Report of the Mille Miglia 2009

A BOYS DREAM BECAME TRUE

Car: Triumph TR3 Works SHP 520

Driver: John H. Houtkamp

Co-driver: Rutger H.J.P. Houtkamp

MILLE MIGLIA 2009

14 May 2009 21:39 - 16 May 2009 01:30

Car:
Triumph TR3 Works

Driver:
John H. Houtkamp

Co-Driver:
Rutger H.J.P. Houtkamp

Serviceteam:
Hans Bezemer Real Art on Wheels
- Bodie Hage
- Wessel van der Laan

Sponsors:
Bosman & Soree Tailors Amsterdam

A dream which became true

Years of dreaming and talking about the greatest classic car race in the world have finally resulted in passing the entry stage at the 1st of February 2009. At exactly 00:00 we received the great news that we were invited with our Mille Miglia '57 Triumph TR3 Works.

Preparations started directly and since the 1st of February the Triumph has been completely prepared for its revival of '57.

M.O.T checks, new tyres, a lot of test kilometers and some complete checks and improvements by Hans Kooij restauraties.

Almost everything which could go wrong went wrong. M.O.T. stations who made mistakes by completing the papers, FIVA papers with wrong engine/body numbers which resulted in not having the correct papers only 2 weeks before the start. So a bit of stress during the preparation of our dream.

A scarry moment!

Although we knew that everything was as it has to be we were both a bit nervous when driving to the scrutineering area at the Mille Miglia paddock in Brescia. You never know!

Off-course we passed, all the papers were correct and the Triumph was in the condition as described in the entry form. After receiveing the "PASSED" sticker we were certain that we could start with our dream, driving TOGETHER the Mille Miglia!

Relaxing just before the big start!

Two fantastic days did we had just before the start of the Mille Miglia. Brescia was Mille Miglia. Every shop showed Mille Miglia emotions in their windows. It was unbelievable how locals show us the way in their home town. They even gave up their tables for dinner and different people invited us for drinks. This because we were wearing fantastically designed and made poloshirts which were sponsored by Bosman & Soree tailors Amsterdam!

After collecting all the Mille Miglia presents we were ready for lessons of our big competitors/friends Bas Coret and Theo van Esch who are professionals in the world of Italian regularity rallies! Without their help we had never reached our current result. They became the first Dutch team of Mille Miglia 2009.

14-05-09 21:39 the time where we dreamed of for about 4 years!

After a small fire in the car and some problems with the gas we finally came to the point where we had dreamed over for about for 4 years. Only the last 3 months we didn't slept because of this moment. The start of the Mille Miglia was a fact. We were both very nervous but we made it to Brescia and now we were really starting at the most presticious classic car rally in the world. Together with our president Jan Peter Balkenende, Prince Bernhard and Princess Annette van Oranje-Nassau and big friend and director of Porsche in the Netherlands Ray Uiterwaal.

14-5-2009 21:39 - 02:03 the first Mille Miglia 2009 Leg

At 21:39 the start of the Mille Miglia became a fact. Directly with some heating problems but we passed the start podium and drove to the first regularity stage which was started about 2 kilometers from the start. So the real game started almost immediately. After the first part of the game we tried to drive a bit harder to give the engine its much needed cooling.

During the Mille Miglia we should drive from Brescia to Rome and back, clockwise in a circle on the fabled Mille Miglia roads crossing seven regions: Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna, the Marches, Umbria and Lazio on the way down, adding Tuscany on the way back. But in Verona we faced our first big problem. An overheated engine. The cooling fan wasn't working as it had to be. But after some very fast improvements (by Wessel van der Laan and Bodie Hagie which were our serviceteam from Hans

14-5-2009 21:39 - 02:03 the first Mille Miglia 2009 Leg

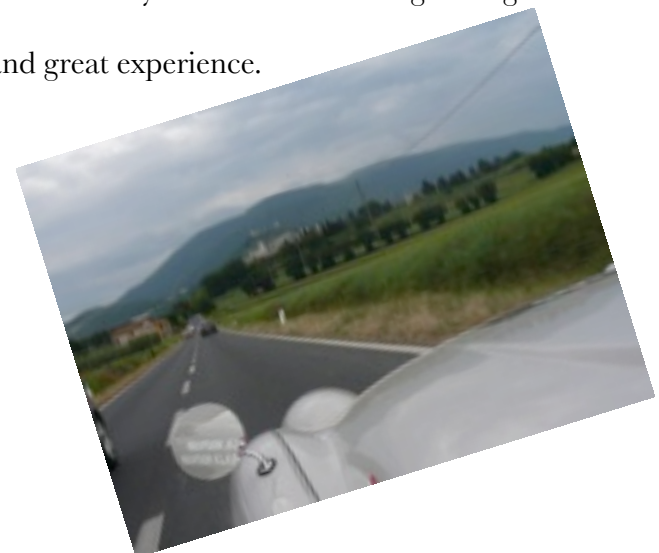
Bezemer Real Art on Wheels) we were able to drive to the finish of the first leg at Ferrara where we drove over the finish podium at 02:03.

A short night, due to the fact that our serviceteam had to fix quite some things on the car to make it ready for the big trip to Rome on the second day.

15-5-2009 09:37 - 22:03 the second Mille Miglia 2009 Leg

After a strong Espresso which was served at the roof of the Triumph we were ready for the start of 2nd day. We started exactly at 09:37 and during the day we haven't had any big problems among the heating with the car. It drove fantastically thru the small Italian villages where 10.000's of people were supporting us towards the next village. We have past approximately 600.000 supporters and almost everybody was waving.

Not only the waving supporters were amazing, also the Italian Police. We have had only 5 red traffic lights during the whole rally. The others were secured by the police and there was only one word the Italian police could say "GAS"!!. Furthermore at every highway junction, the cars were stopped so that we should not loose any minute. An amazing feeling and great experience.



15-5-2009 09:37 - 22:03 the second Mille Miglia 2009 Leg

One of the most impressive places we past was San Marino. Again we drove in very small shopping streets where cars were never allowed, but during the Mille Miglia, the 375 cars were more then welcome. From San Marino we continued our dream toward Rome.

During the second leg we have had all possible weather circumstances. 30 degrees celcius, rain, wind and even snow. Finally at around 22:03 we finished in Rome. Policemens guides us towards the finishpodium in the city centre where again 1.000's of people were waiting for the Mille Miglia cars and their drivers. It is undescribable how the Italian supporters are crazy about the cars. They do everything to touch it and become almost crazy if they get the chance to have a sit in one of the competing cars.

16-5-2009 08:37 - 17-5-2009 02:05
the third and final Mille Miglia 2009 Leg

When we started our dream we had only one wish left. Arriving in Brescia, so finishing the complete 1000 Mile. Therefore we started to drive very carefully. Although we had a fantastic serviceteam, we wouldn't have any technical problems. But during the Mille Miglia we became so fanatic that we want to be in time at every checkpoint. Also the result at the regularity stages became as important as finishing in Rome.

We really had the Italian feeling and were driving quite well towards the finish.

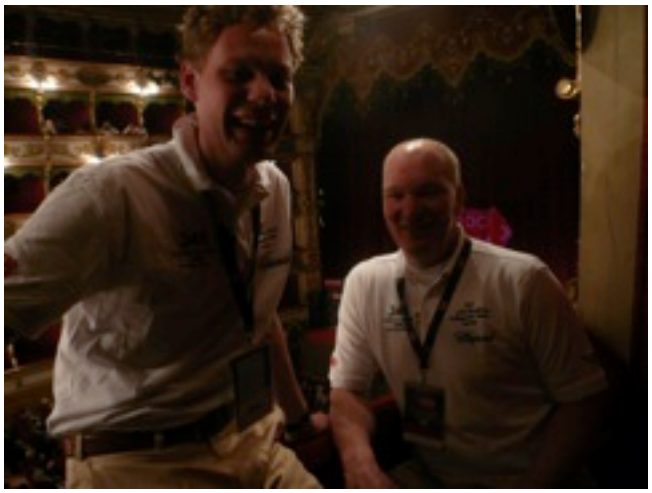
After some dissapointing minutes where we faced the crash of our serviceteam we continued our trip towards the finish in Rome. We had to drive very carefull and therefore reduced our speed drastic. Nothing had to go wrong for about 450 kilometers because that could result in the end of the race for us. Therefore the final kilometers became even more exciting and when

16-5-2009 08:37-17-5-2009 02:05 the third and final Mille Miglia 2009 Leg

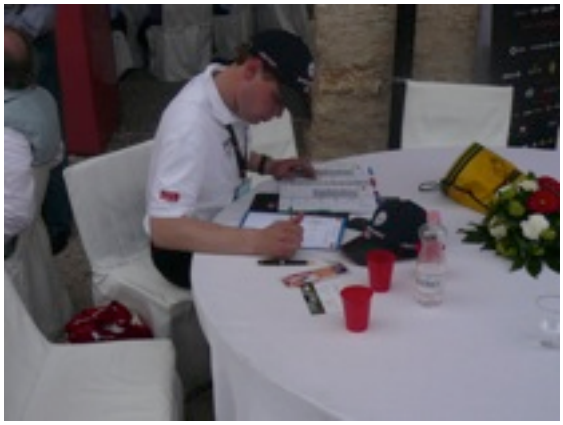
passing the Ferrari factory in Maranello we felt that we should finish. Therefore the feet pushed the gas again and for almost the last time in the Mille Miglia 2009. The thousands of people and the policemen gave us again a unique energyboost. This final boost leaded us towards the finish podium in Brescia where we finished at 02:05. The dream was almost over, but not directly. We had one very relaxed day left.

An unbelievable nice award ceremony and great farewall lunch at the Mille Miglia museum.

After the lunch we had to go back to our Triumph. With a nasty feeling in our astomic we drove the Triumph into the trailer. The dream was really over but we made it!



14-5-2009-16-5-2009
A quick overview of our experiences



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