

Sebring 1962: Bruce McLaren has a unique distinction at Sebring. He won 3 different types of races here overall. First, the 1959 Formula 1 USGP held at Sebring in December, driving a Cooper Climax. The 2nd win was in the 3-hour support race in 1962, driving a Fiat Abarth 1000 Bialbero. The 3rd win was the 1967 12 Hours of Sebring with Mario Andretti in a Ford Mk IV. Today, we're going to focus on the lesser known 1962 3-hour support race. McLaren would actually drive in both races at Sebring in 1962, finishing 5th overall in the 12 Hours, driving with Roger Penske, in a Cooper Maserati T61.

The 1962 win in the 3-hour, under 1000cc, race wasn't easy for McLaren. First off, it had rained before the start and the track was very wet. He also had some stiff competition. Stirling Moss was driving an Austin-Healey Sprite and Moss was one of the best in wet conditions. There were several other notables entered as well, including McLaren's teammate Walt Hansgen, Pedro Rodriguez, Innes Ireland, Olivier Gendebien, and Steve McQueen.

Stirling Moss would lead for most of the race. His superior handling in wet conditions paid off until the track started drying out and, with 30 minutes to go, McLaren and Hansgen were both able to get by Moss. That's how it would end up for the top 3 overall spots: McLaren, Hansgen, and Moss. Steve McQueen did well enough and finished 9th overall.



Waiting in line at tech inspection, Bruce McLaren smiles while listening to Alfred Momo.



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The line at tech inspection. Further up you can see the Cooper Maserati T61 that McLaren and Penske would drive in the 12 Hours. Also, Rosebud Racing is dropping off their Formula Junior entries in the background.



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A nice profile shot of the winning car in the 3 Hour support race.



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Briggs Cunningham and Alfred Momo look over notes with the Fiat-Abarth representative.

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Briggs Cunningham was never afraid to get his hands dirty! I've seen many pictures of him in the middle of helping out. Notice the rain slicker and dark skies in the background.





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And they're off! Wet conditions made it tougher for some drivers.

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The #21 Austin-Healey leading 2 Fiat-Abarths, including the winner, through Webster Turn.



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Smiling at the camera. That's Walt Hansgen on the left. He finished 2nd overall. Alfred Momo center. Bruce McLaren holding the trophy on the right.