

autocult

FACTS & STORY

“Edition 2019” + Ferrari 312 T8 (Italy, 1976)

MODEL OF THE YEAR

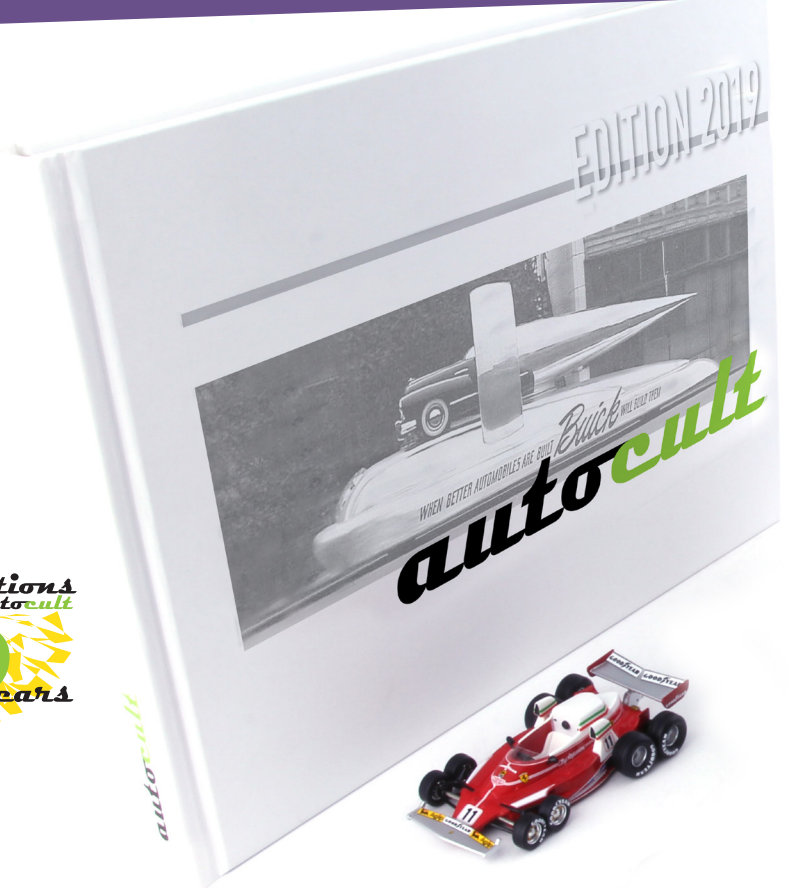
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Eight mysterious Wheels

The 184 pages book “AutoCult” is a different kind of book - it is THE book for the automotive enthusiast who wants to learn more about the many stories of long forgotten automobiles, brands and other developments. Whether rare, fast or strange – many interesting stories in conjunction with precise historical accuracy, flanked by many historical photographs and illustrations of AutoCult models, make this book (as well as all future editions) a reading experience for those interested in automotive history.

Sports- and race cars, whose engineers believed that six, instead of the usual 4 wheels, would transfer more power to road and therefore also enable a higher top speed, belong definitely to the category of automotive flops. There were many considerations about this, but always the initial euphoria came quickly to an end. Nobody seemed to have a reasonable concept that proved to have a real potential. Eventually this constructive rarity felt into oblivion, until it caused a sensation in the highest racing series.

The title pages of the December issue in 1976

and the February issue in 1977 of the British magazine Autosport showed the six-wheeled Formula One racer of the racing team Williams that featured a double rear axle. The racing team Tyrell experimented also with a similar construction named Type P34. Contrary to Williams the engineers of Tyrell went for a double front axle fitted with smaller wheels than the rear axle. In midst of this phase, in which it was believed that the question of additional power transmission from the engine to the road has been solved, Ferrari arrived on the scene with its invention. But instead of relying on an additional axle, they just added an additional wheel to the rear wheel on both sides, so called twin wheels. In this configuration the modified race car, which based on the Type 312, drove its laps steered by the Grand Prix drivers Niki Lauda and Carlos Reuteman. The number of wheels was also expressed in its type designation 312 T6. Eventually an Italian magazine capped the “multi-wheel mania” all off. They published a picture of a Ferrari, pictured from the side during a fast ride on a straight section of the track. It was clearly

identifiable as the race car of Clay Regazzoni due to the number 11. Even a correctly seeming type designation – Type 312 T8 was mentioned in the reports of the media. A vast number of fans all over the world took notice and it seemed to be the dawn of a new era. It appeared that Ferrari has made a major step in being a little bit ahead of its competitors. The euphoria of the real Ferraristas most probably knew no bounds.

But the disillusionment followed immediately as the picture was just a very good photo retouching. The fact was that the car has never existed! Today the following

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