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FIAT 124 COUPE
The very best?
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Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

The 25th year of the Florida event was celebrated in style

Story & images by Keith Bluemel



The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance celebrated its silver anniversary at its regular location on the fairways of the Golf Club at Amelia Island in Florida. Each year over the past quarter of a century, event chairman Bill Warner and his team have gathered superb arrays of cars and motorcycles of multiple genres for the delectation of the visitors, and 2020 was no exception.

Each year there is an honouree, and for 2020 it was Roger Penske, aka 'The Captain'. He was a proficient race driver in his time, but in more recent years his

renown is as a team owner and astute businessman. In the UK, the Penske Organisation is the owner of Maranello Sales, as well as the Maranello Ferrari Service and Classic Parts divisions.

To put into perspective the achievements of the Penske racing team, over a 53-year period it has won more than 540 races, 13 national championships and 18 Indianapolis 500s. As is the custom at the concours, there was a class for the cars of the honouree. In fact, this year there were four: cars that he'd driven; Team Penske cars; Team Penske Sunoco cars; and Indianapolis 500 winners. The displays certainly

*ABOVE: Lovely OSCA by Michelotti predates Lancia Fulvia shape
BELOW: Iso Rivolta and Ferrari 250 GTO*



provided an eclectic array of machinery, ranging from cars raced early in his career, like a Ferrari 250 GTO (chassis # 3987 GT) through a Porsche 917/30 CanAm car, resplendent in blue-and-yellow Sunoco livery, right up to current racers. The Indy-winning class comprised five cars, including the Dallara DW12/Chevrolet that gave the team its most recent victory in 2019.

The show encompassed 36 classes for cars, within which there were further celebratory classes. Of most interest to *Auto Italia* readers were two classes for the cars of Sergio Scaglietti, celebrating the centenary of his birth: one for production cars and another for racers. Sergio Scaglietti's son Oscar was scheduled to be an honoured judge, but due to the coronavirus situation in Italy, was unable to attend. We later learnt that, very sadly, Oscar passed away after a long illness (not coronavirus-related) and our thoughts are with all his family and friends.

Some 20 cars were entered in the two Scaglietti classes, all but one being Ferraris, the outsider being one of three Chevrolet Corvettes that Scaglietti bodied in 1959. It is said that when Enzo Ferrari visited Scaglietti's shop and saw one of the Corvettes, he enquired what it was, who it was for and how many was he building. Scaglietti replied that it was a Corvette for an American client and he was building three, to which Ferrari replied: "Good – if you do one more, you'll never do another car for me".

In the Scaglietti production car class, the cars on display ranged from a 250 GT LWB California prototype (chassis # 0769 GT), through a 250 GT TdF Berlinetta (# 0903 GT), a 250 GTO (# 3527 GT), one of ten 275 GTS4 NART Spiders (# 10139) and a 365 GTS4 'Daytona' Spider (# 16857). In the racing class, cars ranged from a 375 MM Spider (# 0366 AM), 750 Monza (# 0510 M), 500 Mondial (# 0580 MD) and 250 Testa Rossa (# 0724 TR). No question, this was a broad overview of Scaglietti-bodied Ferraris.

Best in Class Scaglietti Production award went to the 1957 Ferrari 250 GT California Spyder Prototype (chassis # 0769 GT) of Robert Bishop. The Best in Class Scaglietti Race award went to the 1955 Ferrari 750 Monza (# 0510 M) of Patrick and Carolyn Ottis. A Ferrari also collected Best in Class in the Race Cars 1946-1962 class: the 1950 Ferrari 166 MM Berlinetta Touring (# 0026 M) of Jack and Kingsley Croul. Another Ferrari Best in Class award in Sports and GT Cars 1958-1964 went to the 1959 Ferrari 410 Superamerica (# 1323SA) belonging to The Cogan Collection. The Scaglietti Award for the 'Most Historically Significant Scaglietti Bodied Ferrari' went to the 335 Sport (# 0700) entered by Scuderia NE.

Lest it be thought that Ferraris were the only Italian cars on the show field, this was definitely not the case, as there was a broad variety of marques spread through the various classes, including some rare gems. The oldest example was a 1907 Fiat Targa Florio Racer, one of five built, which finished second in that year's race, driven by Vincenzo Lancia, who the previous year had founded his eponymous marque.

There were some pre-war Alfa Romeos, including a 1931 Brianza-bodied Monza and a very original Tipo B P3 from 1934, entered by the enthusiastic English lady, Jenny Taylor. Definitely worthy of note were a couple of unique examples in the Sports & GT Car classes, namely a Ghia-bodied 1953 Abarth 1100 SS





and a lovely OSCA Prototipo with red-and-black coachwork by Michelotti.

For rally car fans there was a pair of Group 4 cars: an Alitalia-liveried Fiat 131 Abarth and a Lancia Stratos (pics above). Also on display was the resurrected De Tomaso marque with its P72 in a very eye-catching powder blue. The unique 1965 P70 sports racer sat alongside it on the Saturday (see bottom pic).

Within the show field, totalling well over 300 vehicles, there were also classes for some rarities. A 'That's

“ There were so many spectacular cars on the field that you could probably write a whole book on them ”



Cute' category included an Isetta 300 bubble car. Among some of the most outrageous custom car ever built was the 1955 Golden Sahara by custom car legend, George Barris, with its 24-carat gold-plated fittings and specially produced Goodyear Neothane translucent coloured tyres.

Preludes to the main event included a tour on Friday morning, Cars & Coffee on the show field on Saturday morning and the MotorXpo exhibition across the street. The Cars & Coffee gathering attracted a big crowd, with Alfa Romeo having a very good turnout. Within their number were two of the three Dodge Viper-based Zagato Alfa Romeo TZ3s in the USA (pics left), as well as a 2600 and a Montreal.

Three major auction companies held significant auctions: RM Sotheby's on site at the Ritz-Carlton, Gooding & Co at the nearby Amelia Island Plantation and Bonhams at the Fernandina Beach Golf Club. The Bonhams sale started with an impressive array of automobilia and memorabilia, all of which sold. Among Italian cars, a Ferrari 330 GTS sold for \$1,475,000. Probably the most surprising figure achieved was \$456,000 for the dune buggy that appeared in the





film *The Thomas Crown Affair*. The Gooding & Co auction realised total sales of over \$20 million, with a 93% sell-through rate.

The RM Sotheby's auction included a big contingent of Ferraris – 13 in total, all but one of which found new homes. Seven cars sold above the \$1 million mark, including three Ferraris. An Enzo was the overall top sale, achieving \$2,782,500, whilst a 250 GT Lusso made \$1,600,000 and a 250 GT S2 PF Cabriolet sold for £1,352,500. Although the sell-through rates were high, most of the sales were either below, or within the estimate for the car, showing a more sensible atmosphere in the market.

Getting back to the concours, the Silver Arrows display was impressive, including a 1935 W25 Grand Prix car, a 2014 W 05 F1 car and a 1938 W154 Grand Prix car in partial cut-away form. Also impressive was the class for mid-engine Corvette prototypes.

There were so many spectacular cars of all ages on the field, many with interesting histories or stories that you could probably write a book on them. A trio of Scimitars was highly unusual – no, not Reliant Scimitars but 1959 concept cars funded by the Olin Aluminium Company, to promote the material's use in car construction. Built by Reutter of Germany to a Brook Stevens design, all three were shown at the 1959 Geneva Motor Show, and all have survived the passage of time.

After all the class and corporate awards, it was time

for the Best of Show awards. The Concours de Sport trophy went to the 1973 Porsche 917/30 CanAm Spyder of Rob Kauffman, while the trophy for the Best of Show Concours d'Elegance went to the 1929 Duesenberg J-218 Town Limousine from the Lehman Collection. In closing, at the awards ceremony on Sunday afternoon, as a tribute to Roger Penske's gracious attendance, Bill Warner quipped: "Roger Penske is never normally anywhere for more than an hour, and we have had him for four days!"

ABOVE: There was plenty of pre-war Alfa action here
BELOW: Cute Fiat-Abarth 750 GT MM of 1956

