

# PETER AND WATTS SHARE THE WINS

Hans Peter and Matthew Watts took a win apiece in Historic F2 as the series headed to the hallowed ground of Monza.



Stretton leads Watts in the Monza rain

**T**he 59th Coppa Intereuropa Storica Monza meeting held on the famous Italian circuit just north of Milan in early June is always very popular with drivers and attracts entries from many different groups, including the HSCC-administered Historic Formula Two Championship.

A strong entry was received and in qualifying it was the two normal front runners, Matthew Watts (March 772) and Martin Stretton (March 742) who were quickest.

Race one on Saturday saw Stretton lead into the first corner with Hans Peter (Ralt RT1) and David Gathercole (Chevron B25) next up, while Watts was only fourth. Stretton pulled out a good lead but was suffering with a bad vibration which finally caused a plug lead to fall off and an early retirement, which let Peter into a lead he kept to the flag. Watts was catching but lost time after a spin while trying too hard to make up time after a poor start. Gathercole ran strongly until half distance but then retired with a blown engine, so up to third and on to the podium at the finish came a very on form Robert Shaw (Ralt RT1) with Grant Tromans (Chevron B42) an excellent fourth overall in his first ever HF2 race.

The ever-consistent Diogo Ferrao finished fifth, winning Class A (for 1600s) with another strong showing from Ian Ashley (March 79B) who was sixth overall and Class B winner. Richard Meins (March 762) showed well, starting from the back of the grid, and passed many cars in the early laps but then retired with fuel pump problems. Tim Barrington (Lola T240) and Paul Bason (March 712) had a race-long battle finishing second and third in Class A and Chris Sharples (Chevron B29) just got the better of Chris Lillingstone-Price (Tecno T70) at the flag.

Race two was early on Sunday morning when the track was very wet, although it was not raining. After a brilliant start from row three it was Richard Eyre (March 782) who was in second place behind Stretton on lap one but Watts soon got past and those three stayed in position for the first few laps until Eyre had to pit after six laps following a very strong showing. Peter spun early on and Shaw could not avoid the incident, with both having to retire. Again Meins was passing lots of cars but he too had to retire when the car would not handle in wet conditions with the tyres he had. With Stretton's tyres going off Watts got passed and into the lead which he held to the finish. Stretton took second and an excellent third overall was Ian Ashley. Two other very good race performances were Philip Gladman (Chevron B34) fourth overall and Steve Tandy (Chevron B40) who was sixth. Everyone liked being at Monza. We had some good racing, no serious incidents and the feel good factor was high.

## Monza Musings

Everyone just loves racing at Monza - it's the history, the parkland setting, the Italian attitude, the food and wine and the marvel of the old banking; it always just seems to be a good place to be.

This year we had mixed weather again - mostly warm but some heavy rain and when it rains there it really does rain and you get soaked in minutes. At one stage the vehicle tunnel under the track was two feet deep in water and Rachel Watts (Matthew's sister) said the back of their truck looked more like a Chinese laundry than a race car transporter, with so many items of clothing to dry. Mathew was sporting a very trendy new designer beard on arrival at the track, although it was shaved off before the race - too much extra weight, perhaps.

Walter Nef had a new helmet design which looked very smart but it didn't bring him luck as he blew an engine on lap one of race one. "No matter" he said "I have two more at home already prepared" - he builds his own engines. It wasn't a good weekend for poor Walter because he got knocked off his bicycle in the paddock by a car, badly damaging the bike but not him fortunately. He kept smiling as always.

David Brown was celebrating a milestone birthday over the weekend and, together with friends, was testing some of the better local hosteleries with their food and wine.

It was very good to welcome new HF2 competitor Luciano Arnold from Switzerland. He is racing an ex-Silvio Moser Brabham BT36.

Lincoln Small was much in demand over the weekend because he is fluent in Italian, which was very useful when trying to explain over the phone to a taxi driver how to find the Monza circuit so his passenger, Mrs Lillingstone-Price, could find her husband Chris. He was also in demand when talking to the race organisers and, of course, understanding menus!

Robert Shaw not only had a new race car but also a new colour scheme as well, plus a very smart new helmet design.

Last year's HF2 champion, Katsu Kubota, said he is missing HF2 but is concentrating on his new toy, a Group C Nissan, which he raced at Spa recently. It's so fast he reported, over 200 mph in places.

Grant Tromans, who is loving his HF2 car, apparently nearly missed the start of race one because he was racing his Osella sports car in the previous race. At the finish he ran down the pit road, got into the F2 car, then found it was missing a mirror so a team member ran back to the sports car, collected a mirror, dashed back to the F2 and the car was ready just in time, but it was close.

Roger Bevan was helping out the Retro Track and Air team for the weekend, instead of racing while his engine rebuild is completed for his ex-Fittipaldi Lotus 69

Phillip Gladman is beginning to show some good form in his Chevron B34 and what an active helper his wife is at the circuit, often seen doing all sorts of jobs on the car.

Paul Bason and Tim Barrington had a tight schedule after the race because they had to get back to the UK for a quick turnaround to take Paul's Lotus Elite to Le Mans which was entered in the Legends support race on the Saturday morning of the famous 24-hour race.

One very disappointed driver was Frenchman Alain Lagache whose brand new engine blew up before he could even make official qualifying. He hopes to be out later in the season.

Phillip Harper, a normal regular HF2 competitor, was driving an AC Cobra that weekend but hopes to be back in HF2 for the end of the season.