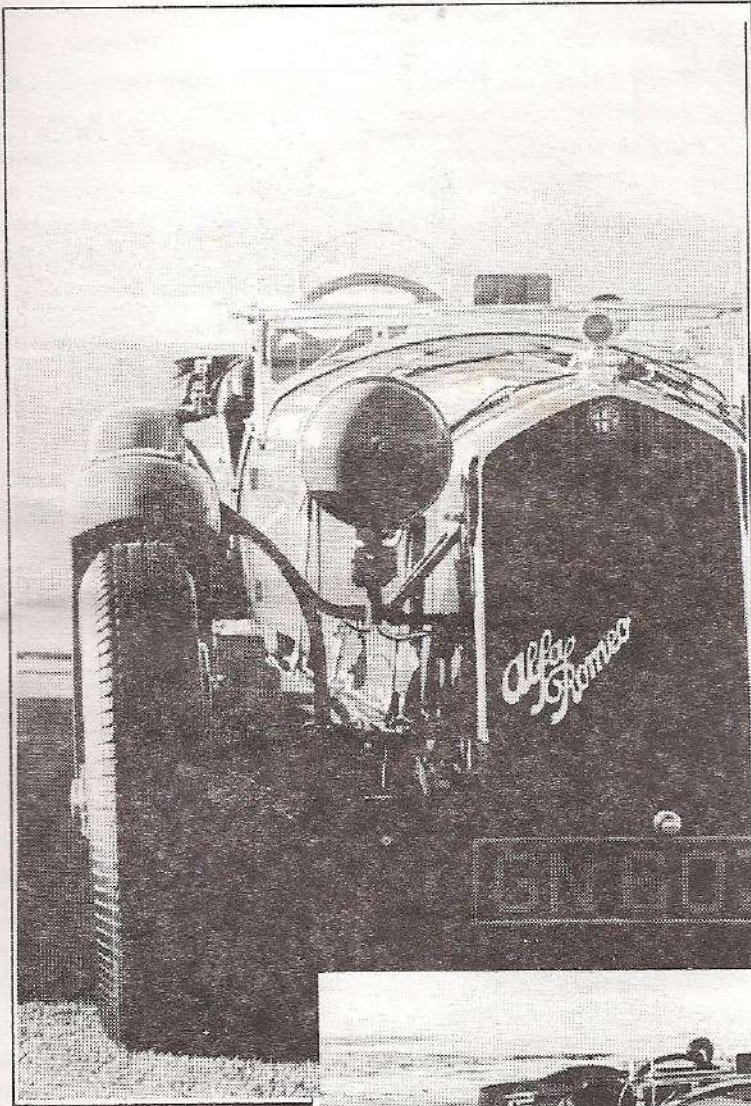


# Alfacionada

The Journal of the Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

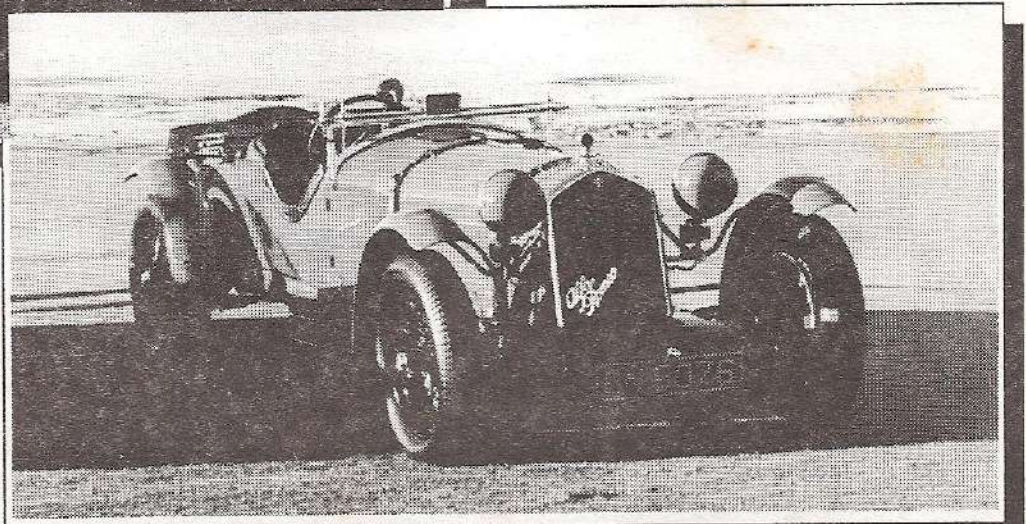
November, 1994



## Coming Up:

*Time Trial  
and Race,  
December 3 & 4*

*Holiday Party,  
December 10*



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 \$55 membership fee paid to AROSC, Inc. Meetings are held monthly on the LAST FRIDAY of the month at 8:00 PM at the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, 111 N. Hope St., Los Angeles.



**IMPORTANT DEADLINE:**

Please send articles, letters, classified ads and photographs to the editor by the tenth of the month for publication in the next month's edition. Photos and manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage. Black and white or color prints only; no slides except if submitted by professional photographers. Send SASE to editor for copy of editorial guidelines, hints, etc.

Classified ads are available as a free service to members and at a nominal \$10.00 charge to non-members advertising Alfa related items.

This newsletter and its authors and editors assume no liability for the accuracy or legality of any technical information appearing herein.

**MODIFICATIONS DISCLAIMER:**

AROSC is not responsible for the safety or practicality of modifications performed by individual members and described in these pages. The Club suggests you check with your mechanic before modifying your car in any way.

**CLUB MAILING ADDRESS:**

P.O. Box 39554, Los Angeles, CA 90039-0554

**EVENT ARTICLE DEADLINES**

February Classifieds	January 3
February Events	December 3
March Classifieds	February 3
March Events	January 3
April Classifieds	March 3

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Newsletter

Randall Higa, Editor  
Diane Greenesid, Art Director

Cover Photo: *Alfas at Pebble Beach*  
Photos by Randall Higa

**COMMERCIAL DISPLAY RATES:**

	Half year	Full Year
1/8 Page	\$60	\$100
1/4 Page	\$120	\$200
1/2 Page	\$240	\$400

# California '94 ALFAS GO

JOEL HOFFMAN

With a big assist from Dave Gooley, the AROSC media blitz has begun. KTLA, Channel 5 has had a five minute segment about cars on their Morning News show since it began amusing us three years ago. Two very entertaining and informative guys, Steve Parker, "The Car Nut" and Mike Anson have hosted the unofficial unveiling of the Ferrari 348 Spyder, the '95 Buick Riviera and Olds Aurora. They've had guests on their show such as Boyd Coddington, creator of the Aluma coupe, Cadzilla and Chezoom, and designer of some beautiful billet style wheels for American hot rods and Jim Wangers of Pontiac who along with John De Lorean brought about the '64 Pontiac GTO. I religiously tape their segment which airs live between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. on Fridays. For the VCR-less, Channel 5 airs the morning segment on the 10 O'Clock News. Week after week this Alfa nut gets a big kick from their weekly segments. KTLA should give them more air time.

Steve Parker is a busy guy. He has a two and sometimes three hour long radio show on 710 AM, TALK RADIO on Saturday afternoons starting at 1 p.m. and sometimes at 2 p.m. He hosts some of the same automobile family as on TV plus he takes calls from listeners. Steve has two or three trivia contests each week and gives away \$25 gift certificates from Beverly Hills

Motoring Accessories (I won once), Motorola Cellular telephones, and other great prizes. But there's even more. On Sundays between 5 and 7 p.m. Steve's again on 710 TALK with "The Racing Show". He has reports on the weekend's races and once again has guests. Glory hound that I am, I'm certainly no racer, so I've arranged for Charlie Thieriot, AROSC's Competition Director, to be a guest either on the October 23rd or the October 30th show, a week or 2 before the AROSC Time Trialers and the guys from the AIS, American Indycar Series, enjoy themselves at Willow Springs the weekend of November 5th and 6th.

Have you ever seen Motorweek '94? I had been watching this half hour TV show with test reports on newly introduced cars, mechanical features and a whimsical segment on just about all aspects of cars on PBS' KCET and KOCE. However this past spring the producers took it off PBS and placed it on Cable TV. It took me a while to finally locate it on the Chicago "Superstation" WGN at 7 a.m. on Saturdays. KABC, Channel 7 airs it on Sunday Mornings at 6:30 or 7 a.m. Near the end of the show there's a segment on a viewer's car they call "The Car of the Week". I must have seen 300 of these segments and always wondered why there was never an Alfa. Imagine the pleasure it must have brought to AROSC members Doug and Nancy Brown of Glendale whose '56 Giulietta Sprint Normale was fea-

tured on August 20th.

To many of us AROSC's Dave Gooley leads a charmed life. We've seen his beautiful photos in SPORTS CAR INTERNATIONAL and heard him describe his adventures in Italy at the last two Mille Miglias. Dave did a spread in the August '94 issue of EUROPEAN CAR on the first prototype of the Ferrari Tour de France. Its' October '94 issue has some of his beautiful photos of Lamborghinis at their factory. Dave gets to have a ball driving around Europe visiting car museums, old monasteries, palatial mansions and park and shoot cars in Italian town squares. Dave, we're all envious.

AROSC friend Franco Barbuscia of Franco's European Sports Cars in Van Nuys was also photographed in EUROPEAN CAR's October '94 issue in a story called "Leno's Lambos". The caption which calls him "Leno's mechanical maven" shows him with Jay Leno at Jay's Valley garage. Actually, garage doesn't do justice to this spectacular home of more than 25 of Leno's Lamborghinis, Bentleys and one or more airplane motored Hispano Suizas. All of us would drool at the idea of having a spotless place like this, with dealer signs on the walls and powerful Italian macchinas on the ground.

A few months ago I mentioned Steve Treece of Alfa International in Glendale, APE, Alfa Parts Exchange in Berkeley, Bill Werner of Alfa Only, and Keith

*continued on page 12*

# Chiasso!

RANDALL HIGA

It's been a tough, grinding, depressing year. I am sure that most of you would admit the same; working harder and having less to show for it. Sometimes, when you work too hard, you've got to play real hard. So, for this year's El Supremo Monterey Peninsula automotive weekend, I promised myself that I would do the following:

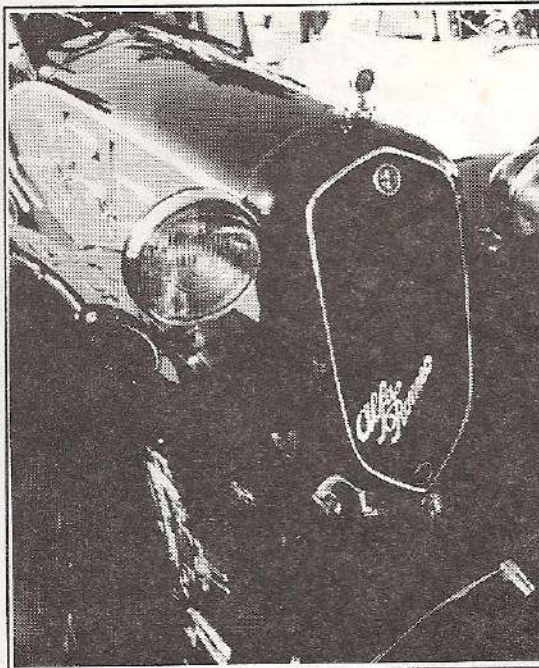
1. Drive too fast
2. Look at too many cars
3. Eat too much  
(with too much garlic)
4. Drink too much
5. Buy too many T-Shirts
6. Have way too much fun
7. Spend too much money

By the end of Sunday, I accomplished my goals quite handily. In fact, by the way my head felt on Monday morning, I knew that I had done a very good job at it.

Driving out of LA on Thursday night towards Carmel was like fleeing from a frightful monster in a bad dream. I seemed to drive as fast as I could (between 75 and 80 miles an hour) but I felt as though I couldn't get away fast enough. As expected, my anxiety level diminished as more miles separated the Spider from the urgent interoffice memos, to-do lists, activity reports, quarterly reviews, etc. that were left in disarray on my desk. Well, at least I was accomplishing #1 on my list.

The fact that Ferrari was to be the featured marque at the Monterey Historics meant that the weekend was to have over and

Photos by Randall Higa



Pebble Beach Concours

above the usual hordes of car buffs. However, I was not prepared for the mob scene at the Concours Italiana on Friday. By my conservative estimate, I figured that there were at least twice as many people in attendance as the previous year and nearly twice as many cars on display. I easily accomplished #2 on my list within the first hour.

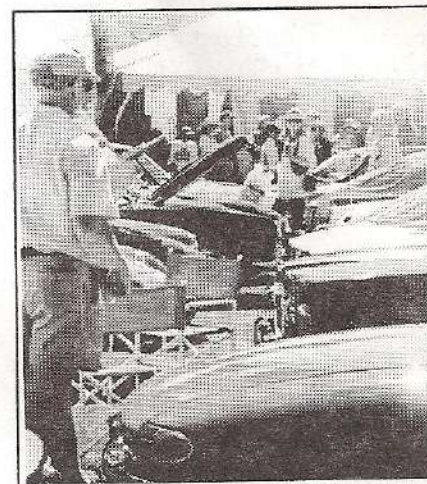
There were tons of Alfas on the grass, but unfortunately, they were packed together like Chrysler minivans at a shopping mall. As far as I was concerned, some of the space allocated for the "acres and acres" of Ferraris should have been granted to the Alfas (good thing I'm an impartial party). Much to the dismay of Fred Schueddekopp, he wasn't allowed to display his beautiful 4R Zagato because there wasn't the room and, as stated by the event organizers, there was already another one on display! Nonetheless, there were many wonderful Alfas on display, including Al Cortes' 2600 Zagato that was restored by Vintage Prep. The Alfa

Romeo Association also had a booth where they were selling many of their club's wares. Since ARA refuses to send me their newsletter, I grabbed as many as I could.

After walking for miles and miles down Carmel Valley Road to the Quail Lodge and back, it was time for some exquisite dining at Tappy's Roadhouse in Monterey. The food was up to its usual superb standards with special honors going to the garlic mashed potatoes. Accompanying the food was a glorious bottle of Cabernet

Sauvignon from the cellars of the Alexander Valley Winery. Not bad, I wiped off #3 and #4 on my list in one sitting. Aaaaahhhh, life is so good!

Saturday and Sunday (afternoon) was spent looking at the some of the world's finest vintage racing cars both on and off the



Concours Italiana

track. Most memorable was watching and listening to Phil Hill, at what looked to be at least 25% past the limits of the car, wail around Turn 4 in a 1951 Ferrari 212 Barchetta. He lead his race from

start to finish and made it look oh, too easy. As far I was concerned this display of driving was far more interesting than watching the Ferraris parade around the track at Rodeo Drive speeds.

Not only were there acres and acres of Ferraris, but there were also acres and acres of vendors. I usually only buy T-shirts when I feel that I've attended a



Racing Ferraris, Laguna Seca

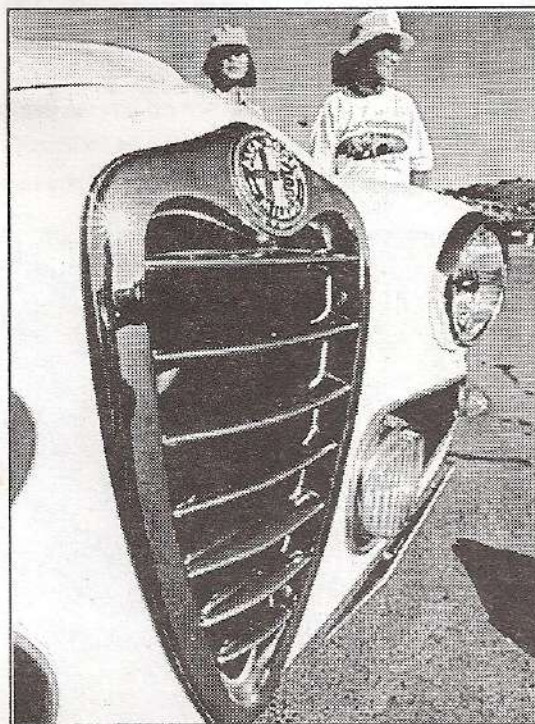
once in a lifetime, extremely memorable and ultra-significant event (and Janice wonders why I get excited when I see my 1984 RAGBRAI (Registers Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa) T-shirt sitting in the Goodwill box). However, I did make a commitment to buy "too many" so picked several candidates, and after circling the vendor areas three times, I purchased a Fangio/Alfa T-shirt as well as an Alfa 155 Touring Car Championship T-shirt. Both of which I felt were absolutely necessary and mandatory Alfisti attire. I also considered the, "Some Fear — If You Aren't Scared, You're Not Going Fast Enough" T-Shirt but I ended up also buying a "It Takes Balls to Race" (pictures of footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, and, in the middle, a pair of brass balls) for a fearless newcomer to AROSC Time Trials and friend who couldn't make the event. I felt quite satis-

fied that I met the philosophical intent of #5 on my list.

At 5:00 AM on Sunday morning, the alarm went off and I figured that I had done enough to satisfy #6 on my list and had a strong urge to go back to sleep. However, I persevered; rolled out of bed and dragged my sleepy buns and cold Nikons to Pebble Beach. What greeted us was

unbelievable! Even though it was before 7:00 AM, the sun was out and there was not a trace of fog to be seen. The early morning direct sunlight on the parade of cars

that were being driven onto the grass was both overwhelming and inspiring. Click! Click! It was one of those few times where I should



Alfa 1900 in the pits at the Monterey Historics



Concours Italiana

have had a video camera. There were several Alfas on display including a very bizarre French-looking device. It was billed as a 1939 Alfa Romeo 6C2500SS roadster with body by Desaughifa. Sorry guys, I'll move on to the Pegasos.

By the end of Sunday, I had become saturated with cars and knew that I had unequivocally achieved #6 on my list. My senses had been raised to a new level and I felt as though I had died and gone to Automobile Nirvana. Ironically, instead of having to go home, I was to attend a conference at the

Asilomar Conference Grounds on the other side of the Monterey Peninsula where I was to spend a week discussing energy efficiency in buildings. It took at least two days to finally get into the swing of things and, in my brain, push aside the sound of the screaming V-12 Can Am cars, the sights of pre-war Alfas, Napa Valley Cabernets, and tastes of extra virgin olive oil and roasted garlic...

As far as #7 on my list, the realization of that achievement didn't hit until I received my Visa bill. Yikes!

# Events and Activities

RANDALL HIGA

**N**O NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING — HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!!

**T**IME TRIAL AND RACE, WILLOW SPRINGS, December 3 & 4

For the second and final time in 1994, AROSC returns to it's home track, Willow Springs Raceway. The weather should be nice but take some sunscreen just in case. As always, we'll be running a Time Trials Events, a Race event and, for those of you curious about being on a track, we'll have an Introductory Event. For more information, call Charlie Thieriot at (310) 476-8812 or Tracy Culp at (805) 250-0906.

**H**OLIDAY PARTY, Saturday, December 10, 7:30 PM

It's time to again celebrate the AROSC traditional holiday party at the home of Charlie Thieriot. Come see what Charlie has done to his back yard and witness one of the

best views of Los Angeles. For only \$10 per person or \$15 a couple, you can enjoy terrific food and party with your fellow Alfisti. While the food will be plentiful, it is BYOB; children not recommended. As we did last year, we will have a gift exchange, so bring a gift (don't spend over \$10) to put under the tree. Charlie's house is at 2500 Roscomere Road in Bel Air, just off the 405 Freeway at Mulholland Drive. Also remember to bring canned food for distribution to the homeless. RSVP to Sebastian at (310) 390-7337 ASAP.

**A**NNUAL MEETING, Friday, January 27, 1995

Pat Braden has agreed to be the keynote speaker for our fabulous Annual Meeting. Kick off the new year in style and bring your shinny Alfa to show off to your fellow Alfa Club members. Pat will be talking about Alfa Romeos; their past, present and future.

**E**NGINE REBUILD WORKSHOP #2

This is again your chance to rebuild your Alfa 4-cylinder engine with the expert instruction of a master. Following the very successful Engine Rebuilding Workshop #1, Jerry Lomas is again organizing the second Workshop. Space is limited so call Jerry as soon as possible, even if you are in the slight bit interested. Jerry's number is (213) 734-5852.

**P**ROGRESSIVE DINNER,

**Date:** TBD (maybe spring '95)  
What could be better than driving your Alfa Romeo and eating fine Italian food? NOT MUCH! We are planning a Spring Progressive Dinner (Dine and Drive?) where you will drive from one house to another and eating one course of a meal. For example, you'll drive the home #1 and graze on a few delectable appetizers, (perhaps prosciutto & melon, caponata, and/or pomodori con ripieno di verdura), drive to home #2 and sample some hearty soups (perhaps zuppa di cipolle e fontina, zuppa freddo di ruchetta, and/or raviolini in brado), drive to next house and, well, you get the idea. Of course, a salad/antipasti, main course, and dessert will eventually follow. It will cover the span of a leisurely weekend afternoon and evening and will be BYOB. In all probability, it will take place in the Pasadena/Los Feliz/Westside areas. If you are interested in helping in planning, cooking, preparing, and/or having good friends in your home, please give Randall Higa a call at 213-344-8828.

**WHILE SUPPLIES LAST:**

**100% cotton Club T-shirts  
in racing colors  
(red, white or green)**

**1 for \$13 2 for \$25, or "The Mad Italian Special":  
1 of EACH color for just \$35!**

**Club mugs, gold on black, only \$5**

**See Jay Negrin at the general meeting or call  
(818) 894-3549**

# 1995 Board of Directors Candidates Statements

## Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

### **ANTHONY J. WU, AIA**

I would like to participate as a board member in 1995. As the current Vice President, I felt that I have put in a great deal of contributions to help make this a better club. Next year, I hope to expand my role and continue to be a great service to the club.

### **Tina Van Curen**

I am submitting my name as a candidate for the board of directors for 1995. I have been an active member of AROSC for five years. I have served one year as Secretary and two as President. I am also a member of the Time Trial Board, currently the Promotion Director. I have many ideas for making the club attractive to all Alfa owners. We have almost 400 members and I will do my best to provide for interests. My next priority will be to encourage non-affiliated Alfisti to join and keep current members active and interested.

### **Dirk Stoehr**

After a near miss and spectacular motorcycle slide for about 15 blocks down Topanga Canyon on a beautiful summer day in 1982, I was forced to rethink my infatuation with motorcycles. So I went to Santa Monica Sport Cars and bought my first Alfa, which I still own today. The gorgeous black convertible had many of the same characteristics as the bike; speed, agility, wind in your hair, and no bugs in your face! My affliction grew and today I own the Spider, a '65 TI and a '67 Super. I have

enjoyed serving on the AROSC board since 1989 and I hope you will vote for me so that I may continue. I see '95 as a year that we can all make special. I will work towards more concours and social events, and of course the annual wine tour which is always a lot of fun. *En boca al lupo!*

### **Jerry Lomas**

I have been an AROSC member since 1984 and board member since 1992. I organized the AROSC engine rebuild workshop with Rex Chalmers, Omega Motorsports in 1991. I am currently working to start workshop #2.

### **Jay Negrin**

I have been a member of the Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California for over three years. I own an Alfetta GT that I am giving enough TLC to keep reliable and looking good. For the last year I have served on the Board of Directors as a member-at-large. I have written tours for this club and I am currently involved in maintaining rally competition for AROSC. I am also the "T-shirt guy". A priority goal of mine is to help find and support club functions that will attract new members and will see more of our current members become more active.

### **Gary Patitz**

I have an extensive history with Alfa Romeo Clubs that includes memberships in both the Alfa Romeo Owners Club and the Alfa Romeo Association for more the 15 years. I

started the Central Coast chapter of AROC in 1985 and was the president (as well as chief cook and bottle washer) for three years. I also have under my belt the experience of holding board positions in several other chapters. In addition, I have written many articles and drawn cartoons (Alfoonery) for the national and many local newsletters (look for them in the upcoming issues of *Alfacionada!*)

### **Sebastian and Tess Franzen**

We have faithfully served the Alfa Club for the past year as your Social Board of Directors. We again look forward to working with the other Board members and look forward to planning more social events for 1995!

### **Charlie Thieriot**

I have been an active member of AROSC for something like 20 years. Many of you know me as the Time Trial Director, a position I have held on and off for most of my tenure in the club. I am very proud of the unique competition program which we in AROSC have developed over the last twenty years and am committed to supporting and expanding the program. As a long time member of the Board of Directors, I take an active role in all aspects of the club. As a member of the 1995 board, I will continue to promote social activities of all sorts as well as tech sessions and other activities in which our membership shows an interest.

*continued on page 12*

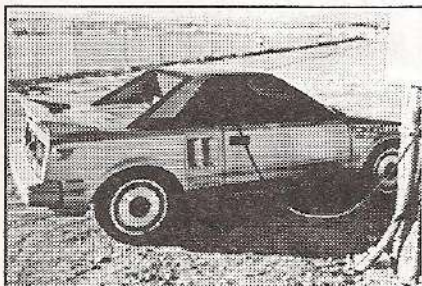
October 8 & 9

# Las Vegas Time Trial and Race

JERRY LOMAS

**E**rnest "Pappa" Hemmingway continued to rant and rave that only three true sports exist; bull-fighting, auto racing, and...I've forgotten the last one! Maybe it will come to me later...

Hitting the track at "Lost Wages" was a sort of *deja vu* for me. Shades of winter driving riding with my aunt in the midwest on glare ice in a '47 Ford. There she was singing, "Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder" (A World War II song for those under 50). As she wildly swung the Ford from side to mail boxes on those icy roads, I can hear



The Hamilton's go-fast secret!

her shouts of delight, "Yahoo, Yahoo, Snapple!" So, with a kind of offer from Randall Higa to co-drive his car, "off we went..." on the track with only 23 pounds of air pressure (cold) in the Yokohamas 008R/008RSs. Well, let me tell you for both of us, the first practice session was like driving on gorilla snot. By comparison, ice was easy. Back to the pits, pump those puppies up four pounds at a time. Let Allen Ward and Charlie Thieriot run on 23 pounds of air; who cares if they blow our doors off!

Las Vegas Speedway is a



short, tight and demanding circuit with one other element. Man/Women! It is FUN! Thirty five cars and many more drivers arrived on a pristine cool and breezy Saturday morning to hear Charlie at the 8:30 AM driver's meeting. He is often right on schedule, a very hard thing to do with a herd of anxious lemmings visualizing themselves in Turn One as the next Juan Manuel Fangio. To run on this track (purrfect for Alfas) is easily worth the four hour drive from Los Angeles (and longer drive from the Bay Area). Just remember to warm up the Escort Solo 4 Superhetrodyne radar detector; don't bother with the rear view mirror, its probably too late anyway...To see old friends and to meet new ones is part of what the events are about.

**T**he first day's practice sessions are spent over-running the track and then trying to slow down to "do it right." For those of us who had not driven this track before, "its good to remember those times in October when life was young and oh so mellow..." Oops, sorry, I get carried away... however, it was good to remember, "when in a spin, both feet in." Listen to your driving

instructors.

Well, there they are in their glory: Alex Brown, Pat Rinaldi in a car that has survived Alex's late apex turns (who needs brakes?), Alan Ward and Phyllis' pumped up GTV, Charlie Thieriot showing us his new found passion for early apexes (muchos grandes huevos!), Richard Thompson from San Francisco in his fast GTV6 (love that Solo 4, heh, heh, sorry CHP), John Cote (no one forgets John's GTAm) running well and fast, but not wanting to be a "moving chicane in the race group," Lorien Kranen (congrats to a new lawyer), her father George doing astounding indecent times in four-cylinder T-Bird, Steve and Kathy Hamilton showing us how to race together and still stay together, and Paul Blankenship without his good luck mascot, Mr. Bear. Rumor has it that



Fun times with friends

the bear got pissy about the color of his new nomex suit and refused to hold on to the front of Paul's grille. (I bet that damn bear orchestrated his own kidnapping).

Yes there they were in addition to a whole group of non-Alfa cars and owners, Porsches, Lotuses (Lotii?), Datsun 240Zs, Toyotas, Hondas, BMW M3s, a Dunestang, and a Dodge Charger (Nascar

*continued on page 13*



**LAS VEGAS SPEEDWAY**  
**TIME TRIAL RESULTS -- OCTOBER 9, 1994**

**CLASS B**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	1	Thieriot, Charlie	GTA	1:10.995	<u>1:10.399</u>	<u>1:10.399</u>		

**CLASS C**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	123	Erickson, Rube	Spider	1:13.886	<u>1:13.595</u>	1:13.062	<u>1:12.070</u>	1:12.291
2	162	Thompson, Richard	GTV-6	1:18.139	1:16.903	1:16.189	1:16.267	<u>1:16.013</u>

**CLASS D**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	50	Brown, Alex	GTV	1:13.597	1:11.576	1:10.690	<u>1:10.609</u>	1:10.676
2	201	Rinaldi, Pat	GTV	1:20.976	1:19.286	1:18.805	1:19.412	<u>1:16.819</u>
3	44	Selby, Charles	GTV-6	1:23.346	1:23.283	1:23.231	1:23.672	<u>1:23.882</u>

**CLASS E**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	25	Blankenship, Paul	Alfetta GT	1:14.608	<u>1:14.534</u>	1:14.594	1:14.653	1:19.445
2	17	Higa, Randall	GTV	<u>1:15.957</u>	1:15.969	1:16.508	1:16.972	1:16.534
3	47	Lomas, Jerry	GTV	1:18.664	1:17.487	1:17.537	1:16.405	<u>1:16.368</u>
4	7	Gray, Brad	GTV	1:25.531	1:36.935	1:25.468	1:25.145	<u>1:24.998</u>

**CLASS M**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	111	Paul, Steve	Dunestang	1:11.382	1:11.119	1:10.144	<u>1:10.086</u>	1:10.766
2	99	Toporeck, Jerry	Charger	1:28.398	1:26.278	1:25.691	<u>1:25.356</u>	1:26.934
3	242	LeLesch, Mike	240-Z	DNF				

**CLASS N**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	4	Arico, Nick	EagleTalon	1:10.457	<u>1:09.528</u>	1:11.304	1:10.813	1:10.327
2	22	Currier, David	Corvette	1:12.926	1:12.299	1:12.173	<u>1:11.968</u>	1:12.182
3	14	Porteous, Paul	BMW M3	<u>1:13.502</u>	4:47.114*	*total for 4 laps		

**CLASS O**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5
1	271	Chan, Victor	Esprit	1:12.106	3:34.640*	* total for 3 laps		<u>1:10.566</u>
2	61	Hamilton, Cathy	MR-2	1:13.776	<u>1:12.895</u>	1:13.088	1:12.949	1:13.225
3	77	Kranen, Lorian	CRX- Si	1:20.409	1:19.268	<u>1:19.056</u>	1:20.153	1:19.760

Fastest time by Nick Arico, car #4, Eagle Talon Class N, time of 1:09.528

**LAS VEGAS SPEEDWAY**  
**RACE RESULTS -- OCTOBER 9, 1994**

POS	#	DRIVER	CAR	CLASS						
1	219	Roig, Robert	Porsche	D - 1	7	48	Presto, Tony	Capri	E - 4	
2	88	Buck, Marshall	Corvette	D - 2	8	30	Dedman, Chuck	JensenHealy	E - 5	
3	11	Ellis, Paul	Dunestang	D - 3	9	43	Hightower, Paul	240 Z	E - 6	
4	67	Takasugi, Jon	300 ZX	E - 1	10	19	Hamilton, Steve	MR-2	E - 7	
5	4	Arico, Nick	Eagle Talon	E - 2	11	8	Donofrio, James	240 Z	E - 8	
6	241	LeLesch, Bonnie	240 Z	E - 3	12	25	Blankenship, Paul	Alfetta GT	F - 1	

# Wierd Alfa Noises: The Sequel

HERB SPITZ

[Editor's note: As some of you may recall, a contest was held by the *Alfacionada* staff for the best "Weird Alfa Noises" story. Herb Spitz takes top honors for his contribution of the following story.]

It was a beautiful sunny April morning on the 101 Freeway. I was driving my '78 Spider at about 75 miles an hour southbound on my way to work, enjoying the view of the hills as I passed through Westlake Village. Another work day awaited me in Commerce, and although I was barely underway on my 50 mile morning commute, the joy of driving my Alfa on a sunny day, with the prospect of coming home with the top down, made the miles fly by.

As I cruised along listening to the radio and the thrump, thrump, thrump of the freeway concrete, a new and ugly noise began to intrude into the passenger compartment. A grinding sound, no, a jangling metallic noise. Now it was here, then it was gone. What was that? Was I hearing things? I remembered that Alfa mechanicals are always nosier with the top up, the passenger compartment acting as a big boom box in which rear end noise and engine sounds reverberate, so I tried to remember if I had heard the racket the last time I drove with the roof in place. No, it was a very new and very real sound coming from the front of the car. And every time I hit an expansion joint (thrump, thrump, thrump), it seemed to momentarily worsen. Glang! grrrind, Glang! grrrind, Glang!

10

I pulled over to the breakdown lane, left the engine running, and go out for the ceremonial WALK AROUND THE CAR and the obligatory LOOK BENEATH THE CAR. These are the first things I always do when I encounter mechanical difficulty while on the road. I suppose it satisfies some primal fear that the wheels or fenders are about to fall off, or that I have collided with a mysterious road object that is now protruding

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*Everything  
looked in  
order. What  
could that  
noise be?*

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from the side of the car, or that something like the muffler is dragging beneath the car. It also gives me time to think about what might be wrong before I open the hood or crawl under the car, and make a rational decision about what to do. Everything looked in order. What could that noise be?

Now I must confess that I am very proud of my diagnostic abilities as far as automotive sounds are concerned. I spend most of my childhood and young adulthood riding in or driving vehicles of

questionable reliability. As I was of limited means, when my vehicles broke down, I repaired them myself, wherever and whenever the broke. This has fine-tuned by senses over the years such that once I was in college, I greatly impressed a new girlfriend as we walked down the street by casually and correctly announcing that a passing car that just broken down a block in front of us, after starting to make loud ipop pop popf sound, had lost a sparkplug. She was convinced from that point forward that I was a Zen master of machinery, an illusion I did nothing to dissuade her from.

So what was this sound from my beloved Italian machine? The combination of grinding and metallic jangling made me think it might be a bad wheel bearing. I shook the wheels but detected no noticeable play. I popped the hood and listened to the engine. Nothing but the hum and occasional surge of the Alfa's 2 liter idling along as usual. The lack of any obvious sign of a problem while sitting still and the thought that I had to get to work got me moving again. If it was a wheel bearing, it could wait.

By the time I made it to work, I had put the top down while stopped in bumper-to-bumper traffic, cranked up the stereo accordingly, and could now barely hear the grinding sound. It hadn't gotten any worse as I drove on, so I was lulled into a false sense of security. Yeah, must be a wheel bearing. Not unusual in a 16 year-old car.

At lunch time I invited my

*Alfacionada November 1994*

department manager to go to lunch off-site to discuss some business. Imagine my embarrassment when after we climbed in the Alfa and I twisted the ignition key, I was greeted by the sound of the starter motor spinning freely without cranking the engine. Oh-oh! I opened the hood and walked around to check the starter. I was horrified to see the starter no longer parallel to the engine, but about 10 degrees askew. But how was this possible? I then saw the crack, about 1/4 inch in width, in the transmission bell housing. The section of the bell housing that the starter bolts to had broken away from the remainder of the housing. The Alfa flywheel was visible through the crack, and the starter was no longer engaging the ring gear. Apparently the bell housing had broken on the way to work, and grinding sounds I hear on the freeway were the sounds of the flywheel ring gear eating into the aluminum of the bell housing as the starter flopped around.

Why did the housing break? On removing it from the car later in my garage, I found that it had broken before and someone had spent considerable time heli-arc

*I was horrified to see the starter no longer parallel to the engine, but about 10 degrees askew.*

welding the cracks together. I had only owned the car for two years, so I had no ideas when it was welded. The new break had started where the welding job was poor, and then broken up through previously undamaged aluminum. But why did it break previously?

I began asking around as to what could have originally caused the breakage. Fred at Alfa Pacific told me that if the front bracket that holds the starter to the motor mount was missing from my car (it was), the weight of the starter could cause the bell housing to flex and eventually break due to metal

fatigue. He told me that the older cars (pre-2 liter) had smaller starters and didn't have the front bracket, but the 2 liter engine required a bigger and heavier starter. The front bracket was added to hold the starter to keep the fragile aluminum housings from breaking. This sounded like a logical explanation. But then Robert at Alfa Ricambi told me he doubted that was the reason for the breakage, as he had never seen a Spider with the front bracket since most owners/mechanics threw it away when replacing the starter. He said that bell housing usually break when people try the wrong starter/ring gear combination.

Anyway, armed with a used bell housing from Ricambi and a bracket and hardware from Alfa Pacific, I reassembled the Spider. I am still not entirely certain as to why it broke originally, as I didn't own it at the time, but the absence of the bracket seems to be a logical reason. And I also know now to look for signs of cracks or previous welding in Spider bell housings!

**"A car has no business being so desirable..."\***

**\*Road and Track on Alfa Romeo, March 1958**

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Dues for 12 months to AROSC and National (AROC): \$55  
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## Alfas Go

*continued from page 3*

Goring of Alfas Unlimited in Connecticut as good places to find used parts for older Alfas. A week ago I was looking for a shift fork and called Steve Treece (818-500-0305). He said he'd sell me one for the GTV/6 for \$10 but only had some for Alfettas at that time. Somehow I forgot about Bill Werner (213-662-3916) and called Keith next. He had one for \$40. When I told him that price seemed high he screamed "Why are you wasting my time?" and hung up. Whatever happened to common courtesy? Keith, who had supplied me with several GTV parts I couldn't find here won't see a penny from me anymore. *Caveat Emptor.*

This episode was meant to improve the GTV/6 shift linkage.

Alfa Ricambi was out of Shankle's Sure Shift kit which after inflation now costs about \$110. Bill had the needed parts. AROSC Treasurer Pete Valenzuela, engineer par excellence, is going to massage the linkage and then display it at the November Swap Meet before it goes in the car.

When I joined AROC in 1975 I used to see requests for members to join all kinds of Registers and wondered what the hell they were. Now that I've become a certified Alfa nut I know what they are. I answered a request for information on '72-'74 GTVs and 6 weeks later the Registrar, Alex Gouras (P.O. Box 6628, NY, NY 10150-1905) sent me a list of owners names, addresses, descriptions of their condition, date of manufacture, and Vehicle Identification Numbers. He's constantly updating it. I know AROSC has 40+ GTV owners. Let's

go guys.

Send in the information. And now for you roundtail Spider owners. Brian Wermeyer of 6900 Preston Rd. # 2013, Plano, Texas has a register with the same requested information. Invest 29 cents.

GTV JOEL is no more. In 1982 I had a NY State registered Spider with a FLY ALFA plate. I tried to get the California version when I registered it here but someone in northern California had the plate. When I bought Charlie Thieriot's GTV/6 I asked about the FLY ALFA plate and was told that the northern Californian still had it, but that it wasn't on a car and he hadn't paid their fee. The DMV told me they would give him 60 days to pay and then it would be mine. Hallelujah. It's on my GTV/6 now. ALFAS GO has returned to my GTV.

Last weekend at VARA's Alfa-Porsche Challenge Charlie Thieriot started 25th, and Alan Ward 30th and in their D Production race ended up 2nd and 4th. Congratulations to you both. Jeff Kline, who in the 70's used to drive a 1300 Alfa, drove Said Marouf's '82 Alfa Formula One race car to victory in the Alfa-Porsche Challenge.

Lastly, 1995 Alfa 164s are for sale at Alfa dealers. Two air bags, spectacular performance and fabulous styling can be yours. Buy one. ARDONA, a new ARI, or a privately owned importer will be selling these and almost definitely the new Spider and GT coupe.

Congratulations to AROSC's Harold Rich on his recent wedding. ALFA FEVER. DON'T LET GO.

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## Candidates Statements

*continued from page 5*

### Randall Higa

I have been afflicted with the (sometimes dreaded) Alfa Romeo Disease for over five years. I love (some-time worship) the marque and enjoy being with others who take pleasure in owning their Alfas. For next year, I am planning a progressive dinner so that our membership

can combine fine Italian cuisine along with our fine Italian automobiles (see the events column). My campaign promise is simple: An Alfa (or two) in every garage and excessive garlic on everyone's pasta!



## Las Vegas

*continued from page 8*

comes to LV). As Len Frank says, "the Alfa club has no pride, they will let anyone run (sometimes faster) with them." One of these non-Alfa drivers, Paul Porteous, in a BMW M3, driving quite well did not get any final times in his run on Sunday. Now Paul, if you would put an Alfa logo on your car and slow down, maybe you'll have better luck next time!

**H**umor within the club and at the track is ever present. All drivers were required to work corners as flag people (a most important part of racing; your life depends on it). With your headphones on, you'll hear some of the most bizarre banter between the tower and the corner workers. The Alfa club has a tradition of naming corners after people who are deviates from the norm. Such is Turn 9, now "Kathy's Corner." After a spin, Steve and Kathy Hamilton were observed in a heated discourse on, "how far in were both feet?" Some wit on the headphones cried out for a "marriage counselor at Turn 9, QUICK!!" Charlie Thieriot, heard over the phones, calling several times for Bonnie Lelesch, supposedly flagging on Turn 3, received a response telling him that she was on the track, in her car in race group practice. After a long pause, Charlie answered, "I knew that." A flag person in Turn 8, wanted know what time it was. Over the headsets came the question, West Coast or Mayan?

This was also the weekend of a lot of equipment failure. The most notable being George Kranen,

with hood up and oil all over his engine, asking, "do you know who rebuilds these things?" Alan Ward was seen twirling the blown head gasket from Phyllis' car like a hoola hoop around his wrist. Both Charlie and Paul Blankenship were heard triple clutching to ease the strain on their bad (get down!) throw out bearings. Its all Paul Blankenship's fault. Paul, just get that damn bear his own choice of nomex underwear and get him back to the track.

We also discovered closely held secrets: Steve and Kathy's MR2 "hook-up" to one of the power poles — run silent, run deep into the turns you two; what's next solar cells? Paul Blankenship observed Brad Grey in his new 1965 GT 1300, street tires, taller than Mike Lelesch and probably no springs ("scariest 1 minute and 25 seconds I've ever had in my life!"), signaling Paul to pass him. Paul swears that Brad was standing up through the sunroof as he signaled him by!

**S**aturday and Sunday saw some fast and furious action in practice and in the race for some of the best club racing in a long time. Paul Hightower and Chuck Dedman are good friends, but on the track, it was time to take no captives. Paul had to back off in the race when his 008s, well beyond the limit for recommended heat cycling, wouldn't respond when turning the steering wheel. Kinda makes your butt tighten in Turn 2, right Paul? We all watched the amazing performance by Bonnie Lelesch in her 240Z (yes, that's right, another fast woman) as she tucked in behind Nick Arico's (lowest Time Trial time of the event) very fast Eagle Talon to take sixth

place. Fourth place in a 300ZXTT (what's that? — goes like hell though) was Jon Takasugi. Paul Ellis in his Dunestang continued in displays of flawless driving. The winner, Robert Roig in a much modified Porsche RS America (Ya hear that John Ireland?) seemed to have his hands full keeping that car going in one direction. Roig almost spun in Turn 1 on the warm-up lap, then decided that Turn 6 didn't have the apex in the right place, and as I ducked behind the concrete barrier, watched him re-establish the apex two car widths inside on the gravel. But a great hand to Roig as he lead the race from start to finish.

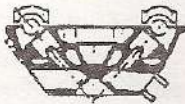
The social highlight of the weekend was the smell of chicken and hamburgers on the barbie. Much good conversation and good times. Paul Ellis' birthday provided us with the cake to soften the beer and wine. To those of you who have not been to these events, we encourage you to do so. You will have the time of your life and meet many new friends.

Aha! I remember that third sport. Bowling!! When Alan Ward no longer had a "ride," he bowled in senior's league at "Sam's Place." Listen up! With "Papa", Dr. Hunter S. Thompson (Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas and Doonsbury) and Alan Ward all agreeing, you gotta listen!

**N**ow if I could only get my aunt to groove on a red nomex suit, and stay away from that damn bear, I know where there is a '47 Ford and maybe, just maybe, we could enter her in the "Class W" time trial class. What the hell is Class W!? Wintersports, of course.....

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**1974 GTV.** Red, sunroof, complete ground up restoration, over \$7K spent. \$5,800 negotiable. Pete Valenzuela. Home: (310) 923-5365, office: (310) 336-7498. Oct94.

**1967 Giulia Super.** Rebuilt 2000 motor, 40 DCOE carbs, differential rebuilt w/80% limited slip, 2000 rear brakes, all new front suspension, adjustable upper control arms, fuel system lined and rebuilt, new upholstery and headliner, new carpet including trunk, new paint, rebuilt transmission, new clutch, new body rubber where available, 12.5 mm cams, built for vintage racing, very fast, more than \$15,000 invested. \$8,500. (619) 486-0350 or (619) 748-5631. Oct94.

**1976 Alfetta Sports Sedan.** Black/black, strong high comp. engine, runs well but needs paint & body work, or part it out. Best offer. Car is in Long Beach. Karl. (805) 562-7592 work. Oct94.

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**December 3 & 4** Time Trials and Race -  
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Time Trial and Race-  
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**December 10** Holiday Party,  
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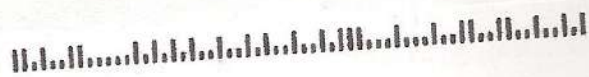
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Note that specific positions will be decided amongst the elected board members.

Send ballot by **December 24, 1994** to **AROSC, P.O. Box 39554,**  
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