



Overheard Cams





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The Alfa Romeo Association (ARA) is dedicated to the ownership, maintenance, preservation, operation, and enjoyment of the wonderful vehicles produced by Alfa Romeo. The ARA is based in the greater San Francisco Bay Area of California, but welcomes members from everywhere.

Alfa Romeo Association

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On the Covers
All Italian Day 2023
Photos by Bob Goldberg

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The Steering Column

Scott Pinsky, President

O.E.M. What are we talking about here?

- Operational Enhancement Modality?
- Organic Enablement Monitor?
- Occasionally Emblematic Mediocrity?
- Olallieberry-Eggplant Meringue?

None of the above! It stands for Original Equipment Manufacturer, of course! Come on! Who didn't know that?

But where does that lead us? We all know about the hallowed OEM standard. But how important is it in our daily lives? How much does it shape what we admire, what we buy, what upgrades we do, what we choose to drive?

We've all been raised with a certain hallowed respect for the gospel of "originality" in the realm of vintage motorcars. We hear it invoked in reverential terms at shows, auctions, and other events, especially when the discussion involves iconic marques like Ferrari, Lamborghini, and—yes—Alfa Romeo. The numbers must "match." Every nut, bolt, and even washer must be the "correct" specification. Anything after-market is anathema.

And there's good reason for this obsession in many instances: Values of collector cars frequently rise and fall based on the degree of originality that potential buyers perceive. Many shows are picky about what cars are allowed to enter, with substantial modifications being an impediment in cer-



tain cases. Some would say (performance notwithstanding) that the "prestige" of a classic car is reduced by a bunch of obvious aftermarket replacements.

And equally if not more important, aftermarket parts are notorious for being lower in quality in many instances. How many of us—facing limited or non-existent availability—have purchased and installed brand new non-OEM parts only to see them fail rapidly, leading us to discard and re-

place them with a decent used OEM part? But it's also a matter of degree. If an OEM part is "unobtainium" whether new or used, there's sometimes little option but to go the after-market route.

Then there's the whole separate world of resto-mods. Here, there's not even a pretense of maintaining any semblance of originality. Such alterations run the gamut—a later EFI system, swapping out a stock 4-speed transmission in favor of a

5-speed from a later model, an upgraded all-aluminum radiator and electric fan in place of the OEM unit, even a Chevy V-8 in place of the factory 4-banger.

It can be fairly astonishing to see what extreme mods some owners bestow upon their vintage machines. In some cases, the results appear to be quite impressive, both in terms of the look and the reported performance upgrade. In other cases, not so much. I've done a few of these on my Duetto, including cooling system upgrades, Carello headlight covers, and a custom steering wheel, none of which so far have gotten me booted off the green in Monterey. And right now, I'm in the process of replacing the stock 4-speed transmission in my '58 MGA with a brand new 5-speed Mazda unit made by Vitesse. I did a similar tranny-swap on my '71 Volvo P1800 a couple years back and am ecstatic about the improvement in performance and speed range—and you can't see any change unless you crawl under the car!

So why am I bringing all this up? Well partly because my recent resto-mod proj-

ects have occasioned some reflection on the wisdom of these “improvements,” but also because I've recently been noticing a fair number of even more extreme undertakings by others, many of which seem to draw a lot of interest. Examples: A significantly modified '71 GTV 1300 (with a rebuilt 2.0-liter engine) recently was bid up to \$71K on BaT (reserve not met!). And a hideous re-bodied MGB GT, sporting a 347ci Ford V8, with appallingly exaggerated fender flares and rear spoiler, just sold on the website for a whopping \$54K—about three or four times what a nice example usually nets.

Most of the cars I saw this year in Monterey held closely to the OEM standard (as much as I can tell!), which is no surprise. And there's certainly a degree of sanctity one feels in the presence of such automotive moral rectitude. But who can say? There's no accounting for taste! Are significant or even extreme modifications always a bad idea if they actually increase a car's value? Or if they pump up power, handling and reliability?

Clearly, it depends.

You won't see a Chevy engine in a 275 GTB any time soon, we hope, but less rarified examples of hardware seem up for grabs. My own feeling (having not only swapped out transmissions, bumpers, rims, and carburetors) is that the exterior look of a car should usually not be tampered with. No flares, whale-tails, or window tinting for me. And yet, I've eliminated side markers and metal trim on several cars during paint and body restoration and also replaced a front grill with an earlier year's model. Is that sacrilege? Maybe to some.

It all comes down, of course, to personal taste, and there are no rules that everyone would agree on. So, we should all just have fun and do what we want; but it does make some sense to try to do such changes in a way that is more or less reversible. If someday when you sell the car you can include the OEM motor and carb system, any offense caused by your impious modifications can be substantially lessened. Meanwhile, you'll have had fun dusting all the stock examples at the track.

Andiamo!

ITALIAN LICENSE PLATES

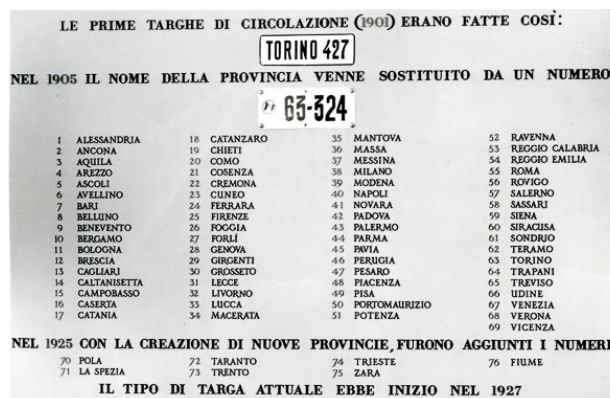
Although I had just visited MAUTO in June, I recently discovered their online article about Italian license plates:

“What a jumble the world of vehicle registration plates in Italy!

The plate is a “sui generis” object that has always fascinated dozens of “former children” who, thanks to these signs of recognition, have learned the names and acronyms of many Italian cities, almost like a game. However, this is a foreign body, a disturbing element of a car’s design and this is well known by the designers in the sector, yet without it the car cannot circulate.

This “automotive detail” is as well known and necessary as it is little considered but also the plaque has its own history behind it, which has changed with the passing of the years, with the changing historical situation, with the transformations of materials, with the needs of fashion and the changing habits of people. All seasoned with anecdotes, errors and confusions that are typically... Italian.”

Read the entire article at www.museoauto.com/en/vehicle-registration-plates-no-thanks/



ALL ITALIAN DAY

One theme recurs when speaking with someone who attended All Italian Day: the person had fun! I admit to not getting “it” until I attended my first one some years ago where I too had fun, and the fun has continued since.

Why does everyone mention having fun? Many reasons. Cars are displayed on grass in a semi-circular layout. Car placement is based on order of arrival; there is no segregation by marque. All cars are visible without having to walk down a street and turn a corner. The cars are all Italian, or possess an Italian attribute. The event benefits Special Olympics of Northern California. One gets to hang out with old friends. The music. The weather is always great.

All those reasons are good ones, but I think there’s another important attribute: this event is casual. Attending this event is like going to an old friend’s house to hang out for a few hours. No expectations. No restrictive time limit. Just relax and enjoy.

THIS ISSUE

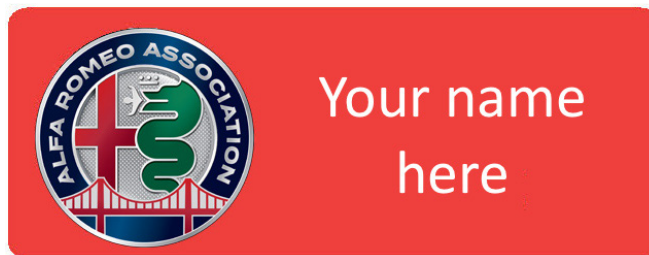
This issue contains a normal mix of content: event recaps (Alfa Parts Swap Meet by Andrew Watry and All Italian Day by Peter Loomis), my impressions of the very cool Fiat museum in Turin, fantastic color cut-away illustrations from the Museo Fratelli Cozzi, Mark Thornton’s concluding article about distributors, and Jon Gavin’s commentary on F1 races 17 to 19.

THE STATE OF CAMS

As club board members know well, I have regularly lamented about the lack of submissions for Cams. Happily, that is not a current problem as the editorial backlog is now full of articles from members, friends of the club, and my recent trip to Italy. This unusual situation will result in interesting content being published for several months into 2024. However, I fear that when the backlog is exhausted, my lamenting will resume. Stay tuned. Better yet—submit something.

Club Merchandise Available in the ARA Store

Click any photo below to be taken to the merchandise page in the club's online store.
The new club keychain, *top right*, is now available.





ARA Monthly Meetings

The club typically meets at 8 PM on the first Tuesday of each month with some exceptions.

North Bay meetings (Feb, May, Aug, Nov) held at

Aurora Ristorante Italiano Novato
8 Commercial Blvd, Suite A Novato, CA 94949
(415) 382-8488
auroranovato.com

East Bay meetings (Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Sep) held at

North Beach Pizza
1598 University Ave Berkeley, CA 94703
(510) 726-8504
www.northbeachpizzaberkeley.com

South Bay meetings (Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct) held at

Giovanni's New York Pizzeria
1127 Lawrence Expwy Sunnyvale, CA 94089
(408) 734-4221
www.giovannisnypizza.com

ARA Membership

Welcome new members

Dayton A Calhoun, Candace Carpenter
Fabrizio Dangelo, Steven F DaRonco
Michael Fazio, Dan S Fox
Charles Marsh, Bruce S Owen
Christopher S Schoeneman
Leanna Schoeneman
Michelael D Wiese

Thank you to renewing members

William G Anderson, John C Burton
David P Ching, Ramon Colcer
Tom R Hardy, Frank Lucca
Michael McClure, Stephen Rogers
Craig Schuh

ARA Tech Support Lines

Jim Allen • Nipomo, CA

750, 101, 102 and 106 series cars
(805) 929-6113; evening answering machine

Wes Ingram • Burlington, WA

Spica fuel injection
(360) 707-5701; wing@nwlinc.com

Tom Sahines • Milpitas, CA

Giuletta and Giulia cars
Mon to Fri: 12 noon–9pm
(408) 262-6279; tsahines@gmail.com

Remember that our tech team
members are volunteers.

Please respect their time and thank
them for all they do for the ARA!



2023 Event Calendar



Current/updated ARA event information is posted on the club's website — click the ARA club logo to view it.

<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>
8 DSARC Holiday Party [Sacramento] 28 Annual Meeting of Members	7 ARA NorthBay Members Mtg 19 Green Hills of Earth Tour/Lunch 26 Q1 ARA Board of Directors Mtg	7 ARA EastBay Members Mtg 18 Through the Mountains to the Ocean Drive 25 Murer House Pizze e Bocce [DSARC]
<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>
4 ARA SouthBay Members Mtg 5 ARA EastBay Members Mtg 8 Mozart Collection Tour 22 Spring Fling South Bay Drive 29 Glenn Oliveria Tech Session	2 ARA EastBay Members Mtg 6 One Lap of Marin 20 ARA-SFIAC Tour and Lunch [SF] 21 Q2 ARA Board of Directors Mtg	3 Blackhawk Cars and Coffee 5–15 AROC Goes to Italy #6 6 ARA EastBay Members Mtg 17–25 AROC National Convention/Tours [Ashville/Charlotte, North Carolina]
<i>July</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>
11 ARA EastBay Members Mtg 11 ARA SouthBay Members Mtg 15 Summer Party at Sturgeon's Mill 22 One Lap of South Bay	3– 6 Northwest Classic Rally [Oregon] 8 ARA NorthBay Members Mtg 13 Q3 ARA Board of Directors Mtg 13–20 Monterey Car Week +++ 19 ARA-AROC Concorso Italiano 19 Post-Concorso Dinner [onsite @CI]	5 ARA EastBay Members Mtg 22–24 Crater Lake Drive Weekend [DSARC] 24 All Italian Day Car/Motorcycle Show [SONC benefit event!]
<i>October</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>December</i>
3 ARA SouthBay Members Mtg 15 Alfa Romeo Swap Meet 19–23 AROC Goes to USGP COTA [Texas] 22 Members Lunch Social in Napa	4 Patrick Ottis Shop Tour [Berkeley] 4 DSARC Chapter Dinner [Fair Oaks] 7 ARA NorthBay Members Mtg 18 Private Car Collection [Santa Clara] 19 Q4 ARA Board of Directors Mtg	3 ARA Holiday Luncheon [NOTE: We'll be at a NEW [to us] South San Francisco venue this year! See details in this issue.]

Monthly ARA Member Meetings

- Location, registration, and speaker information vary by meeting.
- Updates will be posted in both future issues of *Cams* and on our ARA website, but please check the website for the latest word about any upcoming meeting.
- Some months will have two meetings running concurrently in different regions.

January/April/October

South Bay Membership Meetings [ARA]

Tuesday evenings, except January: January 8th, April 4th, October 3rd

Location: [Giovanni's New York Pizzeria](#), 1127 Lawrence Expwy, Sunnyvale

Registration is not required.

February/May/August/November

North Bay Membership Meetings [ARA]

Tuesday evenings May 2nd, August 8th, November 7th

Location: [Aurora Ristorante Italiano](#), 8 Commercial Blvd A, Novato

Registration is strongly encouraged but not strictly required.

Questions? Please contact J. Hutson Hart at memberships@alfaromeoassociation.org.

March/April/May/June/July/September

East Bay Membership Meetings [ARA]

Evenings March 7th, April 5th, May 2nd, June 6th, July 11th, September 5th

Locations may vary by month:

March 7th – North Beach Pizza, Berkeley

April 5th – Fantasy Junction, 1145 Park Ave, Emeryville

May 2nd, June 6th, July 11th, July 11th, September 5th – North Beach Pizza, Berkeley

Questions? Please contact Ed Adams at edonadams@gmail.com.



Event Details

November

Patrick Ottis Shop Tour

4th (Saturday) 9:00 AM–12:00 PM

Location: 1220 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710 [[map here](#)]

Patrick Ottis is known as the foremost Ferrari engine builder in the USA. His shop, Patrick Ottis Co. [[website](#)], does mechanical restorations of vintage Ferraris to concours specifications.

Patrick has also been a Ferrari Class Judge at the Pebble Beach Concour d'Elegance for many years and has shown (and **won**) with his own cars on the lawn. Patrick will tell the stories of the cars he has in his shop and describe the intricacies of the work he does. It's always a fascinating presentation. He is generous and open to questions about Ferraris, engine building, concours judging, or anything else.

Please drive your Alfa. There will be plenty of good parking places where you can display your car. Please arrive by 9:00am – presentation will start shortly thereafter.

Contact: Bill DeGolia vp@alfaromeoassociation.org 925-683-6420



Delta Sierra AROC Chapter Dinner Meeting

4th (Saturday) 6:00 PM–9:00 PM

Location: Caffè Italiano Ristorante, 8112 Madison Ave., Fair Oaks, CA 94710 [[map here](#)]

Our friends from DSARC have arranged a fall Club dinner on Saturday at Caffè Italiano in Fair Oaks. We would love to see you there! The dinner will be \$40 per person, including sales tax and tip, which includes a salad and main course of your choosing. The club will furnish dessert and Sergio's delightful limoncello.

To RSVP [required please] and if you have any questions, please contact:

Mary Ann Dickinson maryann@dickinsonassociates.com



Event Details

November

Private Collection Tour

18th (Saturday) 11:00 AM–2:00 PM

Location: Private Collection in Santa Clara, CA

tour of an amazing private automotive collection located in Santa Clara CA near the San Jose airport. The collection spans two rooms.

Room #1 houses some 40 cars from 1904 through 1926. The owner of the collection will give us a short narrative on the antique cars. Many of these autos have been featured at the prestigious Pebble Beach Concours.

Room #2 houses some 35 European sports cars (Alfas included) from 1948 through 1990. An additional bonus here are some vintage motorcycles and model T race cars. We will be free to wander around this room.

The tour will be strictly limited to 25 entrants so sign up early. A strict rule is that no photography of any kind is allowed! Directions to the collection will be emailed to those who register for the tour.

ARA member and Tech Advisor Tom Sahines and the owner of the collection will lead the tour.

Register for the tour [here](#). (We are considering a short drive prior to the event and lunch after the tour for those who are interested.)

If you have any questions, please contact:

Andy Epstein

andy@alfaromeoassociation.org



Event Details

December

ARA Holiday Luncheon

3rd (Sunday) 11:30 AM–2:30 PM

New venue: [Basque Cultural Center](#), 599 Railroad Avenue, South San Francisco [map [here](#)]

Join your ARA friends for a holiday luncheon at the Basque Cultural Center.

Lunch will be served from 12:00 noon–2:00 pm.

For \$35 per person you'll enjoy a course of passed appetizers, followed by a delicious meal with salad and your choice of a pork, salmon, or vegetarian entrée. There will be a no-host bar available and the wine corkage fee is just \$15 if you'd like to bring a bottle. Following lunch there will be a short program.

Note: This venue has a spacious gated parking lot.

Registration is open **now!** Please register [here](#) on the ARA website.

If you have any questions, please contact: Laurie Delimon, social@alfaromeoassociation.org, 408-930-3252



January 2024

DSARC Post-Holiday Party [Save the date!]

13th (Saturday) time tba

Location: California Auto Museum

Details will be provided in the December *Cams*.



2023 Racing/Track Events of Interest

These are non-ARA events – Details and registration information are available on the individual event websites — Please check before making your plans

WEATHERTECH RACEWAY LAGUNA SECA, MONTEREY, CA

MAY 5-7 – TRANS AM SPEEDFEST
MAY 12-14 – MOTUL COURSE DE MONTEREY (IMSA)
JUNE 23-25 – CSRG–LAPS FOR LAGUNA
JULY 1-2 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 9 & 10
JULY 7-9 – MOTOAMERICA SUPERBIKE SPEEDFEST AT MONTEREY
JULY 14-16 – AHRMA CLASSIC MOTOFESt OF MONTEREY
JULY 29-30 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 11 & 12
AUGUST 12-13 – MONTEREY PRE-REUNION
AUGUST 16-19 – ROLEX MONTEREY MOTORSPORTS REUNION
AUGUST 20 – CORKSCREW HILLCLIMB & COMMUNITY DAY
SEPTEMBER 8-10 – FIRESTONE GRAND PRIX OF MONTEREY (INDYCAR)
SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 1 – PORSCHE RENNSPORT REUNION 7

THUNDERHILL RACEWAY PARK, WILLOWS, CA

FEBRUARY 18-19 – 24HOURS OF LEMONS–YOKOHAMA 3 TRACKS, 1 RACE 2023
MARCH 18-19 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 3 & 4
MAY 27-28 – 24HOURS OF LEMONS–YOKOHAMA DAYS OF THUNDERHILL 2023
APRIL 15-16 --SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 5 & 6
APRIL 29-30 – NASA RACE WEEKEND
MAY 5-7 – SCCA WESTERN REGION SHOOTOUT
JUNE 3-4 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 7 & 8
SEPTEMBER TBD – NASA CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND
OCTOBER 27-29 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 15, 16, & 17
NOVEMBER 3-5 – CSRG–SEASON FINALE
NOVEMBER 10-12 –NASA 25 HOURS OF THUNDERHILL

SONOMA RACEWAY [SEARS POINT], SONOMA, CA

FEBRUARY 25-26 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 1 & 2
MARCH 4-5 – NASA RACE WEEKEND
MARCH 24-26 – CSRG–DAVID LOVE VINTAGE RACES
MARCH 31-APRIL – FANATEC GT WORLD CHALLENGE
APRIL 29-30 – SVRA RACE WEEKEND
JUNE 9–GENERAL TIRE 200 – ARCA MENARDS SERIES WEST
JUNE 10–DOORDASH 250 – NASCAR XFINITY SERIES
JUNE 11–TOYOTA SAVEMART 350 – NASCAR CUP SERIES
JUNE 24-25–NASA RACE WEEKEND
JULY 22 – FERRARI CHALLENGE NORTH AMERICA
JULY 28-30 – DENSO NHRA SONOMA NATIONALS
AUGUST 18-20 – NASA RACE WEEKEND
SEPTEMBER 2-3 – SCCA RACE WEEKEND REGIONAL 13 & 14
SEPTEMBER 8-10 – CSRG–CHARITY CHALLENGE
OCTOBER 14-15 – NASA RACE WEEKEND
NOVEMBER 10-12 – VELOCITY INVITATIONAL
DECEMBER 2-3 – 24HOURS OF LEMONS–YOKOHAMA ARSE-FREEZE-APALOOZA 2023



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Alfa Parts Swap Meet

Andrew Watry



On October 15 the annual Alfa swap meet went off without a hitch in its new (hoped for) permanent home at The Cobra Experience in Martinez. After the fog cleared it was a great day. We had the whole back parking lot, in the range of twenty-five sellers, and fifty to sixty participants, by rough guess. It's a social event as much as a parts event, and lots of folks just hung out, talked to friends, grabbed a donut from a pink box, enjoyed



the cars and atmosphere, and maybe swapped a few greasy parts. Sellers and buyers alike seemed to be reasonably happy, though I think we mostly just traded items to go back into our already-full garages. Highlights included a Giulia Quadrifoglio for sale, a good stash of 2600 parts, Montreal wheels, and a set of nice Giulietta Borrani wheels. Award for longest distance attendee was Greg, who honest-to-gosh drove from Denver and



back to get a Giulia sedan back window from me. Cheaper and safer than shipping glass by truck (ask me how I know).

Hope to be back there again next year. The folks who run The Cobra Experience are the best, friendly, accommodating, not demanding. Please support them by going to the museum, open one Sunday a month to the public.

All Italian Day

Peter Loomis



On the last Sunday of September, ARA again joined Special Olympics of Northern California (SONC) and FIAT America to host All Italian Day. This event has been running in Alameda since 1987, bringing owners and *appassionati* of Italian motor art from Vespas to supercars onto a single field.

Like all good All Italian Days, it had started the evening before with three guys—Nick Balch of FIAT America, me, and Ed.—wandering over a soccer field squirt-

ing paint to mark parking spaces in giant nested semicircles. The dense smoke from the Smith River fires that had been choking the Bay all week had just left the day before, and Sunday was set to be primo weather.

When All Italian Day set-up volunteers arrived just after dawn on Sunday, they parked their Alfas and FIATs in the first row (a side benefit for volunteering for the dawn crew) and began putting up signs, tables, and getting the details all perfect. The

entries started rolling in at 8:30 am and the party was ready to begin, as one hundred and forty cars and twenty motorcycles (and motor scooters) filled the field.

One thing we finally got right this year—we moved the date away from the first Sunday of the month. On those days, cars leaving the Alameda Antiques Faire mid-afternoon always choke the Posey Tube with a traffic jam so legendary it has its own web page. Spending ten minutes or more,

stopped inside the tunnel driving an old Italian spider without a gas mask—never again. That’s all in the past. Exit traffic was a breeze this year.

VEHICLES

We have stretched the definition of “Italian” a wee bit at times. Previous All Italian Days have had various vehicles with a strong dose of Italian design, including Cadillac Allantes, Citroen SMs, and one of our regular attendees in a Karmann-Ghia. This year we had an application from a 1967 Herald, from the Michelotti years at Triumph. After agonizing whether this would open the floodgates to TR4’s, TR6’s, Stags, Spitfires, or even AMCs with Gucci interiors, we decided to chance it and allowed



it to register. Sadly, it was missing on the day-of. A Lucas mystery?

All Italian Day did have a few special vehicles, however, detailed here with photos on subsequent pages. First is the blue Apollo 5000 GT prototype, sporting Franco Scaglione bodywork and a Buick 4.9L drivetrain. The Apollo was manufactured in the early 1960’s by International Motor Cars with only eighty-eight cars ever made, this car being number 12 of the first 42 cars built in Oakland (local flavor!). While it always has been a rare car, in the early 1960s Apollo’s were sold in select Buick dealers along the west coast. It was featured as the villain’s car in the The Love Bug Movie (opposite Herbie) and owned by celebrities such as



Pat Boone. This particular car belongs to the family of the original owner and still takes exercise drives through the East Bay hills.

Hidden in plain sight was Karl Robrock's rare 1994 164 Q4, 1 of 1206 made. Twenty years ago, Karl bought this quasi-operational (slipped timing belt) car online and had it shipped from Germany to central Illinois where he was then a student at the University of Illinois. Fast forward fifteen years: Karl, now married with children, decided that it was time to properly finish the car. Five years later, with bodywork by Frank Zucchi, a rebuilt engine expanded to 3.2 liters by Larry Dickman, Jr, and Q4 parts scoured from all over the globe, the car was done.

Per Wikipedia: The Q4 had *"the most powerful 3.0-Litre V6 engine fitted to the 164, featuring 24-valves. The Q4's four-*

wheel-drive system ("Viscomatic") was co-developed with the Austrian company Steyr-Puch and was more advanced than other systems offered at the time. Connected to the ABS and "Motronic" engine management modules, the power driven to the rear axle was continuously variable from 0 to 100% subject to road conditions. Torque was distributed between axles depending on the speed, turning radius, engine rpm, throttle position and ABS parametrics. This model was equipped with a Getrag 6-speed manual gearbox."

A new member of the All Italian Day portfolio was the MDB Green Climber LV300 trailered in by ARA member Sean O'Donoghue. This remote-controlled slope mower, which was parked in the inner circle, is manufactured by MDB in Pescara, Italy. With no seat for the driver, it was the



only vehicle on the field that was obviously not street-legal. This amazing machine is designed to clear brush and combustible fuels on steep hillsides where it may be too hazardous to send a hand crew. Being able to remotely control the machine from up to five hundred feet away (or one hundred and fifty meters in Italy), the operator can stand in safety sipping a Limonata and avoid being pelted with debris. The tracks of the green climber can slide outward from the chassis about 18" on each side to significantly lower its center of gravity on really steep terrain. The soccer field unfortunately was too flat to really put it through its paces. Its 25 HP 3-cylinder engine uses about five gallons of diesel every six to eight hours.

Sadly missing this year was the Alameda County Sheriff's Office with their crowd-favorite resto-mod Hudson squad car. They



were triple-booked on our weekend, but SONC will be trying to get All Italian Day on their calendar for sure next year.

ABOUT ALL ITALIAN DAY

Our main goal is to have a great party for attendees to display (or ogle) the vehicles and socialize in a sunny, cozy setting. And maybe nosh on panini. This is our third year at the Alameda Main Street soccer field, and we are getting it pretty well dialed in for that party. Suggestions are welcome!

A second goal is to create a rewarding—and not too taxing—experience for the volunteers, who came from ARA, FIAT America, SONC, and their friends and families. There were more than forty people doing the planning, setting up, running,

and cleaning up, which makes the group of volunteers itself one of ARA's larger social events of the year.

And lastly, our goal is to generate a charity donation opportunity for Special Olympics. All net proceeds from All Italian Day go to SONC. Although this is one of SONC's smaller benefit events, the Special Olympics Athletes relish coming to man the tables and wander around the field, because it is such a change of pace from their diet of athletic competitions, bike-and-brew fests, and sheriff Olympic torch runs. To our benefit, the SONC people are professionals in organizing events, and their help and guidance really make it easier for the volunteers and nicer for the attendees.



Finally, a couple of thanks are in order for our generous donors.

- The Peet's stores in Alameda have always come through with a big donation of coffee.
- Astra, the aerospace company next to the soccer field, graciously donates their parking lot every year for our visitor's gate.

If you have any suggestions for next year's edition of All Italian Day, please e-mail them to any Board member. *CAMS*

Photos by Bob Goldberg (*Ed.*)
except where noted



1973 Berlina (Harel Schwarz)



Fiat 500 roadster
(Kristy Johnson)



Vince Dattoli in his Ferrari 328 GTS







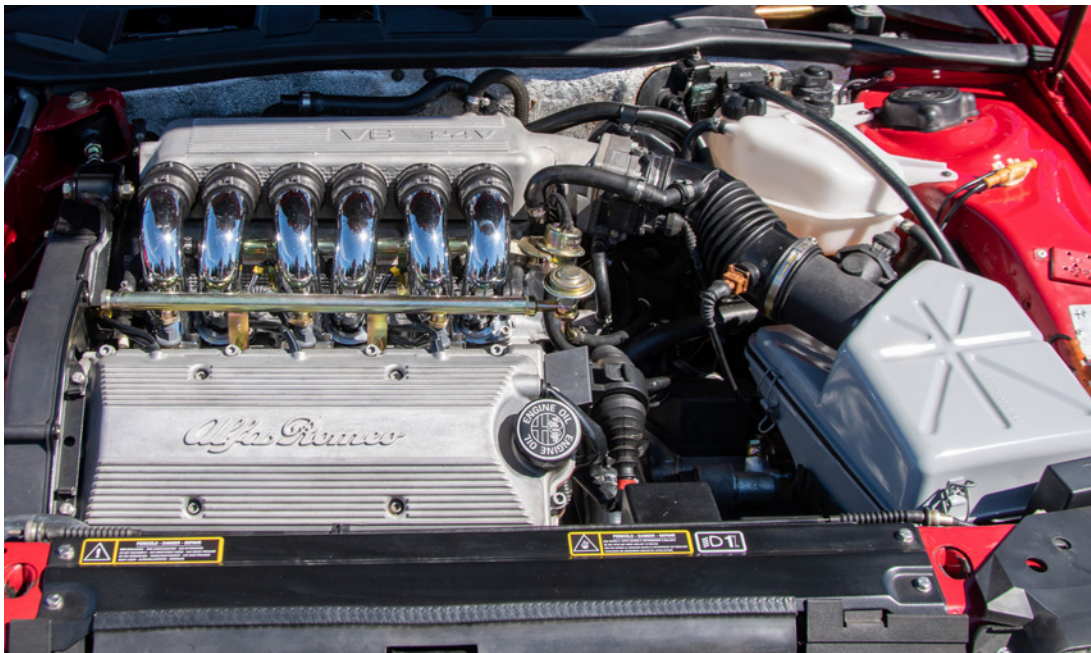
Color-coordinated
Meggan Carswell
tracks her 2018 Quad







A rare 1994 164 Q4 (Karl Robrock)
see text for details (also top right and bottom left)



James Treadwell with his 164
and accessories





1963 Ferrari 250 GT Lusso
(Fantasy Junction)



Fiat Abarth Alemano coupe (Andrew Schank)



GENAU AUTOWERKS - ALFA SPECIALISTS

A 1933 Alfa Romeo 6C
1750 Gran Sport Figoni
Coupé photographed at
Dawn driving onto the
lawn at Pebble Beach.

*This car won the Gran Turismo
Trophy, awarded to the most
significant car balancing
artistic beauty and*



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Centro Storico Fiat

Bob Goldberg

After my third visit to Turin in 2019, I learned that there was a Fiat Museum that I had missed. After kicking myself for not discovering *Centro Storico Fiat*, I vowed to visit it on my next trip to Turin. That visit took place four years later, the week after the *1000 Miglia* 2023.

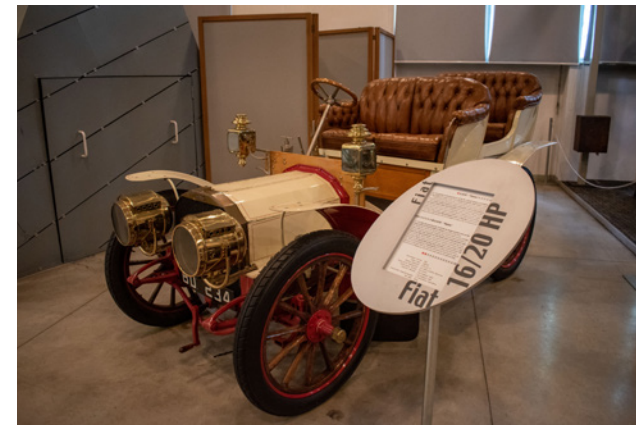
As with everything else in the world, the Covid pandemic impacted *Centro Storico Fiat*. The museum closed during the pandemic and today, post-pandemic, remains closed to the public. However, as a journalist I was allowed to schedule a visit. Archivist Pierpaolo Righero accompanied me during the museum tour.

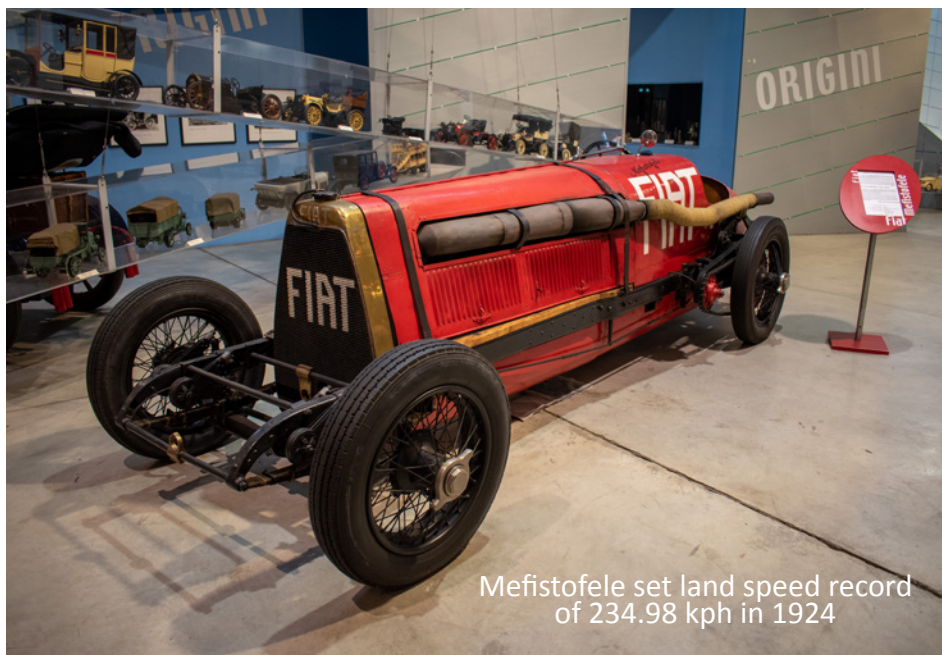
Founded by Giovanni Agnelli and partners in 1899, FIAT is the acronym for *Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino*, which can be translated as “Italian car manufacturer of Turin.” In 1906 the company stopped spelling FIAT as an all-uppercase acronym and switched to the mixed-case Fiat. (Alfa went through the same name transition just over a decade later.) Fiat grew to be Italy’s largest industrial company, eventually acquiring Alfa Romeo in 1986. See www.fiat.com/history for timeline of the company’s history.

The museum is housed in a Fiat factory built in 1907 and is surrounded by modern apartment buildings in a neighborhood southeast of the Porta Nuova train



4 HP, the first FIAT car





Mefistofele set land speed record of 234.98 kph in 1924



8V

station. Unlike museums having separate rooms and wings for displaying objects, *Centro Storico* exhibits are arranged in a space consisting of a large main level and an upper mezzanine with a large rectangular opening. The space is open and airy, and on the main floor visitors have many sight lines that traverse multiple exhibits to nice effects.

For a non-Italian, the major takeaway from the museum was Fiat's manufacturing dominance in the twentieth century. One poster succinctly summarizes Fiat's reach as "*terra, mare, cielo*" (earth, sea, sky). Earthbound cars are displayed on the main level, with airplane and boat engines up on the mezzanine. Some boat artifacts can

only be represented by photos and models due to their size. A few small airplanes and a helicopter are suspended from the ceiling above. Fiat made bicycles too.

The car collection emphasizes the variety of cars produced by Fiat. As one would expect, a Topolino and a 600 are displayed, along with modern concept cars and various sedans. Yet for someone not steeped in Fiat history, seeing the variety of models was a pleasant experience. Among the cars displayed were many attractive sports cars and coupes.

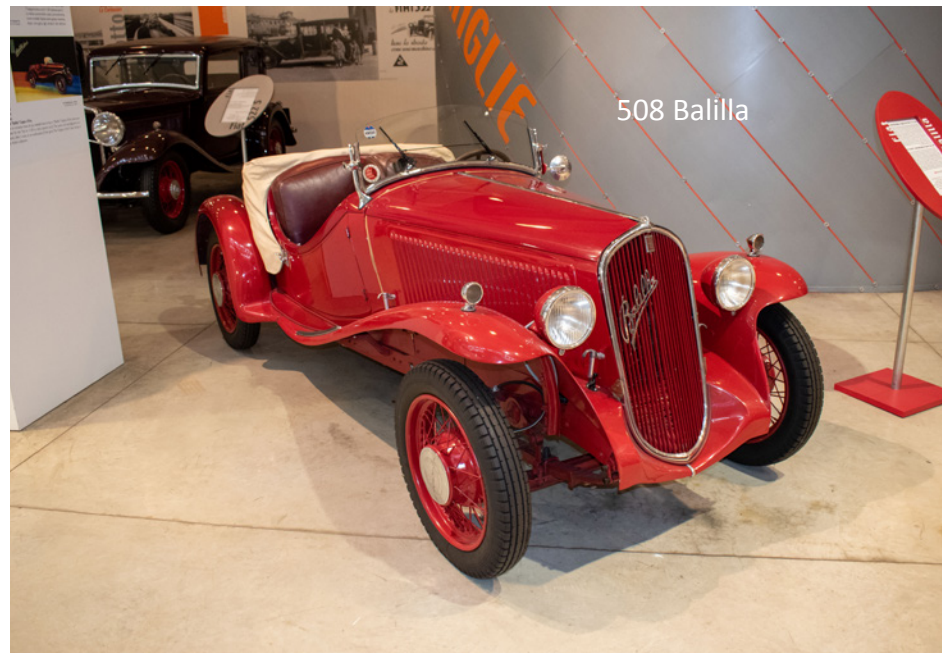
Another highlight of the museum is the poster collection on the mezzanine. The focus of the posters shifts with the direction of the nation during the twentieth century.

Ones from during the fascist era before the second world war exhibit power and might, while those from after the war focus on consumerism.

Fiat used a variety of artists for their pre-war posters, among them Bassi, Codognato, Dudovich, Romano, and Riccobaldi. Codognato's signature is visible at the top left of the 514 poster shown on the next page. You may have some of their artwork hanging in your house, such as a Cinzano poster by Dudovich or a Martini poster by Riccobaldi.

Thanks go to Pierpaolo for making my visit happen. Should the museum open to the public again, it's well worth a visit when you're in Turin. *CAMS*

This poster and 514 one below
both by P. Codognato





525 SS



700 prototype



508 Balilla Spider



1500 Berlina



509



500 Topolino



front, 508 Balilla
middle, 500 Topolino



Russian 124 Ziguì



2300 S Coupé

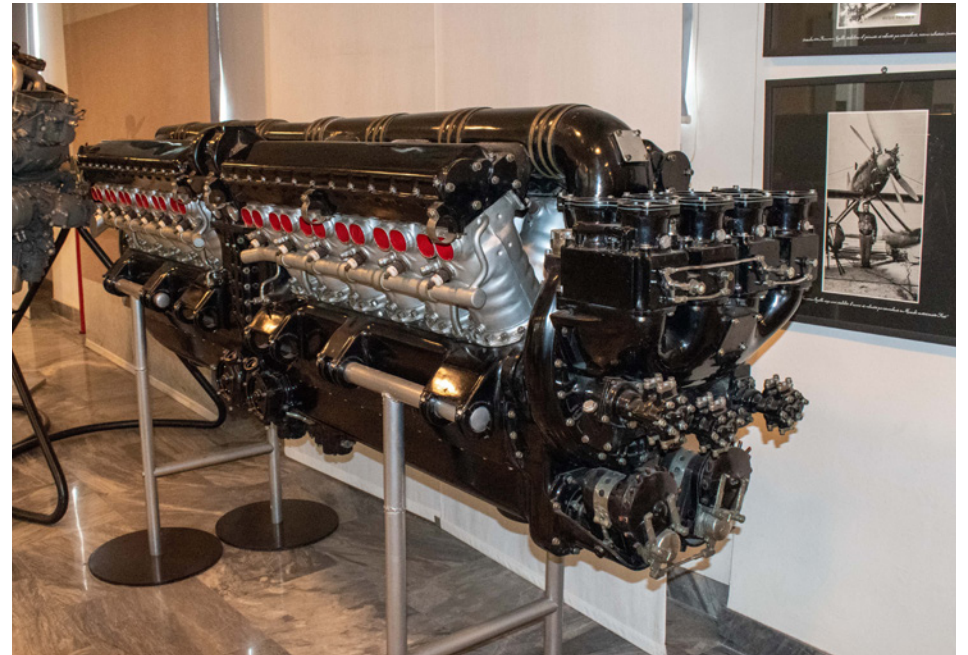


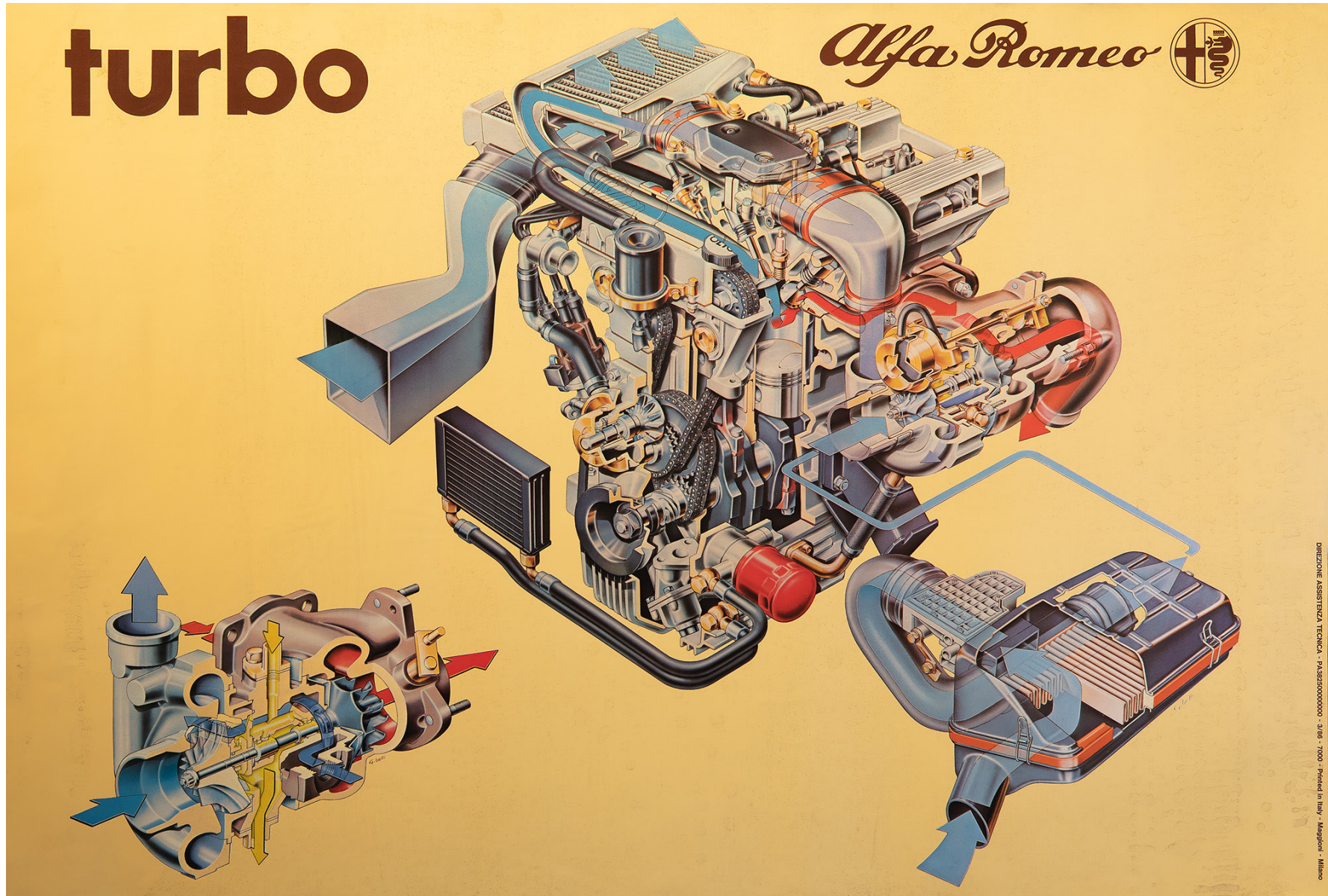
2400 Dino Coupé



1100 TV

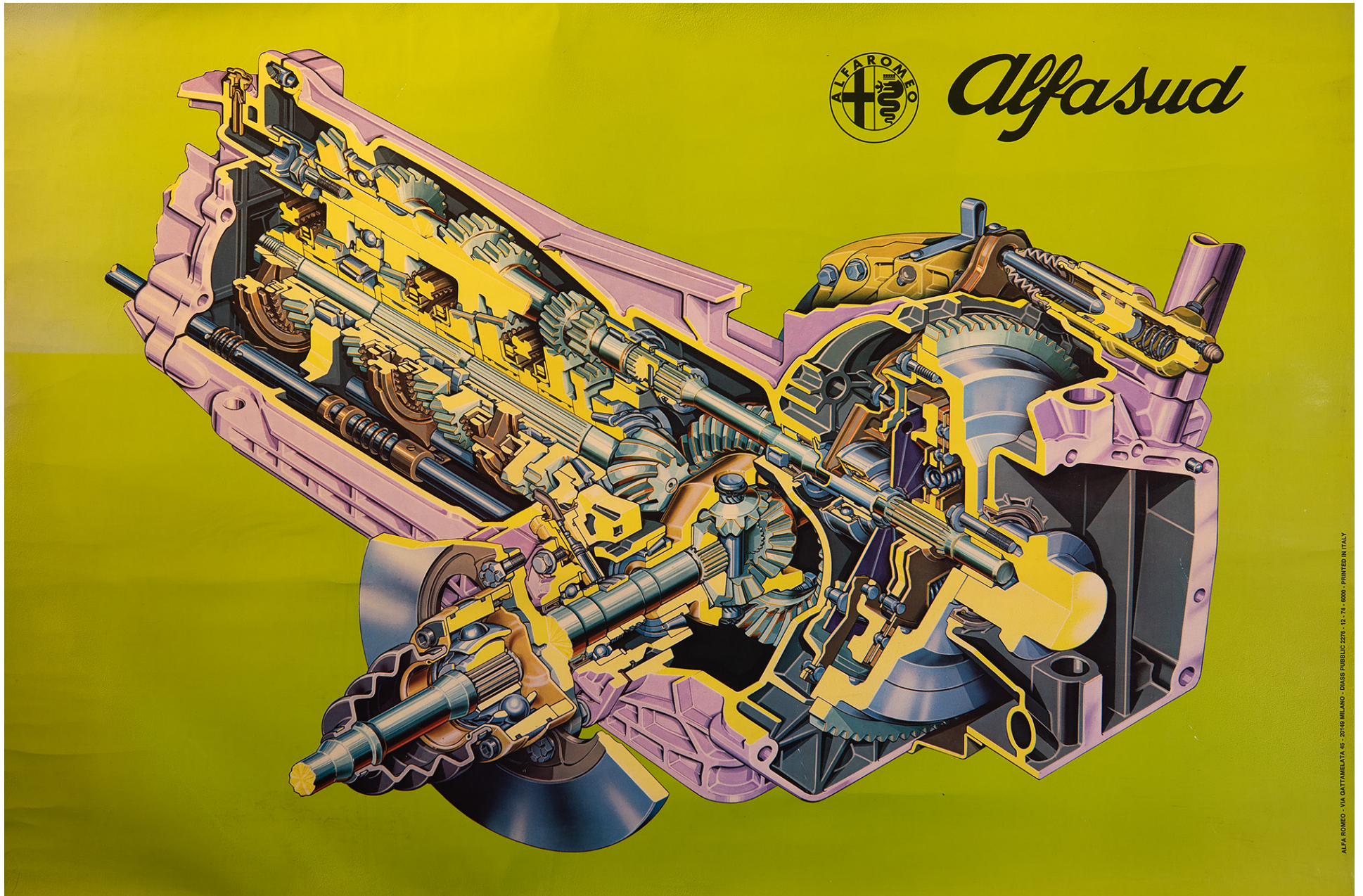






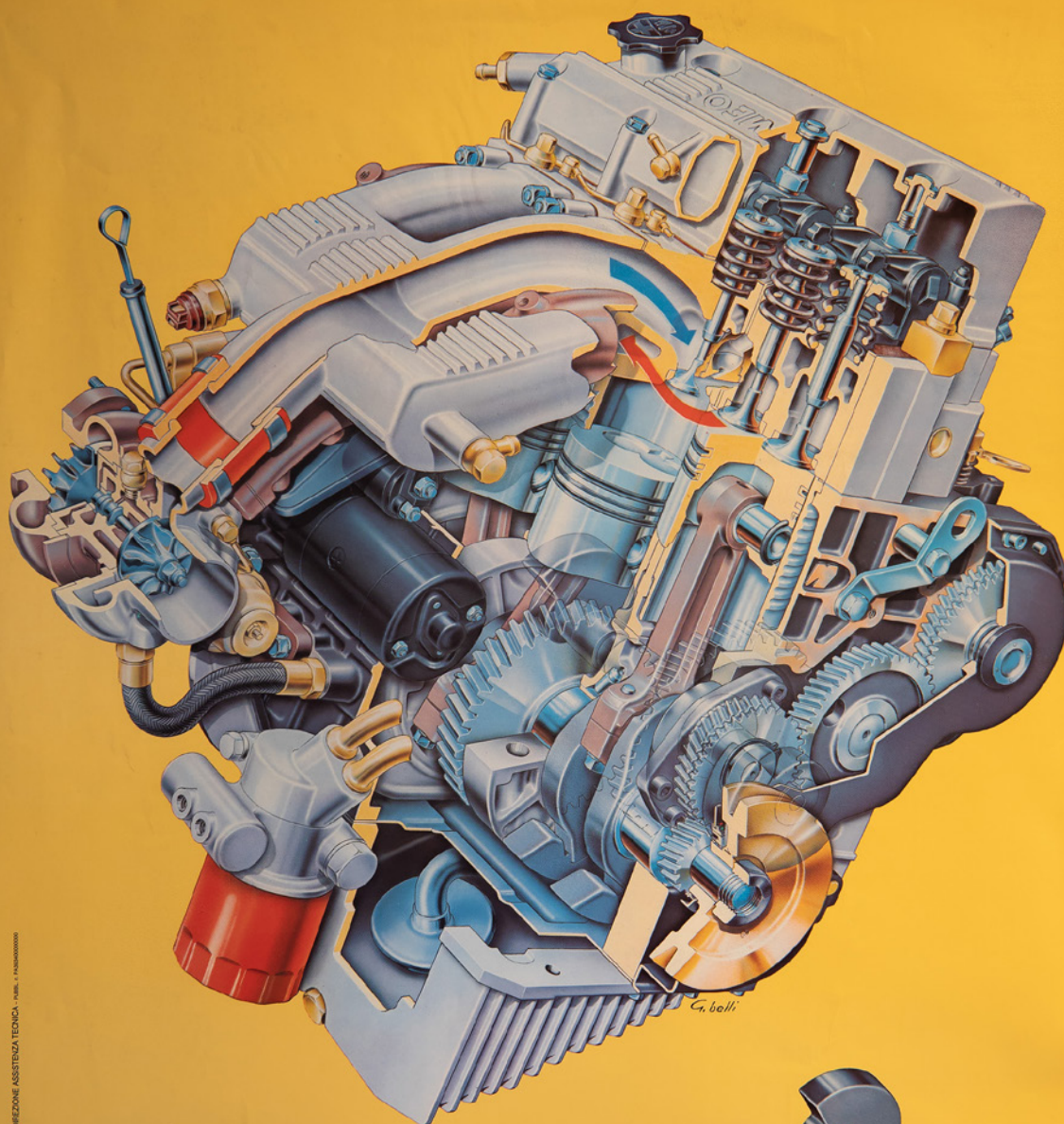
Images provided by [Museo Fratelli Cozzi](#)





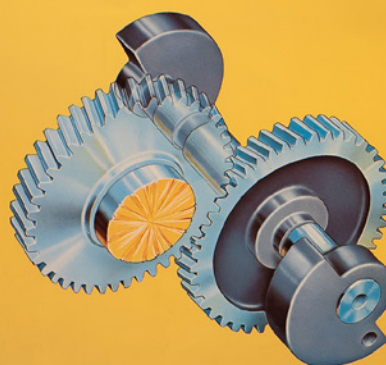
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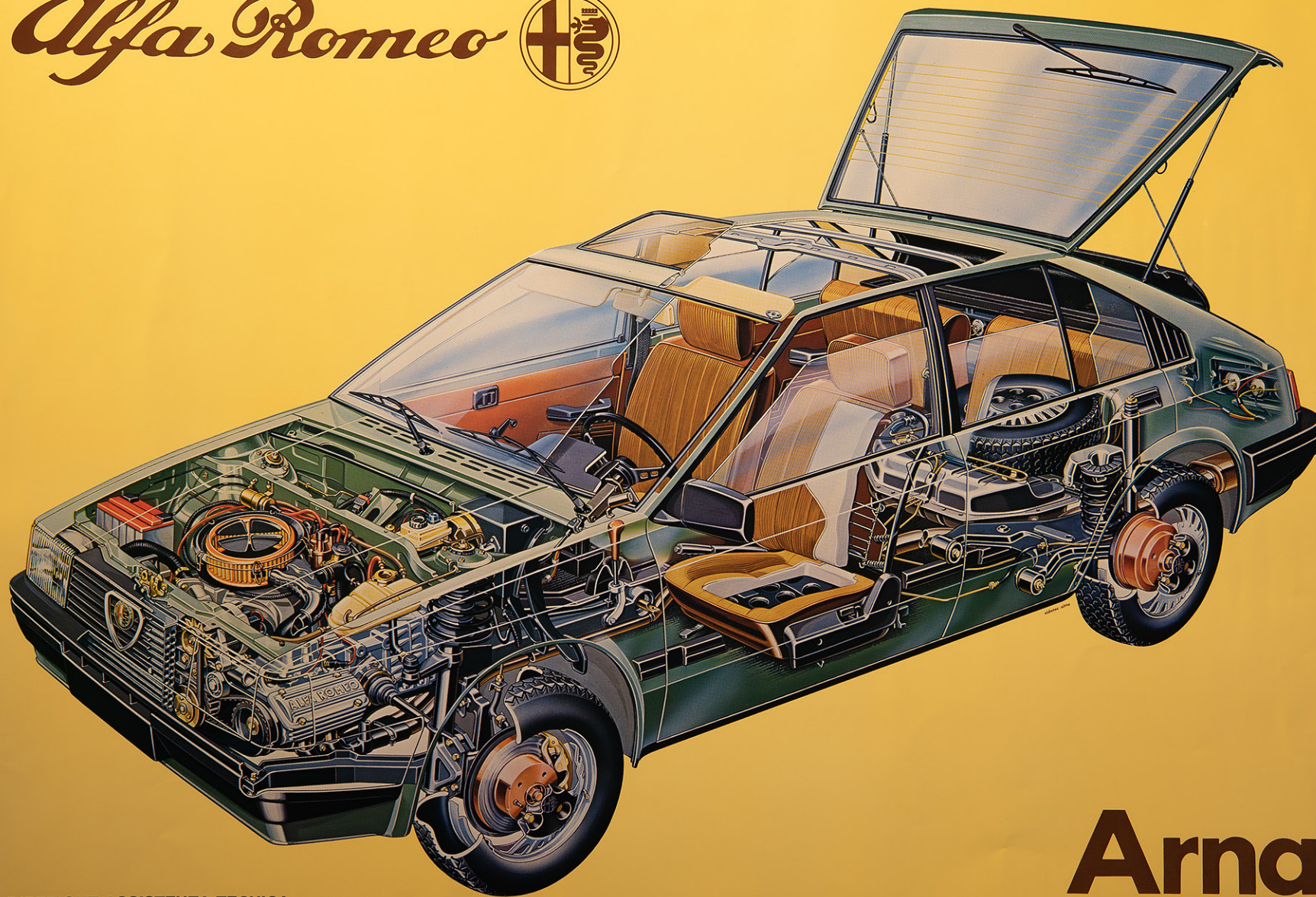


DIREZIONE ASSISTENZA TECNICA - Roma - 1980

Alfa Romeo

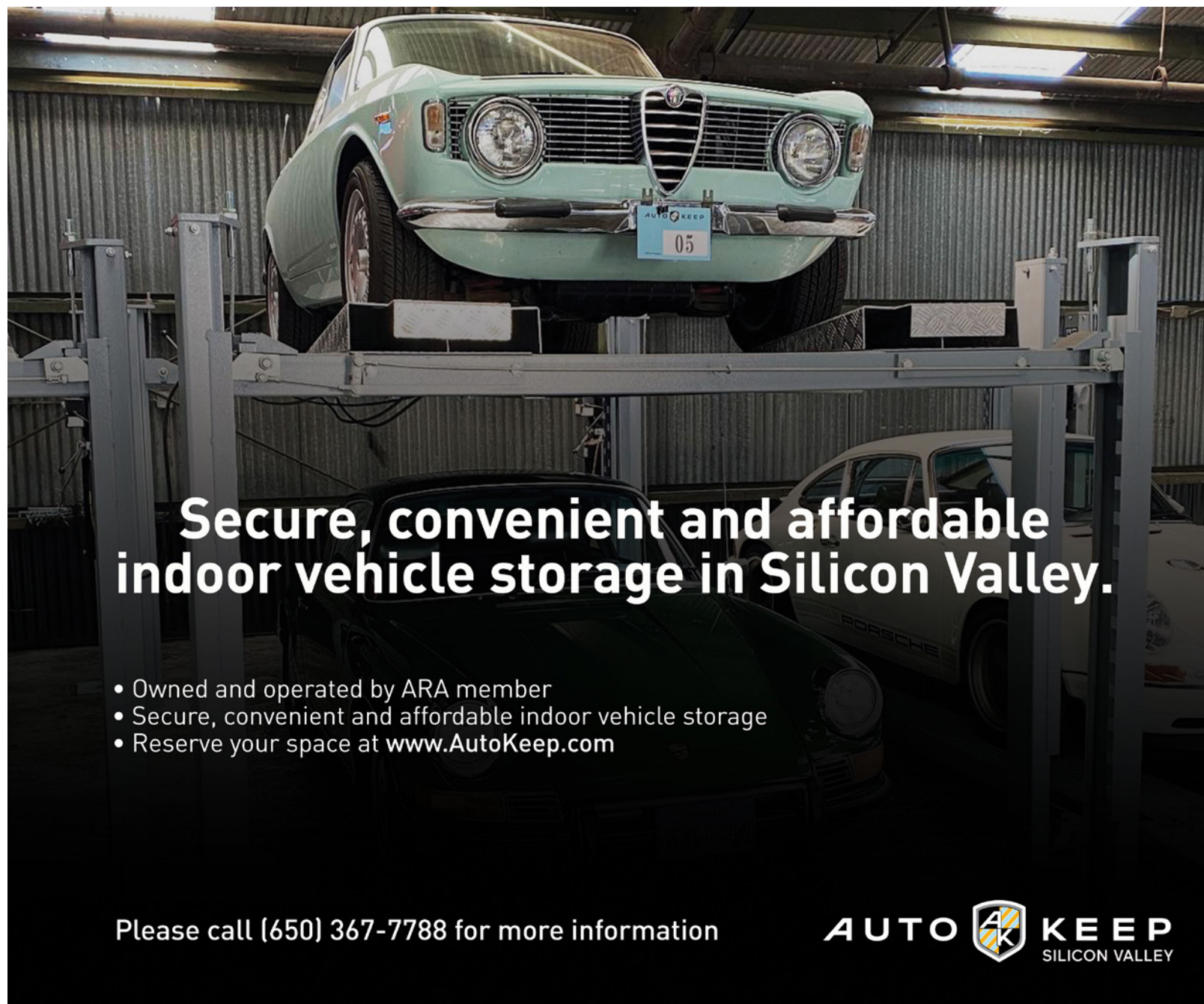


Alfa Romeo



DIREZIONE ASSISTENZA TECNICA Pubbl. N° PA339800000000


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About Distributors, Part 8 (Conclusion)

Mark Thornton

This series of articles began with a question from friends. Why did my Alfa have a 123 distributor?

To answer that question, it was necessary to review the progress of ignition system technology available for our Alfas. Manufacturers have made new technologies available since our older Alfas were delivered with mechanical distributors. The best are by this point mature technologies, having been in place for decades.

Having a properly running ignition system in your Alfa is critical. Well-adjusted timing helps SPICA Alfas deliver great drivability around town. Subjectively, I find that accurate timing makes driving more enjoyable—it is worth the effort.

Sections that follow sketch info from previous articles to provide a series conclusion. Article review comments often made me aware of new information and pointed out areas where I had not explained what's going on. So, I've included updates in this summary, many based on reviewer feedback.

MARELLI DISTRIBUTOR IGNITION SYSTEM

When I talk with Alfa owners interested in an ignition upgrade for a type 115 Alfa from the 1970s, I sometimes get bogged down by all the high-tech words in the conversation. Suppose that an owner

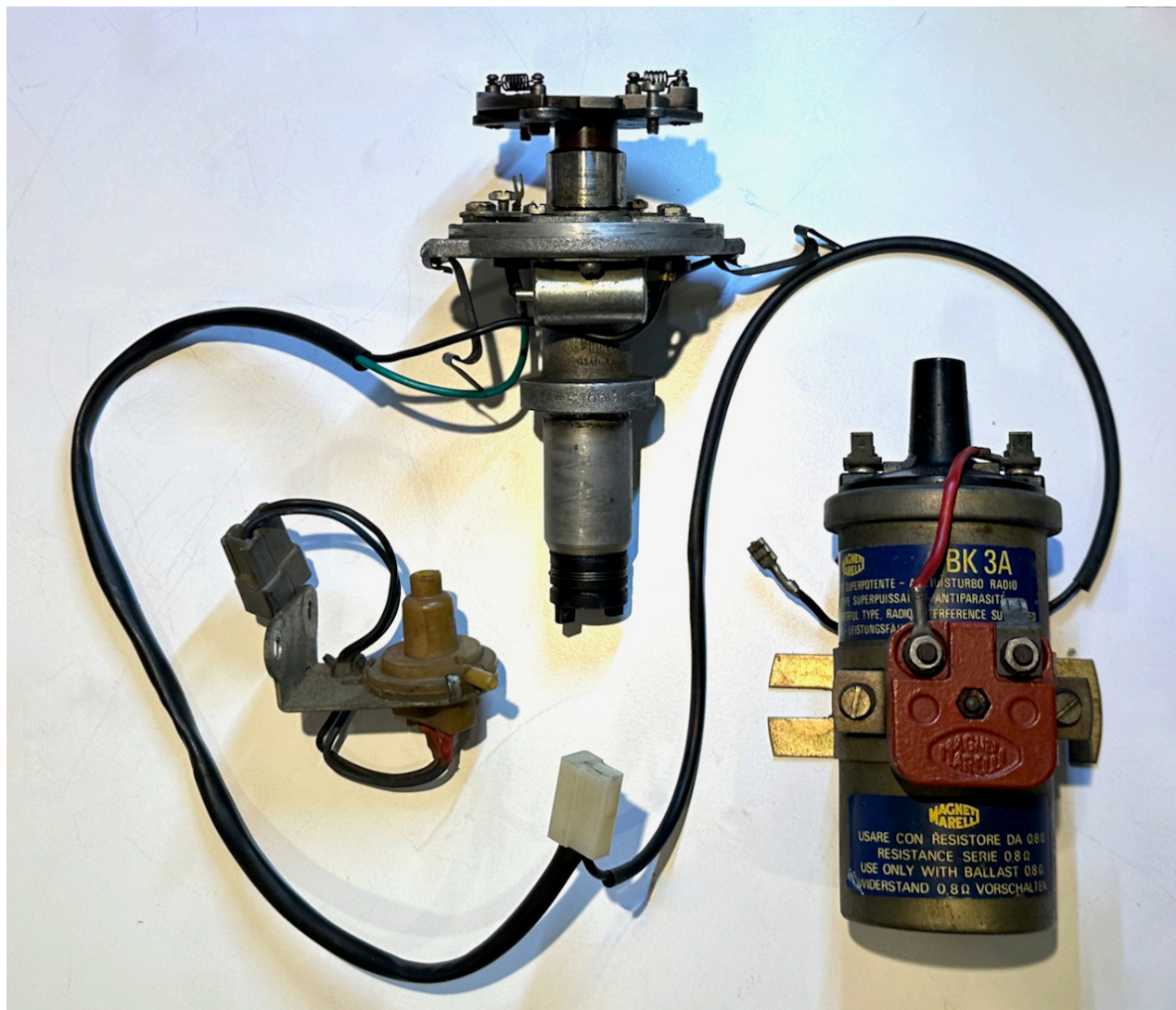


Fig. 1. Marelli S166B dual-points distributor from 1979 type 116.58

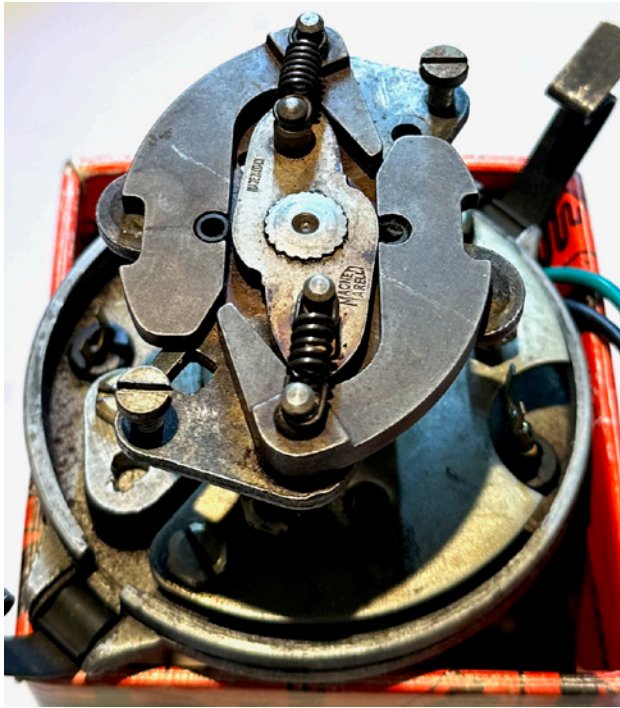


Fig.2. Marelli S166B timing mechanism



Fig. 3. Earlier type Bosch distributor



Fig. 4. MarelliPlex distributor with two magnetic pickups

has in mind replacing an old distributor. Amidst all the technical detail it's easy to forget a simple truth learned years ago while working on other makes of cars. It was then routine to buy a rebuilt distributor to replace a worn-out unit.

What's different today, working on our Alfas? Affordable new mechanical distributors are no longer available from most of our Alfa parts suppliers.

In Part 1 we discussed the stock original ignition system, its features, performance, design trade-offs, and shortcomings. For

this update, figure 1 shows a Marelli S166B dual points distributor from a 1979 type 116.58 Sport Sedan. I think this type may be the last Alfa four-door equipped with SPICA mechanical fuel injection.

This car had the interesting dual points setup with a vacuum-operated switch. The function of the switch was to select which of the two sets of points energized the ignition coil. Owners and technicians could time the points differently. This allowed the engine to run with retarded spark for idle emissions control and then switch to advanced

spark timing at speed.

In some ways the switch is a substitute for the conventional vacuum advance mechanism we see on the later type 161 Busso V6 3.0. The difference from the earlier car is that the SPICA ITB (Individual Throttle Body) setup doesn't have a conventional intake manifold. This means that the SPICA ITB setup does not provide a vacuum port to operate the conventional vacuum advance mechanism. The vacuum-operated switch made sense at the time, because it was able to operate on the

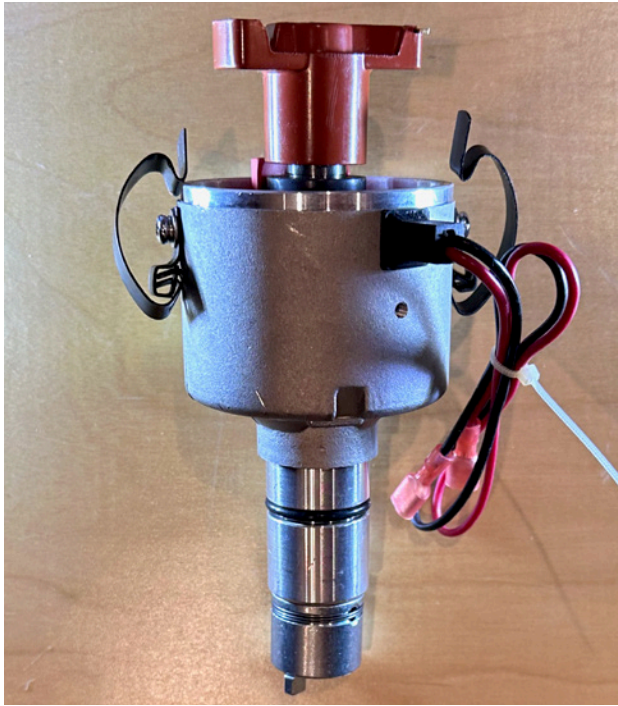


Fig. 5. Aftermarket electronic distributor

limited vacuum available at a port on the #1 cylinder intake runner.

Figure 2 shows the S166B centrifugal timing mechanism. This differs from the earlier S103BA in having heavier centrifugal weights with more generous wearing surfaces. The wearing surfaces of interest are where the inner arm of the centrifugal weight bears on the central boss attached to the distributor shaft. This application of force is what rotates the timing mechanism relative to the distributor shaft, advancing the spark, working against the balancing

force from the springs. This example does not show the advanced wear I'm accustomed to see on the earlier type.

REPLACEMENT DISTRIBUTORS

In Part 2 we looked at replacement distributors, their design, performance attributes, limitations, and how this led me to select a programmable electronic distributor for my own Alfa. Months after this article appeared I got a chance to capture images of one of the earlier Bosch distributors, this example stamped 0 231 110 044 F4 (figure 3). These distributors, many of them bought used, were popular at one time as replacements. They went a long way toward making cars more fun to drive. The reason why is that they did not have the inconveniently wide spark advance range of the later Marelli S103BA.

Making the Berlina more fun to drive is a goal I work toward more so than making more power. I don't measure this old car's power on the dynamometer. Likewise, I don't run this car on track. I do enjoy test driving. SPICA drivability is among the Alfa's best features, notably responsive to improvement via tuning adjustments.

Figure 4 shows a MarelliPlex distributor from an intermediate Spider, a 1981 model with a variation on SPICA mechanical fuel injection. This distributor features two magnetic pickups, timed differently, emulating the type 116.58 dual-points distributor.



Fig. 6. Suggested orientation of distributor pinch clamp

Figure 5 shows a new aftermarket electronic distributor, likely manufactured by Pertronix. This unit relies on a permanent magnet rotor and a compact magnetic module mounted directly inside the distributor, thus requiring no external spark box. One interesting feature of this unit is that it combines electronic switching with conventional centrifugal spark timing advance. This design point, combining older technology with newer, makes the aftermarket electronic distributor a bit of a snapshot in time.



Fig. 7. 123 Tune phone app display of hot idle

PROGRAMMABLE ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTOR

Why get a programmable distributor? That question became the centerpiece of Part 3. It's not just one thing. Some owners may like tinkering around with this new toy. The 123 distributor and phone app provide a good set up for the enthusiast tuner.

Lots of other Alfa owners probably just want to go driving. If the Alfa's old distributor is worn, it might be wise to let your technician swap in a 123 distributor. I know of more than one technician and shop owner who recommend doing so.

About swapping in the 123 distributor: A friend pointed out that both a photo and an illustration showed the distributor clamp upside down. It's easier to work with the clamp with the pinch bolt oriented as shown in Figure 6. For forty years I did not see this.

In figure 6 the nut of the pinch clamp is positioned toward the front cover of the engine, generally toward the water pump. On some Alfas lack of clearance makes it necessary to position the pinch clamp oppositely, inboard, toward the rear of the engine, generally toward the engine mount. The pinch clamp is harder to work with when it's oriented that way.

Figure 7 shows the phone app display that makes working with this distributor such a clear departure from what we knew before.

Over time I've become convinced that the 123 distributor was one of the best things recommended for my engine rebuild. The difference is ease of use. It's not that the programmable unit provides spark energy that we can't get using other electronic distributors. Its benefits include flexibility over a wide range of adjustment and time saved making adjustments when test driving. The 123 distributor and its phone app take a job that can be a chore, a puzzle, or a roadblock and turn it into a positive experience. It delivers precision in tuning.



Fig. 8. Earlier Bosch distributor with Crane optical module

SPARK MODULES AND SPARK AMPLIFIERS

Part 4 discussed spark modules that can be added to an existing distributor, and spark amplifiers, used to take the high current switching function off low current spark trigger electronics.

These bolt-on improvements offer benefits including not having to service or replace contact breaker points. In combination with a spark amplifier, these can deliver better spark energy and faster rise time. Figure 8 shows an earlier Bosch distributor fitted with a Crane optical module.



Fig. 9. Crane spark box

Near center, just underneath the rotor we can see a plastic disk with four slots machined in it. Engineers call this a chopper wheel, as it chops the light beam, generating a voltage signal in the optical module.

These bolt-on devices do not remedy awkward features of the distributor we install them in, for example inaccurate timing.

RE-STRIKE SPARK BOX

In part 5 we looked at a re-strike spark box, a popular improvement at one time. We looked at two examples on a Ferrari V8. Helping a friend set the timing on this engine gave me a chance to learn what a re-strike spark box can do.

For the Alfa, depending on the type, a re-strike spark box can correct the awkwardly wide timing range of the stock original distributor. Timed correctly, ignition from the re-strike spark box ran the Ferrari V8 well.

SMART RE-STRIKE SPARK BOX

In part 6 we took a brief look at a remarkably ingenious product, a smart re-strike spark box from Jacobs. This unit can re-strike the spark based on detecting misfire in real time. That's an accomplishment in engineering.

I ran a photo of a typical spark box installation. A friend asked about the Jacobs spark box in the photo. The spark box in the photo was only for illustration, not from



Fig. 10. Jacobs spark box

Jacobs. Instead, it was a popular spark box from Crane. See figure 9. Figure 10 shows a Jacobs spark box.

CONTACT BREAKER POINTS

In part 7 we circled back to the beginning, considering the stock original ignition system with contact breaker points. When the type 115 Alfa was new, contact breaker points were already a mature product, well developed, nearly universal in autos at that time. Contact breaker points in a mechanical distributor are among the most interesting artifacts present in the type 115 Alfa.

Owners and technicians alike understood that contact breaker points required timely replacement, typically more than once per



Fig. 11. Standard Motor Products ventilated fixed contact

year. Comparing different sets of points, differences in performance emerge at a detail level, notably as to contact surface wear. Figure 11 shows a worn but usable set of contact breaker points from Standard Motor Products. These innovative contact breaker points worked the best of any I tried.

SERIES CONCLUSION

This series of articles began with a simple question about my Alfa having a 123 distributor. To answer that question we had to back up a few steps, to understand the stock original system, its advantages, as well as its limitations. Over the years I've had a good assortment of choices, most of them readily accessible. The best of these products combined solid performance with objective facts to back up reputation and claims.

Why are these products falling out of fashion? One trend we can see is new automotive technologies rolling into the aftermarket one at a time. We've had decades to observe this phenomenon during which:

- We replaced contact breaker points with some other form of switching.
- Then we added a spark amplifier.
- That change allowed us to run a low-impedance ignition coil.
- Spark boxes became available, replacing the conventional ignition coil.
- Advanced spark boxes brought flexibility to set the advance range as well as re-strike technology.
- Further development led to a programmable electronic distributor.
- Later, a manufacturer integrated their programmable electronic distributor with a Bluetooth interface and phone app.

The technologies discussed in these articles proved useful in their seasons.

Note that I have not used the word finally, as this story is not over. By and large the automotive industry does not drive the development of new electronics technology. In this the auto industry tends to follow more so than lead. *CAMS*

LOOKING AHEAD

Programmable engine control is another technology that may well earn a place on our older Alfas. Owners who have installed these systems report good results.

Aftermarket programmable engine control systems have a big following in the tuner community, particularly for import sport compacts. There's a parallel to draw with the programmable electronic distributor. Programmable engine control systems allow us to bolt together an integrated setup that has much in parallel with what automakers selected for later model cars. By this point, decades into this phenomenon, the parts, the pieces, the architecture, the digital interface electronics, and the tuner app for a laptop are all sorted out, more or less. I experience a certain nostalgia to observe that some of these systems retain the distributor to serve as a camshaft position sensor.

F1 Review: Races 17–19

Jon Gavin

The season marches on with fly away races in Japan, Qatar, and the US Grand Prix in Austin. Details follow after some news.

NEWS

The FIA announced that Andretti Formula Racing Cadillac had passed the requirements to field a team as a new entrant on the grid. Three other entries were rejected. With a thorough entry prepared by Andretti addressing all the required metrics the FIA did not have much choice in approving them. This sets up a conflict with Formula One Management (FOM) as the next step is for Andretti to agree contractual terms for entry. FOM have been very anti-expansion in their comments and many of the teams have baulked at potential dilution of their share of the revenues. It's a bit difficult to see how this ends well.

Capex spending allowances were increased for 2024. The lower three teams got \$20M more, the mid teams gained \$13M, and the top three \$6M. Williams had been quite vocal about their inability to update outdated and neglected facilities due to spending caps.

Incumbent tyre provider, Pirelli, won the sole supplier contract thru 2027 with the option of another year beyond that. Bridgestone was the other bidder.

Race Results & Championship Standings - After Round 19						
Team	Team Points	Driver	Japan Result	Qatar Result	USA Result	Driver Points
Red Bull	706	Max Verstappen (VER)	1 🏆	1	1	466
		Sergio Pérez (PER)	DNF	10	4	240
Mercedes	344	Lewis Hamilton (HAM)	5	DNF	DQ	201
		George Russell (RUS)	7	4	5	143
Ferrari	322	Carlos Sainz Jr (SAI)	6	DNS	3	171
		Charles Leclerc (LEC)	4	5	DQ	151
McLaren	242	Lando Norris (NOR)	2	3	2	159
		Oscar Piastri (PIA)	3	2	DNF	83
Aston Martin	236	Fernando Alonso (ALO)	8	6	DNF	183
		Lance Stroll (STR)	DNF	11	7	53
Alpine	100	Pierre Gasly (GAS)	10	12	6	56
		Esteban Ocon (OCO)	9	7	DNF	44
Williams	26	Alexander Albon (ALB)	DNF	13	9	25
		Logan Sargeant (SAR)	DNF	DNF	10	1
Alfa Romeo	16	Valtteri Bottas (BOT)	DNF	8	12	10
		Zhou Guanyu (ZHO)	13	9	13	6
Haas	12	Nico Hülkenberg (HUL)	14	16	11	9
		Kevin Magnussen (MAG)	15	14	14	3
Alpha Tauri	10	Yuki Tsunoda (TSU)	12	15	8 🏆	8
		Liam Lawson (LAW)	11	17	—	2
		Nyck De Vries (DEV)	—	—	—	0
		Daniel Ricciardo (RIC)	—	—	15	0



Fastest Lap Point (if in top 10)

DNF/F: Did Not Start/Finish

DQ: Disqualified

The Belgian Grand Prix will continue at Spa at least thru 2025 as another year was added to the contract.

UPCOMING RACES

#	Date	Grand Prix
20	29 Oct	Mexico
21	5 Nov	Brazil
22	18 Nov	USA (Vegas)
23	26 Nov	Abu Dhabi

RACE 17: JAPAN, SUZUKA

The Japanese Grand Prix was once again hosted at the Suzuka International Racing Course. The current run began in 1987 and has continued here except for a brief switch to Fuji in 2007 and 2008 providing an opportunity to bring Suzuka up to current FIA standards.

The track was originally built as a test track by Honda. Some safety-based realignments have occurred, but the essence is still the same. It's a fast figure of eight circuit featuring a unique crossover and providing a long 5.8 km lap. Turns three thru seven require a spot-on rhythm, downhill eight and nine need some respect to keep the car on track, and there is a fast full throttle run from fourteen to sixteen. Fast cornering is aided by positive cambers and there is about fifty meters of elevation change, mostly in a dip between turns seventeen and seven that sets the start on a downhill

grade. The flow of the circuit makes it a driver's favourite and the fans also have a great time with inventive tribute costumery.

The surface is aggressive and a two, or even three, stop strategy on softer tyres will likely be fastest. Downforce setting is a balance between the first sector twisty bits and the long high-speed run in the final sector.

Weather has been a challenge in prior years with tropical storms arriving at inopportune moments.

No deviations from the traditional run order were in play at this race. Race distance fifty-three laps.

WEEKEND OVERVIEW—JAPAN

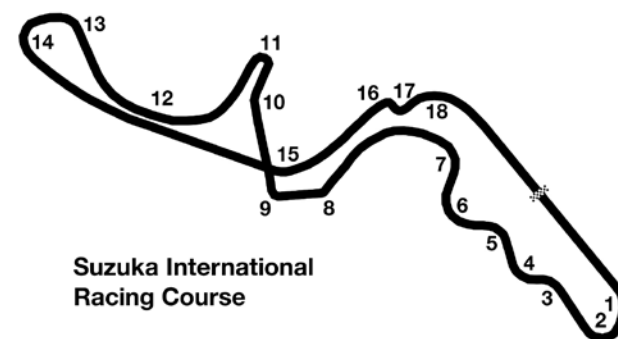
At this race, Red Bull were able to wrap up the Constructor's championship with a win for one of their cars.

McLaren brought a revised rear beam wing and side pod inlets. Both cars were fully updated to the latest spec for this race.

Aston Martin debuted new side pod inlets. Ferrari, a new floor. Red Bull also had a new floor. Williams ran their spiffy Gulf livery again.

Lance Stroll was back on duty for Aston following his crash the week prior.

Pirelli brought a test tyre for the teams to run in the Friday sessions. This was a tweak to the compound for 2024 designed to slightly adjust the position in the scale for the C2 tyre, the grade designated medium for this weekend.



The weather held up and this was a dry race, for once, although this brought heat and humidity as the alternative.

Free Practice One (FP1) started warm with the track at 37C. In the opening laps with new parts to evaluate, there was a fair bit of constant speed running for data collection along with Flow-Viz paint and various aero measuring sensor arrays fitted.

Early on Verstappen threw down the gauntlet going fastest on the hard tyre in his Red Bull. Then, about halfway through he put on a set of softs and obliterated the timings.

With twenty minutes to go Sainz put in a lap in his Ferrari that got only within six tenths of Verstappen for second fastest. On his last lap Norris got the McLaren up to third. Leclerc was fourth in the second Ferrari. A strong showing by local talent Tsunoda in his Alpha Tauri yielded the fifth fastest time.

FP2 later in the day saw a track temperature increase to 41C and a definite increase in the wind.

The exit of turn nine (T9) proved to be a bit of a challenge and there were wide runs aplenty there. The ultimate expression of T9 came just a couple of minutes before the end of the session when Gasly drifted his Alpine wide making it to the wall. The session was Red Flagged and would not resume. Once again Verstappen was fastest, ahead of Leclerc and Norris. Sainz was fourth.

FP3 started slowly with no takers for the first five minutes. Wind was a little higher and the track a fraction warmer at 43C. Both Ferraris then came out and had the track to themselves for about another five minutes.

At ten minutes to go Verstappen started a lap that would take him to the top, again, but only by a couple of tenths this time. This pushed the two McLarens down to second and third, with Norris ahead of Piastri. Pérez was fourth, ahead of the Ferraris of Leclerc and Sainz. Otherwise, it was a steady session but the lack of durability of the soft tyre became evident as it dropped off towards the end of the first fast lap.

Qualifying round one (Q1) started slowly with most cars staying put for the first few minutes before coming out to get a first time on the board. The fragility of the soft tyre was limiting the number of useful laps pretty much to one. Verstappen went fastest with Norris second. At nine minutes to go Sargeant had his now obligatory crash, proceeding to the wall in the final corner.

He did major damage to the left side of the car but walked away. The Red Flag was thrown suspending the session.

After the clean-up, some cars were still without times so had to get that done. Verstappen and Norris did not come out again and their times held for first and second. Leclerc put in a time for third, Sainz sixth.

In Q2 Verstappen set fastest lap initially, with the McLarens behind. All three opted not to run a second time. Leclerc put in a lap that bested Verstappen, topping the board. The McLarens dropped down but remained in the top ten. Sainz was fifth.

On to Q3 for the final push. Verstappen set the fastest lap on his first try and improved further on a second run, a second ahead of his teammate. The McLarens did well with Piastri second and Norris third. Pretty good for Piastri on his first visit to the track. Leclerc was fourth, Pérez fifth, and Sainz sixth. So, the grid was set.

Race day had similar weather conditions with a 43C track temp. Off the line Piastri made a strong attempt to pass Verstappen on the inside line to T1. He didn't quite make it and backed out. Simultaneously, on the outside Norris tried but failed to get by the leader but did manage to pass Piastri for second. For the now top three, aside from some pit stop related shuffling, there wasn't much to worry about as they finished in that same order.

Further back, off the line, there were two incidents started by a four and a three wide

squeeze. Collisions resulted in a carbon fibre mess and the Safety Car (SC) was deployed for a couple of laps to allow for clean-up. Under the SC Pérez pitted for a wing, as did both Alfas.

The SC came in at the end of lap four and a clean restart ensued. At the end of lap five the Mercedes drivers had a fight for seventh, swapping positions a couple of times.

On lap twelve, Pérez made an optimistic lunge up the inside of Magnussen in T11. Magnussen's Haas was spun round, and Pérez had to pit for another new front wing and also to serve a penalty picked up in the first SC period. On lap fourteen the Virtual Safety Car (VSC) was deployed for just one lap to clean up debris. Piastri took advantage and pitted, but others who might have benefitted missed their chance. Pérez would retire on lap sixteen.

Also on lap sixteen the Mercedes cars were scrapping again. Mercedes wisely pitted Hamilton at the end of that lap while Russell continued on a one-stop run.

Verstappen pitted at the same time triggering pit stops for all the leaders on subsequent laps confirming a two-stop run for them. Coming out of this Piastri had made enough time on his earlier VSC stop to end up ahead of Norris. On lap twenty-four Russell pitted for his one stop and the order was now Verstappen, Piastri, Norris, Leclerc, and Sainz.

By lap twenty-six, Norris had caught Piastri and was looking for a team ordered

swap which he got on lap twenty-seven and he pulled away on his fresher tyres.

On lap thirty-four Leclerc and Hamilton pitted for a second time and the other top runners did the same over the next few laps. Last to do so was Sainz, and as a result he was undercut and dropped back to seventh. Russell was now in play in third, but was a sitting duck on his older tyres and step by step he was overtaken.

On lap forty, the presumed retired Pérez left the pits and came around back to his pit box, sat for five seconds then changed tyres before going out for one more lap. Having duly served a five second penalty he picked up for shoving Magnussen off the track, he would avoid a carry-forward three place grid penalty at the next race. This was an unusual but seemingly legal move.

By lap forty-six, strategy had allowed Hamilton to catch up to Russell again. Hamilton was the faster car on younger tyres and he reeled Russell in but got stuck in his wake. On lap forty-nine Russell finally complied with an order to let Hamilton pass but being the slower car, he soon fell victim to Sainz on lap fifty.

Finishing order was Verstappen first, Norris second and Piastri third. Leclerc was fourth, Hamilton fifth, and Sainz sixth.

This result solidified Red Bull's position as Constructor's Champions for 2023, an entirely appropriate result given their level of execution over the year.

Hat tip too to McLaren getting two trophies with their newly invigorated car and talented young drivers.

Fully a quarter of the grid retired.

ALFA'S WEEKEND—JAPAN

Alfa Session Results - Japan							
Driver	FP1	FP2	FP3	Qual	Grid	Race	Gain
BOT	17	10	11	16	16	DNF	NA
ZHO	20	16	10	19	19	13	+6

At the start of FP1, both cars were out promptly along with the whole grid. Guanyu was ahead of Valtteri, and both were on mediums. They did a series of four push laps. Guanyu followed the usual single cool/charge lap spacing. Valtteri started out on the same plan, but he had a problem with battery deployment on his second push lap and he backed out to re-charge the battery before another push lap. Guanyu reported oversteer throughout the segment and was twelfth by the end. Valtteri was tenth. About twenty minutes was spent.

After about ten minutes Valtteri came out on a new set of mediums performing a practice start at the end of the pit lane. Guanyu did the same but about three minutes later. Cars were again on push laps interspersed with single cool/charge laps. Valtteri did three, Guanyu four. Both met traffic on their second push lap. Valtteri backed out. Guanyu found two slow cars in T13/14 and had to go off track to avoid

them; fortunately, there was asphalt in the run-off area so he could rejoin. Upon completion Valtteri was eleventh, Guanyu twentieth and still reporting understeer and about a second in arrears to Valtteri. Fifteen minutes remained.

Valtteri came out again with twelve minutes left on the clock. He was using a new set of the test tyres and did a practice start at the end of the pit lane. He went on to run consecutive fast laps at race pace until the end of the session.

Guanyu, running a bit behind, came out about five minutes later also on the test tyre on the same program. Both cars did a grid practice start after the end of the session. Final positions were Valtteri seventeenth, Guanyu twentieth. Neither car ran the faster soft tyre in this session.

In FP2 Guanyu was first over the pit exit line at the green light, but he pulled over to do a practice start at the end of the pit lane. Valtteri did the same a few moments later. Both cars started on new copies of the test tyre. They each did three push laps interspersed with single cool/charge laps. Guanyu made some progress from a lower base, Valtteri didn't improve on his first lap. By the time they pitted Valtteri was eighth and Guanyu eleventh—just over fifteen minutes had passed.

Six minutes later, both cars came out again on new soft tyres for some qualifying simulations. Valtteri was ahead. Both

picked up about a second and a half. Double cool/charge laps followed with Guanyu passing through the pit lane to do a practice start in between. On the following push lap, Valtteri hit some traffic going into T13 and Guanyu went onto the curb at the exit of T9 scraping the bottom of the car. Both cars abandoned and returned to the pits in ninth (Valtteri) and twelfth (Guanyu). Twenty-seven minutes were left on the clock.

At twenty minutes to go Guanyu came out on used softs taking a practice start at the end of the pit lane. Valtteri followed on new hard tyres also performing a practice start. Guanyu immediately came back into the pits for a practice pit stop for a fresh set of hard tyres. Guanyu complained about a long brake pedal and was called in at the end of his first push lap. Valtteri continued to circulate on a race simulation running longer than planned to get more data since Guanyu was in the garage. With about six minutes to go Guanyu came out again, but his brake problem was not resolved, and he returned to the pits ending his session. Valtteri came into the pits about three minutes before the end. He donned a set of used soft tyres, but a Red Flag for Gasly's crash stopped him leaving the pit lane and he was pushed back to the garage. Final placings were a good tenth for Valtteri and a less optimal sixteenth for Guanyu, with about 0.4s splitting the cars.

At the opening of FP3 both drivers did the same as everyone else — that is to say nothing. They prepared in a leisurely manner and eventually left the garage about thirteen minutes into the session. Both cars started on new soft tyres with Guanyu ahead. They did a short opening segment with only two push laps each separated by a double cool/charge lap incorporating a pit lane practice start. On the second lap Guanyu did not improve on his first time. Valtteri picked up a tenth on his second lap and was thirteenth. Guanyu was fourteenth. Both cars pitted with thirty-five minutes remaining.

Both cars came out again on fresh soft tyres with twenty minutes to go. Once again Guanyu was ahead. On the first push lap Guanyu picked up 0.8 seconds and jumped to fourth. Valtteri picked up nine tenths and he rose to sixth with only three hundredths between them. Both did a double cool lap. Guanyu visited the pits for a practice start in between cool laps. A second push lap did not show any improvements and both cars pitted. Now in seventh (Guanyu) and ninth (Valtteri), seven minutes remained.

A quick turn around and the cars left their garages with a minute or so remaining to run practice starts at pit exit and on the grid after the flag. Guanyu was again reporting a long brake pedal on his in-lap. Final positions were Guanyu in tenth and

Valtteri in eleventh. Encouraging performances.

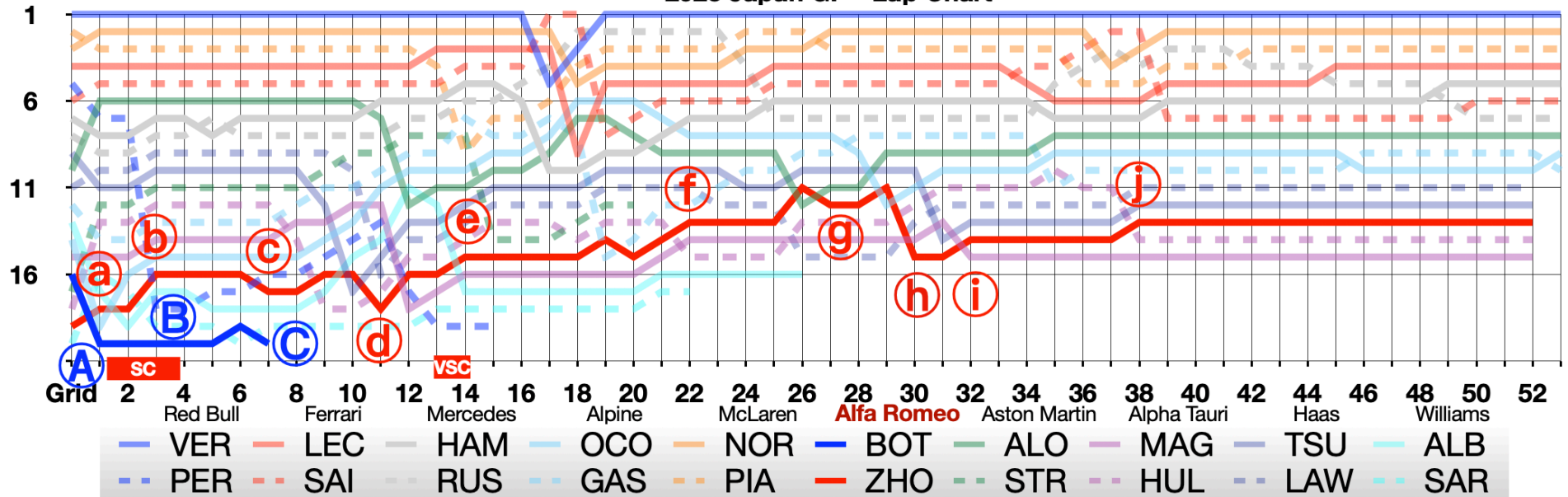
Next up was qualifying (Q). The Alfas waited about five minutes before joining the Q1 action as did much of the pack. They both had fresh (but now known to be fragile) soft tyres. Guanyu was first to push. Sargeant crashed just as Guanyu was completing his lap and he lifted as required under the then Yellow Flag. He completed the lap registering tenth. Valtteri quickly dived into the pits but without a complete lap time. Nine minutes were left.

They sat once again after the track reopened to join, along with about half the pack, at four minutes to go. This allowed time for just one push lap but there was traffic. Guanyu found Hamilton at the exit of T9 and, probably slightly distracted he went a little wide there. He also caught Lawson at the chicane and felt he was impacted. His lap time was not great; he finished in nineteenth. Valtteri had an initially encouraging time but dropped down the order to sixteenth by the end. Valtteri was not sure why especially given the FP3 result. With this, qualifying was done for the team.

A day later and it was race day. Both cars started from their qualifying positions. Both chose the soft tyre to get a run at the cars immediately ahead on mediums.

Valtteri had quite an adventure. His soft tyres enabled a good start and he was mak-

2023 Japan GP - Lap Chart



ing ground up the middle of the track. He was past Magnussen and alongside Albon to his left and about halfway alongside Ocon to his right. Ocon drifted left towards him and Valtteri had to move left to avoid and there was a big contact with Albon. He picked up a puncture front right and straight-lined T4. The then began the long slow drive back to the pits. He was fitted with a new set of softs and a front wing. He rejoined about half a lap down (A) but the Safety Car allowed him to catch up to the rear of the pack.

Guanyu also had a rapid start passing Hülkenberg's Haas and pulling up behind Magnussen just as Albon and Valtteri clashed in front of Magnussen. A shower of

debris blew into the path of the Alfa including a big chunk of the Williams' front wing. That debris got lodged in his front wing which he could feel but not see. He pitted ahead of Valtteri and received a new front wing and new soft tyres. Despite all this he was up a place as Valtteri also pitted (a). Both Sargeant and Pérez also pitted, with Guanyu gaining another couple of spots under the SC (b).

On the restart Valtteri held position (B). Sargeant had a lock up going towards T11 and Valtteri got alongside on the outside line going into the turn. Sargeant, still carrying too much speed, speared Valtteri and span him round. He was able to get going but reported handling problems. He came

into the pits at the end of lap six for a set of new hard tyres. He ran a lap, but the car was too broken, and he retired (C).

On his restart Guanyu almost got by Ocon but had to pull in behind as they entered T1. On lap seven Pérez came by into T16 (c). Guanyu was losing touch with Ocon and reported the rear tyres dropping off. After a discussion on tyre strategy, he pitted at the end of lap ten for a fresh set of soft tyres. He rejoined in eighteenth off the back of the pack (d). The clash of Pérez and Magnussen was worth two places and Albon pitted under the VSC, so Guanyu was now fifteenth (e) with Stroll about four seconds ahead. On lap nineteen Gasly pitted for a place gain but relinquished it on the

next lap. On lap twenty-one, Stroll would pit to retire the Aston and on the next lap Hülkenberg would also pit his Haas moving Guanyu up to thirteenth (f).

On lap twenty-six, Alpha Tauri pitted Lawson and Aston called in Alonso. Alonso quickly recovered position as Guanyu was told not to lose time fighting, leaving Guanyu in twelfth (g). On lap twenty-nine Ocon pitted briefly giving a place but then Guanyu took a stop on the following lap changing on to a set of new hard tyres. He rejoined at the back in fifteenth place (h). Tsunoda, ahead, also pitted a lap later and Magnussen pitted on lap thirty-two. The latter stop would be worth a place, and he was again following Tsunoda (i) about two seconds ahead. Unfortunately, he could not keep up and slowly the gap increased. The only remaining advance came at Hülkenberg's expense as he pitted and moved Guanyu up to thirteenth (j), his finishing position.

Overall, not such a great result considering that there was some encouraging practice times. Qualifying was unfortunate and this put the cars near the back for the race. A good choice of starting tyre looked to be beneficial, but being at the back meant they were vulnerable to accidents and so it came to pass. A plus was that they beat their near competitors: Haas and both Alpha Tauris failed to score and were not too far ahead.

RACE 18: QATAR, LOSAIL

This year, 2023, was only the second running of the Qatar Grand Prix held at the Losail International Circuit. The track opened for business in 2004, hosting mainly bike and tin-top series before F1 arrived in 2021. 2022 was an off year as Qatar focused on hosting the World Cup.

The track was fully resurfaced before the race and the pit/hospitality complexes razed and rebuilt to better suit the scale of F1 cars. The surface was thus naturally slippery to start. Qatar is basically flat and so is the track so there is little natural protection from wind. Drifting sand adds to the adventure.

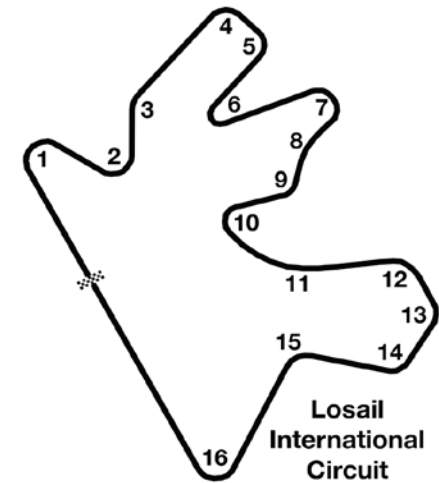
The 5.4 km loop is full of turns, all are mid to high-speed setting demanding high effort and concentration.

For 2023, curbing around the track was dialed back to a less aggressive profile, as the prior design had caused too much damage to the undersides of the cars.

The race is held under the lights after dark. This round featured the Sprint Race format we all love. Sprint Race distance nineteen laps, Grand Prix fifty-seven laps.

WEEKEND OVERVIEW—QATAR

Having wrapped up the Constructor's Championship, Red Bull looked towards the next milestone. Max Verstappen needed only three points to secure the Driver's Championship so the possibility/likelihood



existed that he could wrap this up in the Saturday Sprint Race.

The Sprint Format severely limits practice time, so updates were few. Alpine brought diffuser and body cooling changes, Alpha Tauri modified their floor edge and Alfa Romeo modified the rear beam wing and rear wing endplates.

Friday started with the single Free Practice session of the whole weekend, and it began under the waning sunlight, moving into lit conditions as the sun went down.

The track was initially hot at 41C and there was a moderate but variable wind blowing. The first laps were a cleaning operation. The cars were throwing up sand rooster tails that almost looked like water from a wet track. They skated round the low grip track with its fresh oily sandy surface. Early laps were on hard and medi-

ums. Many experienced offs as they sought grip. T4 was a common area for overshoot, Leclerc, especially, having a bad time with this corner.

By about the halfway point the racing line was clear of sand. It wasn't until thirteen minutes from the end that the first soft tyre runs were tried. Albon was first. He tried twice and both times overshoot at T4. Hülkenberg found some grip and went to second six minutes before the end. Others left it to the very last minute, and some did not even try the soft tyre leaving it to actual qualifying to get their data. Final rankings were Verstappen first, Sainz second, and Leclerc third. The McLarens were down in ninth and tenth.

Next up was the race qualifying. The sun had set, and the track temp was down to 34C — still warm but significantly off from the early practice conditions. The wind had also died down. The earlier work left a clean racing line, but sand was still present elsewhere. At the start of Q1, cars came out almost all on soft tyres. Verstappen logged an early quickest time but fell back a bit in the first wave of laps as the track continued to evolve. Track limits were being enforced and some lap times were disqualified giving some more work to do.

At halfway Mercedes came out for their first serious runs while others took their mid-session “break”.

With about five minutes to go, many cars came out for another one or two flying laps.

Ultimately, Verstappen topped the time followed by Norris and Alonso. Leclerc was sixth, Sainz ninth.

In Q2 about half the cars came out with another batch about a lap behind. Verstappen topped the times ahead of the Mercedes cars. The track went quiet, then cars started to re-emerge with about five minutes to go. The McLarens had run used tyres in the first Q2 runs so were down the order and banking on their ability to run off a fast lap at the end of the session. They delivered and went to the top only to be dethroned by Verstappen. The McLarens had time for another lap but could not oust Verstappen.

Further down Pérez got his time deleted, now in thirteenth, and Sainz was slow in twelfth. Both exiting qualifying.

Cars came out one by one spreading themselves around the circuit for their first runs in Q3. Again, times got deleted leaving Verstappen on top. The track completely emptied as cars pitted to prepare for one more push in the final minutes.

Verstappen led the return with just under four minutes to go. Norris behind was on a flyer but went wide. Verstappen's first time was sufficient for pole.

There then followed a bit of a fiasco as penalties came in after the flag. Verstappen retained first. Russell bumped up to second as Norris was sent to tenth. Piastri, initially third, got bumped to sixth finding this out during his post session TV interview. Ham-

ilton benefitted with third. Leclerc was fifth.

Saturday dawned as Sprint Day with Sprint Qualifying (SQ) first. However, before the teams could get started, they had to digest news. Overnight, as is normal practice, Pirelli looked at the used tyres from the previous day. They found some concerning early failure symptoms in the area where the tread meets the sidewall. These were sufficiently concerning to warrant significant mitigations. The problem was attributed to the lateral forces incurred on hitting the still aggressive new curbing especially in T12 and T13. To wit, the track edge line between these corners was moved inwards 0.8 meters to modify the driver's line. This was a repainting job. The nasty curbs remained but were now out of bounds. Further, a per-tyre lap limit was posited for the main race subject to a post Sprint Race review of tyres.

SQ1 opened with the track hot at 44C with the sun dropping. Once again lap times were deleted for track limits, including times for some of the big names. With time being short this was quite a concern. Ultimately, they got times on the board with Russell ahead of Verstappen and Norris. Sainz was fifth and Leclerc was down in eleventh.

At the start of SQ2 ten cars went out immediately to get their first times so as to give themselves time for three tries. Still, lap time deletions came, amongst them Hamilton, Leclerc, and Sainz. Four more

cars joined around seven minutes in, leaving time for two fast laps. One left himself just time for one fast lap. The top two, Norris and Verstappen, returned to the pits and sat, confident after just one fast lap. Hamilton had a second time deleted and his one posted time was not good enough, so he dropped out in twelfth, a big surprise. The finishing order was Norris ahead of Russell and Pérez.

On to SQ3, with the soft tyres fitted. Verstappen went out first to lay down a target for the rest. It was quick but he had his time deleted. Leclerc suffered the same fate. Now there was an opportunity for one of the later runners to sneak in something faster. Piastri was next to top the board only to be replaced by Norris who had a time better than Verstappen's deleted time. Verstappen had another go but was not able to go as fast leaving him third. Meanwhile on the next try Piastri took fastest as Norris had a wobble in the last turn leaving him second.

An interesting result came about: McLaren were able to meet and beat Verstappen and Piastri bettered his more experienced teammate. Sainz was sixth and Leclerc seventh.

The Sprint Race followed a few hours later with the sun set and the track illuminated by electric lights. Wind was down and track temps at 36C. Off the line Piastri held the lead but both Norris and Verstappen dropped back as they were quickly overwhelmed by a batch of soft shod cars

behind them. Russell, Sainz, and Leclerc were second thru fourth on the way to T4. Meanwhile Lawson was off in the gravel at T2, and a Safety Car (SC) would slow proceedings starting in lap two and lasting just one lap. On the restart Piastri lost his lead to the soft tired Russell in T6.

On lap three, Sargeant shot off and once again the SC was out for laps four through six. Russell made a good jump on the restart and Sainz almost got by Piastri. This battle allowed Russell more of a gap. DRS was finally enabled on lap eight and Verstappen began to move forward getting up to third on lap ten. On lap eleven Piastri passed Russell for the lead and Norris passed Leclerc for fifth as the soft tyres were beginning to fade. Then, on the same lap Pérez, Ocon, and Hülkenberg had contact and some were off into the gravel. The SC was out again on laps eleven thru fourteen.

The soft tyres showed a little more life on the restart as Russell had a brief try for the lead but after half a lap Piastri's mediums came in and he pulled a gap. Leclerc recovered a place from Norris. Verstappen passed Russell for second on lap sixteen and Norris pulled a double pass on the Ferraris for fourth on the following lap. All examples of medium over soft. On the last lap Norris took third from Russell making a medium tyre podium. Piastri took his first win, Verstappen in second took his third Driver's World Championship, and Norris in third made it two McLarens to the podium.

An interesting race: nineteen laps, three safety cars, and five retirements. The soft tyre was a gamble that didn't pay off despite all the stoppages.

On Sunday was the race proper, qualifying having been on the Friday if you recall. The track had cooled a little under the night sky to around 37C but the humidity had much increased to 75% relative humidity, uncharacteristically high for a desert location. Humidity was one factor in how the race played out.

Based on the Sprint Race tyre post-mortem Pirelli were still not happy and they stipulated a maximum tyre use of eighteen laps. This would determine a three-stop strategy at minimum. The late arrival of these restrictions left some teams in a bit of a pickle as they had already used up, or partially used up, their allocated tyre sets.

The result of this restriction was that the usual in-race tyre management strategies which can add five or more seconds to a qualifying lap time were no longer applicable. The drivers were therefore now running semi-qualifying laps for the whole race distance, requiring a step up in the physical effort resisting the 5G plus forces on their bodies. Add to that that the cars were also working harder (and so hotter), the aforementioned meteorological conditions, and the overall physicality of the circuit led to some quite marginal working conditions. Cockpit temperatures soared, leading to extreme discomfort for these highly trained

drivers. Ocon was “unwell” inside the car around lap twelve, Sargeant (who had been under the weather) had to retire due to exhaustion, and Stroll reported bouts of semi-consciousness. Albon checked himself into the medical center after the race. Many reported this being their toughest race ever, far exceeding the conditions at the reference high humidity race in Singapore. As a consequence, the FIA have instigated an inquiry into driver conditions to see if there are appropriate protocols that could be applied in the future. This situation could have ended much worse had drivers crashed as a result; it seems this was almost the case.

Meanwhile, back to the race. Sainz’ Ferrari suffered a fuel leak, and he didn’t start. Pérez’ team picked up a penalty for starting to rebuild his car in Parc Fermé prior to getting approval to do so. He would start from the pit lane and changed his power unit while he was at it.

Off the line Verstappen kept his lead and would not relinquish it. Russell got a good start behind him and pulled out to get alongside into T1. However, Hamilton got a better start from second, benefitting from the clean side of the grid and soft tyres, he was able to pull somewhat past Russell. Cars were now three wide into T1 when Hamilton cut over causing contact with Russell. Hamilton exited for the gravel and retirement. Russell span round but was

able to get going again to pit to rejoin last. Meanwhile Verstappen was set. This nonsense brought out a Safety Car resulting in the few soft tyre cars taking a stop to get off those tyres, swapping mainly onto the medium.

On the restart Verstappen gapped Piastri, now second. On lap six Russell began his move forward dispensing with Pérez. On lap eight the first of many track limits warnings came in. At the end of lap twelve Piastri pitted from second, having kept Verstappen within a couple of seconds. Norris would pit on the following lap, joining a number of the leaders doing so.

As the order was re-established, Verstappen was ahead of Piastri, Alonso third, and Norris coming forward to effectively fourth.

At lap twenty-two, Zhou reported Sargeant (ahead) was repeatedly leaving the track; this was probably the onset of Sargeant’s physiological problems. Piastri pitted at the end of lap twenty-five after a short stint. The race continued in a fairly chaotic manner with pit stops a-plenty as differing strategies played out depending upon teams’ tyre-life options. A batch of stops happened in laps twenty-five to twenty-eight and again in thirty-one to thirty-three. Final stops in laps forty-three to forty-five and fifty to fifty-one would allow the final order to emerge.

On lap forty-one Sargeant gave up the struggle and slowed right down as he

brought the car back to retire. He needed help to get out of the car and even to just stand up.

Verstappen would lead, Norris was up to second, but Piastri overtook him in the pit stops. Norris wanted to try to regain second and may have had the speed and tyres to do it, but the team shut him down opting for a safe two-three at the flag. A late stop for Russell moved him down to a still well-earned fourth, considering his lap one woes. Leclerc brought the sole Ferrari home fifth.

Norris’ pit stop on lap twenty-eight was superb. The car was stationary for only 1.80 seconds to change four tyres. This beat season long title holder Red Bull’s 1.98s previous record.

The gap to Verstappen under these unusual conditions was just under five seconds. An encouraging result for McLaren as they are now consistently the second fastest team and not allowing Verstappen the luxury of a massive margin. McLaren having two drivers in the high points also puts Aston’s fourth ranking in jeopardy.

Pérez is looking increasingly desperate as his driving becomes less consistent. He’s under pressure from the team to retain second in the Driver’s Championship, the 1-2 being something Red Bull have yet to achieve. He would receive a grand total of four five-second track limit penalties in this race.

ALFA'S WEEKEND—QATAR

Alfa Session Results - Qatar							
Driver	FP	Qual	SP Q	Sprint	Grid	Race	Gain
BOT	17	9	13	10	9	8	+1
ZHO	18	20	15	14	19	9	+10

Both Alfas headed out early in FP, both on new mediums, with Valtteri ahead. Guanyu commented it was like driving on ice as he ran his out lap. They ran a sequence of push and cool/charge laps gaining chunks of time as the track evolved. On the fifth push lap, Valtteri found a slow Norris in T12 and reported front graining. He would back out and pit at the end of the lap in twelfth. Guanyu went on to complete his fifth lap with another gain and a move up to fourteenth. Both cars were pushed into their garages as just over twenty minutes had elapsed.

Just before the halfway point Valtteri came out on used mediums performing a practice start at the end of the pit lane. Guanyu followed the same steps a minute or so later. Both cars ran consecutive fast laps at race pace and experimented with various settings as they went around. By the time they were both back in the pits about fifteen minutes remained.

Nine minutes to go and both cars came out on new soft tyres. Valtteri was ahead. On their first fast laps they both gained multiple seconds and ran a cool/charge

lap thereafter. Valtteri gained a couple of tenths on his next push, but Guanyu backed out having gone wide in T10, blaming Alonso ahead. Guanyu proceeded directly to another fast lap whereas Valtteri was able to squeeze in another cool/charge lap before a final push lap. Guanyu didn't improve. Valtteri found a slow Stroll in T15 and backed out. Final positions were Valtteri seventeenth, Guanyu eighteenth.

Race qualifying was next. Both cars went out early on new soft tyres. Valtteri went to second, Guanyu sixth, and the cars returned to the pits discussing wing changes for the next try. As they sat, others completed their first fast laps, dropping them to tenth (Valtteri) and sixteenth (Guanyu). Twelve minutes remained.

After a quick turn both cars came out again on new soft tyres with ten minutes left. Guanyu started his push lap ahead of Valtteri and both had some clear air to work with. Guanyu went to fourteenth and Valtteri jumped up to second. Both cars returned to the pits with five minutes left.

Another quick turn, with three minutes on the clock the cars were out again on a third new set of softs. They went round to the line and started a final push lap. Guanyu was overtaken by Sargeant along the main straight and lost time into T1 ruining his chances of improving. Valtteri found a couple of tenths and rose to eleventh, but others were still running. Guanyu

was destined for twentieth and out. Valtteri dropped to twelfth thereby advancing to the next round.

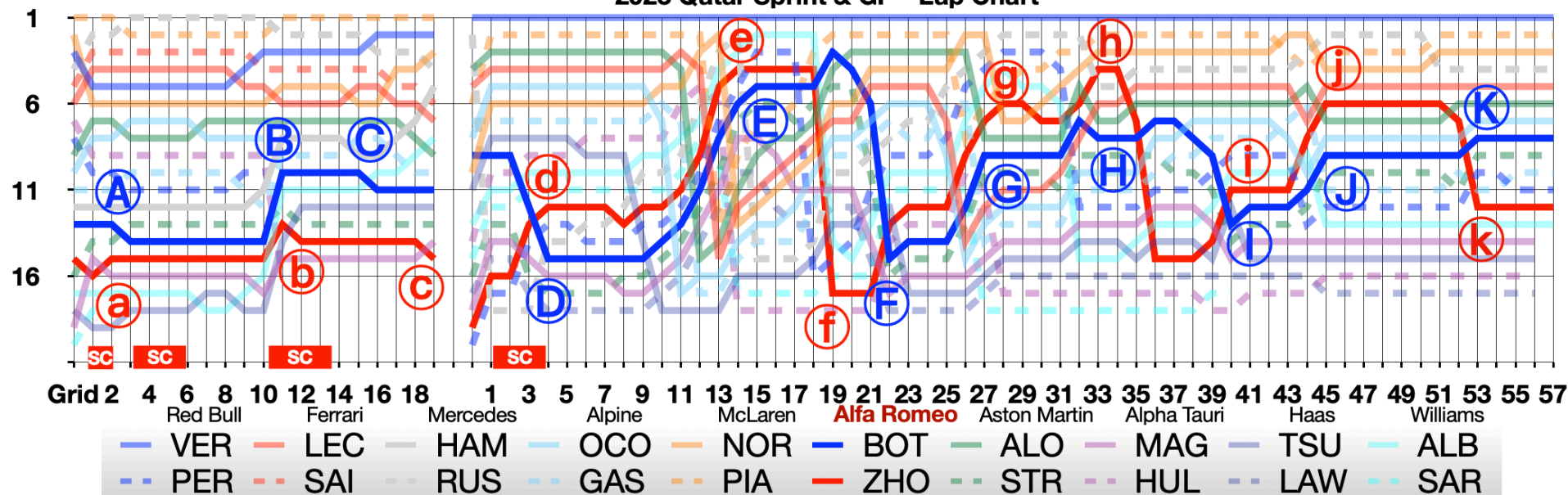
Valtteri was out early for Q2 on new soft tyres. He went third but of only three times on the board. He returned to the pits declining any front wing adjustment.

He waited until four minutes to go and came out on another new set of softs. He came round to run his one final fast lap and had clear air. Picking up six tenths he was ninth; Valtteri reported a good lap. However, others were still circulating, and he dropped down to eleventh. But Pérez' time deletion moved him back up to tenth moving him on to Q3. As he was pushed into the garage, he and his engineer discussed which now used tyres they would use for the Q3 attack.

Keen to get started, Valtteri was waiting at the end of the pit lane for the green light and was first on track. Naturally, he was initially fastest but dropped down the order to ninth after others did their first laps. He reported again some rear instability that was preventing further front wing optimisations, and also some front graining. He returned to the garage for another used set of softs.

He rejoined with others with about three minutes to go, just time for one fast lap. He was sixth but once the clock ran out, he had dropped back to tenth, the used tyres not helping. A small bonus was received when

2023 Qatar Sprint & GP - Lap Chart



Norris lost his time, moving Valtteri up a place to ninth. Q3 qualifying was a welcome result.

In Sprint qualifying round 1 (SQ1) both cars came out together but their departure was not until the halfway point in the session, putting them almost the last on track. Valtteri put in a lap good for fifth, Guanyu's was fourteenth and he was reporting understeer. They did a second push lap after a cool/charge lap. Valtteri had a couple of twitches without going faster, so was still sixth. Guanyu did pick up time and improved to eleventh. Now it was a case of waiting to see how others did. Valtteri held on to thirteenth. Guanyu looked to be out, but Tsunoda had his time deleted so

Guanyu moved up to fifteenth to squeeze into the next round.

In SQ2 Guanyu went out at the seven minute to go mark just as the first cars were finishing their push laps. On his first push lap he had a small snap in T5, went wide at the exit and he eased off and went for a cool/charge with no time on the board. His second lap was faster, but his time was deleted for track limits at T13 dropping him to fifteenth.

Valtteri came out at just past the four minute to go mark. He would only have one shot at recording a time, but it was at a point when the track would be fastest. Although good for eleventh, his time was also deleted, and he dropped to fourteenth.

Lawson also had a time deleted moving Valtteri up to thirteenth. Despite the deletions neither had times that would have moved them on to SQ3, but they might have been a couple of positions further up the Sprint starting grid.

At the Sprint race, Valtteri had an OK start keeping up with his neighbours off the line. Lawson went off and Hamilton went wide in T2. Hamilton regrouped and came back by in T7 leaving Valtteri in thirteenth (A).

On the first restart, Valtteri had a good go at Hamilton ahead, as the Mercedes could not get grip. He got alongside but backed off into T1. Soft shod Stroll came by in T3 dropping Valtteri a place, with Guanyu just

behind before the second SC was deployed. Fortunately, there were no more soft tired cars behind.

Guanyu's start was not so good—he lost places to Stroll in T2 and Magnussen got by into T12 as the first SC was called. However, a place was gained at Lawson's expense when he crashed out. He was now down a spot in sixteenth. Guanyu was given the place back from Magnussen during the SC period, so he was back to fifteenth for the restart (a). Guanyu was now following Valtteri as the SC came out again and like Valtteri had no soft tired threats behind.

On the second restart both cars held position. Valtteri began to see Stroll losing grip and on lap eleven he passed at the end of the straight. Pérez, Ocon, and Hülkenberg would clash and retire moving Valtteri up to tenth (B). Guanyu decided to pit under the third SC for a set of softs as did Stroll immediately ahead. He would rejoin fourteenth, up a place due to the retirements (b). He would now follow Stroll almost to the line. Valtteri lost out to Albon at the end of the straight on lap sixteen dropping him to eleventh (C) where he would finish.

On the last lap Guanyu was under attack from Magnussen who was coming fast down the straight. Guanyu defended but almost ran into Stroll in T1. He jumped left and went wide to avoid Stroll, but allowed Magnussen by, so moving Guanyu to fifteenth (c), his finishing position. Post-race

Stroll received a five second penalty for track limits violations and Guanyu moved up to fourteenth in the final classifications. Guanyu's stop for softs didn't pay off. Points wise it did not matter.

In the main race, Guanyu gained a grid spot at Pérez' expense. Guanyu took a used set of the short lived soft tyres, Valtteri selected the more popular medium tyre, a new set in his case.

Off the line Guanyu held station but gained two spots as the Mercedes tangled into T1. Valtteri got away well but lost a spot to Norris in T1 and almost another to Tsunoda. It looked like Tsunoda was taken care of when Valtteri went wide in the relatively gentle T3 allowing Tsunoda to make his move stick. The race was then paused for a Yellow Flag and Safety Car (SC). Valtteri also picked up two spots courtesy of Mercedes. At the end of lap three Valtteri pulled in under the SC for a set of new mediums, good for the allowed eighteen laps. He would rejoin fifteenth (D), Guanyu benefitted from some pit stops and was twelfth at the restart (d).

Both cars maintained positions on restart. On lap seven DRS was enabled and Russell was coming for Guanyu and Valtteri was looking to close on Pérez. On lap eight Russell took twelfth with a pass on Guanyu in T6. Russell continued forward leaving Guanyu now chasing Sargeant. Valtteri was slowly losing ground to Pérez and had Stroll getting closer behind.

Several lead cars pitted starting lap twelve, resulting in both cars moving up the rankings. By lap fifteen Guanyu was very briefly in third before dropping back to fourth as Pérez got by into T1 (e). With Pérez moving forward Valtteri was now fifth, about three seconds behind Guanyu (E).

On lap eighteen Piastri got by Valtteri at the end of the straight. Albon pitted at the end of lap eighteen moving Guanyu back to third, again briefly, as he also pitted at the end of the same lap to rejoin seventeenth with new hard tyres fitted (f). Valtteri was now running third as Pérez also pitted. Alonso would come by Valtteri into T1 at the start of lap twenty. At the end of lap twenty-one he would take a stop for a wing adjustment and a new set of hard tyres sending him back to fifteenth (F).

Valtteri's and others stops would bring Guanyu back to twelfth. On lap twenty-six Guanyu got by Sargeant into T1 to take ninth. At the same time more cars ahead began to take stops and Guanyu moved forward to sixth by lap twenty-eight (g). Valtteri also benefitted in a similar manner and was ninth by the same point (G).

On lap thirty Norris came by Guanyu at the end of the straight as he recovered from a pit stop. Valtteri lost a spot to Leclerc at the end of the straight on lap thirty-three. On the same lap Alonso had a big off and would rejoin just ahead of Valtteri but giving a position to Guanyu. However, more

pit stops would lift both cars, Guanyu to fourth (h) and Valtteri to ninth (H) by the end of lap thirty-three.

Russell came by Guanyu on lap thirty-five at the end of the straight. Guanyu then pitted at the end of that lap for a wing adjust and another new set of hard tyres demoting him to fifteenth.

Ocon came by Valtteri on lap thirty-eight at the end of the straight. Valtteri pitted at the end of lap thirty-nine for a used set of hard tyres that had enough life to run to the end. Others also pitted and Valtteri rejoined in thirteenth. Tsunoda pitted and brought Valtteri to twelfth. The group that pitted with Valtteri benefitted Guanyu and after this mini-wave of stops he was back in eleventh (i), about eleven seconds ahead of Valtteri in twelfth (I) by the end of lap forty-one.

More stops for others around laps forty-three and forty-four brought more positions. Guanyu moved up to sixth(j) and Valtteri to ninth (J) by the end of lap forty-five.

Valtteri had Stroll behind and was able to drop Stroll clear of DRS. He then dialled back a little to run to the line. Guanyu would pit one more time allowing Valtteri to move ahead to his finishing position of eighth (K).

Guanyu took a stop at the end of lap fifty-two as his tyres neared the end of their allowed run. He got a new set of softs that

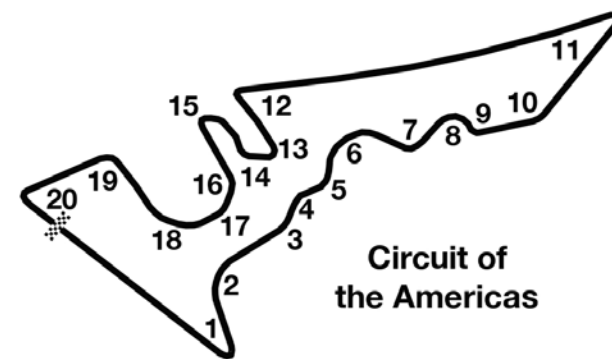
would last to the end of the race. He rejoined now in twelfth (k) and that is where he crossed the line.

As the flag flew Guanyu got an extra two places as those ahead had penalties applied. Guanyu was parked and out of the car before the final result was declared—it was good news as Pérez got his fourth penalty moving Guanyu up to ninth. His was an especially good result having started at the back of the grid.

A great result for the team and a six-point haul! When you're at the bottom of the table even a single point has great significance. Alfa moved up a place in the Constructor's Championship to eighth displacing Haas. Alpha Tauri again failed to score keeping them further behind. Finally, a good result after a long drought since the early part of the season. Was this a sign the recent upgrades were finally working? Can they hang on to eighth?

RACE 19: USA, AUSTIN

A fixture on the calendar since 2012, the Circuit of the Americas is a purpose built F1 circuit situated near Austin, Texas. The track is an elongated loop with a 5.5 km lap distance. A steep uphill from the grid to a peak 30 meters above at the apex of the sharp but wide T1 offers opportunities to try alternate lines, but also sets cars up for collisions and run-off at the exit. The track drops down again into a series of technical high speed turns reminiscent of Silver-



stone and Suzuka requiring precision and strong high-speed downforce. A hairpin at T11 ends the loop offering a possible pass point and dropping the drivers onto a long straight setting up a pass opportunity into T12. The circuit changes character again for a slower final section including a long right hander highlighting mechanical grip. The track continues to settle bringing a new set of bumps each year to be navigated by the drivers and engineers as they impact how low the car can be run, a crucial parameter for the current ground effects dominated cars.

For a second race in a row, the Sprint format was in play. Sprint race distance: nineteen laps, main race fifty-six laps.

WEEKEND OVERVIEW—USA

The Sprint format limits teams to just one hour to set up cars for the whole weekend. Usually this and the distance from home would limit the level of updates. This was not the case this time.

Mercedes brought a brand-new floor aimed at getting some more speed for the remainder of the season but also to inform the 2024 car design.

Haas brought a brand-new set of outer clothes for their car. This was a major drop for the team and much hope was pinned on it. The design has brought aspects of the Aston (sidepod top surfaces), Red Bull (sidepod inlets), and Alpine (engine cover and cooling inlets).

Aston brought several changes to optimise underfloor flow including diffuser, floor edges and rear beam wing. Alpha Tauri brought a new floor with revised edges.

Alfa tweaked the rear area of the floor to continue the integration of their Singapore updates.

Daniel Ricciardo was back at Alpha Tauri following his hand injury in Holland.

The single Free Practice session started hot and dry, the track at 37C and climbing under the Texas sun. Verstappen went top almost immediately but Hülkenberg slotted in second as an opening bid. All cars were soon on track and going about their business with a mix of medium and hard tyres evident. After just one fast lap both Astons pitted. Stroll had a front brake cooling issue and would remain in the garage for the rest of the session. As the track emptied out after the first runs Hamilton took the top time by a tenth. After a lull, cars trickled out again for their next segment and ran race simulations. Piastri had a big moment

in T9 going wide with a massive tank-slapper. He somehow kept his McLaren pointing forward and rejoined. In this segment Norris gained a tenth for the top time and Magnussen maintained fifth.

With fifteen minutes to go both Williams' came out to try the soft tyre. Sargeant went to fourth, Albon then went to the top. At ten minutes the rest of the pack began to come out on the softs for a lap or two before the flag. Verstappen regained the top time, Leclerc second, and Hamilton third. Perez was fourth and Magnussen still retained fifth. Sainz was eighth. Good signs for the Mercedes and Haas updates.

Race qualifying quickly followed. Quite a few different run plans were seen in Q1 making it more difficult to follow. About half the cars came out as the track opened. Most of those did a couple of fast laps with a couple of cool/charge in between. The Ferraris did one fast lap and pitted with Leclerc topping the timings. Verstappen and both Mercedes led the balance of the pack on to track with about twelve minutes to go. His single lap topped the timings until Hülkenberg knocked him off at eight minutes to go. The early out cars and single lap later cars began to pit, and the track emptied except for the two Ferraris who were now out on a fast lap with their second set of tyres. They went to the top, Sainz ahead of Leclerc. Both Red Bulls joined them as they ran a cool/charge lap. Those four cars came around just as the rest of the pack

were coming out of the pits for their out laps for a single push before the flag. Sainz pitted, comfortable with his top time. Leclerc went around for a second cool/charge lap running with the new joiners. The Red Bulls went for their push lap with a lot of traffic to navigate. It went well enough as Verstappen topped the timing, Pérez third. However, Hamilton's next fast lap was a couple of tenths faster. Then Norris snuck into second leaving Verstappen third and Sainz fourth. Leclerc was ninth. Magnussen retained a notable seventh. There was a bit of a shock as both Astons were eliminated.

On to a much simpler Q2. Cars came out gapping each other to spread themselves around the lap. The top cars risked using scrubbed soft tyres for a first attempt. All the cars ran a single lap and at this point Verstappen led Piastri and Ocon. Norris lost his time to track limits so had everything to do.

Ferrari led the return the track at five minutes to go. The rest of the pack began to join at four minutes to go, with the last cars leaving it to two minutes before they came on track. All were set for just one fast lap. Leclerc was fastest, a hair ahead of Verstappen. Hamilton was a couple of tenths behind. Sainz was fourth. Ricciardo lost his lap time to track limits and was among those eliminated.

Verstappen led out the pack for the start of Q3. All ten remaining contenders prepared for a push lap. Leclerc went fastest,

half a tenth ahead of Hamilton and Verstappen. Sainz was then fourth. Russell lost his time to track limits. All cars then returned to the pits for a final set of fresh softs. They began to emerge at four minutes to go with Leclerc leading the charge. Despite a dodgy T1, Verstappen jumped to the top beating Leclerc by just 5 milliseconds but was judged out of bounds in T19. So, he dropped to sixth. Leclerc therefore took the pole with Norris second and Hamilton third. Sainz was fourth.

After a night's sleep all were back for the Saturday Sprint Qualifying and Race. In SQ1 all cars trouped out on the 40C track. There was a little back up in the pit lane as cars left a gap to the car ahead. Cars were able to run a couple of fast laps with a cool/charge in between. Verstappen topped the time followed by Leclerc and Albon. Sainz was fourth.

At the start of SQ2, half of the fifteen cars went out to set their first times and then continue for a second try. The other half came out with a few minutes to go, banking on their ability to set and keep a good time with one attempt. Verstappen, on his second attempt, span his Red Bull at T9 ending his chances to improve. Not to worry as his first time held and he topped the timing with Leclerc second and Sainz third. Ricciardo was eleventh so dropped out along with the Astons.

The clock started for SQ3, but no cars came out. They all waited until four to five minutes to go leaving just time for an out lap and a single fast lap. All or nothing. Verstappen was first to try and set the fastest time setting himself up for pole. Everyone else knew what they had to do. Leclerc came up second, just a half a tenth short, Hamilton was a hundredth further back in third, Sainz was sixth.

For the Sprint Race, the cars gridded up on medium tyres except Sainz who had a set of softs installed. Off the line, Leclerc got up inside Verstappen who forcefully closed the door causing Leclerc to back off before T1. Leclerc would then lose out to Hamilton who shoved himself by in T2. Sainz got by Piastri off the line cutting across Piastri's nose for fifth using his soft tyre starting grip advantage.

Hamilton kept Verstappen close, and a gap opened back to Leclerc. By lap five Hamilton was still on Verstappen's tail and the latter was reporting poor drivability. That said, he began increasing the gap and Hamilton dropped out of DRS range.

On lap eight Norris briefly passed Sainz into T12 but Sainz quickly came back by, but his soft tyres were fading. Two laps later Norris would get the job done again into T12. Pérez had also been lurking and he too picked off Sainz on the way to T12 on lap ten. At this point the top places were set.

Verstappen would win, Hamilton second and Leclerc third. Sainz sixth having held off Russell for the last quarter of the race.

The cars gridded up on Sunday for the Grand Prix Race with four cars starting from the pit lane: both Astons and both Haas' made changes under Parc Fermé. Medium tyres were the choice with only Hülkenberg and Stroll opting for the hard compound for their pit lane starts.

Off the line, Norris got the jump and took the lead from Leclerc in T1. Sainz dispatched Hamilton for third and Verstappen took Russell for fifth. Over the next ten laps, Hamilton and Verstappen would move forward at the expense of the Ferraris, Hamilton got up to second, Verstappen third, and Norris had a modest gap in the lead.

At the end of lap ten, Piastri retired, possibly from damage he had from a contact he had with Ocon at the start. Ocon had retired at the end of lap six.

A little bit stuck in third, Verstappen pulled the pin and took a pit stop at the end of lap sixteen. Norris took the bait and stopped on the next lap. Hamilton resisted for a couple more laps as the team debated sticking to a one stop race as planned. Hamilton did stop but may have stayed out just a bit too long, as he ended up third after the stops had completed. Norris retained the lead but had taken the hard tyre.

Verstappen on the mediums began to close in and on lap twenty-eight he caught and passed for the lead. However, all was not well as Verstappen was soon complaining about brake problems.

Another round of pit stops starting lap thirty-six did not fundamentally change the order. Norris was able to keep Verstappen within a couple of seconds, both cars on the hard tyre of similar age. Behind, Hamilton, who had taken a stop a few laps later and picked the medium tyre, was moving forward. Verstappen's brake problems were limiting his ability to disappear into the distance and in fact making him work to hold the lead. On lap forty-nine the reckoning came and after a spirited defense, Norris gave up second to Hamilton who now set his sights on the ailing but still fast Verstappen. He got a little delayed by Ricciardo, who pitted for the unconventional soft tyre, enabling him to just keep up with Hamilton albeit a lap down. Ricciardo works for Red Bull and drives for Red Bull's sister team Alpha Tauri. Probably coincidence.

In the end, an unusually flustered Verstappen retained the lead with a couple of seconds margin over Hamilton. Norris was third, Sainz fourth, and Pérez fifth. Leclerc was sixth.

But wait, there's more. Post-race scrutineering revealed excess wear in the under-floor plank for both Hamilton and Leclerc. Both cars were disqualified moving Norris up to second and Sainz to third.

On the last laps, Tsunoda, then in tenth with plenty of margin, took on a set of softs and secured fastest lap. As he was in the top ten, he got an extra point for doing so. Good points strategy from the Alpha Tauri team.

Sargeant broke his duck with a tenth place resulting in his first point. And he didn't crash all weekend. Progress indeed.

ALFA'S WEEKEND -USA

Alfa Session Results - Austin							
Driver	FP	Qual	SP Q	Sprint	Grid	Race	Gain
BOT	17	13	18	16	13	12	+1
ZHO	16	12	15	17	12	13	-1

Both cars were out at the start on new medium tyres. Guanyu was a bit ahead of Valtteri. They did a series of three fast push laps with single cool/charge laps in between. They picked up good time gains with each run and were third (Guanyu) and seventh (Valtteri) as they crossed the line. They returned to the pit with fifteen minutes spent.

Guanyu came out after about ten minutes on used mediums and made a practice start at the pit exit. Valtteri followed in the same manner about a minute later. They proceeded to run continuous laps for about a fifteen-minute segment after which they returned to the pits. Guanyu was now ninth, Valtteri down in fifteenth.

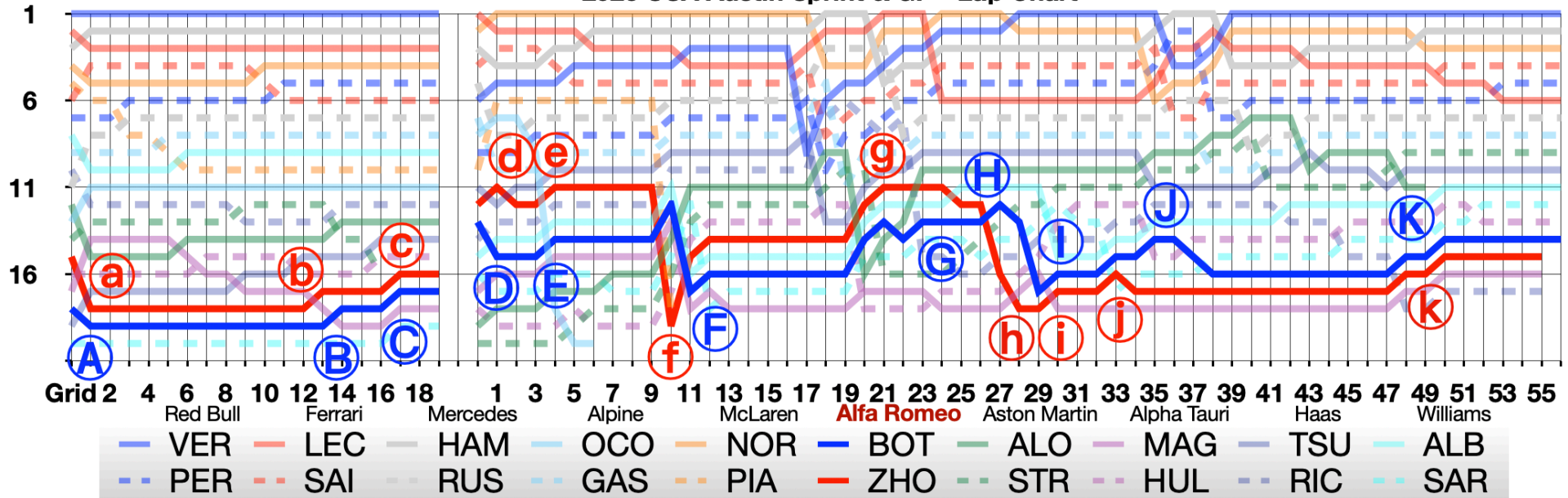
With twelve minutes left they came out to try the soft tyres just a few minutes ahead

of most of the pack doing the same. Both cars picked up a second or so, Guanyu jumped to fourth and Valtteri fifth. They both did a double cool/charge and went at it again. Guanyu made up less than a tenth and he would finish in sixteenth. Valtteri found Leclerc in the final turns and backed out. He tried to get round for another lap but just missed out as the flag flew. He would finish in seventeenth. Both cars ran practice starts from the grid. Overall, not a very great result with the Haas' looking strong and the Alpha Tauris faster.

Next up was main race Qualifying. The Alfas were amongst the first on track having waited in the pit lane for the green light. Both cars sported new soft tyres. After a first fast lap they ran a double cool lap then another push lap. Valtteri was a tenth behind his first run and was now ninth, Guanyu was three tenths slower and in fourteenth. Both cars pitted thereafter. Guanyu's second lap time got deleted for track limits. Valtteri took a small front wing adjustment.

Both cars came out into the pit lane with about four minutes to go with fresh soft rubber. Both cars made it round in time to start a push lap despite a backup in the pit lane. Guanyu did well picking up a second for sixth, Valtteri 0.9 seconds for ninth. Others were still finishing up and the cars dropped back a bit to eighth and eleventh but still advancing to Q2.

2023 USA Austin Sprint & GP - Lap Chart



Both cars came out for Q2 mid pack with fresh softs. They went round for one fast lap and went to sixth (Valtteri) and eighth (Guanyu), dropping back to tenth and thirteenth as the track went quiet.

At four minutes to go both cars came out on new soft tyres for a single push lap. Guanyu went to ninth, Valtteri to thirteenth. After everyone else was done they dropped to twelfth and thirteenth ending their qualifying.

In SQ1 the next day, Valtteri was out quite a bit ahead of Guanyu. He ran a single fast lap taking to the pit before coming out again on used mediums after just a couple of minutes. Guanyu stayed out running a single cool/charge lap between his two

push laps. He did request a double cool/charge for tyre prep but there was not time available. Despite this, he picked up a couple of tenths on his second push lap. When all was done, Valtteri was down in eighteenth reporting no grip. Guanyu did better at eleventh and he advanced to SQ2.

Guanyu was amongst the first group on track for SQ2. He set his time then ran a double cool/charge making some differential settings changes as he prepared for his second push lap. His second lap was just a couple of hundredths better, but he felt he was blocked by a slow Stroll in T15. Ultimately, he was fifteenth and done.

For the Sprint Race, both cars were set up with used medium tyres. Guanyu

got away well enough. He had to take the outside line in T1 letting Valtteri and both Haas' get by. Guanyu passed Valtteri in T9 to recover a place, but Tsunoda made a pass into T12 setting him back to eighteenth again by the end of the opening lap (a). He would remain there for quite a while. Ahead Magnussen dropped back and on lap thirteen it was Guanyu's turn to get by having been close to doing so several times on the previous couple of laps. He pulled off a pass in T15 (b) but went wide on the exit. He did not give back the place and would suffer a five second penalty costing him a place in the final ranking. Once clear of Magnussen he pulled away a little. Hülkenberg ahead was too far up the road. Stroll

would retire on lap seventeen bringing one more position (c) and he would cross the line sixteenth, but his penalty would knock him back to seventeenth in the final classification.

Valtteri's start gave him the inside line into T1. On the way he squeezed up the inside of Hülkenberg and passed Magnussen and Guanyu. It did not stick as Hülkenberg got back by in T5, Magnussen in T7, and Guanyu in T9. Tsunoda got by in T11 leaving him nineteenth (A). He would follow closely behind Guanyu except where Magnussen dropped in between them. Magnussen was easily passed on the way to T12 on lap fourteen (B), but Guanyu had pulled about a second extra in the process leaving Valtteri without DRS. Stroll's retirement was worth a spot (C) moving him up to seventeenth where he would cross the line, unable to make margin on Guanyu. He did, however, "pass" him in the final classification due to a penalty for Guanyu making his final position sixteenth. Unfortunately, they were so far from points that it was a bit academic.

Sunday was another day and another chance as the main race was set. Carrying on from Qualifying on Friday they gridded up in their qualifying positions.

Off the line, Guanyu got alongside Tsunoda in T1 but did not get by. Guanyu put the pressure on into T12 and Tsunoda went wide. It was not a permanent fix as Tsunoda took the place back in T1/2 on lap two

(d). Ocon picked up some damage at the start and dropped back finding a home between Tsunoda and Guanyu on lap four. In T15 Guanyu got by to regain eleventh (e) as Ocon continued to drop back. Unfortunately, Tsunoda had escaped DRS and Guanyu began to drop back. At the end of lap nine he dropped into the pits for a set of new hard tyres and rejoined at the back (f). His stop kicked off a reaction from cars nearby and they pitted over the next couple of laps providing places. Piastrì's retirement also gifted a spot and he had recovered to fourteenth where he sat for a while. Hülkenberg was a way ahead, Albon a few seconds behind.

Around lap twenty, more pit stops brought Guanyu up to eleventh (g). A couple of laps later Alonso came by after his stop, but at the same time Ricciardo pitted so he held eleventh for a little while longer. On lap twenty-five Albon took a place with a late braking move into T12.

Valtteri was now behind and close and the order came in to let him by at the last turn on lap twenty-six. On lap twenty-seven both Stroll and Albon made easy passes and Guanyu took to the pits at the end of the lap for fresh hard tyres. Once again, he was at the back (h). Magnussen pitted at the end of lap thirty (i) bringing one place. Sargeant pitted at the end of lap thirty-three and rejoined just behind Guanyu. He was able to keep him behind for a lap and a half before Sargeant got the place back into T12 with

his fresh medium tyre grip (j).

Guanyu was now following Valtteri but with a five second gap that remained stable. At the end of lap forty-seven Ricciardo pitted netting one place and Alonso would retire one lap later for another place (k) bringing Guanyu up to fifteenth where he would cross the line. Late disqualifications moved him up to thirteenth post race.

Valtteri started well enough, but Ricciardo got the inside line into T1 and took a place.

Albon snuck by between T2 and T3. Valtteri kept the pressure on Albon but was down in fifteenth at the end of the first lap (D). He continued to harry Albon with several almost-passes over the next few laps. Ocon's rearward march gave a place on lap four (E), but as with Guanyu, he lost ground to the car in front, Albon. He did recover a few tenths but wasn't able to get close again, so he pitted at the end of lap ten.

Unfortunately, Albon also pitted so no advantage was gained. If anything time was given up in this move. Sargeant pitted on the next lap and so he was now in sixteenth (F). Around lap twenty, others pitted and Valtteri rose to thirteenth (G). After this he was just beginning to close the gap on Albon. Albon passed Guanyu on lap twenty-five and Guanyu was now just ahead. Valtteri's engineer came on the line and asked how much faster he could go. Replying "half a second" the team ordered



Alfa Romeo celebrates 100 years of the legendary Quadrifoglio in Formula 1 as the C43 race car driven by Valtteri Bottas and Zhou Guanyu is emblazoned on part of the engine cover with the celebratory four-leaf clover created by the Centro Stile Alfa Romeo. Photos courtesy of Alfa Romeo

up a switch which was executed on start finish at the end of lap twenty-six (H). Albon was now about two seconds up the road and now unconstrained by Guanyu he was pulling away. At the end of lap twenty-eight Valtteri would pit for fresh hard tyres to go to the end. He retained the lead over Guanyu and when Magnussen pitted the next lap, he gained a spot to sixteenth (I). Albon would pit at the end of lap twenty-nine and rejoin ahead, again, with about 3.5 second advantage.

Sargeant and Hülkenberg pitted bringing Valtteri up to fourteenth. Unfortunately, Hülkenberg and Sargeant, both on the medium tyre, regained their positions dropping Valtteri back to sixteenth (J). As with Guanyu, a stop by Ricciardo and Alonso's retirement moved him up two notches to his finishing position of fourteenth (K). The double DQ would result in twelfth position.

Overall, both did at least finish close to the points and neither Haas cars scored. Tsunoda netted an eighth place so mov-

ing Alpha Tauri closer from behind in the Constructor's Championship. Williams, ahead, extended their lead to ten points, a high mountain to climb for Alfa to move up another position. However, a place could easily be lost with a spot of form from Haas or Alpha Tauri. *CAMS*

World of Alfa



The Should Have Made Alfa Bigger Than BMW! Alfetta - What Went Wrong?

From Number 27 (YouTube): *“Alfa Romeo’s Alfetta (type 116) was the FIRST family car that handled like a sports car and thought [sic] it sold in respectable numbers it never achieved the sales success of the 5 series.”*

Click [here](#) to view the video.



A 1959 Alfa Romeo 2000 Rekindles Memories Of A Family’s Past

From Hemmings: *“Rarely, ..., does an Alfa Romeo memory involve hauling a family of four, two of them very young kids, on errands around New York City in an ever-rustier car. Yet it’s just that variety of pleasant recollections that led a Massachusetts man to invest in an Alfa Romeo that’s become very attractive to collectors only within the past decade or so. That’s because this 1959 Alfa Romeo 2000 Spider is a decided departure from the sporting cars from Milano that came before it, and after. First of all, the 2000 Spider had a tough act preceding it, as it followed the fabled Alfa Romeo 1900 series, which was designed by Orazio Satta and was the first Alfa built on an actual production line during its run from 1950 through 1959.”*

Click [here](#) to read the article.

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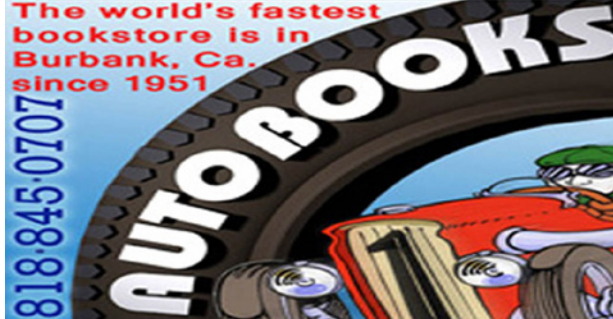


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