

MASERATI

b u l l e t i n e n

MEET PEE VEE
IN TRIPOLI

THE MAN TWO
STEPS AHEAD

LE MANS
CLASSIC 2022

GREETINGS FROM BÅSTAD, SWEDEN



ESTATE

2022



Maserati Bulletinen

#1 2022

Bulletinen ges ut av den Svenska Maserati-klubben och fungerar som en medlemstidning. Den utkommer med ett par nummer per år.

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SVENSKA MASERATI KLUBBEN

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Cover photo: Peter Gunnars

Dear Maserati friends

This issue of the club bulletin is a bit different than usual. As you can see it is in English. The reason of course is to give different perspectives and beautiful pictures from the international rally in Båstad. It will be distributed to all participants as well as all Swedish club members.

What a journey it has been! Let me give you a re-cap. At the president's meeting in Modena in December 2015, (my first) it was decided that Sweden would arrange the rally in 2020. The organizing committee started already in the spring of 2016 to look at different suitable locations. We took several trips, stayed at different hotels, looked at different race tracks, all to find the perfect place.

At the end of 2017 we had found the perfect place. Ystad Saltsjöbad! We booked it and thought that the job was done. It was not. It turned out that there had been a misunderstanding about the dates and the hotel was not available. Then we had to start all over again. We knew from the start about Riviera Strand in Båstad, but since the rally was held in Båstad in 2010 we were a bit hesitant to go there again.

When reviewing all available options, we agreed on Riviera Strand after all. The hotel and location are great. We booked Ring Knutstorp which is the closest race track. We booked restaurants and a factory tour at Koenigsegg situated just 20 km from Båstad.

We could not wait for the summer of 2020 to finally arrive.

In the beginning of 2020, you all know what happened. Disaster! All the work that had been done had to be done again. Re-book hotel, restaurants, race track, activities etc etc in order to arrange the rally in 2021. The one thing we did which turned out to be one of the best decisions ever, was to have all suppliers commit to the price for everything in writing when we made the original booking in 2019. As you all know the price level of restaurants and hotels are very different today than in 2019.

We could not wait for the summer of 2021 to finally arrive.

In the spring of 2021, it became obvious that it would not be possible to arrange the rally in the summer. Once again, re- book hotel..... But it was not so easy this time to just change the dates. One of the restaurants had gone bankrupt, Ring Knutstorp and Koenigsegg were not available etc.

We could not wait for the summer of 2022 to finally arrive.

And it did and you came, and I think we had a fantastic time! This could not have been possible without the hard work of the organizing committee. Thanks a lot to: Mattias, Roland, Jan, Hans, Rolf and Erik. Also, a big thanks to: Lasse, Johan and Henrik. As always, we are grateful to our spouses who helped us during the rally. I also want to wish good luck to our friends from Spain, led by Felix Buget, who is doing all above right now, planning for the 2023 event in Barcelona. It was fun, let's do it again soon!

Fredric Gustafsson

President Maserati club Sweden

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AMAZING DAYS, WORTH WAITING FOR.

After almost three years of waiting, it was finally going to happen – Maserati International Rally 2022 in Båstad, Sweden. Erik Barkman tells his story and gives his thoughts during the rally. Most of the photos are from professional car photographer Peter Gunnars. However, Henrik Hof, Mikael Andersson and Andreas Barkman also managed to catch some great glimpses of the rally. At [Maseraticlub.se](https://www.maseraticlub.se) you can download your favourites. Enjoy!

Text: Erik Barkman Photos: Peter Gunnars, Henrik Hof, Mikael Andersson and Andreas Barkman

The international meetings between Maserati clubs and its members have a history of about 40 years – actually as long as the Swedish Maserati Club has existed. The forms and intensity of these meetings have changed over time. However, the basic purpose is meetings between people who have a common interest in beautiful and unique cars created by a technically gifted family, one who laid the foundations for a brand that has endured over time with many fates and dramatic periods. We are all enthusiasts who want to learn and continue to be carriers of this culture, and have fun together. The rally is a forum where different people with different circumstances meet and exchange knowledge, have fun and feel good together.

This rally in 2022 in Båstad is no exception. The Swedish Maserati Club has had the privilege of organising the rally for the 4th time – 1992, 2000, 2010 and now in 2022. The Covid 19 pandemic stopped us from carrying out the 2020 meet, but now finally it was going to happen. However, there have been some cancellations during the past few months, probably due to the Russian invasion and some ongoing Corona uncertainty. Unfortunately, many of our older enthusiasts are missing, not least from Great Britain, Italy and France. But we have gathered 90 cars and 170 people from all over Europe, and even the US.

This Bulletin, which is now sent to all participants is a souvenir of this year's edition of the international rally – a reminder that the friendship between us Maserati enthusiasts lives on and continues.



DAY 1 - JUNE 30th - ARRIVAL

The day of arrival and a first meeting between the participants who made it to Båstad and Sweden in various ways. Everyone has expectations. It's almost three years since Scotland delivered a great rally. The Swedish club has repeatedly tried to maintain interest and communicated the rally through other clubs. This time, we have broken the tradition that the rally will take place during the month of September. Our climate is safer in June and we can offer bright nights with a stunning midnight sun.

Organizers also have expectations. Will it work as intended? After all, there are several arenas during a rally that require forethought, such as the hotel, the racetrack and visitor points that have other stakeholders apart from Maserati enthusiasts.

The arrival and welcome to Båstad was planned to take place at 15.00. The entire hotel was at the disposal of the Maserati gang for four days. Business

was feverish the hours before for all functionaries. The give-away boxes would be packed with the sponsor's gifts and the club's own gift to all participants "Clas-siche Masters" by Marc Sonnery. Reception would be built up for a positive experience. Also, the management of the parking lot would be on their toes to avoid queues - normally an Achilles' heel at every event.

So, how did the arrival go? Most followed the established routines and the crew's advice and instructions. The garage spaces were a little too tight for our beloved cars. An arm's length away was the goal - but when two friends absolutely wanted to stand next to each other with the largest modern Maserati models, it became tight. "The customer is always right," so they got what they wanted. The new MC 20s were also not easy to fit due to their vertical door openings - the wheelbase encroached on three parking spaces. The wise owners realised the dilemma and moved the beauties out into the hotel yard.



Almost all 90 cars came and got a spot. The weather gods stood by us throughout the event, except for the second evening at Norrviken's gardens. We got the first welcome drink in the hotel lobby after a feverish time of unpacking, dress code adaptation and not least the struggle to get the stubborn bumper stickers in place on the sides of the doors.

Our back-up with rescue forces and services had work to do, but no serious incidents occurred either on the arrival day or during the rally days.

The first evening ended with a traditional Swedish midsummer celebration with songs, nubbe (akvavit), a lot of toasting and dancing around a leafy midsummer pole. A fantastic evening with all outdoor activities and a reddening evening sky as a backdrop to our celebration with old and new friends. Spontaneous table placement was proclaimed. Fun and table trolling was experienced at the tables. A lovely start to the event.



DAY 2 – JULY 1st – ANDERSTORP RACEWAY

Most international rallies have their given ingredients with a welcome day often in national spirit, a race day on the track and a rally day to get a glimpse of the landscape and nature, mixed with orientation to get from start to finish. Båstad strictly followed this agenda. Today's trip was directed to Anderstorp Raceway, Sweden's only F1 Track, about 120 km north.

Mandatory for participation is the driver's review. It took place at 11.00 sharp. Safety and cornering technology is the most important message. To help was an experienced and wise racing driver who first gave us information about the track's character – strengths and weaknesses and, of course, the meaning of the signal system with the different colours of flags.

After the briefing, we all went out on the track to inspect and learn how to attack the path to success. Heavy and quick braking was recommended and, of course, touching the flex points of the curves to get through the curves in the fastest way. The length of the track is approximately 4 km and it took approximately 2 min, i.e., 120 km/h on average. Maximum speed was about 200 km at the end of the longest straight.

We were divided into groups – Beginners and Experienced – and drove passes in about 15 minutes. There were surprisingly many people with no track-driving experience who turned up this time. It generally applied to the whole rally that many had not been at these rallies before, with a lot of news as a result. Hopefully, this event will be followed by many more.









DINNER – NORRVIKEN GARDENS

After the track run, the adventure continued to the hotel and the preparations for the new party, now at the Norrviken gardens – a newly renovated oasis, originally from the beginning of the 1900s, filled with beautiful style gardens. We Maseratis got to occupy the Orangerie with pre-drinks and national dishes in the company of new constellations of participants. The trip home to the hotel was wet after the march towards the buses through the park. This time were the weather gods angry with us.





DAY 3 - JULY 2nd - RALLY DAY

The pace of activity during the international meeting is high (voluntariness to give something up is always an option). This Saturday, with glorious summer weather again, it was time for Rally Day. The rally requires taking part in and interpreting the roadbook. Furthermore, it is good to have map reader skills and orientation skills, as well as an open mind to get around the designated loop. The main message was to showcase Bjärebygden's unique landscape with stately rooms and narrow secret passages high up on Hallandsåsen with wonderful views towards the sea. Furthermore, to also offer a glimpse of Halland's open agricultural landscape on smaller country roads, where our long-distance cars could glide along both near forest

and sea. The approximately 210 km drive was divided into three different characters.

THE FIRST PART

The first part was on a narrow, older road, almost car-free. Possible encounters could have appeared and would have needed to be somehow mastered. Alternately, views were offered over the entire Bjäre region with Kullaberg on the horizon 30 kilometres away. The tricky parts required a lot of attention from drivers and co-drivers. Mistakes happened, despite "good" guidance in the roadbook. There were a few occasional organiser mistakes that perhaps should have required clarification – but that is history now and made some good stories.



Everyone got around and happily answered the questions along the way, even those who drove solo. Brilliantly done! Two minor incidents were noted – a small group of cars took the wrong road in Grevie and ended up on a golf course before realising they had to turn around. Some others happened to meet a local car on one of the critical narrow passages where the oncoming driver refused to back down. The person had not had to reverse on this road for 30 years, so the Maserati crew had to retreat. A shorter Hill Climb Race up the slopes of Hallandsåsen challenged the drivers' ability to keep to legal speed limits and, at the same, time drew attention to the historic milestone.

THE SECOND PART

The second characteristic part began with the possibility of 'free speed' on the highway along more open countryside around the E6 to Laholm – a picturesque small town by the river Lagan, known for its fine salmon fishing. There were some tight and tricky passages here as well, which most people mastered. The stage finished at Wapnö Slott with a well-deserved lunch. We had our meal in one of the farm's warehouses near the castle itself. The main building corps de logi was last built in 1750 but dates back to the 14th century. A lot to see apart from the cultivation centre itself with very organic cultivations and sustainability for the climate as a guiding star. Worth a separate trip.





THE THIRD PART

The last section was on significantly faster roads in the magnificent Halland countryside southeast of Falkenberg, with large elements of ancient monuments – where burial grounds and stone placements by Asige church was a partial goal. The return journey to Wapnö Castle was via Halland's Coastal Route via Steninge and Haverdal – where the sea encroached. A short coffee break for those who had time was offered before

the final stretch to Båstad was completed at full speed on the E6.

A tough day at the wheel for almost everyone. About 80% of the crew participated for the whole day of the rally, some took a break at the hotel, some turned around at Wapnö and some chose their own shortcuts to solve all the challenges. Fun and exciting were most people's impressions of the Rally Day.









The impressions from the journey barely settled until it was time to meet for the Concour d'elegance on the hotel's grassy surfaces. Equipped with a drink and competition form, everyone got to choose the winner in five different classes. Exhibited Maseratis from the early 1960s (3500 GTi) to 2020 (MC20) were admired and

allowed to be the focus of scrutinising eyes. The result of this "People's Choice Concours" was presented during the Gala Dinner (with all the winners at the end). The ink barely had time to dry on the ballot paper before it was time to get dressed for the Gala Dinner. Time for black tie and an aperitif.









The Gala Dinner is the highlight of the entire event. The participants feel more at home now. Meetings between people have intensified. We have more in common to exchange opinions on. Now it's party time! New table settings with new and famous Maseratis.

The idea arises whether or not the form of table placement has a decisive role in the depth/value of the dialogue and encounters between people in this situation. During Båstad 2010 and in, for example, Scotland 2019, there was basically free seating. During the 100-year anniversary in 2014, we were directed to clusters of nations such as Scandinavia or France. The free sitting also tends to gather people into national groups and or friendship sittings. There was a period of international meetings when the latter aspect for some of the participants became a limited and closed group to the detriment of the common party. Such tendencies were not seen in Båstad 2022, thankfully.

Back to the party and the dialogue with the table neighbours. Curiosity was heightened when it was time for the dessert and the announcement of all the winners. The ceremony was led by the president of the Swedish Maserati Club, Fredric Gustafsson.

For the rally itself, it was the Krezlik family from Poland who answered all the questions best. The range of answers to the knock-out questions was rarely wide. Were the questions unclear, or were the participants so busy that everyone didn't keep up?. It was guessed that our golf boxes held 2-250 golf balls, when reality was 153. For the Hill Climb Race, it was Lida Beukers and Piet Verdonk who drove flawlessly within the team's raw marks. Great work.

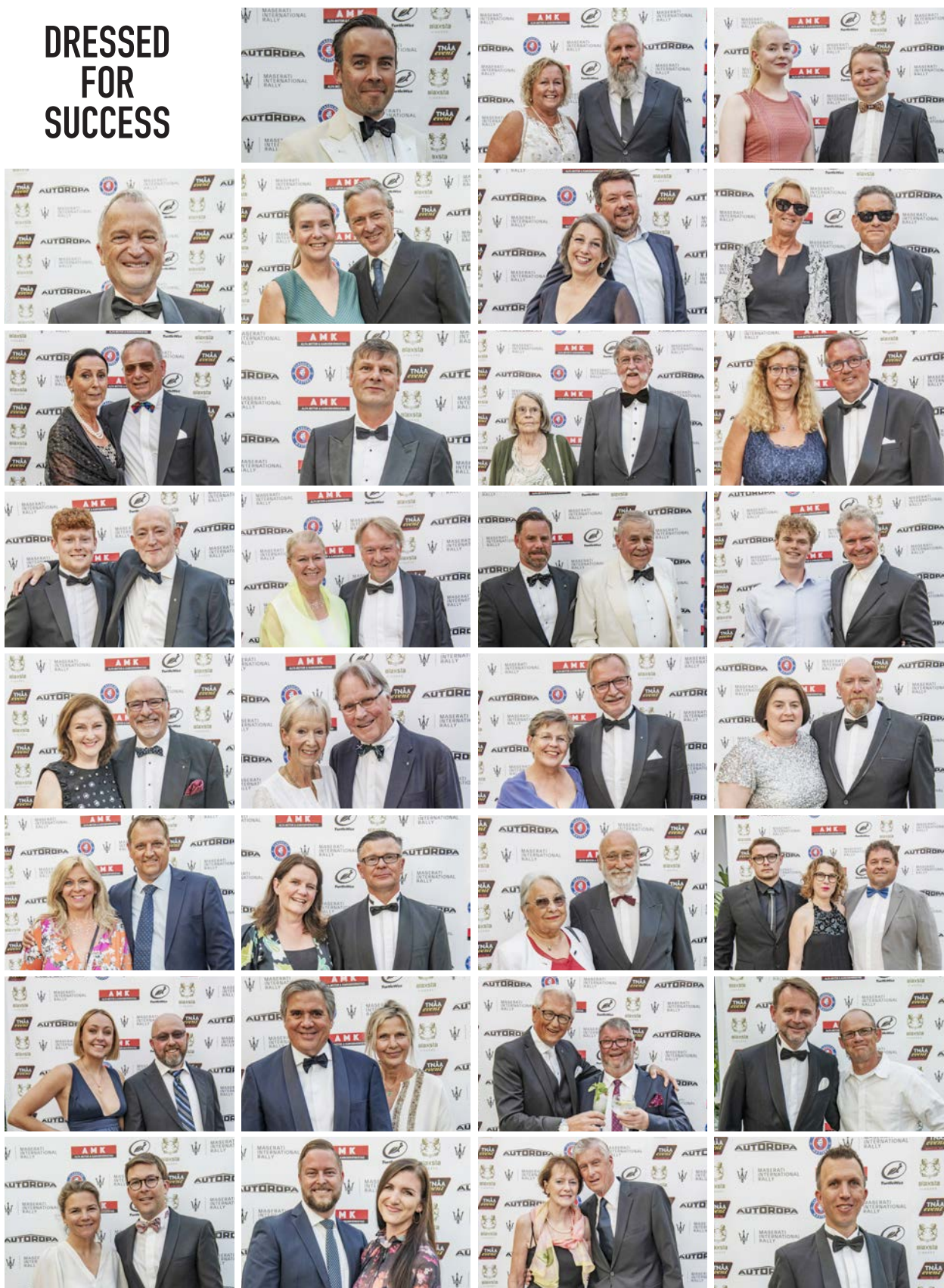
As for the concours winners, it was a shared first place; Pelle Bengtsson and Ulla Torstensson who won "Best in Show" with their newly renovated Ghibli Spyder, 1972. And Jean van der Elst together with Isabella Van Damme Maserati in 3500 GT from 1962. All winners received their well-deserved ovations from the entire Maserati congregation, images on page 26-27. Our guests from the US, Art Harvey and Ivan and Myrna Ruiz got an extra ovation for travelling all the way to Sweden. Art Harvey bringing his Bora from the US was the undisputed winner of the prize "Longest Distance Travelled".

The Gala Dinner was rounded off as usual with dancing to live music until the sun was on its way up again.





DRESSED FOR SUCCESS







AND THE WINNERS ARE..



Classic 6- cyl, Joris Claeys, Maserati Mistral Spyder



Classic 8-cyl, Göran Amnegård, Maserati Bora



Longest distance travelled, Art Harvey, Maserati Bora



Winner of the Rally Quiz, Konrad Krezlik with family



Best in Show, Pelle Bengtsson, Maserati Ghibli Spyder & Jean van der Elst, Maserati 3500 GT



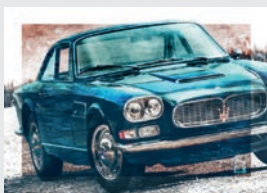
Modern, Robert Torp Halvorsen, Maserati MC 20



Hill Climb Race, Lida Beukers and Piet Verdonk from Holland.



Bi-turbo, Göran Westerlund, Maserati Ghibli V8 Evo



Artwork by Peter Gunnars for to the winners.

DAY 4, JULY 3rd

Thanks and farewells and speeches from all participating clubs ended the international rally in Båstad 2022, with gifts to the club and its crew for a well-executed rally. Spain got the last word and welcomed us to Barcelona in September 2023. Looking forward meeting you all then.

Our first MIR

By Ivan Ruiz
Photo: Peter Gunnars



My wife and I were finally going on a holiday trip outside of the USA after two very long years of Covid travel restrictions. We had planned two weeks of travel to Scotland and Ireland in July and were eager to explore those countries.

While I was browsing the Maserati section of FerrariChat.com a thread reminding people to sign up for the Maserati International Rally (MIR) in Båstad, Sweden caught my eye. I have been collecting Maseratis for over 40 years and had never heard of a MIR. I knew we had to go when I saw that the date was the weekend just before our trip was to begin. We were going to be on that side of “the big pond” so adding a week to our holiday plans and fitting in a car event seemed perfect. To sweeten the temptation even more, Fredric Gustafsson (who was one of the lead organizers) offered me the use of his lovely Mistral coupe for the rally. Ok, I was convinced we are going to Sweden!

Our trip started in Copenhagen where we stayed a couple of days. We had visited Copenhagen several

times but always enjoy that city. After visiting the Little Mermaid one more time it was time for the drive to Båstad crossing the impressive Øresund Bridge. Once in Sweden we took the time to drive around Malmö and visited the Lund Cathedral.

On our arrival to the Hotel Riviera Strand, we were greeted with an impressive array of Maserati cars. Everything from a 3500GT to a couple of MC20. We, of course, had to park our Ford rental car far away. I could not wait to walk around and look at all these cars.

The great thing about Maserati owners, no matter where you are in the world, is that you will be greeted with a smile. The love for these cars is the glue that bonds us together. My wife and I immediately felt at home amongst friend even though we barely knew anyone.

That evening was the first MIR event, the midsummer celebration. We are both from an island in the Caribbean where every day is summer. Celebrating mid-summer seemed somewhat foreign to us but there



was dancing and drinking and that is something we know how to do.

Next day we drove to the Anderstorp racetrack which luckily was over an hour away as it permitted me to experience some of the roads in Sweden, even if driving a Ford hybrid rental car. I did not participate in the track event as I was not going to risk damaging Frederic's Mistral, and the Ford was a "no-no". Still, as spectators we enjoyed watching the cars and listening to the instructors describe the course.

That evening's dinner at Norrvikens trädgårdar was magical. The grounds and the building provided the perfect ambiance, and the food was delicious.

Saturday morning was the day for the rally. I must admit being a bit nervous driving someone else's classic car. One thing I've learned is that every Maserati classic car has its own idiosyncrasies, and it takes some time to get used to them. Luckily this Mistral was very well behaved and it took very little time for me to feel comfortable driving it. My only complaint was the eng-

ine was so smooth that when stopped at idle I was not sure if the engine was still running. I've owned several Mistrals and this car was as smooth and responsive as any I've driven.

Of course, we managed to get lost as soon as we left the hotel but soon with big help from my friend Art Harvey, we followed his Bora and had a great time. It was fortunate that there was little traffic on the very narrow roads, and we could enjoy the scenery. After lunch we stopped and toured the automobile and airplane museum and then took the drive along the coast back to the hotel. I thought the rally was great as it took us though very scenic back roads.

That evening during the gala dinner we reminisced about the wonderful weekend and started to say our goodbyes. And of course, there was dancing too.

We want to give our personal thanks to Fredric and Cecilia not only for being generous and lending us their Mistral but more importantly for their hospitality and making us feel very welcomed.



OBSERVATIONS FROM ART

Dear Readers,

My name is Arthur (Art) Erlend Harvey, I'm one of three Maserati enthusiasts from the US who attended the MIR 2022 in Båstad Sweden this June. At the Rally, Fredric from the Swedish Maserati Club approached us to share some of our background and experiences attending the MIR 2022 in Sweden this summer.

I'm married to a very supportive wife, and we've enjoyed owning and driving our 1975 US spec Bora #932 in the Northeast United States, which I purchased from Ivan Ruiz in late 2012. I service it mostly myself, and drive it approximately 1,500 miles per year. Its original color was Silver with a Red interior, it is now painted a very dark brown with a creme interior. The Bora has been a very reliable, competent and stylish car to own.

This visit to Sweden was my first MIR, and the idea of attending the event started with an invitation posted by Frederic Gustafsson of the Swedish Maserati Club, that I noticed in the Maserati forum of the FerrariChat website for 2020.

I grew up and have family in nearby southeastern Norway, and always had a dream of driving a personal vintage car on vacation instead of renting an uninteresting car. Owning a Bora, and having Norwegian connections made the desire to attend the MIR Sweden event very strong. Some quick cost-estimating of shipping and handling our Maserati from the Port of Newark to a convenient Scandinavian port made it clear that MIR Sweden was an opportunity not to be missed! The Port of Drammen, Norway was the best intake port for my purposes. Gothenburg, Sweden served as an excellent alternative port. I signed up myself and a friend to attend MIR and began the planning and execution.

As we all know, the global impacts of Covid delayed the MIR event to this year. When the dates were finalized my wife had other commitments, which was sad, but she was happy that I could attend, and it was worth the wait!

Shipping costs had increased about 35% to US\$2700 but savings from two years of not traveling made it affordable.

My shipping agent arranged what I asked for, which was to pick up the Bora from my house and deliver it to Drammen, Norway via Roll-On-Roll-Off (Ro-Ro) ship. The advantage of Ro-Ro is scheduling: The ships make frequent and regular crossings. I needed the firm schedule to guarantee the Bora would be delivered on time for the MIR 2022 dates. The weakness with Ro-Ro is the possibility of mishandling, exposure to weather in port, and nothing can be shipped with the car. Our Maserati took 34 days from pick-up at our house to arrival at Port of Drammen. This time included about two weeks waiting at port terminals in Newark, Bremerhaven, and Drammen. The tools and spares I wanted to bring were packed in my suitcases and went as extra checked baggage on my SAS flight. I arranged liability insurance for driving the Bora in Europe via a German insurer for 3 months. This was about US\$410. My American insurer wrote an amendment to cover damage and collision insurance during shipping and while in Europe at no additional cost.

The Bora was picked up by a transporter on May 3rd, 2022 and it arrived Drammen Norway on June 6th. I flew in to Oslo Gardermoen airport on June 16th, and took a train straight to Drammen to pick up the Bora. It was a short taxi ride from the train station to the port terminal. The taxi could not enter the terminal area, so I walked in with my luggage to pick up the customs clearance paperwork and the Bora. The car's Norwegian customs intake document was stamped with a tourist clearance valid for 3 months.

When I arrived at the Bora, it was parked in an outdoor holding area, which had exposed it to weather and wind for 10 days, dust and salt air. The battery was dead from the Park lights having been left on some time during its transport, and I found the alternator/waterpump belt was destroyed. The battery should have been disconnected under transport, but can apparently be left connected in port. Dockworkers must have started the Bora, but the dead battery had put a large load on the alternator which stressed the drive belt and melted it to destruction.

Note To Self: Never again ship any car via Ro-Ro. It will return via Shared Container, estimated US\$3700.

Meanwhile, at the Port of Drammen, I changed into work clothes from my suitcases and was offered assistance from the terminal area's Service Truck. I was

able to get the old destroyed alternator/waterpump belt off, but a coolant hose was in the way of installing the new one. I had no equipment to drain the coolant and get the coolant hose out of the way. To get the Bora repaired and running again, I needed more tools and assistance than I had available at the Port.

Note To Self: Next time make arrangements to have the Maserati picked up and delivered to a local, reliable workshop for inspection, initial start-up, and temporary storage.

I only had one connection to the classic Maserati community in Norway; Gabriel Robertstad Garcia. I texted him and Luck was on my side. Gabriel connected me with Sigurd Amundsen, a local vintage Italian car enthusiast, who was willing to come and trailer and haul the dead Bora to his home garage the next day. I took a taxi back to the train station and overnighted in Oslo. The next morning (Saturday!) Sigurd and his grandson Robin met me. My shipping agent had already arranged us all with security clearance to access the terminal area on a Saturday.

Note To Self: It was definitely worth bringing strategic spare parts and tools. I did not need to order anything. I had brought correct belts and coolant hoses which I needed for the repairs. My list of spares weighed almost 50lbs, but it was worth the cost of the extra checked luggage.

Spare Parts List:

Distributor cap and rotor.
Bosch ignition coil.
Sparkplugs, correctly gapped.
Ignition switch with key.
Electrical wiring and repair kit.
Electrical multimeter and continuity tester.
Fuel filter.
AEG electric fuel pump*
Primary and secondary LHM spheres.
2liters LHM oil.
3qts 20W-50 engine oil**
Full set of engine belts.
Full kit of rubber coolant hoses.
Fuel hose.
Clutch flexible hose.
Brake flexible hoses, one each front and rear.
Tools needed to replace all spare parts on the list.
Timing chain tensioning tools.
Carburetor adjustment tools.
Maserati Bora Parts Catalog and Owners Manual.

*Next time install a secondary fuel pump in place, with selector switch, as Alfieri intended.

**20W-50 is not easy to find.

With Sigurd and Robin, we got the Bora loaded and hauled to Sigurd's garage, and by the end of the day

I had the new belt back on the Bora, coolant refilled, and the engine tested. I spent one more night in Oslo to have a nice dinner, get some rest and let the battery fully charge.

On June 20th, three days after my arrival in Norway, the Bora was finally able to drive from Oslo to my family home in Sarpsborg. I could finally relax.

The following week I spent test driving and making small corrections to the belt tension and repairs to a leaky coolant hose to be sure they were in proper order for June 30th, the beginning of MIR 2022, Båstad! Sigurd and Gabriel stayed in contact to check that the repairs were successful. Since I had connected with Gabriel with the Norwegian Maserati Klubb, I had also been introduced to Øystein Bakken, their president. Øystein asked if I'd like to join a group of club members driving to MIR 22 on June 29th, with one overnight in the resort town of Grebbestad, Sweden. I gladly accepted and welcomed the social and driving company of other Maseratisti for the trip. We arranged a meeting time & place which worked perfectly. I'm very thankful to all the Norwegian Maserati Klubb members for their warm welcome. The drive south on the E6 highway went smoothly and quickly!

The rest of the Båstad Sweden MIR 2022 event - the hotel, the gifts, the events, the driving, the Maseratis, the meals, the beautiful countryside of southern Sweden, and very lovely people who we met throughout the long weekend - were the same high quality as we all experienced.

I am very glad and proud to share that after all the work to bring our Bora to the MIR 2022 Sweden event and get it proper order, it drove beautifully as always. It brought me there and back, it was very very competent when driven harder than I've ever driven it - on the track at Anderstorp - and the Bora held up nicely on the fun and challenging Rally day! I drove it back to Norway for another 1,200kms of fun, and delivered it to my return shipper just 3 days ago, on August 1st.

Thank you again. It was a tremendous pleasure to attend the MIR 2022, and I thank you so much for the hard work of organizing and arranging all the large and small details of the event. My personal thanks to the Norsk Maserati Klubb. Most of all, I loved the relaxing atmosphere you created and the opportunity to meet and talk with so many wonderful Maserati enthusiasts from all over the world. I hope my experience can serve as an encouragement to other enthusiasts, and I hope to see many of you again at future MIRs!

Cheers!
- Art Erlend Harvey



MASERATIS AT LE MANS CLASSIC 2022

By Marc Sonnery

Photo: Jean Francois Blachette, President of the Maserati Club France & Marc Sonnery





Rarely has an event been awaited with so much longing. Because it is only held every two years and because of Covid it had been four years since the last Le Mans Classic took place.

Well already on the Friday the attendance, energy and expectation was massive, with classic cars from all over Europe filling the club enclosures, no less than 8600 of them through the weekend which took place in perfect hot balmy weather.

The last LMC had a record attendance of 195000... well this year's exploded that statistic reaching 200850 spectators! Only 30000 less than the modern 24 hours' usual figure. It is nothing less than the largest classic car event on earth, vastly outgunning Monterey or the Silverstone Classic and Goodwood events. It is not just about quantity; the quality is there too, very much so.

You could feel the joy, the power of passion with big affluence from all over Europe, quite a lot of Americans among drivers and spectators in the paddocks, pitlane and on track. 1000 racing drivers shared 750 racing

cars built between 1923, the race's first edition and 1980, regrouped in 6 grids by era plus support other support races.

There were many outdoor Displays including gatherings of old small capacity French former Le Mans racers, one by Alfa Romeo with a 33 Le Mans car and, remarkably, Alfa's still born group C racer, built but never raced, very handsome, the only one in existence brought from the factory's museum. All kinds of shops in tents or permanent structures sold models, memorabilia, vintage racing oriented clothes, art, you could get a sixties hairstyle in hair salons with period equipment, there was dancing to sixties tunes, and the vast choice of food and beverage stands with fare from all over the world including, of course, a champagne bar! There was an outdoor theatre showing back to the future, Mad Max fury road and...what else: Le Mans 66/Ford versus Ferrari of course!

Even the shuttles for the public were quaint old buses from the fifties, one owner had driven his all the way from Switzerland.

Various manufacturers had huge and impressive presentation stands with old racing glories on display but the most interesting was the trio of De Tomaso P72's displayed. They were very clearly inspired by 330 P3 so very handsome, inside and out and they sounded fabulous when going for hot laps between the races. A serious effort.

How does Le Mans Classic work? There are six grids by era which each have two practice sessions on the Friday and then three forty minute races each between Saturday and Sunday. Grid one race then grid two race etc and then after grid six race it starts from one again so eighteen races which with transition times add up to roughly 24 hours.

Grid 1 1923-1939 did not feature any Maseratis this year.

Grid 2 featured the 1955 300S of Germans Rettenmaier/Rettemaier, the 1953 A6GCS of Argentines Sucari/Sucari, the 1957 Osca S 1500 TN raced by Frenchmen Blasco/Peyraud/Agaud and a second Osca, the 1954 MT4 of Italian Incerti. There is no obligation to have a co driver but a minimum time pit stop during each race is mandatory whether there is a driver change or not. Finally there was a 1958 Osca Maserati 750 Sport driven by Frenchmen Bellue-Laurent.

The other grids did not include any Maseratis. Note that a number of cars are now perfectly identical tool room replicas, particularly for the most valuable cars: there were one each Ferrari 250GTO 64 and 250LM for example; this is the consequence of the ever rising values of the real ones whose owners are more and more reluctant to risk them on track. This has been the case at Goodwood for years for example.

Famous drivers racing included a slew of former Le Mans winners such as Emanuele Pirro, Eric Helary, Eric van de Poele, Jurgen Barth, rally star 308GTB Gr4 Michelotto and 512BBLM racer Jean Claude Andruet, former F1 Ferrari driver Rene Arnoux in a BMW M1, Marco Werner in a 935 and the Crown Prince of Denmark in a GT40. There were also two car company Presidents; Jim Farley the Ford CEO in grid 4 who actually drove his GT40 to a podium finish and Carlos Tavares the leader of Stellantis (which groups Fiat, Peugeot, Citroen, Alfa Romeo, Opel, Jeep and Maserati among others) in a Chevron B21. Interestingly this major motorsport enthusiast and outspoken critic of the politicians' blind lemming like rush towards ultimately unsustainable and not so clean electrification was running his Chevron on synthetic fuel, one of four cars doing so at Le Mans Classic. This fuel was developed by Aramco and LMC organiser Patrick Peter hopes to have the entire field of 1950 and younger historic cars race on that fuel within 5 years.





Around 4PM the first race started, though with some delays. It was done with a false Le Mans running start behind safety car for the beauty of it but later in the warm up lap the safety car stops so drivers can fasten their belts or harnesses then he releases them in front of the pits.

The grandstands were packed and it was just a joy to watch...and hear! So many had been missing this event very badly so after four years it was just pure joy. On the Saturday night after more than 24 hours at the track I decided to take a break and have dinner in a nearby village in peace and quiet...well that back fired. Literally!

After four years I had forgotten that Arnage (after which the slowest corner of the 24h circuit is named) is not only full of parked sports and classic cars and fans during race weekends but that there is a spontaneous burnout and engine revving fest right past the restaurant terraces with diners cheering loudly! So much for a quiet dinner! Walking afterwards in the park across the street edging the river Sarthe for which the department is named did the trick of providing some peace and quiet; I was eager to get back to the track again!

The Endurance racing legends was a joy to behold simply because it included a 333SP whose distinctive wail had the crowd enraptured, as always! It was driven by Michel Lecourt and Raymond Narac, chassis 034, in yellow livery. It was sold new in Germany and never raced in period. There were also two Maserati MC12 GT1's and it was poetic justice to see them pound round le circuit de la Sarthe. They had been conceived on the base of the Enzo specifically to win Le Mans but were refused in period by the ACO, the club which

rules Le Mans, as being too stealthy in concept, virtual Trojan horses in terms of the rules. What few remember is that the very last year they ran they had actually been accepted for Le Mans but the teams still running them did not take part.

Now bear in mind each of these grids had about sixty cars; with an 8 mile long track accommodating so many is not a problem. The one race or rather exhibition which had about 200 entries and caused the greatest ruckus though was the kids in little miniature race cars, many of which looked like 365P's. It was both amusing and concerning to see how the parents were taking this very seriously, some of them in a literal frenzy and you could hear them give advice in several languages on how their dear offspring should win. Amusing and ridiculous in equal terms but the good thing is that the boys and girls at the heart of it become a new generation of enthusiasts and some of them future owners.

Then there were the classic cars driven to Le Mans from all corners of Europe and many from the UK on display in the club corral: only 8600 of them! The corral space is the short permanent Bugatti circuit within the non permanent 24 hour course. The Porsche paddock had about one thousand road cars 99% 911's then then there were several thousand British classics, loads of Jaguars, Triumphs Astons, but also TVR's and every little obscure English production. There were about 40 Maseratis with numerous Ghiblis, Indys, Mistrals and more modern models, a dozen Lamborghinis, most of them classics, a dozen Panteras, more modern supercars, Cobras genuine or not some cars that you would never see elsewhere such as Ligier Maseratis, Marcos, Alvis, Bizzarrinis, GT40 road cars,



one of the ultra rare original ones and many replicas etc everywhere you looked, think Laguna Seca paddocks and parking lots during Monterey but multiplied by four. The oddest of all Maserati engine cars present was the one off Citroën SM Tisseur flatbed transporter. It certainly got a lot of attention, was saved from dreadful condition and fully restored. It is owned by a Citroën SM specialized workshop which uses it all across France to transport SM's –what else!- to shows. Oh and speaking of which 99% of the classics present at LMC were driven there hundreds if not thousands of miles, not trailered such as a beater Countach, ratty, road rashed with huge six figure mileage. One Granturismo had been driven all the way from Ireland and had a special paint livery for the occasion.

Between proper races there were various concours and parades on track for all the various clubs, the Ferrari one was quite good but featured mostly 90's and later cars excepting 246GT's BB512's 328's. Two cherry red SP3's led the field, a third one, yellow was also seen in the paddock.

My little tradition during LMC is to spend part of the night in the most unadulterated portion of the circuit: the Indianapolis and Arnage curve sequence, where the circuit is unchanged from the old days and no modern constructions ruin the view; the perfect time

machine spot. The atmosphere is magic as you are surrounded by forest under a cloudless sky. You can hear the pack miles away on the Mulsanne straight – real name les Hunaudieres- then they arrive at the slow corner ending it and relaunch in the flat out narrow stretch that follows, also at top speed with slight kinks and suddenly they appear through the woods screaming away only to face the challenging approach to Indianapolis curve which necessitates braking while negotiating the last kink before the much slower curve itself. It is banked so they often pass two abreast, then reaccelerate for about 300 meters before slamming hard on the brakes for Arnage the 90 degree right which at 50mph is the slowest curve of the whole circuit. From there they accelerate to very high speeds again towards the Porsche curves more than a mile away. A sequence that is the perfect mix to observe with several hundred enjoying the sight standing or in their chairs, engines howling through the night like wolves; it gets to your enthusiast's soul, I can tell you. Right there and then I thought I would rather see a perfect replica with its beautiful lines and gorgeous sounds go by at full blast at 3am than a real one in an auction room. Some enjoy the somewhat obscene frenzy around values at auction, I would much rather be at the track. This is what these cars were made for and are about.



There was also an auction Saturday afternoon put up by French house Artcurial and the highlight, best selling lot was actually a 1954 A6GCS bodied by Fiandri which sold for €3418000. The auction also featured a Ghibli, Bora and 3500GT.

This year's edition was truly mind blowing and I will close with the best quote courtesy of my German journalist colleague, the spirited lady racer Gabi von Oppenheim; "Le Mans Classic is Woodstock for petrolheads". Absolutely!

The best surprise of all is that instead of having to wait till 2024 Le Mans Classic will be back already next year in honour of the centenary of Le Mans: 1923-2023 and it is sure to be an occasion not to be missed. Rendez vous in the Sarthe June 29 to July 2, 2023!

IN MEMORIAM OF ALEXANDER "CHIPS" FYSHE



A friend and a great Italian car enthusiast has left us in July 2022 after a short illness. He was a well-known collector of unique – mainly Italian – cars. His collection included a Maserati Ghibli SS 4.9, Ferrari 250GT Lusso and Osca MT 4 1100. For a very long period, Alex has also been president of the UK Maserati Club. My memories of Alex belong in the development and cooperation of the Maserati clubs in Europe. He was the driving force behind our presidential meetings, which developed the international meetings into a joint forum, where enthusiasts can meet and learn from history but also have fun.

With his formidable poise paired with a casual, jovial aura and, not least, humour, he put us all in a good mood that led us forward towards wise decisions. A great man with a twinkle in his eye has left us but his deeds remain. Our thoughts also go out to the closest to the bereaved.

Erik Barkman

Jan Svanbäck

- two steps ahead of everyone else

By Bengt Dieden

That Italian supercars are of great interest and command astronomical prices today does not surprise Jan Svanbäck. He tried to open the eyes of Swedish car enthusiasts to this almost 50 years ago, but the interest was low and the cars he came across often ended up in foreign hands.

In the 70s, car enthusiasts could fulfill their dreams of Italian supercars without having to spend too much money. A Ferrari 250 GT could be bought for slightly more than a Volvo and if a man like Jan was interested in cars, it had to be that way. The Ferrari didn't impress him much, but he still went on some longer drives. On a visit to Switzerland, the car developed a serious problem and he traded it outright for a Maserati 3500 GTI at a car dealer. With this began a lifelong interest in the brand, even if there were deviations into other areas of interest

The Maserati was more stable in all respects and probably suited Jan's rather tough driving style better. The spare parts were not expensive at the time, but the only place to buy them was at the factory in Modena, where Jan went at regular intervals. On the way there, he discovered the fantastic Nürburgring, where he took the opportunity to take a driving course long before most enthusiasts in Sweden could even spell the track's name.

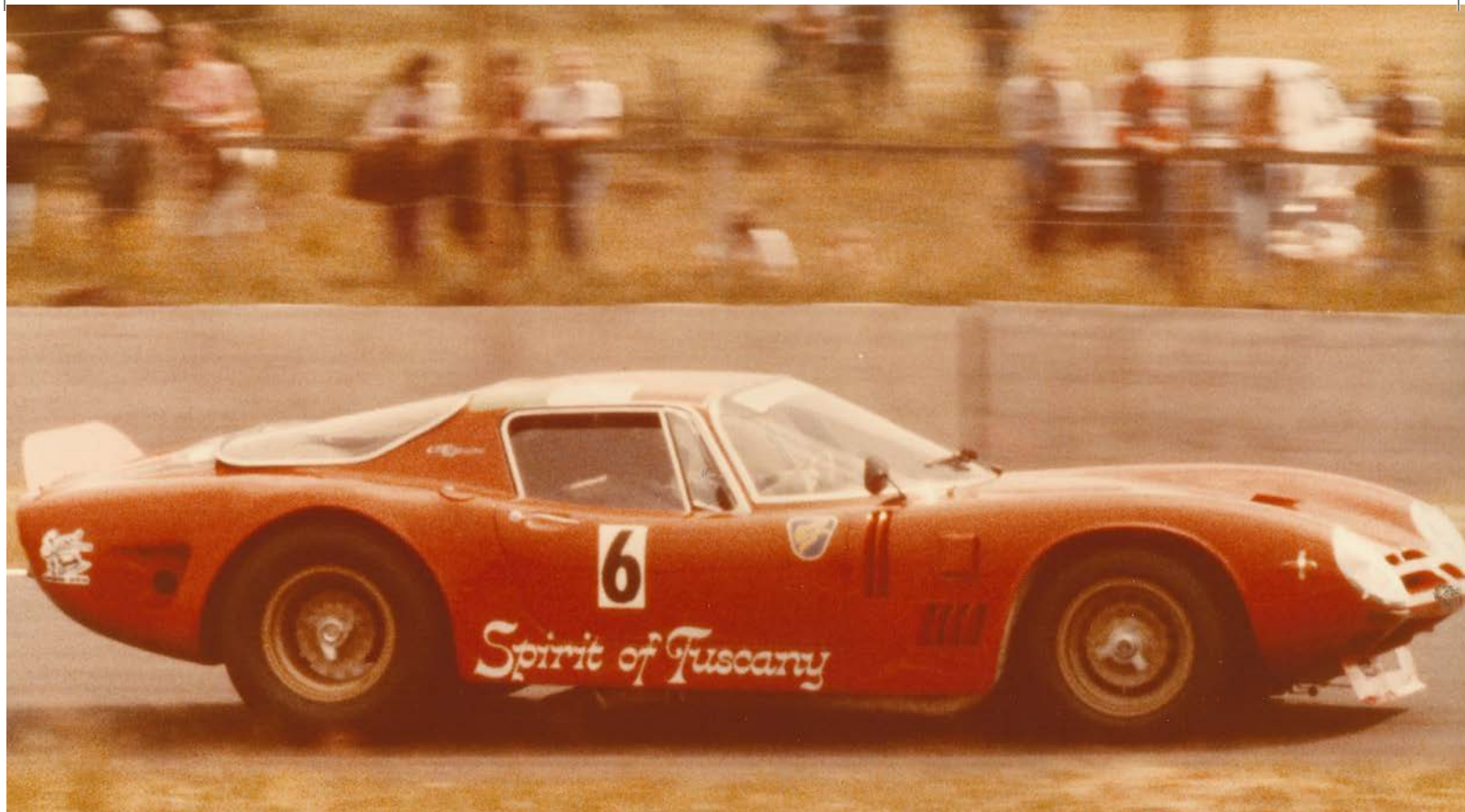
Jan has always found his own solutions to problems that arose and which were perhaps not always the most common. He still has the ability to think outside the box, one might say. During a visit to the Ring, the Maserati's water pump broke down. Getting one from Italy would take too long, but Jan came up with a solution. He knew that a company in London had it on the shelf and what do you do then? Well, you borrow a BMW, drive to London, get the pump (probably from a Rover) and drive back again. All within 24 hours. The next day it was full speed on the track again.

Jan had heard a rumor that there was a Maserati 5000 GT standing at the back yard of the factory and he decided if it was true he would absolutely get the car. At that time it was one of the fastest cars in the world

with a top speed of almost 280 km/h. During one of Jan's regular visits at the factory he saw the car behind the building. He immediately recognized it as a 5000 GT Touring, the so-called Shah of Iran model. Jan asked the spare parts department about the car but no one knew anything about it. "No, we don't have such a car", was the answer from the factory management and thus begins the story of one of the most spectacular rescues of a classic Maserati.

On the following Saturday evening, Jan climbed over the fence to get to the car and investigate its identity. The area was guarded by dogs, but he had already realized that and therefore been to a butcher in town and purchased a large bag of juicy meat bones. The dogs were calmed down with these while Jan ran to the car, raised the hood and wrote down the chassis and engine numbers. Now the dogs came back, gaping wildly, but he had also anticipated that, so now they got the rest of the meat bones to deal with while he climbed back over the fence. On Monday morning he presented the facts to the factory, who then had to admit the car's existence. "Can I buy it?", then became the question. The answer was that he should leave his phone number and they would call back.





A few days later, the phone rang in Jan's hotel room in Rome. "You can buy the car but you must be here no later than 3pm". The gas in the bottom of Jan's Opel Rekord -64 and on the stroke of 3 he slid through the gate and stopped in front of the factory entrance, went in and put the agreed amount of lire notes on the counter and asked for the keys. How much it was about is probably a secret, but at a guess it was about a couple of millions of lire (roughly \$1,500). The car was sold as various used Maserati parts, has since had various owners and was last sold at auction in Scottsdale, USA, in January this year for \$924,000.

What is interesting in this context is that Jan took the car to Rome and made it drivable, after which he offered it for sale in Sweden for SEK 30,000. No one was interested. The car was then sold to an Italian collector to later end up in the United States. The car has chassis number 010 and was the third or fourth Touring bodied cars identical to the car the Shah of Iran had ordered from the factory in 1959. There is a lot to read about the car in the literature about the 5000 GT but, according to Jan, it is usually incorrect.

Swedish enthusiasts showed the same disinterest in, for example, an O.S.C.A 1600 GT with Zagato body that Jan took in the following year. Here the price was SEK 19,000, but even then the interest was cool, but it stayed in Sweden anyway. These cars today go for more than 300,000 and then it's not about Swedish kronor anymore but about dollars. Jan imported a lot of De Tomaso cars, Lamborghinis and also a Lola T70. The Swedish car enthusiasts were happy to buy the cars for reasonable prices. However he had got a taste for these Italians with American uncomple-

ted engines, which resulted in a great commitment to Bizzarrini, a brand we had hardly heard of in Sweden at the time.

In the 70s, Jan ran a security company where he himself acted as a doorman at the Wallonen restaurant in Stockholm. His job was to turn away customers who were drunk or under the influence of drugs. As he is quite big and strong himself, he was cut and cut for this. He examined the guests with a sharp eye and if he saw the slightest sign of intoxication, the guest was kindly but firmly asked to turn and go out. If they insisted on coming in, Jan grabbed them by the scruff of the neck and threw them out onto Kungsgatan with full force. Between laps, he could stand and chat with his friends about what interested him at the moment, and right then it was mostly Bizzarrini. I have heard him tell me about the long discussion he had with Giotto Bizzarrini about how he got the rather small bearings of the Chevrolet engines to last for 24 hours at Le Mans. One of the reasons was an oil sump of 15 liters and a radiator of 30. The engines not only lasted during the race, the cars were also driven to Le Mans and back too Livorno on their own wheels. Slowly it dawned on the Swedes what Bizzarrini was and several cars got Swedish owners. At the same time, some ISO Grifos also came in that shared some of the technology, including the engine.

One of the Bizzarrinis Jan took home for himself was about to blow all sound barriers when it rolled into the garage on Lodgatan in Stockholm. It is said that when they were revving the engine inside the garage, the rapping in the roof released and fell over the car. The

reason for the sound is said to have been that Jan was overtaken by a Porsche somewhere in Germany which he couldn't stand. He never liked Porsches and being overtaken by one at the Autobahn was too much. He drove into the nearest service station, lifted the car and borrowed a hacksaw. He understood that the Abarth exhaust system was not suited for such a big engine therefore he cut the pipes just before the mufflers so the engine could breathe at high revs. It felt like some 100 hp more from the engine, he said, and he could now handle the Porsches.

Jan entered that car for the West Coast Race in Falkenberg in 1980 to be driven in the large GT class together with a number of Ferraris and Jaguars. In order to have a competent driver, Rune Tobiasson was hired, who thought this was fun. Under the name Spirit of Tuscany, the Bizzarrini won the GT-race despite Tobiasson only having two usable gears towards the end. Big party in the pit and a long nose for Ferrari, exactly what Jan's intention with the whole thing was. Bizzarrini had in any case received the attention the car deserved and today these cars command astronomical prices.

Now the interest in Maserati started to return and the model that Jan detailed was the model 151. Here he really dives into the history of the model and tries to connect with everyone who was involved at the time the car was driven at Le Mans. We are then talking about one of the absolute fastest cars of the time, but

also one of the most dangerous. The knowledge of aerodynamics was not very great and what happened at Hunaudières, the long straight at Le Mans where the speed was over 300 km/h, sometimes drivers only found out first when it was too late. Jan read everything there was to read about the model and I dare say that few in the world can measure up to his knowledge even in this subject.

Now you shouldn't think that Jan Svanbäck is some expert idiot on sports and racing cars, on the contrary, during the time I've known him, boats have also been an important topic. Even there, of course, it is the most extreme boats that caught his interest. He has always liked robust constructions and he once expressed his distaste for Pettersson boats like this. "When you take a coffee break in the cabin of a Pettersson boat, you have to cut equally large pieces of cake for those sitting on the right side as for those sitting on the left - otherwise the boat capsizes."

Jan became interested in lifeboats and deep-sea boats. This is a type of boat designed to go out and rescue people when their boats capsize in bad weather. In other words, these boats must withstand everything and that has always interested Jan. Once I went with him on such a boat that he bought when it was decommissioned from service. It was built in solid wood, had only a small wheelhouse, not very large but could withstand being knocked around according



to Captain Svanbäck. The engine was a sturdy Penta marine diesel and the craft only made 6 knots but in all weathers. Jan and his dear Raija went with this boat to Gotland without any problems and he used to say that if one of the Gotland ferries had a problem, he could tow one without slowing down. The boat had extremely low freeboards, which means that the rail was very close to the water level. Jan said that only land crabs think that high freeboards make the boat seaworthy. It should be low, just like on sports cars.

Then there were sailboats and naturally the most extreme constructions ever built. The boats were old, and so were the designers, but that didn't stop Jan from contacting widows and relatives (sometimes with my help as an interpreter) to find out what the thinking behind the boats was and how they behaved in different wind situations. His search for knowledge and ability to understand various constructs seemed to have no limit.

After the sailboats, it became military all-terrain vehicles where he quickly concluded that no one beat the Russians on that point. All said and done, he acquired a number of such brands that usually consist of abbreviations of three or four letters.

Once the most common models were completed, he set off to the country of origin to acquire the ultimate vehicle, a tank transporter. This is a huge vehicle that

should be able to transport a 50 ton heavy tank on the trailer and it is powered by a gigantic V12 diesel engine. On the way home, he took the opportunity to buy a Russian tank in Poland as they were cheap now after the fall of the wall. A more magnificent turn-out than this is hard to imagine. The exhaust pipes apparently went out at the side of the truck and when he gave full throttle with the tank on the trailer, hats blew off to the poles, Svanbäck said in his usual enthusiastic way.

Jan is today 76 years old and hasn't changed a bit since I got to know him. He has never had time for social contacts, so there is no point in talking about the weather with him. Straight to the point but still with the same humility he always showed for people and facts. He is now back in the world of Maserati and trying to get to grips with his former car's history. The story does not match with what is written in several books about his former 5000 GT and he doesn't like that many pundits trust the books more than himself and what he has seen with his own eyes. He is still in contact with the factory and is trying to clarify who actually dropped the car there for service and then never picked it up. Was it a relative of the Orsi family, an Arab prince or just some wealthy Italian businessman? It would have been easier to do it 50 years ago, he admits, but Jan Svanbäck has never looked for the easy way, but rather accepted a challenge. One fine day he might find out whose car he bought in the factory's backyard in Modena, but then he will surely find another topic to research.



AUTO- HISTORICA MASERATI

By Niklas Palm

The Swedish Historic Car Club (Automobilhistoriska Klubben, in Swedish) meets every other Monday during the winter months at its premises in Bromma/Stockholm. Each meeting focus on a specific topic, which can be a specific car brand or anything else related to vintage or old motor vehicles. Monday 19th of April, it was Maserati theme. More specifically, the theme was Maserati's history and the speaker was none else than our chairman Fredric Gustafsson. Of course, all the members of the Swedish Maserati Club



were also invited and some actually showed up. It was a joy to see three generations of the Quattroporte parked outside the clubhouse.

How could anyone present 100 years of development in a couple of hours? Well, it actually went great thanks to a really good speaker and a well-planned set-up. We started the evening by watching the film Victory by

Design where the British TV profile and former racing driver Alain de Cadenet presents and drives the first decades of racing cars from Maserati. It was breath-taking to watch as Alain pushed the priceless cars to the extremes on winding mountain roads. After a good dose of racing history, we moved on to the development of road cars. With Fredric as our shepherd, we were guided through the second half of the 20th century. We also touched briefly on the 21st century cars. It was fascinating to take part of the sometimes dramatic story of the company, its owners and its amazing cars. What a joy ride.

Back in the days, the Swedish Historic Car Club had a separate Maserati branch and they even had their own magazine, Il Tridente Svezia. I believe that it was this branch that later (1978) became the foundation for the Swedish Maserati Club. Our mother was pleased to see us, even though it was just a short visit.





The start, Tripoli Grand Prix 1935

PeeVee *in Tripoli*

By Niklas Palm

It's really hot at the salt lake outside Tripoli. The air is quivering over the elite who have gathered to compete in a really important motor race. It is just before 3 o'clock in the afternoon of May 12, 1935. Rudolf Carracciola is standing next to his Mercedes-Benz, Achille Varzi alongside an Auto Union, Louis Chiron and Tazio Nuvolari each at a fearsome Alfa Romeo Bimotore (one engine at the front and another at the rear) to name a few of the superstars who are there. Furthermore, the starting grid contain of a whole bunch of Maseratis. These are driven by Luigi Premoli, Geoffredo "Freddie" Zehender, Philippe Etancelin, Emilio Guiseppe "Nino" Farina, Luigi Soffietti, Arhimède Rosa, Piero "Perini" Taruffi, Hans Rüesch and Guglielmo Carraroli ... but hold your horses. There is another Maserati in the middle of the starting grid. Who's next to it? Isn't that PeeWee? Well, I mean Per-Viktor Widengren (also called Vicken or PV) from Vingåker in Södermanland, Sweden. A Swede ... in a Maserati ... in one of the most important competitions of the thirties! His younger brother Henken (Per Lars Henrik Widengren) has

previously driven his Maserati Tipo 26C in a number of international races (see Maserati Bulletin issue estate 2020), but those races were not of this calibre.

The Tripoli Grand Prix is the Ascot of motorsport. Everyone is there. The audience of about 20 thousand people abounds with celebrities and dignitaries. The most significant racing teams line up with their best "riders". The German car manufacturers have enormous financial resources at their disposal and are thus represented under their own brands. Maserati and Alfa Romeo no longer have their own factory teams but are instead represented by teams such as Scuderia Subalpina and Scuderia Ferrari as well as privateers such as Widengren.

The music from the large grandstand is occasionally interrupted by the roar of an engine of one of the cars that had lined up behind the starting line. Everyone is anxiously awaiting the drawing of the lots. It's big



Lottery ticket, 1935.
Programme cover Tripoli Grand Prix 1935

money to win. Italians are crazy about motorsport. In order to raise money but also to attract Italians to the new colony in Africa, motor races of the highest class have been arranged for some years.

The Tripoli Motor Club had managed to convince the Italian state to build a state-of-the-art racing track at the salt lake Mellaha near Tripoli. That's right, we are talking about the country called Libya but which at this time was Italian.

The financing of the track comes partly from the sale of lottery tickets. Each ticket costs 12 lire and ten of them go on to winnings. After the state takes its share of ticket sales (i.e. 2 lire), a very considerable sum goes to the winner of the lottery as well as to prizes to the drivers. This year, a huge amount of about 6 million lire will go to whoever has the race winner's starting number on their lottery ticket. The ticket that has the number of the car that comes on the second place wins about half this sum (about 3 million) and so it continues with the third car's ticket that gets half the second's (about 1.5 million) etc. The highest winnings are quite significant amounts considering that the driver who wins the race receives a prize of about 200 thousand lire. Thus, the winner of the lottery gets about 30 times as much as the winner of the race. In previous years, the set-up had been slightly different and several of the drivers had been accused of match-fixing as they allegedly collaborated and shared the winnings with the ticket holders.

The lottery draw takes place now that all the drivers

are lined up next to their cars on the grid. It is difficult for the drivers to perceive who gets their ticket number. The speakers are not pointed in their direction and the voice of the commentator sounds most like a barking dog. At last, the governor of Tripolitana arrives in an open touring car preceded by twelve men on motorcycles. The crowd rises and the soldiers posted around the track stands in attention as Giovinezza, the Italian national anthem at that point in time, sounds across the court. The governor takes his time as he walks between the race cars and exchanges some words with all the drivers. A tremendous tension has been built up for both the audience and the contestants. It is now time for the drivers to step into their cars and for the mechanics to step aside. 4, 3, 2, 1 ... the checkered flag is lowered and the green start light comes on. With a roar, the 28 cars set off in a cloud of smoke.

First one to cross the starting line is Luigi Fagioli. We know him as a successful works driver for Maserati but this time he steers a Mercedes. After the first lap, however, it is his stablemate Caracciola who takes the lead. Despite the Italian-sounding name and a career as a works driver for Alfa Romeo, this master driver is actually German. Widengren is in a nineteenth place out of the 28 cars. This must be considered sufficiently good as he started in the fifth line with 18 cars ahead of him in the first four rows.

Caracciola's Mercedes is still in the lead after five laps, followed by a string of other German cars. Two Maserati who are operated by Etancelin and Farina are in fifth and sixth place. The track, which is the fastest in the world, is tough on the tyres and several cars have already visited the pit for a tyre change. The order in the lead is thus rearranged. After 10 laps, it is instead the former Maserati driver Achille Varzi who has the lead with an Auto Union.





Hans Ruesch in his Maserati 8CM on his way to victory in Rhneck-Walzenhausen-Lachen Bergrennen 1937

Widengren advances to 12th place but is several minutes behind the lead. It is noticeable that he is not used to this car, a Maserati 8CM (chassis number 3022). His blue-and-yellow Alfa Romeo Monza, with whom he normally performs, is instead participating in the Finnish Grand Prix where it is currently run by his brother Henken. PeeWee has borrowed the car from the Swiss Hans Ruesch who, ironically, has instead started driving an Alfa Romeo Monza. However, in this race Mr Ruesch participate with another and newer Maserati.

Ruesch had participated with his Maserati 8CM in several major races over the past year but without any success. In the Nice Grand Prix, he burned his left foot on the hot gearbox so he had to cancel the race. In the German Grand Prix, he had problems with a leaking fuel line and became so frustrated that he handed over the steering wheel to his reserve driver. In the Swiss Grand Prix, he had to throw in the towel already after the warm-up when the burned wound on his foot had opened up again. In the Italian Grand Prix he ran out of fuel because Maserati's pit was still busy and he had to run lap after lap until he ran out of gas 500 meters before the pit stop. The reserve driver came to the rescue with a can of gasoline so that he could drive the last few meters and refuel. This resulted in Ruesch being disqualified for being helped by outsiders. Indeed, it is understood that Ruesch has no warm feelings for this Maserati 8CM. The car had in principle "bad luck"

written over its entire body.

Perhaps Widengren and Ruesch became acquainted already last winter when the Swiss participated with this Maserati 8CM in an ice race in Vallentuna outside Stockholm as well as in the Norwegian Grand Prix (of which both races were won by Widengren). Widengren also got to study Ruesch's Maserati when they both participated in the German Eifelrennen at the Nürburgring last summer. They agreed that the Swede could borrow the car for a while and possibly drive it in several races.

The Maserati Tipo 8CM is an eight-cylinder single-seater car, as evidenced by the model designation where the 8C stands for otto cilindri and the M represents monoposto. So 8CM doesn't refer to the length of the car, in case you were wondering.



Per-Viktor Widengren and his Alfa Romeo in Tripolis Grand Prix 1934 (previous year)



The start, Tripoli Grand Prix, 1935.

This construction made its maiden voyage during the Tunisian Grand Prix in 1933. Since then, the model has reaped some success on the race tracks. Among other things, Nuvolari won a famous victory in the Belgian Grand Prix in 1933 where he gradually drove himself up from the last to first place.

When the model 8CM was launched, it was basically a new design for Maserati. Together with the two-seater model 8C, it was given an upgraded engine. The previous 8 cylinder engine had served the Maserati brothers well ever since their first car was launched in 1926. However, the engine had developed gradually over the years. First, it entered as a 1.5 litre engine in the Tipo 26 and then expanded to two litres in the Tipo 26B a few years later. The volume was then increased to 2.5 litres in the Tipo 26M and then via the Tipo 8C 2800 to 2.8 litres. In 1932, the Tipo 8C was launched with a 3-litre engine. The Maserati brothers now also made several significant changes to the engine and when mounted in the Tipo 8CM it produced 210 horsepower at 5,600 revs. However, the main novelty was in the chassis and bodywork. Single-seaters had dominated racing in the United States and had also been allowed in the Grand Prix context for a few years, but it was not until 1933 that the small Italian family business had the opportunity to launch its own version.

The wind resistance and weight could thus be significantly reduced but the car became too difficult to

drive. Initially, the 8CM was significantly narrower than the competition's, but it was soon discovered that the design was too light and subject to flex. It was later on slightly widened and fitted with a number of extra struts that made the car stiffer with significantly improved handling. Another novelty of the Tipo 8C is the introduction of hydraulic brakes. Furthermore, the alloy Elektron was used when manufacturing the brakes as well as in certain other components. Elektron (or Elektronmetall as it was initially called when it was developed in Germany in 1908) is a metal mixture that consists mostly of magnesium but also contains a splash of aluminium and an ounce of zinc.

15 laps have been completed an hour after the start in Tripoli,. It is still some German Mercedes-Benz and Auto Unions at the top with Farina's Maserati in fourth place. "Nino" Farina drives a Tipo 6C. Widengren's performance is decent since he is now at thirteenth place. A dozen cars have already given up but six Maserati cars are still in the fight.

On the 20th lap, the German Hans Stuck takes the lead but shortly thereafter his engine suddenly catches fire. Initially, Stuck does not notice that large flames of fire shoot out from behind the car. Once he realizes the danger, it turns out that the rear brakes have already been destroyed by the fire and heat. He flies along the track in a burning vehicle without rear brakes.

Time passes and the fire creeps ever closer to the driver. Panic! Stuck finally manages to stop the car. Now he just aims to leave the burning inferno. That's easier said than done. Auto Union's new racing car is as slim as it gets. The drivers sit very tight, almost like in a carpenter's vice. Even more panic! How is he going to get out of this thing? The clock is ticking until Stuck finally – with the help of some officials who have rushed forward – manages to crawl out of the burning car. Stuck is shaken but fairly unharmed. The other cars whizz by as the race continues. Perhaps Stuck notes that his team mate Varzi has taken over the lead.

Widengren drives pretty well. He is now in 10th place and drives the third best Maserati at the moment. It looks to be a nice revenge from the failure in last year's Tripoli Grand Prix. The year before – in 1934, that is – he participated with his Alfa Romeo Monza. Unfortunately, the engine was damaged and after about half the race he had to park the car. Widengren, however, got a certain routine of the track that he now, a year later, enjoys greatly. He has now completed as many laps as last year and the Maserati is running just fine. After 30 laps on the track, PeeWee advances. He is now 9th and is second best Maserati as Farina's car no longer participates in the race. However, the leading cars run even faster and the gap, in terms of time, becomes larger. It's scorching hot. Damn, he is so thirsty. However, it's more important than ever to focus on the race. There are 10 more laps to go before he can rest in the shadow.

Varzi is now first with Caracciola half a minute behind. However, Caracciola makes a pitstop in order to change a tyre and Varzi is thus given a reassuring lead. Nouvolari, who is third, is a full lap behind but runs alongside Varzi. However, this turns out to be fatal. The two Italians drive like crazy to show each other that he is the best motorist. This is pure insanity as Varzi is not really in a hurry but should instead preserve the car so that it can survive the remaining part of the race. The cars are driven really hard in the tough duel. When Varzi passes the grandstand with only five laps to go, a thread breaks on the right rear tire and in the next moment the puncture is a fact. It's half a lap to the pit and once he arrives, the damned wheel doesn't want to come off. His mechanic hammers frantically with a copper hammer while Carraciola's Mercedes approaches. When Varzi finally comes out of the pit, he has only a narrow lead. After a few more laps, the lead is only 100 meters. On the 39th and penultimate lap, Carracciola passes and a moment later he can note how Varzi's Auto Union disappears in the rearview mirror. It's a puncture on Varzi's left and rear tire that erases any chances of winning. Caracciola can thus triumphantly drive in as the victor. However, Varzi does not give up.

After another wheel change he miraculously manages to earn a silver medal.

How are PeeWee and his Maserati doing? Of course, Widengren cannot threaten the leading drivers, but the speaker proclaims that he comes in 8th place. After a while, it turns out that he had only driven 39 laps instead of the required 40 when he stopped after crossing the finish line. He naturally becomes unplaced (a finer word for disqualified). Why doesn't he complete the last lap? It's a mystery. Is it a mistake, i.e. hasn't he kept track of how many laps he's run? Maybe it's the sour feeling of having been passed by the leading car too many times that makes him try to sneak out unnoticed. Motor Sport Magazine speculates that Widengren would have finished 5th if he had only completed the last lap. Maybe that's right, maybe not. Either way, I think it's a nice performance by both Widengren and the Maserati to endure about 3 hours at full race speed. Most crews didn't get that far but had to make a permanent pit stop at a much earlier stage of the race.

I think PeeVee had higher thoughts of what the Maserati could achieve. There was no more collaboration. The Maserati was returned to Hans Ruesch and PeeVee returned to his Alfa Romeo Monza which he drove in different races up in the Nordic countries. The memories of competing with the crème de la crème on the African continent probably lingered in his head for a long time. What an adventure.



Maserati 8CM from 1934 at Rétromobile de Paris 2015.



Maserati 8CM.

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