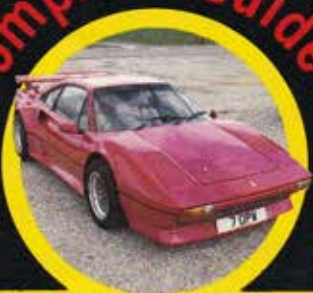


The Complete Guide to the



# FERRARI

308 · 328 · MONDIAL



Wallace A. Wyss



*The Mondial 8 is conservative, a more muted echo of the 308 and Boxer styling themes. (K. Oblinger)*

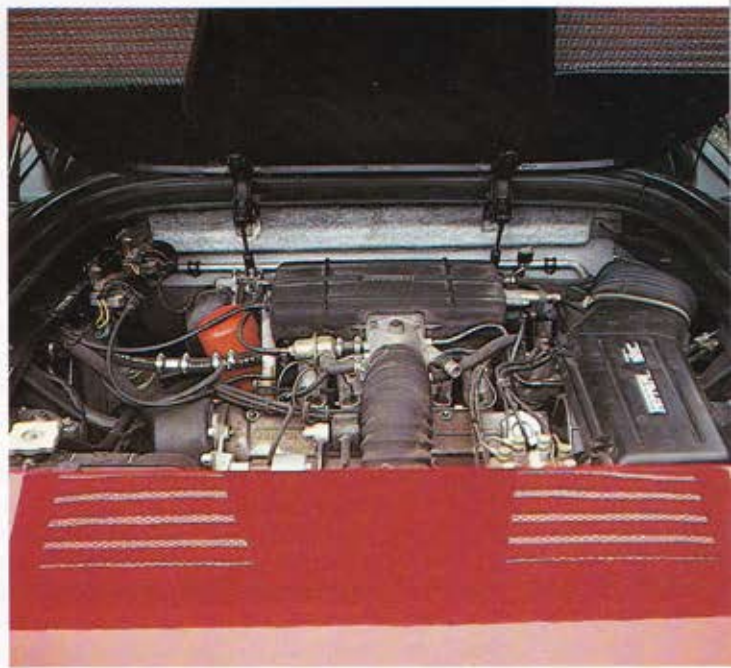


*The Mondial 8 was praised by European road testers but they weren't quite as enthusiastic about it as they had been about the GTB/GTS. (K. Oblinger)*





*In the back a small luggage compartment with factory-supplied tool kit and the engine are revealed. The large air intake scoops were necessary because of legislation in Germany (K. Oblinger).*





*MOTOR's Rex Greenslade at the wheel  
of a British-market model.*





*The Mondial 8 depended for its acceptance on many old Pininfarina design characteristics.*



## Mondial 8

*It was raining as the driver reached the crest of the grade. Far below him, he could see a village, or was it the St. Bernard hospice?*

*He slipped into third as he started down the mountain. One turn connected to another in a kind of fluidic movement. He had the rhythm and the engine and gearbox were co-operating, reacting perfectly to his every movement, simpatico.*

*Later, in the city, the three businessmen he entertained gave the car little notice. It was small, and Italian – that was all they knew. He was almost relieved when he dropped them off at the airport and once again turned alone toward the alps, their crests gleaming in the sun. The engine began to sing again as he picked up speed. It was singing the song of Ferrari. . . .*

When the GT/4 was phased out in 1980, there were no outcries of protest – no crowds chanting at Maranello's gates. After all, Ferrari enthusiasts had the much more attractive GTB and GTS to take its place.

And, in countries outside the U.S., there was still the 400 model available if you wanted 2-plus-2 seating in a Ferrari. But the 400 was not sold in the U.S. by the official distributor (though illegal models continue to be imported and converted to U.S. specifications) and Ferrari sought to replace the "hole" in their marketing structure with a long wheel-base Pininfarina design more in keeping with the styling theme of the GTB/GTS.

Whether the impetus for the Mondial first came from Pininfarina, Ferrari's usual body designer, or from Ferrari, is unknown. This writer suspects it was Ferrari first asking Pininfarina to design a car around a certain-size package, this conjecture based on the fact that, when Pininfarina designs the car on *their* volition, there is usually a show car done by them first, such as in the case of the flat-12-powered front-engined "Pinin".

There is not only a need for extra seating capacity beyond two seats in other countries, but, indeed, the presence of two other seats – whether they are ever used or not – sometimes presents tax advantages in that the car is then judged a sedan. (In Japan, the Mazda RX-7, for instance has two small jump seats in the back, it being against the law there to produce a car which selfishly only has two seats in such an overcrowded country).

Thus the Mondial 8 was created first seen by the world at the Geneva Auto salon of 1980. One might correctly think of this car's lineage as the Bertone-bodied GT4 "re-interpreted" as a Pininfarina design. True, the design house headed by Sergio Pininfarina is more (in the eyes of Ferrari purists) *qualified* to design a Ferrari's shape, but the fact that the Mondial 8 comes out 13.8" longer, 5" higher, 3" wider, and 350 lbs. heavier than the Pininfarina-designed GTB doesn't sound like there was any concerted effort to preserve the performance character of the earlier car as the highest priority (an assumption one would automatically make with Ferrari, for what are Ferraris *for?*). Instead, the Mondial 8 was intended to be a 2-plus-2 in which the "plus-2" part could actually be sat in, by adults, in contrast to the 308 GT4, where the back two seats were actually more cosmetic than utilitarian.

The Mondial 8 insured its acceptance by the Pininfarina-oriented Ferrari contingent by squeezing as many of the characteristics of the previous Pininfarina-designed Ferraris into its design as possible – Boxer-style hood vents, 400 door handles, 308 GTB/GTS front spoiler and roofline, (even down to the "tunnel-back" or "sugar-scoop" rear roofline which allows a fastback side profile with a vertical rear window). Yet there are some curious features which jar the sensibilities of those whose tastes were honed on earlier Pininfarina-designed Ferraris. For instance, the huge glued-on "grate" covering the side

air intake scoops seems unnecessarily large and grotesque (when none had been needed to cover the air intakes on the flanks of the previous 246 series, or the Pininfarina 308 GTB/GTS). But, reportedly, some sort of cover was needed for the hole because of legislation in Germany which required all such intake holes to have a protective grate (who was

supposed to be sticking their arm into intake holes can't be imagined but the law's the law!).

Another offense to the eye is the heavy emphasis put on bumper protection. It used to be that European models always had smaller bumpers than the American ones and that the bumpers "dominated" less of the overall look



*The first Mondial 8's had the side grate painted black. When the enthusiast media proved unenthusiastic about this detail, Ferrari painted the grate body colour, but to date, the press hasn't "warmed up" to the car like they previously did to the GTB/GTS models.*

*One of the most controversial aspects of the Mondial 8 design is the leading edge of the sail panels, which is flat black.*



of the car. But with the Mondial, even the European model looks just as "heavy with bumper" as the U.S. version.

A final aesthetic nitpick concerns the wheels. These are the 180 TR x 390 wheels designed previously for those GTB/GTS models carrying Michelin 240/55 VR 390 TRX tires, and have the same outward-projecting center spider that runs contrary in design tradition to all racing wheels, which for generations, have had deeply *inset* centers.

Mechanically, the Mondial 8 was virtually identical to the 308 GTB/GTS series except for a modification in the hubs to reduce kingpin offset – and thus reduce the sharp steering "kickbacks" encountered when you hit bumps. Taking a cue from Mercedes, the front suspension's upper wishbone mountings were angled to give some anti-dive when braking.

Ferrari touted the Mondial's biggest engineering change as the fact that the engine/transmission package was all contained in a removable subframe. Nothing new, really, since Maserati had the same thing in the Bora back in 1973, but, still, one ought to applaud any attempt to make servicing easier.

The Mondial 8 engine started out virtually identical to the "i" version of the 308 GTB/GTS, using Marelli Digiplex electronic ignition and Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection. *Motor* magazine's Rex Greenslade, in his Dec., 1981 driving impression of a Mondial 8, first lamented the loss of horsepower for the injected engine (which he said produced 205 bhp at 6600 rpm in the U.S. version and 214 in the European version) compared to the carbureted GT4 version (which he quotes as producing 255 bhp at 7600 rpm) but then admits that "it may well be that in 1975 – when quoted figures weren't watched so closely by the authorities – that the 255 was a little more generous than it should have been". Greenslade, then, was acknowledging what sharp-eyed readers knew all along – that car magazine editors – particularly in the flush of a first acquaintance with a new performance car – are all too likely to swallow improbable manufacturer-supplied figures whole. Thus was the furor created earlier over the manufacturer's "190-mph" top speed claim for the

365 Boxer, a claim only disproved some three years *after* the car's introduction when the staff of a British car magazine found they couldn't get anywhere close to that figure.

The result of putting an essentially weaker (than the GT4's) engine in a heavier car (than the GT4) was a slower car, even though its numerically higher final drive . . . 4.063 compared to 3.71 on the GTB/GTS should make it faster accelerating. The GT4, after all, had been called "shatteringly quick" in *Motor's* January, 1975 road test. Indeed, one cannot help but marvel at how much faster *Motor's* test car was than the GT4's tested by American magazines, as shown by the published results. One explanation might be simply that British road testers feel more of a responsibility to their readers, to the point where they wring the utmost performance out of a given test car – regardless of the manufacturer's recommended redline – more so than American road testers. If the engine blows up from overstrain – so be it!

### Driving the Mondial

Even though the Mondial has an oil pump added to the gearbox to pressurize it that the 2-seaters didn't have, *Motor's* Rex Greenslade found that it had the same fault as the GTB/GTS gearbox – an unwillingness to shift when cold. Greenslade termed second gear being "well nigh unobtainable" when the gearbox is cold, but, fortunately, reported it loosens up in a few miles. Ferrari also claims the pump reduces gear wear, quiets down the gearbox and keeps temperatures even throughout it. The driver doesn't know all this – all he knows is that, once it's warm, it shifts like the proverbial hot-knife-through-butter, or much better than the baulky shifter in the pre-i-series GTB/GTS models or GT4.

Just as in the 308 GTB/GTS, although the Mondial's steering feels impossibly heavy at parking speeds, and seems to be a strong understeerer in tight corners, the car lightens up at faster speeds. In Greenslade's words: "it comes alive with feel – it almost seems as if the car can defy the laws of motion, so great is the lateral acceleration that can be developed".





*The Mondial and the 328: contrast in style.*



In contrast to several earlier mid-engine cars (the most infamous of which was the Mangusta), the Mondial did not jump into that wicked condition known as "trailing throttle oversteer" when he lifted the throttle or was forced to brake in mid-corner.

*Motor's* road tester praised the ride quality of the Mondial, which he termed: "firm and jiggly at low speed, though never uncomfortable as any vertical jarring has been cunningly removed by subtle tuning of the dampers. At speed, over all surfaces, the ride smooths out to become more than acceptable – on motorway and smooth A-roads it almost qualifies for the magic carpet class". This writer – based on 14,000 miles in a 308 GTS – wouldn't go *that* far, feeling a Porsche 911SC has a better ride over a variety of surfaces, as does the Lotus Esprit. But the Porsche has potentially violent oversteer lurking in the wings at the limit of adhesion and Lotus construction borders on "flimsy" compared to Ferrari's so, considering its heavy weight, its ride and handling are quite comparable with its would-be competitors from Stuttgart and Hethel.

Ferrari has always lagged far behind its German competitors in "creature comforts" – their philosophy seeming to be: "You adapt to the car, the car doesn't adapt to you". Where Porsche was offering electrically-adjustable seats and many other "gadgets" as options, the interiors of Ferraris remained almost spartan (indeed, it is the only car in this writer's experience that for several years came without a factory radio). There has been some small "bending" of this philosophy with the Mondial, the steering wheel being made adjustable up and down an inch or two. But the length to which the clutch pedal must be depressed still prevented short drivers (under 5 ft.) from ever driving the car. In perhaps a leap too far forward into the gadget ("Did we really need this?") realm, the Mondial has push-button solenoid releases for the bonnet/engine/boot lids. The question is: "When the battery is dead, can you still open them?". The answer is: Yes, and there are manual over-rider's for each button.

The air conditioning system in the 308 GTB/GTS was always on the bare edge of being adequate, partly due to the placement of the

three dash-top vents far forward on the center of the dashboard where they could do little more than cool the windscreen. The Mondial has the aforesaid vents plus a vent on each side of the dashboard to better circulate the air. But the heater is still very slow to warm up, and *Motor's* Rex Greenslade complained that the heating and air conditioning controls – and even the radio face – are located so far back on the console that the driver can't see them. (Not so on the American version, which has the air conditioning controls in an easy-to-reach box under the dashboard).

The gauges in the Mondial 8 are still Veglia-Borletti white-on-black circular units, but they have a new type face on the labels and numbers and are not only easier to read but better-illuminated at night. Unfortunately, the upper brow of the rectangular instrument housing protrudes outward a little too far, cutting off the tops of the two main gauges from the driver's view. One of the biggest improvements from the GTB/GTS gauges is the fuel gauge, whose needle no longer swings wildly from side-to-side as the fuel moves about during cornering.

There is also a digital clock which reads out time in both military (European) fashion and in U.S./English fashion and has an elapsed time mode like a stopwatch. But this too is located high on the dashboard, just under the overhanging brow, and it takes a contortion by the driver to read it.

One really odd departure from past Ferrari practice is the moving of the odometer and trip odometer out of the mph/kp/h gauge and onto a separate part of the dashboard where it resembles an hour meter on a piece of stationary industrial machinery. It may be easier to service now that it is separately located but somehow it now seems *too* prominent for this writer's tastes.

Rex Greenslade implied the electronic check control display was a gimmick intended to make the Mondial "modern". As you turn on the ignition, it indicates any failures in the brakelights, headlights, or if there is a lid improperly closed. It also monitors the levels of engine oil, transmission oil, screenwasher fluid and air conditioning fluid. A clue to lack of temperament in this engine, perhaps, is a

"service due" light that comes on 3000 miles after the last service.

*Road & Track's* testers also found the warning light console of limited value: "Attractive though it is," they wrote in their November, 1981 test, "the check panel is located well out of normal sightlines, its LEDs are barely visible in daylight and these tend to minimize its usefulness". Obviously, while embracing modern technology, Ferrari had failed to note what watch-makers had discovered 10 years earlier – that liquid-crystal displays are superior to LED's because they can still be read in daylight.

Even though one would assume that, with the increased emphasis on seating four people in the Mondial over the GT4, there would be more luggage room, such was not the case. The carpeted luggage compartment – at 6.5 cubic feet – was less than in the GT4's 6.7, which means those extra two people had better not pack any luggage.

*The seats of the Mondial 8 are shaped differently than those in the GTB/GTS. They seem to have more cushioning, but to this author, seemed more slippery—perhaps because they are not so "deep-dish."*

In the U.S. version – which has catalytic converters under the luggage bin – the luggage bin gets very warm on even a short 1-hour trip. The results can be devastating should one attempt to stow film or perishables in this area. Alas – some mid-engine cars might have averted this problem through careful exhaust routing in the late 60's – but not now when catalytic converters are mandatory. If you're wondering what soft luggage was invented for, it's cars like the 308 which cannot accommodate conventionally-shaped "hard" suitcases.

And even though the increase in wheelbase would lend one to assume that the rear seats are actually "sit-able," *Road & Track* felt that the 32.5" of headroom made the rear seats only fit for small children though they did concede "there's a bit more leg room than in the GT4 and though you might find it acceptable to splay your knees around the front seatback, but you can only slouch so much".





*The Mondial 8 presents a rather sedate image compared to the GTB/GTS, especially when it is painted a dark color. This is a European model, one of several dozens imported to the U.S. prior to Ferrari North America's "official" importation of the car.*

## Performance

*Road & Track's* test crew confessed open disappointment in the Mondial's performance. Their 0-60 mph time of 9.4 seconds and quarter-mile of 17.1 seconds at 83 mph they found "less than scintillating", since these times were slower than their GTSi test car. They felt that the added 390 lbs. was the culprit. "Not only did the engine feel somewhat strained at wide open throttle", they wrote in November, 1981 "but even more disappointing, it was missing the low-and-mid-range responsiveness we've come to enjoy from other fuel-injected Ferrari V8's. Succinctly, the Mondial made all the right sounds, but it just didn't go".

The Italian magazine, *Auto Capital*, tested a Mondial 8 in 1982 and compared it many times to the old Bertone GT4. "It is a weaker car," they wrote. "In the 0-200 km/h run, it took 13.5 seconds longer to get to 200 km/h than did the old GT4." But the Mondial 8, with fuel injection as standard, was considerably more stingy on fuel, using 16 liters/100 km while the old 308 GT4 used 20 liters.

*Road & Track's* testers noticed that, since the Michelin tires are taller than those fitted to the 308 GTB/GTS, they also lengthen its stride "evidentially to the detriment of its kick". They pointed out that, "in 5th gear at 60 mph, for example, the Mondial's tach shows 2900 rpm compared to the 308's 3200". While they didn't feel the top speed was hurt

(they estimated 135 mph), they were somewhat embarrassed when they checked their records and found that the Porsche 924 Turbo, Alfa Romeo GTV-6 and Datsun 280ZX Turbo *all* proved to be faster to 90 mph than the Mondial.

Few U.S. magazine staffs test for lateral acceleration, which is expressed in terms of a side *g*-force reading. *Road & Track* does, by renting a test track with a circle painted on a flat surface and driving around said circle at a steady rate, obtaining the max *g* reading at a point just short of losing adhesion. With the Mondial, they recorded a reading of 0.812 *g* – the same as they recorded previously on their test GTB. This would be impressive were it not common knowledge that some much cheaper cars – like the \$13,000 1982 Pontiac Firebird Trans-Am – can generate a 0.85 reading on the same skidpad. *Road & Track* also had an old Ferrari bugaboo pop up in their Mondial test – a momentary complete drop in oil pressure – something that had happened earlier with a 1977 308 coupe being tested for them by race driver Bob Bondurant. “There’s a straightforward fix for it, though,” they wrote, “involving removal of the oil pan and slight realignment of the oil pump’s pickup; apparently, production tolerances are enough to cause this problem on some cars, but not others”.

*Motor*, in their Dec. 1981 driving impression, wrote: “Enter a corner too quickly and lifting the throttle produces a mild tightening of the line – enough to scrub speed off without requiring a specific steering correction – and even if you’re forced to brake in mid-corner, hard, the Mondial slows without an excessive change of attitude. This stability is one of the Mondial’s fortes and the Ferrari engineers deserve the greatest compliment for managing to blend such good high speed stability (even at 120 mph on a bumpy country road with the wheels pounding up and down like pistons the Mondial feels rock-solid on line) with a lack of understeer and a neutrality in strong cornering.”

*Motor*’s staff did find, on damp leaves, excessive throttle could “make the tail step out of line very smartly indeed”. They warned: “You have to be very quick and accurate applying opposite lock, though just the right

amount of castor action is a considerable help”.

Even though the Mondial lacks a high-technology braking system like the Mercedes ABS-system (which uses an on-board micro-computer to modulate braking pressure in order to prevent a skid with its subsequent loss of steering control). *Motor*’s staff felt that the brakes “must be as good as that of any road car in the world today”. They praised the progressive and positive action but only found fault with the handbrake, which in the right-drive test car was so close to the stereo speaker that each time they used the handbrake, they skinned their knuckles.

While the regular brakes work exceptionally well, the handbrake is one of those maddening types that folds down to be out of the way even when it is in the “on” position. This causes some consternation when the car won’t move forward until the dash light tips you off that the brake is on. Then you have to lift the lever with a mighty heave and depress the release button, to be able to fold it flat in earnest. The Porsche 914 had the same cursed arrangement

One thing no road testers (upto the time of publishing this book) mentioned was the “forward control” feeling one gets in a Mondial 8. The feeling is much more akin to a modern GP car seating position than one gets in the GTB/GTS. The driver feels as if his legs are extending over the front axles. Even the view out the Mondial windscreen shows only a *hint* of hood, compared to the sensuous bulges in the hood of the GTB/GTS or even Boxer.

Whether one likes it or not depends on where you like to be when you initiate a turn. In the GTB/GTS, you feel like you’re in the centre of the car, with an equal amount of car both ahead and behind you. In the Mondial 8, when you turn, you feel as if you’re a lot further up front with the great mass of the car following you. You get used to it, but it’s a different feel that some drivers may never acclimatize to.

The Mondial – in 2-valve form, and in U.S. specification – does nothing until you are going either 70 mph or above 6000 rpm. In other words, it not only has a very muted sound to the exhaust, it has very muted performance as well. When you finally can go

down a winding country road at speed – say 6000 rpm in third – *then* it begins to feel like a Ferrari. But in city traffic, it could be almost any car as far as the sense of power-on-tap one gets. If the Mondial 8 sells any Ferraris, it is GTB's and GTS's because it makes them look like tigers.

It is difficult to imagine what goal Ferrari and Pininfarina had in mind when they designed the Mondial 8. If it was luxury, they fell far short of a 928. If it was performance, they even fell short of a 944 – a car which cost 1/3rd as much! If it was four seats, and a Ferrari engine, they already build that car – the 400 Automatic. How did Ferrari miss the mark by so wide a margin? It may be due to their isolationism – a legacy of the Old Man's philosophy of building it the way Ferrari wants to build it regardless of what others are doing. It could be a costly mistake for the firm.

*Auto Capital's* staff writers were philosophical about the Mondial: "Lovers of exotic sports cars and lovers of Ferrari naturally

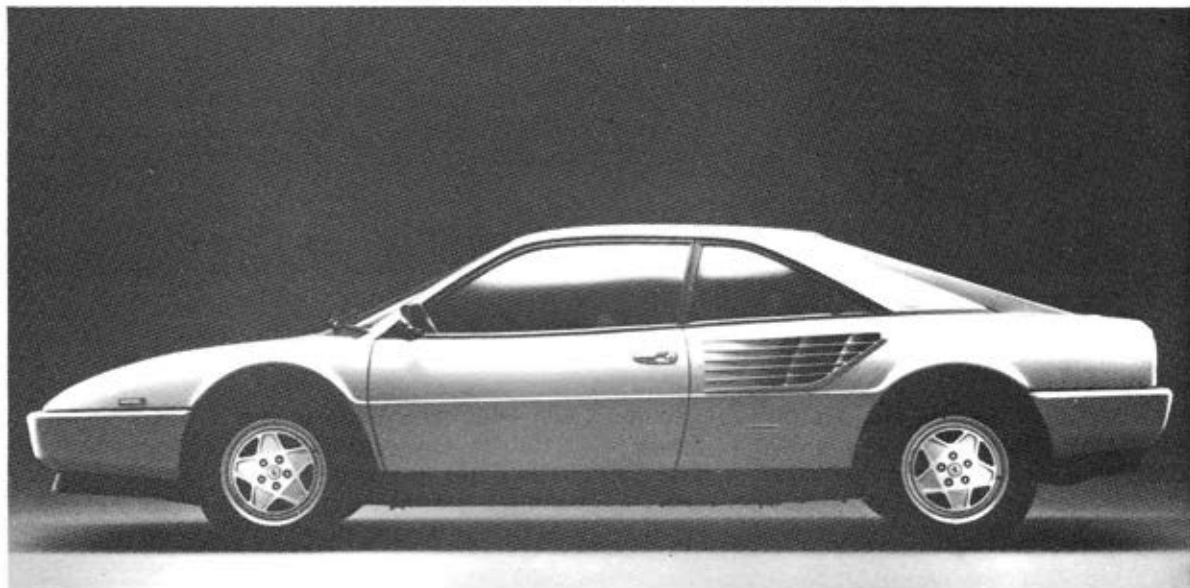
don't pay attention to the few things that the car lacks. Whether they can accept the fact that it is not as powerful (as the previous Ferraris), and has less bite, remains to be seen from sales. It is too early to make a prediction."

What the introduction of the Mondial 8 *did* accomplish, in a nutshell, was to mark with a model change what had already been happening since the introduction of the GT4 308 back in 1975 – the moving of Ferrari into what you could call the "turn-key" class. That meant you just get into the car, turn the key, and go, as if the car were no more complex than a Buick. (The author is reminded of a visit to Maranello he made in April, 1982, where he saw an all-white BB 512 with an all-white interior at the factory, symbolizing that the BB 512 is now regarded by Ferrari as a car which will never suffer a messy breakdown or even be so impolite as to leak oil. With that color combination, it wouldn't *dare!*)

*Ferrari is reportedly considering making a car even more luxurious than the present 400—the Pinin, which made its debut as a prototype in 1980 at Turin. The front end will likely be re-shaped and the 308's V8 may go under the hood instead of the Boxer's flat-12 since the V8 already has passed U.S. emissions standards. Its production may result in the 400 being phased out.*



## *The Mondial Cabriolet*



*The European versions of the 3.2 Mondial have only a thin side marker in front rather than fore-and-aft markers as in the U.S.*

### **The 3.2 Mondial**

Ferrari and Pininfarina refused to drop the Mondial even when it was met with apathy by its intended buyers. To their credit, the cabriolet's introduction in October, 1983, turned the situation around. But the first cabriolets had top-engineering problems, and these were redesigned by September 1985 when a newer variation was introduced.

The next big change for the Mondial came when the 328GTB/GTS were introduced. It, too, received a minor "facelift" to give it some identity with the Testarossa.

The changes were similar to the 328's over the 308-body-coloured bumpers and flush-front turn signal lenses and fog lamps.

In an attempt to improve drivability at low speeds, the front tires were made smaller than the rears, and they were mounted on narrower wheels. If the brand was Michelin, the front tires were 220/55VR's while the rears were 240/55VR390's. If they were Goodyear Eagles, they

were 205/55VR16's in front and 225/55VR16's in the rear.

The 3.2 Mondial was four inches shorter than the original model, which helped account for its 240 lb. lighter weight.

Inside, the instrument panel received minor changes, like red lettering on the Veglia dials instead of white, and an external temperature sensor for the air conditioning.

### **The Performance**

In Europe, Ferrari quoted the top speed of the 3.2 Mondial at 250 kph, and magazine road testers were almost able to reach this. More importantly, it was at least matching the performance of the 308 GTBi and GTS QV's if not the 328, though still slower than the new 328GTB and GTS.

One significant change in the Mondial 3.2 was to fit narrower tires and wheels in the front than in the rear (220/55VR front; 390-290/55VR390 rear in European versions) in an



The dashboard of the 3.2 Mondial was redesigned with push-buttons to control many of the features. The center console has a lot of rocker switches and a light warning system. This one has a Blaupunkt radio, but there is no "official" Ferrari radio.

attempt to lighten up on the steering effort. Some feel that this added to the understeer characteristics, but only marginally.

### Value

The Mondial 3.2 coupe may as well be a nonexistent model as far as the American-specification version is concerned, dealers preferring to sell the Cabriolet. The coupe would probably be a worse investment than the Cabriolet because of the low price of '83-'86 coupes on the used car market, most of them the slow and heavy 2-valve 308-powered versions.

The Mondial 3.2 coupe may legitimately have a market in Europe where the lack of sunshine (except on the Mediterranean and Aegean seas) makes a convertible useless, but in the U.S., it is the car without a market. The Cabrio allows one to enjoy the sun, and thus makes the concept viable. The 328GTB will still enjoy a market for those purists who dislike the lack of rigidity of an open car and still want a Ferrari but for whom the Testarossa is financially unreachable. The 412, incidentally, is not sold in the U.S.

### The Mondial Cabriolet

When Ferrari had trouble selling the Mondial 8, they did what they had done years ear-

lier with previous Ferrari models to make them more exciting – they cut the roof off.

The result, introduced in 1984 as the Mondial Cabriolet, was not aesthetically a *tour de force* but did at least satisfy the public's craving for a fully open Ferrari rather than a targa.

The Mondial Cabriolet came with the four valve head on the 3-liter V8.

The top was designed so that, when erected, it still had a fastback look by means of canvas "sail panels". From the back, it was less than pleasing, but with the top down, you had the effect of both abundant luxury and power.

The Mondial Cabriolet was called simply the Mondial Quattrovalvole and not the Mondial 8. It came with the same size wheels and tires front and rear – 240/55VR 390TRX Michelin radials.

The Mondial Cabriolet was a success sales-wise, as it quickly sold out in America, and it also gave Ferrari time to finish up on the restyling of both the 308 and the Mondial.

Its biggest significance was that it brought new customers into the Ferrari fold, people who wanted luxury and performance but who originally came into the market because of the luxury and styling, and then came to appreciate the performance.

The Mondial Cabriolet was not really a four-seater in that four full-grown adults could take a long trip in it – it was more of a 2-plus-2, in



that four adults could squeeze into it for a very short trip (with the rear seat passengers not at all comfortable). Of course, for children under 12, the rear seats were adequate. Seating-wise this car is more in the vein of the 365GTC/4 than the 400i.

One potentially un-nerving aspect of the Cabrio is that the driver and front passenger's seats are very forward in position, giving you the impression that the great bulk of the car is behind you. You don't feel as centrally-placed amidships as in the 308GTBi and 308GTSi and this impression could make some drivers uncomfortable.

The chief thing that the Mondial Cabriolet has going for it is exclusivity – when it was introduced, there weren't many ultra-luxury four-seater convertibles in the U.S. other than the Aston-Martin or the Rolls Royce Corniche.

It made a good "show-off" car, but not necessarily a practical long distance tourer for four, because even if you shoehorned in four passengers, the 308-sized luggage compartment could only hold overnight baggage for two.

The Mondial Cabriolet is primarily intended

to be a pleasant tourer, not an all-out performance car. Hence, one can forgive its great weight – quoted at 3545 lbs. by *Road & Track* (but 3152 lbs by Ferrari), and its lower speed, which *Road & Track* quotes at 138 mph compared to the manufacturer's quote of 149.1 mph. But then again, R & T only ran it up to 6800 rpm where Ferrari's top end figure is calculated at the redline of 7700 rpm where it's "fully wound in top cog" as the British say.

The Cabriolet is less rigid than the coupe or GTS, so much that *Road & Track* commented on the flexing and shaking. In a slalom test, the same magazine's testers earned only a 0.80 later g-figure – lower than an '84 Corvette's .84 g-figure. But then, the Corvette has much wider tires, and is not a four-seater either.

In U.S.-spec. form, the Mondial Cabriolet could accelerate as well as the GTBi and GTSi – with a 0-60 mph time of 7.6 seconds.

The new car price for the Mondial Cabriolet at its U.S. introduction was \$65,000 in 1985.

The used car price soon reflected depreciation, but the Ferrari North America organization guaranteed a high resale value in the U.S. by limiting the number of cabriolets imported.

*Like the 328, the 3.2 Mondial has a more "filled-out" grille cavity to give the up-dated model more of a family resemblance to the Testarossa.*

