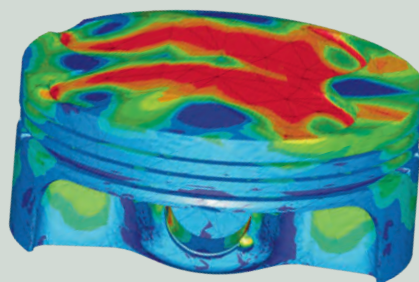
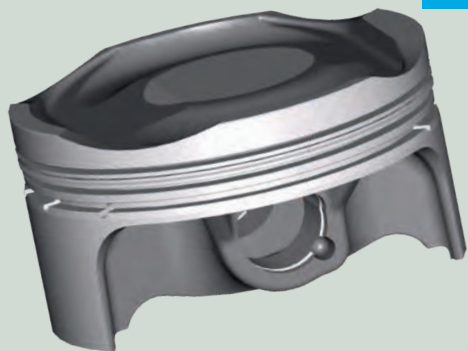


THE HISTORY OF ASSO WERKE



ASSO WERKE WAS FOUNDED IN 1973, CARRYING ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE FABBRICA PISTONI ASSO, AND ITS DEVELOPMENT STARTED OUT BY ITS FOUNDER, THE CAVALIERE DEL LAVORO (APPOINTED TO THE ORDER OF MERIT FOR LABOUR) SILVANO FERRUCCI WHO BEGAN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMPANY IN 1949.

In those years, the founder, proceeding from previous experiences acquired in the field of mechanical and motoring constructions, began, with makeshift means, the business of casting and machining of pistons that, despite the limited resources available in that period, accomplished to perform their function and found a market in full expansion. At the beginning, Pistoni Asso was able to collect significant experiences in the field of pistons production for two-stroke engines, and these constituted one of the strong points of the entire production.

Afterwards, the range of products was widened, covering all main motoring applications, both for mass production and for

racing: automotive (spark-ignition and Diesel), motorbikes, scooters, go-karts, personal water-crafts, snowmobiles, light agricultural devices (string trimmers, chainsaws), air and fridge compressors, engine generators and Diesel engines for various applications; the sector of pistons for four-stroke engines developed particularly. In the next years, the technological level of the products rose more and more, allowing the Company to obtain notable results: many companies, in Italy and abroad, choose pistons ASSO WERKE (OEM, Original Equipment Manufacturer) in their first assembly. The Company has, as a matter of fact, understood how to acquire even more market shares in different areas,

from the simplest application to the more complex one, despite the competition of bigger companies. To provide the Customers with a further guarantee of reliability, an intense improvement plan, aimed to optimize the organization of the productive processes and to supply a constant high quality, was carried out, achieving as the final result the certification of their own quality system, following the ISO 9002-94 in 1997 and ISO certification 9001-2008 in 2009. The production of pistons, piston rings and gudgeon pins, as a result of the merger by incorporation, occurred during 2005, between the Asso Werke S.p.a. and Erre Vis S.p.a. that resulted in ASSO WERKE S.r.l., is now managed by a single technical and commercial management.

Since 2007, to extend its own range of products and meet the needs of Customers, the Company started the production of cylinders and cylinder liners so to provide the complete thermal unit. Currently, ASSO WERKE is developed on an area of about 80.000 square metre, 35.000 of which indoor.

Interview to Nicola Agostini

1. HOW WAS IT POSSIBLE, COMING FROM THE SMALL VILLAGE OF FORNACETTE, TO BECOME SUCCESSFUL ALL OVER THE WORLD?

My grandfather, Sir Silvano Ferrucci began to produce pistons in 1949, starting basically from scratch, having the farsightedness to understand that there was a market for this product, and the ability to face the technological challenges this decision entailed. After about 10 years, he

was joined at the head of the Company by my father, Eng. Arnaldo Agostini, and together they have taken the Company to a full growth and were able to achieve a great commercial development in Europe and later in the United States. This allowed us to invest in production systems with advanced automatization, innovative for our field, and design and thermo-structural calculation tools that, together, were the key to strengthen the relationships with historic Customers and to start new ones with the new engine manufacturers.

What let us be appreciated all over the world is our ability to study and provide solutions to every issue regarding the thermal unit that our Customers have to face in the development of new engines.

2. WHAT ARE THE INNOVATIVE PROCESSES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR COMPANY?

Our Company has as its "creed" in the Customer Satisfaction in its widest sense: we start with the design and thermo-structural calculation of our products, especially the piston, from the blank sheet, with only the essential data of the engine, to later proceed in the development with the Customer, proposing technical innovative solutions to answer the various issues new engines involve in order to have higher power and engine rpm, reduced consumption, respect for the environment and low costs of production: for example, very high temperatures and lower lubrication. To address these topics, new structures of the piston and of the gudgeon pin, new materials and coatings, new kinds of piston rings are



developed and, after engine tests, the results are checked with a deep exam to, possibly, propose further improvements. Basically we suggest ourselves as Solutions Suppliers, as well as Products. We are active in the research of new material with better characteristics, to name just one the fatigue strength at operational temperatures. Our productive systems are highly automated, and this guarantees at the same time reliability of production processes and low productive costs: we preferred this option rather than delocalize in countries with low labour costs.

3. BETWEEN THE CUSTOMER COMPANIES, THERE IS FERRARI TOO. WHEN AND HOW WAS THE PARTNERSHIP BORN?

My first job after graduating in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Pisa, was right in Ferrari, in the "Gestione Sportiva", where you exclusively work for Formula One. After four years of an extraordinary experience, I decided to come back in Tuscany to start working in the Company founded by my grandfather. Then, we began to get in touch with Ferrari for road-cars engines, a collaboration that through experimentations of our products on various engines saw its achievement in being appointed by Ferrari among the few "Strategic Partners for the key innovations", in our exclusive supply of pistons, piston rings, gudgeon pins and cylinder liners for the new Ferrari FF, the first four-seats and four-wheel drive Ferrari.

We are really proud to collaborate with such a prestigious

Company, with which we launched a significant walk of growth to make ASSO WERKE able to propose itself even more effectively on the Automotive Market, both with the creativity and flexibility typical of Italian companies and with the strict organization necessary in this sector.

4. FERRARI IS A WORLD FAMOUS BRAND, EPITOME OF THE ITALIAN "KNOW-HOW". HOW INFLUENT IS, TO THIS DAY, THE REAL "MADE IN ITALY", THAT IS, GOODS REALLY PRODUCED IN ITALY, IN THE WORLD?

Ferrari is a wonderful example of an *italian spirit* applied to the most advanced technology, in order to make vehicles able to convey unique emotions through charm, beauty and performances.

My opinion is that the real "Made in Italy" products benefit from a creative contribution, from an attention to particular, to detail, from a care that is dedicated in the design, in the development and later in the production, exactly of an *italian spirit* that is their exclusive prerogative.

5. HOW MUCH CHUNK OF MARKET SHARE DOES THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET REPRESENT FOR YOUR TURNOVER AND WHICH ARE THE COUNTRIES WHERE YOUR COMPANY IS MORE PRESENT?

We export about the 45% of our turnover; in order of importance, currently the major markets are Germany, USA, Austria, United Kingdom, China, Thailand, France, Sweden, Portugal and Denmark.

