

## VareseNews

### “Farewell, maestro, thank you for everything”

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During a brief ceremony held yesterday afternoon (Wednesday, 6th March) at the cemetery in Comerio, the **final farewell** was said to **Diego Mombelli**, who died last week at the age of 76, from an illness linked to his profession. A motorcycle racer in his youth, then a great go-kart specialist, he was a great mechanic, but also a talent scout; it was he who discovered and trained **Ayrton Senna**, for example, on the European circuits. And Mombelli was also the mentor of **Max Papis**, the racing driver from Barasso, who reached Formula One before emigrating for a successful career in America. And it was “**Mad Max**”, who wrote this **oration** (last Saturday, before a race) for his maestro, and came back to Italy from the United States to pay tribute to Mombelli.

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Dear Diego,

Today, on this special day, I am sitting in a racing car (a Ferrari 458 GT), doing the things you taught me. I'm sorry I'm not there in Comerio, with you and your family and all your friends to celebrate your life. Yes, your life, the life of a person who gave so much, everything, anything you could for the love of our SPORT and for Life.

THANKS Diego for all that you taught me, for telling me never to give up until I reach the chequered flag ... do you remember? That's how I won my first point in Formula 3, in MONZA, overtaking my rival coming out of the last bend, the Parabolic, following your advice.

Thanks Diego, for teaching me to USE my BRAIN, not only in the races, but above all

in life, and to make the right choices, but without thinking too much, and to follow my instinct, because, as you yourself said, if you always do the wrong thing ... then, it's better to change profession.

Thanks Diego for teaching me the art of overtaking and for the beatings you gave me when I didn't listen ... you know how stubborn I am.

Dear Maestro, thanks for being by my side, like a DAD, and for letting me drive the go-kart van without a driving license, and not telling my DAD; thanks for being proud of my victories and for teaching me that, if I lose, it's OK, provided I gave it all; if not, it's not OK, it's a serious mistake.

Finally, thanks for the hugs and kisses you gave to my two children when you met them, it was as if my Dad, Cesare, was hugging them. Thank you, with all my heart. I will always miss you.

And while you're up there, say hi to AYRTON, my DAD, Cesare, Greg (*Moore, the great F. Cart racer in the USA and friend of Papis, ed.*) and all the others who are there with you.

HERE, ON EARTH, you've left us with great emptiness our hearts, but big smiles on our faces. A PIECE of racing, and a piece of my heart have gone with you; you will always be with me on the track, wherever it is in the world, and in our lives.

Thanks MAESTRO, I LOVE YOU!

Your pupil, Massimiliano.

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