**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH ITALIAN RALLY VETERAN MARCO CAVIGIOLI**

14.08.2014

After 30 years in Motorsports, Italian Veteran Rally driver Marco Cavigioli has seen a lot of changes and development in the Rally scene. With hundreds of races of experience and significant achievements he spoke to David Oliva, responsible for Communications for YOKOHAMA Europe, on the evolution of the sport, his achievements and his thoughts on the future of Motorsports as a whole.

**Q: What are the main highlights of your 30 years career?**

I am happy with my career, because Rally was a hobby when I was very young and after a lot of work it became my job. Thanks to some good results I achieved, I was also invited as a driver instructor with Ferrari, Maserati and Abarth driving schools, and now this a regular part of my life when I am not racing.

My career really changed in 1994 when I won the European Rally Trophy FIAT Cinquecento and the Rally of Monte Carlo in 1995 with the FIAT Works team. From this moment I was a professional Rally driver and my long career really took off. In 2008 it was also a true highlight, when I won the Intercontinental Rally Challenge 2 Wheel Drive category Championship.

**Q: Would you have considered going into another modality of Motorsports other than Rally?**

No, I love Rally and although I follow other motorsports too Rally is my life.

**Q: What have been the biggest challenges that you have faced throughout this time?**

There have been many challenges… First to find sponsors to enable me to race… My family did not have so much possibility to support this financially and I was working very hard to find the budget and funding to cover the costs of my racing interest. I really had to play a lot with my talent and creativity proposing to exchange the prize money of the races to cover the big costs of the race with the support team... It was never easy and I had to put in a lot of effort and interest to achieve the objective of my career - to win and become a professional Rally driver!

**Q: To whom are you grateful for the opportunity to do what you love most?**

Firstly I must thank my family for giving me the moral support and energy to create the opportunity to race, and even though they could not fund my hobby, they always had kind words of support and encouragement. Of course I must also thank all the people who helped me and especially President and team manager of Island Motorsport Mr. Fulvio Garajo.

Of course I also am grateful to the sponsors that have believed in my talent, and all the motorsports partners such as Yokohama who were among the first that decided to collaborate with me… now I can say that the partnership also transformed to friendship!

**Q: Are Rallies today as romantic as when they originated?**

No, Rallies have changed so much… In the beginning of my career, races were very long and very competitive and strong, now they are strong for the speed that the car has on the road although technical and technological advancements currently help drivers a lot. The

new configuration of the races also help drivers and fans too, as well as safety precautions are also generally much better now.

However if you want to look at the romantic face of the race, this is really missing…

**Q: Do you feel professionalization has meant the loss of some of the essence of rallying?**

As I told you before the professionalization have changed a lot rallies, but today would be impossible to have a race like 30 years ago … The world has changed and the races, too. As in F1, too. But the essence of Rallies I think is safe, because it is always the contest from the men (or women) and the car vs the time in every conditions of weather or road.

**Q: Do you think Rally drivers are different from other top professional Motorsport drivers?**

No, every motorsport modality has good drivers. Sure the F1 driver tries to find the best records in a few curves but with a lot of speed. Rally drivers try to do the best time in very long special stages in every condition.

I think every driver can be the best in their motorsport brand but I would also be sure a good driver in other motorsport brand could also be competitive, because I think that talent is talent. Anyway, when I joke and discuss with my colleagues, I usually tell them that Rally is “THE RACE” and circuit is the baby parking! But this is a very old funny discussion between us.

**Q: What are the main qualities that define a good Rally driver?**

I think that a good Rally driver is one who can race every time at 100% in any road condition, but can also understand when to release the foot off the gas, and have respect for the car, but always ready to do the best also when the car is not at 100%. For sure the driver must be not only fast, but a good tester to prepare the car to be fast and the setup is also very important.

**Q: Is it all about individual talent? Or is it the car and technology?**

Obviously without talent nothing will be possible. But I think that the best mix will be when the Rally driver with talent can use at 100% the available technology that the car has nowadays.

**Q: What are your current challenges?**

This year for me the focus is to look at my 30 years of career, and I feel that is not a small result. However I think it is too early to stop my racing activity and I want to continue in international races as much as possible. I have discussed and planned with my team manager to run some rallies of the FIA European Rally Championship, and some special events to celebrate the anniversary of my career.

**Q: Where do you see yourself in the next few years?**

In the next few years I want to continue in the motorsport world using my long experience to collaborate with important brands such as Yokohama, and maybe to help some young drivers to improve in this amazing world of motorsport. And why not to be the racing instructor of my son. But at moment this is only a dream!

**Thank you very much!**