



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Engine:	4244cc V8 front
Bore x stroke:	92mm x 80mm
Compression ratio:	11.1:1
Ignition and fuel:	
Power:	425bhp @ 7200rpm
Torque:	340lb ft @ 4500rpm
Transmission:	6-speed paddle-shift, rear-wheel drive
Brakes:	Brembo 4 vented discs 6-pot and 4-pot calipers
Wheels:	9 x 18 and 10 x 18
Tyres:	Pirelli slicks 305/660/18 and 265/645/18
Kerb weight:	1345kg (dry)
0-60mph:	3.9sec (est)
Top speed:	184mph
Cost:	128,000 Euro for one season's use.

Ninety seconds later I am back in the race. For several laps I am held up by a slower car. The standard overtaking manoeuvre of diving up the inside under braking is defended and nobody brakes early. Eventually I exit a corner quicker and add a dash of slip-streaming to overtake cleanly. Looking at the lap-by-lap race analysis sheet, after a couple of slow initial laps, my main weapon is consistency with lap times. I keep up out of trouble and never make a mistake. This takes me from 18th to 10th by the finish with the 9th place car within easy reach had there been one more lap. In the end, there is no carnage and just two DNFs: the Zerere/Harada car and the Johnny Herbert/Jodie Kidd car which retires at Vale when Joe Macari comes into contact. Last year's winner Vicky Butler-Henderson who is partnered with Jean-Marc Girdali finishes 17th. At the front, the crowd is entertained by 40-minutes of exceedingly close racing. Championship leader, Alberto Cerrai takes the chequered flag just half-a-second clear of the car of the Swiss pairing of Notter/Catori. My post-race feelings – can I have another go?

The Car

Idiot-proof, bullet-proof, bomb-proof and easy to drive – to a point. Achieving front-running lap-times from a Trofeo GranSport takes enormous race-craft. It also calls for some controlled brutality. You can be as rough as you like with these cars, the rev-limiter cuts in at 7900rpm and the Cambiocorsa paddleshift software won't accept inappropriate down-shifts. Despite its 1345kg (dry weight), the Brembo brakes will take anything you throw at them. The set-up is dry/wet compromise so that should it rain, your Maserati crew only has to change the wheels and tyres.

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LEFT: hgh ghghghg
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The 2005 aerodynamic improvements mean that there is some downforce, so you must remember that you can pull more lateral-g in fast turns than slow ones. Used to driving my own race car or the personal property of a co-driver, I am programmed to be kind to cars. I learn that you can't be like that in a one-make series. These cars can and must be driven really hard every second of the race. **ai**

