



Signor Taruffi, our friendly rival, who led us this year in the 1100 c.c. category.

was dry. Wheelspin on the wet roads and heavy going on the muddy section had played havoc with refuelling arrangements based on careful testing. Hall stopped at a petrol pump in the first village he came to. The man with the key was away up at the cross-roads watching for the cars. Hall's M.G. was the first to appear. Shouts of "Benzina" brought the man running back, but he had still to find the handle.

How Hall had gained on Taruffi's Maserati, even over the wild mountain roads, may be judged from the fact that despite all this delay he still had a lead of two minutes when he reached the M.G. pit at Siena! He had filled up with ordinary Esso, on which the engine ran perfectly.

Only 27 kilometres beyond Siena, when car and driver were at their best and confident of success, Hall was overtaken by the cruellest ill-luck. The oil pressure gauge started to do funny things. Mrs. Hall sprang out of the car and found water spurting from the crankcase breather! She thought the cylinder head gasket had gone, but was mystified to find that the sparking plugs, when examined, were dry and the engine was firing perfectly. Anyway, there were no gaskets nearer than the Perugia pit, so Hall left his car and, with his wife, was given a lift back into Siena in an ambulance. Hence the rumours that they had crashed!

The real cause of the trouble was extraordinary. A core plug in the top of the cylinder head

casting had come loose, allowing the water to leak into the valve gear and start circulating with the oil! Anyone who knows how the core plugs are fitted will agree that this is just about the most unusual trouble that could possibly occur. It is a

tribute to the sportsmanship of Mr. and Mrs. Hall that they never "groused" over their ill luck, although it must have caused the greatest disappointment either of them



C. PENN HUGHES
(Count Lurani's co-driver, who will handle an M.G. in the Mannin Beg.)

had ever suffered. When I saw them a few hours later in Bologna they were as cheery as ever.

So Lurani and Penn Hughes were the sole survivors of the M.G. team. Their car was running perfectly. They had a substantial

lead on the fastest Fiat. But their restraint in the earlier stages of the race, obeying team orders, had caused them to lose so much time to Taruffi that they had no hope of making it up. Their only hope was if the Italian should be delayed by trouble.

Fork retired at Rome with rear axle trouble. Thus only one M.G. was left but, thank goodness, it was running splendidly. In spite of their "safety first" driving, the M.G. crew were only 34 minutes behind, and in the next 500 miles a lot might happen!

But Fortune rode with Taruffi. Nothing could stop him. I saw him roar into Bologna, mud rising in fountains from his wheels. The M.G. came. We sponged the drivers' faces and forced a little food and drink down their throats. Lurani took over for the last lap.

And so, as dusk settled over the land, the little green car set off on its last stage. Rain fell miserably as, indeed, it had fallen all day. I tore across country—130 miles—to Brescia, getting there just as Taruffi dashed across my bows as if the race were still on! But he was only driving to his hotel!

Penn Hughes and Johnny Lurani came in. Wet through they were, but cheery and fresh as paint! What a tribute to the comfort and stamina of the Magnette! They were second in their class and well up in the general classification. One cannot always win. This year fortune did not favour the cars from Abingdon. But they nevertheless acquitted themselves honourably, and one at any rate with distinction, in the most gruelling race the world has ever known.



Count Lurani (left) with C. Penn Hughes at the finish.