

125 C

A DREAM BECOMES A REALITY
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IMAGES FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

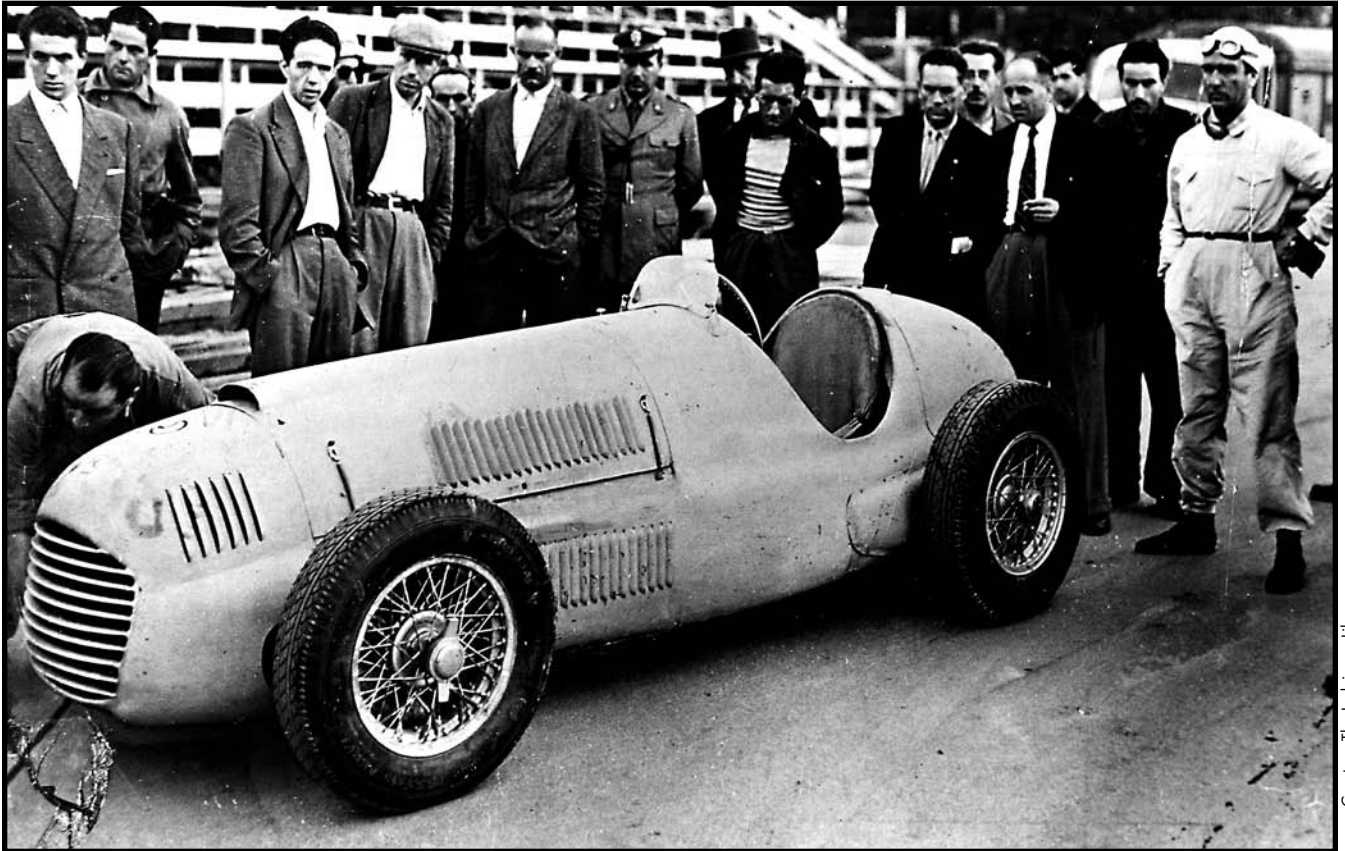


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Shortly after his separation with Alfa Romeo, at the end of the year 1939, Enzo Ferrari founded the company *Auto Avio Costruzioni*, a custom machine shop based at Modena in the buildings of his former racing team. He has arranged in particular to machine parts for the Roman *Compagnia Nazionale Aeronautica*, which is manufacturing small four cylinder aircraft engines for lightweight training aircraft. In December, Alberto Ascari and the Marquis Lotario Rangoni Machiavelli come to meet him at Viale Trento Trieste to ask him to build two cars to compete in the 1940 *GP Brescia delle 1000 Miglia*. Ferrari accepts but the model cannot wear his name, Enzo having undertaken with Alfa Romeo not to build cars or go racing under his own name for the duration of

02C still paintless during its first tests in the Torino streets, achieved by Giuseppe Farina seen on the right.

four years. The car will have a simple designation: 815 – 8 cylinders 1500 cc – and although both cars retire during the race, the experience will have shown that Ferrari could become an independent manufacturer.

In June 1940, Italy then enters the war in its turn, and Ferrari will have to become organized. During the summer of 1943, the factory even has to be transferred from Modena to Maranello, where it now makes oil pressure grinding machines for roller bearings. Its buildings will be bombarded twice, in November of 1944 and February of 1945, but from the end of hostilities, Ferrari is finan-

cially ready to restart activity as quickly as possible. Except, however, that he does not want to continue in machine tools construction, as his desire is henceforth to take up completely with the motor racing world. For that, he is already surrounded by a good group of technicians, but he misses a designer, a project manager to run the team.

In July 1945, Enzo asks his friend Gioachino Colombo to come to Modena. Colombo is a man of great experience, very talented, who notably designed the already famous Alfa Romeo 158. He gladly accepts the invitation as he is currently suspended temporarily from work by Alfa Romeo, the brand having

no sports program in mind for the moment. The roads have largely been damaged during the war, but Colombo is ready for everything, to see again his old friend Enzo, and he arrives at Modena in barge...

Ferrari announces to him his wish to construct racing cars and asks him what is, according to him, the ideal architecture for a 1500 cc engine. Colombo, who already has had his own reflections on this, is going to say the right thing, by proposing one of twelve cylinders. It is exactly Enzo's idea. It should not follow the choice made by Alfa Romeo and the V-8, but rather dare to be an ambitious project. This configuration had always been one of his pet plans, ever since he saw the first pictures of the Packard twelve cylinders that had raced at Indy back in 1919.