

Ford-Ferrari Wars Round 1: Ferrari Wins! Building the Renaissance 1964 275P

by Wayne E. Moyer

Say "Le Mans" to someone of my generation and the immediate response is "Ferrari". We can't help it; Ferrari dominated the 24-Hours during the decade in which our automotive interests were fixed, winning seven of the eight races from 1958 through 1965. Even now I find it difficult to believe that it's been 42 years since Ferrari won Le Mans!

Ferrari's first serious attempt at a rear-engine sports-racer, the 246SP, was less than a howling success. It was followed in 1963 by the 3-litre 250P, a very good-looking roadster easily identified by the "basket-handle" airfoil behind the driver. Ferrari's 1964 cars looked the same but the engine was enlarged to 3.3 litres; hence the designation 275P. The result was another Ferrari victory even though the Ford GT's led for a short while. Ferrari had tried to have the 250P homologated as a production car by adding a roof, but the FIA, having been burned by the GTO (Ferrari never did build the number required for homologation) and with Ford and Shelby-American displaying the proper volume of completed cars, refused. The "250LM" - since it had the 3.3 litre engine it properly should have been the 275LM but Ferrari was still trying to get the FIA ruling changed - ran as a prototype in '65 and recorded the final Ferrari win at Le Mans.

I was much more interested in collecting Ford and Cobra models in the mid-Sixties and somehow never got around to picking up the Starter 275P kit - Ferrari was, after all, the "bad guy" in the Ford-Ferrari Wars. That didn't make much difference until I realized a couple of years ago that I needed only a few models to have all the Le Mans winners in my collection. By the time the Renaissance kit of the 275P ([REN4327](#)) was announced in "Four Small Wheels" I needed only that model and two Matras (anybody have a couple of spare Starter kits?) to complete that collection, so I immediately emailed my order to GPM.

The FBB arrived in short order and I opened it to find pretty much what I'd anticipated, a multi-medium kit well up to current standards. There are 13 resin castings, 49 photo-etched parts, a couple of which aren't used on this kit, 20 machined

and white-metal pieces, and enough lights and miscellaneous bits to bring the parts count to 95. That included four nicely assembled photo-etched wire wheels and skinny soft resin tyres for them. There are four pages of instructions in French and English, with numbered layouts of the photo-etched trees, painting instructions, and four illustrated assembly steps. I anticipated a quick and easy build.

References are plentiful; "Ferraris at Le Mans" has a full-colour shot of this car on the cover, Supercars Profile 3, "Ferrari 'P' Series" has lots of information, and Pete Lyons "Ferrari, The Man and His Machines" has some excellent colour photos of a restored 250P that are very useful.

Close inspection revealed a couple of fairly large feed tags inside the body, "ragged edges" in the wheel arch and cockpit openings, and some small pinholes on the lower edges. Cleanup took less than 20 minutes, not counting drying time for the putty and primer used on the pinholes. Bending the soft, malleable photo-etched brass windscreen frame to shape was easier than I'd anticipated and, as recommended, I glued that and the rear panel vents to the body before priming. The first coat of primer did reveal a few minor surface blemishes that were easily eliminated by sanding the general area down to bare resin - no additional filler was needed. The instructions recommend attaching the "basket-handle" before painting too, but I often have a problem getting a good paint finish under things like that so I left it off, preferring to deal with the small joint line resulting from adding it after painting.

I used Tamiya "Flat Aluminium" for the inside of the body, the rear bulkhead, and the chassis, and picked out the relief-moulded chassis tubes with Pactra "Steel" for contrast. After masking the interior I airbrushed on several coats of BBR "Original Red" ([BBV002](#)); I'm not exactly sure what its formulation is but it's definitely "GOOD STUFF"! After it dried to a nice gloss I applied the simple, accurate, and easy-to-work-with decals and completed the finish with a coat of wax - race cars then weren't the rolling works of art we see today so don't make the finish too glossy.



I found the "cut here" lines on the vac-formed windscreen were very indistinct and this made cutting the screen to the proper shape a bit of a challenge. Once cut to shape it does fit beautifully and is quite clear. A spare is provided in case you do goof. I used "Bison" glue for the first time and liked it - it's very tacky and dries quickly - clear rather than dark yellow as it comes out of the tube - but it does tend to pull out long, spiderweb-thin strings. Fortunately they can be simply rubbed off clear and waxed surfaces. Cutting out the small headlight covers was equally challenging, and it was a good thing that I dry-fitted the turned headlight buckets before applying glue. They are much too big and stick up outside the body lines.



If they were glued in place there's no way the clear covers could fit. I have a 40-year collection of aftermarket parts and left-over pieces so I was able to find some headlight rims and jewelled lenses (also missing from my kit) instead of having to contact Renaissance for proper pieces. Shortly thereafter I found that there were no tail-lights in my kit, so either my kit got the wrong parts bag or Renaissance's quality control needs some work. If you have this kit, check the lights (both ends) before you start construction unless you have a large parts box too.

I then discovered that while the model correctly has four exhaust pipes, the kit body has a slot on the lower surface for only one on each side. I had to use a Dremel Tool to make that "notch" wide enough for a pair of pipes - that's something



that would be much less stressful to do before the body is painted. With the two-tone taillight lenses, authentic number plate, louvered rear panel, and quad tailpipes, the model matched photos quite well.

All the number lights and tiny photo-etched parts fit very well, although you'll want to open up the holes again after painting. I'd anticipated problems with the thin photo-etched trim behind the seats and on the body sides, but I used "Bison" again and carefully (be still, my shaking hand) fitted them in place and they're still there after quite a bit of handling.

Photos show the instrument panel decals are correct and that the glare shield should be flat black while the panel itself is aluminium; the three-piece brown resin and photo-etched steering wheel makes a very realistic "wood-rim" wheel. Renaissance is correct in providing brake discs (paint the callipers steel) only for the front wheels and the photo-etched three-ear knock-off hubs are correct and fit well. There's no indication of seat belts in any of the photos. Details like the leather straps retaining both the hood and deck lid are also correct. The cover photo in "Ferraris at Le Mans" seems to show a clear cover over the light below the headlight, but that's the only thing that Renaissance has missed. Incorrect and missing lights aside, this was indeed an easy build. The completed model really "looks right", matching photos from all angles and its dimensions check out to 1/43 scale quite well, too. Now where can I get the '72 and '73 Matras?

