

AUTOMOTIVE CONSULTING ENGINEERS LTD



Collectors Corner

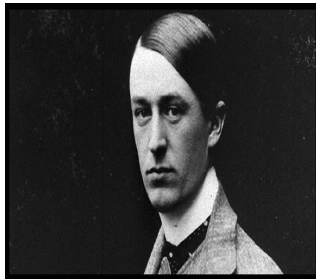
Anyone for a Bugatti

There is something about the name “Bugatti” that has always grabbed my attention, for me the name symbolises speed, risk, bravery and a talented designer. It’s a name that spans generations whether it’s because you know it for the Veyron the current world’s fastest production car or for past models that now are no longer in the forefronts of our minds, but more importantly the past models are the most important as without them Bugatti cars simply would not exist. Currently the Bugatti rights and name are owned by Volkswagen (VW).

For the past few years I have owned a Bugatti and, not to mislead, not a full sized version but a 1:18 exact handmade scale CMC model of a type 35 from 1925. In the months ahead I will be giving you a guided tour of my private collection looking not just at the models fantastic attention to detail but the history behind each of them, which can be equally as fascinating.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Ettore Arco Isidoro Bugatti to give him his full name and who is pictured below was born in Milan on 15 September 1881.



At the age of 17 Ettore cut his design teeth initially with bicycles and tricycles as an apprentice. He was born at the right time to take advantage of the newly invented internal combustion engine, which he experimented within cycle designs. Around 1900 he designed his first car with private backing that gained him a prestigious award at a trade show in Milan. This launch the Bugatti name as a potential brand. Still an extremely young man when he took his first Director’s post he was too young legally to sign his contract of employment so, his father signed it in his name instead.

Allenby House, Knowles Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 9AB. Tel: 0845 074 3644 Fax: 0845 074 3645

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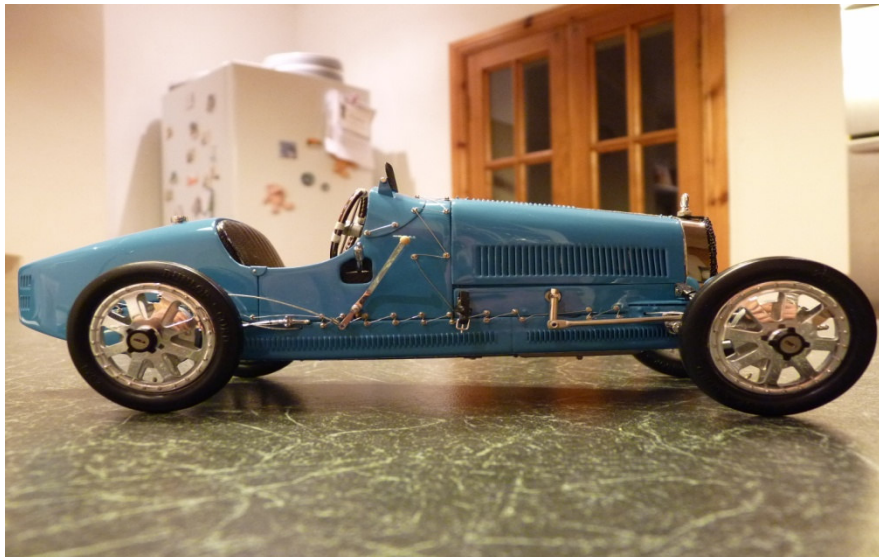
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To gain such a high post at such a young age already symbolised what a talent Ettore was and was going to be.

The birth of several successful and uniquely designed cars were to follow the type 35 being among them. By the early 30's Bugatti's dominance was starting to slip. The introduction of vacuum and primitive hydraulic braking systems the forerunner to hydraulic systems of today were the curtain call for Ettore's cars of this era which adopted cable braking systems. He pulled out of racing in the early to mid 30's.

THE MOST FAMOUS BUGATTI OF THEM ALL



The type 35 which I am going to concentrate on here was the most successful racing Bugatti with over 400 grand prix wins and accreditations with over 1000 victories over all, this tiny car dominated such races as the Targa Florio from 1925 to 1929. During its era it broke 47 records. Very few original type 35's have survived the test of time as many crashed and burned during races and events along sadly with many drivers and onboard mechanics who worked and drove them. A genuine working full size original now can cost millions to buy and are hideously expensive to maintain. Several models were made, the 35,35A,C, B and T, the values differ accordingly to type and racing pedigree.

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The images above and below show the front axle complete with steering links and leaf spring suspension all operational. The unique positive camber and track of 47.2 inch both front and rear. The type 35 had 94.5-inch wheelbase with a kerb weight of 4,433lbs.



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Why did a mechanic ride alongside the driver? Well the oil pump on this car was hand primed one of the reasons the mechanic was there and also to repair and keep the cars going during races. There was no multi million pound teams with flash 3 second pit stops here, most of the races were won on public highways, through towns and rural areas this was the era before track circuits the first track purposely designed for racing in the UK was Brooklands. Britain was not the birthplace of the motor race.

Grand Prix racing started in France, as the laws were much lenient over on the continent with no real speed limit imposed or policed. Racing here also helped Bugatti and the success of the type 35 as it could be entered into more races every week, the amount of races available is one reason why the type 35 was so successful but it was the class of the field its tiny size made it nimble and its distinctive camber was advantageous for the narrow primitive roads it raced on at speed of up to 120 mph. It was quick but stopping it was rather a handful and not for the faint hearted as one customer pointed out.

One Bugatti customer famously complained to Ettore that his cars did not stop, a complaint about the brakes the Bugatti's had, Bugatti replied, "I build my cars to go not to stop". Different to today as such a comment from the manufacturer would most certainly raise a few eyebrows and not just the customers either.

Around the model

You can see this in the model below that its level it's the level at the left side of the cockpit and yes the lever is operational if you were wondering. This CMC model has operating cable rear brakes, steering and cranking handle with a removable fuel tank cap and wheels with combined brake drums. The stitching you can see around the body is hand crafted and the bonnet straps and seats are covered in real leather the straps have real buckles of similar design to the original car.

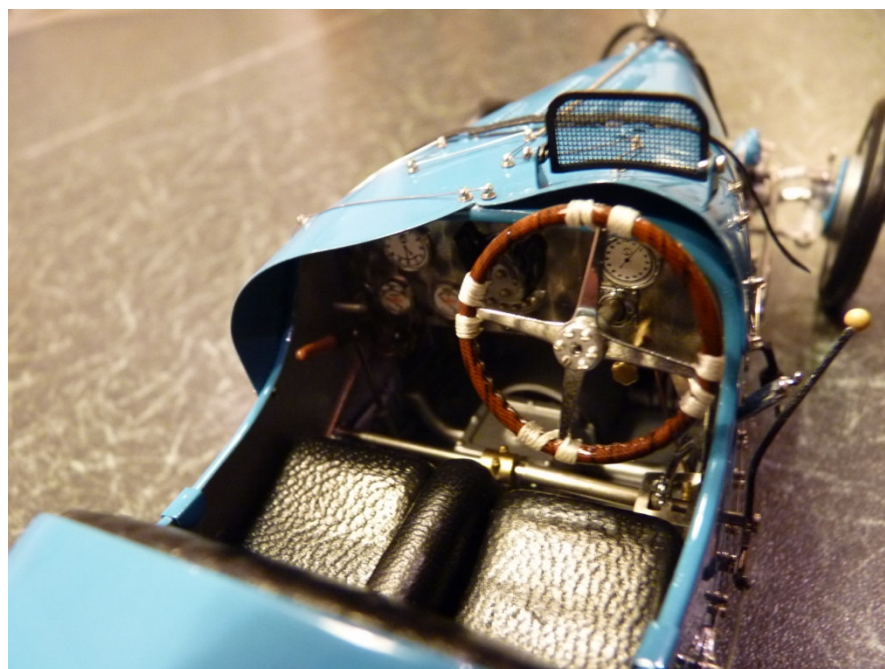
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The lever to the right of the steering wheel is a lever that operates a set of cables to the rear wheels. What the images don't show is the minute detailing of the dash the clocks and figures on the dials. The model takes detailing to a whole new level when viewed with a magnifying glass.

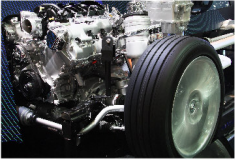
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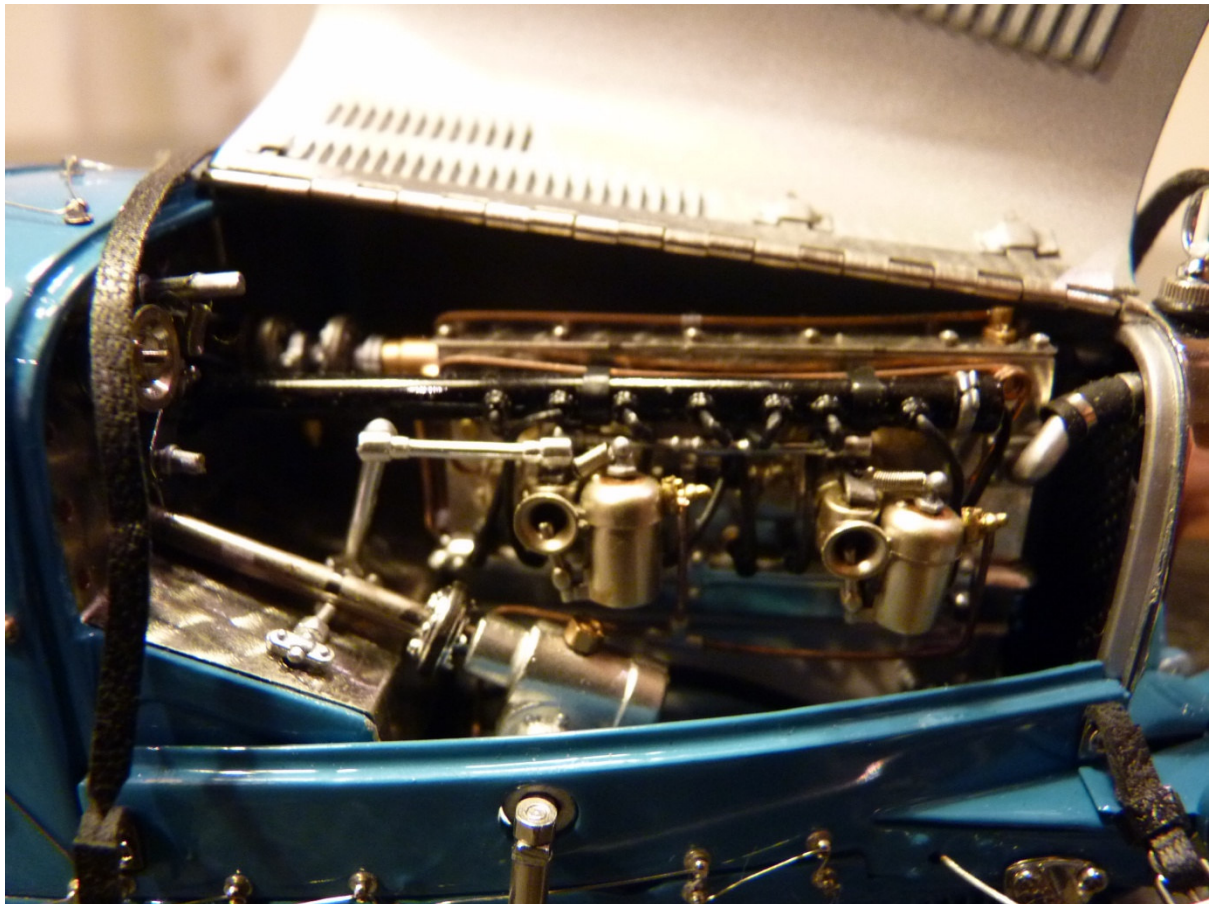
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Under the bonnet



The model has a fully operational steering box and detailing even down to hose clips and wiring. This image also shows the twin carburetors and clock spring linkages. Below you can see the body to chassis stitching unique with Bugatti. The engine is a 1,991cc straight 8 cylinder petrol type with a bore and stroke 60X88mm. The engine develops 135 BHP (Brake Horse Power) at around 5,300 RPM (Revolutions Per Minute).

The engine was supercharged in 1926 taking power output from 90 BHP to 130BHP and a top speed of 120 MPH. Drive was through a 3/4 speed crash change manual gearbox to the rear axle and in turn to the rear wheels and its tiny cross ply 710X90 tyres.

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It took tremendous skill and bravery to drive and control this car on essentially dirt roads and tracks littered with over excited spectators getting as close to the car as they could, sometimes with disastrous consequences.

The car was tiny and this is demonstrated in the image below the Type 35 paired against the much larger Mercedes SSKL a car from the early 30's and one that I will be covering next time round.



For those of you that want further information about CMC models and the range of models currently available please cut and paste the address below.

<http://www.cmc-modelcars.de/en/index.htm>

Thanks for reading.

Article and images compiled by Adrian Smith...

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