

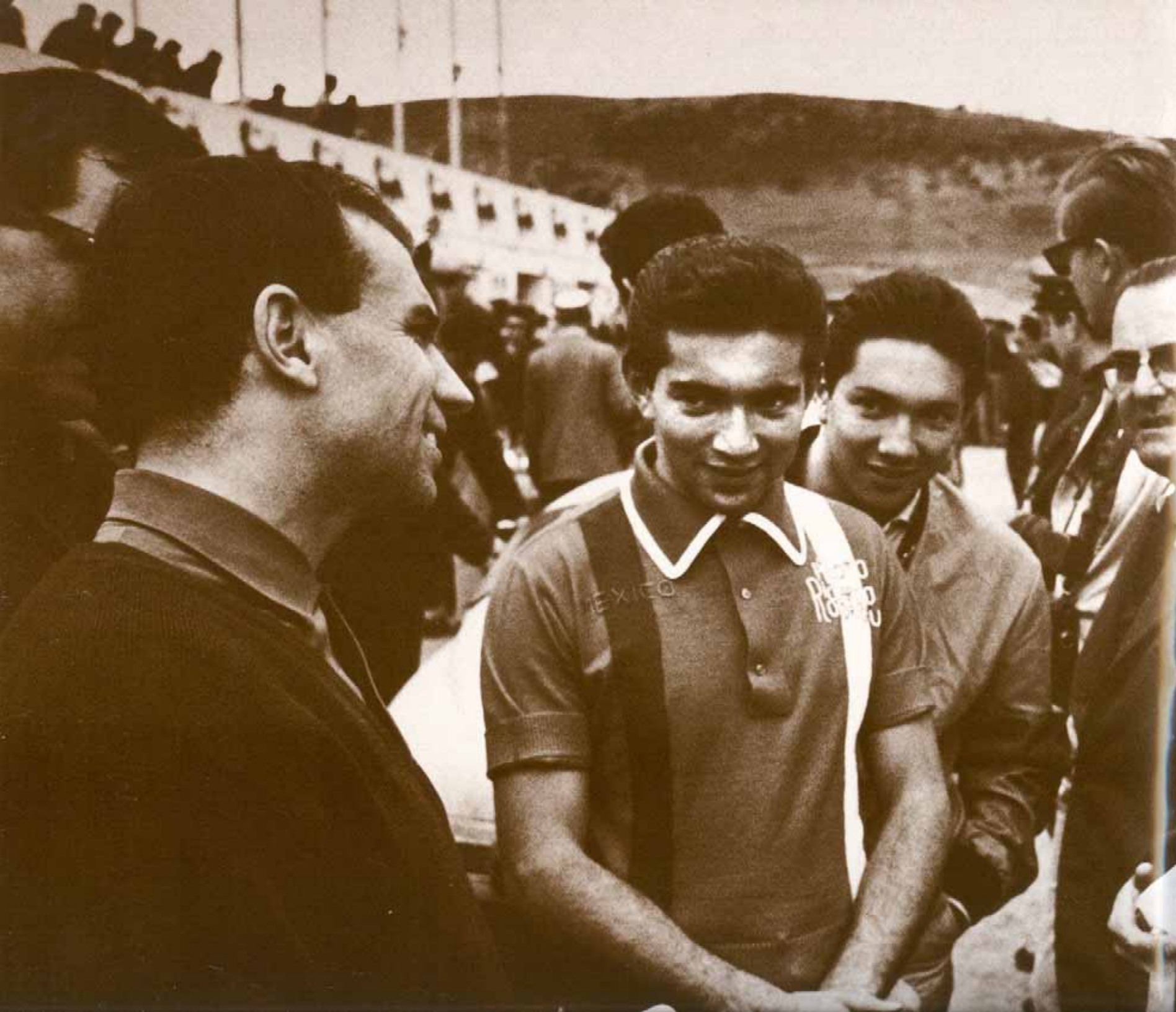


FERRARI

TESTA
ROSSA
V-12

JOEL E. FINN







Willie Mairesse has the attention of (L to R) Ricardo Rodriguez, Pedro Rodriguez, Luigi Chinetti, Phil Hill and Richie Ginther.

THE TARGA FLORIO LOST AGAIN

The 44th edition of the Targa Florio on May 8 consisted of 10 laps on the delightfully named "Piccolo Circuito della Madonie," totalling 720 kilometers, instead of the normal 14 lap, 1000-kilometer grind. The shortened distance, supposed to be worth fewer championship points, was decreed necessary to permit spectators to clear out of the mountain roads before darkness fell. However, some suspicion lingered that it was really done to enhance Ferrari's chance of winning by reducing their fuel consumption disadvantage compared to Porsche. Over the full 14-lap event the Ferraris would need an additional pit stop, but at 10 laps, both makes would require the same number.

Ferrari came in force to the Targa Florio, sending down a team of five cars, all different from each other. Heading the list were the TRI60 (0780) as seen at the Le Mans trials, and a standard TR59/60 (0772) both utilizing 4-speed transmissions with first and second gears opposite each other in the quadrant. Supporting them were live-axle and IRS 2.5-liter Dinos, and a 2.0-liter Dino for the Rodriguez brothers under the auspices of Chinetti's NART. In addition, an ancient Monza 750 came along on the transporter to serve as a practice hack. The driver crew included the regulars of Hill, Von Trips, Allison, and Ginther, the latter newly signed to a contract, plus Giulio Cabianca, Lodovico Scarfiotti and Willy Mairesse. Also on hand to drive was Paul Frere, the Belgian driver/journalist, in his first factory-entered ride.

Opposing the Ferraris were a trio of RS60 Porsches to be managed by Barth/G. Hill and Gendebien/Herrmann/Bonnier. Because of a lack of drivers, the last named crew would handle two of the cars. In view of Porsche's 1959 Targa Florio performance and their showing to date in 1960, they were heavy favorites to win.



Phil Hill prepares to take out the TR160 for a practice session.

Allison stands on the bank while Ginther hangs inside the engine compartment of the totaled TRI60. Hill is also about to look after scrambling down into the ditch.

The only other competition of note was the Camoradi Birdcage entry for Umberto Maglioli, a 2-time Targa winner, with co-driver Nino Vaccarella, a Sicilian lawyer reputed to intimately know all 702 curves making up the circuit. Camoradi had been very disappointed by the failure of their Birdcages to last to the finish in previous events, and only entered the car after Maserati assurances that the weak ring and pinion problem had been corrected.

Most of practice took place in the normal Targa Florio conditions of local traffic hazards, but the situation in 1960 was even worse than usual. The severe winter of 1959-1960 had been hard on the mountain roads, and now numerous work crews were out with repaving equipment, rollers, shovels and brooms attempting to restore the surface to some semblance of smoothness. This meant that even in the mountains, caution had to be exercised, as wandering work crews might be encountered in the most unlikely places.

The Monza "muletta," though looking thoroughly disreputable and suffering from a broken rear spring hastily wrapped in wire, went like a rocket, seemingly perfectly suited for the course. Even though the roads were cluttered with normal Sicilian traffic, Hill managed a highly respectable 48:20 lap in the old pig. However, Ginther, ill at ease on the circuit, finally did in the Monza when he piled into a house on the last day of open road practice.

Scratch One TRI60

As in 1959, organizers completely closed the entire course to normal traffic so that competitors could go flat out, at least for a few laps. During this session Allison had a spectacular accident with the TRI60 (0780) at the end of the only straight section of the circuit. The straight terminated in a gentle left-right-left "S" curve normally negotiated in the 125- to 130-mph range. As he entered the beginning of the curve, the left front tire suddenly blew out, and unable to make the right-hand turn following, he went straight on into a deep drainage ditch, burying the nose in mud. Allison escaped unhurt, but the Testa Rossa was literally destroyed. Among other items, the front suspension and frame were caved in, the engine torn off its mounts and the differential casing broken.



Ginther (202) leads Von Trips in the IRS Dino 246, but crashed only moments later, eliminating the only TR to start.

The TR160 had been the fastest Ferrari in practice, with both it and the IRS 246 Dino performing particularly well in handling bumps, pot holes and bumpy turns. That form of suspension was clearly not yet completely worked out as turns with humps or ridges were more difficult for them than the normal De Dion TR59/60. Despite its smaller displacement, the IRS Dino beat the best times posted by the TR59/60. As this had not been expected, and the TR160 was unrepairable, confusion ensued in the Ferrari camp as to who would drive which car. The situation remained up in the air until late that last night before the event, when final assignments were made. Hill and Von Trips got their wish and took the IRS Dino 246, leaving the TR59/60 to Allison and Ginther. The Rodriguez brothers kept their Dino 196, while Cabianca, Scarfiotti and Mairesse were assigned to the live-axle 2.5-liter Dino. This left a disappointed Frere without a ride, so he simply switched back to his original profession of motor-racing journalist.

The Ferrari crews' outlook could not have been encouraged by their prospects on the morrow, as both Porsche and Maserati were easily faster in practice than any of Maranello's best. For the first time since the Mercedes-Benz days, Ferrari would come to the starting line as a distinct underdog.

The Demolition Derby

Contributing to the general uneasiness on race day was a new problem confronting all the competitors, most of whom had never experienced such a situation in Sicily. It was drizzle and mist all through the normally bone-dry mountains, making the roads exceedingly muddy and treacherous.

By the end of the first lap, Ferrari fears were confirmed as Bonnier forged a 23-second lead over Maglioli, followed by Gendebien in another Porsche, then Allison, Mairesse and Von Trips in order behind them. Von Trips had come to grief on the initial lap when locking brakes caused him to smack a wall, requiring some frantic work to pull out a tire-fouling fender, though nothing could be done about the slightly bent front suspension.

The order remained this way over the next few laps as the bad mountain weather began to clear and lap times decreased. Bonnier pitted the leading Porsche on the 4th lap, allowing

Maglioli to assume the lead by virtue of staying out for an additional lap. Allison came in and handed over the best-placed Ferrari, the TR59/60 running in fourth, to Ginther. Only a kilometer beyond the pits he rashly tried to pass a slower car on the outside of a curve, lost control, got on the marbles and rammed a tree head-on. So much for the only Testa Rossa competing.

The race ground on, with Von Trips and Hill moving up to 3rd by the 8th lap, some six minutes behind the Bonnier/Herrmann Porsche, which in turn was more than four minutes in arrears of Vaccarella, who was really burning up the course in the Birdcage. His effort came to naught on that lap when the fuel tank, evidently punctured by a flying rock, ran dry at a most critical moment, entering a high speed corner. Bereft of power, Vaccarella crashed heavily, ending a fine demonstration of skillful driving.

The race ended on a predictable note after this incident, as the Bonnier/Herrmann Porsche took the victory with the Hill/Von Trips Dino 2nd, followed by another Porsche, and the Cabianca/Scarfiotti/Mairesse Dino in 4th place. The Rodriguez brothers finished 7th, an amazingly high position only when viewed in light of their heroic efforts not to finish at all. The Dino looked like the last survivor of a demolition derby, crunched in four separate accidents during the race. The most serious occurred when Pedro did a double roll, landing upright on the wheels and leaving portions of the bodywork scattered about the landscape in the process. In spite of it all, the poor, battered Dino kept on running to the end.

With Porsche's victory in the Targa Florio, they took a 2-point lead over Ferrari, 20 to 18, in the championship stakes. Though the TR60 in one form or another was Ferrari's primary entry in the title quest, on tight circuits it seemed to be slower than the rapidly improving Porsches and barely faster than the 2.5-liter Dinos. The glory days for the big front-engine sports racers were clearly running out.

Just after the Targa Florio, the Venezuelan race organizers admitted their inability to raise the necessary funding, and formally abandoned the shaky event, leaving only Nürburgring and Le Mans to finish out the season.



