

# Alfa Romeo Tipo 33-3 Works Autodelta Gp. 6 Championship Winning Team Car

Chassis no. 105 800 23



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**Ex Andrea De Adamich / Piers Courage, Buenos Aires Temporada Series WINNING,  
Sebring 12hrs, Monza 1000km, Targa Florio, Nurburgring 1000km, Le Mans 24hrs,  
Group 6 World Sportscar Championship WINNING Team Car  
1969 Alfa Romeo Tipo 33-3**

Chassis no. 105 800 23

Whenever enthusiasts discuss 'the golden age of sportscar racing', one season always seems to top the chart. Perhaps it is due to the involvement of such legendary teams as Ferrari, Porsche, Alfa Romeo and Matra in some of the most evocative sports cars and prototypes ever built, perhaps it is due to the sheer speed and excitement of the closest racing in the world or perhaps it is that Steve McQueen's immortal film 'Le Mans' recorded that years race, but whatever the reason, the 1970 season remains the greatest ever for lovers of Sports racing cars.

Both Ferrari and Porsche rose to the regulations imposed by the FIA and built 25 examples of their 5 litre 512s and 917s, thus fulfilling the criteria to qualify as 'Sportscars' in the FIA Group 5 category, whilst Alfa Romeo and Matra-Simca ran in the 3 litre Group 6 'Prototype' category along with Porsches 908s and an assortment of smaller manufacturers. This mixture of sports and prototypes, large and small engines, V8, Flat 10 and 12 cylinder engines ensured that over the full range of circuits from Le Mans to the Targa Florio, the 1970 season was full of potential from the beginning, and so it was to prove.....

Whilst few doubted that the resources behind Porsche and Ferrari in Group 5 would see them fight for the overall championship between themselves, Autodelta, the racing arm of Alfa Romeo headed by the legendary Carlo Chitti went into the season with high hopes of securing not only the Gp6 championship, but also the odd outright win, particularly as many of the circuits did not suit the larger engined cars.

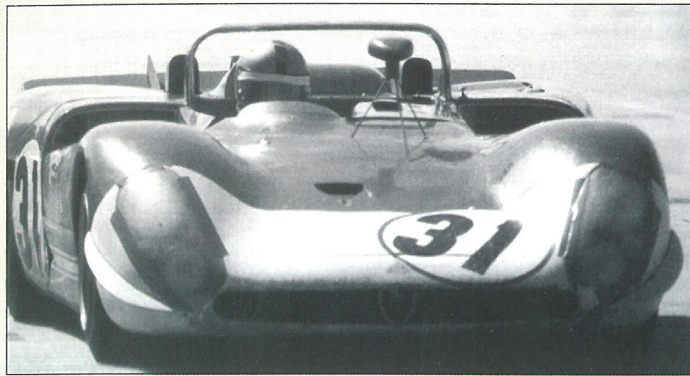
The teams' hopes rested on a new car, the Tipo 33-3. Developed from the previous seasons T33-2 the new car featured an all new aluminium monocoque chassis, replacing the large diameter tube based chassis of the previous seasons. The water radiator had been relocated to the nose, twin oil coolers mounted amidship, and outboard brakes now being fitted at the rear. Also new for 1970 was the 3 litre V8 engine with an estimated output of 420+ hp. Autodelta started the season with four cars for their stable of drivers, amongst whom were many of the greatest drivers of the time.

The year opened well for the Autodelta team with a two car entry heading for the relaxed atmosphere of the non Championship Temporada 'series' in Buenos Aires comprising a 1000km race, followed a week later by a two heat 200 mile race. The team consisted of Englishman and heir to the family Brewing fortune Piers Courage, paired with longterm Autodelta driver and T33 exponent, the 1966 European Touring Car Champion and occasional Ferrari FI

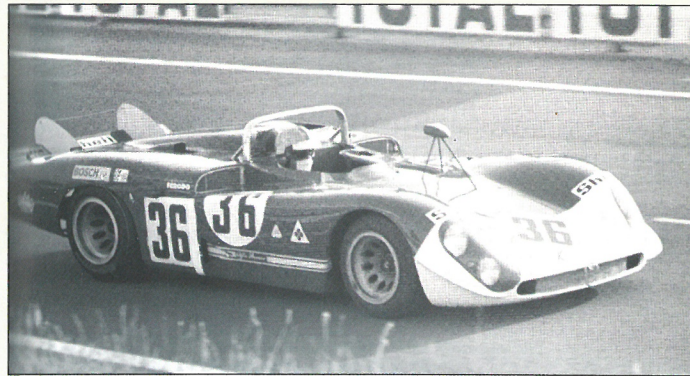
driver Andrea De Adamich, with German Rolf Stommolen sharing the sister car with Nanni Galli. The former pairing qualified in second place behind the Porsche 917 of Brian Redman for the first race, going on to finish in sixth place having been slowed by teething troubles with the new engine. The 'double header' race a week later provided a dream result for the team with Courage winning the first heat and partner De Adamich winning the second, leaving them clear winners overall, and providing a real boost to the team before beginning their challenge on the coming season proper.

Having missed the first round of the championship at Daytona, the team arrived at Sebring in Florida for the 12 hour race with high hopes and a three car line up. Courage was again paired with De Adamich in Car 31, which featured the white identifying nose band, whilst Galli / Stommolen shared car 32 with a yellow nose. The American Masten Gregory partnered fellow team newcomer Toine Hezemans in the monotone red car, number 33. The Race began as predicted, with a battle taking place between the 5 litre 917s and 512s for the first few hours after the rolling start (replacing the traditional 'Le Mans' type start on safety grounds). Luck seemed to desert Porsche early on, with mechanical failures and accidents accounting for the failure of all the 917s by the four hour mark. To every ones amazement, the first non Ferrari at that stage was the 3 litre Porsche 908 of Peter Revson and Actor Steve McQueen in fifth place. The misfortune which had struck Ferrari at the season opener at Daytona returned, causing problems for several of the leading cars including gearbox problems for Andretti and engine failure for Ickx causing his retirement. With Andretti delayed in taking over the car of his teammates Giunti and Vaccarella, this left the Solar productions 908 of McQueen in the lead. The battle to the end of the race with Andretti narrowly beating the movie star is one of the most famous finishes in the history of the Sebring 12 hours, so it is little wonder that few recall the Autodelta teams fantastic result with all three cars finishing in the top 10 places, and that the 'new boys' Gregory and Hezemans finished in third place behind McQueen.

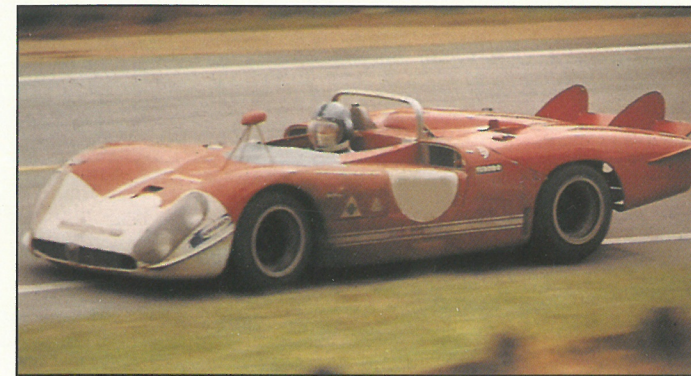
From the sunshine of Florida, the teams next outing was one month later at a rain swept Brands Hatch for the BOAC 1000kms, described by 'Motorsport' as "the only decent sportscar race in Britain" that year. As a result 20,000 spectators crowded the Kent circuit to watch the 34 runners contest an exciting and event filled race. Whilst the crowd marvelled at one of the finest displays of wet weather driving ever seen courtesy of Pedro Rodriguez in the Porsche 917, the sole Autodelta entry of Courage / De Adamich fell



Sebring 1970



Le Mans 1970



Le Mans 1970



Sebring 1970

foul of the conditions. Courage survived a massive spin on the back straight as well as a puncture before handing over to De Adamich who spun into retirement on the pit straight on lap 55.

Three days after the Brands Hatch round came the teams 'home' race at Monza, and a full strength entry of four cars were fielded, to do battle with the two car entry from Matra. Whilst the 3 litre cars were outgunned on the fast 5.75km road circuit by the Gp5 machines, the De Adamich / Courage entry posted fastest qualifying lap of the 3 litre cars with a time of 1 min 27.88 sec.

Whilst the race for victory was inevitably between the 512s and 917s, three Gp6 machines did manage to split the 5 litre dominance. With the two Matras V12s proving the more suited to the circuit, they finished in an amazing 5th and 6th place ahead of the Galli/ Strommelen Autodelta T33, themselves ahead of a number of larger engined cars. The Courage / De Adamich car was the next 3 litre runner home in 13th, 4th in class. In all, three of the four cars entered by Chitti finished the race.

The beginning of May saw one of the most charismatic races in the Sportscar calendar, the Targa Florio. Run over a 72km circuit through the hills of Sicily, few images remain more evocative of the era than a red Tipo33, Ferrari 512 or Porsche 908 howling through

the narrow dusty streets of the remote hilltop villages whilst the enthusiastic residents and race fans from around the world crowd the road ahead, only parting at the last possible minute as the cars scream past at full revs around the tortuous and challenging circuit.

Having won the previous five runnings of this prestigious race, Porsche arrived in Sicily with an unprecedented level of cars and equipment, set upon retaining, and indeed strengthening, their strangle hold on the event. To this end they had constructed a car designed specifically suited to the event based on their European Mountain Hill-climb championship winning car. This 908/3 was to be unbeatable, with Porsche filling four of the top five positions, with two Ferrari 512s finishing in a credible third and sixth positions against such specialist machinery. Given the opposition, Autodelta came to the event well prepared with a three car entry, plus a spare car in reserve. Much research and practice had been carried out earlier in the year, so although the Porsche effort was impressive, Autodelta were determined to rise to the challenge. A number of GTAs were also prepared for the teams use in practice, based at their headquarters in Cerda on the edge of the circuit.

Things did not go to plan in Thursdays practice, with the hard charging local hero Vaccarella in an open 512 Ferrari pushing Masten Gregorys' T33 off the circuit. The strength of the Tipo33 ensured Gregory was uninjured, and the spare car was pressed into service only after much yelling in the pits between the relevant mechanics! Piers Courage on his first visit to the island proved fastest of the Autodelta drivers in practice, posting a time of 35min 5secs in the sunny and dry weather conditions of Thursday.

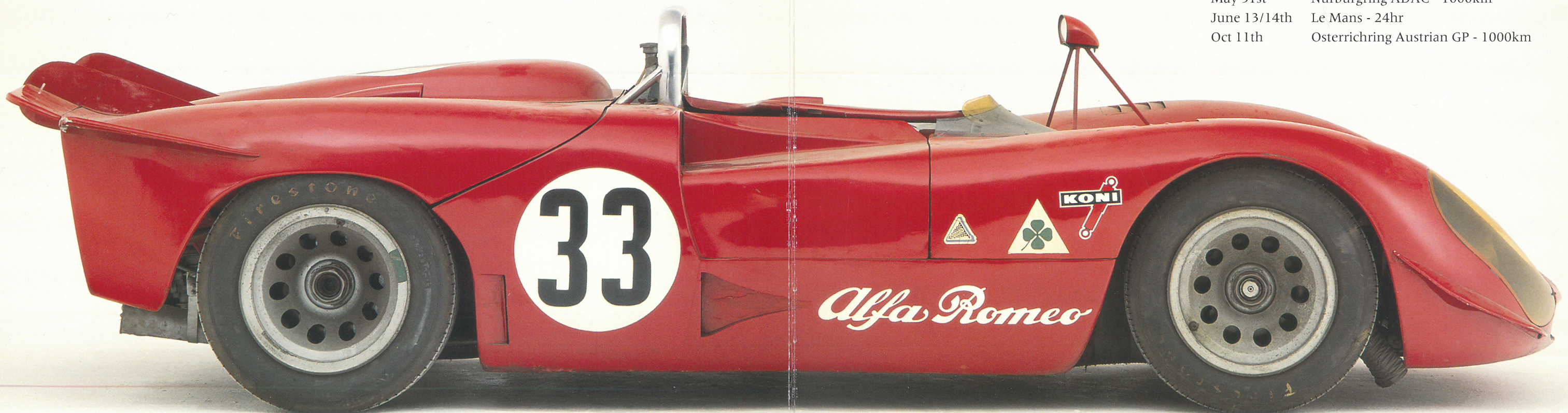
Few of the teams or spectators had expected to contest rain and snow, so their arrival on Saturday night before the race made for uncomfortable conditions for both the teams and the 400,000 spectators who lined the circuit. Traffic chaos and rock falls onto the circuit added little needed drama to the early laps, with many of the front runners falling foul of the treacherous conditions within the first lap, including Maglioli in one of the Autodelta cars, whilst his team mates benefited from a later start time and drying conditions. As the race continued and conditions improved the Porsche dominance began to become evident and the Alfa challenge began to fade, with the two remaining cars suffering from accidents after a strong showing early in the race.

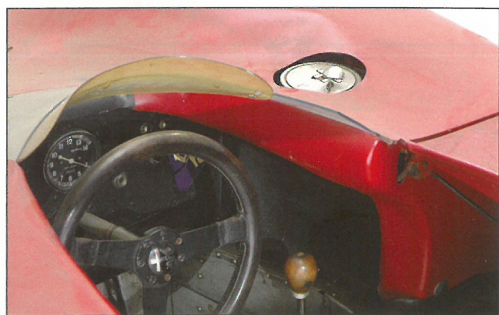
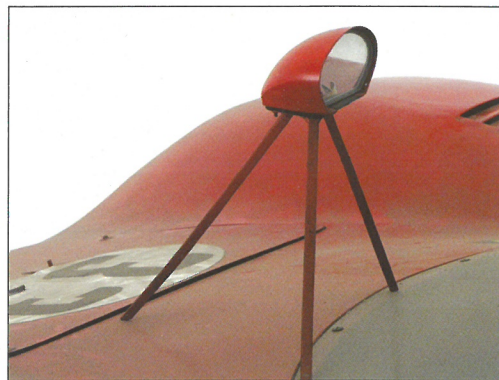
The end of May saw the ADAC 1000km race on the famous Nordschleife circuit in Germany. Porsche and Alfa Romeo both conducted extensive tests in preparation for the event, with Porsche practising in both the 917 and the 908/3 as used to such effect in the Targa. Having settled on the 3 litre cars, a fascinating battle between the Porsche cars and those of Autodelta was anticipated. Unfortunately, following a private test day, the Alfa entry was reduced to a single car, leaving only Stommolen / Courage to challenge the might of the privateer Porsches and the Ferraris, and they struggled to get within 10sec of their practice times in the race.

For many the main event of the Sportscar calendar, Le Mans is the one race all drivers and manufacturers want to win above all else. Porsche had yet to win the race, and had been beaten by the slimmest of margins ever in 1969. When Dr Porsche dropped the flag on the cars lined up in the new start formation at 4pm on the Saturday he could only hope for the result which was but 24 hours away, the culmination of many years of work at La Sarthe by the Stuttgart marque.

#### Autodelta 1970 Season

January 11th	Buenos Aires - 1000km
January 18th	Buenos Aires - 200mile
March 22nd	Sebring - 12hr
April 22nd	Brands Hatch. BOAC - 1000km
April 25th	Monza - 1000km
May 2nd	Sicily - Targa Florio
May 31st	Nurburgring ADAC - 1000km
June 13/14th	Le Mans - 24hr
Oct 11th	Osterrichring Austrian GP - 1000km





As everyone who has watched Steve McQueens' film based around the race (in which the Autodelta cars appear in the footage shot during the race by the Solar productions 908 Porsche, the same car which had come second at Sebring) will know, Le Mans is the circuit for which the Porsche 917 and the Ferrari 512 were designed, and no other marque looked to stand a chance of victory against the might of these two teams. Within the first hour mechanical problems and rain had added their own excitement to the race, with both Ferrari and Porsche suffering from blown engines in the early stages.

The rain continued to fall and took much of the advantage away from the larger engined cars. Many cars spun without damage, only to be 'collected' by others, as happened to Facetti in one of the T33s, whilst the entire Matra challenge collapsed due to engine failures.

In the midst of the worst weather conditions seen at Le Mans for many years the Autodelta challenge appeared to remain strong through the night hours until the Galli/Stommelem entry was disqualified early on Sunday following a push start. The last of Chittis cars, that of Courage/De Adamich finally succumbed to engine troubles at midday on Sunday, by which time only 19 of the 50+ starters were still in the running.

The final round of the championship took place at the Osterreichring in Zeltweg, Austria in October and saw Autodelta field a strong entry of four cars, now sporting revised bodywork with blunter front ends, (not unlike the Porsche 908/3s from the Targa Florio and Nurburgring 1000km) and upswept tails. With Matra not running cars in the race, Henri Pescarollo took the place of Piers Courage alongside De Adamich following the Englishmans tragic accident at the Dutch Grand Prix. The team ran strongly in formation behind the leading Ferrari and Porsches until Stommolen briefly led the race for several laps during the first round of pitstops.

As the race developed the circuit took its toll on the leading cars and it looked increasingly as though the Autodelta team might end the season with a well deserved win. Refuelling problems for the Porsche team saw Pescarollo move up to second place shortly after his teammate Galli suffered engine failure. The Hazeman car was excluded after it was bump started following a pitstop, despite much theatrical denial from the Autodelta mechanics!

Despite this disappointment the team were happy to end the season on a high, with the De Adamich / Pescarolo car finishing in a strong second place in addition to the teams securing the 3 litre Group 6 sportscar championship.

Whilst Autodelta never kept records of the individual chassis used by the team (causing much confusion to historians researching the cars over the years), the particular example on offer today is perhaps without question unique in that it not only remains exactly as it finished its last race in 1970, but also because as a result of this originality, it appears to be identifiable as to which races it contested.

As a reference source for other cars, chassis 33 is unrivalled. The car was sold by the head of Autodelta, Carlo Chitti to the Italian distributor for the Koni shock absorber company in 1970 (a copy of the sales invoice accompanies the car), at which time it was immediately placed in storage, where it remained until its purchase by the vendor in 2002. As a result it remains correct in every detail: from the sponsors decals to the original wiring, every detail, though dusty, is as it left the Autodelta works in 1970.

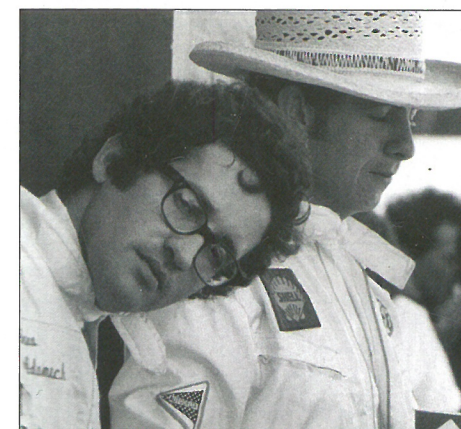
The original bodywork is still in place, as are all the mechanical components, instruments, even the Dunlop racing tyres and Magnesium wheels are believed to be those fitted for the last race.

Upon inspection by a marque expert, he was simply stunned by the discovery of such an important and significant car, correct in every detail. The craftsmanship is of the highest standard, as one would expect, but the opportunity to study the way components such as the lightweight fibreglass bodywork was originally constructed, without the confusion of later strengthening or repairs is a revelation to a restorer. Close inspection of the components even revealed a further rarity, the use of a P3 filler cap on the oil tank!

Whilst it is usually difficult to ascertain the exact identity of any Autodelta, the discovery of the name 'Andrea De Adamich' written on the rear of the original loose seat squab still in place within the car and the location of an electrical cut out on the right hand oil cooler inlet means it is possible to identify chassis 33 as most likely being the car shared by the teams leading pairing of De Adamich and Piers Courage throughout the 1970 season.

It is indeed rare for cars of this importance to remain undiscovered for so long, and there can surely be no more original and significant an example of a sportscar from this seminal era remaining undamaged or untouched by restorers anywhere in the World. This therefore represents a unique opportunity for a collector to acquire an untouched, original example of one of the most evocative and highly regarded sports racing cars of all time.

This is a car of museum quality which would surely form the centre piece of any important collection of either sportscars or Alfa Romeos anywhere in the World. Alternatively, sympathetic recommissioning could see this as perhaps the most evocative car to enter future runnings of the Le Mans classic and other such events becoming ever more popular for cars from this golden age.



Team mates  
Courage and De Adamich



Team mates  
Victorious!



Brands Hatch 1970

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