

Note 55



Maserati 250F Head Sealing

It is surprising that such a simple, one might say primitive, form of head seal did not cripple the Maserati 250F reliability, but it *could* cause trouble as described by Alf Francis (147) about the Moss-owned car.

At the 1955 International Trophy meeting in practice the engine lost water at a high rate despite 3 attempts to overcome the problem by removing and lapping the head. The trouble persisted and caused a seizure after overheating in the race. Only when the engine was taken back to the Maserati works was it found that No. 5 cylinder liner had dropped 2/1000" so that escaping combustion gas forced coolant overboard. In theory the liner should have been fast in the block since the assembly process was to heat the Al-alloy block to 160° in an oil bath before pressing the liners into place against the retaining flange at 1/3rd depth (949). Presumably the block material had crept at that feature and allowed the liner to fall.

The problem must have affected other 250Fs although no details are known.

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