



Photos: Wide World

The Old Man just turned on the tap, and there it was—exactly what he needed to win. His mechanics lifted him out of the car and carried him on their shoulders.

FANGIO'S GREATEST RACE: THE GERMAN GRAND PRIX

by Jesse Alexander

THE 1957 German Grand Prix will most certainly go down in history as not only Juan Fangio's greatest race but one of the most exciting European Grand Prix ever held. Four Championship events had gone before: Argentina, Monaco, Rouen and Aintree; Maserati with Fangio had won the first three, Moss in the Vanwall taking the Grand Prix of Europe at Aintree. Thus it had been Fangio practically all the way, driving the 250F six cylinder, a car that has been in development and refinement for over three consecutive years and which in 1957 appeared with a newer and lighter space frame. The 250F Maserati, should, if Maserati development work is any criterion, be sort of falling by the wayside, as Alfieri and his staff at Modena have been spending practically all of their skull-bending lately on making the 4.5 V-8 sports car reliable, and trying to make Alfieri's brain child, the new 2½ liter v-12, go. Up to now it has been a big disappointment despite all their efforts.

In preparation for the Nürburgring race, Masers spent an afternoon on the circuit at Imola just a few miles south of Bologna; Fangio tried both the twelve cylinder and the six cylinder monopostos, but was clearly faster and happier in the six cylinder machine. He broke the lap record at Imola, a challenging twisty road circuit with certain of the corners setting up conditions similar to those encountered at the Nürburgring. Accordingly the twelve banger was left behind when the Maserati trucks departed for Germany with their load of 250F six cylinder cars.

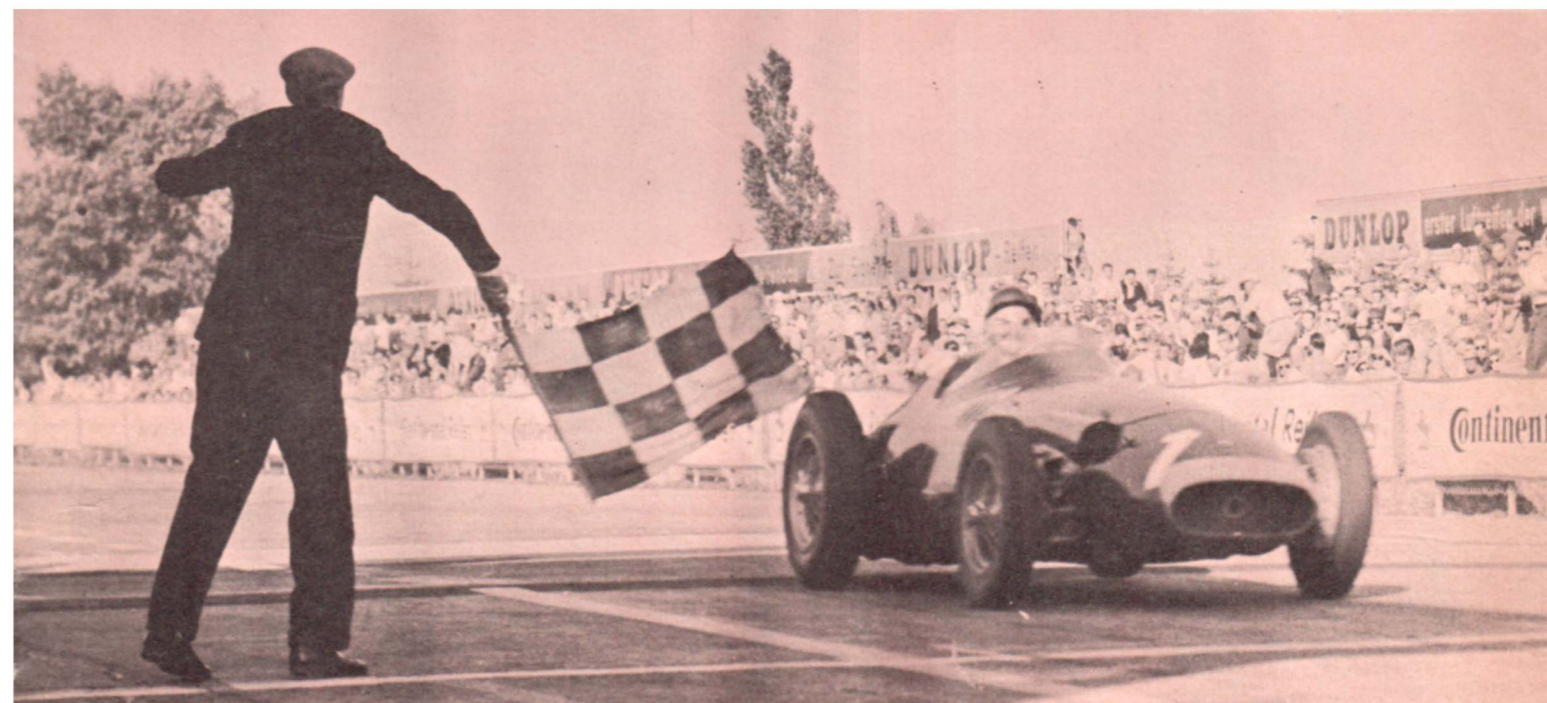
First day of training was on Friday the 2nd of August. Weather: fantastically beautiful for the Nürburgring, as rain and fog are more common occurrences. Considerable resurfacing had been done over almost the entire circuit, and experts believed this meant a decrease of at least ten seconds over past lap times, despite the fact that the stretch past the start - finish line and down past the grandstands remained as before - wavy, uneven concrete that made a Grand Prix car almost leave the ground as it cleared the brow of the slight rise leading onto the pit straight.

Driving for Maserati was, of course, Fangio, as well as Jean Behra, Giorgio Scarlatti and Harry Schell. Ferrari had Collins, Musso, and Mike Hawthorn in three of the latest Ferrari-Lancias with coil springs at the front and ball-joint wishbone front suspension, but looking much sleeker without the fake pannier side tank shrouding. Carburetor position had been altered, with the 4 double-choke downdraft Solexes sitting almost on the vertical again, further testing at Maranello having apparently shown that they were getting no great power increase with the carbs canted inwards, as they had been placed earlier in the year.

Lap times in the two practice sessions were interesting; they clearly demonstrated the superiority of the Maserati over the Ferrari. On the 'Ring, in 1956 Collins was very nearly Fangio's equal, but in 1957 he could do no better than 9 min. 34.7 seconds; it was left to Hawthorn to preserve the Ferrari honor by turning in the Scuderia's best time of 9 minutes 28.4 seconds. Fangio was, of course, fastest in training with 9 minutes 25.6 seconds. This is an average speed of 145.2 kph or just a hair over 90 miles per hour. Now to average 80 on the Nürburgring is no small feat; but 90 plus is practically super-human. And the amazing thing about Fangio is that he was able to go faster and faster by just turning on the tap, so to speak. There would seem to be no impenetrable sound-barrier for Fangio, and he proved this over and over again during the race on Sunday.

But to get back to training for a bit, the only serious opposition to Ferrari and Maserati came from Tony Vandervell's splendidly turned out Vanwall team. The Vanwalls were fresh from their greatest victory in the Grand Prix of Europe at Aintree, two weeks before, and Stirling

It was hub to hub, nose to tail all the way after The Old Man stopped for fuel. And when it was all over, so was the fight for the championship... the lap record dropped 17 seconds.



You can see the big grin on Fangio's face as he flagged to his fifth World's Championship in a row.

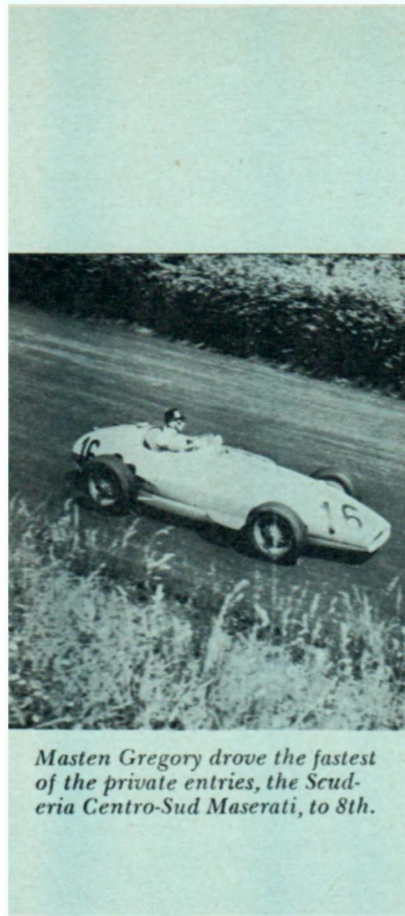


This is the way it was after Fangio's pit stop: Hawthorne(D-50), Collins(D-50) and Fangio(Maser).



Fangio, who started with a half-full tank, made a 53 sec. pit stop that cost him the lead by 33 sec.

Moss, still suffering from the after-effects of a bout with a serious sinus infection, capped it off with a case of food poisoning that laid him low for most of the days prior to coming to the Nürburgring. But Stirling's luck had turned at Aintree, and despite the physical ailments he had a new aura about him. The Vanwall team had high hopes for victory. Only a few laps in practice, however, and their confident smiles disappeared as they got down to some real suspension sorting-out. It seemed that the car was practically unmanageable at anything close to the speeds of their competitors. Stewart Lewis-Evans said that the high plexi-glass cockpit shrouds were practically punching him on the side of the face as he was flung about in the car around the 'Ring; Stirling said that the shaking up he was getting should make his food poisoning germs leave him in sheer fright. In the Karusell it was practically impossible to take the proper line—that is to put the left wheels into the "ditch" and put your foot in it. With the Vanwall, too much gas made the rear end just come right out of the Karusell and Lewis-Evans said that it was a real job to hold the car in. What the team should have done, was to have come to the Nürburgring a week before with sets of different spring rates and shock absorbers so that the handling difficulties could have been ironed out prior to actual race week end. As it was, however, their best practice time stood at 9'36.1, set by Tony Brooks. Both Ferrari and Vanwall were having shock absorber difficulties, but by Sunday morning Ferrari had apparently sorted things out



Masten Gregory drove the fastest of the private entries, the Scuderia Centro-Sud Maserati, to 8th.

enough so that they could utilize their car's full performance.

To no one's surprise the BRM was a no-show at the 'Ring. It has been a no-show for practically the whole season, and the whole project seems to be getting no where fast. The untimely death of "Mac" Fraser at Reims in the Formula II race early in July was a blow to BRM, for "Mac" had just signed on as a driver for the English racing team. Jean Behra had driven a BRM to victory at a small French Formula I race at Caen, one week prior to the German GP, and he had unsuccessfully urged them to bring several cars to Nürburg. Many people felt that it would be better for them to start in an international GP rather than finish a local event at a speed which did not stress the car anywhere near the limit.

The rest of the field consisted of privately owned Maseratis. The fastest of these was Masten Gregory's—a Scuderia Centro-Sud car.

Masten turned 9'51.5 seconds in training in a car that was several years older than the factory cars driven by Fangio and Behra. Scuderia Centro-Sud is owned and operated by the Maserati dealer in Rome, and he has signed Masten for several European Formula I events in 1957. Gregory's car, painted white with a blue center stripe, gave a surprisingly good account of itself in practice.

Run in conjunction with the Formula I event, was a race for Formula II (1500 cc) racing cars. This evolved into a battle between Roy Salvadori and Edgar Barth, Salvadori piloting a twin cam Cooper-Climax; Barth (former East Zone AWE

driver and now working full time for Porsche in Stuttgart) was in the factory Porsche RS—the Le Mans car with the fins at the rear and the new deck-lid oil cooler. The Formula II Ferrari did not start, despite its excellent showing at Reims three weeks earlier when it trounced the English opposition. Barth won after the Cooper packed up.

The starting grid had four cars abreast in the front row at 1:15 Sunday afternoon. Fangio had the "pole" position; next to him was Mike Hawthorn in a Ferrari; at Hawthorn's side was Behra in a car similar to Fangio's; and on the far left was the Ferrari of Peter Collins. Behind them was Luigi Musso's Ferrari and two Vanwalls, piloted by Moss and Brooks; the third Vanwall with Lewis-Evans at the wheel another row back with Gregory's Maserati and behind all these was the multi-colored hodge podge of racing cars that always make up the last few rows of a European starting grid.

The start itself was excellent. No one jumped the gun; none of the organizers were run down (which nearly happened at Reims where Jean Behra had to brake at the start when M. Roche, head of the Automobile Club of Champagne, ran in front of the already rolling cars to chase away some photographers). Collins and Hawthorn got into the lead closely followed by Fangio, and as the cars roared off, the two Ferraris were showing their tails to the world champion's Maserati.

Nine and a half minutes later and the opening lap of the 22 was completed. It was still Hawthorn in the lead, but more than ever it was Fangio in third place

snapping at their heels. Mike turned his standing lap in 9'42.5", then his next in 9'37"; but by that time Fangio had overtaken Peter Collins and halfway around on his third lap, had passed Mike and put himself in the lead. The two Ferraris, relegating themselves to another "procession," tried as hard as they could for the next eleven laps but were forced to play follow the leader. At this point, Maserati race strategy made itself apparent, for first Behra came into the pits for refuel and tire change. Ugolini had decided to start both Fangio and Behra with half-filled tanks, while the Ferrari team manager Tavoni decided to push through all the way without refuelling. On the twelfth lap, Fangio came screeching into the pits, lept out of the car as the rear wheels were jacked up and the fuel funnel jammed into the tank filler. While fuel was pumped into the 250F Maser, Juan had just time for a quick drink of water and a wipe at his dirty goggles. For 53 seconds, Fangio's car was stationary; and while it was being serviced, Hawthorn and Collins roared by — into the lead of the German Grand Prix. Collins turned 9' 28.9 in his twelfth lap, driving as hard as he knew to stay ahead of Fangio, who was now back in the race and just thirty-three seconds behind the Ferraris.

Now, no ordinary Grand Prix driver could possibly do what Fangio was about to do. With over a half a minute separating him and the two charging Englishmen in their Ferraris, Fangio began nonchalantly to knock off over six seconds every lap until he chopped the gap down to 20 seconds; on the 18th he turned a sensa-

tional 9' 25.3—a time faster than his best practice lap. On the next time around, the 19th, he was clocked at 9' 23.4". Then, with only three laps to go, the Argentine "Weltmeister" proceeded to do the impossible. On a circuit that was by this time slippery with oil and rubber, the Old Man circulated around the Nürburgring in exactly 9 minutes 17.4 seconds, an average speed of 91.84 mph. As he finished his record lap, the three cars roared by the pits in a tight group with the two red Ferraris still leading, if only by a hair, the galloping Argentinian. As the cars braked, downshifted and went into the Sud Kurve almost as a solid unit of red, we waited in almost a near panic as they rounded the corner and came charging up the back straight past the rear of the pits. Fangio was about 25 feet behind Collins, with Mike about half that distance in front of his teammate; as they went by the rear of the timing stand both Ferrari drivers had lifted their feet and were braking for the corner coming up fast, the banked left-hander that takes you —up and over, then a hard left, again down into Hatzenbach forest.

Fangio left his braking for perhaps three seconds later than the Ferraris; he rushed up behind them into the corner, braked really hard, then with a lightning-like downshift, had his foot on the gas again. As the three cars went into the north curve together, he stuck his nose on the inside of Collins' car, roared on through, slid up onto the grass verge on the outside of the corner, and then like a shot was off after Hawthorn, who by now was not fifteen feet ahead of him.

Mike tried as hard as he knew how. The Old Man was practically breathing onto his rear view mirror; together the Ferrari and the Maserati swept through Hatzenbach and down the long hill to Quiddlebach and Flugplatz. Schwedenkreuz, the very dangerous Aremberg, twisting and turning; then flat-out downhill to Fuchsröhre and Adenauer-Forst; then more down hill for five and a half long miles, averaging better than 91 mph. Fangio dogged Hawthorn until finally, at Breidscheid, the Old Man nipped through and was in the lead.

As Fangio crossed the finish line the ninety odd thousand spectators were on their feet *en masse*—truly a Grand Prix to end all Grands Prix. Fangio's record lap of 9' 17.4 was a time thought impossible just a year ago. And today Fangio had pulled it out of the hat as if it were a routine training lap. Any one who knows the Nürburgring knows what 9 minutes 17.4 seconds means; it's a feat unparalleled in the history of motor racing, and one which every one present felt honored to have witnessed.

The scene at the end was unforgettable. Fangio was lifted out of the car, picked up bodily by his mechanics and carried on their shoulders to the stand of honor. Standing there alone for a minute, tired but wonderfully happy, he began calling for Hawthorn and Collins, and above the din of the shouting photographers one could hear the slight, high-pitched voice of Fangio calling out for the Ferrari drivers to share his honor.

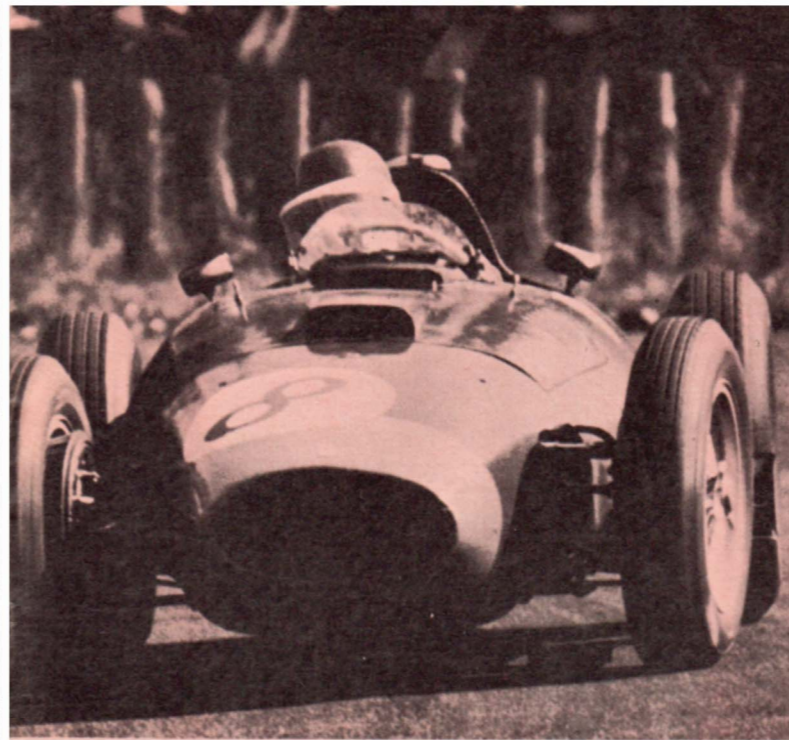
(Continued on page 58)



Steward Lewis-Evans in the Vanwall, which arrived late, had shock absorber trouble, and didn't finish.



Photo: Ernst H. E. Richartz—Mainz



Toward the end of the race, it looked as though Mike Hawthorne had it put away; nonetheless he drove just as hard as he could. Every turn became a four-wheel drift.

Peter Collins gets some pleasant, authoritative dope on ancestors of the D-50 he later drove to third place. Now we know our stuff gets read!



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Austin Healey

(Continued from page 57)

gain in torque the gearbox and axle ratios were being kept as heretofore, Geoffrey Healey remarked that the normal C-type engine wasn't capable of hitting its 4600 rpm peak in overdrive top. But the new 125 bhp edition could, would and did do so. Be that as it may, it is of interest that SCI's best two-way average in overdrive on the '57 model was more than 5 mph up on the corresponding speed in normal high. From this it will be gathered that overdrive fourth is in constant use during unhindered highway driving with the latest 100-6, and that this ratio gives a really big margin in top speed over normal top. It does, too. That's as it should be, and experience proves that five of the six available ratios (there is OD on third as well as high) are ideally suited to the new engine characteristics. Overdrive third is practically uniform with direct fourth; life would be much the same if it weren't there.

The closeness of the steering wheel to the dash—on which, as before, the overdrive switch is located—makes it possible to trigger OD in and out without taking your hand off the wheel. The Mille Miglia car, of course, had right hand steering, and the benefits of this fingering feature would perhaps be less marked where the same hand had to be used for lever shifts and OD manipulations, too.

Most endearing single characteristic of the latest Healey is its breadth of scope on the two highest ratios in its robust and easily manipulated transmission train. Even on the narrow and overcrowded roads that Britain officially classifies as "main", these two gears, direct top and OD, meet practically every contingency from a dawdle to a full-bore maximum that takes the smirk off the face of almost anyone you're likely to meet in a 500-mile day. At ninety on OD the car has a stride that belies its relative paucity of cubic inches, and at or below this speed a flick of the Laycock

switch, accompanied by an instantaneous traversal of what's left of the throttle arc, uncorks a fresh and abounding lease of life under the hood.

The fact that the engine is the only engineering element now being modified makes it unnecessary to comment here on chassis behaviour in general. What was good when SCI's full test report appeared is good still, and vice versa. But just by way of an *aide memoire* to those concerned, it didn't escape our notice that the exhaust system is still too close to the ground. Also, a driver's ability to make himself cent percent comfortable is somewhat a matter of luck, governed by his personal dimensions. If he's tall, has long legs and average arms, everything is fine. But if he's below average height, has longish arms for his build and likes an almost straight-arm driving position, he'll find that the right fore/aft seat setting makes it hard to reach the pedals. And this won't do because clean and easy gearshifts are dependent on using nearly the full clutch travel. Not even a telescopic steering column would lick his problem because he needs to get the wheel further away from him, and it's already as far forward as it can go without cramping clearance between its top arc and the dash.

In the body department the important new Healey development is the introduction of a strictly-for-two version of the 100-6. The familiar 2½ seater, with room at the back for two kids, carries on without change; but now Warwick also caters to customers who have no small progeny and aren't immediately expecting any. The actual body shells are identical, but the two's-company model is reworked astern to convert the nursery into extra trunk room. Also, the spare wheel, which lies on the floor of the none too cavernous trunk of the 2½ placer, is relocated higher up and further forward on the new model, increasing the effective depth of the hold by around eight inches. Erecting and lowering the top, with its clamp attachment to the windshield frame crossbar and fourteen snap fasteners at back and sides, is, happily, a good deal easier on the two-seater.

Dennis May

German G. P.

(Continued from page 29)

In reviewing such an event, one can only conclude that Fangio is an absolute genius—to be able to set exactly the tempo required to win. The strategy of Ugolini to refuel half-way through was a gamble that paid off handsomely. Ferraris were confident on their Englebert tires, and ran the same set on all three cars, running the full distance, 312.4 miles, without stop. The revolution counters of both Ferraris were stuck at well over 8400, while

Fangio's rested exactly on the 8000 mark. And so it was that a brilliant combination of car and driver made history on the Nürburgring—August 4, 1957.

Jessie L. Alexander

RESULTS: GERMAN GRAND PRIX — 1957

22 laps; 14.2 mile circuit; 312.4 miles;
 weather: warm and sunny.

1. Juan Manuel Fangio, Maserati 250F; 3 hr. 30 min., 38.3 sec.; average speed: 88.79 mph.
 2. Mike Hawthorn, Ferrari-Lancia D-50; 3 hr. 30 min., 41.9 sec.; average speed: 88.73 mph.
 3. Peter Collins, Ferrari-Lancia D-50; 3 hr. 31 min., 13.9 sec.; average speed: 88.54 mph.
 4. Luigi Musso, Ferrari-Lancia D-50.
 5. Stirling Moss, Vanwall.
 6. Jean Behra, Maserati.
 7. Harry Schell, Maserati.
 8. Masten Gregory, Maserati (1 lap behind).
 9. Tony Brooks, Vanwall (1 lap behind).
 10. Giorgio Scarlatti, Maserati, (1 lap behind).
- Fangio's fastest lap: 19 min., 17.4 sec., average: 91.84 mph.