



Alfa Romeo 8C 2300

1931 - 1934

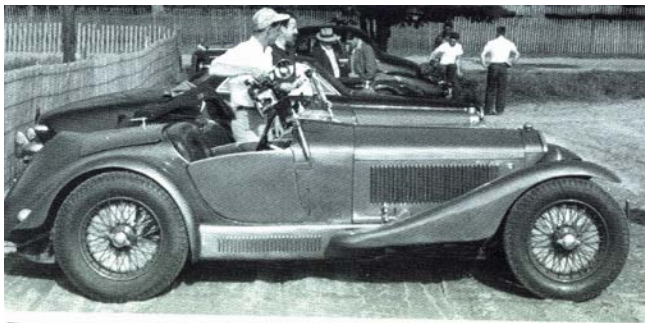
At the end of the 1920s, Alfa Romeo decided to move upmarket by introducing a new car whose 8 cylinder engine was a development of the straight 6 used extensively in the company's offerings up to that point. Designed by Vittorio Jano, the new 8C 2300 had a straight eight engine that was effectively two twin-overhead camshaft 4 cylinder engines joined back-to-back with the auxiliaries in the center, and supercharged to deliver no less than 142 horsepower at 5000 revs.

The engine block with cast-in cylinder liners was of light alloy construction with fuel boost fed using a two-lobed volumetric supercharger built by Alfa, and a vertical carburetor. The 8C 2300 was built from 1931 through 1934 and was provided with two types of chassis, a short (*Corto*) chassis for competition (as is the featured car) and an imposing long (*Lungo*) chassis for touring in cabriolet or saloon form. The *Corto* Spider made its racing debut at the 1931 Mille Miglia and quickly became a favorite with the greatest racing drivers of the time, from Alberto Ascari and Giuseppe Campari to Tazio Nuvolari and Achille Varzi, who filled the sports pages with news of triumph behind the wheel of Alfa's 8C 2300.

The car shown here sporting a Figoni body was ordered from the factory by Tazio Nuvolari (the Michael Schumacher of his era) and used extensively and effectively for racing, including a win at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1933 while partnered with Raymond Sommer, beating Luigi Chinetti by about 500 meters. Three weeks later, Sommer and Henri Stoffel used the car to finish second in the 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps. The car was returned to Alfa after the Spa-Francorchamps race and Alfa gave it to Nuvolari for his personal use. In July 1934, Alfa "sold" the car to Nuvolari who then registered it in his own name. The transfer of this 1933 car to Nuvolari in 1934 was probably done to avoid paying taxes by treating the 8C 2300 as a 1 year old used car.

Nuvolari and Sommer again ran the car in the 1934 24 hours of Pescara (the Targa Abruzzo), but retired during the night while in the lead. It appears that for this race the car was repainted from *giallo oro* to light blue. Nuvolari then used it as his regular car until he brought the car to New York in October 1936 at the time of the Vanderbilt Cup. It was then sold through George Rand at Zumbach's to Barron Collier (an uncle of today's Miles Collier) who used it, now painted a dark brown, to win the 1937 Mt. Washington Hill Climb.

At some point before the War, the Alfa was again sold, this time to collector Tommy Lee in Los Angeles where it was used at Muroc Dry Lake, doing 120 mph. After the war years, the Alfa was sold to Secundo Guasti who raced it both on the West Coast and at Bridgehampton in 1948 where his mechanic was Warren Olsen who later worked for John von Neumann and Lance Reventlow. Guasti wrote about the car in a story in the first edition of Road & Track. In subsequent years the Alfa moved back and forth across the country and was raced into the early 1950s and had a series of owners before it was sold to Europe in the mid-1980s. Current owner, Peter Sachs of Connecticut, acquired the car in a bankruptcy auction in 1992 and has graciously presented it for display at *Concorso Ferrari & Friends*.



The Alfa Romeo 8C of Secundo Guasti.
Bridgehampton, 1948

Chassis	2-seater front-engine Roadster and Saloon
Engine	2.3 Liter Straight 8 (supercharged)
Horsepower	142 - 155
Top Speed	N/A
Designer	Vittorio Jano