PAGIONAGIA.



ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



MAY 1990

ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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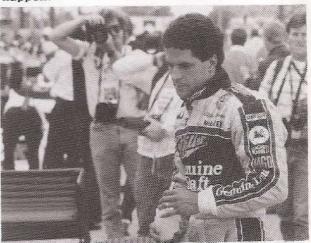
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GENERAL MEETING

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As we go to press (I've always wanted to say that ... it sounds so important) the program for the June meeting at Alondra Park is still TBA. Go anyway, though; something crazy and fun is bound to happen!



PHOTOS

To find out who these little old ladies from Pasadena are and what they are doing here please read Parola Di Presidente within. Above is Roberto Guerrero at Long Beach, photo by Rex Chalmers.

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PAROLA DI PRESIDENTE

Dan Ritter

COVER STORY:

Why are these ladies smiling and what is it about their automobiles of which they seem so proud? As you may have guessed already these two special Alfa owners are Rachelle Ponce de Leon and Ada Garza, two women who happened to be my Mom and Mom in-law. The one with the broken ankle is my mother [skiing accident]. The point of all this nepotism is that the 1979 Alfa Romeo Sports Sedan with automatic transmission is well suited to meet their driving needs. With four doors, adequate trunk space, automatic and air conditioning it provides ease of operation and creature comforts associated with the popular Japanese imports. The 78-79 auto sedan is also very affordable. My Moms Alfas are gifts which I had purchased both cars for less than \$2000.00! Yes I had to do some repairs but these cars can be had for a reasonable price and can be enjoyed by people who usually would look toward other automobiles. What I really get a big kick out of is that once over the shock of receiving the car as a gift that they start to enjoy the actual driving experience that only an Alfa can deliver. They are now taking the time to learn about the tradition and engineering that goes into their cars and both were delighted to learn that "Alfetta" is a diminutive name for the great Tipo 158 & 159 Grand Prix cars. Growing up before and after the War, both Moms have heard of the great name of Alfa Romeo but never dreamed of ever owning one. As a native of Mexico, my Mom in-law vividly remembers listening on the radio of the Alfa Romeos in the Carerra Pan America. The side benefit to all this is that I not only enjoy the family esteem bestowed upon me but the family tolerance when I tow home that little jewel that just needs a little TLC to get it running again!

POINTS OF INTEREST

I want to thank Paul Dexler for a very successful and informative presentation of

his slides and narrative of the Alfa Romeo Museum at the General Meeting last April 27th. About 75 of us were in attendance and as an added feature Paul brought a 164 sedan which one could count many heads nodding in favor. The car courtesy of ARI was the center of attention for the Alondra Park regulars. A multitude of comments and opinions and I think most were favorable. Certainly the Pinnfarina Body is quite attractive and well finished. Again, Thank You Paul. Thank yous also go to Susan Zettle and Vickie Dillman for the refreshments.

Our next General Meeting will be held on May 18 which is the Third Friday of the month rather that the traditional last Friday. This was scheduled so as to not to conflict with the Memorial Day Holiday weekend. Our guest speaker will be a representative from Zymol car care products.

Friday June 29 will be the following General Meeting at Alondra Park program TBA.

Then on July 21 which is a Saturday at 2 PM we will have a Dinner Meeting at the San Antonio Winery. A Concours de Elegance will be a part of this day of Italian cars and Italian food. Sounds great? Please mark your calendars for this wonderful afternoon. Details are elsewhere in this issue of Alfacionada. Or call me to reserve dinner and to enter the Concours.

There will be elections to the Board of Directors of this Chapter and I hope to be replaced as President. The elections will take place at the annual Swap Meet which will be held once again at Alfa Ricambi in November. Call me if you can donate some time to help run the club it takes just few people but we need to rotate the responsibilities. If I call you its because I'm recruiting to get more members involved. Sure its time consuming but think of the reward of finally doing your bit for the club after all these years sitting on the sidelines. We need people to bring refreshments for two monthly meetings, someone to replace Terry Higashi of T-Shirt fame, a new Treasurer and Membership chair. Plus some people to work with the Competition Director. me a call if your interested. Until then....

A Rivederla

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS & JUST NEWS

Stu Schaller

The Alfa Indy car effort started off in almost the same manner as last season ended. At both Phoenix and Long Beach, the car qualified in the middle of the field. At Phoenix, Guerrero was up to eighth before a minor incident put him out of the race. At Long Beach, the car finished fourteenth. The problem appears to be as much with the March chassis as with the Alfa powerplant, as at Long Beach the Lolas and Penskes seemed a lot quicker through the corners. The only other March (with Porsche power) was also a mid-field runner.

Alfa prices, along with those of most other collector cars, seem to have stabilized over the last two months. I still think Alfas are cheap in relation to other great marques.

Got to drive a new 164 the other day. The car is very impressive; the only thing I didn't like was the somewhat buslike driving position. The base and "L" models are out now, and the Sport will be available in the fall. Prices "out-the-door" will be \$28,000 to \$37,000 depending on model and options.

My 2600 Sprint is coming along. The brakes needed work, and the carbs need rebuilding, along with various and sundry other things. By the way, I can use a set of inside armrests if someone has them to spare.

There have been a number of Alfa articles in various magazines this month, one of the most interesting being on an Alfa six (a 6C, 2.5 liter Alfetta Sedan with carbs) owned by one of the staff of Classic and Sportscar.

Some advice for those of you with older cars: If you can find the parts for your cars now, buy them. There are not that many people remanufacturing Alfa parts that have become obsolete, and we can only count on our friends at Alfa Ricambi and others for so much. It is expensive to "tool up" for even the smallest parts, and for the obscure Alfas such as 6C2500s, 1900s, 2000s, 2600s and the like, there is not really enough demand to spend money for tooling when you can only sell a small number of a particular part. Some good

sources for Alfa parts outside the U.S. are 1.) A.F.R.A. Via Carraciola 24, Milan, Italy and 2.) E.B. Spares, West Wilts Trading Estate, Westbury, Wilts, England. Please provide part numbers with your orders.

We have another club dinner coming up in July at the San Antonio Winery, thanks to club member Gene Jacob. Contact Gene for further information regarding this gathering of Alfisti.

ALFAS RACING PLANS

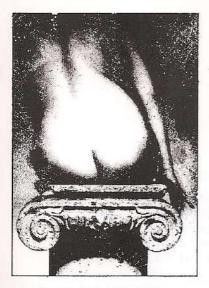
For this year Alfa plans to continue its Indy car effort through Patrick Racing, developing the motor currently in use (4 valves per cylinder) and, as soon as it is ready, using the new 5 valve per cylinder motor, which, by the way, has a larger bore and smaller stroke, producing a motor which can rev to higher rpm. By late 1991 Alfa wants to have this new motor developed to the point where they can sell it to various teams and move away from full-fledged involvment with a particular team. Alfa definitely does not intend to produce and develop a complete car for the Indy series.

The factory is currently working on a car with a twelve cylinder, 3.5 litre motor for the International Sports Car Championship. This car will not be completed quickly, and will go through gradual development, both this year and in 1991. In 1992 the Sports Car Championship will be exclusively for 3.5 litre normally aspirated cars (eliminating turbos which are allowed through 1991). All components are being done "in house". It was decided that the V-10 3.5 litre motor, developed for the stillborn Touring Prototype series, would not develop more than a reliable 580 bhp at 12,000 rpm, so the decision to make a new motor with 12 cylinders was recently made. Alfa thinks they can get 650 reliable horsepower at 15,000 rpm. by the time the car is ready to race, sometime in late 1991 or early 1992. Alfa does not plan to go into the Formula One wars, as Ferrari represents the Fiat group in that arena.

For those of you with a few extra dollars, the V-10 motors and the 4 cylinder 1.5 litre turbo motor (which was actually at Alfa Ricambi for some time and which was designed for the 1987 Ligier Formula One car) are available!!

"Til next time

Stu



EDITOR'S DESK

For me, fate is an iffy proposition. there such a thing, or do we like to believe so and thereby provide a conveinient scapegoat for all the doo doo we get ourselves into? Was I fated to meet my wife, fall in love and get married that day a hundred or two years ago when I first cast an eye on the fair Susan? (What imagery! Where do you suppose that strange expression derived from? What fish could be so tempting that one would consider casting ones' natural born eye?! What part in what play could be so bizarre as to cause the director to cast said slippery ocular orb?!) At the time, it sure seemed like it, so transfixed was I by her presence and so single-minded was I in pursuit of our union. Was it destiny that provided my parents with the wonderful gift of me, or caused them to move around the country at various times so that I would end up in just the right places to meet just the right people so that I would be in just the right career at just this very moment?! Was I preordained (I think not. I have never been nor am I now, a man of the cloth.) to become irrational, foolish and fiscally irresponsible each and every time someone wiser than I offers to sell me an Alfa Romeo?! Naaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhh!!! Like I said, I have a rough time with the concept. I know there are a lot of folks out there who believe in predestination; think there are some religions around that teach predestination. There are also a lot of folks who put a lot of store in astrology. If there's a difference, I can't see it. Different strokes, right?

The point of all this blathering is that, in spite of what I may or may not choose to put faith in, the fates have conspired this month to make the newsletter late. No, really!! (Remember the part about the scapegoat?)

It seems my assistant was at his desk pretending to work as usual. A strange impulse (fate again!) caused him to lift his head from his nap. Water was fairly gushing from a ceiling soffit directly over our computer equipment, which was on at the time. The innocent looking soffit is actually a planter when viewed from the outside of the building and a sprinkler pipe therin had burst and was doing its best to fulfill its destiny by flooding my office, computer and all. Fearful of crashing hard disks, said erstwhile assistant slogged through the rising damp to rescue the machinery from the deluge. It has spent the last week and a half at the repair shop.

Oh Darn!! Now I won't be able to do the newsletter! (An honor every young lad born to Alfa should aspire to and achieve) Done in by destiny again!!

Time to trot out plan B. Charlie Theiriot called on a completely different subject and the conversation worked its way around to soggy software. "Ah HA!" said Charlie, "You can use the club computer that John Green has." (There's that fickle finger again!) He wouldn't give it to me unless Susan and I would come to his house for dinner and bridge, however, but that's another story.... If your newsletter is late, though, it is definitely not-my-fault...it was fate!!

CONCOURS

Phil Guiral

The first Concours of the year will be held June 10th in conjunction with the Huntington Beach Concours d'Elegance benefitting the children's library. Last year, all the Alfas entered came away with trophies or door prizes and there was plenty to see and do throughout the afternoon. There are dozens of classes for both cars and motorcycles (I'll be entering my Norton Commando). The Alfas will be judged by both their judges for their trophies, and our judges for our ribbons and year-end points. Entry forms can be obtained by calling (714) 960-8836 or (714) 842-2277. Once you have entered, please call me, (213) 439-5550, so that I may organize our club judging and ribbons. Treat this event as two separate concours and mail their application and \$25 fee to them, and the club entry form and \$7 fee to me at 248 Lindero, Long Beach, Ca. 90803.

I hope to see you all June 10th at Huntington Beach!

Four Days In A 164

By Paul Dexler

Automotive writers have one perk in an otherwise totally normal job. The auto manufacturers know that if the writers experience their latest products, they're going to "get some ink." Some words, hopefully good ones, about their cars will appear in print.

So, when Fabio Garbini called and asked if I would show my slides of the Alfa museum and the Turin museum at the April meeting, I thought it would be nice if I could bring along a real live 164. not on a show stand but on its wheels where everyone could see it, feel it and hear it in the flesh. I called Craig Morningstar at ARDNA in Orlando, and he said "No problem." The car would

be delivered to me on Tuesday morning and picked up from my office the following Tuesday.

Just to be sure that everything was operating according to plan, on Monday the 23rd, I called the company that handles the press vehicle fleet for Alfa and many other companies. "No problem," said the owner of the company, "We'll have the car to you by 10:30 tomorrow morning." Later in the day, the phone rang again. "Slight problem," said the manager of the company. "We can't find the car you're supposed to have." It turns out that there are three 164s in Alfa's Los Angeles press fleet. One is a base model, one an "L" type and one an "S" model. They knew exactly where the S model was. Road & Track was doing a road test on it when someone slammed into the rear of it in a parking lot. It was languishing in a body shop waiting for parts. The base model was out of state on an extended test and the L type was nowhere to be found.

"We'll call you in a day or so," I was told, "Meanwhile, how would you like to drive a nifty Peugeot 405 GTI 16v?"

The Peugeot was nice enough, but not what I had really wanted. The week drew on. Thursday, I got a call.

"I think we've found the Alfa. Call you back later." Thursday late, just before quitting time: "Do you know where Motor Trend's garage is?" I did. "Take the Peugeot there tomorrow and leave it and pick up the Alfa." The good people at Motor Trend had finished their test

of the 164 two weeks earlier and had neglected to tell anyone. They were still enjoying the car.

So came Friday morning and I was heading down the Hollywood Freeway to Highland, then west on Sunset to La-Clenega and the Petersen Publishing building. The garage attendant took me to the lower level where, sure enough, there sat the red 164L, between a RMW M5 and a Geo

a BMW M5 and a Geo Metro convertible. I turned the keys to the Peugeot over to the attendant, transferred briefcase and tape cassettes to the Alfa and shortly was motoring down Sunset towards the 405. The week had started badly but it was looking good now.



The 164 L. If was worth the wait.

On The Road At Last

Now that I was finally in the car, I started to assemble my impressions. The first were that it sounded, felt and smelled like an Alfa. The next came after I passed the Strip and was cruising through Beverly Hills. There seemed to be no torque steer. Here was a front drive vehicle with a large and powerful engine mounted transversely, and yet except for a tiny twitch when moving off from rest, it felt like a rear drive car. Arrival at my office left no more time for impressions.

Came evening, I drove home, picked up the projector, slides and screen, and headed for Alondra park. Some thoughtful motoring writer had lifted the owners manual, so I had called Alfa and found out about little details like the tilt and telescope steering column and how one or two other little items worked. I also found out that there was no trunk key, but the trunk could be opened by

a button on the dash.

The drive down the 405 to Lawndale was uneventful, the fairly decent Chrysler radio providing good sound and one annoyance. I happen to believe that the dial of a radio should show the tuned frequency, and some other dial should provide me with the time of day. I seemed to recall that the 164 I sat in in Turin had a clock, even though no radio was installed.

After the meeting, where all who wished got "hands on" with the car, and the Pizza Show, where more of the same, I cruised the 35 miles home, fine tuning the seat adjustments and getting more "into" the car. The more I got into it, the more I liked it.

The structure was extremely well thought out, so that the body felt as if it were carved from a solid block of steel. The shifter was precise and light, the clutch light. Three thousand miles of magazine editor testing had caused the usual problem with test cars, slightly softened motor mounts from hundreds, may be thousands, of jackrabbit starts.

The seats got more comfortable as the next day passed. Electric adjustments for fore-and-aft, height and back rake, coupled with an adjustable lumbar support and the tilt/telescope wheel provided an enormous range of choices of driving position. The instruments were clearly visible through the wheel, and the "Christmas tree" effect of all the warning lights coming on when the key is first turned has to be seen to be believed.

When I had first seen photos of the 164, I wasn't too sure about the nose treatment. Seen in person, my reservations dissolved away. The whole car looks "right." Strangely, or perhaps not so strangely, although the floor pan and internal structure of the body are the same as the Fiat Croma, Lancia Thema and SAAB 9000, those three cars share a similar look but the Alfa does not. In fact, nothing gives any indication that the car is based on anything but itself. Thank you, Pininfarina.

The weekend, with its opportunities for driving, passed all too quickly. Monday was over, then it was Tuesday morning. I got a phone call, "We'll be there at 10:30 to pick up the Alfa." And soon enough, they were. I turned over the keys and watched the car disappear down the alley.

As an automotive editor, I get two types of cars. There are "drivers" and "keepers." A driver? Well, it's interesting enough while you have it, but when it's time to send it back, off it goes without a qualm. A keeper? I had already been on the phone with Alfa, "How about I keep it until Wednesday, may be Thursday?" No dice. I got the promise of more time in a 164 later in the year, though I can hardly wait.

THE LITTLE ALFA THAT COULD

Lorenzo Gigliotti

Last year, when I heard that Alfa Romeo would enter the CART/PPG racing series I was extremely pleased especially with the thought that once again Alfa would have a chance to shine Long Beach Grand Prix. However, I soon found out the car would not appear at Beach until the following (1990). So I contented myself with following the car's progress through the 89 season via television. It was quite a season "a learning experience" and let's leave it at that. At least had a more modest attitude Porsche and didn't eat any crow.

This season when I found out, that not only had they acquired a major sponsor but they had also become part of the Patrick Racing Team, my imagination ran wild. Here's the line up--Roberto Guerrero driving and well overdue for a great season-- Miller Draft Beer, a truly big league sponsor and the Patrick Racing Team year's championship team ... else could you want? How about second car driven by one of the Winningest drivers in Indy car history? The announcement out that Al Unser Sr. would drive the second entry at the two big oval races -- The Indianapolis 500 and the Michigan 500.

Needless to say the Long Beach Grand Prix should have been exciting premier of things to come and I was ready. The Phoenix race preceded Long Beach couple cf weeks but the new engine wasn't ready yet. Guerrero spun out and crashed mid-race... so much for Phoenix. Then the news came out that the new five-valve Alfa engine would debut at Indy and not before. Well I went to the time-trials Friday and Guerrero pushed car hard but there wasn't enough

continued page 8

there to qualify close to myself tor ten. I told tomorrow would be better "maybe they of get a little more out engine cver-night." Saturday came and went with no improvement. I consolled myself in the fact that other veteran CART entries had qualified behind this relative newcomer.

excitement Sunday main the concerning the Miller-Alfa Romeo would be: when it would be lapped and whether it would finish if it did, how would it finish? The race started on time. The car ran strong but was obviously out-muscled and was lapped fairly early on. One consolation was about to be lapped by leaders again when the checkered flag came cut so at least it in the photo.

continued page 11

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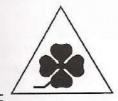
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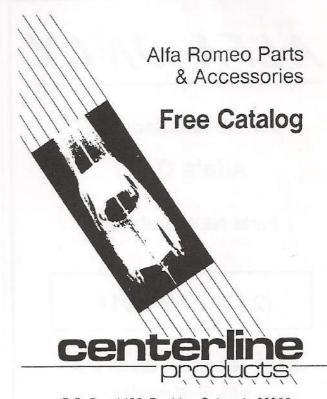


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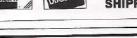








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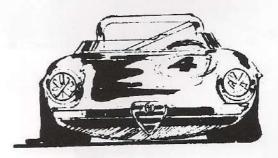
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*1988 Milano Verde 3.0L 10K miles, extended 7yr./75K warranty. Red, black interior. \$16.5 K. John, (213) 544-0286.

*1979 Sprint Veloce 50,000 miles; air cond; sunroof; Webers; recent motor, brakes, donuts, complete Shankle suspension, Sachs gas shocks; Ansa; Alpine; Campagnolos; new tires; body and paint excellent (rust free California car); new upholstery - creme w/blue and grey suede cloth. Trade for Giulia Super or \$4,000. Mike, (805) 498-0271.

*1967 GTV Body damage left rear. \$5,500. (818) 996-6787.

1977 Alfetta Sedan Interior and exterior good. Make offer. Paul DeRosier. (714) 892-0658.

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Both above, Tina Van Curen (213) 666-4500.

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1979 Sports Sedan Clean body, mechanical not so important. Pete Valenzuela. (213) 923-5305 H. (213) 336-7498 O.

* Indicates new ad

It seems that Alfa's recent racing history really-fast-open-wheel-racers (Formula 1 and now Indy) is a series of mis-matches. In the late 70's Formula 1 ventures they managed to attract some heavy duty driving talent such as Nikki Lauda and Mario Andretti but the cars were not quite up to snuff. When they finally developed some really competitive machinery in the early 80's most notably the 182T and the 183T they put them in the hands of rockies who made habit of destroying these masterpieces (point of interest -some of these guys still haven't won a race and they are'nt rookies anymore). This time I hope history doesn't repeat itself. Guerrero is no rookie and Patrick Racing is not toc shabby. March has building competitive Indy cars for a long time. The wild card in this formula is Alfa and timing the most important ingredient...lets hope that the competitive engine that Alfa will inevitibly build, is available to what is perhaps the most competitive combination Alfa will ever acquire in Hopefully the "little Alfa that cculd" will become "the little Alfa that will."

CALENDAR

June 29 General Meeting - Alondra Park

July 20 General Meeting - Alondra Park

28,29 Time Trial - Willow Springs

September 2 Time Trial - Carlsbad

September 29,30 Driver's School at the Streets of Willow Springs

November 17,18 Time Trial - Laguna Seca

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