



::: Jolly Club: that cold and misty winter evening ... :::

It could seem the beginning of an horror film, after all the environment is that one, but the history that we are about to tell is completely different. That evening of 11th February 1957, as already told, in Milan it was indeed cold and the fog covered everything creating a dark and silent atmosphere. Almost all the cafés were closed and the people in the street were really few, but not at "GIANNINO". There was a big ferment of people there and the owner, that same evening, had been informed by MARIO ANGIOLINI to reserve a table away from the confusion because they had to discuss of rather delicate matters. After the 8 p.m. the table companion arrived. A supper among friends, a glass of wine, four chatters, a signature on a contract, an handshake and go! The foundations of the future JOLLY CLUB team had been laid.

A race team constituted by eighteen friends whose rules, most of all, was based on passion, loyalty, friendship and amusement, all managed with true professionalism. The choice to constitute this association was not dictated by the case. ANGIOLINI, dynamic and vivacious person, lover of the races world, thought that the environment in which he operated was too slow and bureaucratic and of this he suffered. The decision was that to find alternative ways and new ideas to revive a sport that could hardly take off and for this the name of JOLLY (Joker in Italian) was given to the team, in reference to the popular playing card that, inside the pack, is without doubt the most versatile. ANGIOLINI didn't take alone this decision but he had the help of a precious adviser: his wife RENATA. Mrs. ANGIOLINI was a great impassioned of races cars. This depth feeling was transmitted her by the volcanic husband which often declared that "the greatest obstacle for the drivers is represented by their wives that are often left at home in a totally masculine sport". If the



wife had become co-driver of her husband or even rival in race venturing herself in the drive of a rally car, then the problem would have been solved. So he gave the way to Mrs. RENATA to try to race in car, taking part in the 1954 SUPERCORTEMAGGIORE race, where she placed first in the category reserved to the ladies. That positive experience did her "get sick" of car-racing, for the joy of her husband that could finally practice in full his passion with the approval of his wife. The couple also had a child, Roberto, he also driver, once he reached the legal age. That of the ANGIOLINI was therefore a race family and sometimes also bugbear of the adversaries, as that time in Monza with MARIO winner on an ALFA ZAGATO and RENATA and Roberto first in the respective categories.

The team foundation had a big consent in the rally environment and, only after one year of activity, it could count over three hundred affiliate. This situation, surely positive, together with the interest of some car companies among which the ALFA ROMEO, induced MARIO ANGIOLINI to constitute a real society with sponsors to get subsidies and sporting cars to race. The JOLLY CLUB began so a rosy period with a drivers group indeed formidable that boasted of names of the caliber of BUSSINELLO and ANDREA DE ADAMICH, pupil of ANGIOLINI, that became then one of the more appreciated professionals in Italy. And then IGNAZIO GIUNTI and ARTURO MERZARIO, this last known as good driver of the FERRARI team. In 1963 it begins a great, long and profitable collaboration with the LANCIA, determined to return to the rallies and to win. The new talent of the Italian rallies SANDRO MUNARI, on board of the powerful LANCIA STRATOS, wins the European Championship and then is surrendered to the Official Team where he becomes one of the more affirmed drivers in the world. In 1966 MARIO ANGIOLINI dies, leaving a heavy inheritance to his wife RENATA. At the JOLLY, she is initially looked with distrust in the environment, above all from that drivers and tuners that, accustomed to the exceptional figure as MARIO was, had to have relationships with a woman that to the appearance could seem unprovided but with a strong character indeed. Her son Roberto, besides, was only 21 years old and had little experience. Nevertheless, with the humility and the tenacity to continue MARIO's work, they succeeded in a short time, in regaining the trust and the liking of everybody. Mrs RENATA became leader in the management of the team and, today, she is still a symbol in the world of the car managing.



With the time, the successes multiplied in a series composed by unbelievable moments. Over 100.000 competitions have been disputed and more than 10.000 victories gotten by the cars and the men of the JOLLY, conquered in all the fields of the sector, also the most tiresome and difficult: from the Formula 1 to the Rally, from the Off-shore to the Motocross, from the Endurance competitions to the Formula 2 and 3. The firm JOLLY CLUB became in this way world leader thanks to the wise and profitable job of Mrs RENATA and, even more, to that done from her son ROBERTO, become skilled manager and above all talents discoverer, fundamental thing to make a great team. To him goes the honor and the worth to have understood the ability of drivers as ALESSANDRO FIORIO, group N World Champion with a LANCIA DELTA 4WD in 1987, DARIO CERRATO, European Champion in 1985 with a LANCIA 037 and Italian Rally pluri-champion with a DELTA in all of his evolutions and, finally, MIKY BIASION, driver of undisputed value, twice World Rally Champion with the MARTINI RACING but grown inside the JOLLY that allowed him to mature and to win in 1983 the European and Italian Championships. This supremacy continued for 20 long years and was equalized only in 2002 by another great of the Italian Rally: RENATO TRAVAGLIA.

These three drivers are today still an example for everybody but some other drivers have been able to make great things on board of JOLLY CLUB cars as ANDREA ZANUSSI, GIANFRANCO CUNICO, TONINO TOGNANA, 1982 Italian Rally Champion with a FERRARI 308 GTB, ADARTICO VUDAFIERI, 1984 Italian Rally Champion with a LANCIA RALLY 037 and MICHELE RAYNERI, winner in 1987 of the same prize, with the same car made in ABARTH. For all of them and for others a big Sporting Manager, skilled strategist and person of great intelligence: CLAUDIO BORTOLETTO.

Besides, it is necessary to tell that the team from Milan has been supported for years by a winning sponsor, tied up to the world of the horses: the TOTIP. From 1981 to 1989 all the cars of the JOLLY CLUB had the same white-green-orange stripes color disposed in the same way of those of the MARTINI RACING (where the stripes were red, blue and black), almost to seal a strong link among the two great Italian teams. MARTINI RACING and JOLLY CLUB-TOTIP, two names that didn't leave escape to the adversaries in every championship, two names that alone wrote the rally history. We don't want to forget what happened in 1989 at the Rally di San Remo, competition entirely disputed for few seconds among MIKY BIASION, MARTINI ensign, and ALEX FIORIO, diamond of the JOLLY. After three days and two nights spent to give driving lessons to the adversaries, the two met again on the last special stages separated only



by few seconds and, after having faced it without breath, the rally issued its verdict. BIASION first and World Champion and FIORIO at the second place and vice-champion.....only for five seconds.



In 1990 the cars of ANGIOLINI "changed their suit" but not the results. The LANCIA DELTA, now with the colors of the oil company FINA, touch on the success in the World Championship with the French AURIOL, uproarious in Corsica and at the SANREMO, but they conquer the European Championship with the Belgian DROOGMANS and the Italian one with an unstoppable DARIO CERRATO. The JOLLY CLUB, besides, in this rosy period constitutes new satellite societies to be able also to compete at the maximum levels in the small competitions. One on all must be remembered for the great achieved victories and to have made to grow champions of the caliber of PIERO LONGHI, FRANCO UZZENI and TIZIANO BORSA. We are speaking of the VAEMENIA JOLLY CLUB, team from Novara founded by a group of impassioned but supported in a grandiose way by the team in Milan. The VAEMENIA, between the end of the years 80 and the first half of the years 90, gets great successes in the Italy Cup competitions Zone 1 and 2 thanks to crews with top ambitions and top cars. Besides the ones already quoted we remember CARLO ZUCCHETTI, GABRIELE VEDELAGO, ANDREA SAGLIO and LUCA ZONCA boss of the TAM-AUTO. Memorable their sporting challenges with the usual rivals of the METECO CORSE, often won by the first one, very motivated from the link with the team number one in the world.

It is not an error to give to the JOLLY the name of "number one team" above all after the 1993 sporting happenings. In this period, in fact, LANCIA definitely abandons the races leaving to the JOLLY the heavy inheritance to continue, with the MARTINI colors, the rally activity, becoming in this way the only team to defend the Italian colors in the World Championship. After one year of unlucky settlement, with the Spanish ace CARLOS SAINZ only sixth with a tired LANCIA DELTA and with DARIO CERRATO by now at the end of his glorious career, the new JOLLY CLUB, under the management of the stainless couple ANGIOLINI-BORTOLETTO, finds new successes. Strengths are concentrated on the Italian Championship and on a couple of respect: FRANCO CUNICO and the FORD ESCORT. CUNICO, fast and winning driver, wins along the peninsula for three consecutive seasons, from 1994 to 1996. In the following two, from 1997 to 1998, because of the scarce competitiveness of the FORD in comparison to the evolved SUBARU, ends at the third and fourth place end in championships by now dominated by the Japanese houses. In 1999 CUNICO will go to the SUBARU while ANDREA NAVARRA, only survivor of the great JOLLY dynasty, won't go over the fifth final place of the championship.

Today the JOLLY CLUB team is only a memory. Of it, it remains only the logo that we can see on some car that race in East Europe and an unbelievable palma-res that puts it, together with the MARTINI RACING and the GRIFONE, among the most winning teams of every time. In 2002 the Polish driver JANUSZ KULIG, with a FORD FOCUS WRC-JOLLY CLUB placed second in the European Championship, after the excellent TRAVAGLIA, showing good things, but we are by now very distant from what we could admire along the special stages at the passage of BIASION, CERRATO, CUNICO or FIORIO. The memoirs of the engine "song" of a Fiat



131 ABARTH, of a STRATOS or of a 037, as the long passages on clammy funds searching the limit, are indelible and we believe that nothing will be able to cancel them. A last thing we would like to tell: it often happens us to cross a road in the tortuous hill, theater in past of great challenges at the "RALLY della LANA". On a wall it appears, even though faded and almost illegible, a writing: "VAI CERRATO". We feel nostalgia because we know that we will hardly see again what we lived in past. But above all do we ask ourselves "To which end has come the glorious JOLLY CLUB?" The answer is perhaps written there, on that wall made grey by the time.

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