

CLASSIC DRIVER

Here's how it is to race a Ferrari 750 Monza at Goodwood in torrential rain

Lead

After our interview with Tazio Ottis and his team as they prepared their Californian Ferrari 750 Monza for a weekend of racing at Goodwood Revival, we caught up with him as he hopped out of the car after an impressive race against some of his heroes.



Nothing in life is certain. Seasons change, temperatures plummet, and the sun can come around as quickly as a downpour, but one thing we've all come to expect and admire is a moment in time at Goodwood Motor Circuit. For a number of years now, usually at around 6:30pm as the famous Freddie March Memorial Trophy race gets underway to mark the finale of the event, the golden sun will appear and create one of the most beautiful spectacles in motorsport. Priceless Ferraris and Jaguars reflect piercing sunlight, marking not just the end of the event, but quite often the end of the summer, and for the UK, the end of another incredibly busy event season.

Instead of sunshine, 2024 got rain, and a lot of it, at least on the Friday anyway. Hurtling downwards like a high-powered shower, drivers, teams, and the thousands of spectators had to wrap up their period-correct outfits and shield themselves from heavy downpours, but it would take a lot more than a bit of precipitation to dampen Goodwood's famous spirit. Tazio Ottis and his glorious Ferrari 750 Monza, [which we followed as the team were preparing for the weekend of racing](#), isn't a pairing that has experienced rain of this magnitude, residing in America's West Side for much of the year. "It's definitely a change of pace from California, and only my first rain races this year! Which probably isn't what most locals would say, but nonetheless, very happy to come over for a change for what is such a special event."



After Friday's practise session, spirits were high at team Ottis. The car was performing well, with plenty of low-end torque and an ideal balance to tackle Goodwood's tricky turns, but the competition was fierce. A Flurry of Jaguar C and D-Types, as well as a Maserati, and an Aston Martin DB3S were all busy battling for pole position on the Saturday, which saw some dry patches forming out on track by the end of the session. The fastest laps came from two HWM's, one a Jaguar and the other a Cadillac, who traded sector times throughout the entire session. Tazio and the 750 Monza were defiant and earned a solid 8th place starting position on a packed grid, just four rows back from the leading trio.



Sunday saw the best weather of the event, and through some heavy downpours, that famous Goodwood sunshine did make an appearance as the Freddie March Memorial Trophy got underway. As the flag dropped, Tazio's karting instincts took over, hitting the gas with lightning reactions, immediately putting him in contention of snatching a podium position at the very least, with Bill Sheppard's space-age Ford Thunderbird 'Battle Bird' also storming the front runners. Tazio recalls the start, "It was epic! The Ferrari is plenty torque-y, and gets off the line great. I have quite a bit of standing start practice from the karting I do, and it all seemed to fall together well out there. Happy it also dried up a bit for the start!"



A first corner harum-scarum is always evident at Revival, but the entire field managed to get away cleanly, and Tazio quickly settled into 6th position, with the clock counting down from 25 minutes. The Ferrari is a mighty racer, but it seemed the local big cats were the cars to be in, leaving Tazio to chase down the sleek C and D-Type Jaguars to remain in the top 10. Up front saw some of the entire event's best racing, with Richard Woolmer's HWM Cadillac fighting for its life against a fellow HWM Jaguar, driven by British Touring Car Championship and hero of the weekend, Jake Hill. The pair battled for almost the entire remainder of the race, with Woolmer going full Dukes of Hazzard to reclaim the lead, overtaking backmarkers across the grass in a truly jaw-dropping move, only for Hill to take the overall victory. While we all stared open-mouthed at the replay, I was intrigued to hear just how tricky it is to navigate the slower cars on such a tricky circuit, "Luckily, the people that show up at Goodwood across the grid seem to be very respectful, and know where they are racing within that grid. So it hasn't ever been an issue here, which I very much appreciate!"



As the chequered flag brought the race and entire Revival event to a close, it was a chance to reflect on what was once again an event for the ages. The commitment from the fans, the drivers, marshalls, teams and organisers to put on the best show possible despite some oh-so British weather was a sight to behold, and made for some incredible images and memories to take home. As Tazio and the Ottis team packed up the with 10th place secured, and their racing legend unscathed, we wondered where we'd perhaps see the car next. "I'll likely run the Monza at the LeMans Classic again next year. I am heading back to join IMSA's Michelin Pilot series in a week at Indianapolis, and then off to the SCCA RunOffs at Road America at the end of the year, so I'm still plenty busy!"

To see more from Goodwood Revival 2024, be sure to check out [our 75 image gallery here.](#)

Photos by Kevin Arechiga for Classic Driver 2024

Gallery

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