

RIGHT Hughes de Fierlant/Alain de Cadenet, driving the #9 Jacques Swaters-entered 512 M (chassis 1030), were forced to retire from the 1971 Le Mans race at around half-distance with gearbox problems. (LAT)



the end of the race a rear shock absorber top had broken off, and the shock absorber had gone up into the shift rod and tried to shift the car into another gear while it was already in gear. As a result one of the gears wasn't working correctly, and I don't know if it can be attributed to that or not, but the ring and pinion gear broke in the gearbox. With about 15 minutes to go the car came in, and I can remember when it came into the pits you could hear it go ...mmmm clunk...mmmm clunk as it grabbed the ring and pinion, and the car would move forward a bit each time. But you have to still be running at the end at Le Mans to qualify, so I kept the car in the pits for about 12 minutes or so, and then I sent it out for the last

BELOW Finishing on the podium in the 1971 Le Mans 24-Hour race was a dream for Sam Posey/Tony Adamowicz in the #12 NART/Chinetti Ferrari 512 M (chassis 1020). (LAT)

lap, and we finished third behind two Porsche 917s. When we got it back to Connecticut and opened it up, there were just three teeth left on the ring gear and one on the pinion. It probably wouldn't have made another lap!

The result must have been one of the most enjoyable and memorable times of his racing life. 'It was everything! Tony was a wonderful co-driver. I could count on him, because when I got out of the car I didn't feel as though I was handing over to somebody who was going to damage it in any way. In those days, of course, we only had two drivers per car. It was really wonderful. The race went incredibly well for us, and we were once again the first Ferrari home, which was a source of great pride to me.'



Finishing on the podium at Le Mans would normally be the crowning glory for most drivers, but Sam Posey was anxious. 'Actually I didn't enjoy it very much because I was afraid we were going to be disqualified,' he explained. 'There was a rule that you had to do your last lap within a certain percentage of your fastest lap, and the rear end of our car was shot to pieces – Tony had to coax it around, and it wasn't fast enough to satisfy that rule. So I thought they were going to take our trophy away, so I didn't enjoy that moment very much. But they didn't impose that disqualification rule and our third-place finish stood.'

Österreichring 1,000km 27 June 1971

Despite the fact that Porsche had already clinched the World Championship, the John Wyer team wanted to assert its position in the racing world, and there was still the small matter of beating those pesky Alfa Romeos. Consequently Porsche cars, both prototype and GT, accounted for 14 of the 23 starters in a much reduced field. If truth be told, the top drivers would probably rather have had their teeth pulled than miss an opportunity to prove their superiority over their rivals.

On the grid were three Ferrari 512s, two of them well-known competitors comprising the José Juncadella car (chassis 1002) and that campaigned by Herbert Müller (chassis 1044). The third car, entered by Brescia Corse (chassis 1024) and driven by Marsilio Pasotti/Mario Casoni, was the ex-Chinetti 512 S that had been converted to M-spec. The three Ferraris occupied positions five, nine and twelve on the starting grid.

In the early stages the Herbert Müller/René Herzog Ferrari rose as high as third place but succumbed to the pressures of Helmut Marko's Porsche 917. Unfortunately, the Müller and Juncadella 512s were involved in separate accidents, but when the chequered flag came down it was the Brescia Corse Ferrari that was classified in fourth place.

200 Miles of Nürnberg, Norisring 11 July 1971

Pedro Rodríguez was scheduled to drive a BRM-Chevrolet P167 in this event, but just before the race the car's engine blew while



testing. Targa Florio teammate and friend Herbert Müller offered Rodríguez his Ferrari 512 M (chassis 1008) for the race, which he duly accepted. Rodríguez was placed second on the grid, but after just 11 laps he was forced into the wall by a slower car, and the #26 Ferrari crashed and burst into flames, killing him. This tragic incident was just two weeks after the Austrian race and a week before the British GP.

Watkins Glen 6-Hours 24/25 July 1971

The Watkins Glen 6-Hours would be the final time that the Group 5 race cars would be seen in anger in the World Championships. In a race that see-sawed between Ferrari, Porsche and Alfa Romeo it was perhaps inevitable that Porsche would come out on top, as the 917s had been dominant all year.

Lined up at the start were four Ferrari 512s, three Porsche 917s of which two were the John Wyer works cars, a pair of Alfa Romeo 33/3s and a single works Ferrari 312 PB. The Ferrari 512 M of Gregg Young/Jim Adams didn't make the start due to a fuel leak. It was no doubt a surprise to many – with the possible exception of the driver himself – when Mark Donohue placed the #6 Penske/Sunoco Ferrari on pole with a time of 1:07.74, almost a full second ahead of the works Porsche 917 driven by Jo Siffert/Gijs van Lennep.

Woody Woodard recalled, 'There were two races at Watkins Glen – first the six-hour enduro and then the Can-Am. In the first race we sat on pole. At the start Mark pulled away from

ABOVE Back at base, the #14 Chinetti car (chassis 1006) driven by Masten Gregory and George Eaton in the 1971 Le Mans 24-Hours is stripped down and overhauled. The car retired early in the race due to fuel problems. (François Sicard Collection)