



Ferrari 512 S/M – book launch

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1970 Ferrari 512 S (chassis 1026), Nick Mason's 5 litre V12 sports racer

I received my author's advance copies of the Ferrari 512 book a little more than a week ago. And I must say that I am very pleased with the finished product. It has been a real pleasure doing this book, because once again I have had the privilege of meeting up with some great people who were directly associated with the cars in period. Also, in addition to that list of names mentioned in [Part 1](#) of this book blog, I had the opportunity to speak to one of the all-time greatest sports car drivers, Mario Andretti.



Mario Andretti at IndyCar May 2011 - Indianapolis

Over the years I have interviewed hundreds of drivers, mechanics, team managers, engineers, designers, etc. But when I was given the phone number for Mario Andretti, I think I broke into a sweat. For some reason I thought that he was the kind of guy who would chew up a journalist and spit out the pieces when he was done. So with some trepidation, I called the number and introduced myself, and told the lovely lady on the other end of the



phone why I wanted to speak to 'Mr. Andretti' expecting to be told that he was out and wouldn't be available for a month, hoping I would go away. But it was nothing of the kind. She said to hold on and would I like to speak to him now. He was in the office which apparently didn't happen that often. Of course I said 'yes' and the next thing this pleasant gentleman came on the line and I asked to speak to Mr. Andretti to which he responded, "Speaking." So, for the next half an hour I listened to him as he recounted some of his exploits behind the wheel. What an easy-going, super guy to talk to. It was one of the highlights of the whole project!



Showing the business end of the 1970 5 litre V12 Ferrari 512 S (chassis 1026)

Talking to some of the people who worked on the cars in period, and kept them going by borrowing parts at the track when something broke, was really interesting. The Penske guys were so laid back about borrowing a whole front suspension from the Chinetti NART team, and vice versa. When the chips were down, Penske gave the NART guys one of their newly



fabricated oil tanks which prevented oil starvation on the banks of Daytona. But make no mistake, on the track they were the fiercest of rivals, and that is what the spectators had paid to watch. However, off the track there was no rivalry. It was a different time back then...!!



Interior and steering wheel of the Ferrari 512 M (chassis 1002)

Fortunately, most of the Ferrari 512s are still racing. And while it has not been practical to travel the world to photograph them all, we have covered two well-known cars (out of 25 cars originally built) photographically in some detail. For this I thank Nick Mason and his team, and also Gregor Fisker and his team.



1970 Ferrari 512 M (chassis 1002)



Escuderia Montjuich team Ferrari 512 M
(chassis 1002)

It was while photographing the Fisker car that an ambitious copper crept up behind me to ticket my family car which I parked outside the London Mews. I wanted the car close by in order to retrieve some camera gear as and when it was needed. As this copper was not interested in my story, I had to pack everything up, push the Ferrari back into the garage, which then had to be locked by one of the guys from upstairs. I then had to hunt for a parking in the vicinity, which proved easier than expected, however at a cost of £5 per hour. As I hate paying for parking I had to be extra quick. This was not such a bad thing because I still had a 4 ½ hour drive back to West Wales ahead of me.



The #23 Ferrari 512 S (chassis 1006) at the 2009 Goodwood Festival of Speed

Blow me down, if not a week or so later, the same £10-million Ferrari racing car (chassis #1002) was ticketed by the same prowling copper who wanted to give me a ticket. This was reported in the London newspapers the next day and online, prompting comments like 'the most expensive motor car in London to get a parking ticket.' The global advertising that the car received as a result must have been worth the cost of the ticket. But you have to wonder if the coppers could not have overlooked this rare classic that so obviously belonged to the dealership outside which it was parked.



The #18 Ferrari 512 M (chassis 1038) rounds Stowe corner in the Silverstone Classic, 22 July 2012

There is a lot of material in the book that I haven't come across elsewhere in print. Naturally curious, I like digging and discovering new things, and in the process I have learnt a lot about this Ferrari through talking to folk in interviews. The Ferrari 512 S/M: Owners' Workshop Manual is now available in bookshops and online.

I hope that you find the book as enjoyable to read as it was for me to write!! If you are still curious, read Part I [Ferrari 512 S/M - book progress report](#) .

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