

## 1987

### The F40 is unveiled at the Frankfurt Motor Show

Lean, pure, extreme, uncompromising, the preserve of the lucky few. That is exactly the car Enzo Ferrari wanted to celebrate the company's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Lean as its name: the F40. Pure as the iconic lines of its bodywork. Extreme as the performance it could deliver. Uncompromising because it was - very deliberately - stripped of the electronic control systems designed to come to the assistance of less expert drivers.

The F40 is all that and much more. Bursting with indomitable character, it is a genuine supercar, an extreme evolution of the 308 GTB and the GTO Evoluzione, the prototype that inspired its lines and solutions. In other words, it is a real Ferrari as a delighted Enzo Ferrari himself liked to say when asked what he thought of it. That said, Ferrari also wanted the F40 to deliver a uniquely powerful emotional impact on more than just its drivers. The F40 was the state-of-the-art in terms of its power, thanks to a twin-turbo 90° V8 engine that generated almost 160 hp/litre by virtue of twin intercoolers and IHI turbos, punching out a total of 478 hp. An engineering masterpiece supported by a central integrated tubular steel and composite structure of a kind previously only used in the Formula 1 single-seaters. This solution worked well with a tubular steel chassis to which Kevlar reinforcement panels were bonded guaranteeing three times the torsional rigidity of a regular road car. The result was that the F40 weighed just 1,100 kg. This fact combined with a set-up and suspensions adjustable to three different heights to suit different speeds, guaranteed the model astonishing road-holding and extreme performance figures, most notably a top speed of 324 km/h and 0 to 100 km/h acceleration in just 4.1 seconds.

Enzo Ferrari's final and definitive car's styling was, of course, well on a par with its technological prowess. It had a stunning fibreglass body, for a start. Crafted by Pininfarina around the technical and stylistic design produced by engineer Nicola Materazzi, the F40 made no secret of its racing roots and aerodynamic ambitions. Its low nose and compact overhang, huge rear spoiler and aggressive air intakes lent it a hugely aggressive, dynamic and exquisitely Ferrari charisma.

When it was officially unveiled at Maranello's Centro Civico on July 21 1987, 900 orders flooded in. Although its original list price was 380 million lire, the F40 was soon changing hands for 1.6 billion lire.

Even the great one-off connoisseur Gianni Agnelli had a customised version built that would go down in history as the "F40 Valeo". This particular car was equipped with the Mondial T's automatic clutch which was coupled with an electronic version that could engage and disengage at 100 milliseconds. The cabin also featured black rather than red fabric trim.

## 1988

### Enzo Ferrari dies on 14 August aged 90

The founder of the Prancing Horse died aged 90 years and 178 days, leaving clear instructions for the funeral ceremony and how to communicate the event. As always in life, even in anticipation of death Enzo Ferrari left nothing to chance.

The year started out as ever, with Ferrari as always with his nose firmly to the grindstone. He loved to work. Except for a few day trips to Viserba di Rimini, where he owned a home, he never went on holiday. One of the days he hated most was Ferragosto, Italy's August Bank Holiday, when everything stops.

On 14 January, accompanied by his loyal driver Dino Tagliazucchi, he went to the Maranello town hall for a very important meeting. He and the Mayor of Modena, Alfonsina Rinaldi, signed the papers authorising the demolition of the old Scuderia headquarters in Viale Trento e Trieste. A little over two weeks later he made his final public appearance, when on 1 February he received an honorary physics degree from the University of Modena. The ceremony took place at the city hall and what struck the keenest observers present was that Ferrari looked exhausted. It seemed that the years had finally begun to catch up with him.

Just over two weeks later he celebrated his 90th birthday, an event that gives us a good idea of how the founder saw things. There was to be no public ceremony, no authorities invited to participate, but simply a "family event" open "to people on the payroll", as Ferrari ordered. The family sat down to eat on the production lines with about 1700 people, with a huge field kitchen outside. Employees received a model of the F40, the last car personally signed off by Ferrari, along with a silver commemorative medal. The menu was typically Emilian: ham, sausage, cracklings, mortadella, fried dumplings and pickled vegetables as an hors d'oeuvres accompanied by Malvasia wine; tortellini pasta with cream and lasagne for the first course and Zampone of Modena with beans and a veal cutlet with baked vegetables for the main. The meal was accompanied by Lambrusco wine. It concluded with birthday cake and sparkling wine for the toast.

Ferrari enjoyed the company's affection, but a few weeks later his health took a turn for the worse. The clinical picture was badly complicated by kidney failure that meant him spending long days at his home in Modena on dialysis. His trips to Maranello were sporadic and in June, when Pope John Paul II visited the company, he only spoke to the pontiff by phone. Piero Ferrari accompanied the Pope on his tour of the factory. Enzo followed the summer grands prix from his bed at home and passed away at 7 am on 14 August.

As the founder himself had ordered, the news of his death was not announced until the following day after 8 am, by which time the funeral had taken place. Only a very small number of people were invited to attend, whom Ferrari personally included on a handwritten list. And in what was almost a final "prank" for lovers of Ferragosto, such as journalists, Ferrari made the media work like never before on this public holiday. The announcement of his death, even though the Internet was not yet widely used, went around the world and dominated the headlines.

Just under a month later, with the grieving not yet over, the Italian GP was staged at Monza. The Ferraris started from the second row, behind the unbeatable McLarens of Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost. Up to that point the British team had amassed eight one-twos in 11 races and looked capable of winning all 16 rounds. However, the unexpected happened at Monza: Prost's engine went up in smoke at mid-race while Senna, who had a huge lead over the two Ferraris, ended up out of the race after a misunderstanding with the Williams of the lapped Jean-Louis Schlesser, four laps from the end. Gerhard Berger crossed the line first ahead of the other Ferrari of Michele Alboreto. It was clear to whom the drivers and team dedicated the win and all the newspapers the next day spoke about a victory ordained from on high...

## 1989

Nigel Mansell wins the Brazilian Grand Prix with an F1-89, equipped with steering wheel controlled gearbox

Mere milliseconds can make all the difference between victory and defeat. And finishing second just means being the first of the losers. That, in a nutshell, is Formula 1, the very pinnacle of motor sport in which the best teams, cars and drivers do constant battle for supremacy. An arena in which technology rules.

Take steering wheel-mounted gearshifting, for example. It was tried and tested in Formula 1 and is now standard on all self-respecting sports cars. Thirty years ago, however, this was far from the case. In fact, the mere idea was unimaginable. Back in 1979, the Scuderia had developed an electrohydraulic gearbox and tested it on a 312 T3 laboratory car. Rather than the traditional gear lever inside the cockpit, Ferrari's unique system used two buttons on the steering wheel to change the gears. The buttons activated electromagnetic valves that, in turn, activated actuators in the gearbox. However, the advanced electronics required to make the system work were not yet available and it was mothballed. That said, the experiment was not in vain.

Ten years later, now armed with new technology, Ferrari went down the same route and, in the process, ushered in a whole new era in Formula 1, courtesy of the revolutionary F1-89 (design no. 640), the brainchild of John Barnard. A car that was, to all intents and purposes, the first of the present generation of electronically-managed single-seaters.

The new F1-89 sported an innovative aerodynamic body, push-rod suspension with torsion bars, and the latest iteration of the naturally-aspirated V12 which punched out 600 bhp at 12,000 rpm. Nonetheless, the real jewel in the F1-89's crown was its gearbox with electronic management, controlled by twin paddles mounted behind the steering wheel. The driver used the right hand one to go up through the gears and the left hand one to go down. The gearbox itself was a conventional longitudinal transmission in which the gears were selected by hydraulic selectors controlled by electrohydraulic actuators. The advantages to the driver were obvious: he could now focus more fully on driving, resulting in faster lap times as well as fewer errors and instances of the engine over-reving, thereby improving the reliability of power units and gearboxes alike.

Reliability. Therein was the rub. This, unfortunately, was exactly what the F1-89 seemed to lack on the eve of the first race of the 1989 season in Brazil. The technology was still too new and bets were laid in the paddock over how many laps Gerhard Berger and his new team-mate Nigel Mansell would last on the circuit at Jacarepaguá, just outside Rio de Janeiro. There was so little faith in the new system that Mansell himself even booked his flight home for late afternoon as he was certain his race would finish early.

But as it turned out, the British Lion's red car with race number 27 lined up in sixth position on the starting grid on the swelteringly hot day of the race and then proceeded to race hitch-free for longer than it had ever done in testing. In the end, it completed all 61 laps of the grand prix and roared across the finish-line to victory over seven seconds ahead of the McLaren-Honda of Alain Prost. The hands of Ferrari's rivals were swollen from all the gear shifting they'd done throughout the race, but the only marks on Mansell's came from lifting the winner's cup on the podium. The Prancing Horse had just written yet another milestone chapter in Formula 1 history.

## 1990

### Alain Prost wins the French GP giving Ferrari its 100<sup>th</sup> F1 victory

On Friday, 6 July 1990 the Paul Ricard Circuit in Le Castellet celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday by hosting the French Formula 1 GP for the final time. It was the seventh race of a season that was panning out as expected, with another great duel between Ayrton Senna for McLaren and the champion Alain Prost who, over the winter, had moved to Ferrari and was fresh from victory in Mexico. The Frenchman had already won in Brazil, home of his rival, while Senna had triumphed in Phoenix, in the USA, Monaco and Canada. Riccardo Patrese won the day with the Williams at San Marino.

At Paul Ricard Ferrari looked on the same form as when it dominated in Mexico City. Nigel Mansell took pole position, but Prost was just as satisfied after having to qualify with his race engine when the more powerful unit went up in smoke in practicing. The Frenchman was fourth, behind the two McLarens of former Ferrari driver Gerhard Berger and Senna.

The tyres were the main concern ahead of the race, with the fear that two pit stops would be needed to complete the race. But one previously insignificant team had an ace up its sleeve. Leyton House, formerly March, had a car that adhered so tightly to the regulations that drivers Ivan Capelli and Mauricio Gugelmin failed even to qualify in Mexico. The designer, 27-year-old Adrian Newey, had just left the team, but before leaving he introduced an aerodynamic update on the CG901 that really suited the Le Castellet track.

While all the teams were concentrated on finishing the race on only one stop, Leyton House was preparing a coup: to finish the race without a pit stop. At the start Berger overtook Mansell while Senna was third ahead of Prost. The early part of the race was slow and it was the tyre changes that made the difference. Prost's car came into the pits on Lap 26 and set off again seven seconds later. Shortly after, Mansell also stopped while the McLarens stayed out until after lap 30. Senna overtook Berger who lost 12 seconds in the pits, not a good stop but it was nothing compared to what Senna would lose - 16 seconds - on his later pit stop. It would all have been looking good for Ferrari were it not now clear that the two Leyton House cars would try to go the whole way without stopping.

Mansell was forced to retire while Prost caught up with Gugelmin although overtaking was rather tricky. Leyton House's new aero package allowed the British car to exit the bends better than the Ferrari, which then, on the straight, failed to take advantage of the superior power of its V12 to drive home an attack. Gugelmin held out for a long time but eventually gave way to Prost who slowly also closed in on Capelli. It was the 60<sup>th</sup> of 80 laps and, again, it was a mistake to think that it would be easy for the Frenchman to overtake the Italian. Capelli was having the best race of his career, one which in fact earned him a salary at Ferrari in 1992. He fought tooth and nail, only succumbing to the Ferrari with three laps to go.

Prost crossed the line first in front of Capelli and Senna. This was Ferrari's 100<sup>th</sup> win, while Alain, with his second consecutive victory, threw the world championship race open again, now just three points behind the Brazilian. Maranello led the constructors' rankings, followed by McLaren on 83 points, Lotus 79, and Williams 43. A few hours later, at the Olympic Stadium in Rome, Germany and Argentina kicked off for the World Cup final, but for Italian fans the day's most important match was already won.

## 1991

### Launch of the 512 TR, heir to the Testarossa

It is difficult to evolve an icon like the Testarossa. Difficult, but not impossible, and in 1992 Ferrari responded with the 512 TR. While keeping the conceptual framework that had stunned the world in 1984, the new car featured a number of external cosmetic changes that improved the aerodynamics of the elegant Pininfarina lines, while the interiors were more comfortable and ergonomic.

The new car marked a return to the use of acronyms: the “5” refers to the engine capacity in litres, the “12” to the number of cylinders and “TR” stands for Testa Rossa. It was unveiled at the Los Angeles Motor Show, an event always interested in all news from the world of the Prancing Horse.

The 512 TR can be distinguished from its inspirational predecessor by the redesigned radiator grille, which was more in line with the new design trends introduced with the 348. The light clusters are embedded in the body on either side of the grille, which continued to play more of an aesthetic than aerodynamic role, while the traditional pop-up headlights were retained.

With the advent of the 512 TR, the raised section and the side air vents of the revised profile were painted in satin black, while the portion of vents located in the tail were keyed the same colour as the body.

There was also a tiny, barely perceptible difference in the profile of the rear buttresses - which in the 512 TR were linear and connected directly to the roof panel, instead of a step and a perforated grille edge as on the Testarossa.

New alloy wheels were also introduced, as a very stylish interpretation of the traditional Ferrari five-pointed star shaped design. These rims concealed big drilled and ventilated disc brakes with 4-piston callipers. The independent suspension and steering systems were based on the Testarossa's, albeit with small variations and adjustments to adapt to larger diameter wheels and to ensure more precise handling.

The 12-cylinder boxer engine, with four valves per cylinder and dry-sump lubrication, was an improved version of the drive unit used in the Testarossa, thanks to the adoption of the Bosch Motronic injection system. Although capacity remained an identical 4943 cc, the numerous changes boosted output by 38 hp: 428 hp on models for the European market, 421 hp at the same rpm on models made for the United States. This increase in power improved acceleration, while the top speed was similar to that of the previous model.

The 12-cylinder Boxer was also 30 mm closer to the ground: lowering the centre of gravity to improve road holding and handling, increasing traction and generally improving driving flexibility.

## 1992

The 456 GT, a new benchmark for style and elegance, is presented at the Paris Motor Show

In Paris in 1992, Pininfarina presented a true Prancing Horse classic: a front-engined GT, driven by a traditional 12-cylinder engine and capable of exceptional performance. The Turin-based design house and coachbuilder fulfilled the task in admirable fashion by creating yet another simple and elegant shape, and adding yet another Ferrari of incomparable class and charm to an already extensive list.

The “theme” of the 2+2 coupé reached its apotheosis in the 456 GT of 1992, after three years with no similarly configured V12 model in the Prancing Horse range.

Announced in September 1992, at the 40th anniversary of an important Belgian dealer, the 456 GT made its public debut in Paris the following month.

The soft, rounded lines drawn by Pininfarina, as a modern reinterpretation of the unforgettable 365 GTB/4 “Daytona” with its long bonnet and retractable pop-up headlights, which then move up towards the passenger compartment, immediately received unanimous praise from the public and critics.

The design of the tail and the cockpit also drew inspiration from the “Daytona” - the car’s shape is quite modern but contains classic elements referring to the history of the company. The motorised spoiler underneath the tail panel provides a special, almost imperceptible aerodynamic effect: its angle of incidence varies depending on the speed and acts on the downforce of the car.

As with all other models in the range, the car was designed from the outset for all world markets, with a specific version for the American market. However, while previous GT 2+2 models could come with an automatic transmission, the 456 GT was initially offered only with manual transmission. Another analogy with the Daytona is that the gearbox is mounted in a single unit with the differential and final drive: the well-known transaxle system.

The engine was completely new: the first 12-cylinder unit after the famous 12 “Boxer”, 20 years earlier. With a total capacity of 5,474 cc, the engine produces 442 hp at 6,200 r/min.

The stylish leather finish interior came as standard and the electrically adjustable front seats automatically move forward to make access to the rear easier, where two adults can fit in adequate comfort.

To fully utilise the boot space, the car came with a set of suitcases as standard.

## 1993

### Launch of the Ferrari Challenge, the first Maranello single-make championship

One of Ferrari's greatest strengths has always been its focus on fostering close relations with its clients by attempting to meet as many of their needs as possible. Particularly in the case of exclusive products like sports cars, the relationship between supplier and purchaser has to be carefully nurtured each and every day. Attentiveness and the ability to listen are vital factors as is a willingness to innovate and create initiatives that mirror clients' dreams and ambitions.

In 1991, Ferrari realised there was a growing interest amongst owners in using their cars on the track. Just a year later, the idea took shape of creating a high-level single-make championship. Contact was made with the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) to guarantee the highest standards of safety would be met. Ferrari also entered into talks with some of Italy and Europe's finest and most spectacularly beautiful circuits to allow clients to compete on suitably atmospheric tracks. From the very earliest stage of the rule drafting process, it was decided to allow only official Ferrari dealerships to compete to guarantee absolute transparency in performance terms.

The Prancing Horse officially announced the launch of the Ferrari Challenge at Mugello in the autumn of 1992. It would span an Italian and a European series, each comprising six rounds of which the final one would be shared. On that same day, Ferrari also unveiled the TB and TS versions of the 348 Challenge, the car chosen for the series. In line with the tradition of allowing road cars to be converted into racing versions, the 348 was equipped with a special kit which, once removed, returned the car to its original configuration. The kit comprised a roll cage, six-point safety harnesses, 18" magnesium wheels, a fire extinguisher, front and rear tow hooks, and an electric circuit breaker. The 348 Challenge's engine unleashed 320 horses, 20 or so more than the road version. The brakes too were boosted.

The Italian series was first to debut with its maiden round getting underway at Monza on March 28. The first ever Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli race was won by Paolo Rossi in car no. 5, an almost fluorescent 348. Race 2 was won by Roberto Ragazzi who went on to become the Ferrari Challenge's first champion at the end of the season. The first round of the European series, on the other hand, took place at Magny-Cours, just a week later and both races were dominated by Bernd Hahne, brother of 1970s Formula 1 driver, Hubert. The German also won the first European title and triumphed at the Finalissima at Mugello.

The Ferrari single-make championship proved such an instant international success that it was decided to launch a North American series in 1994. Celebrities of the likes of singer Eros Ramazzotti and sports personalities such as skier Kristian Ghedina frequently appear in the Italian and European series. The Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli continues to go from strength to strength with three continental series and around 150 cars doing battle on the world's most beautiful circuits each year. In all, over 1,000 drivers have competed in the Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli since 1993, many of whom have gone on to excel in high-profile GT championships, signalling the Ferrari series as a hothouse for talented closed-wheel drivers.



## 1994

F512 M, the latest model produced with twelve-cylinder centrally mounted boxer engine

Can a masterpiece be improved by a copy made years later? The answer may be yes, looking for example at the famous “Virgin of the Rocks” by Leonardo Da Vinci. The first version of this work, now kept in the Louvre, was painted some time between 1483 and 1486, while the second, found at the National Gallery in London, was completed between 1506 and 1508. The differences between these two versions may seem imperceptible to a casual observer, but not when subject to in-depth analysis. Similarly, the F512 M is a reworking of the Testarossa from the 1980s, but an improvement on it in many important details.

The F512 M is not only the most developed version of the Testarossa series, but is also the rarest. It was the last of the Ferraris with the centrally positioned twelve-cylinder boxer engine, derived from the famous 312 T that dominated Formula 1 in the 1970s. Obviously Ferrari technicians profoundly revised and optimised the unit fitted to the F512 M, particularly in terms of its thermodynamic characteristics and kinematics, with undoubted benefits for maximum power, now increased to 440 hp. The increase in power provided improved acceleration over the previous model and, because various parts of the car were now lighter, there was also a better power to weight ratio.

The letter “M” that appears next to the F512, and that indicates the “Modified” version of the car, was no mere marketing operation, but emphasises the in-depth work carried out on every part of the model. This can be seen, for example, in the improved aerodynamic penetration, achieved through big changes to the lines and the shape both at the nose and the tail. However, the Pininfarina designers and Maranello engineers focussed mainly on the front.

The new nose line was closely related to that of the 355 model and with the style of the 456 GT 2 + 2. The most radical change in the appearance of the front, from the original Testarossa or the 512 TR was the disappearance of the double retractable headlamps, replaced by fixed omofocal type units protected by a glass cover. The bonnet was fitted with a pair of small NACA ducts, situated towards the windscreen, which convey air to the improved air conditioning system. The stain black full-width horizontal grille in the tail is smaller and its sides contain new circular twin rear lights, in stylistic homage to the history of the company.

The F512 M, which replaced the 512 TR, was presented at the Paris Motor Show in the autumn of 1994 although it was shown in secret at Maranello to a number of foreign specialist magazines by official Scuderia driver, Jean Alesi. This car also uses an “F” (for Ferrari) as a prefix to the model numbers. In this case it indicates as previously on the 512 TR, its five-litre engine capacity and the number of cylinders. However, the suffix “M”, in addition to indicating the “Modified” version, is itself a tribute to the letter that Ferrari used on the 512 S competition sports car prototypes of the early 1970s when they were updated to the 512 M.



## 1995

Production begins on the F50, a true F1 road car

*“Just think of 4 camshafts rotating 4,300 times a minute. Imagine 60 valves opening 70 times a second and 12 pistons pumping in a blur of speed. Now also imagine that you are in there with our oil and think of the stresses it has to endure. At maximum power output, every stroke of the Ferrari F50’s pistons unleashes a 4-ton load on the bushings and all that is protecting the latter from instantaneous destruction is an incredibly thin film of lubricant. Why does Ferrari trust only Shell Helix Ultra? Because, just like the F50 engine, Shell Helix Ultra is the product of Formula 1 technology”.* The direct link between the Ferrari F50’s bloodline and Formula 1 not only transcends technological confines but also communications barriers as can be seen from the voiceover for an ad for Maranello’s longstanding lubricant supplier featuring the car’s powertrain. Designed to celebrate the Scuderia Ferrari’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and unveiled at the Geneva International Motor Show, the model genuinely was a road-going Formula 1 car.

However, Formula 1’s direct influence wasn’t limited solely to the engine (the 12-cylinder sported by the 640 and 641 fielded by Nigel Mansell and Alain Prost, albeit boosted from 3,500 to 4,698 cc), it also impacted the car’s overall concept. Just like the single-seater, the engine was a weight-bearing member with the push-rod rear suspension mated to it. The front suspensions, which attached to the carbon-fibre chassis, were inspired by those of the 1980s 126 C too. The use of cutting-edge materials also pointed to the F50’s close links with the Formula 1 cars.. The engineers used everything from carbon-fibre to titanium for the con rods and front hubs, and magnesium and aluminium alloy for the wheel rims. The rear hubs, on the other hand, adopted a solution invented and patented by Ferrari for its single-seaters that reduces power loss.

Crafted once again by Pininfarina, the F50’s styling took 2,000 hours of wind tunnel testing to perfect and effortlessly combined iconic styling features with extreme technical and aerodynamic demands. It is in that particular regard that the F50 stands head and shoulders above its rivals of the day. Its underbody generates downforce that guarantees exceptional ground effect with lateral acceleration of up to 1.4 G i.e. very close to a Formula 1’s figure. The car’s grip was boosted too by Goodyear Fiorano tyres developed specifically for it.

## 1996

### Michael Schumacher triumphs in the Spanish Grand Prix with Ferrari

The Monaco Grand Prix took place at the Monte Carlo circuit on 19 May 1996. Michael Schumacher's Ferrari F310 was on pole. On this unique circuit Schumacher had again displayed all his qualities. A light rain was falling over the Principality, which only added to the fans' confidence, because the German was always among the fastest in the wet.. However, the unexpected happened: Michael started badly, losing first position and, while chasing the Williams of David Coulthard, took a wet rubbing strip too confidently at the Portier corner to end up against the barriers: "I made a serious mistake, throwing an excellent opportunity to the wind," he said, adding: "I thank the team for the work done. I owe Ferrari's fans."

The chance to repay that debt came two weeks later in Spain. In qualifying, in the dry, the Williams called the shots as it did all season.. Damon Hill won pole position four tenths of a second ahead of Jacques Villeneuve and almost a second in front of Schumacher. However, on race day it was pouring. It looked like the race would start behind the Safety Car but at the last moment the race director decided that it could go ahead as normal.

The cars set off gingerly over the soaking wet Catalan asphalt, and Schumacher had one of the worst starts, slipping to seventh place by the first corner, behind his team-mate Eddie Irvine. Meanwhile, the race director's decision proved way off the mark with five cars retiring in the first lap alone. Irvine joined them on the second lap, going into a spin and his engine stalling.

On lap 3 Schumacher was already in a battle with the Benetton of Gerhard Berger for fourth place, although the duel quickly became one for third place because, in the meantime, race leader Hill had spun. Indeed, Hill would spin again before ending his race against the pit wall. Thus Villeneuve took the lead ahead of the other Benetton of Jean Alesi. Schumacher was third having overtaken Berger on lap 4, before speeding off in pursuit of the Frenchman.

Jean was a wizard in the rain but Michael had an excellent day. In less than no time he was in the slipstream of the Benetton and by the ninth lap was in second place. The number of laps Villeneuve would stay in the lead also appeared numbered. Just three laps passed before the Ferrari took the lead and, by lap 13, Schumacher had stretched the gap to four seconds ahead of the Canadian. Michael was the absolute master of the race: lap after fast lap, he built up a lead over everyone. His 14<sup>th</sup> lap was the fastest of the race in 1:45:571. The fastest of the others, Rubens Barrichello for Jordan, was 2.2 seconds slower.

From the outside you might have thought that everything was going smoothly. But actually Schumacher's incredible pace masked difficulties with his engine, the 046 V10, a type that the federation had imposed on all manufacturers. Indeed, on lap 18 one or two cylinders stopped working due to water infiltration to the point that anyone with an ear for these things began to fear a breakdown.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> lap the engine was running well again but seven laps later the worrying sound returned. Michael's lead over the first of his pursuers, Alesi, dropped from one minute to 45 seconds but the day was destined for a happy ending. The F310 crossed the finish line first and Schumacher notched up his first victory with the Scuderia to kick off a series that would only end 10 years and 71 wins later at the 2006 Chinese Grand Prix.