

## THE MILLE MIGLIA

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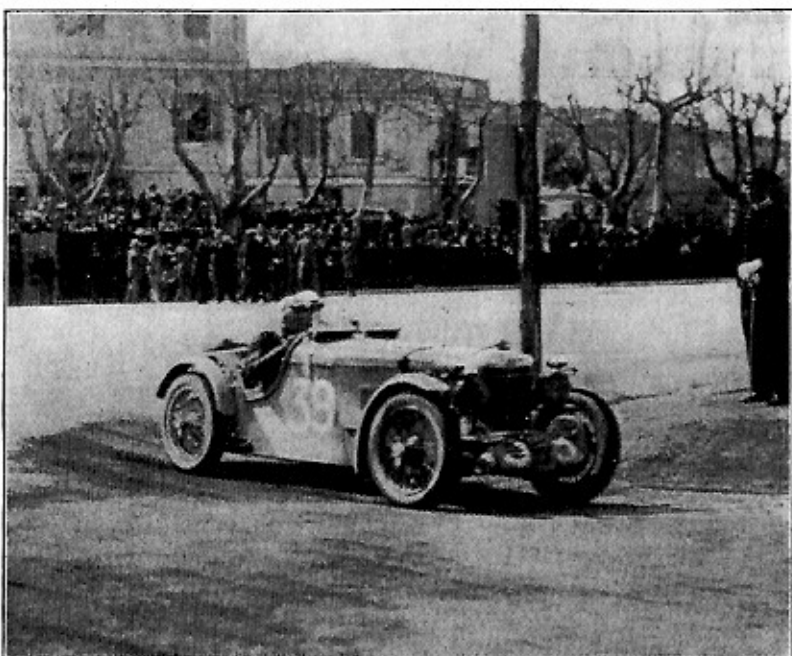
for England. In those eighteen hours of relentless battle, against the flower of the European motor industry, they acquitted themselves magnificently, proving their right to be classed among the finest sports cars built anywhere in the world.

It was Lord Howe, I think, who conceived the bold idea of flinging the gauntlet into the Italian camp. From its very start the fascination of the "Mille Miglia" had gripped his imagination. For the last three years he has been a passionately interested spectator. Often, as we have stood together in the April sunshine, watching the cars roar down the road to Rome, he has told me of his longing to drive in this race.

"But when I enter," said he, "it shall be with a British car."

It was not until the M.G. Magnette made its appearance that our premier driver could even think of taking part. But one glance at the trim, low chassis, displayed for the first time at the last Olympia show, satisfied him that here was the car he sought: one with which he could challenge the élite of the small car world.

Followed a period of debate, of anxious consultation. At the Works at Abingdon research-work



*Eyston's Car, Count Lurani at the wheel, entering Rome at the finish of the Race*

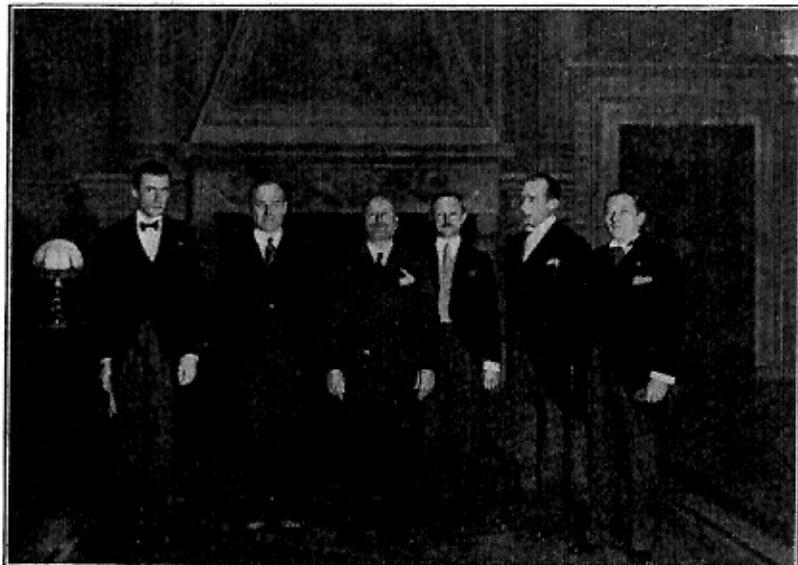
went on unceasingly, perfecting this part, modifying that; experimenting with carburetter settings, plugs and fuels. Carefully the organisation of the team proceeded; drivers were picked, refuelling stations arranged. Mr. H. P. McConnell agreed to act as team manager.

At length all was settled; Lord Howe and that brilliant young driver, H. C. Hamilton, were to share the wheel of one car; Sir Henry Birkin and Bernard Rubin would take turns in driving the next, and Capt.

G. E. T. Eyston and Count Lurani were asked to handle the third car.

The cars corresponded with their catalogue specifications, the only variation from standard being the counterbalanced crankshafts, designed to relieve the main bearings of excessive load and thus to keep down the oil temperature. Six-cylinder, supercharged, overhead camshaft engines of 1,086 c.c. were used, with bores and strokes of 57 mm. and 71 mm. respectively. The maximum power was developed at 6,800 r.p.m. while 6,250 r.p.m. gave a road speed, on top gear, of 110 m.p.h. And this, with a back-axle ratio of 4.89 to 1! The Wilson self-changing gearbox was one of the outstanding features of the M.G. entries. Although used for the first time in a road race, it demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt that it permitted higher averages to be maintained on mountainous stretches and afforded greatly increased safety when descending long, winding passes at high speeds.

Of the preliminary tour of the course which the team made last January, under appalling weather conditions; of the last-minute scramble to get the cars ready



*THE MAGNETTE DRIVERS RECEIVED BY IL DUCE*

*In the group are (left to right): Count Lurani, Earl Howe, Signor Mussolini, Sir Henry Birkin, Mr. Bernard Rubin and Signor Ferrari*

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