



THE WORM REVIEW

March 2006

IN 1989, soon after the 03 Register (as the Worm Register was then called) started, I got a letter from France. Guy Nolleau from the French 203 403 Club, *Les Amoureux des 203-403*, saying g'day and making contact. That contact has continued now for 16 years. Guy has edited their club magazine for all those years and over those years we have contributed bits and pieces to each other's club magazines. The March 2006 Worm Review is almost 100% by Guy.

203 Nardi Dubois

A 203 ND (Nardi-Dubois) has been recently discovered and restored in Italy, and participated in the famous Mille Miglia race (1000 Miles or 1600 km) in 2005, as it did 50 years ago in 1955. The 2005 Mille Miglia is no longer a speed event as in 1955 but a regularity event over three days. It is believed that about 15 examples of this car were built. This one, No. 11, is the only survivor known so far.

In the early 50s, Maurice Dubois, a Peugeot dealer in Argenteuil (a suburb west of Paris) and a good racing driver, decided to invest in the creation of a racing car using the new reliable 203 engine. Named after him, this car would promote the new 203, one of the best sales in France and Europe at that time. A marketing operation, as it would be called today.

Technical specs

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| Engine | 203 with Constantin supercharger |
| Chassis | Nardi |
| Body | Aluminium by Frua with tubular frame |
| Weight | 740 kilos |
| Capacity | 1425 cm3 |
| Power | 90HP, 5000 revs |
| Max Speed | 160 km/h |
| Production | 15 (about) |
| Assembled in | Argenteuil, France with chassis and body made in Italy |



A 203 Nardi Dubois, the only known example from the 15 original cars

He contacted Enrico NARDI in Torino, Italy, to have a special chassis built with a tubular frame, and Pietro FRUA who designed the body in aluminium.

Nardi also created a special gearshift and exhaust manifold for the 203 that he marketed on his own. Running gear, suspension, gearbox, torque tube etc were 203. The first cars were delivered in September 1952 without engines; Dubois installed engines with Nardi modifications, and one car was tested in October 1952 by the car magazine *L'Action Automobile*.

Car No. 11

The car recently restored is No. 11, built in 1953. Dubois used it as his personal car for a short period of time as part of his racing team with other modified 203's. It was BRG (dark green) with brown leather seats.

During the spring of 1954, driven by the famous French rallyman Paul Guiraud, it ran in the Rally of Morocco with no success. In June 1954, it ran a 24-hour

race in Monthléry near Paris, le Bol d'Or (the Golden Bowl), and came first overall defeating many more powerful cars. Sold to racing driver Sigrand and painted light green, it ran in the same month a second 24-hour race at Monthléry 'les Coupes de Paris' (Paris Cups) and finished 5th overall. It also participated the same year in various other rallies throughout France.

In 1955 Dubois decided to compete at the international level and entered the Italian Mille Miglia race (1000 miles) with the Pierre David - Irène Terray team. In their category they had to compete with Porsche, Osca, Siata and other sport cars. Out of 536 cars entered, it finished 52nd overall and 5th of their category behind three Porsche and one Osca. On the way back home after the race, they had an accident on the road with a delivery truck and the MD was damaged. Back to Paris on a trailer, it was repaired and repainted dark green, its original colour.

After a few more races in 1955, it disappeared. It is said that it was abandoned 'somewhere near Paris'. It





reappeared in the early 90's. A short gap of only 35 years!

After then it had several different owners, but none of them had the courage (and money?) to restore it, until it reappeared in Italy in October 2003, very damaged but still with its original engine. This is where Mauro Lotti, a classic car and Peugeot enthusiast, fell in love with it and bought it.

His very ambitious objective was to have the car fully restored in only one year and enter the 2005 the Mille Miglia race exactly 50 years after its first participation.

Different experts took care of it: Faralli in Pisa for bodywork, Baldi in Florence for mechanics, Bulletti for carbies, Carli for upholstery, and several others. Over motivated with the challenge, all of them met their deadlines and the car was almost finished in October 2004 when the engine was started for the first time. And with a few tuning efforts, it was ready to join the 2005 Mille Miglia on time; the challenge had been met! Bravissimo!



Above: Awaiting restoration.

Left: The 203 engine has a Constantin Supercharger and puts out 90hp.

Below: Restored in time to compete in the 2005 Mille Miglia, 50 years after its last appearance in that race.

The MD finished the 2005 Mille Miglia but its placing is unknown at this time.

The car has been restored with different wheels (wire) and front (grill, bumpers, lights) from the original design (see the photos before/after). It's fine with me as I find the car very elegant as it is, but some people here disagree with these changes. I do not concur with them, after all this fine car has been saved from destruction.

Guy Nolleau



Fake 203 Cabriolet



HOW do you tell a fake 203 cabriolet? Some fakes are very obvious. The windscreen and windscreen surrounds are very different to the 203 sedan etc and making them to the correct shape must be difficult as I have seen a few pictures of fakes that are glaringly incorrect in this area. This picture from Guy Nolleau shows a very good fake, note the windscreen, but they missed out on the door hinges. Genuine cabriolets don't have external hinges like sedans etc do.

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