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2010-07-17 AC MA-200 - resurrection of the mysterious prototype [updated]

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The story of this AC prototype starts at the beginning of the 1960s just when the world-famous Cobra was launched. At this time, their other model, the Ace was already nearly a decade-old thus AC was thinking about possible replacement or successors for this model.

In 1962, the company started development of an open two-seater. Registered on 19 November 1963 and built in Thames Ditton, the MA-200 was engineered by Zdislaw Teofil Marzewski, a former MIG aircraft engineer. It was intended to be a front-engined flat-six coupe (however, some sources claim it has never been fitted with such engine), but the Polish engineer was soon instructed to redesign it for Ford 289 V8 mated with ZF five-speed gearbox. The reason for this change was a huge price of the engine. "The flat-six gave 165bhp and cost £2000 to build. For £250, delivered, we could have a 289 Ford V8 engine that gave us 271bhp. What would you have done?" [1] This is also said to be a present from Ford Motor Company for then AC Chairman Derek Hurlock for his help in preparation of two Cobras for 1963 Le Mans. One of these Cobras finished 3rd in GT class and 7th overall. For this reason Hurlock received one of 5 built race engines. [2] The MA-200 prototype was first spotted by Road & Track magazine. They published a picture of this car at their December issue of 1964.

What concerns the looks of the MA-200, it is AC's in-house design, but sometimes people think that it is Italian creation of Carrozzeria Frua. Wheelbase of the car is 94 in (2388 mm), width - 65 in (1651 mm) and track - 54 in (1372 mm). Probably a fabulous appearance was one of the reasons why Hurlock enjoyed this convertible over several years.

Namely Hurlock was the first owner of the MA-200. In 1968 the car was sold to its first private holder - Dr Roger Field from Bickley, Kent. The one-off-a-kind AC then passed to the hands of AC enthusiast Peter Hague from Chichester. Finally in 2006 it was purchased by its current owner Mark Gold.

This is when the mystery started to live its second life. The car then arrived to Dania Beach in Florida - the place where [The Creative Workshop](#) is located. This company is a top-class restorer that are recreating especially rare and valuable cars. British, Italian, American cars like Jaguar, Cooper, Stanguellini, Corvair and others have been resurrected here. The company has also custom-built a one-off Speciale car for a private owner, but that's another story.

In one of the interviews Mr. Wenig, the president, [The Creative Workshop](#), joked that when the car arrived to their workshops it looked more or less the same like it does now after spending about two years for restoration. Unfortunately, it had a wrong convertible top, seats, wheels and even a wrong engine. Hence, lots of time was needed to properly research and analyze this mystery car in order to bring it back to its original condition.

The result you can see in the pictures below - a real stunner recreated with thoroughness and precision. It is absolutely not surprising that AC MA-200 was awarded as "Best In Class - Sports and GT Cars (1962 - 1970)" at [Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance](#) this March.

Text www.allcarindex.com

Pictures have been kindly provided by Jason Wenig, the president of [The Creative Workshop](#).

References:

[1] - Thoroughbred & classic cars. June, 1985.

[2] - World registry of Cobras & GT40s, 4th edition.

