

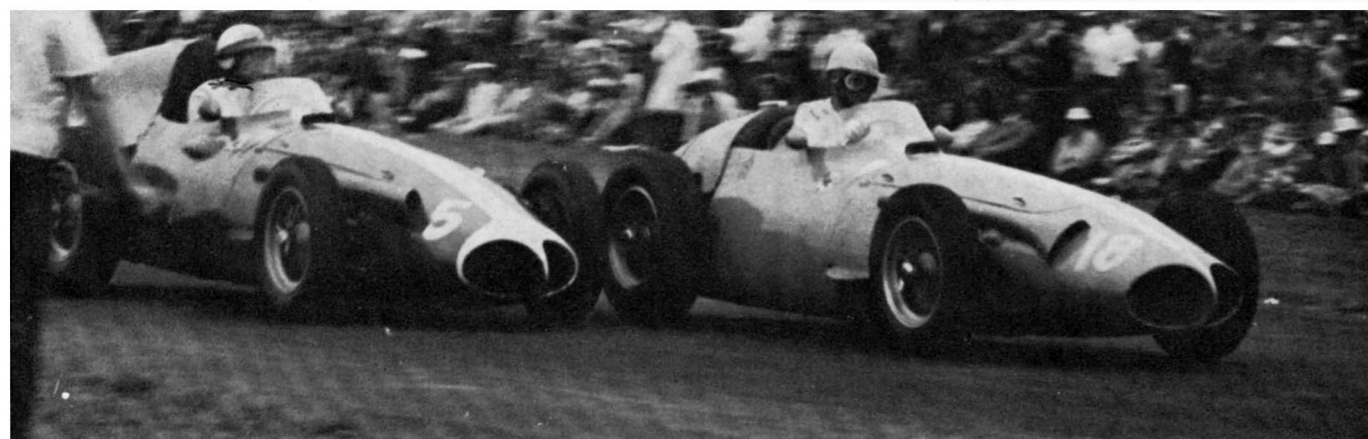
Halfway through the first lap and Moss (No. 7 Cooper) is already in front of the second batch of cars after starting in dead-last position. In the pits he discusses the suspension of Rob Walker's car, maintained by mechanic Alf Francis. Carroll Shelby, in Temple Buell's Maserati, makes a close bid to pass New Zealander Ross Jensen, also in a Buell Maserati.

GRAND PRIX OF NEW ZEALAND

Moss adds more hardware to an ever growing collection

BY JOHN CRUMP

PHOTOGRAPHY: BARRY MCKAY



ALTHOUGH the New Zealand Grand Prix is a Formula Libre event, the Formula I cars and drivers assembled for this year's race represented a partial preview of the coming European season. Drivers included Stirling Moss, Harry Schell, Carroll Shelby, Joakim Bonnier, Ron Flockhart and Jack Brabham, with New Zealanders Bruce McLaren and Ross Jensen at the head of the local drivers. Cars included the factory BRM entry, the Formula I Coopers, and the Maseratis of the Temple Buell Scuderia.

The BRM, driven by Flockhart, has had several modifications since last season (see page 48). The chassis has been slightly modified and the car is now lighter, with a softer suspension. Changes have also been made in the water and oil cooling systems and in the gear change mechanism. The outward appearance of the car is the same. It will next appear at the Easter meeting at Goodwood and will then be prepared for the Monaco Grand Prix.

Formula I Coopers were driven by Moss, Brabham, McLaren and Merv Neil, another New Zealander. Moss's car was the Rob Walker Cooper with which he won the Argentine Grand Prix a year ago and with which Trintignant won at Monaco. The car's 2.2-liter engine had been ruined by overheating in the Melbourne Grand Prix a month

The starter's flag has not yet dropped and four cars are over the line. Ron Flockhart (12) stalls the BRM as Schell (3) moves up from the second row and Brabham (4), McLaren (47) and Bonnier (1) are jumping the gun. Moss is at the back of the pack but grabbed first by the end of the first lap.



earlier, and had been replaced by an engine of 2040-cubic centimeters displacement. Brabham, who won last year's race, was again driving a Cooper, this time with a 2.2-liter engine; Neil and McLaren were in 1960-cc Coopers. McLaren's car was the same he drove to fifth overall and first in Formula II at the Nurburg Ring; fitted with a 1460-cc engine, it was second in Formula II at Casablanca. The 1960-cc unit was the basis for the engines of the Coopers of Moss, Brabham and McLaren. Moss's engine had the same stroke as McLaren's, but was bored out to 2040-cc; Brabham's was the same bore as Moss's, but with a longer stroke to give 2200 cc. Brabham and McLaren, last season's Formula II champion and runner-up, are No. 1 and No. 2 drivers for the Cooper team this year.

The Buell Maseratis were driven by Schell and Shelby. These cars were the latest Maseratis, about 200 pounds lighter than the latest 250 models, with shorter-stroke engines and 5-speed gearboxes. The cars, with disc brakes installed, will be used by this group in Europe. Shelby's car had a high tail fin which extended back from the head rest to the rear of the car. Guillermo Bertocchi, chief test driver for Maserati, was brought along by Temple Buell to act as chief mechanic. In this capacity, Bertocchi was also advising Bonnier of Sweden and Bib Stilwell of Australia, both of whom were driving older 250 Maseratis. (Bonnier's car was used by Fangio in 1957.) Ross Jensen of New Zealand, who was second last year, was entered in a new 250 Maserati.

Completing the field were two Super Squalo Ferraris, three Formula II Coopers, two locally owned 250 Maseratis, a 625 Ferrari, a Monza Ferrari, a Talbot-Lago, a Lycoming aircraft-engined special, and a Cooper-Bristol.

ROAD & TRACK, APRIL, 1959

Practice day was dominated by Moss's attack on the track record. In 1956, Moss had set a record which stood for two years with a lap time of 1 minute 27.8 seconds for the flat, twisty, 2-mile course. Last year, Jensen lowered this to 1 min 26.1 sec. Moss's best time in practice was 1 min 21.5 sec. Next best were Brabham and Flockhart, both with 1 min 23.7 sec. Then came McLaren, Jensen, Schell and Bonnier.

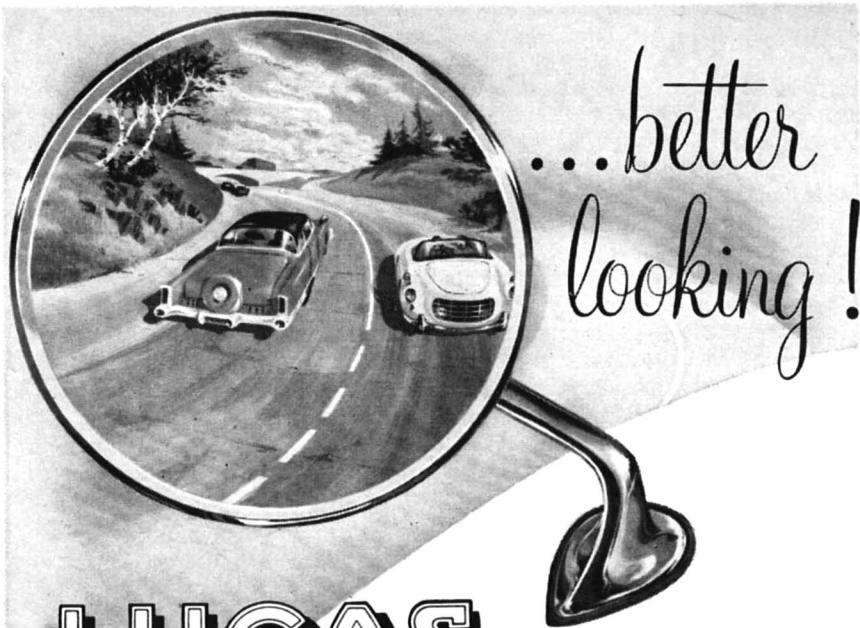
The practice times were used in eliminating the slower cars and in determining the starting positions in the two preliminary heats of 15 laps each for the Grand Prix on race day. Preceding the heats were a motorcycle race and a sedan race; between the heats and the final event were another motorcycle race and a sports car race. Brabham easily won the first heat, followed by McLaren, Schell and Bonnier. Brabham's fastest time was 1 min 25.8 sec. In this heat, Schell and McLaren had a close battle for second, with Schell gaining on the straights and McLaren gaining in the corners. After 10 laps of this, the Maserati's brakes began to fail and McLaren passed Schell into second place.

In the second heat, Flockhart was first away and led for 4 laps, with Moss never more than 20 yards behind. On the fifth lap, Moss slipped by Flockhart as they went into the

cloverleaf and maintained his lead into the final lap. On the final lap, coming out of the cloverleaf and into the pit straight (just 1/4 mile from the finish), Moss's Cooper suffered a broken axle; he quickly jumped out and began to push it. Flockhart thereby gained first place, followed by Shelby and Jensen. Immediately after he pushed his car to the finish line, Moss appeared at Brabham's pit to request the loan of an axle. Brabham, who had come with two cars, immediately dismantled the extra car to supply Moss with the necessary parts. On the basis of his lap time, Moss was allowed to start in the final event, although he was placed at the rear of the grid. Moss's best lap time was 1 min 24.5 sec, which was equaled by Flockhart. *(continued)*

STARTING GRID

BONNIER (Maserati)	McLAREN (Cooper)	BRABHAM (Cooper)	FLOCKHART (BRM)
STILWELL (Maserati)	R. JENSEN (Maserati)	SHELBY (Maserati)	SHELL (Maserati)
CLARK (Ferrari)	MANSEL (Maserati)	S. JENSEN (FII Cooper)	GIBBONS (Lycoming)
GLASS (Ferrari)	THACKWELL (FII Cooper)	NEIL (Cooper)	HOARE (Ferrari)
FREEMAN (Talbot Lago)	GILBERT (Cooper-Bristol)	HARRIS (Monza Ferrari)	QUIRK (Maserati)
MOSS (Cooper)			

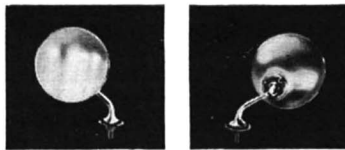


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In a sloppy start, caused by the flag being held overly long, Flockhart stalled the BRM, and Harry Schell was first away and led into the first turn, followed by Bonnier, Shelby, Brabham, McLaren and Moss. From the start to this first turn is a distance of some 600 yards, and Moss had already worked his way through the field to sixth position. On the back straight of the first lap, he passed the remainder of the field and was leading at the completion of the first lap. Schell was second, followed by Bonnier, Brabham, Shelby, McLaren, Jensen and Stilwell. At the end of the second lap, Brabham had passed Bonnier; Schell was still second, behind Moss.

At about 1/3 of the distance of 75 laps, three withdrawals affected the race. After 22 laps, Flockhart retired with a broken oil line. After 25 laps, Schell was out, also because of loss of oil. After 28 laps, Bonnier withdrew because of a malfunctioning of his steering gear. At this point, Moss was some 40 sec ahead of Brabham, and had lapped all except him and, farther back, Jensen, Shelby and McLaren, who were having a battle for third place. On the 37th lap, Shelby passed Jensen into third place, and on the 39th lap, McLaren passed Jensen and was fourth. At the end of the 40th lap, Shelby, who had obviously not been comfortable all day, came into the pits complaining of cramps in his left leg and Schell replaced him. This stop allowed McLaren and Jensen to pass the Buell car, and, although Schell repassed Jensen in the 63rd lap, McLaren remained in third place to the end. Jensen's Maserati was beginning to falter, as a result of his having no clutch.

Up front, Moss had steadily continued his pace, was leading Brabham by almost a lap, and had lapped the rest of the field.

FINAL PLACINGS

1	Moss	Cooper	1:48.24.4	82.8 mph
2	Brabham	Cooper	1:49.53.4	
3	McLaren	Cooper	1 lap behind	
4	Schell	Maserati	2 laps behind	
5	Jensen	Maserati	2 laps behind	
6	Stilwell	Maserati	2 laps behind	

It was an impressive victory for Moss. Although he was expected to slacken his pace to conserve his tires, he never let up. He appeared intent on lapping even Brabham, who won the crowd's acclamation for the loan of the spare axle to Moss. McLaren, showing the benefits of his season in Europe, was the first New Zealand driver home. He had been sent to England by the New Zealand Grand Prix organization for experience, and it was well justified.

The BRM and Maserati efforts were impressive but unsuccessful. Of the two, BRM seemed better suited to the tight "Cooper course," chiefly because of better brakes, and Flockhart was the only driver who showed ability in keeping up with Moss. This, together with his fine driving after his start, made Flockhart's retirement very regrettable. The Maseratis, with better acceleration and greater power, lost the race to the Coopers because of their braking troubles; Bonnier, Schell, and Shelby all had locking brakes at one point or another. Jensen, knowing the course better, had changed the linings on his Maserati and avoided brake trouble. After the race, Temple Buell announced that his cars were to be shipped immediately to Italy to have disc brakes installed.

The race was held on the Ardmore airport circuit, 15 miles south of Auckland. It was viewed by a crowd of some 100,000.



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