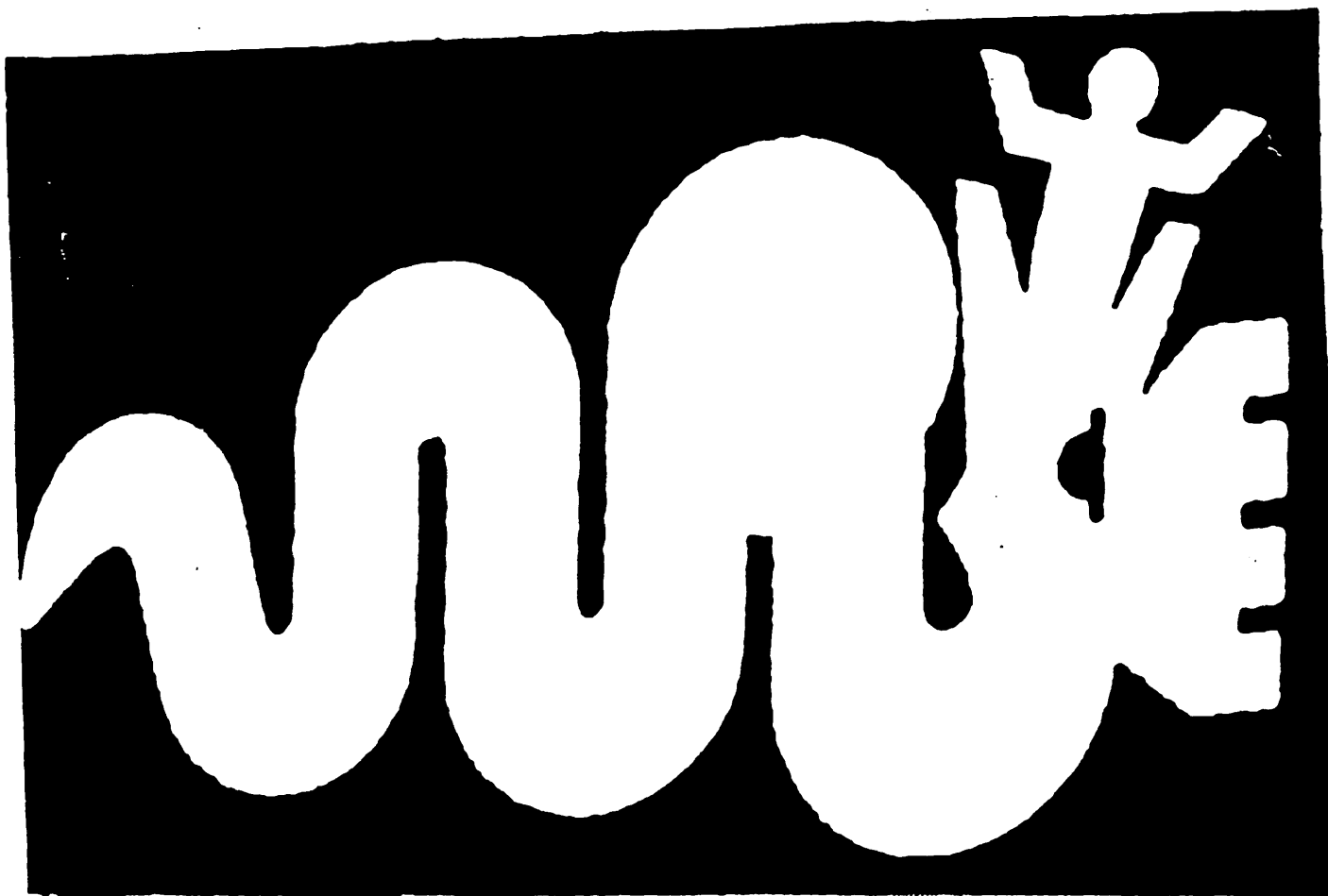
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British cars: Bill Dredge 262.238.1133
Rallying: Ed Solstad esolstad@pressenter.com

Alfa Romeo

Our chapter goals continue to be:

1. Inspire ownership, operation, restoration, and preservation of Alfa Romeo automobiles.
2. Serve as a resource to members for information on Alfa Romeo news, history, technical data.
3. Organize rallies and events of interest to Alfa Romeo enthusiasts.
4. Encourage camaraderie among Alfa owners.
5. Assist members in locating Alfa Romeo automobiles, parts, and service.
6. Increase awareness and the betterment of the Alfa Romeo marque.

Plagiarized appreciatively from TMC--The Maserati Club



First Class

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