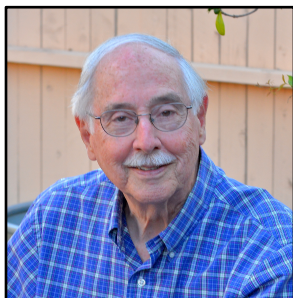


Speed Bump

Slow Down For Some Automotive Tales - By Hal Tretbar

Remembering Sir Sterling Moss



An icon from the glory days of Formula One racing died recently. After a long illness, Sir Sterling Moss passed away

at age 90 on April 12, 2020. I would like to commemorate the 60th anniversary of his winning the Monaco Grand Prix on May 31, 1960. Dorothy and I were there.

According to a New York Times article, “Sterling Crauford Moss was born in London on Sept. 17, 1929. Both his father, Alfred, and his mother, Aileen, had raced cars. His father competed twice in the Indianapolis 500, finishing 16th in 1924, while studying dentistry in Indiana...”

“As a boy Sterling was allowed to sit on his father’s lap and steer the family car. When he was 10 he begged for and received a very old and dilapidated Austin ... at 18 he got his first driver’s license and bought into a Cooper 500 racing car, winning 11 of the first 15 races he entered.”

“Within two years, he was racing across Europe in numerous classes of cars. In 1953, he became a full-time driver on the Grand Prix circuit. His first Grand Prix vehicle was his own Maserati.”

So began an illustrious career that included driving for the Mercedes Benz team in 1953. It was led by his idol Juan Manuel Fangio, a World Champion.

“He raced for 14 years, won 212 of his 529 races in events that included Grand Prix, sports cars and long-distance rallying, in 107 different types of cars.”

Wikipedia notes that in 1954 he became the first non-American to win the 12 hours of Sebring, sharing the Cunningham team’s 1.5-liter O.S.C.A. MT4 with American Bill Lloyd.

The New York Times continued, “He set the Class F land speed record on the salt flats of Utah in 1957... He won

more than 40 percent of the races he entered, including 16 Grand Prix. For four consecutive years, 1955-58, he finished second in the world Grand Prix championship. And in each of the next three years he placed second.”

Moss set a record in the 1955 Mille Miglia that still stands. An article in historicroacingnews.com states, “Sterling Moss and Denis Jenkinson won the Mille Miglia in a record time, covering the 992 mile route in ten hours, seven minutes and 48 seconds – at an average speed of 98.5 mph. Driving a potent Mercedes-Benz 300SLR, the duo developed one of the first pacenote systems to navigate the public roads from Brescia in Northern Italy to Rome and back, leading home teammate Manuel Fangio by half an hour and the third place Ferrari of Umberto Maglioli by 45 minutes.”

Again, quoting the Times, “Moss said courage and stupidity were pretty much synonymous, and may have proved it in a succession of spectacular accidents: seven times his wheels came off, eight times his brakes failed. He was a racer, he insisted, not a driver...”

In 1960, Moss won the United States Grand Prix five months after breaking both legs and his back at a Grand Prix in Belgium.”



Sterling Moss and Innes Ireland at the 1961 Dutch Grand Prix - Photo Credit: Pinterest

Wikipedia described his career-ending accident: “In 1962, he crashed his Lotus heavily during the Grover Trophy at Goodwood held on Monday, April 23rd. The accident put him in a coma for a month, and for six months the left side of his body was partially paralyzed. He recovered, but retired from professional racing after a private test session in a Lotus 19 the following year, when he lapped a few seconds slower than before. He felt he had not regained his previously instinctive command of the car.”

Following many years of business investments, public appearances and driving in charity events he was knighted. In 1999, while Queen Elizabeth was touring Australia, Prince Philip bestowed upon Sterling Moss the title of OBE (Order of the British Empire).

As noted in his website, Moss led the changeover to rear engined Formula 1 cars with the Cooper-Climax, achieving the first victory in such a car at the 1958 Argentine Grand Prix. His victories in the 1960 and ‘61 Monaco Grand Prix ... racing a Lotus 18 against the more powerful Ferraris ... are still regarded as some of the best Formula 1 races ever.



Dorothy was an enthusiastic fan and wrote notes in the Program during the race.

I have told this story many times but it is worth repeating. Dorothy and I were driving our new 1959 Porsche 356 A from Germany to Rome. We decided to stop in Monaco several days before the 1960 Grand Prix on May 29th to see if we could get tickets.

No problem. We walked out of the L’Automobile Club de Monaco office with two in the lower grandstand at the start-finish line. There were no restrictions. We visited the pits. We stood on the sidelines during practice and photographed the crews. American Lance Reventlow was



My pre-race instruction image is a Who’s Who in 1960 Formula One. McLaren, Brabham, Moss, Surtees, Salvadori, P. Hill, Bonnier, Gurney, Ireland, Tringnant, G. Hill, von Trips, and Ginther. Moss is number 6 with the balding head.

At the 1960 Grand Prix of Monaco: 1Louis Chiron 2Rob Walker 3Bruce McLaren 4Jack Brabham 5Tony Brooks 6Sterling Moss 7John Surtees 8Roy Salvadori 9Phil Hill 10Jo Bonnier 11Dan Gurney 12Innes Ireland 13Maurice Tringnant 14Graham Hill 15Wolfgang von Trips 16Richie Ginther

Photographs by Hal Tretbar using a Rolleiflex with Kodacolor film and a Leica M3 with 50 and 135 mm lenses on Kodachrome.



Moss and his crew move the Number 28 Lotus-Climax to the starting line.

there with his front engine Scarab. It was an omen of the future when it failed to qualify. Ferrari had Richie Ginther in a rear engine Dino, Phil Hill in a 2.2 liter front engine and Wolfgang von Trips in a front engine car.



Starting grid with Moss, No. 28 Lotus-Climax, first. Second, No. 8 Jack Brabham in a Cooper-Climax. Third is Tony Brooks No. 18 in a Cooper-Climax. Second row, No.16 Chris Bristow in a Cooper-Climax and No.2 Jo

Sterling Moss drove Rob Walker's light-weight, rear-engined Lotus-Climax 18 in Scotland's dark blue with white nose band rather than British Green.

We had excellent seats in the grandstand next to the Royal stand with Princess Grace and Prince Rainier. I was able to stand next to the hay bale barriers to photograph. The day started clear but rain showers moved in towards the end of the race.

Wikipedia reported, "The pattern of the race was turned upside down when the rain came. Brabham passed Bonnier and Moss to take the lead while Brooks spun

back down the order, leaving McLaren in fourth place battling Phil Hill. After six laps in the lead Brabham spun into the wall and Moss was back in the lead but he had to pit to replace a plug-lead and so Bonnier was back ahead until Moss caught him. Bonnier went out soon afterwards with a broken suspension and Graham Hill crashed."



Phil Hill in the Ferrari kicks up a rooster tail in the rain to finish third.

Of the 16 starters only four cars were running at the finish. Sterling Moss with the Lotus Climax 18 won his second Monaco Grand Prix. Bruce McLaren finished second in a Cooper-Climax, with Phil Hill third in a Ferrari. Tony Brooks, the only other survivor, was fourth in a Cooper-Climax."



This is the 60th Anniversary of Sir Sterling Moss winning the XVIII Grand Prix Automobile de Monaco, May 29, 1960. He will be remembered as the greatest Grand Prix driver to have never won a World Championship.