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MILLE MIGLIA

1955

Mercedes-Benz 300SLR Special Editions



Produced by CMC

Review by Patrick Flinn

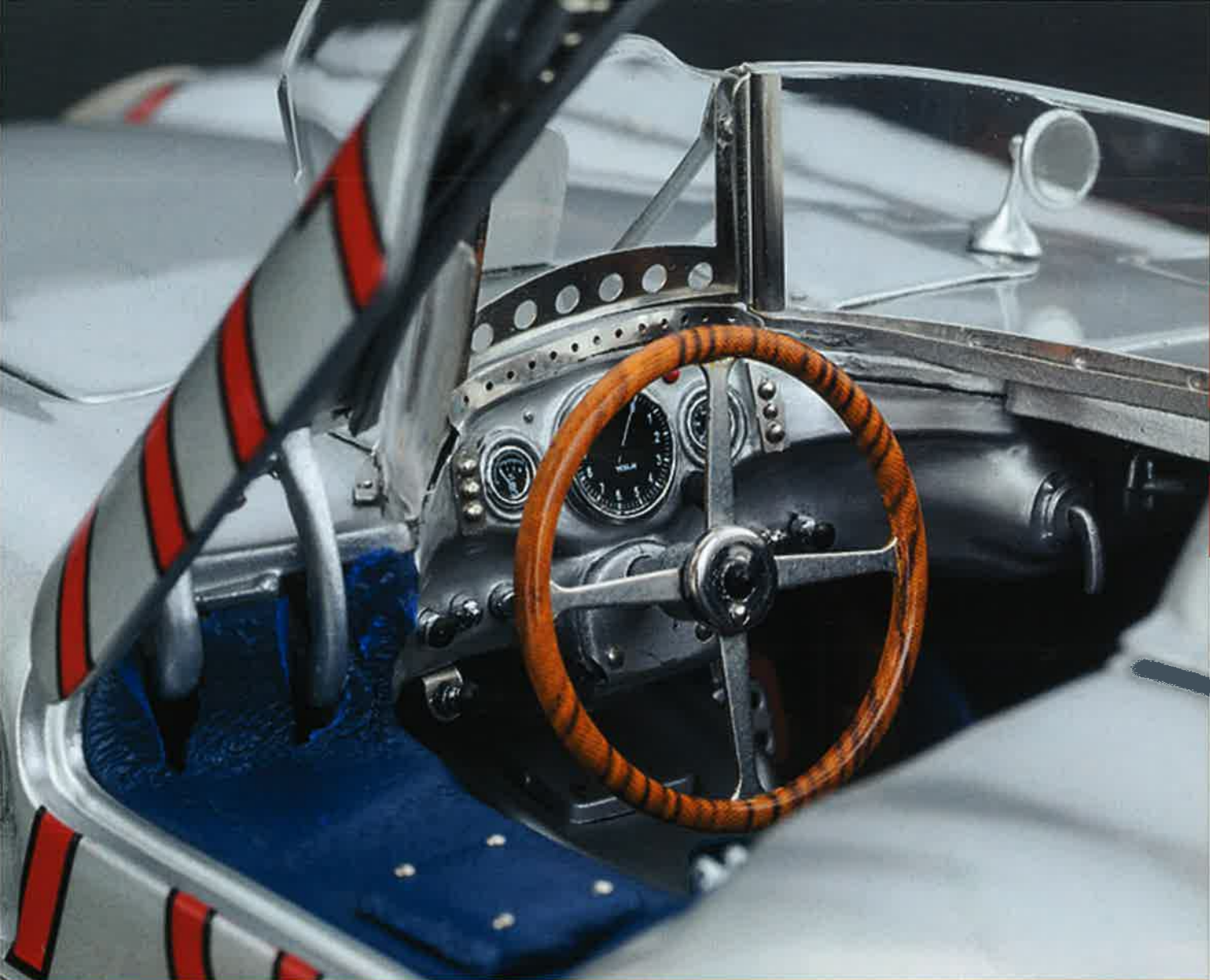
The madness that was the 1955 Mille Miglia began at 9 pm Saturday night on a ramp in Viale Rebuffone in Brescia, Italy, with the slowest vehicles starting first at one-minute intervals. The race route crossed the Italian countryside southeast to Ferrara, Ravenna and then down the Adriatic coast to Pescara. Turning inland the cars would traverse the Abruzzo Mountains to L'Aquila and then Rome. North from the capital the field continued through Siena to Florence,

over the renowned Futa and Raticosa Passes to Bologna, thence to Brescia via Piacenza, Cremona and Mantua. One lap of Italy equals 1000 miles, hence 'Mille Miglia'.

Lined up for an early-morning start is a squadron of silver four-wheeled missiles, the dew being wiped from their curvaceous noses by attentive mechanics. Silently they sit, but ready to burst forth at a second's notice in unbridled, bellowing eight-cylinder voices.

In 1955 the Mercedes-Benz 300SLR (W196S) sports car represented state-of-the-art in competition motor racing. Based as it was on the W196 Formula One Grand Prix machine (which had a slightly smaller-capacity engine but of otherwise identical design), the 300SLR gave Mercedes a chance for victory in the event.

German company CMC, master of the art of automotive scale modelling, having already brought the 300SLR to life in 1:18 scale some time ago with the immortal and victorious #722 Moss/Jenkinson car, now allows collectors the choice of the other 1955 Mille Miglia team cars as raced by Juan Manuel Fangio, Karl Kling and Hans



Herrmann. Although built to a common design, each car has its individual features fitted by Mercedes-Benz to suit each driver. Differences are small but worth a mention: the cars of Fangio (#658; item #M-117) and Kling (#701; item M-118) were single-seaters, while the latter also carried an extra steel guard in front of the windscreen. Herrmann's entry (#704; item #M-119) was set up very much like the Moss car, as a two-seater with full-width windscreen, to accommodate the driver and Mercedes-Benz mechanic Herrmann Eger.

Finished in a beautifully applied and deep coat of Mercedes Racing Silver, the low-slung bodywork of the replica is perfectly





modelled. The low-set nose with enclosed headlights proudly carrying the iconic three-pointed star swoops backward from the laser-etched air intake grille across the power bulge past the upright wrap-around windscreen and on to the rear. Here too it is worth noting that, as a two-seater, Herrmann's #704 has twin headrest/fairings. And on the fairings, each car carries the flag of the driver's home country, while prominently displayed on the flanks and nose is its individual race number, which also denoted the start time allocated in the race. Fangio was first to start at 6.58 am, Kling at 7.01 am, Herrmann at 7.04, and – of course – Stirling Moss with Denis 'Jenks' Jenkinson seated next to him at the now-famous time of 7.22 am.

Opening the bonnet of each model reveals the exquisite replica of the 2979cc straight-eight motor with its magnificent finish in a variety of lifelike materials. Canted to the right at 53 degrees to allow for the low bonnet line and slippery profile, the replica of the double-overhead camshaft motor, with its 16 valves operated by 'desmodromic' actuation, is plumbed and wired most realistically while the Bosch fuel injection system has also been faithfully reproduced in minute metallic detail. Most noticeable in front of the motor are the massive, finned, inboard-mounted *drum* brakes, an unusual feature considering some of the 300SLR's

competition, Jaguar in particular, had already experimented and found success with disc brakes.

Entering the cockpit was easy, with the upward-swinging scissor-action door enabling easy entry – and viewing. The scene on the CMC models is dominated by the wood-finish four-spoke steering wheel, the instrument panel behind featuring a centrally-located rev-counter with two smaller gauges, one on either side. The driver's seat is trimmed in blue-checked cloth, with blue leather for the massive door sills and central transmission tunnel. Situated easily to hand on the tunnel is the gated gear-lever.

Each of the replicas boasts poseable, exquisitely-spoked wire wheels with knock-off centres, shod with Continental-branded tyres. The boot is almost completely full with two spare wheels of different dimensions (for front and rear), and under these lives the fuel pump system.

As the history books show, the 1955 Mille Miglia was won by Stirling Moss in car #722 at an average speed of 97.96 mph, second place falling to Fangio in a failing #658 arriving several minutes later.

It would not matter which of these 1:18 scale replicas you choose to add to your collection; each is beautifully presented and constructed. Or it would be perfectly understandable if you bought all three to

complete the set, especially if you already possess the Moss/Jenkinson #722 replica. It is worth mentioning that the winning #722 model is now a much sought-after collectible, and it may not be long before this trio achieves that exalted status.

So get your order in quickly as each model is limited to a worldwide release of only 2000 pieces. Coming soon, they are priced at around \$460 each.



1955 Mille Miglia Mercedes-Benz 300SLR – Special Editions

SCALE:	1:18
ITEM NO:	#M-117, #M-118, #M-119
PRODUCER:	CMC
AVAILABLE FOR:	\$460