"MARTINI RACING, IN PURSUIT OF THE MYTH"
FROM 9 NOVEMBER TO 26 JANUARY 2014
GIOVANNI AGNELLI NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM – TURIN

PRESS RELEASE

Turin, 8th November 2013. On the occasion of the celebrations for its 150th anniversary, Martini & Rossi, in collaboration with the National Automobile Museum of Turin, presents a major exhibition dedicated to the successes of Martini Racing: 45 years of a long, legendary adventure told through the protagonists that made the history of motor racing.

Martini Racing: a name that immediately conjures up a passion for motors, but also know-how, innovation and design; a brand, a team and a style that occupy a special place in the history of motor racing, not only for having created one of the first sponsorships in history and the unmistakeable car livery, but because, in 45 years of history Martini Racing has dominated all the major car racing events, boasting a record breaking list of successes: from the challenging Endurance competitions to Formula 1, and from the gruelling Rallies to the German DTM championship, the prime international touring car series.

The history of Martini Racing officially began on 27th December 1970 when, on the Hockenheim circuit in Germany, the official colours chosen to decorate the Porsche 917 cars destined for the 1971 World Sportscar Championship were unveiled: a series of dark blue, light blue and red stripes on a silver background, a colour combination that would make motor racing history and leave an indelible mark on all major auto racing events. Ever since then Martini Racing has been present alongside the most famous names in racing: Porsche, Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Lotus, Brabham, Lancia and Ford. From its role as sponsor the team became a protagonist, a major player with a natural taste for a challenge, a desire to experiment and be ahead of the times, and to build its success on courage and long-term vision.
“During its 150 years of history, Martini & Rossi has always been at the forefront of communication. But the company has also achieved huge success in the world of sport. It started in the 1920s and 30s by supporting the epic Giro d'Italia cycling races. Soon afterwards, in the 50s and 60s, it decided to create something in the world of speed and motor racing, a sport much loved by all the members of the Montelera family. At the turn of the 60s they decided to sponsor an actual racing stable - the Martini Racing Team - which was to compete in the coming years in Endurance, Formula 1, Gran Turismo and Rally competitions. In choosing a logo, it was a natural decision to adopt the colours of the Martini International Club, thereby giving life to the unmistakable red, light blue and dark blue stripes that belong to Martini Racing. The racing effort was one without precedent, lasting for more than forty years. During that time the company increasingly defined the image and values of the “Mondo Martini”: “the sporting vision of a young and successful product”, recalls Maurizio Cibrario, Honorary President of Martini & Rossi. ” The idea came from a gentleman driver who was also a manager at Martini Germania. He loved racing and insisted on wanting to be able to put the Martini trademark on his car. Because of his insistence, Vittorio Rossi di Montelera began to consider the idea of creating a motor racing team, and that was how the Martini Racing phenomenon was born. It was a unique event in the world of sponsorship: at the time Martini was certainly one of the very first companies to have its own team. Both car and motor racing enthusiasts, Vittorio and Gregorio Rossi di Montelera were however quite different characters. Vittorio was the man with the vision and strategy: he had clear ideas about where he wanted to take our Group and his vision was creative and far reaching. But alongside these qualities there was a need for someone scrupulous and precise to manage all the implications that derived from these ideas, and this was Gregorio’s role: he was highly accurate, rigorous and serious in his implementation of the programme. These two figures enriched the Group with the important ingredients of vision and achievement. The two brothers put huge drive into the Martini Racing project, working together in great synergy, helped on the field by a group of people who were fundamental for the success of the project: Dino Ajassa and Daniel Schildge, directors of the Gruppo Martini, and Cesare Fiorio, sports director of the Martini Racing Team during its period of greatest splendour.”

A look at the company's history is ample proof of its success: such as in 1973, when Martini Racing decided to sponsor Porsche making its debut at the World Sportscar Championship
with a 911 Carrera, powered by an innovative 6 cylinder turbo engine; and again when it made its Formula 1 debut alongside the newly-founded Tecno, a small Bologna-based stable which was making its first appearance in the F1 circus with a single-seat car of its own construction, equipped with a 12 cylinder “boxer”, the most complex engine of the time. Not to mention Martini Racing’s courageous support of Lancia which, in 1983 with its rear-wheel drive “037”, dared to challenge – and succeeded in beating - the much more sophisticated four-wheel drive Audi. That same passionate desire to go the extra mile, look to the future and to innovation, is found again today in Martini Racing’s decision to bind its colours once more to the revolutionary Porsche 918, the first hybrid Gran Turismo vehicle to come out of the Stuttgart-based manufacturer.

"The Martini Racing stable gained its greatest successes in the world of the Rally, with six consecutive world victories which, between the Eighties and Nineties, consolidated the myth. This all led to the creation of something which, looking back, we call a "myth". But a "myth" is so-called because it has a tendency to return. This is one of the reasons why the exhibition at the National Automobile Museum is entitled "MARTINI RACING. IN PURSUIT OF A MYTH": on the one hand it proposes a historical vision of what has been, and on the other it offers us an infinite number of cues for a revival of the past. It also directs us towards a future where the red, light blue and dark blue livery will dominate once again," concludes Maurizio Cibrario.

The "MARTINI RACING, IN PURSUIT OF THE MYTH" exhibition sets out to celebrate this unforgettable adventure in all its various aspects.
It starts with the protagonists: the Porsche 917, which gave Martini Racing its first victory in 1971 at the legendary 24 Hour Le Mans race; the Formula 1 Brabham and Lotus vehicles; the Lancia cars, seven-time winners of the World Rally Championship; and the Alfa Romeo 155 DTM, the queen of touring class racing. The exhibition calls on a world of images and film footage to show us what it was that made MARTINI RACING into an emblem of style, elegance and courage: from the protagonists and witnesses of its victories, to the secrets behind its success, and from its technical details to its unique design.

TESTIMONIALS
Martini’s participation has been a unique experience in the history of motor racing. Besides its role as sponsor, the Martini Racing organisation has also played an active part as a partner in sports teams, and for many periods as a team in its own right. The extraordinary results obtained in the various competition fields (rally and endurance above all) and with numerous partners (especially Lancia and Porsche) have made Martini a name of huge appeal for lovers of sport, motors and design.” Benedetto Camerana, President of the National Automobile Museum

Daniel Schildge, director of Martini Racing and director of corporate image, recounts: “My best working years were spent in the heart of Martini Racing, a highly active stable that has been involved in all areas of motorsport – F1, Endurance, Rally, Off-Shore, and Aerobatics. I don’t remember any other company at that time making a commitment like ours, which was unique, acknowledged and respected.

As partner and accomplice to the most illustrious names in motor racing, like Porsche, Lancia, Ford, Alfa Romeo and Lotus, Martini Racing stood out in its quest for excellence thanks to the elegance that it possessed in terms of image and on a personal level. Rewarded by countless podium finishes, including Le Mans, Montecarlo and Brazil, and by many world titles, Martini Racing earned the unquestionable respect of the sports world. The list of drivers that have defended the Team’s legendary colours is astonishing. I am extremely proud to have taken part in this adventure full of successes with a man who was my role model, a real Italian gentleman, Count Gregorio Rossi di Montelera, President of Martini Racing.

Martini Racing, a cocktail of style, performance, commitment and friendship that we have had the pleasure of tasting.

A group of men who entered the world of sport with passion and skill to take their colours to the four corners of the planet. Through victories, defeats, joy and tears, the Martini Racing success is still so alive, and the respect that is still shown towards it is none other than the expression of a certain state of mind which many were jealous of and many, on the other hand, have copied. Thank you to everyone for having given me such great pleasure.”

Miki Biasion’s words represent a genuine tribute to “Martini Racing Style”. He recalls: “I began racing under the Martini Racing colours in 1986 driving a Lancia Delta S4 at the
Monte Carlo Rally. I wore the Martini Racing colours until 1992, winning two world titles in 1988 and 1989. I remember, however, that in January 1983 I was called by the Lancia Martini team as a “scout” for its official drivers at the Monte Carlo Rally and for the occasion I was provided with Team Martini Racing clothing. I fell in love with those colours and promised myself that I would do everything I could to wear them as an official driver in the World Championship!!! Wearing this brand was a great stimulus for my sports achievements and I hope it will continue to be so for many other drivers.”

For Cesare Fiorio “it all began many years ago when, as a friend of Gregorio and Vittorio Rossi di Montelera and Ascanio Calvi since childhood, I wore the Martini Racing colours at the Powerboat World Championship, which we won with Carlo Bonomi. Many seasons followed, with ever better results. Many years later I convinced my friends to lend the superb Martini Racing colours to Lancia whose cars I was racing in the World Rally Championship. Here too it was a triumph for many years and the colours were also adopted by the Lancia cars competing in the World Endurance Championship. I have to admit I have some difficulty remembering all the world titles won in powerboat, rally and sports prototype races. But of one thing I am sure: that I have contributed with my teams to bringing even greater prestige and fame to the colours of Martini Racing. No-one has ever won as many titles as we have and I am therefore very honoured to have been able to pay back the trust that was shown towards me.”

Sergio Limone, the engineer who designed many winning cars, recalls: “my relationship with Martini Racing began with the Lancia Rally, perhaps better known as the SE037, my first challenging job as a designer: the Martini livery that appeared on the car body on the day of its presentation to the press in the autumn of 1981, at the La Mandria Fiat test track added considerable aesthetic value to the car, but it also created even greater expectations in the car, and greater worries for the designer!

The livery was to become an integral part of this vehicle’s major victories and would remain “stuck” to the Lancia rally cars through the series of six championships won by the Delta. After that it originated various “Martini special series” of Deltona cars, perhaps a unique case in the history of auto making, sealing the close ties between Lancia vehicles and rally cars.”
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