



HUILA



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1957 Speedweek

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For those of you who did not see it, the October 97 issue of Road & Track has an article by Phill Hill on the 1953 Ferrari 375 MM. This car, which Hill drove in the 1954 Carrera Panamericana Mexico, was sold to Louis Brero, an amateur driver from northern California. Phill Hill goes on to say:

"Early in 1957, there was a major race in Hawaii and Lou was driving a Chevrolet-powered Maserati. Under heavy braking for a corner, his car was suddenly consumed by fire. One can only suspect that when the U-joint broke, the flailing driveshaft ripped the fuel tank open. The last time I saw Lou, who was dying of his burns, I gave him the cigarette he requested as he was guided into the ambulance. Sounds strange today, but that's what we did back then."

This race went under the glamorous and exaggerated name of the "First Annual Hawaii International Sports Car Speed Week" of which there was to be only a second and last in 1958. I talked about the

race in the August issue of Huila but did not mention the accident that resulted in the only death I know of in Hawaii sports car racing. The real tragedy here is, that like many accidents, this could have been prevented. Among the papers I have from Pete Wimberly, then president of Associated Sports Car Clubs of Hawaii, there is a letter from Bill Odom, the tech inspector during the 1957 Speedweek. The letter is dated April 19, 1957, two days before the accident. The letter says:

"Dear Pete, I feel that I should at this time resign as technical inspector for the club. As you know, my objections to the Gillespie 'Maserati' have been overruled by our mainland experts even though I have submitted a very simple and logical method of restraining the drive shaft should it break."

