

Last year during June we took our 1924 3/4s down to Italy for the Bordino Rally. Having bought the car only six months or so beforehand, it was our first long journey with her, and what a pleasure it was!

The car cruised happily down through France to the Mediterranean and then we pottered along the coast into Italy and up to Alessandria (near Turin) where the Rally is based. The three day event – which is open to cars built before 1967 – started in the middle of the city, so it was well worth getting there early as the cars line the side streets around a small piazza. The atmosphere was superb, with many pre-war cars (Fiat, Lancia, Alfa Romeo, Riley) among the entry and crews being encouraged to dress in period costume.

The organisers had provided a detailed and accurate 'tulip diagram style' set of directions, and the Rally followed a wide variety of roads through the stunning landscape of the area. We left Alessandria in heavy rain on Friday afternoon, but that soon cleared as we drove through a couple of timed sections and on to the supper stop at a casate in the early evening. The section that followed was relatively brief, but we were glad to reach the hotel that night and sample some of the local wines.

We were on the road at 9am on Saturday morning for day two of the Rally, and whilst there was some quite challenging driving, this was interspersed with a number of gastronomic stops en route. Whilst we complete regularly on circuits and hillclimbs, we were new to timed stage events and found that we were hampered by the lack of a suitable timer that we could easily road – especially at night! We shall be better prepared the next time.

German team driving Riley



Bordino Rally

June 2016

Simon & Sara Kelleway describe to Review an excellent rally they signed up for amongst the vineyards of Italy, which takes place every June and is organised by the Veteran Car Club "PBordino" of Alessandria. Photographs: Authors and VD Merlinho

On the Saturday afternoon there were a number of open road sections where we crossed some of the larger valleys all very different to the famous lanes up in the mountainous sections but a good opportunity to put the foot down. Amazingly a number of people observed to us afterwards that they hadn't really seen a '60 car pushed back and they really enjoyed it. When they could keep up of course! That day the Rally ended with a presentation back in Alessandria, and having been introduced to the crowd, we were off back to the hotel for the excellent Rally reception and dinner that evening.

The last day of the Rally was - for me - the most fun as the organisers had managed to have a section of central Alessandria closed off to make a circuit of 1.5km length or so. Although not homogenous as a circuit (and therefore we could not 'race', the cars were divided by age-into grids. The 'paddock' was in one of the magnificent central Piazza, and we drove out onto the track for a formation lap, waved on by the Carabinieri. Now the problem was that I had genuinely misunderstood the instructions. I had appreciated that the idea was to run this as a timed stage, but I hadn't realised that we were each to be waved off by a separate drop of the flag - hence the surprise on everyone's faces when we surged off the line from second place on the grid, leading the pack into the first corner. Well sort of! Three laps of spirited driving later - rather strange being on a circuit with the other half, all the baggage in the back and swearing a boxer - and we had managed to lap the entire field. On being waved into the paddock, we were then congratulated on some determined driving, but were politely informed that we had sadly been disqualified from that timed event, as we appeared to have missed

the timing gates on the back straight. Ahem!

The paddock was a superb opportunity to have a good look at some of the other machinery entered in the Rally (which included postwar Maserati and Lotus rallies), and then afterwards it was onto the final lunch and prize giving. We didn't trouble the engraver but had enjoyed three days of fun driving - and a circuit event - in magnificent countryside with like minded folk, some excellent food and all supported by an exceptionally well organised rally team. Heartily recommended and we'll be back! And the car? Almost 2,500 miles without issue ... and we even squeezed in a lap of Monaco on the way back!

The Bordino Rally runs each year in June. We are not affiliated in any way, but if this has piqued your interest contact Antonio (who speaks excellent English) at info@pbordino.com also see www.pbordino.com.



2: A very elegant co-driver! 3: Sun Belling photo-bombed by strange admirer. 4: XV and crew going well. 5: Louis (properly) finished the rally in one piece! 6: The Kellways (eventually) winning the circuit section of the rally. 7: Pryor (surname encouraged). 8: An Italian cousin of the Kellway's. 9: Proving that three English wheels are just as good as four Continental ones! 10: Italians start racing young.