

CLASSIC DRIVER

Team Maranello Concessionaires - 2003 official launch



20 March 2003. A mixture of the old and the new was present at the newly refurbished and enlarged Tower Garage, Egham, last night, spiritual home to Ferrari in the UK since the mid sixties. The Maranello Sales team, ably led by Ferrari UK director Tony Willis, organised a superb evening to launch the company's return to International Sportscar racing with a two car team of 360GT Modenas under the Team Maranello Concessionaires (TMC) banner.

Building on the success of last year's national victories, and occasional sorties abroad, the team will once again link up with *Veloqx Motorsport*, the Brackley based company owned by Hong Kong based businessman **Sam Li**, but this time the cars will be branded in the famous red and Cambridge Blue colour scheme created by the man who was the first Ferrari importer in the UK; Colonel Ronnie Hoare. Two cars and a five driver line-up of **Jamie Davis**, **Tim Mullen**, **Kelvin Burt**, **Darren Turner** and **Andrew Kirkaldy** will be entered in all rounds of the FIA GT Championship. **Stephane Ratel**, Chairman of SRO, the Championship' organising body, was present and was clearly delighted that, in his words, "We will have more Ferraris than Porsches in the Championship, this has to be a first!"



Master of ceremonies, BBC TV's **Steve Rider**, was able to introduce the evening's programme from a podium that not only featured the five young drivers of 2003, but also several members of the original 1960s Maranello driving squad and, to set the scene completely, four of the original Team's racing cars were displayed in the body of the showroom. **Michael Salmon** and **Jack Sears** were re-united with 'their' 1963 Ferrari 330LMB (as driven in current historic races by **Tony Dron**, also present). **Peter Westbury** likewise with the car that made the Team's last major International appearance at Le Mans 1972; the 365 GTB/4 'Daytona'. **David Piper**, who took delivery of his own 250 GTO in 1962 via Maranello Concessionaires, was also present. Having driven all, and

owned many, of the Italian firm's products in the 1960s he was a frequent 'semi-works' driver for Ferrari, and first drove for the British team in 1964, a GTO '64 chassis 4399 - which was of course on show last night, courtesy of **Sir Anthony Bamford**. With no 250LM or prototypes being available for display, normal mounts for ex-BRM F1 driver **Richard Attwood**, also attending, final place in the showroom went to the Team's one-off GT entry at Le Mans in the late sixties - the alloy-bodied competition 275 GTB. The 2003 team will be hoping it will bring them good luck in this seasons racing - it won its class, 8th overall in 1967.

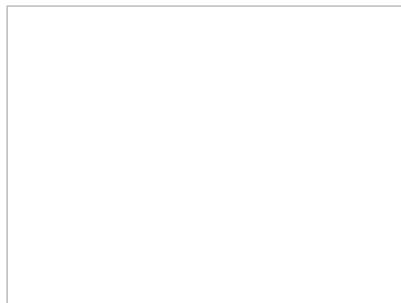


Looking forward to this year's racing TMC's Commercial Director, **John Newman**, said "We are here to compete at the highest level, we are here to win. Coming second is not an option we will accept". The infrastructure, funding and equipment is clearly in place and perhaps the return of so famous a name to the tracks will raise the profile of the FIA series for many other manufacturers to see it as a viable place to demonstrate their products. Ferrari now has two production based racers, 575MM and 360GT, in the series, both able to battle for overall and class wins.

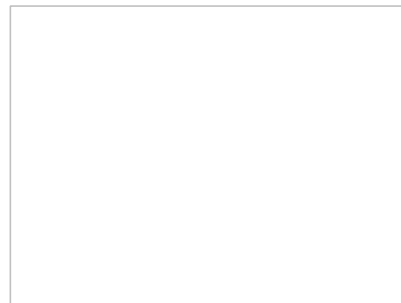
Final word is on a nostalgic theme. **Tony Willis** generously organised the presentation to **Ivan Bishop**, the Team's chief mechanic at the time (and later a Director of Maranello Concessionaires Ltd), of a signed print from **Michael Cooper's** archive of 1960 racing photographs. Having featured the photograph in their **2003 Calendar**, Classic Driver is delighted that Ivan and Joan have a memento of a truly great period of motor-racing, and a particularly nice touch was the signing, by all present last night, of the border to the print.

Final, final word must go to Colonel Hoare on why he chose Cambridge Blue as the colour to separate 'his' Ferraris from the rest. It was 1964 and taking delivery of the Team's first prototype, a 330P, at Sebring he was horrified to see a bright green stripe on the red bodywork. "I said 'That's not my car!'; they insisted it was, green for England you see, but green has always been a particularly unlucky colour for me and I said 'Take it off, quick!'".

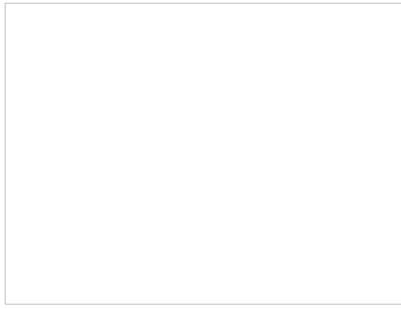
The rest, as they say, is history.



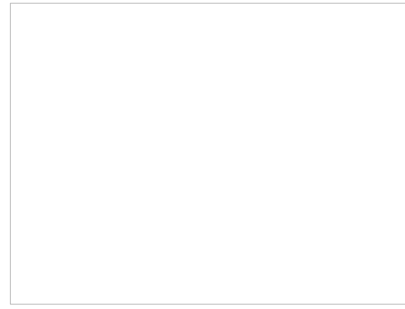
275 GTB/4 8th overall, Le Mans 24 Hrs 1967



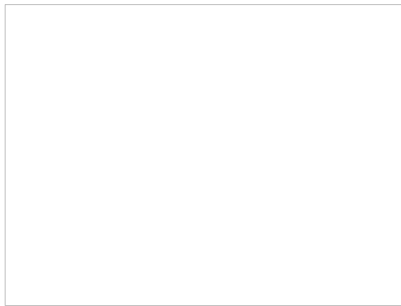
L-r; Peter Westbury, Jack Sears, Ivan Bishop, Richard Attwood



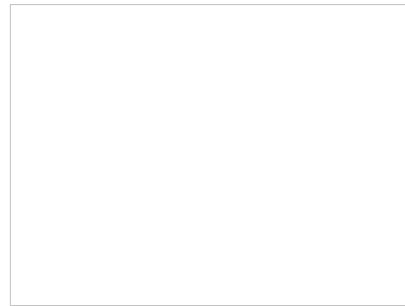
Daytona, 275 GTB, 250 GTO, 330 LMB



Ex-team cars set the scene



Chassis 4399 '64 re-body 250 GTO



Richard Mackay, Managing Director of Ferrari UK

The 2003 FIA GT Championship Calendar is as follows -

- **SPAIN** Catalunya 6 April
- **FRANCE** Magny-Cours 27 April
- **ITALY** Enna Pergusa 11 May
- **CZECH REPUBLIC** Brno Masaryk 25 May
- **ENGLAND** Donington Park 29 June
- **BELGIUM** Spa-Francorchamps 24 Hours 26-27 July
- **SWEDEN** Anderstorp 7 September
- **GERMANY** Oschersleben 21 September
- **PORTUGAL** Estoril 5 October
- **ITALY** Monza 19 October

For more information on Ferrari in the UK please visit www.ferrari.co.uk

Story/photos; Steve Wakefield

Gallery

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