



An Artist remembers flagging down a 412P on the street...

By Wallace Wyss

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I can't remember the year, but I was in the offices of *Motor Trend* on Sunset Strip in Hollywood in the early 1970s when I looked out the window and saw a Ferrari race car tooling along.

I ran down six flights of stairs and hailed the driver, a young man, and told him I needed to photograph it for a magazine.

It turned out to be a rare 412 P.

In 1967, Ferrari built two brand new 412 Ps and converted a pair of ex-works P3s to 412 P specification.

The four cars were supplied to NART, Scuderia Filipinetti, Maranello Concessionaires and Ecurie Francorchamps (the US, Swiss, British and Belgian Ferrari importer teams).

This car, 0850, was one of the two brand new 412 Ps. Originally painted red, it became yellow when bought by Jacques Swaters, the Belgian Ferrari agent, as that was the Belgian racing color.

S/N 0850 lined up for the Daytona 24 Hours, the Spa 1000 km and Montlhery 1000 km. in 1967.

At Daytona, it was driven by Willy Mairesse and Jean Blaton. They qualified eleventh and by the second hour (after Ford's disintegration) had risen to second.

Alas, it dropped behind the other P4 Sunday morning and retired at 3am with gearbox problems.

At Spa's 1000 km race it qualified fourth. Trying desperately to make up for lost time, Mairesse wrecked the car but miraculously walked away with only minor injuries. The car was sent back for a rebuild.

It made the last major European race of 1967; the Paris 1000 km at Montlhery, finishing behind the winning Mirage M1 of Jacky Ickx and Paul Hawkins.

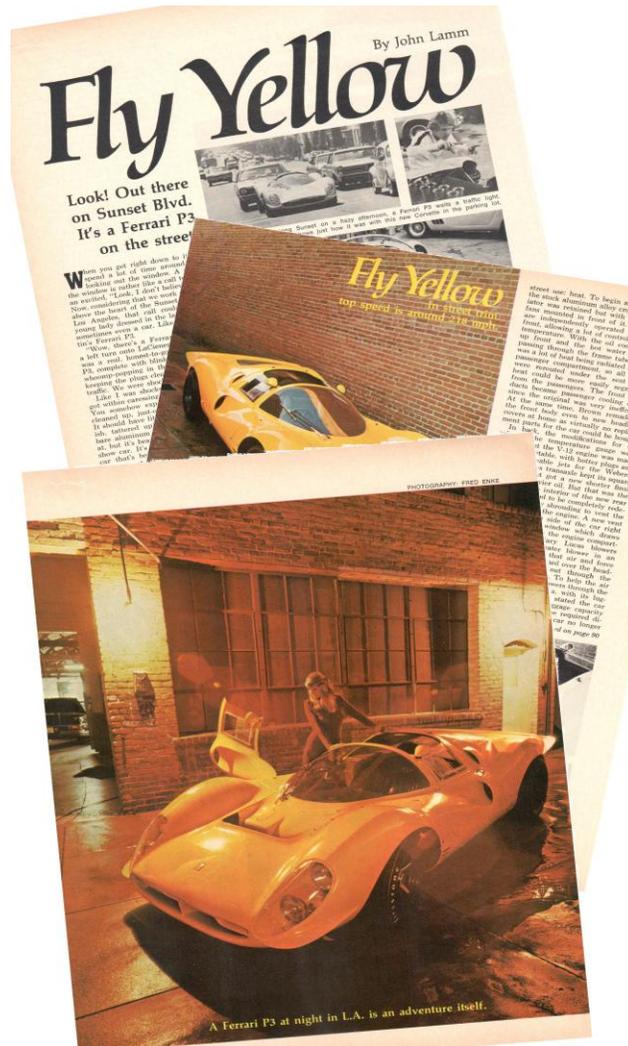
Jean Blaton purchased S/N 0850 at the end of the season. Then there was a rule change, a new three-liter engine size for Group 6 Prototypes from 1968. Bigger engine cars could run in Group 4, but 50 cars were required for homologation.

So, there was no place to race it, but at a hill climb. It ran in the 1968 Belgian Hillclimb Championship.

In mid-1968, Blaton sold it to an 18-year-old kid in California, Dean Martin Jr., who wanted to drive a race car on the street. He got his wish.

The nose was damaged unloading it, and it had to be rebuilt in Hollywood at a cost of nearly \$30,000.

A few changes were made to make it streetable: raising the ride height, extra cooling fans, roof-mounted mirrors, different plugs, re-jetted carburetors and a modified exhaust.



After our photo session, I ran into the lad one more time when he was driving a tamer DeTomaso Mangusta. Then the kid who had everything (did I mention he was Dean Martin's son, a TV star, a band leader, and a tennis star?) met a sad end while in the service of our country flying an F4 Phantom into a fog shrouded mountain when given an erroneous weather report by the base.

The car was acquired by New York Ferrari collector, Paul Pappalardo, in 1976. who had the car restored

I subsequently painted two or three canvases of the yellow mid-engine Ferrari race car. The 412 P is still out and about, including an appearance at Pebble Beach.

NOTE These canvases can be ordered in 20" x 30" size by writing mendoart7@gmail.com

