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1954 MASERATI 250F

Chassis Number: 2516

The stuff of every post-war schoolboy's motoring dreams, the Maserati 250F is the poster child of Grand Prix lore. With its long bonnet, eye-catching red paintwork, shapely tail and low snout, there can be no mistaking a 250F and the ensuing charisma it exudes. It was born out of a Grand Prix regulation change in 1954, where engine size was reduced to a much lower 2.5 litre formula. This provided the chance for a number of additional manufacturers with engineering creativity and, in some cases, more humble budgets, to compete on the global single-seater stage. Able to coax Ferrari's chief designer, Gioacchino Colombo and engineer Valerio Coletti from Maranello to Modena, the new 250F was constructed on a tubular space frame chassis and dressed in aluminium panels. The suspension was independent at the front and featured a de Dion rear. Maserati plumped for a straight six normally aspirated engine configuration.

Not being in a position to fund their own Works team, the cars were sold to a number of privateers. One such car, driven by Juan Manuel Fangio, took the 250F to victory on its maiden Grand Prix in Argentina in 1954, the first of two victories before his departure to the newly formed Mercedes team. The mantle passed to Stirling Moss who raced his own privately owned 250F for the full 1954 season. It was largely down to his efforts that the 250F made such a mark. At the Italian Grand Prix in particular, Moss outdrove both Fangio's Mercedes and Ascari's Ferrari before experiencing an engine failure. Nevertheless, acclaim for his impressive performance stuck. Moss has subsequently said, 'the nicest Formula One car to drive was probably the Maserati 250F'. For the 1955 season, Moss eloped to a paid drive at Mercedes, although, somewhat remarkably, he still drove his Maserati 250F as a privateer entrant where schedules allowed.

In the wake of Fangio and Moss, Maserati made Jean Behra and Luigi Musso its Works drivers. Chassis 2516 was predominantly Behra's mount for the 1955 Formula One season and, as such, offers an unrepeatable history. Notable results include a win at April's Pau round, followed by a consecutive victory at Bordeaux two weeks later. A later podium was claimed by Luigi Villorresi at the Syracuse Grand Prix on 23rd October where he took third position. Other drivers of 2516 that season included Perdisa and Mieres.

After the end of the season, a driver by the name of Reg Hunt was appointed Australian Works racing driver. He duly purchased 2516 and shipped it 'down under' where it enjoyed a thorough and consistent racing career over the following decade. Hunt was extremely successful in the 250F prior to selling it to Bib Stillwell, who entered the Maserati for the 1957 Grand Prix in New Zealand. The following year he returned 2516 to the factory at Modena for a set of updates and it left resplendent with enlarged brakes, a Bellmouth carburettor intake, shark gill cooling slots and a new body with an amplified nose.

Further antipodean owners subsequently enjoyed the 250F until it was purchased in the early 1960s by renowned collector and historic racer, Cameron Millar, who always adored the car, claiming it was his favourite 250F. Moving back to Europe in 1963, 2516 enjoyed a full restoration over the following year. Millar campaigned the Maserati extensively in BRDC, VSCC and AMOC events for the next decade, a period in which it appeared at a British Grand Prix demonstration, driven by Jean Lucas (1967) and in the film '*Fangio*' driven by Fangio himself.

The 1980s saw the 250F pass into the ownership of Anthony Mayman who was a regular sight at VSCC and BRDC competitions, lending the car to a wide range of friends to race including Rodney Felton, Sir John Venables-Llewelyn, John Harper, Ludovic Lindsay and Bill Morris. In the early 1990s, Thomas Bscher acquired the 250F and campaigned her at HGPCA events, the Oldtimer Grand Prix at Nurburgring and rounds of the Shell Ferrari/Maserati Challenge.

The current owner has enjoyed the Maserati since 2004, with notable appearances at the Goodwood Revival and The Oldtimer Grand Prix. This preeminent and notable Grand Prix Maserati, an undoubted force to be reckoned with in historic racing, is

offered with an exhaustive history file, detailing all aspects of its lustrous career and an extensive spares package including a spare engine. For the right buyer, it combines the iconic vision of 1950s Grand Prix competition with a stunning individual history. Eligible for the world's best historic race events, the 250F would be a phenomenal addition to any important collection.

SOLD









