

CLASSIC DRIVER



Shell Ferrari Historic Challenge - Monza 2006

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The last round of this year's series, held fittingly at the 'Temple of Speed', provided two days of exciting racing and also saw the return to the tracks of the famous Ferrari 250GT 'Breadvan'.

For those unfamiliar with the way the **Shell Ferrari Historic Challenge** works, a quick explanation is that it's open to historic **Ferrari** and **Maserati** sports cars and single seaters, with a special invitation extended to pre-war **Alfa Romeos** run by the **Scuderia Ferrari**. Three grids are assembled, 'A' for the oldest pre- and post-war single seaters. 'B' for drum-braked sports and GT cars, and 'C' for the really fast machinery, the disc-braked ex-Le Mans cars like **Patrick Steiger's ex-GELO Racing 1971 Ferrari 512M**. Within the grids, sub-classes ensure that performance and age disparities are allowed for. Needless to say all cars must meet the strict eligibility and authenticity rules set by the series organisers and have full certification from the factory. At Monza each grid had two races.

Grid 'A' was always going to be about a superb battle between Bugatti Cars' president **Dr. Thomas Bscher** in his **Maserati 250F**, and German classic car dealer **Max Werner** driving the car described as the *Noise Machine* by Motor Sport's Denis Jenkinson, the **1957 V12-engined Maserati 250F**. Honours went to Bscher in both races but not without some relentlessly fast driving from Werner in the rasping 12-cylinder car. Further down the field **Klaus Edel** was lucky to escape without serious injury having been ejected from his **1954 Maserati 250F** on the Saturday, the team doing a fantastic job to have the car running again on Sunday, while regular competitor **Julia De Baldanza's** early post-war **Maserati A6GCM** looked as wonderful as ever.



It was **Maserati-mounted Bscher** and **Werner** again for the next grid, this time running **450S** and **300S** sports cars respectively. Honours were even in the two seaters with Werner winning race one and the magnificent 450S that was streaking past the grandstands in a blur of noise and speed taking top spot on the Sunday. The battle between the two cars was simply fantastic and gave the 45,000 spectators and idea of events some 50 years ago with these cars in the hands of **Moss**, **Fangio** and **Schell**.

Behind the leaders **Carlos Monteverde** had a fine couple of thirds in his **1955 Ferrari 750 Monza**, while other drives of note came from **Andrea Burani (1955 Maserati 300S)**, and any one of the surprisingly fast **Ferrari 250GT Tour de France**.



There was only going to be one winner in Grid 'C', and **Patrick Steiger** duly drove the rapid **512M** to victory in both races, with **Paul Knapfield's 'European University' 1979 Ferrari 512BBLM** twice in runner-up spot. **Peter Hardman** in **Tim Samways' Sporting and Historic Cars 1966 Ferrari 412P** had brake troubles in race one but was third second time round – a superb achievement beating the later Ferrari 512s. Behind the leaders a stream of very quick **365GTB/4 Competizione 'Daytonas'** and other **BBLMs** kept up the chase.

Top of the older GT cars (**275GTbs**, and **250GT SWBs** and **GTOs**) was inevitably the man to beat in this class, **Vincent Gaye** in his familiar silver/yellow **250GT SWB**, while hats off to the drivers of the two supremely elegant **Ferrari 250GT Spyder Californias**.



The extraordinary **1961 special bodied Ferrari 250GT SWB 'Breadvan'** has not been seen on the tracks for a while and in the hands of **Max Werner** put up a good performance in the first race, a couple of places behind **Gaye** but failed to finish the second. Let's hope we see more of the car in 2007.

In fact let's see more **Shell Ferrari Challenge** rounds next year full stop. For those used to an English diet of Lister Jaguars and D-Types it makes a pleasant change - and the food's better too...

The series comes under the wing of the company's extensive **Corse Clienti** programme, so for further details please visit www.ferrariorseclienti.com and click on '**Historic Challenge**'.

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Photos: Ferrari/Classic Driver

<https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/shell-ferrari-historic-challenge-monza-2006>

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