

## "TROFEO" RACE SERIES TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT ALFA CLUB SOUTH AFRICA'S GAUTENG EXTRAVAGANZA

### Alfa Gathering



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In 2003, a group of Alfa Romeo enthusiasts got together at Zwartkops Raceway in Pretoria and established an informal race series for pre 1985 Alfa Romeo cars. With Zwartkops at the time running monthly "Hi-Speed Trials" open days, the perfect opportunity arose for these amateur racers to strut their stuff. With entrants ranging from standard road going Alfas from the Giulietta series of the 50's, through to full race modified GTV 6's, with a few Giulias, Berlinas and Suds thrown in the mix, things were bound to get exciting.

After a few events at Zwartkops and Midvaal run on a primitive handicapping system, order was required, and the Alfa Romeo Club of South Africa (ARCSA) stepped in. With the club only too happy to once again be involved in motorsport, the Trofeo members were welcomed with open arms. As things progressed, and the racing circuits had to concentrate on MSA (Motorsport South Africa) sanctioned events, opportunity to race on a casual basis became few and far between for the keen band of Trofeo drivers. Taking the bold next step, the Trofeo management stepped up to the MSA plate and took a swing. After a few months of negotiations, rules and regulation writing and submission, MSA approved the series as a sanctioned Club Championship Series, run under the control of MSA's Northern Regions Committee. This has led to a professionally run series with clear aims and objectives.

The series is open to any pre-1985 Alfa Romeo driver who is a paid up member of ARCSA, and a holder of a current valid MSA Club Motorsport licence. Eligible cars include any Alfa Romeo designed and built before 1985, either imported or locally assembled. The field is divided into 3 main classes, Ti, for standard road going vehicles with only safety biased modifications, Veloce, for modified street cars, and GTA, for full blown race cars. As the series is run on a handicap system developed by the Trofeo members themselves, the chances of seeing a standard Sud going home with the laurels ahead of a 200 hp GTV on race slicks are guaranteed.

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Competitors are encouraged to drive their cars to and from race meetings (street legality permitting), and race budgets range from R 500.00 upwards, depending on individual needs. Ladies are also welcomed, and have provided some notable performances in the series over the past few seasons. Most Trofeo racers are avid motorsport competitors, and won't easily let the opportunity to race slip by. Seeing a handful of Giulias chasing down Mini Coopers and Lotus Cortinas during the "Legends of the Nine Hour" series, or Alfetta GT's and Juniors doing battle with Anglias and Escorts in HRCR Historic Touring Car events is common. Many of the Trofeo drivers have evolved from armchair racers to seasoned competitors, with one driver having made it to National Production Cars with notable success.

Trofeo drivers, however, remember their roots, and will always be at hand when saving the odd rust bucket is required. A few forgotten Alfas have been rescued and transformed at reasonable cost into competitive race cars. The Trofeo members' love for all things Alfa is foremost, and racing, although close and competitive, would never intentionally lead to bumping and barging. A generous "parts bin" has been established informally amongst the members, with used parts often being swapped out in order to ensure these cars stay on the track. Race days are notable for their camaraderie as fellow competitors assist with mechanical repairs, racing tips, or just plain casual banter. Their aim is to see these cars with inherently sporting performance, handling and power put to good use over weekends, in the hope the passion never dies. For further information on the Alfa Clubs' of South Africa please visit [www.alfaclub.co.za](http://www.alfaclub.co.za)

## **SOUTH AFRICAN ALFA ROMEO ENTHUSIASTS' DESCEND ON GAUTENG FOR THEIR NATIONAL GATHERING**



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Gauteng was elected for the first time to play host to the Alfa Romeo Clubs of South Africa National Gathering. Previous years Gatherings have taken place in Cape Town, Bloemfontein & Port Elizabeth. In the past, the National Gatherings have taken place only every five years, however in future they will occur every three years.

The weekend started on Friday 27 April with the all the participants meeting to collect their gift packs and other information of the weekend's events. The National Gathering was officially started by Paul Williams of AROSA (Alfa Clubs of South Africa governing body), with a speech detailing upcoming events. Following that was a social supper, and time to meet most of the out of town members.

Saturday's schedule consisted of track sessions for Alfa Club members, Dealerships and Alfa Trofeo (our local, Pre 85 Alfa Romeo only racing group) at the Kyalami race circuit. The Trofeo runners were lucky enough to have a warm up session, followed by two full speed session. The first session was based on a "Handicapped" starting session, the second session was a rolling start. It's one the few times that Trofeo have done a rolling start, so the racing was far more interesting with a lot of overtaking. The faster cars being able to show their full potential. As for the Alfa club members, there were both, fast and slow sessions. The slower was more relaxed, with models such as Giulietta Spiders being able to enjoy their cars, without having twin turbo V6's breathing down their neck's. The faster section's featured some of the more performance oriented cars like the 147 GTA and 156 GTA.



In the dealership drives, participants were taken for a ride in one of the latest Alfa Romeo's (GT, 159 Q4 & Brera Q4) at a controlled speed, allowing the public and participants the opportunity to enjoy an Alfa in its natural habitat. The track day was highlighted with a parade lap of most of the Alfa's on hand.

Sunday morning saw a National Concourse held at the ARCSA (Alfa Romeo Club Of South Africa) club house in Edenvale. A "Tops Only" event with four categories ("Pre 85", "Post 85", "Race Car" and "Modified"), and there was a category for everyone taking part.

With bonus points given for cars taking part in either of the previous day's activity, the final results helped some of the everyday cars compete, and in some cases win, over the usual garaged cars. At the prize giving that night, awards where handed out to participants, by the various sponsors and organizers', followed by a Cocktail evening.



Monday began with a speech from FASA (Fiat Auto South Africa) with regard what is planned for Alfa Romeo in South Africa. Highlighting the advances in Customer Service and support. From there began the journey to Cullinan Mine in a group of Alfa's ranging from Breras to GT Juniors and Alfasuds.



Once there we enjoyed an above ground tour of the mine and history regarding the aria. The Cullinan Mine, which lies 25 miles outside Pretoria must be the most famous mine in the world. It has produced three of the biggest diamonds ever found in the world, the biggest of which was named after the mine - the Cullinan or Star of Africa - which was presented to King Edward VII of England. It is now part of the Crown Jewels which are housed in the Tower of London. "The tale is told of Joseph Asscher, the greatest cleaver of the day," wrote Michael Hart in his book *Diamond: A Journey to the Heart of an Obsession*, "that when he prepared to cleave the largest diamond ever known, the 3,160-carat Cullinan, he had a doctor and nurse standing by and when he finally struck the diamond and it broke perfectly in two, he fainted dead away." Following the tour, we enjoyed a three course lunch, at one of the local eateries.

A big thank you to: the organizers of the event, the clubs who took part, Alfa Trofeo, and FASA. For further information on the Alfa Clubs' of South Africa please visit [www.alfaclub.co.za](http://www.alfaclub.co.za)

