



Forgotten F1 Teams – Andrea Moda

Welcome to Forgotten F1 Teams, a mini series brought to you by Sidepodcast. We are looking into the history books to discover some of those teams that are no longer present on the grid, and telling their story. We're onto our penultimate team now, and it is Andrea Moda.

At the end of the 1991 season, shoe manufacturer Andrea Sasseti bought the ailing Coloni F1 team. They had failed to pre-qualify for every single race for two seasons, but Sasseti clearly thought he could change their fortunes. He kept a lot of the Coloni staff on, and signed a deal with Simtek to run a car previously designed for BMW. He signed up with Judd engines, and thus Andrea Moda was born.

Their new car, though, wasn't ready for the start of the season, so they turned up to the South African Grand Prix with an old Coloni chassis. Alex Caffi and Enrico Bertaggia were drafted in to drive the cars, but neither of them pre-qualified. As it turns out, it didn't matter, as the team were excluded from the event. Sasseti had been contacted by the FIA and asked to pay the \$100,000 due for a new team entrant. Andrea refused to pay, arguing that he was not presenting a new team, but had bought the Coloni entry. In the end, he had to pay the fee, despite previous teams in similar situations not having had to do so.

At the next event, the Mexican Grand Prix, the drivers and team turned up prepared to race, but their cars were again not ready. This time, they did not participate in the Grand Prix, and neither driver stuck around for the next few races.

Roberto Moreno and Perry McCarthy were brought in. Moreno didn't qualify for the race, whilst McCarthy was refused a superlicence and also didn't race. The team's first entry into a race came at Monaco, with Moreno finally reaching qualifying. He started 26th but retired after only 11 laps due to engine problems.

In Canada, the team found themselves with no engines, as Sasseti had failed to pay his bills with Judd. Instead, they borrowed some Judd motors from Brabham, but neither driver qualified for the race. By this time, people were starting to leave the team, and things were getting a little bit embarrassing.

Ahead of the French Grand Prix, a protest by local truck drivers caused chaos. All the teams were affected, but it was only Andrea Moda who didn't make it to the race. With so little in the way of results, and so much in the way of not showing up to races, any sponsors the team had began to rapidly withdraw. Short of money, and beginning to realise what a challenge he had set himself, Sasseti began to favour Moreno. At the Hungarian GP, there was a guaranteed space on the grid due to other team movements, and it was an easy decision for Sasseti to make. McCarthy was let out of the pit lane with just 45 seconds to go, meaning he had no chance of setting a decent lap time.

The favouritism was so obvious that the FIA, or FISA as they were then, issued the team with a warning. They needed to make the effort with McCarthy, to show they were at least trying, or they couldn't compete.

Once again, at Spa, pre-qualifying was unnecessary, as the Brabham team had pulled out. Both cars made it into qualifying, but were at least fifteen seconds off the pace. During that race weekend as well, police entered the paddock at Spa and arrested Andrea Sasseti on charges of fraud. He had allegedly been forging invoices.

The team were turned away from the paddock at Italy and banned for the rest of the season for bringing the sport into disrepute.



That's all for this episode, thank you for listening. You can leave your thoughts on the shambles that was Andrea Moda on the blog, Sidepodcast.com, or via voicemail on 0121 28 87225. I will be back tomorrow with our final foray into history with the last episode of Forgotten F1 Teams.

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