

Alfa Owner

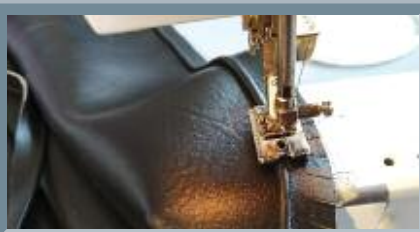


\$5.95

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ALFA ROMEO OWNERS CLUB

APRIL 2021

Joe Hurwich's Excellent Alfas



Veloce! Alfa TCR at Daytona • Do It Yourself GTV Upholstery • 1962 2000 Spider Fetches \$100,000

A Win



ning Season

By Elyse Barrett

Joe Hurwich's highly collectible Alfas are e-concorso stars

In the year of Our Pandemic 2020, as the concorso greens closed, group driving events were scrubbed from the calendar and the sports car/collector car world turned inward to virtual activities, Joe Hurwich had some fun with his Alfas. He owns three, a 1954 1900 Corto Super Sport, a 1949 6C 2500 Super Sport and a 1959 Giulietta Spider. Two of them came up winners in regional and national events on the small screen but in a big way.

You should recognize the 1900 from AROC's *Concorso Virtuale Italiano Dell'automobile* last July. It was the Czar's Award winner. In a judges' favorite type of recognition, event creators Richard Cross and Karen Phillips declared, "The Czar's Award should go to a car that, if we saw it at a concours, it would demand our total attention AND would be a car we would drive home, and to future events. After



Photography by Ingo Schmoldt

Genau AutoWerks/www.genauautowerks.com

Turn-signals
of the day.



Ready for her closeup in 2020.



All together now: the 2500 languished
in boxes for 40 years.



As the Spirit of the Quail honoree,
the 2500 delivered the motoring
experience true to its era.

hours of debate, voting on each other's lists and spending a lot of time reviewing, we chose Joe Hurwich's 1954 Touring-bodied 1900 CSS."

The 6C 2500 was entered in two different virtual summer events: the Petersen Car Week Petersen Concours online show where it took third in the European Classic class, and The Digital Spirit of The Quail where it was the overall winner.

Being the 2020 Spirit of the Quail honoree meant this car was the single outstanding vehicle to exemplify the essence of the show. Organizers wrote it "absolutely ticked all the boxes that made up the criteria" for this



The 1900 in its element - on the road!

award: timeless design, engineering innovation, an open-bodied (Pinin Farina) design that captures the spirit of motoring that is true to the driving experience of its era, plus the dedication and enthusiasm of the owner.

Hurwich, a Delta Sierra ARC and ARA member, is a European car enthusiast, fortunate to be able to vacation on the Continent, and attend Concorso Italiano and The Quail at home in California, while driving the sumptuous backroads of Marin, Sonoma and Napa counties with his local group of East Bay sports car friends.

The 1900 CSS

One of Joe's driving dreams was to

participate in the Mille Miglia, and he has done so, most recently in 2018 and 2019 with an Abarth-prepared, original Mille car, a Fiat 600. But he also wanted to drive the historic rally in an Alfa, and in 2013 Joe came to The Netherlands in November, shopping for Mille Miglia-eligible cars. He was at a dealer's shop to look at a different 1900, but another client had brought this one in for two days. It was originally delivered new to Switzerland; it then lived in Germany for 25-30 years and underwent a 10-year restoration there. The work included a rebuild of the 1975-cc, 4-cylinder engine, transmission, clutch, brakes and suspension, plus a new interior, and

paint, and concluded in 2012. It is one of perhaps a dozen 1900s with a 5-speed column-shift. A 40-page report on the work accompanied the car.

It was gorgeous ... and not for sale at the time. "I buy with my eyes," Joe relates, "and when I saw this one, it had to be mine." Indeed, discussions and test drives ensued over the next couple of days, and he was able to acquire this car and get on the waiting list for the 2014 Mille Miglia.

He had it delivered to a friend's home near Nice, France. Come May, they drove it back up to Brescia and, en route, it began overheating and developed a transmission seal leak. Despite a series

of heart-warming Italian repair shop stories in and around Brescia, it could not be permanently fixed in time for the rally, and the car came home to California.

Once here, however, the 1900's problems were solved and it was back on the road to be appreciated as Best Alfa Romeo at the 2014 Concorso Italiano and runner-up Best in Show at the Danville d'Elegance that fall as well as other awards. Most recently, the car ran the 2018 and 2019 USA Mille Warm-Up in Virginia, and was accepted and displayed at The Quail in both 2014 and 2019.

Meanwhile, the 1900 is, as are all of Joe's cars – from the perfectly restored gems to very nice road cars – driven. "Except perhaps in winter time, each one gets out about once a month," he says, "driven about 1,000 miles a year. I generally get them out every other Saturday with an informal Ferrari or other group, mostly in west Marin and Alameda County." Perhaps the most-fun-to-drive car is his 1959 Giulietta Spider, with which he was able to run in the California Mille. "Call Martin [Swig] and tell him what you're buying," Joe was told, "He'll probably let you in." And so he drove that celebration of vintage California car culture twice with the Spider.

He has excellent country byways nearby. "From where I live, which is very congested and metropolitan, you can drive 10 minutes and you're in the country on beautiful two-lanes. There are hills and great curves, and you don't see another house or any cars to speak of for miles on end."

The 1949 6C 2500

Described as one of the most expensive cars of its time, the 6C 2500 SS is a grand touring car and a favorite of royalty and celebrities, with reportedly less than 70 cabriolets built. This Pinnin Farina-bodied example is right-hand drive with a

shift pattern that is not standard (rather, upside down), so it takes some concentration to settle into driving it as Joe intends.

This car was delivered new in 1949 to a Milanese toothpaste magnate and it presumably cruised northern Italy in style. It came to New York in 1958, after which its history is lost for a while. It reappeared in the mid-'70s in need of a restoration. Through two successive owners, over 40 years, the body and 47 boxes containing the rest of the car were still not reunited. In 2017, it all was sold to an eastern European buyer, who accomplished the complete reassembly there. Joe bought it in 2018 and spent the next year sorting through numerous mechanical issues.

But in 2020 she was ready for her close-up. Not being able to drive the cars onto the green for The Quail judges to hear and appreciate in person, entrants had to submit videos. "I'm not a digital video editor, so I had to shoot it over again five times," Joe shared. "But this visual approach helped. They awarded not just the car, but its story."

And the 2500 will write more stories as it cruises the byways of California. "I love convertibles. It is a nice driving car on the highway, a grand-touring car. In the first three months of driving I put over 1700 kilometers on it," Joe said. "The steering is nice, but suspension not so much because it is heavy despite being 2,500 lb. and aluminum-bodied. The engine, although just 115 hp, has lots of torque being a six cylinder, and that helps."

Joe is ready for this year's MM, should it take place in May, and will hopefully enter with the Fiat 600 and a soon-to-be-acquired 1931 Aston Martin Le Mans. We wish him the best of luck. And we look forward to seeing one of his excellent Alfas out in its element – on the road. ■



Near home in the East Bay hills.





Five speed on the column
= thoughtful shifting.



Comfort and style, by Touring.