

September 20th 2006

Mountain Dry

Le Belle Macchine d'Italia 2006

The weather reports didn't look good; in fact they were down right scary. For the three days leading up to Le Belle Macchine d'Italia at the Skytop Lodge in the Pocono Mountains of PA the reports called for violent thunderstorms, but luckily they never materialized. Saturday's forecast called for an 80 % chance of rain for the Concorso; it looked like the luck had run out.

A massive storm system had parked itself over the Northeastern U.S. and was dumping a monsoon-like rain that didn't let up until two weeks after the event. It caused major flooding, forcing the evacuation thousands. The counties around the Concorso site were declared federal disaster areas.

As the weather system pounded the Northeast we discovered why the Concorso site got the name Skytop! The Resort was literally above the rain system, a half a mile down the mountain it was raining; it was raining everywhere from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia, from Washington D.C. to New York and Boston.



Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



Photo credit [Nathan Leach Proffer.](#)

While the sky looked frightening not a single drop of rain fell on the Concorso (if only that could have been said for the track event). Those that braved the trip through the hurricane like conditions were rewarded for their effort, with a stunning display Italian automobiles.

The absolute showstopper this year was the display of all three Maserati 8CTFs ever built together for the first time since 1948, which included the 1939 and 1940 Indy 500 winning "Boyle Special" from the Indianapolis Speedway Museum along with the sister cars from the Collier Collection and renowned historian and collector Joel Finn.



Joel Finn gets away from the maddning crowds with his Maserati. Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer

The 8CTFs were brought together because Le Belle Macchine d'Italia plays host to the Maserati Owners National Meet and Historic Maserati Reunion held in coordination with Maserati Club International and Sports Car Market Magazine. With historic Maseratis also on display from the Classic Coach Collection and Fratelli Auriana, Le Belle Macchine d'Italia has become the Cavallino Classic for Maserati Owners.

Sponsored by Maserati of Central NJ with support from Maserati North America it also featured an absolutely stunning display of historic racing Maseratis that included two of the legendary 450S'; one being the fearsome looking Costin Coupe, a Tipo 61, Tipo 63 and Tipo 64 Birdcages, a 300S, a 200Si and the oldest known unrestored Maserati, a 1928 Tipo 26B. An interesting side display from Classic Coach featured an MC12 and an FXX positioned in front of a trailer that pictured an MC12 and FXX on its side. There was also a nice selection of Maserati GT cars both classic and current.

In addition to Maserati, Le Belle Macchine also hosts the Lamborghini Owners Club National Meet, sponsored by Automobili Lamborghini, which each year brings their world renowned test driver Valentino Balboni over from Italy to give rides in a new Lamborghini on the track to participants for a donation to charity.

The Lamborghini display was a spectacular array of colors and flags boasting no less than five tractor trailers and a tent the size of another tractor trailer. Almost every Lamborghini dealer and their customers from east of the Mississippi were in attendance. Taking center stage in the Lamborghini display was a vivid green Miura SV with a bright blue interior (The last Miura built for the US). Only a Lamborghini could pull off a color combination like that and look great doing it. Other Lamborghinis on display included 2 of meanest SUVs on the planet the LM 002, a couple of their early GT cars and an assortment of Countachs, Diablos, Murcielagos and Gallardos.

Across the field in front of the Ferrari of Central New Jersey trailer, it seemed that Daytonas were car of choice this year. A nice selection of cars braved the weather including a Comp Daytona and an mixture of just about every model of Ferrari built for the last 35 years.

Up the hill from the Ferraris in front of the Dunlop trailer were the DeTomasos, Iso Rivoltas and Etceterini. The guest of honor for the DeTomaso faithful was Pantera designer Tom Tjaarda who also has to his credit the Ferrari 365 California Spyder, the 330 GT and the Fiat 124 Spider.

Among the Grifos and the Rivolta GTs was a late arriving Lele that turned out to be one of the two "Works" Marlboro cars. This one was the Geneva Show car that was given to Iso Marlboro F1 driver Howden Ganley. VeloceToday will have the complete story on this car in a future edition.

Another car that just caught everyone's eye was the one-off 1946 Lancia Aprilia Pagani, that had to be the real inspiration for the Audi TT!!



Dennis Gage was there to make sure Le Belle Macchine gets on SpeedChannel. Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.

The Concorso broke up early as everyone preferred not to press their luck too far with the weather, hoping that some of the luck would carryover for the next two days of track at Pocono International Raceway. Unfortunately the weather forecast was for 90% chance of rain and Pocono Raceway is located in a lower elevation area. So for the 1st time in the 20 year history that this event has been taking place; the track event was a complete washout. The cars remained in their trailers or garages for both days as rain just kept coming down.

At the awards dinner the judges expressed that their choice for Best of Show was one of the toughest decisions they ever had to make: Taking home this year's trophy was Joel Finn's Maserati 8CTF # 3031 joining previous winners:

- 2005 1938 Lancia Belma Eclipse of John Moir
- 2004 1957 Maserati 450S # 4509 of the Classic Coach Collection
- 2003 1969 Alfa Romeo Tipo 33 Stradale of Lawrence Auriana
- 2002 1932 Maserati 8C 300 # 3004 of Willem van Huystee
- 2001 1951 Ferrari 212 F1 # 102 of David Scaite
- 2000 1959 Maserati 5000GT "Shah of Persia" # AM103.004 of Alfredo Brener
- 1999 1957 Ferrari 335S # 0700 of Peter Sachs
- 1998 1957 Maserati 450S # 4508 of Nick Soprano
- 1997 1963 Ferrari 400 Superamerica Cabriolet of Scott Rosen
- 1996 1966 Bizzarrini P538 # 002 of Van Horneff

The 2007 edition of Le Belle Macchine d'Italia is scheduled for June 22 – 25 at the Skytop Lodge: Skytop, PA & Pocono International Raceway: Long Pond, PA. For complete details www.italiancarsatpocono.com



Maserati's latest offerings courtesy of Maserati of Central New Jersey and Maserati North America. Photo credit Kerry McMullen.



One of the oldest unrestored Maseratis in the world, Fratelli Auriana's 1928 Tipo 26B. Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



Technical soul mates, the Ferrari FXX and Maserati MC12. Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



The Maserati Birdcage, serial number 2469, from the Indy Museum, drives through the Red Bull Arch. Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



Maserati 300S of Fratelli Auriana joined some great company. Photo credit Bob Coates.



The 4.5 Costin Maserati has been around for a long time but still a lovely monster. Today owned by Classic Coach Collection.



Rear view of the Costin Maserati. Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



All the way from the Indianapolis Museum came the Boyle Special (chassis 3032) to join its sister Maseratis. The event made the New York Times. Photo credit Bob Coates.



The Collier Collection sent Chassis 3030, the second of three Maserati 8CTFs. Photo credit Bob Coates.



Joel Finn came with his Maserati 8CTF, chassis number 3031.
Photo credit Bob Coates.



Comp Daytona, serial number 12467, owned by Len Rusiewicz.
Photo credit Bob Coates.



Lancia Aprilia made an appearance, [\(read story of Pagani\)](#).
Photo by Donald Osborne.



Alfa Montreal, a rare breed, but just one of the many Alfas, Isos, and Lamborghinis to take part in Le Belle Macchine.
Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



Miura with a now classic color. Interior is blue!
Photo credit Donald Osborne.



Ferraris lined up for the big show. Photo credit Donald Osborne



Lambos gather at their spot on the lawn.
Photo credit Bob Coates



A bevy of exotics gather around the campfire waiting for rain that did not come.
Photo credit Bob Coates.



Far below Skytop, at the Pocono International Raceway, it rained. And then some.
Photo credit Nathan Leach Proffer.



Maybe next year. Photo credit Peter Stuyck.