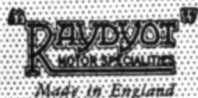


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LETTER FROM THE CONTINENT

BY BERNARD CAHIER

THE past month has been marked in the Sport field by intense reorganization and preparation for the coming season, which started on January 22 in Argentina. One most important part of this reorganization has been finding top drivers for each team, and at the time when I am writing these lines it seems that Ferrari has come out the winner in this preliminary battle. Indeed, Ferrari has Fangio, Castellotti, Musso, Collins (for G.P.) and Trintignant occasionally, depending on his arrangements with Bugatti. Maserati has so far two official drivers, Moss and Behra, and they managed to steal from Ferrari their racing manager Ugolini, who is considered to be the best in his field. B.R.M. has signed Hawthorn and Flockhart while Vanwall has Harry Schell as their No. 1 driver.

Ferrari and Maserati have sent a boatload of G.P. cars to the Grand Prix of Argentina. The Maseratis will be the six-cylinder models with some modifications including a weight saving of 70 lbs. Ferrari will send a mixture of three completely redesigned Lancias, 2 Squallos with Lancia engines, and one 100% Ferrari. Both these teams have also sent several sports cars for the 1000 Kms. race. Maserati will send a mixture of 2L, 3L, and 1500, all of these cars being slightly redesigned for weight saving and better streamlining. Ferrari have entered their potent 3.5L, 4 cyl. and at least 2 brand-new 4.9L, 12 cyl. cars. This new-born Maranello baby has a very good design; it is low and quite light, and it hardly looks like a big 5L car. The engine is an improvement over the previous 5L, and the use of 24 plugs is one of its novelties. Conservative figures given on its HP are no less than 360.

Still in the Sport field, there are two other novelties coming from Italy. One is a lovely 750 Osca made especially by the Maserati brothers to break the string of victories made in the past year by the French 750s. When one has seen the high quality work done at Osca, it leaves no doubt that this car will be a success. The other car is the Alfa Romeo Sportiva, 2L. This interesting newcomer from Alfa Romeo is using the present, but modified, 2L engine but with a tubular chassis, de Dion rear end and several features taken from the experimental Disco-Volante seen some time ago.

An interesting idea, now well under way, coming from the Automobile Club of Milan, is the participation at some time during 1956 on the new Monza Circuit, of professional American drivers competing with their Indianapolis cars against Europeans using free-formula racing cars.

Phil Hill's fine showing at the Nassau race has been followed with interest, and it is hoped that he will compete regularly in Europe in '56; if it should be as a member of the official Ferrari team, he certainly deserves it, for in the opinion of many observers he is among the best sports car drivers of today.

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