

CLASSIC DRIVER

Historic Cars to Aviation Standards by 'Racing Repertoire'



Tony Bianchi is as confident at the controls of a WW2 Spitfire as he is competing at the Goodwood Revival. And Racing Repertoire, the small but growing operation he set up with his wife, Pia, has developed out of the Bianchis' aviation restoration business.

The traditional skills and ultra-high-quality equipment needed in the aircraft industry mean they are more than able to take on the most demanding of projects, whether it's the full restoration of a pre-War Grand Prix car or the major overhaul of a 1970s riveted monocoque sports car. Or, indeed, the more routine servicing and repairs needed by road-going classics – especially Ferraris.

“We bring the philosophy of the aviation industry to historic race car preparation,” explains **Tony Bianchi**. “That is, very high quality work that stands up to stringent inspections. Motor racing doesn't have all the legislation and layers of inspection that you find in aviation, but we carry the same values across.”



The aim is to offer a one-stop shop for restoration, race preparation, circuit support, transportation and storage – as well as bespoke race clothing – but, as **Bianchi** points out, “We're quite happy to stay small as a business, so that we can remain very personal in our service. For example, we're not one of those outfits that's running 15 cars at any given race meeting. We're quite happy to take just a couple of engineers and run two cars.”

An example of what they can achieve is the **Ferrari 246 Dino** single-seater GP car (top) with which **Richard Attwood** scooped victory in the **Richmond Trophy** at last year's **Goodwood Revival**. This was engineered and supported by **Racing Repertoire's John James**.



The company's small size, however, belies its highly specialist skills. **Bianchi** has many years' experience working with riveted monocoque alloy structures in the restoration of classic aeroplanes. “Detail

manufacturing is one of our strongpoints. We can make just about anything – whether it's a monocoque for an **F1 BRM** or a **Ferrari** gearbox." **Racing Repertoire** can work from patterns or drawings, to the most exacting standards of the aircraft industry. And of course, the company still takes on aviation work, too!

"Our customers are typically guys who aren't all that young, but they're fit and active and have maybe been in historic racing for quite a few years," adds **Bianchi**. "We've recently been working on an early **ex-Works Cooper S**, for example, owned by a gentleman in his eighties who's had the car since the 1960s. But if someone came to us with an **MGB** they were planning to race for the first time, we'd be more than happy to take it on."

However, there's more to the business than just **race car** (and **classic aircraft**) preparation. As the UK importer for **TOORA COMPETIZIONE**, the company supplies bespoke race suits for most of the UK Historic series as well as being agents for **Sabelt**, **Lico**, **Arai Helmets** and so on. Through '**Pia Design**', the Bianchis offer the very best in made-to-measure embroidered race suits, plus off-the-shelf lightweight suits, helmets, gloves and underwear, all to FIA spec.



Bianchi explains that this side of the business came about in the 1990s, because of the lack of personalised service when it came to buying race kit in the UK. "We felt it was important to offer a bespoke service. We like to do it properly, even if it isn't a highly profitable sale." And that aim of doing things 'properly' is clearly an ethos which extends right the way through the business.

Based on the airfield at **High Wycombe**, **Racing Repertoire** is close to the M40 motorway, less than an hour from London and within easy reach of **Silverstone**, **Thruxton**, **Brands Hatch** and **Goodwood**. Contact **Tony Bianchi** or **John James** on +44 (0)1494 449810 or email info@bianchiaviation.com.

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