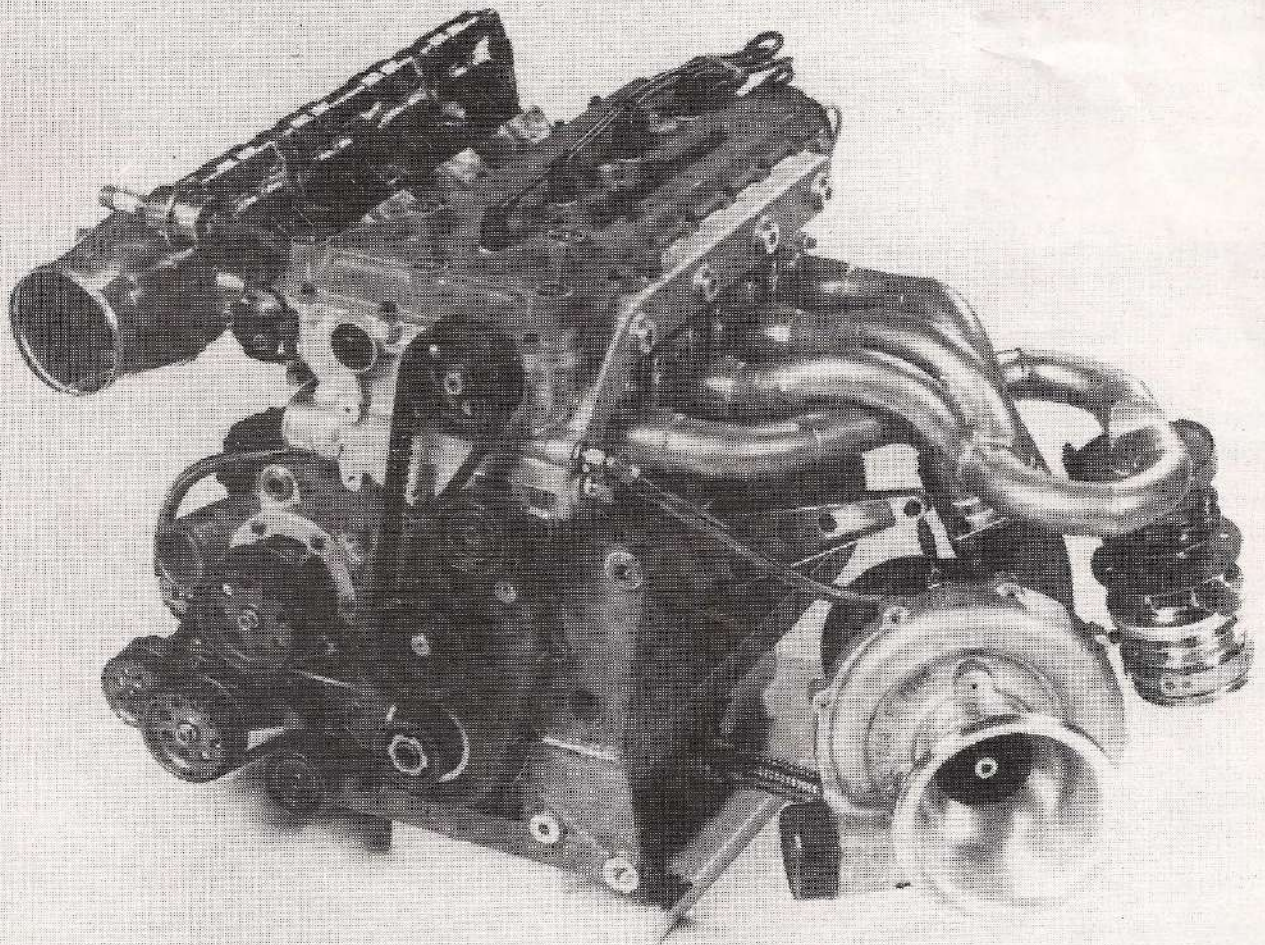


ALFACIONADA!



ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



AlFacionada!

ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

ALFACIONADA is the monthly publication of ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, a regional chapter of ALFA ROMEO OWNERS CLUB, INC. Subscriptions to this newsletter are included as part of the \$35.00 membership fee paid to AROC, Inc. Meetings are held monthly on the fourth Friday of the month at 8 P.M. at Alondra Park Clubhouse located at 3850 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Lawndale, Ca. Please send articles, letters, ads and black and white photographs to the newsletter editor by the first of the month for publication in that month's edition. Classified ads are available as a free service to members and at a nominal \$5 charge to non-members advertising Alfa items. This newsletter and its authors assume no liability for the accuracy or legality of any technical information appearing herein.

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♣ CALENDAR

		1986
MAY	18	Concours - Descanso Gardens - La Canada
	25	Time Trial #3 at Carlsbad
	30	General Meeting
	31	Wegge Motor Cars Oil Clinic/Dirve the Milano
June	2	Practice for Malibu Gran Prix Challenge
	9	Malibu Gran Prix Challenge - Northridge
	27	General Meeting
	?	Rally
JULY	12	Concours - Will Rogers State Park - Fuel Injection Clinic
	25	General Meeting
AUGUST	2	Pre tech for Time Trial #4
	9	Time Trial #4 at Riverside Raceway
	23/25	Laguna Seca Historic Races-Pebble Beach Concours NO GENERAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER	26	General Meeting
	27	Suspension Clinic - Ward & Deane (Tentative)
	?	Rally
OCTOBER	18	Concours - Briggs Cunningham Museum
	26	Swap Meet - General Meeting
NOVEMBER	1	Pre tech for Time Trial #5
	8	Time Trial #5 at Riverside Raceway
	21	General Meeting
DECEMBER	6	Christmas Party

♣ COMMERCIAL AD RATES

	HALF YEAR	FULL YEAR
1/8 Page:	\$ 45.00	\$ 75.00
1/4 Page:	\$ 90.00	\$150.00
1/2 Page:	\$180.00	\$300.00

Prices are for camera ready art. Please contact the advertising director if you need assistance in formulating your advertisement.

may CALIFORNIA 86

ALFAS GO

by Joel Hoffman

With a late April date for the meeting, the newsletter back to arriving beforehand and the prospect of winning a set of competition rear springs donated by The Alfa Recycler, we had a more normal 65 members show up. There were no big laughs like last month, but it was interesting nevertheless. Harold Kahn of USAG Eurotool surprised me and probably many others. He's been running an ad in AUTOWEEK showing a huge, filled-up tool chest and billing his company as the Official Supplier of the Ferrari F1 Race Team. With Ferraris starting over \$63,000 I figured that the tools would also be ultra expensive. We learned that it just isn't the case. Most of USAG's tools cost 50% less than Snap-On's. They will replace any tool that breaks and have offered a 10% discount to AROSC members. USAG (818 988-6657) is located at 16533 Arminta Street in Van Nuys. Thanks John for the pleasant surprise.

Saturday the 26th found about 35 of us at Diro Alfa Romeo in Harbor City. Chuck and Jan Cline brought 11 month old Eric up from Fountain Valley. Coming in one-two in the longest distance driven category were Ray Beggs from Redlands and former AROC president Howard Rockstad from Thousand Oaks. Randy and Lisa Van Daalen Wetters brought coffee and doughnuts. Diro owner Robi Thalmann was busy answering members' questions and his son Rob's Spider Veloce demo was sold during the Brakes Clinic. Our host Robi who led the demonstration generously installed a free set of pads in lucky AROSC member John Deghi's '84 GTV-6. Another happy person was Diro parts manager Gary Wadley who sold \$600 worth of parts and accessories.

By the time you have read this Mike Sperry in his TZ and Charlie Thieriot in his GTA will have competed in the May 9-11 Vintage Mexican Road Race. Next month, Charlie who has entertained us with his Time Trial reports should tell us how it went. The first of the three Rallyes and three Concours will be over. Carlsbad on the 25th will again be fun for entrants and spectators, too. Racing films highlight the May 30th meeting at Alondra Park.

Raffle prizes include a Jantzen Alfa Romeo knit shirt donated by Diro Alfa Romeo and a tool kit. If you're new to the chapter or haven't been to a meeting in a long while, we still have the buy and sell and tech session at all meetings...good deals and free expert advice. Saturday May 31st is the Oil Change Clinic at Wegge Alfa Romeo.

We've been challenged by Lotus West and the So. Cal. Z Club to a night of racing at the Malibu Gran Prix, 19600 Nordoff St. in Northridge. Instead of the usual \$1.75 per lap, we'll get a special \$1.10 rate. We've scheduled a night of practice starting at 7:30 on Monday, June 2nd. The times of our fastest drivers will be averaged and prizes given when we meet these wimps at 7 p.m. on Monday, June 9th.

At the June 27th meeting we'll have slides taken by Jim and Teri Wood. They left April 22nd, picked up their Milano in Frankfurt and drove it to Milan. They should be showing slides of the factory, museum, Balocco test track and many other places. Because of the Chernobyl meltdown we'll have a huge supply of radiation suits available.

To the famous "The check's in the mail" and "I'll only put it in a little bit" I hope we don't have to add "The Milano is coming". ARI distributed color postcards titled "Countdown to Milano" to the dealers with the April 26th introduction date. Bill Pringle brought a batch of them to the March meeting and many of us believed that it would be in the showrooms on that date. As of today, May 1st, the word is that the cars are on the boat and will be in the dealer's showrooms by May 26th. The car magazines drove some Milanos in Arizona back in March. AUTOWEEK'S April 14th issue had one on its cover with the words "Flash! The Cheapest Fast Car In America". They had many positive comments, but the road test in ROAD & TRACK and CAR AND DRIVER are what count.

The May 31st Wegge Alfa Oil Change Clinic/Milano/Quadrifoglio/Eat/Drink/Drive event kicks off at 11 a.m. at 2124 E. Colorado Blvd. in Pasadena. Host Bud Wegge is providing wine and cheese for us plus the use of his lifts to change oil and filters. Service manager Bill Pringle will be on hand helping those who've never seen the underside of the ribbed oil pan. The parts department will be selling oil filters to us and also have available Valvoline 20W-50 racing oil. If you want

continued next page

Alfa Romeo

to use a different brand or weight of oil then bring your own. Corral your friends and neighbors for this event. Introduce them to Alfa Excitement. Bring your checkbooks to Wegge Alfa or your favorite Alfa dealer and BUY A MILANO! Concours czar Dan Ritter is buying one.

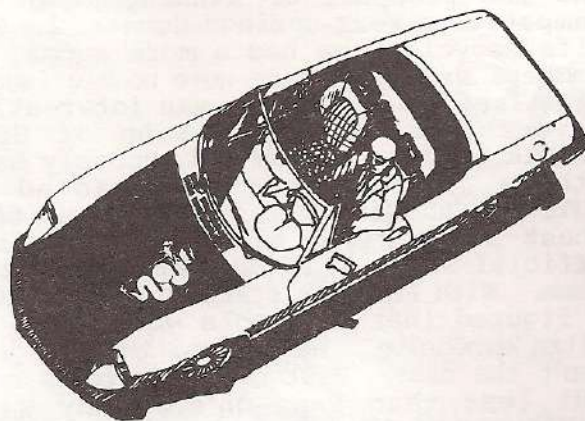
The June issue of MOTOR TREND is supposed to have a road test of the Quadrifoglio written by KPFK's "The Car Show" host, Len Frank. Len has been a judge at some of our Concours, has publicized our events on his show, and is a regular Time Trial entrant. Thanks, Len, but if we read that old familiar "can't get comfortable in the seat" routine when Alfa has put in a Recaro duplicate, we'll send you a package of Accutrim. By the way, former AROSC president Jack Becronis' '28 6C1500 Sport Zagato which won Best of Class a few years ago at the Pebble Beach Concours, is supposedly pictured next to the Quadrifoglio in the road test.

ROAD 7 TRACK'S April issue ran a couple of pictures of the Quardifoglio and wrote that its "Mazda 626 look-alike alloy wheels (lay off the bottle, R & T) with 195/60HR-15 Pirelli P-6 tires help boost the skidpad numbers to .82g from .77g for the last Spider we tested in August 1985." They also wrote that the GTV-6 was "well liked for its size, steering, roadholding and-again- that lovely engine note" in a 5 car comparison test done on the route of the old Mille Miglia.

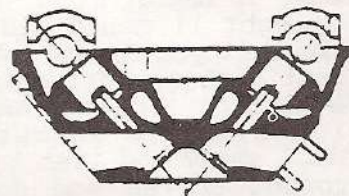
Another magazine, ARI's QUADRIFOGLIO, which is mailed to all AROC members will have a story about us, AROSC, in its next issue due to arrive most likely in early June. Rex Chalmers, AROSC member and owner of The Alfa Shop (213-642-0063, in case you missed his ads) is an avid reader of Italian car magazines. Rex reports that the Alfa 33 4x4 won its class in the Monte Carlo Rally and the Swiss Rally.

ARI which last year put out an Alfa Romeo Boutique Catalog with picnic sets, luggage, swim suits and the like has sent an Accessories Catalog to the dealers. Want a wood steering wheel for your new Milano? just order part #8605; a Milano polycotton car cover? - part #8611; a Milano nose bra? - part #8587; and Team Milano Handling Package - part #8626. These are strange parts numbers for Alfa Romeo, but they are the ones in this catalog. There are also items for the GTV-6 and Spiders, including a tonneau cover, surfboard rack (really), alloy wheels and other stuff.

If you're looking for a clinching reason to buy an '86 GTV-6, here it is. Besides a 6 year and 60,000 mile emmissions and rust-free warranty, ARI is paying for all parts AND labor through the 30,000 mile service. BRAVO!... Don't forget to send in the postcard and vote for Al Cortes. Ciao.



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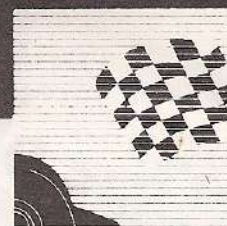
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALFA ROMEO DEVELOPES THE NEW 415/85T FORMULA ONE ENGINE

1986 will be a developmental year for Alfa Romeo's Formula One efforts. The Gianni Tonti designed 1500 cc., turbocharged four-cylinder power-plant will undergo strict engineering, performance and endurance evaluation at Alfa Romeo's Balocco proving grounds near Milano, Italy.

All future Alfa Romeo competition activities will be directed through "Alfa Corse", a wholly owned subsidiary headed by Engineer Gianni Tonti.

In 1987, Alfa Romeo will make the 415/85T available to selected chassis manufacturers or teams. Staying within the 1985 fuel consumption parameters of 212 ltr. per race, this engine produces 890 horsepower. The 1986 FISA rules dictate a maximum consumption of 195 ltr. per race which currently limits power output to 830 horsepower.

Specifications:

Engine Type: Four cylinder, all alloy, turbocharged DOHC

Displacement: 1498 cc.

Bore: 92 mm

Stroke: 56.4 mm

Induction: Electronic engine control, mel ignition, fuel injection and fuel management system.

Turbocharger: KKK

Power Output: 830 horsepower at 195 ltr. per race consumption

Weights: 124 kg. (278.8 lbs.)

EDITOR'S DESK



"The Milano is coming! The Milano is coming!" said Chic Little. Or is it? It is late in arriving which is no surprise considering Alfa's past record at making good on promises. Alfa's very stylish publicity calender was very specific about when the Milanos could be expected in the showrooms...April 26th, and yet, it's late. No big deal maybe, but symptomatic of something a bit more disturbing than a missed deadline. I am in a business in which I have to depend on a multitude of people to perform, and nothing gets under my skin more than people who don't do what they say they're going to do. For as many years as I can remember there has been an air of expectancy among the Alfisti in this country; we've all been waiting for Alfa to DO something! Years of false rumors, delayed model introductions, the bankrupt hope that a new Spider would appear and a growing lack of competitiveness have dashed expectancy into apathy. Only the hardcore Alfisti are left.

"The Milanos are coming! The Milanos are coming!" said Ernesto Vettore." At last, a ray of hope! Or is it? Mr. Vettore, (see the accompanying article on the Milano reprinted from AUTOWEEK) seems to be very committed to developing the American market. Deja Vu. Now where have we heard that before? He seems to have an insightful understanding of our cultural differences with Italy and has embarked on an ambitious program to cater to the American consumer. According to Pat Braden's article in the May ALFA OWNER this program will include a separate assembly line and quality control for U.S. bound cars, a new owner orientation session of some thirty minutes for each and every purchaser, a 60 day follow up contact by the dealer for each and every

purchaser, and improved training for dealer service personel. Sounds great and I hope for the sake of Alfa Romeo and all the rest of us that it works like a Swiss watch. Breakdowns in the system can cripple even the most well conceived program though and this one looks like it is going to need very strong support on the dealer level. It is, in part, the reputation for a poor dealer network that has kept Joe American from buying Alfas, and even a successful program may be slow to generate acceptance by the public....it's going to be a long road.

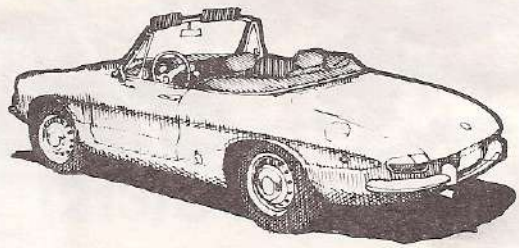
Mr. Vettore seeks to shorten the road dramatically. As he said in the AUTOWEEK article "The best way to get back into the market is to buy ourselves back in." Certainly the Milanos are being offered at prices that are just plain irresistible. In fact, anyone in the market for a prestige sedan or coupe would be a fool not to buy a Milano or a GTV-6. The list of standard equipment and the new warranties simply have no equal at anything close to the price. Good move Mr. Vettore!

Beyond price though, and as Mr. Vettore himself says, there are cultural differences which dictate the design of cars and which affect their acceptance by a particular culture. In Italy the emphasis is on handling while in the U.S. it has been, and probably in the hearts of the masses always will be, on mind bending, gut sucking, smoke belching ACCELERATION! Yes, even people who are much too civilized to have ever been near a drag strip look at those numbers first when they read a road test. Sure, the more cosmopolitan of us are beginning, with the help of automotive publications, to appreciate more and more a truly well balanced car. But, in a country that insists on making tired old fogies out of all its drivers, 130 on the top end doesn't count for nearly as much as the quick stoplight-to-stoplight sprints. Ergo, even though some are a lot costlier and some are a bunch homlier, Alfa will lose a lot of sales to quicker cars. The technology of quickness is changing and with ever increasing competition it seems that Alfa is currently several years behind. The 3.0 liter Milano would be nice to have NOW. Len Frank penned a road test of the Quadrifoglio Spider in the current issue of MOTOR TREND. He really wanted to like the car and in general did despite its age. But in spite of greatly improved

continued next page

handling and balance, what spoiled it for him was its relatively lackluster acceleration. It's kinda gutless and, for Len atleast, it turned what could be a good sports car into a "cute" car. Enough said.

I've been trying to reserve judgement on the design of the Milano until I've actually seen one. I've seen so many photos of it by now though that I just can't resist comment. The American market is, in spite of suffering generally from abominable taste, very style conscious non-the-less. Some of the designs of the past have held up very well, indeed, some of them are classics. The Bertone (Guigiaro) GTV, the GTV-6, and even the aging Spider are designs with classic appeal. The sedans, in my mind have been less memorable. As a sedan, the Milano as Pat Braden opines, may be the best yet. Still, it doesn't seem to have the spot-on proportions of, say, the Maserati Biturbo. I think it has less to do with the "..... perfectly awful kick-up, behind the C-pillar." that bothers Leon Mandel than it does with the greenhouse. In these days of flush fitting windows and gracefully rounded edges it somehow looks too blocky and rigid, almost Saab-like, for the rest of the car.



If Alfa's target audience will accept the styling of the Milano I think they will buy a lot of them considering the price. If the 3.0 liter version were available at the outset I think they would sell in droves and give Alfa a big leg up in the marketplace. It may sound like I'm carping when, in fact, the Milano will likely prove to be the best made Alfa ever for the American market. And it most certainly is one hell of a deal at this point. No one wishes Alfa more success than yours truly, so suffice it to say that this is my two cents worth. I hope the Milano does sell. I also hope to see a new, competitive, four valve head Spider SOON! It wouldn't hurt matters any!



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The Cheapest Fast Car in America

The key to Alfa Romeo's second conquest of the colonies lies somewhere between the wallet and the right foot

By Leon Mandel

IRI calls itself a holding company. In a similar sense, NATO could call itself the same thing. NATO is a holding company for armies, navies and air forces. IRI is a holding company for everything in Europe that *isn't* an army, navy or air force. By all accounts, the budgets of IRI and NATO are about the same. One of IRI's subsidiaries is called Finmeccanica.

Here's some late news from Finmeccanica: "Ansaldo, in consortium with General Electric and Babcock & Wilcox International of Canada, has been awarded a contract by the Huaneng International Power Development Corporation of the People's Republic of China..."

Finmeccanica also occupies itself in its own country. In Naples, in concert with McDonnell Douglas, it builds the fuselages for DC-10s and DC-9s. Also 15percent of Boeing's new 767s.

Finmeccanica has a few dozen subsidiaries of its own. One of them is called "Alfa Romeo".

A Matter of Colonization

There was a golden epoch for Alfa in the US. There was a time when it was one of three cars considered for ownership by sporting drivers of modest means. If you were predisposed to Anglophilia, Jaguar was the car of choice; the XK140MC roadster specifically. Or, had you wanted to do 180s along the cutting edge of life, you bought a 356 Porsche Speedster, the Super with the Hirth roller bearing crankshaft. The third car was Alfa; the Giulietta spider veloce, a lovely little thing, crackling and impertinent, voluptuous, as demanding of affection as a thumb-sucking Lolita.

Yes indeed, Alfa. Remember now, nobody had a dealer network except for maybe

MG, and in those early, fickle days, MG had very soon become, oh my, *establishment*. So parts and service were problems for everybody.

Performance? Jaguar had a big motor but Jaguar was a big car. Austin-Healeys cradled truck engines, even the LeMans model. There were Jowetts and Morgans and HRGs; there were Denzels and Borgwards; there were Saab Sonetts and Sabras. But this side of lunacy, and south of the increasing conventionality of MG's sacred octagon, there were only three choices: Jaguar, Porsche, Alfa.

You could race your Alfa, you could cruise the still sweetly innocent nights of postwar America. You could wear a white scarf in your Giulietta, you could order Cinzano while gazing at your Alfa parked at the curb outside. In the golden epoch, if you owned an Alfa, you waved to Ferraris first

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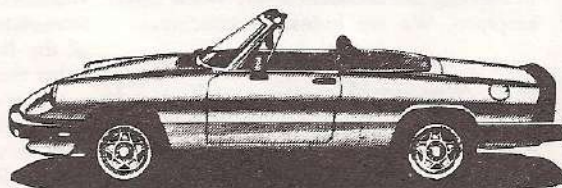


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and to no one else. Healeys, MGs, Kaiser-Darrins, Corvettes waved to you. There was a certain sense of polite avoidance with Jaguar and Porsche; exactly the same hesitation that grips mind and arm when it comes to a decision about whether to offer a lady a hand upon introduction. (In those days there was no question about that one: *she*, if anyone, offered it and you were to brush your lips over your own hand covering hers, pretending to the world it was hers, but never presuming to be so intimate as to touch a part of her *body*.)

That was Alfa in the golden epoch.

Reality in the Post-Industrial Society

Ernesto Vettore leans over the breakfast table, capturing the informal moment for a renaissance tutorial, telling his small audience about *how it is now*.

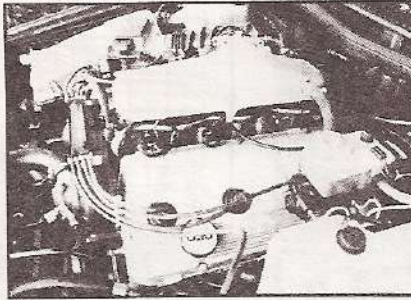
"In Europe, and in the United States too, we are arrogant. We build cars that reflect our culture.

"Listen: In France there are big metropolitan areas, open countryside and many good roads. The French cars thus have good suspensions and are roomy. It is required by the conditions. In the same way, the autobahns dictate the design of German cars and to an extent, of the Swedish cars also.

"In Italy, as in France, we have cities, but our roads are far more windy. So we insist on handling as a priority."

Vettore's eyes are deceiving windows; they carry a look of calculated ingenueness, they are challenging, they are amused, they wait with little hope for the slightest sign of understanding. Vettore, the youngish, modish, energetic president of Alfa Romeo US, is wonderfully fluid in his expressions as well as fluent in the language. As fluent as he is in carspeak, he is even more the modern embodiment of that wonderful Italian cultural self-confidence he calls arrogance.

"Our industry has been lazy because we have had a huge domestic market. Remember too, that everybody in Europe has government support. We are wholly owned by the government." In this way, he explains the loss of interest in the American buyer in the period between the end of the golden epoch and three years ago when he became



That old familiar Alfa 2.5liter V6 gives Milano an honest, V-rated 130mph

chief of all Alfa in the US, the surrender of what was not just a beachhead but a full-blown colony; in this way and with characteristic and disarming candor "Without fear and without shame, we can say we have had a very mixed past (in the US)." How engaging it is, how captivating, to listen to this man who manages, this morning in the Arizona conference center air conditioning, to be self-deprecating on behalf of an entire continent, including his own country first and foremost, and at the same time say...

"The motor car reflects the way of living of the nation that builds it. When you export a car you export a cultural view.

"We Italians have been the least flexible in meeting the demands of the world marketplace. We are industrial latecomers.

Specifications

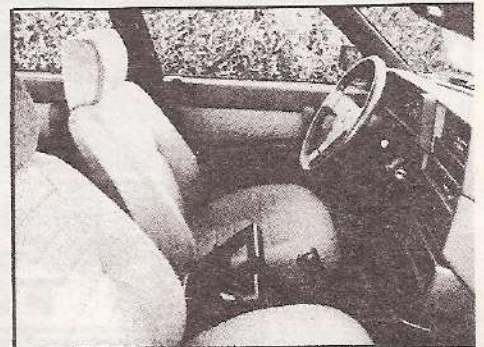
1986 Alfa Romeo Milano
Silver Quadrifoglio

Base Price:	\$12,850
Wheelbase (in):	98.8
Length/Width (in):	170.5/64.2
Curb weight (lb):	2907
Powertrain: Front-mounted 151cu in/2.5liter 60deg sohc V6, aluminum block and heads, 154bhp @5600rpm, 152lb ft @3200rpm, rear-drive five-speed manual 0-60 (sec):	8.5
Top speed:	130mph
Mph at 1000rpm in top:	na
Suspension: Ind front parallel transverse links with longitudinal torsion bars, anti-roll bar; rear de Dion axle, laterally located by Watts link, coils, anti-roll bar	
Brakes: Vented front, rear discs	
Tires:	195/60VR14
Mpg/range: (est) 21.0mpg × 19.8gal = 415miles	



Jack Abraham photos

Alfa Romeo USA president Ernesto Vettore: "We build cars that reflect our culture"



That's not a shut-down switch at Oak Ridge. That's Milano's handbrake

After all, we are the youngest republic in the world. We are an automotive weak link. We and the French and the British, and we (the world automotive community) have already virtually lost the British.

"The expression of this cultural difference is even more visible in Europe than between Europe and the US. The protestant north of Europe is harder for us to penetrate than the US. We, in the Catholic south, have trouble accommodating to their views." Vettore speaks with no animus. His tone of voice does not return the contempt of the British for Italian cars, he praises rather than denigrates the Germans for their automotive products, but cannot resist saying that the ideas come from the north of Italy only to be made with precision in the Federal Republic. He does not need to remind his listeners of the endless parade of Alfasuds that scream past Mercedes and BMWs and, yes, even Porsches in the fast lane of the Autobahns, certainly not because they are faster but because they were built and driven by the same passionate people.

"The success of the Japanese is understandable easily. Instead of inflicting their engineering arrogance on the market, they went out and discovered what people wanted to buy and then built it. And they did not think that in doing that, they were in any way engaging in prostitution."

Vettore, using the invisible shrug perfected by the Italian male, could never do

continued next page

that. Turin could never do it. Nor Stuttgart, not even Detroit. We will all inflict our products—and therefore our cultures—on the world, Vettore tells his listeners.

But what if we can't?

"The question then becomes, are our cultures and the cultures to which we export compatible?"

Are Milano and the US Compatible?

Alfa's Milano is the new sedan that IRI's subsidiary Finmeccanica's subsidiary Alfa Romeo hopes will keep it in the American market. It will. We drove the car (*AutoWeek*, June 3 1985) in Italy (where the less opulent version is called the 75, celebrating the company's ability to endure in the industry that long). It is a 130mph car. It has the lovely 60deg V6, 2492cc motor that gets it to 130mph as fast as anything you're going to find within \$5000 of its price (hold on, the price is too good to give away so soon). Better still, the engine has a sound to 1) Make love by, 2) Go to sleep thereafter by. If you care, as golden epoch Alfa owners would, compression is 9.0 to one, the crank is nitrided forged steel, fully counterbalanced with four main bearings. Pistons are aluminum/silicon alloy. The motor is a fuel injected (Bosch L-Jetronic) cammer, with fuel metered so well it will start in gear without any help from your right foot. If you know Alfas, you know the engine and you love it.

If you know Alfas, you also know the suspension: independent parallel transverse links in the front with longitudinal torsion bars and anti-roll bar, de Dion rear axle, with coil springs and anti-roll bar.

This makes the guts of the car compatible with the American Alfa tradition. That's good news and bad news. Good because there are Alfanatics out there. Bad because there aren't enough.

Vettore is on record as saying he understands what is needed here, that he knows about how to reconcile the cultures. He has

done this with the roadster by adding *stuff*. Gold spoon and flashy anklet stuff. Rodeo Drive stuff. Vettore is an ex-Ford marketing guy. He is also a cynical European. He probably knows our consumption gullibilities better than we do.

But the Milano chassis will not be watered down for the US, in spite of Vettore's past training. Despite 350lb worth of US DOT padding, it's still a taut handler and takes our culturally larger potholes in stride. The steering is crisp enough to make you want to take hold of the wheel and loosen the stays on your adrenaline. The car's balance in corners is good, and even more fun with people in the US-size backseats.

So if you are a golden epoch Alfa person, you're going to flat love the Milano. You're going to love it despite its resemblance to a Jetta and its perfectly awful kick-up, behind the C-pillar. You may even like that kick up. Why are you going to love the car? Listen to this exchange in a Milano on the way to Carefree, Arizona between the *AutoWeek* guy and the guys from *Road & Track*, *Motor Trend* and *Car and Driver*.

MT Guy: "Jeez, the shifter works, I mean you can feel where it's going."

R&T Guy: "What! You trying to tell us you can feel it's going into another gear and not just bending?"

C and D Guy: "Look at this idiotic handbrake. I mean you've got a handbrake that's in the shape of an 'H' and what it looks like is some awful overgrown handle for a gobot."

AW Guy: "What are you all bitching about? This thing is a pretty good piece."

Others (in concert) "Who's bitching? This is an Alfa."

Which probably makes it germane to note that all three are so deeply steeped in Italian car theology that one owns a Lancia Fulvia HF, another a '56 Lancia Aurelia and the third recently bid a tearful farewell to a GTV. We are talking about the *converted*.

Which a whole lot more Americans than we might suppose are likely to be when Vettore and Alfa and Finmeccanica get through with them. Plans are afoot.

The Milano we have been talking about is to be designated "Silver Quadrifoglio" which seems to be pidgin Italian for "stripper". To come: Gold and Platinum. The silver already has a lot of the stuff Vettore is convinced America loves: Electric windows, central door locking, lots of inside lights, dash graphic display, you know the kind of thing. (The kind of thing, parenthetically, Italians do *not* get with their 75s). The Gold Milano comes with air, bells, and whistles. The Platinum (and to come the "sport") has everything Saabs, Audis, and Three Series BMWs have—the target cars—and then some, including ABS. To come are automatic transmission and 3.0liter 175-190bhp motor.

Vettore fought hard for these modifications, he knows his market. Equally important he fought hard and he got a 36month/36,000mile limited warranty *and* a six year/60,000mile anti-rust perforation limited warranty.

Ah, the canny Vettore. He knows as well as we do Alfa must invade the land of the Marina del Rey persons. To do that the cars have to have sex which is spelled options and that means pandering to the biases of another culture no matter what the president of Alfa US says about cultural arrogance. It also means jacking up the dealer body. Even the world's best car would be worthless unless it could first be sold, second be serviced after it's sold.

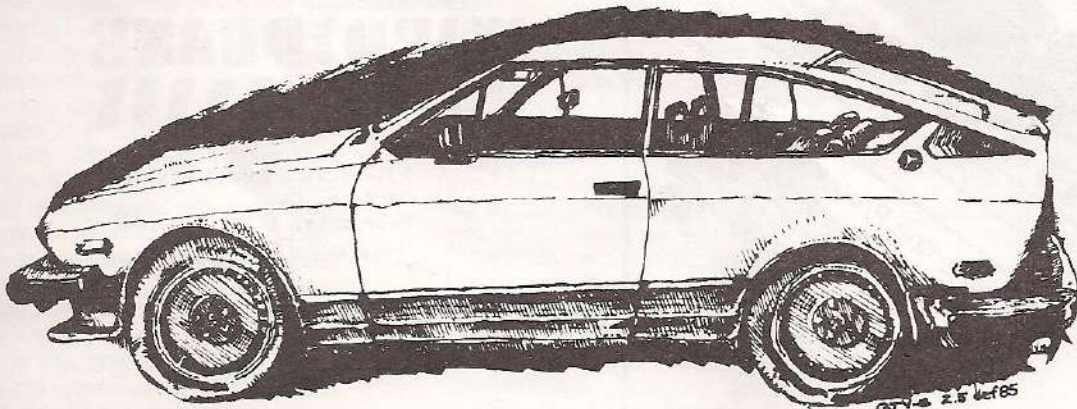
Trust Vettore.

Particularly trust his marketing strategy which he states succinctly and which should get you down to your Alfa dealer even faster than a speeding Milano.

"The best way to get back into the market is to buy ourselves in."

The Alfa Romeo Milano Silver Quadrifoglio is priced at \$12,850. **AW**

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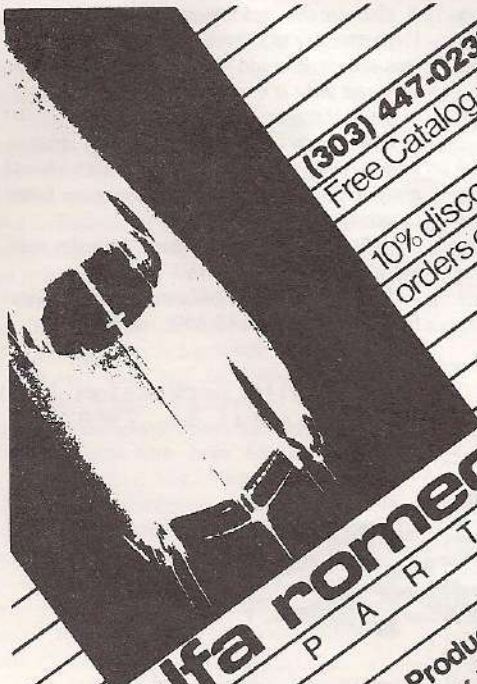
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VELOCE

Summer's coming. Time to fire up a good Italian coupe and go driving.

BY MEL NICHOLS

London—The sun came out the other day, and I walked across the common to the garage where I keep the Alfa. The doors creaked open and there she was: blue, pristine, voluptuous; as lovely as the day she was made. I dabbed the throttle a few times, and the twin-cam fired and settled at once into its perfect idle. I backed her out and left her running while I ran my eyes around her. God, what a testimonial to Giorgetto Giugiaro's ability. This was the thirteenth car he designed. Extraordinary the way he got the proportions so right, sketched the pillars so delicately, made the tail dip and the lines flow so seductively, created such a classic.

A few years ago, it seemed to me that too many Alfa Romeo GTVs were rusting away and I really should have one to take out when the roads are right. It wasn't just the body—though I must confess that the idea of having one of the finer fruits from Giugiaro's extraordinarily productive six years at Bertone was fair bait indeed. The real lure was that I kept remembering a series of wonderful drives in GTVs. Every time I tested one (or simply wheeled one from Alfa Romeo on the flimsiest of excuses; they always understood), it became a time of motoring inspiration.

The 1750 and 2000 GTVs seemed possessed of a sensuality and drivability that transcended pure performance. In the Seventies, their technology was already old and their roadholding on unfashionably narrow tires was merely modest, but they seemed to have a measure of the spirit and the character to be found in Maseratis, Lamborghinis, and Ferraris—and which are intrinsically Italian.

Taking 27.7 seconds to reach 100 mph, the 2000 GTV was hardly a slouch for a 2.0-liter, though that sort of time looked pretty tame compared with the acceleration of the Italian supercars and the big-bore American pony cars. I'd grown to love the flexibility and the sparkle—the *class*—of Alfa's twin-cam four, to revel in using a gear lever located as if it were an extension of your arm, to delight in the feel of such taut and communicative steering, and to relish the bite and the progressiveness of

the twin-booster brakes and the way they could be used to tighten the GTV's line into bends. I'd grown to love the way the Alfa sort of jiggled at the rear as it felt its way over the road's surface, a legacy of its well-controlled coil-sprung live axle. I loved the impression of quality as well as of character in every aspect of its mechanical engineering, and the way that that made the car seem such a partner for the driver in the pursuit of pure pleasure on the road; the built-in inference that motoring is about something other than covering the ground between two points.

All this reached a climax, I recall, in a long series of bends as I charged home through the mountains of New South Wales after a 1000-mile weekend trip in a 2000 GTV. Between the bends, the GTV would zip up through the gears to 100 mph or so (77 mph in third, 104 in fourth at 6000 rpm). It seemed, as a matter of course, just to cock itself perfectly into the corners. Pushing really hard coming in fast under brakes, the nose would hunch down onto the road and press so tightly into the bend that almost no steering lock was necessary. Occasionally, too much braking force, with too much weight on the nose, broke the rear wheels' grip, and the tail would flick out. But mostly, it was merely a matter of balancing the GTV deliciously on the knife-edge between optimal braking force, optimal cornering attitude, and breakaway. Swift pedal work and the location and motion of that peerless gearshift allowed, all the while, a flurry of heel-and-toe downshifts so that the moment the GTV reached the bends' apexes it was in the right gear, ready once more for full throttle.

It seemed to me that this was what driving a sports coupe was all about. It also seemed to me that this ability of the GTV—to be balanced so finely and driven so consistently and sensuously at the very limit of its roadholding, and in a way that brought all the elements of its performance into total harmony—was the nub of the character that made the GTV rather special. Contemporaries like the BMW 2002ti were faster from 0 to 60 mph (8.2 seconds versus 8.9 seconds) and had a trace more roadholding, but the GTV's dynamic qualities were somehow aesthetic. It was urgent, lively, and alive, talking to you every minute of the way through the wheel, the gear lever, the pedals, and, most of all, the seat. I marked it down as having the sort of thoroughbred qualities that are ordinarily much higher-priced; the blend of character and dynamics that is usually the preserve of Ferraris, Lamborghinis, Maseratis, certain Lancias, and the Porsche 911.

In the spring of 1981, the GTV seemed to me to have lost none of its grace, and near London I found an immaculate 2000 and bought it: a '72 model, dark metallic blue, 39,000 miles, two owners, properly maintained, apparently carefully driven and garaged most of its life. Here was that old feel again: a car with a charming engine that idled perfectly then rewed lustily; steering that, though with a trace of wear, was full of life; brakes that, though slightly down on power, had a lovely feel; a gearshift that, though with a little wear on second's synchro mesh, was pure pleasure. My memory had served me correctly.

Now, the roadholding feels dated, but the handling is sufficiently sharp so that when pressed correctly into bends and taken through in a way made possible by its razor-edged balance, it can still dent the pride of hot hatch hedgehogs.

On the open road, it's still interesting and satisfying, and, even by today's standards, remarkably stable. But what's so good about the GTV is that it has enough character to put real enjoyment into driving in city traffic. For that reason alone, it's prompted me to drive it in London far more than I had anticipated. Every minute spent in it is a reminder of the spirit and the skill that spawned it.

I wish the steering wasn't quite so heavy, and it's vital to remember to allow far more stopping room than our Saab Turbo needs, for instance. Traveling swiftly is harder work, and less obviously safe, than covering long distances in the Saab, too. The GTV is best taken out just by its driver. Alone and unhindered, within the GTV's own special time warp, he can savor the sensuousness that the car embodies; the flourish that epitomizes all that is great about the Italian vision of creating cars.

So these next few weekends, now that summer's signaling its coming, I'll be drifting across to the garage, tinkering and polishing and getting the Alfa ready. The roads will soon be right.

AUTOMOBILE MAGAZINE

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PININFARINA ALFA COUPE

The twin stars of Pininfarina's stand were a coupe and convertible based on the upcoming Alfa Romeo 164 flagship sedan. The famous coachbuilder, whose recent creations include the Ferrari Testarossa, presented the slick looking coupes ostensibly as straightforward design studies. However it's known that Alfa wants to build replacements for the now-dated GTV and Spyder models so the state-owned Italian auto maker is sure to give the duo a close examination. As their smooth appearance suggests the cars cut a clean path through the air—the coupe's Cd is a respectable 0.30. Both open and closed versions share as many parts as possible to keep down build costs and the body is made from a combination of metal and plastic materials, some of which are already used in production.

Reprinted with permission from
AutoWeek, May 12, 1986
Photo by Colin Kurwood

Swell

RAYTON FISSORE

The design team responsible for developing the Alfa 75 (Milano) wagon seen at last month's Geneva auto show (see AutoWeek, March 24) is preparing a sportier version as the star of its Turin display. Rayton Fissore's new high-speed wagon will have 75 Turbo mechanicals, low profile tires and aerodynamic body trim. If it does go into production it will surely be a prime competitor for Volvo's Turbo wagon. Rayton Fissore, one of the youngest but most dynamic companies in the design field, also scored a big hit at Geneva with its Range Rover-like Magnum 4x4 off-roader.



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AutoWeek, April 14, 1986
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1979 SPORTS SEDAN

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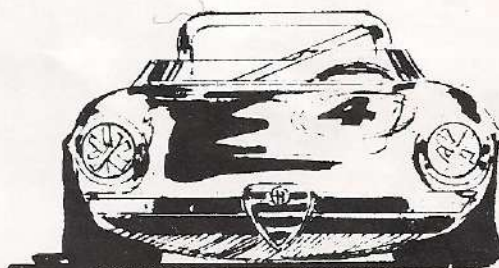
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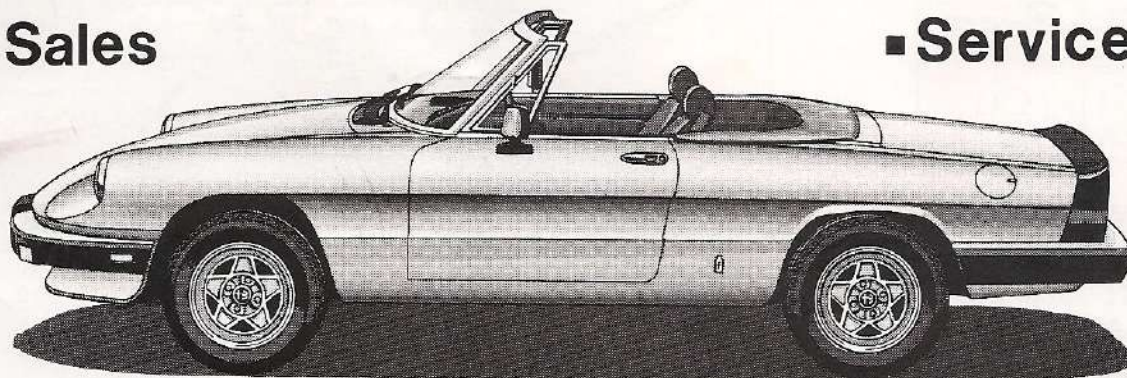
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