

Of all the Maserati 250Fs built, without doubt the one now campaigned by Peter Giddings has one of the most complex and fascinating of histories. #2501 was in fact the very first 250F built and test-driven during 1953. It was subsequently displayed at the Paris Salon in October 1954, and at the end of the Salon #2501 was whisked away for its racing debut at the Spanish Grand Prix – the last F1 race of the season. This race was also the first team drive for Maserati's new star, Stirling Moss.

#2501 continued to be the successful mainstay team car throughout 1955. Raced throughout Europe and Argentina, with second places achieved at the Bordeaux, Naples, and Syracuse Grand Prix (Musso). In 1956 #2501 continued as a prime factory team car, primarily driven by Menditeguy and Behra. At Syracuse, Jean Behra raced #2501 fitted with a new experimental fuel-injected engine and aerodynamic body. Moss elected to drive #2501 at the German Grand Prix, and won a hard-fought second place on this most challenging of circuits. Subsequently, on 2 December Moss again chose to drive #2501 in the 1956 Australian Grand Prix, this time gaining first place.

In 1957 #2501 remained a factory team car, being driven by Schell, Behra, Hermann, Fangio, and Scarlatti, Behra achieving a second place at the Rheims GP. In 1958 the Maserati factory rebuilt #2501 to the latest specification, installing a new engine #2523, and changing the chassis number to #2523. The new owner was the plucky Italian female, Maria Teresa de Filipis, who raced #2501/#2523 throughout Europe.

In 1959, #2501/#2523 was campaigned in Europe by Scarlatti, after which its engine was removed for fitting to Colotti's creation, the Tec Mec II. In early 1960, New Zealand racing driver Ross Jensen acquired #2501/#2523 from Messrs, Neri/Colotti/ Tanner, and Scarlatti fitted the 'El Salvador' twin nostril nose and engine from his own Maserati 250F #2504.



Above: Brian Prescott, Maserati 250F 2501/2523 Levin 14 January 1961 (photo Jim Barclay); Left: Brian Prescott, winner Levin Championship 15 April 1961

Jensen subsequently sold #2501/#2523 (now renumbered by him to #2504 in order to get it back into New Zealand!), to New Zealander Brian Prescott, whose best placings in 1961/62 were three first places at Levin in April 1961.

Prescott then sold #2501/#2523 (with destroyed engine #2504) to New Zealander Leon Witte who, subsequently traded it for an Aston Martin DB3S owned by Cameron Millar of the UK. Millar then restored #2501/#2523, removing its twin nostril nose, and fitting instead a conventional 1957-style one. Millar also fitted engine #2522, one of the most successful 250F engines of all times.

Millar proceeded to race #2501/#2523 (engine #2522) in historic races for more than eight seasons, always achieving good results. From 1976, Christopher Mann, Keith Duly and Don Young variously owned the car, and in 1986 Peter Giddings became the new owner. Today, Peter races a 250F Grand Prix Maserati which began life as #2501, became #2523, unofficially became #2504, and now has reverted back to #2501/ #2523 again (this time fitted with engine #2522).

During its career, this remarkable car has raced in over 40 Grand Prix, including five appearances at the Monaco Grand Prix, four at the Syracuse, Italian, and French Grands Prix, and two at the Argentina, Buenos Aires, Naples, Belgian, and New Zealand Grands Prix. ●



Peter Giddings – 1953 Maserati 250F 2501/2523, Eastern Creek, 26–28 November 2010