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Ferrari 250 LM

SEPARATING FICTION FROM FACT

The tale of an important Ferrari that became two cars and eventually reverted to one

Story by Peter Collins
Photography by Michael Ward
Location: Turweston



“It was closer now and then a rapid-fire volley from the exhausts as it slowed for the bend, into fourth, into third and then into second with a yelp from the rear tyres as it slithered into the corner, a blurred view of chamois-leathered hands then the rising turbine scream of the engine blotted everything else out . . . until all that was left was a veil of dust, two crisp rubber marks on the road, a priest shaking his head and the memory of a badge, a black horse on a yellow background; a Ferrari.”

This was written in the 1960s by David Owen and describes an actual experience close to Modena. It is not known if the car was a 250 LM, in fact it's unlikely it was, but as a description of a Ferrari GT of any sort out on test in those days of 40-odd years ago and more, it takes a lot of beating. Also, there is no doubt that Enzo Ferrari, at the time, would have very much liked the subject to have been an LM.

Why? Because he was trying to persuade everyone that here was a Ferrari that was, above all, a GT car. Why did he need to do that? Because guys from across the ocean, from Ford in the USA, were snapping rather too close to his heels on the international race circuits of the world and he needed to retaliate.

Whilst Ford's GT proved to be the equal in speed of Enzo's new 330P, it suffered from hopeless reliability and so it was left to the Blue Oval-powered Cobras to try and beat the GTOs. With their powerful and reliable 4.7 V8s, the ACs were very nearly successful at

toppling the Ferraris in the GT series in that first year and this gave Enzo a start.

To be eligible for GT racing a manufacturer had to prove that a certain minimum number of that model of car had been produced before it could legally be allowed to race. That had been no problem for the 250 GTO but, by the end of 1963 it was clear that the '62 GTO was due for an update and Enzo was the consummate planner, seemingly always to have a car ready for any particular rule or year and his new car was not to be an exception.

With the help of new recruit John Surtees, a new prototype racer, the 250P, had debuted at Monza early that year and been developed into an extremely successful car. At the Paris Salon in October, to everyone's astonishment there appeared Ferrari's new GT car, the replacement for the GTO. It was very little other than one of the 250Ps with a roofed body, but the crucial point was that Enzo wanted it to be his new GT racer.

It was called the 250 LM (Le Mans) Berlinetta and boasted coil-spring and wishbone suspension all round, a Testa Rossa based engine, but unlike the 'P' it had the clutch mounted on the flywheel, instead of being at the rear. The 5 speed transmission had all-indirect gears and with the dry-sump motor they allowed the car to be much lower than the GTO. The radiators were in the nose of the car and the body was designed by faithful Pininfarina.





So certain was Enzo of convincing everyone that this new rear-engined confection was just a development of the GTO that the cars wore odd-numbered chassis numbers which, in Ferrari-speak of the time, meant that they were road cars because competition cars were allotted even-numbers.

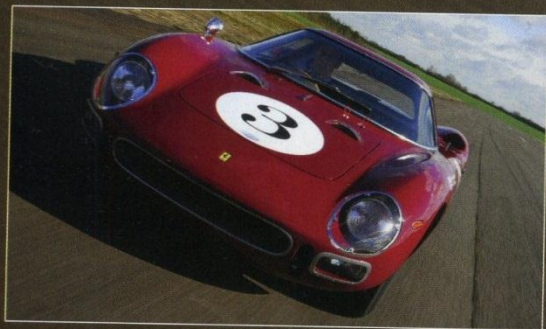
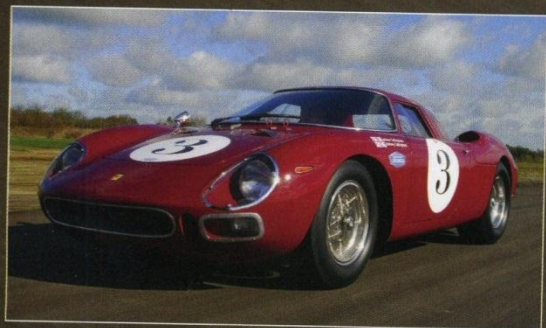
This first car was 5149 and, as if it was a road car, it was displayed at all the winter motor shows – Paris, London and Turin.

Not everyone was convinced though and crucially that included the CSI who turned the car down meaning that in the meantime, until they were prepared to pass it, the LM would have to race as a

prototype for which, with its roof, it was too heavy.

The homologation saga dragged on through 1964 until Enzo lost his rag, as he was periodically wont to do and symbolically turned his entrant's licence in to the Italian authorities, thus abdicating himself from being entrant of his Grand Prix cars in the final two World Championship races of the '64 season in the US and Mexico. For these events, the cars were painted in the American blue and white running under NART – ostensibly.

Meanwhile, in an attempt to appease/ameliorate the situation, the Italian authorities created a special class for LMs in Italian GT racing and the model promptly won





ABOVE: Detail of the rear part of the chassis that was removed to load the car into a transporter



everything in sight there.

Despite being designed by Pininfarina, the production batch of cars was built by Scaglietti. The LM may have been heavy with that roof but one thing everyone could be sure of was the fact that it would have power, stamina and reliability.

It was NART that provided the LM with its greatest result when they entered 5893 for the '65 running of the 24 Hours at Le Mans and, crewed by upcoming man Jochen Rindt and veteran Masten Gregory, it won. This was actually against the odds and Henry Manney, in *Road and Track*, reported that they drove the LM "just as hard as it would go". Manney again: "the winners showed that a Ferrari 250 LM can be motored flat out long enough to take the race for a customer."

There can be little more praise for the LM than that and here we have a beautifully restored example of the model, chassis 6045, fresh from the expert hands of DK Engineering. In many ways, Enzo would have been delighted with its history as it proves beyond doubt, that the 250 LM is both a race car and a road car, the functions he was trying to convince everyone of back in '64.

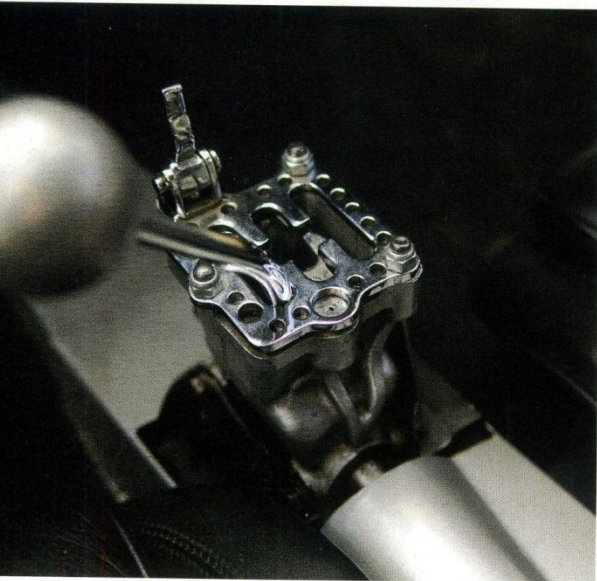
This is also a fascinating story that typifies the sort of intense research that is required to establish the

history of cars that are now extremely important, not to say valuable, artefacts but about which, at one time, the world was less than considerate. Here, I must thank Ferrari expert Keith Bluemel, for the sight of his report on the car and I do not apologise for describing the story in full.

Completed in 1964, 6045 was purchased by one-time worldwide famous Bill Harrah of Reno, Nevada, who not only owned casinos but also had a huge car collection long before such things were fashionable or affordable. Enzo would have loved him because he bought the car to use as a road car and it was never raced. In April '66 he sold it via an agent to one Dr Hart Isaacs of Beverly Hills, California and again, the car was used only on the road and for four years this life continued until, in 1969, 6045 was involved in a road-traffic accident.

Subsequently found photographs show that the damage was not extensive but, one of the centrally-mounted fuel-tanks was ruptured and, such was then-current lifestyle that a carelessly discarded cigarette end ignited the fuel and burned the car. The consequences of this fire were much-discussed over the following years, but again, recently found photographs prove that damage was not extensive.

Isaacs obviously had no more use for the car and, in



'71, it turned up in an insurance auction and, tipped off by one Ronald Kellogg, it was acquired by Donald Simpson of Bellflower, California. As so often happens, a year passed and Simpson lost interest in the restoration project having partially dismantled the car and had fibreglass bodywork made.

Kellogg took the project over in '72 but he too tired of it and a year later sold the engine to Dr Stuart Baumgard for use in his 250 GTO chassis 3987 GT, and then sold the remaining parts – the chassis, transaxle, wheels and fibreglass body – to Dr Hamilton Kelly as spares for his already owned LM, chassis 6023. Although the latter collected all the smaller parts, he left the chassis with Kellogg until later being required to remove it.

Kelly hired a van and man to pick it up but when loading it, it was found to be too long for the flat-bed, so a section was sawn off. Crucially, the cut section, retained by Kellogg, included the chassis identification number. Kelly eventually sold the main chassis on to Charles Betz and Fred Peters and the former, much later in 2007, remembered it was missing the "rear two feet". Later photos show the cut to have been at the rear of the engine mounts.

By 1980, the pair had sold the frame to Giorgio Schon

in Turin where it was checked by Gaetano Florini of Assistenza Clienti of Ferrari (before Ferrari Classiche). He confirmed its originality and authorised original manufacturer William Vaccari of Modena to restore it. Because the tube carrying the serial number had been separated from the chassis, there was the possibility to create two cars with the same identity and this is what happened.

In Italy, the partly-restored Schon car was sold to one Ulrich Guggisberg who initiated a full restoration with Bachelli and Villa responsible for the bodywork and the mechanicals being dealt with by Toni Franco in Maranello. The latter's correct-type engine (possibly a 250P) was stamped 6045/2. The whole car then went to Japan, moved to the USA and, by 2007 had been acquired by DK Engineering and a client in the UK.

Meanwhile, back in the US in about 1987, this complex story becomes even more convoluted as one Richard Freshman, who had bought LM 6023 from Kelly, had also purchased the original 6045 engine from Don Walker, who had bought GTO 3987 from Baumgard and had also located its proper engine, making the LM unit superfluous. Freshman also found that a chassis member and a few minor fire damaged body parts, with 6045 identification, which had been sawn off some 13

ABOVE: A painstaking search by DK Engineering reunited all the original parts to resurrect this superb car



years earlier. He had a new chassis constructed and the proper 6045 engine fitted with the whole car completed by Piet Roeloffs in Holland. This replica 6045 was sold to Michael Schoen of Phoenix, Arizona.

So, in the UK, DK Engineering had the original and restored chassis of 6045, while the original engine lay fitted to a recently made chassis. This incredible story finally came together when in April 2011, after DK was able to purchase the replica car with all the remaining parts, the correct engine was installed in the chassis of 6045 for the first time in 38 years.

At the time of writing, to fit the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle, Ferrari Classiche had been invited to carry out the transfer of the one original tube in the replica carrying the correct serial number to the original chassis frame.

If only all historic car stories ended happily ever after! All the owner has to do now is allow the car to build up some competition miles to finally prove what Enzo was claiming 48 years ago, that the LM is a dual-purpose car, suitable for road and track use. Oh – and highly desirable. **II**

TIME LINE 6045 GT

1965 First owner Bill Harrah USA
1966 Sold to Dr Hart Isaacs
1969 Accident and fire damage
1971 Sold in insurance auction
1973 Engine separated from car
1982 Restoration in Italy
1995 Sold to Japan
1998 Replica (second car) built

2005 Original sold to UK
2009 Original restored
2010 Replica sold to UK
2010 Replica dismantled
2011 Engine reunited with original car
2012 Ferrari Classiche invited to perform the final reunification of parts to the original chassis

