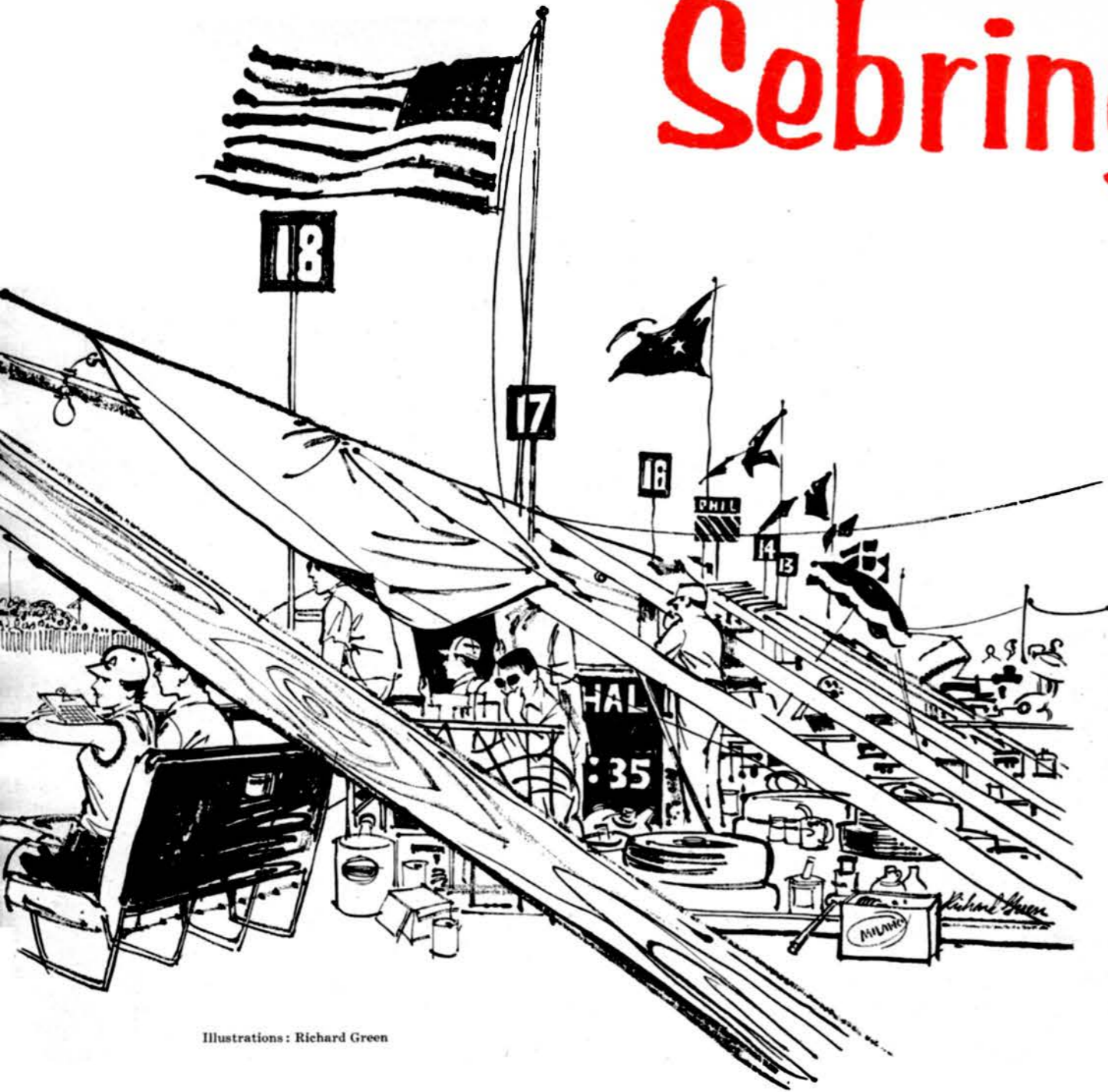


Sebring Forecast

by Stephen F. Wilder



Illustrations: Richard Green

THE LATEST INFO as we go to press (just before entries close) is that Alec Ulmann is burning up the airwaves to Stuttgart, trying *very* hard to get Daimler-Benz to reenter racing *now*. Whether he will succeed or not is quite up in the air. They like to go racing only when they are sure they can win, because to them racing is a part of their advertising program, not of their bloodstream. And with cars that haven't been touched since 1955, well... Look at the newest Ferrari, if you want to see what they're up against.

For the three liter limit, Enzo only had to dip into that old bagful of bores and strokes. What he came up with is an oversquare V-12 of 2.88 x 2.31 in (73 x 58.8 mm), the same as used on the 250 GT since 1956 as well as on the 1951 *Europa* and 1952 *Mille Miglia* models. The big differences today are the new heads with individual intake ports and six double-choke Weber carburetors. Because of all the crowding, spark plugs have been moved to the out-board side of the heads, as on the 4.9. The four-speed,

all-synchro gearbox, straight off the GT, is mounted to the engine. The rear suspension, indeed, all of the chassis is pure *Testa Rossa* (SCI, March, '57), though the wheelbase is stretched out four inches. Brakes are larger editions of T-R and the steering is by Z-F. For reasons unknown to us, the first car delivered (to von Neumann) had left hand drive.

At the moment Ferrari appears to be the standout numerically with six or maybe seven cars in the running. These vary from the new 250 Testa Rossas to the 2.0 four banger T-Rs and V-12 GT coupes. Drivers make an impressive list: Hill-Collins, Hawthorn-Musso, von Trips-Gendebien, Ginther-von Neumann, Lloyd-Andre, and Rubirosa-Malle. Tentatively, you may add a feminine touch with Denise McCluggage-Ruth Levy. An enlarged T-R at 2.5 liters might have better torque characteristics with four big cylinders than the 250 V-12 three liter. But the impressively stylish ducting around the front brakes on the latter is not to be discounted, because the Florida circuit is a torture chamber for brakes,

more so than any other we can think of. It has seven corners per lap that demand severe braking — about two per minute — and four of them are preceded by approaches over 4000 feet long.

Maserati looks rather let down with but three cars, and none of them Buell's, who will race only his 4.7 (where?). Two 300Ss, driven by Rose-Ruby and Duncan-Bonnier and a 200SI in the hands of Kimberly-Ulrich.

Aston-Martin is making a very serious bid with two DBR1s and a single Mark III GT coupe. Making up for small numbers is the list of drivers: Moss, Shelby, Brooks and Salvadori for sure and maybe Fitch too.

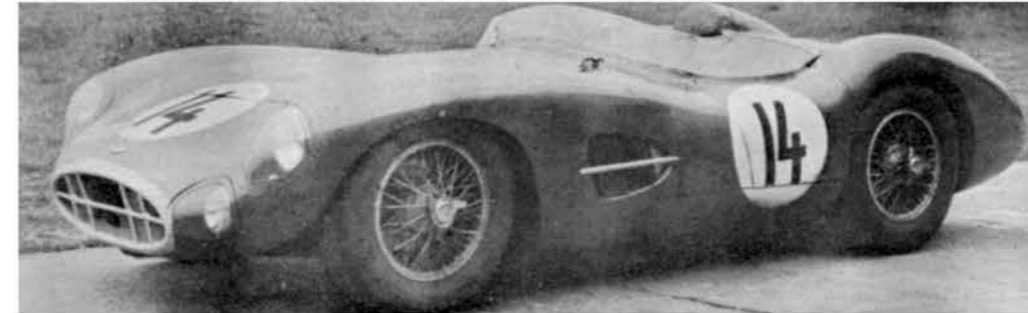
Jaguar's honor is being defended by quite a geographical melange. Destroyed D's will be run by the Ecurie Ecosse (Scotland) with Flockhart, Sanderson, Gregory and Bueb plus Fairman as reserve for either car A third D, from

Indianapolis, is entered by Jack Ensley, but he is in a bit of a quandary for a co-driver, as Pat O'Connor has just been "stolen" from him by Briggs Cunningham for his pair of Lister-Jaguars. Other drivers for Briggs are Hansgen, Scott-Brown and Crawford.

Porsches are entered in considerable quantity, five cars with ten well-known "pushers": Barth-von Frankenberg, von Hanstein-Linge, Kunstle Miles, Wallace-Holbert and Bunker-Beaufort.

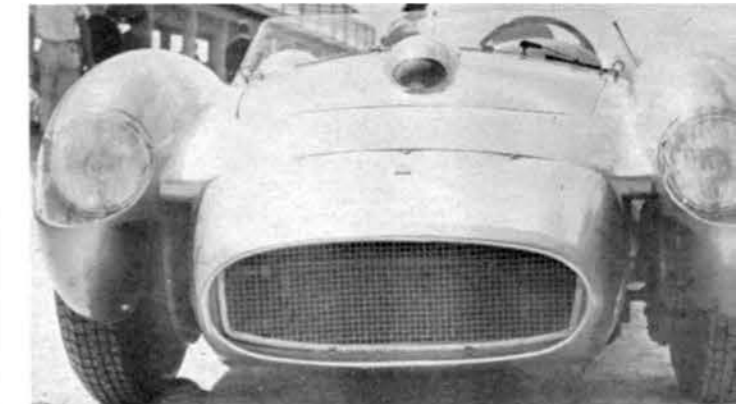
Elvas, having tasted victory at Nassau, are out for blood with three 1100 cc cars. Eight drivers are paired as follows: Kolb-Martin-Baptista, Bentley-Bradley, Wylie (Dr. and Mrs.)-Dietrich (Mr.). Giving them serious opposition will be the Lotus entry of two 1100's (Chamberlain-Frost and Allison-Weiss) and one 1500 (Chapman-Pallakson).

(Continued on page 58)



Aston's DBR1/300 has three major wins, on fast road courses. Moss and Brooks driving, and quick-change pads in the disc brakes, it may show up well on Sebring's stop and go 5.2 mile airport circuit.

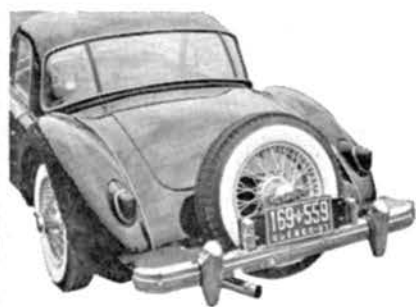
The 250 Testa Rossa is Ferrari's 1958 team sports car. Scaglietti, who builds bodies for all the racing Ferraris, came up with this exciting derivation of the old F-1 cars.



The front fenders aren't much more than headlight shrouds, letting air right at brakes, past Dzus'd on cowl.

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SEBRING

(Continued from page 15)

Here's a bit of background on the race itself. Born on New Year's Eve in 1950, the Florida International Twelve-Hour Grand Prix of Endurance is now a healthy eight years old, and already Sebring's favorite son. (Don't go the wrong weekend or you'll think you've found a ghost town.) Put on the FIA's International Calendar in 1952, it changed its birthday to March and grew from six to twelve hours in length, and from a national SCCA event (a Crosley Hot-Shot had won) to become America's first road race to actually attract foreign entries since Roosevelt Raceway. In 1953 it became the American event which counted towards the Sports Car Manufacturer's Championship. Even so, "boys" were still allowed to compete against the men for several years more. Today it's strictly a man's race, and at that, the factory's men don't leave much room for the independent men.

As at Le Mans, the rules are a very important part of the race; they are the subject of much discussion, some of it heated, and inevitably, they seem to get changed a little each year. This year the changes are quite extensive. Eligibility is defined distinctly, which bears some going-into.

To fit in with the CSI's requirements for 1958 Championship races, sports cars at Sebring will be limited to three liters. Larger sports cars just may not run, not even "not-for-points." But for the first time there will be a separate, concurrent race for Grand Touring cars of any displacement over 500 cc.

This has given the quietus to much of the big machinery, just as it was intended to. We can write *finis* for Ferrari's over-four-liter V-12s and for Maserati's 4.5 V-8 which won with such ease last year. Jaguar needn't junk its D-types, but they have plenty of work cut out for themselves. For the Corvettes, there is an out; but more about this later.

Prize money is attractive without being shattering — except to the SCCA which requires that members donate their winnings to charity. For sports cars, the winner on overall distance will win not only the coveted Amoco Trophy, but also \$3,000 which should pay for a few of his tires. Second and third get \$1500 and \$500 respectively as well as trophies. Trophies and the same amounts are awarded to the three best performers based on the Coefficient of Performance. In each class, the first three on distance also get trophies.

For G.T. cars things are slimmer, as there is but one money prize, \$3,000 for first overall. As for sports cars, the first three in each class will receive trophies. With seven sports car classes (D through J) and nine G.T. classes eligible, there seem to be 48 class awards for the maximum of 65 entries. But pot-hunters will find that entries are none too easy to come by, as this is very much a race for the elite.

Your Coefficient of Performance is equal to the distance traveled in twelve hours (plus whatever time — up to ten minutes — it takes to finish the last lap) divided by your qualifying distance. Unchanged from

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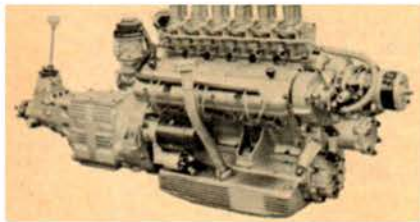


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last year, the latter is determined from the formula:

$$\text{distance in miles} = \frac{825 \times \text{Displacement}}{\text{Displacement} + 250}$$

Engine displacement is measured in cubic centimeters. For both class and coefficient purposes, supercharging increases engine displacement by 40%.



Six-port heads and six twin-choke Webers, single ignition by two distributors, and this 73 x 58.8 mm V-12 pokes out 300 hp @ 7200 rpm. Four-speed Testa Rossa gearbox, all-synchro, transmits torque to live rear.

The 1958 race, to start at 10:00 AM, Saturday, March 22nd, is the second of eight events on this year's Championship List. The winning car's manufacturer will win eight points for his effort. Second through sixth get 6, 4, 3, 2, and one. These are awarded only to sports cars, not GT. Furthermore, a marque which places more than one car in the first six receives points only for the best placed one, though the trailing members of his team do keep others from earning the voided points. If a Maserati were to win, followed by five Ferraris in a row, Maserati would earn eight points and Ferrari but six. If just one of the Ferraris had beaten the Maser, then the scoring would be reversed. This keeps things more competitive, as a strong-but-slow team can no longer earn more points than the winner through sheer weight of numbers.

However, with a separate race being run for GT cars at the same time, it seems odd that a well-driven, say, Ferrari *Europa* which just conceivably could win the sports car race if . . . well, if, a lot of things . . . yet win no Championship points. The only out is for the GT entrant to renounce his GT status *before* the race and run as a sports car. This can get us involved in "What is a Grand Touring car?" or, "When is a GT car not a GT car?"

As a matter of fact, in our April, 1957 issue we published a very complete digest of both the FIA Appendices which are pertinent, C for sports cars, and J for Touring and Grand Touring. The latter has been slightly changed for 1958. The first change enables series production GT cars with factory-installed blowers to compete; as to be expected, they move up one class. Models which have been out of production for more than four years may no longer compete as Normal Series Production (i.e., "stock") Touring Cars. Factory-optional fuel tanks, radiators, and gear box and rear axle ratios are now considered stock, but in the case of the ratios, they must be available at no extra cost. Furthermore, for one recognized model, only two sets of gear box ratios (three, if one is an automatic) and only two sets of rear axle ratios may be listed on the "homologation" form. Special Touring Cars may now have

(Continued on page 62)



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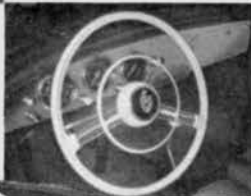
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SEBRING

(Continued from page 59)

minor mods made to the casings of the gear box or rear axle, either for mounting an overdrive, or for changing ratios.

Now on Grand Touring cars, the minimum quantity manufactured in twelve months is to be 100, identical with respect to "mechanism and coachwork." Some key phrases:

"GT series production cars must be equipped with . . . coachwork enabling a normal touring use, particularly as far as comfort, accommodation, and protection against bad weather are concerned."

". . . the top must have the nature of definite equipment . . . liable of being used part of the time or permanently during the event . . . may be replaced by a detachable hard top."

Dimensions are as for sports cars in Appendix C, except that internal width of the cockpit need be but 43.4 instead of 47.3 inches! Vertical height of the windshield must be 7.9 rather than 5.9 inches. Luggage space is required, 5½ cubic feet for one liter cars and a minimum of 3.6 for smaller ones.

In case you're confused, a rough simplification is that if the SCCA call it a stock sports car, then the FIA has homologated it as a GT car.

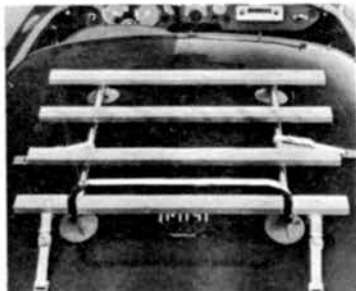
At first glance, the unchanged paragraph on Special Grand Touring Cars sounds like an opening for the Corvette SS, but alas, it isn't. Again, to quote:

"Special Grand Touring cars are vehicles derived directly . . . from . . . Grand Touring series production cars . . ." The key word is "directly." Ah, well.

Still, an XK150 with a D-type engine is certainly eligible, so is a Corvette complete with an awful-awful power house, or other all-out souped-up, gutted versions of any stock GT cars. But it must be a *Grand Touring* car, because this year's regs specifically bar Touring cars. (Over 1000 cc, the difference is that Touring cars must have four full-size seats, GT but two.)

This year's Sebring regulations, which supplement the FIA's Code Sportif and its appendices, make several departures from past practice. The most drastic change is permission to keep spares in the pits instead of on board. The former rule always meant a compromise between weight and performance on one hand, and safety-in-numbers on the other. No longer must an entrant who has traveled thousands of miles be forced out through the failure of a minor part. The paying public can hardly be enthused, either, when a top notch entry is forced out with an ordi-

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narily-repairable failure. Neither can the manufacturer. The liberalization is more than generous. Paragraph 6 (a) states:

"Competitors may have at their disposal either on board the car, or in their pit, every spare part or tool that they may require. However, such spares whether carried on board or stored in the pit must be component parts. Complete engine, gear box, or rear axle assemblies may not be used."

This is a vast change from previous years and will stir up a hornet's nest of discussion and dispute. Not the least of it will center around the question of when does a component part become a complete assembly? Talking with energetic Alex Ulmann, we got this example: generators, starters, and complete cylinder heads may be swapped, but complete cylinder blocks (short blocks?) may not. Perhaps further supplementary regs will clarify this a bit more. For instance, may the fairly-quick-change BMC ring and pinion sets be replaced *in toto* or are they considered rear axle assemblies? Time and a few arguments will probably straighten this out — before the race, we trust.

The picture on driver changes is best given by quoting again from the regs:

"(7) Drivers and Crews:

(a) One driver may drive for the full 12 hours. He may, however, have 1 or 2 relief drivers, i.e., total drivers per car may be 3. Drivers on teams may be switched from one car to another within the team, even though they have driven another car in the team. (See below).

(b)

(c) If a team car is scratched and is withdrawn from the competition, the team manager may elect to appoint the entire crew of the scratched car to another team car. The displaced crew may not drive for the rest of the competition, and this privilege, which applies only to cars of the same make entered as a team, can be exercised only once by each team."

Last year, once a driver had driven a car in the race, he was "frozen" to that car. Other minor changes relating to the crews permit them to give signals from the edge of the course in front of the pits, rather than from the pit apron only. The drivers, often rather particular about their helmets, need not mark them with colored Scotchlike bands as required last year. In deference to European tastes is the elimination of this one: "The driver must use

(Continued on page 66)



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SEBRING

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the safety belt at all times when the car is on the circuit during practice and the race." As many organizers have discovered, there is no point in rules that can't be enforced.

An unchanged reg permits only the driver to work on the car away from the pits. As a second thought on driver changes, with as many as three allowed to a car, there is nothing to prevent an astute team manager from nominating his chief mechanic as driver (if he can get him an FIA driver's license, that is). Because, if the car breaks down out on the circuit, the rules permit the current driver to hot-foot it to the pits (no Vespas or Lambrettas), report the sad details to his mechanical type co-driver who can then and there effect a driver change with him and, fresh as a daisy, run-not-walk to the disabled car with the necessary parts and tools, make the repairs and drive—ahh, that bucket makes a comfortable seat—back to the pits.

With a Le Mans start, there is no starting line as such. At Sebring, the timers' and scorers' stand is located, for their convenience, part way around the slow 90° turn before the pits. And from the timers' point of view, the finish line is quite naturally directly in front of them, in the corner. For safety's sake, the checkered flag is displayed a hundred yards away in front of the pit area. The first time past the timers' stand, the cars are considered to have finished a standing lap, even though it is a bit short of the full 5.2 miles. The winner of the race will be the first car with the most laps across the real finish line after 10:00 PM. Now, it's most unlikely that the finish should be neck and neck after twelve hours of Sebring's blistering pace, but if it is, we might be treated to a repetition of that fabulous spectacle at the 1950 Grand Prix at Albi—the finish line there is on a corner, too—when Raymond Sommer just nosed out Fangio for first place honors by going into the corner hopelessly fast and sliding madly out of control across the finish line—backwards. Well, you never can tell.

Stephen F. Wilder

Classified

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