

CMC 1:18 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR #722- Moss/Jenkinson- Mille Miglia

Reviewed by: [Bill Bennett](#)



Sir Stirling Moss has frequently been referred to as "the best driver never to win the World Championship". During his racing career from 1948 to 1962, Moss won 194 of the 497 races he entered including sixteen Formula One Grands Prix. Moss's sense of sportsmanship and devotion to British cars got in the way of him winning the world championship but he was four

times the runner-up. He held the lead for the most major racing wins by an English driver until 1991 when he was surpassed by Nigel Mansell who accomplished the feat with many more racing starts. In 1999, a seventy year-old Stirling Moss was knighted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

For 1955, Moss was contracted by Alfred Neubauer to drive for the Mercedes-Benz Rennabteilung (racing team). One of the cars he drove was their 300SLR in their effort to win the World Sports Car Championship for Manufacturers. The 300SLR, a thinly-disguised version of the W196 Monoposto Grand Prix car that Moss also drove, was introduced at the Mille Miglia in May of 1955. The car was configured specifically for the race, and because the Mille Miglia was a high-speed endurance race, run over a figure-eight shaped course on public roads between Brescia and Rome and then back to Brescia, Moss chose to take along, as navigator, his friend and motorsports journalist, Denis Jenkinson. The two of them ran over the course six times in the months before the race and took extensive course notes on an 18 foot-long roll of paper that “Jenks” un-rolled during the race and transmitted the information to Moss with a set of pre-arranged hand signals.

They left Brescia at 7:22 AM (hence the car's #722) and crossed the finish-line at 5:29'48" PM setting a record of 10 hr 7 min 48 sec that has not been bested. The team's average speed was 159.65 km/hr (98 mph), a speed over 16 km/hr (10 mph) faster than the previous record. At times on the course, they reached speeds of over 280 km/hr (170+ mph). It's noteworthy that Moss's final race in the 1955 season had him co-drive with Peter Collins to race the October Targa Florio. The Moss/Collins team won the race and M-B finished 1, 2 & 4 beating Ferrari for the 1955 Manufacturer's World Sports Car Championship by one point.

CMC has done an amazing job in bringing us this historic vehicle in 1:18 scale! The build quality and the faithful reproduction of the original car leave the viewer doubting that this car can be surpassed. This became most obvious to me when I was photographing the car; no matter how tight a shot, the model always seemed indistinguishable from a full scale car! The almost universal lack of parting lines on molded pieces and the scale thickness of most of the body components gave the impression that this car was assembled from hand-formed aluminum pieces just like the real car. The car is finished in M-B's signature silver paint and the pad-printed livery is flawless.

As you explore beyond the body shell, the cockpit with blue sewn-leather door sills and plaid fabric seats looks beautifully realistic and to-scale. Moss demanded a three-spoke steering wheel and it is there in photoetch stainless with simulated wood rim. Moss straddled the transmission tunnel because the engine was laid over on its side to reduce frontal area and center-of-gravity. The switches and controls are all separate pieces and the gauges have glass faces. In contrast to the driver's side, Jenkinson's space is cramped with no door and only a seat and grab handle provided. Twin head fairings are attached to the

body at their leading edge and allow the boot to be lifted for access to the spare tires and the fuel tank and pumps. A small hinged hatch on the driver's headrest provides access to the fuel cap.

The engine is beyond belief in its precision! The massive fuel-injected straight-eight sits directly behind the huge inboard front brake drums, so configured to reduce un-sprung weight. The engine features miniscule part numbers on the cam cover and actual stainless steel hose clamps on the smallest of hoses. Do I need to say that every wire, hose, spring and tube must be there? And the finishes are all correct.....stainless steel, rubber, copper, and cast aluminum. Nothing over-done, just incredibly right! The removable wire wheels are beautifully crafted with individual wire spokes and nipples mounting Continental racing tires.

CMC's obsession with doing this car perfectly hit me like a ton of bricks. This car goes so far beyond any reasonable expectation that it literally leaves me wondering how they can do it. And they act as if each of us will tear the car apart so that sub-assemblies invisible from any direction are just as perfect as the ones in plain sight. CMC, I honestly don't know how you do it, but this is easily the best model in any scale I've ever seen. I doubt anyone, anywhere, can surpass the quality seen here! (12/29/2007)













