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Rally-raids: constructive or disruptive?



Robin Herd interviewed

Two decades on in Formula One

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Front cover: rally-raids remain controversial (top); the March 711 was one of Robin Herd's earlier F1 forays (below).

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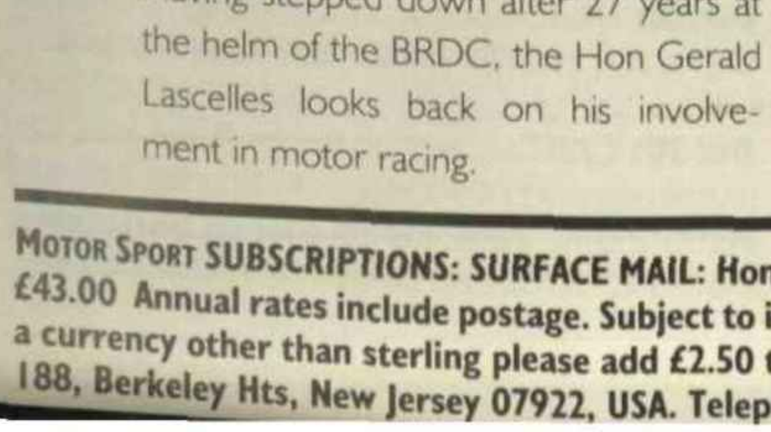
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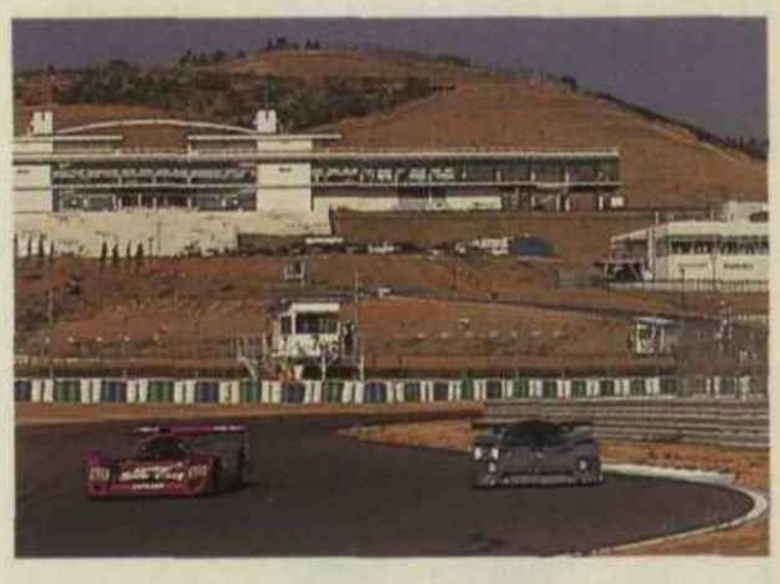
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The month in Motor Sport

Dec 11: Speculation that Sauber may continue to run in the SWC is heightened when both a C11 and a C291 are seen testing at Paul Ricard.

Dec 12: The latest round of F1 testing concludes in Barcelona. Riccardo Patrese emerges quickest after three rain-blighted days. Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill also go well for the Didcot team, while Martin Brundle shows well for Benetton. Aguri Suzuki has his first run in a Footwork. Williams personnel have a lucky escape after a small pit fire, the worst injury being a pair of singed eyebrows.

Dec 13: Lotus confirms that it will use Ford HB engines in 1992. It will also retain the services of its two talented young drivers, Johnny Herbert and Mika Hakkinen.



Johnny Herbert: Ford-powered Lotus.

Dec 15: Colin McRae (Subaru) wins the Attilio Bettega Memorial Rally in Bologna, beating the likes of Juha Kankkunen and Miki Biasion.

Dec 16: It becomes known that Footwork F1 refugee Alex Caffi has signed for Andrea Moda Formula (né Coloni). The optimistic Italian team plans to race a modified version of the unsuccessful Coloni C4 initially, albeit with Judd V10 power rather than the previous Cosworth. A new S291 will be ready for the European season.

Dec 16: Confusion at Leyton House. Director Mike Smith resigns as other key staff pursue a management buyout.

Dec 16: Stefano Modena has his first run in a Jordan-Yamaha, running the team's interim chassis at Silverstone.

Dec 16: After 27 years as president of the BRDC, the Hon Gerald Lascelles steps down and retires to France. He is replaced by former British saloon car champion Jack Sears.

Dec 16: Ford announces that Peter Ashcroft is to step down as director of Ford Motorsport, to be replaced by Colin Dobinson. Ashcroft will stay on in a consultative capacity for a couple of years.

Dec 17: Ferrari announces that Harvey Postlethwaite is to rejoin its design team. Postlethwaite had been out of the F1 limelight since May, when he left Tyrrell to work on the stillborn Mercedes Grand Prix project.



Lancia: reducing its factory involvement in rallying.

Dec 18: Lancia drops a rallying bombshell by withdrawing its factory team from the World Championship, although factory-*blessed* Delta integrales will still be present, entered by The Jolly Club.

Dec 18: British F3 runner-up David Coulthard tests a Paul Stewart Racing Lola at Donington Park. The young Scot hopes to graduate with the team to the European F3000 Championship.

Dec 18: Japanese F3000 champion Ukyo Katayama tests with the Larrousse F1 team for the first time, at the helm of a 1990 Lola with Lamborghini V12 power.

Dec 18: The Jordan F1 team suffers a crushing blow when popular factory manager Bosco Quinn is killed in a road accident on his way home from the team's new Silverstone base.

Dec 18: George Abecassis dies, aged 78. A successful racer both pre- and post-war, he was co-founder of the HWM marque.

Dec 18: FISA announces that turbocharged cars will be allowed to run in the 1992 Le Mans 24 Hours, opening the way for the Porsche 962 to compete yet again.

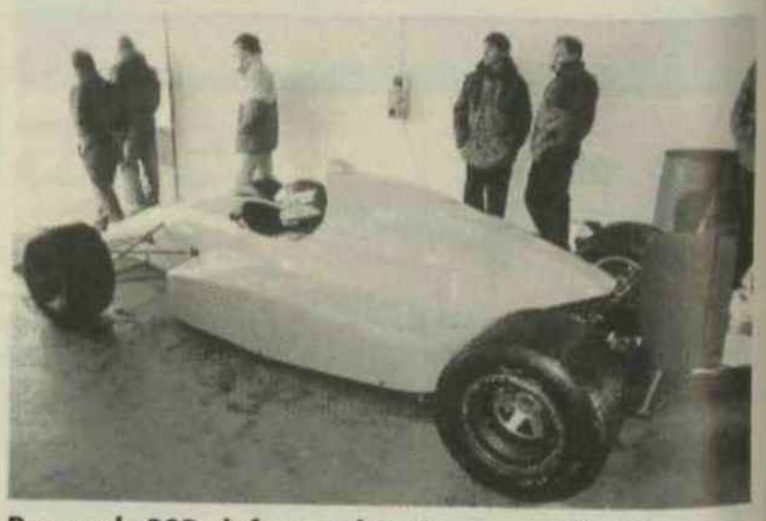


Fittipaldi: an F1 deal, and he's only just 21.

Dec 20: European F3000 champion Christian Fittipaldi signs for Minardi.

Dec 20: Tyrrell secures a supply of Ilmor V10 engines for the new F1 season.

Dec 20: The new Lola T92/10 Group C challenger proves quick in testing at Donington Park, in the hands of Dutchman Cor Euser.



Reynard: 92D defence of its European F3000 crown.

Dec 20: The Reynard 92D F3000 chassis is shaken down at Donington Park by Phil Andrews, prior to its shipment to Japan.

Dec 24: The Paris-Cape Town Rally starts in Rouen. Former winner of the motorbike section Hubert Auriol quickly takes command in his Mitsubishi Pajero.

Dec 25: Two of Jean-Louis Schlesser's support crew are killed when their Range Rover overturns on the Paris-Cape Town.

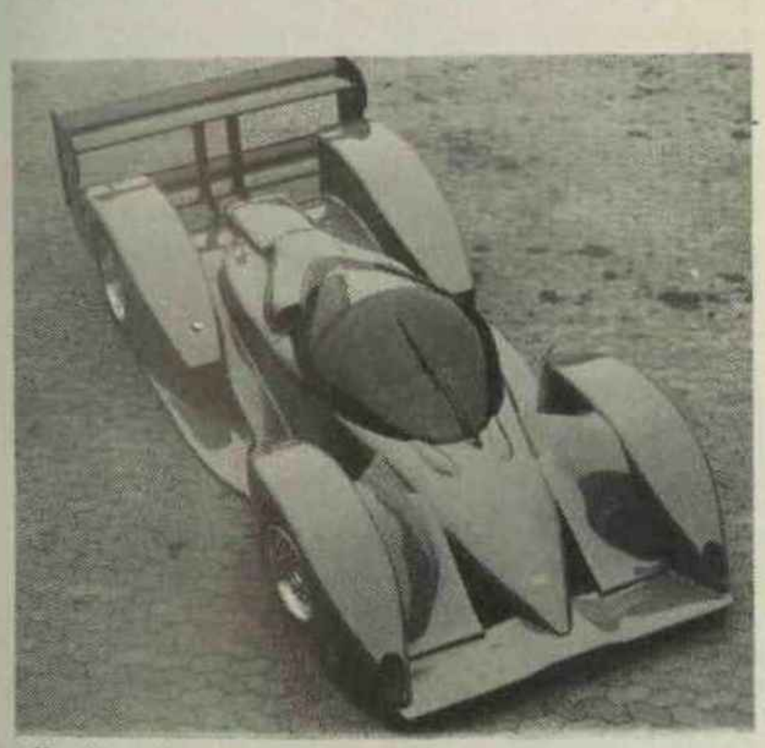
Dec 26: French sportscar racer/constructor Louis Descartes, of ALD, is killed in a road accident.

Dec 30: CART runner-up Bobby Rahal goes into partnership with Carl Hogan to buy the assets of Patrick Racing. Rahal will drive for his own team in the '92 CART series.

Dec 30: Nelson Piquet sets up Piquet Racing, which will run in the 1992 European F3000 Championship. Piquet's protégé Olivier Beretta will handle a Ralt RT24.

Dec 31: Italian F3000 star Antonio Tamburini slips during a party at home, breaking his left elbow. He is ruled out of the cockpit for 30 days.

Jan 1: The New Year's Honours List includes Louise Aitken-Walker MBE.



Allard: ambitious Group C plans.

Jan 2: The radical Allard J2X Group C car is unveiled in Birmingham.

Jan 2: Former champion Robb Gravett is tipped to drive for Peugeot in the 1992 BTCC.

Jan 2: Experienced F1 engineer Harry Mendel announces plans to run a two-car team in European F3000.

Jan 3: The F1 rumour-mill goes into overdrive, after Luciano Benetton is quoted in a South American newspaper as saying that his team has signed Alain Prost . . . It is said he will replace Michael Schumacher, who will be sold to Ferrari to replace Jean Alesi, who will go to Jordan. Denials all round.

Jan 5: Mark Dismore, the American driver who was badly injured during practice for the 1991 Indianapolis 500, continues on the comeback trail at Willow Springs, completing a successful test in one of Dan Gurney's IMSA GTP Toyotas.

Jan 5: The New Zealand International Series for Formula Atlantic cars kicks off at Teretonga. Craig Baird wins both races in his Reynard-Toyota. Welshman Julian Westwood takes two podium finishes in his similarly-engined Swift, whilst teammate, Englishman Harry Nuttall, collects one fifth and one fourth.

Jan 5: Despite rolling, Hubert Auriol retains a healthy lead on the Paris-Cape Town Rally.

Jan 6: British rallying dealt a blow, with the cancellation of the De Lacy International Rally, proposed opening round of the British Rally Championship. Absence of sufficient backing is cited for the decision.

Jan 6: Colin McRae's participation in the British Rally Championship is confirmed. The Scot will stay with Subaru to defend his 1991 crown.

Easing the strain

If Grand Prix drivers thought that the annual rush down to La Source was tight at the start of the Belgian GP, they'd find it's nothing compared to the squeeze just below F1. Right now, there is an appalling log jam in motor racing, and its epicentre lies somewhere between Formula 3000 and F1.

Admirable as the junior formula's record is for pushing its graduates directly into Grand Prix racing, fewer and fewer of them are getting through the crush. In 1989, no fewer than nine of the previous season's F3000 crop appeared in Grands Prix. Last year, the figure was down to four (Comas, Morbidelli, van de Poele and, at the season's end, Wendlinger). This year? Christian Fittipaldi and Andrea Chiesa have secured places with Minardi and Fondmetal respectively; the rest must sit and wait. As we closed for press, seven seats (two apiece at Tyrrell and Leyton House, one each at Larrousse, Ligier, Jordan and Andrea Moda Formula) were known to be available in F1. By our reckoning, there were at least 18 drivers with the credentials to fill them, one of these being triple world champion Alain Prost. Nelson Piquet's recently announced retirement – temporary or otherwise – has hardly eased the situation.

The list of F1 hopefuls chasing those seven seats would have topped 20 had not several of them, such as Damon Hill and Emanuele Naspetti, already committed to a further season of F3000. Both find themselves in competitive situations which many other drivers would envy, but it's hardly positive career advancement. In addition, it also fills up a couple of prize F3000 seats on which the leading contenders in last year's F3 championships had set their hearts. This in turn causes a blockage further down the motor racing ladder. How long before we find that F3 grids, usually the stomping ground of precocious teenagers, are filled by frustrated 30 year-olds?

So what happens to those who miss out on an F1 berth? One or two may wander over to Japan, where wages are good but career prospects are poor as far as F1 is concerned, unless you happen to be Japanese. Anybody heard Eddie Irvine's name mentioned in connection with an F1 seat recently? Or Thomas Danielsson's? Or Ross Cheever's?

For the rest, there's the prospect of a couple of months banging heads against walls, trying to persuade sponsors who would bend over backwards to have their name on the front wing endplate of an F1 car that Formula 3000 *is* televised a little bit, honestly.

Plus of course there is the Sportscar World Championship. We've said in this column before that the SWC offers an important outlet for drivers to ply their trade in a professional manner. As we closed for press, the SWC appeared to recovering from a blow that, before Christmas, looked as though it might be fatal. The patient's chances of recovery are strong, though efforts must be made in 1992 to ensure that the present impetus is not lost. Group C must not be allowed to limp along until it stumbles into a fresh crisis of confidence.

At this time, when gainful employment in the upper echelons of the sport is so scarce, sportscar racing's survival is imperative. **S A**

1992 MOTOR SPORT calendar

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who ordered one of our 1992 calendars. Whilst we are delighted that these have proved so popular, the bad news is that supplies are now exhausted. Our apologies to those of you who have been disappointed as a result.

Rest assured that the print run will be increased next year, when we will continue in a similarly retrospective vein. Our photographic sleuths are already up to their ears in archive material, in keen anticipation.

FEBRUARY FIXTURES

C—Closed. R—Restricted. N—National. INT—International.

Date	*Venue*	*Event*	*Type*
January 23-29	**Monte Carlo**	**Monte Carlo Rally**	**INT**
January 25	Bournemouth	Mazda Carline Winter Rally	N
February 1-2	**Daytona**	**Daytona 24 Hours, IMSA**	**INT**
February 7-9	**Spa, Belgium**	**Boucles de Spa**	**INT**
February 8	Newport	Wyedean Stages Rally	N
February 8	Inverness	Snowman Rally	N
February 13-16	**Karlstad**	**Swedish Rally**	**INT**
February 16	Daytona	Daytona 500, NASCAR	N

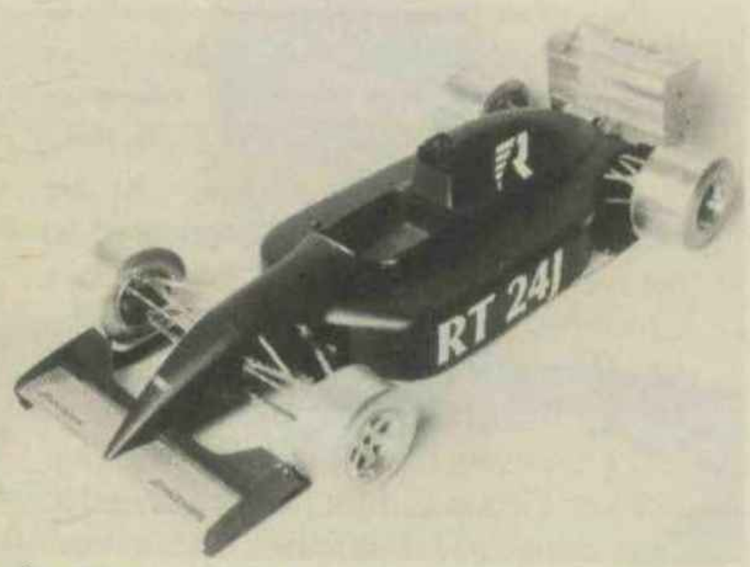
DIARY

Jan 6: Avon retains its contract to supply control tyres to the European F3000 Championship. The deal is renewed for three years.

Jan 7: The Paris-Cape Town Rally suffers another blow. Motorcyclist Gilles Lalay, a former winner of the two-wheeled class on the event in its Paris-Dakar days, dies when he collides with an ambulance in the Congo. Another 'biker, Jean-Christophe Wagner, ruptures a kidney in a separate incident the same day.

Jan 8: Gérard Larrousse's F1 future is secured. Specialist sports car manufacturer Venturi is confirmed as the French team's financial saviour. Venturi-Larrousse will use Fomet-built chassis powered by Lamborghini's V12. Ukyo Katayama's future team-mate has yet to be decided.

Jan 8: Ralt's new RT24 F3000 chassis is taken to Nogaro to be shaken down. Allan McNish and Jean-Marc Gounon are thwarted by the weather. Rain restricts them to a total of 70 laps in three days. The adverse conditions dissuade Nelson Piquet from attending. The triple world champion, who has ordered two of the new cars for his own F3000 team, was slated to complete a stint at the wheel himself.



Ralt's RT24: a logical development of the RT23.

Jan 8: Emanuele Naspetti abandons hopes of an F1 drive in 1992. The Italian, four times a victor in the 1991 European F3000 Championship, will continue to pursue that crown with Forti Corse. His new team-mate will be Italian F3 graduate Alessandro Zampedri.



Morbidelli: Fittipaldi's new team-mate.

Jan 9: Another piece of the F1 jigsaw falls into place, when Gianni Morbidelli is confirmed as Christian Fittipaldi's partner at Minardi. It will be the Italian's second full season with the team.



Donnelly: team management beckons.

Jan 10: Martin Donnelly, still out of the cockpit following his horrific accident at Jerez in 1990, sets up his own racing team. He will run two cars in the British Formula Vauxhall-Lotus Championship, one to be driven by his fellow Ulsterman Dino Morelli.

Jan 10: Middlebridge Racing is the first European F3000 outfit to confirm an order for the Lola T92/50 (though 20 cars have by this stage been sold to Japan). For the third consecutive season, Damon Hill will lead the team.

Jan 12: Craig Baird's domination of the NZ Formula Atlantic series continues, with another double success at Timaru. Julian Westwood is his main challenger, another brace of podium finishes establishing him in second place in the points standings, albeit 29 points adrift of the runaway Baird. Baird is tipped to be running in the 1992 British F3 Championship, incidentally.



Piquet heads for the 1981 world title in Las Vegas.

Jan 13: Claiming that he is no longer in a position to challenge for the World Championship, Nelson Piquet announces his retirement from motor racing. The 39 year-old Brazilian graduated directly to F1 from F3 in 1978, firstly in an Ensign and subsequently in a BS Fabrications McLaren. He joined the works Brabham team at the Canadian GP, and stayed there until the end of the 1985 season, having taken world titles in 1981 and 1983. A third title, for Williams, followed in 1987, but the next two seasons at Lotus proved fruitless. For the past two seasons he drove for Benetton, taking three victories, the most being in Montreal last June. In all he started 204 Grands Prix, winning 23 of them.

Jan 13: More controversy on the Paris-Cape Town. The cancellation of two stages in Namibia provokes a tantrum from Citroëen, which claims it has been denied a chance to make up time lost earlier in the event. The French manufacturer's future participation is called into question. Unperturbed, Hubert Auriol's Mitsubishi still leads with just three days to go.

Jan 14: Nelson Piquet says that his remarks the previous day have been widely misinterpreted. If he is offered a competitive car for the season, he'll take it . . .

Obituaries

Louis Descartes

Sportscar driver and constructor Louis Descartes died at the end of December when his road car crashed into a tree north of Paris. He was the epitome of the private entrant in endurance racing, compensating for his lack of success with an enormous amount of enthusiasm for the sport.

Descartes, who was 40, started racing in 1972 but concentrated on building up his publishing business. He eventually formed his own team in 1984 with a BMW powered car, the ALD (Automobiles Louis Descartes), and the high point in his career was to finish 11th at Le Mans in 1987 with Dominique Lacaud and Jacques Heuclin as co-drivers.

His untimely death casts doubt on the future of ALD in the FIA Cup sports car category. **M L C**

Bosco Quinn

Our sympathies go out to Eddie Jordan and the whole of his dedicated F1 team, following the death in a road accident before Christmas of the popular Irishman Richard 'Bosco' Quinn. He was 30.

The accident occurred late at night, as Bosco returned home from another long stint finalising details of Jordan GP's move into its brand new F1 facility opposite Silverstone.

Irishman Quinn started his long association with Eddie Jordan back in 1983, working as a mechanic. Apart from a couple of seasons with the Magnum F3 team, he remained loyal to EJ. He became manager of the EJR F3 team in 1988, before taking charge of the factory as Eddie concentrated on his F3000 programme and his long-term F1 ambitions.

Ironically, the move to the new site was scheduled for December 20, just 48 hours after his death.

Motor Sport offers its sincere condolences to his family and many friends in racing. He was a truly likeable man. The sport is poorer for his passing. **S A**

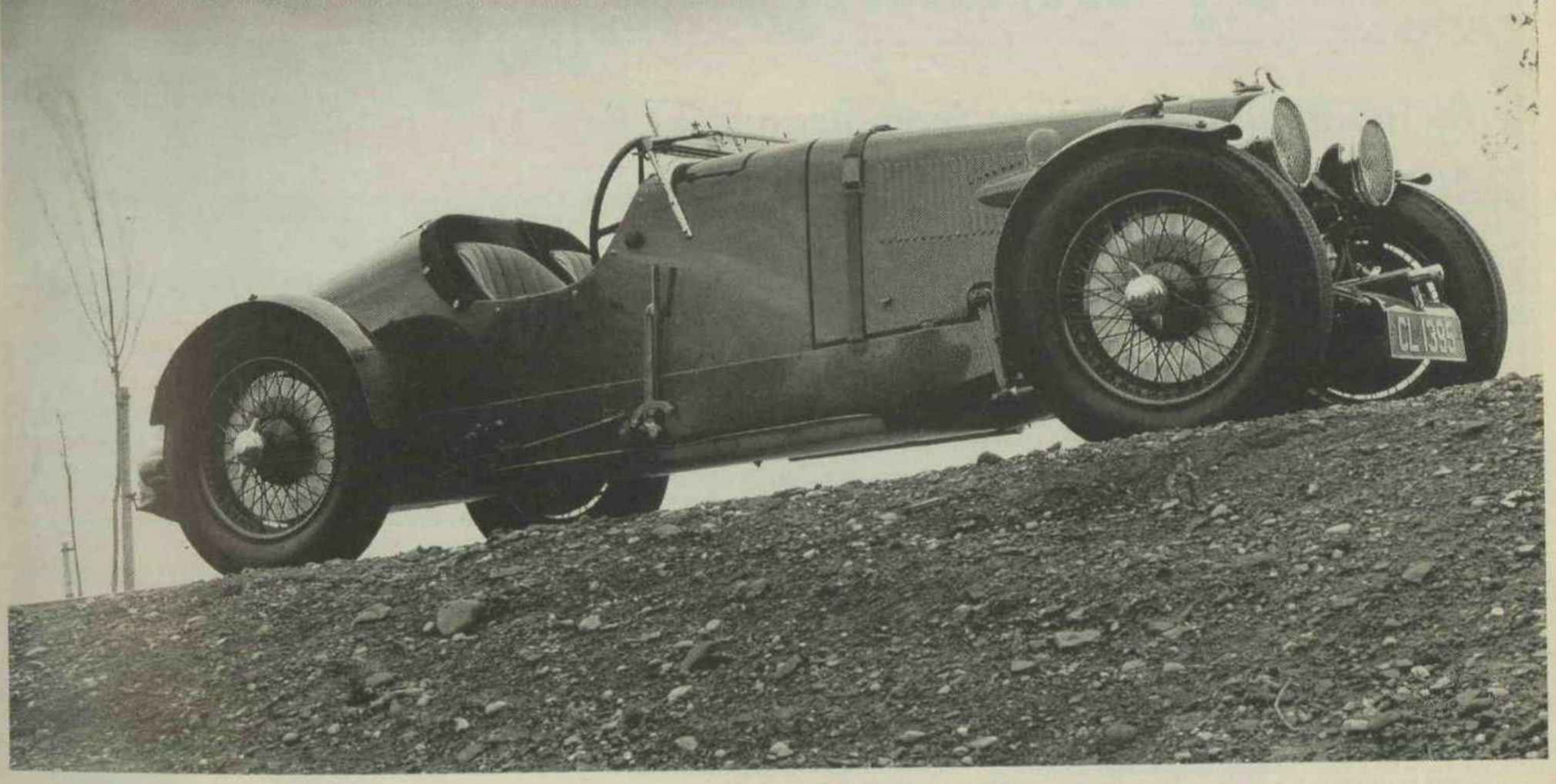
George Abecassis

The successful pre- and post-war racer George Abecassis died shortly before Christmas, aged 78.

After establishing his reputation with an Austin Seven and latterly an Alta in the mid '30s, he flew with distinction in the Second World War.

After hostilities had ended, he was quick to resume his competition career. In 1947, he set up HWM with friend John Heath, the marque's first sports car appearing one year later. While Abecassis' own sports car racing activities centred on an Aston Martin, HWM's single seaters were handled by several promising newcomers, among them Moss and Collins.

HWM pulled out of motor racing after Heath's death in the 1956 Mille Miglia, though Abecassis himself continued in the motor trade under the HWM banner, finally retiring in 1980. His love of the sport remained intact throughout, and he took a particular interest in the museum at Brooklands, where he had first made his name.



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The car enjoyed a long and active racing career before returning to the UK where it has recently been restored by Ecurie Bertelli to their usual exceptionally high standards. It is now to be offered for sale at Olympia where other entries include a Bugatti Type 51, a 16-valve GP Aston Martin, a 3½-litre SS100, a 1922 Sunbeam 24/60 Light Sports, a Lagonda M45 Tourer and a continental collection of veteran cars.

Entries are still being accepted. For further information or a catalogue (£15 post paid) telephone: Motor Cars – James Knight or Mark Beattie, Automobilia – Edward Bulwer-Long or Colin Warrington (consultant) on 071-228 8000.

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INTERVIEW

Hates losing, is embarrassed by winning



As the Venturi-Larrousse team announces its plans, Robin Herd reflects on his rationale in F1 fourth time around

"I think it's pretty normal with most sportsmen – I'm not saying I'm a top sportsman – but certainly a lot of tennis players and golfers will tell you that losing is a much stronger emotion than winning," says Robin Herd. "It's the thrill of the chase. Stevenson said, 'It's better to travel hopefully than to arrive'. Winning is an anti-climax and it is an embarrassment. But losing really burns and that's what drives on most sportsmen."

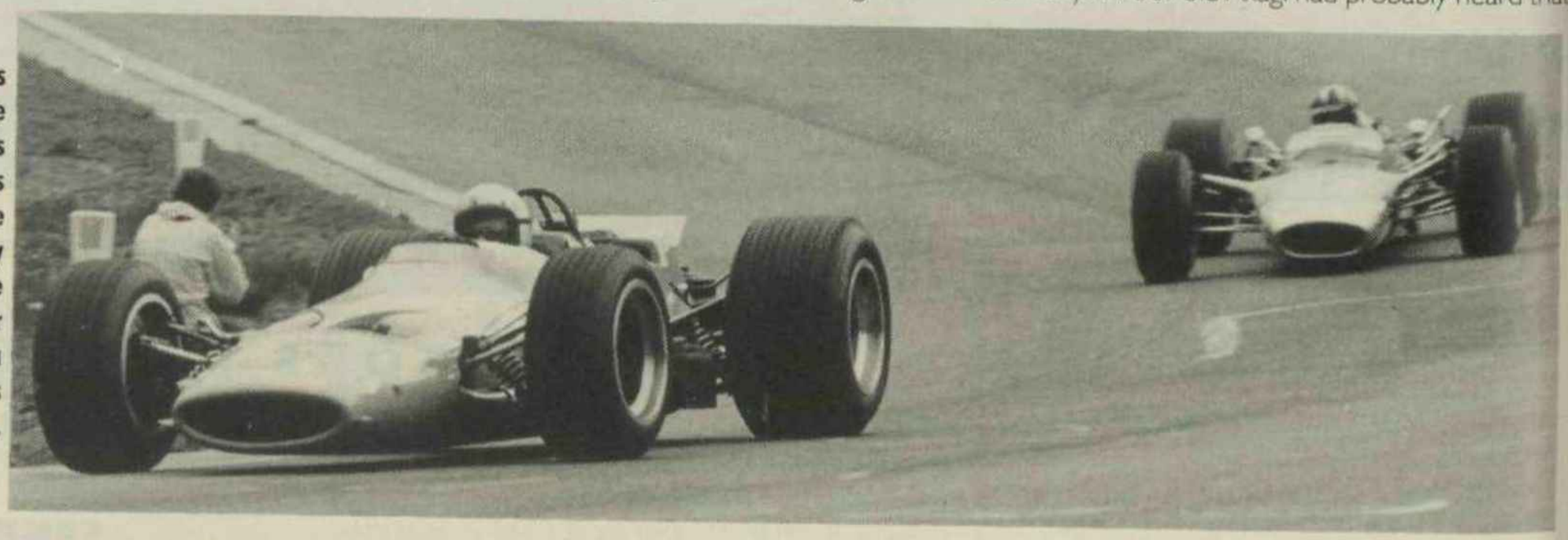
Talk of tennis players with the evergreen Herd inevitably sparks a mental note of his resemblance to Jimmy Connors. Like the American, the man who designed Bruce McLaren's first F1 cars, before starting March in 1969 with Max Mosley, is also a true survivor. He is no stranger to winning, even in F1, but despite the Seventies successes of Jackie Stewart, Vittorio Brambilla and Ronnie Peterson the pickings were lean when compared to what March achieved in virtually every other formula. That very success, paradoxically enough, finally became a turn-off.

"In America between 1981 and '86 I averaged six flights a week and 26 transatlantic flights a year. I got knackered. We got to a point where we had five Indy 500s in a row and 22 of the last 24 CART races, nine successive Japanese championships, the first three European F3000 Championships, the Daytona 24 Hours. Going into the last flight in Miami we were going over Iceland or Greenland – I always mix the two up – and I just knew it was all over. There was nowhere to go but down. I'd bought a bottle of scotch at the Duty Free and drank most of it, and when I got to Miami Airport I met that rare being, a customs official with a sense of humour. He stopped me and said I'd have to pay duty on myself!

"I can't intellectually believe in Fate, but looking back pragmatically it's quite difficult to say that Fate doesn't play a hand. When I got through customs there was Cesare Gariboldi saying he knew this Japanese guy who wanted to run Ivan in Formula One in 1987, and that we'd got to go to Japan. Well, I was virtually totally inebriated at the time and the last thing I wanted to do was think of going to Japan, but once we'd done the race we set off for Tokyo. Poor old Akagi had probably heard that I was coming because he'd had a major heart attack, and we arrived to find him in intensive care, but anyway, that was the start of Formula One again.

"So we set out to do Formula One in a different fashion with Leyton House March – I wouldn't necessarily say a better fashion – but a more enjoyable fashion than perhaps was traditionally carried out. And we had two fabulous years, with Ian Phillips, Tim Holloway, Adrian Newey, Cesare, Ivan and Mauricio. It was a pity it went slightly sour towards the end with machinations and manipulations..."

In three of the last four races in 1988 Capelli was ahead of Senna or Prost in the normally aspirated March 881, against the might of the turbocharged McLarens, and the team seemed on its way. Along the pit lane it was regarded as the happiest, the most popular. Nobody who witnessed Capelli's moment in the lead in Suzuka will ever forget it, even if the recovering Senna did quickly depose him as the 881 cut out. It was a team that was going places, that seemed to know what it was doing. Somewhere along the line it lost its direction. As



At Spa Francorchamps in 1968 Bruce McLaren leads Graham Hill on his way to victory in the M7A designed by Herd. It was only the second time a driver had won a GP in a car bearing his own name.

Two years on, Herd explains the basically unsophisticated nature of the March 701 to Autosport's John Bolster, attired in his characteristic deerstalker.

part of his deal with Akira Akagi when the latter bought him out by the following year's Brazilian GP. Herd was not allowed to have a technical involvement with another F1 team for three years. Last year he helped to set up the Fomet facility in the old March premises in Bicester, sorting out the non-technical details such as finance and the business side as Holloway and Tino Belli worked on a cunning and cost-effective update of the old Osella for Fondmetal wheel magnate Gabriele Rumi. Somehow, at the time, it seemed as if Herd was simply dabbling, especially as there was at the beginning of 1991 talk that he would run Eddie Jordan's Barclay-backed F3000 team. By the end of the year, however, Rumi did not feel that he could carry on, but Herd was not prepared to surrender what Fomet had just begun to build up. "We'd done lots of work on the programme, and we didn't want to give up. The timing went wrong with Rumi, because later he would decide to carry on after all, but by then I'd called Gerard Larrousse when he was in Paris trying to sort things out as the Australian GP was taking place. It all clicked very quickly."

Larrousse did not agree initially, but thought the proposals through overnight and got in contact the following day. "At first I wasn't sure," he admits, "but then I call Robin to say yes!"

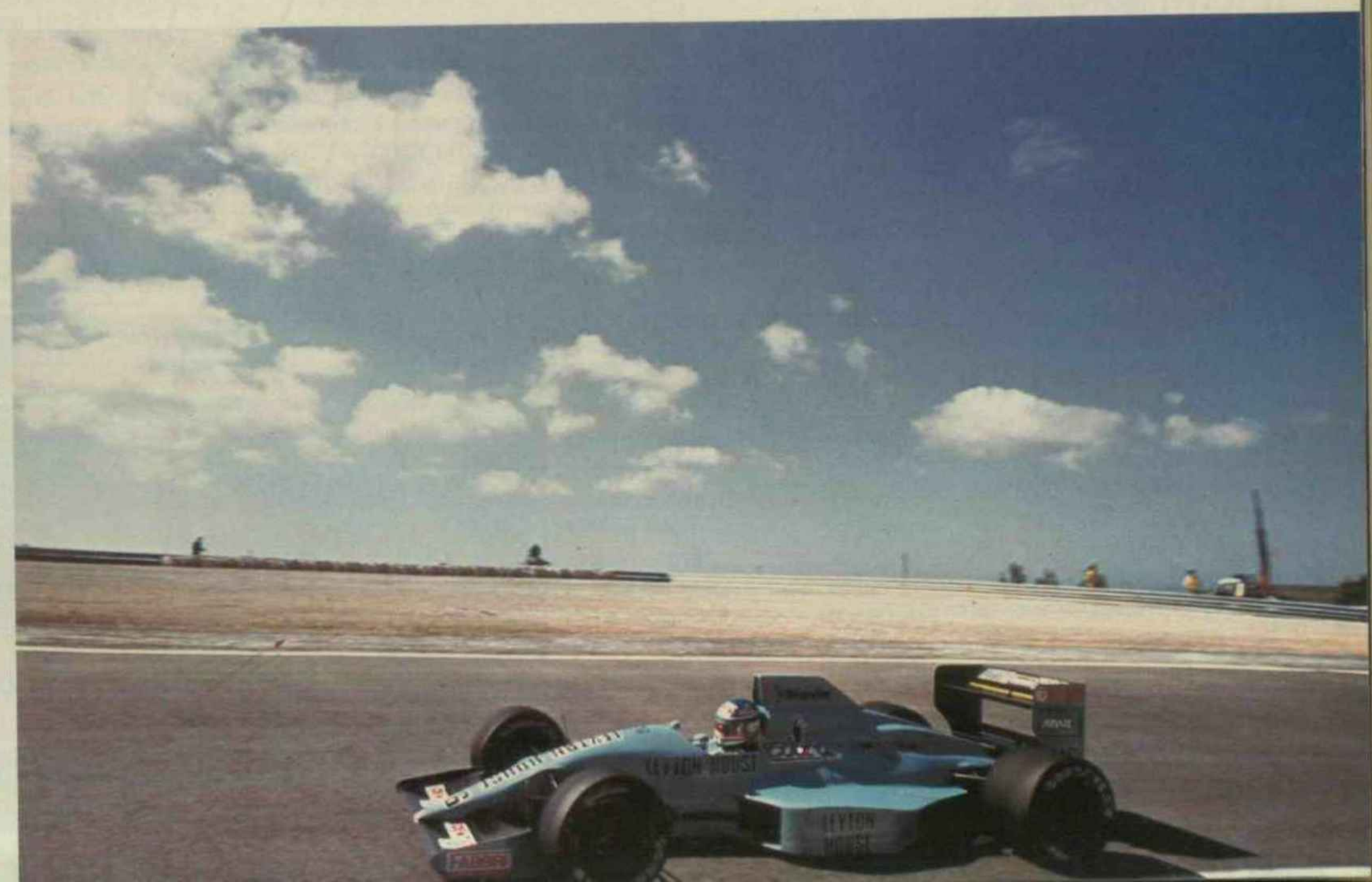
Herd is a naturally buoyant individual. If he wasn't, March Engineering would never have got off the ground in the first place, let alone won its second ever F1 race only months after kicking off in motor racing as a Formula Three constructor. There is no mistaking his enthusiasm for his new project. In the early days of March Engineering the company walked a financial tightrope, on which Herd had to balance alone when Max Mosley finally left. When Robin came back third time around with Leyton House, he was still the juggler of the technical and financial factors. Now, though, he faces his best opportunity since his Sixties days at McLaren to indulge in pure engineering.

Ask him about the concept for the new Venturi-Larrousse and he is almost cagey. "I don't believe that anyone is clever enough to have all the ideas. Tim, Tino and I work very well together, and technical decisions almost tend to make themselves. When Max and I worked together at March the same sort of thing happened. We never ever had a dispute or a confrontation, because if we had differing points of view we would argue or talk them through rationally and a way forward would emerge." With only three months in which to produce a new car, its concept was necessarily straightforward, but the team has worked together long enough to have shrewd ideas on what is needed in today's F1 milieu. Herd cites seven factors that are necessary for success.

"Tyres, the team, the chassis, the fuel, the budget, the engine and the drivers. On the first we are equal because everyone has Goodyears. Hopefully there won't be any qualifiers. As far as the team is concerned, I'm very happy that we don't have to go through setting one up. We can just concentrate on the engineering. I believe that we have a good team. The chassis will be good, I believe, although again I think the Williams will be the best. Adrian Newey was surprised when he went there that the technical level was the same as Leyton House's, but the organisation was much



The birth of March came with fanfares. Chris Amon demonstrates the 701 at its Silverstone launch.



Third time around, Herd really enjoyed the 1988 season, when Ivan Capelli hit sensational form in the final races with the advanced 881. Here in Portugal the Italian was the only man capable of challenging the dominant McLaren Hondas, chasing Prost for victory after passing Senna.



Herd present: Olivier Grouillard ran the Fomet 1 for most of the 1991 season, the Frenchman pedalling the Osella which Herd's engineering concern had neatly updated.

better. We have 15 engineers, Williams has 20, and the difference is in electronics and software. I believe that by 1993 we will be of the same calibre as Williams.

"Fuel is now the seventh factor, but one of the most crucial. Unless you have the correct technical relationship with a fuel company, you almost needn't bother. Ferrari, Williams and McLaren have good relationships with Agip, Elf and Shell respectively, obviously, but there are two teams with BP and we're one of them. That gives those five teams a substantial advantage, when there is up to 60bhp to be gained from having the right specification fuel.

"We have the budget to do a sufficient job. We are not yet up to the level of Benetton, but it's good. I have worked out Williams' budget and that's what we are aiming at for 1993. Gerard gets the use of the bottom circuit at Paul Ricard free throughout the year, so we hope to utilise that to the full, but as we've learned in the past Ricard can be a dangerous circuit because it's very flat and doesn't show how the car handles over bumps!

"There are two areas in which we may not be so advantaged, where there is scope for development. 1991 was a race of engines, and we do not have a Ferrari, a Honda, a Renault or the Ford HB, which I think was underrated last year. We have the Lamborghini. On its 1991 form that could be a negative, but Chrysler is putting a lot more funding into it, and more technical support, and hopefully Larrousse and Minardi will prove better than the teams which ran the engine in 1991. I'm interested that Gianni Morbidelli thinks the Minardi Lamborghini is as good as the Minardi Ferrari was, although of course we can never be sure just what specification Ferrari engines Minardi had last year.

"On the driving front I think that Ukyo Katayama will surprise people, but he is a number two because of his lack of experience. He is very small, which helps! And quite fiery! Our number one driver, as I say this, hasn't been selected.

"So, we have four very good areas and others which can get better. We obviously look to seven very good factors for 1993, but are trying to be realistic. I'd give McLaren eight for its chassis, 10 for everything else, and 11 for the driver! Williams gets 10 for its chassis, nine for the team because the odd wheel comes loose, and nine for its driver, 10 for its fuel and nine for its engine. It has a very well spent budget. Benetton doesn't have too many negatives, while nobody can be sure what Ferrari will achieve, although Steve Nichols has a free hand on the chassis for 1992. The engine was okay but unreliable last year, and Agip has a learning curve now that it is switching to unleaded fuel. I believe that Benetton will come up to Ferrari's level this year.

"Eddie Jordan did a fantastic job last year to finish fifth in the Constructors' Championship, and we hope our operation approaches his level. When we were arrogant, naive and foolish back in 1970 with March we would have told you that we had everything, no problem. In our middle age we are quite happy to tell you that we have every intent to get to the same level as McLaren and Williams. We wouldn't be doing it unless we believed that. There are five or six teams with the same motivation, and others who are content just to earn a good living in quite a glamorous fashion.

"It's a challenge," he affirms, and here is a man to whom challenge is vital, who, despite his feelings on winning and losing, still needs some form of career stimulation. "It's a challenge which one can realistically see coming off. That doesn't mean that we will be successful, and sure it's going to be difficult, but we know where the strengths are and we know where the weaknesses are and it's up to us to build into a position where we can mount a really strong challenge in 1993 or 1994.

"Formula One is the highest mountain we've ever tackled in motor racing, and in my own career it's the only one I've failed to climb consistently bar those few successes in the Seventies."

Though it might ultimately embarrass him to succeed Robin Herd, you sense, is prepared to do everything an Edmund Hillary would have done to rectify that shortcoming. **DJT**



Herd past: Even today the M7A exudes simplicity and elegance. Here at Brands Hatch in 1968 Bruce McLaren won the Race of Champions on its first outing.

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Farewell to a modest man

After 27 years as President of the British Racing Drivers' Club, the Hon. Gerald Lascelles is heading for Bergerac, snooker and his 4,000 jazz records

These days motorsport is big business dominated by the need for maximum publicity, yet behind the scenes the quiet men still lurk to whom the satisfaction of a job well done far outweighs the volume of any tone others might pursue when blowing their own trumpets. The Hon. Gerald Lascelles, the Queen's cousin and, since 1964, the President of the British Racing Drivers' Club, is such a figure. Always in the background, shunning the spotlight, his true achievements will only come to be appreciated by those outside the BRDC and Silverstone as he now heads for retirement.

His passion for the sport was really fuelled during WW2 when he was serving with Tony Rolt, who would go on to two Le Mans victories for Jaguar, and it has endured ever since.

"He was in prison through most of the war, part of the time in Colditz. I happened to be posted to his company, which was a great stroke of luck. We spent many a long evening, mostly in Germany with the army of occupation at that stage, and I really got to know him quite well. I was at school when the war began and I didn't know all that much about motor racing. I knew a bit, I suppose, but I'd never been to Brooklands or anything like that. It was more of a schoolboy interest at that time. I realised that he was very much involved, and it was great getting information from him rather than from someone who was on the fringe."

When he was demobilised he was thus inspired to join the West Essex Car Club, becoming a keen marshal and an avid spectator. He even enjoyed a brief, and by his own admission unspectacular, career as a competitor.

"I never raced seriously; I was strictly an amateur. I joined a car club; I think I joined the BARC to be exact, in 1949. Then I did the odd things with them, a few rallies, in the early Fifties. I bought an MG in '51 and raced it in '52. I went to my first motor *race* at Goodwood, Easter Monday 1950, then I went to the Grand Prix that year. That was when I got bitten. There was a huge crowd and we arrived late! And, you know, that race remains the first time that a monarch has ever attended a British motor race. All the dignitaries wore bowler hats!"

Before long he joined the BRDC, racing his Jowett Jupiter in the Silverstone Six Hour race in 1956. "It was a process of erosion, really! I used to go up there for meetings, and then I got to know more and more people and somebody said, 'Why don't you come and do a bit of marshalling?', that sort of thing. Then they asked me to judge up at Oulton Park in the days when they ran the Empire Trophy. And then they asked me if I wanted to become an honorary member. It was certainly not done because of my driving prowess! I'd given up racing by then. I had a very short career, really only two years. It was thoroughly disapproved of by my family, and was curtailed by lack of money.

"When I was trying to race I was working at Ford and they didn't pay big money in those days. I was what they called a management trainee. I went right through the works and finished up in the purchasing department. Then I worked for Aston Martin for three years, and that was much more interesting!

"I was there from '52 to '54, doing a variety of things. First I was p.a. to the general manager, then we started running down production at Feltham because of the move to Newport Pagnell. We worked in the racing department at Feltham but then the whole of the management was restructured and I became the buyer down there. For all the experimental and service things, which included the racing department, I got to know John Wyer pretty well during that period, naturally, and I used to go back and help him out at the various meetings, timekeeping in the pits or whatever. Signalling down at Mulsanne at Le Mans in the years after 1955 and the big accident. I think I worked for Astons in the pits for about 10 years.

"I'd given up working for Astons as such, but I was there at Le Mans the year of the accident. I was actually up in the Welkomm at the time of it, and it happened almost right opposite the Aston pits. I'd just been doing my first stint of timekeeping, and if I hadn't gone to the Welkomm I'd have been right in front of the whole thing. Nobody in our pit came to any harm, but it was a very unpleasant experience, bad enough as it was.

"There was panic immediately afterwards, but it subsided fairly quickly. Some were still apt to be a bit panicky, but the people who came out of it



best were the Boy Scouts. They were marvellous. They did everything they were told to do, in double-quick time, and then it was just a matter of the officials taking over and doing the things that they had to do. It's something I prefer to forget, I must admit."

When Lord Howe died the committee asked Lascelles if he would like to take over as President, in 1964. His first duty was to take the chair at all committee meetings as they then were, before the members formed themselves officially into a board. "We were a committee in the old days and I was the chairman, on a monthly stint. Like Lord Howe I also got involved a lot more, I won't say in the day-to-day running, but certainly in quite a lot of things which had to be decided. John Eason-Gibson was the secretary in those days and we had an office in Down Street. It was just round the corner from the old Steering Wheel Club, so I'd pop round and have an hour with John after lunch talking about the various things that needed deciding. It was a rather strange life in a way, because he used to do a lot of other things besides secretaryship of the BRDC, and if he was very busy he'd shuffle things up the road to Silverstone because Jimmy Brown would get on with them! So there was a certain, shall we say rather illogical, split of work between the two offices sometimes. But it all muddled through somehow, quite happily. We left the circuit to get on with it as much as possible, and in the '60s Jimmy was already beginning to build up quite a revenue from testing. People had a very amateur view of motor racing then, but teams used to come up, particularly Jaguar and Aston Martin. They used Silverstone a lot."

In those days few members of the media paid much attention to such endeavours, most of them missing the testing – even the existence – of the Jaguar XJ13 in the process.

The most significant point in the BRDC's development under Gerald's presidency was forming the board to run the circuit in 1966. "That was probably the biggest step forward. We really couldn't do that with 12 people, especially as only half of them would turn up at one meeting and the other half at another because they were busy racing. It was a really wise move, because we were able to control the commercial side much better and to get a logical policy going. We were moving forward step by step rather than jumping in this direction and then perhaps retreating in another, which often used to happen!

"The move came from our financial advisor Peter Hetherington. He put the proposal to me, and then I talked it over with one or two members of the committee just after the Grand Prix. We decided to take the plunge and set up the company, and we never really looked back from then.

"Of course, there were the years when we didn't have the Grand Prix that the farm made more money than the circuit" – in those days there were around 560 acres. "It was a reasonable size but it was not a good farm, because most of the the land within the circuit had been wrecked by being bulldozed to get the flat runways. It was a mixture, half and half arable and grassland, but we couldn't have free-ranging animals so we had pigs which were kept in the old Nissen huts." By irony these were later refurbished, "tarted up from the pigs and made nice and comfortable" for occupation by nascent race teams and associated businesses.

"We had a thriving pig farm thanks to Reg Parnell and Jimmy Brown, they really got that going tremendously. Reg was a pig farmer himself in Derbyshire. He knew quite a lot about pigs and he put us straight and Jimmy Brown straight. I never got involved in the day-to-day running of the farm." Jack Sears, who rather appositely succeeds Gerald as President, was himself a farmer who played a significant role in establishing this side of the business.

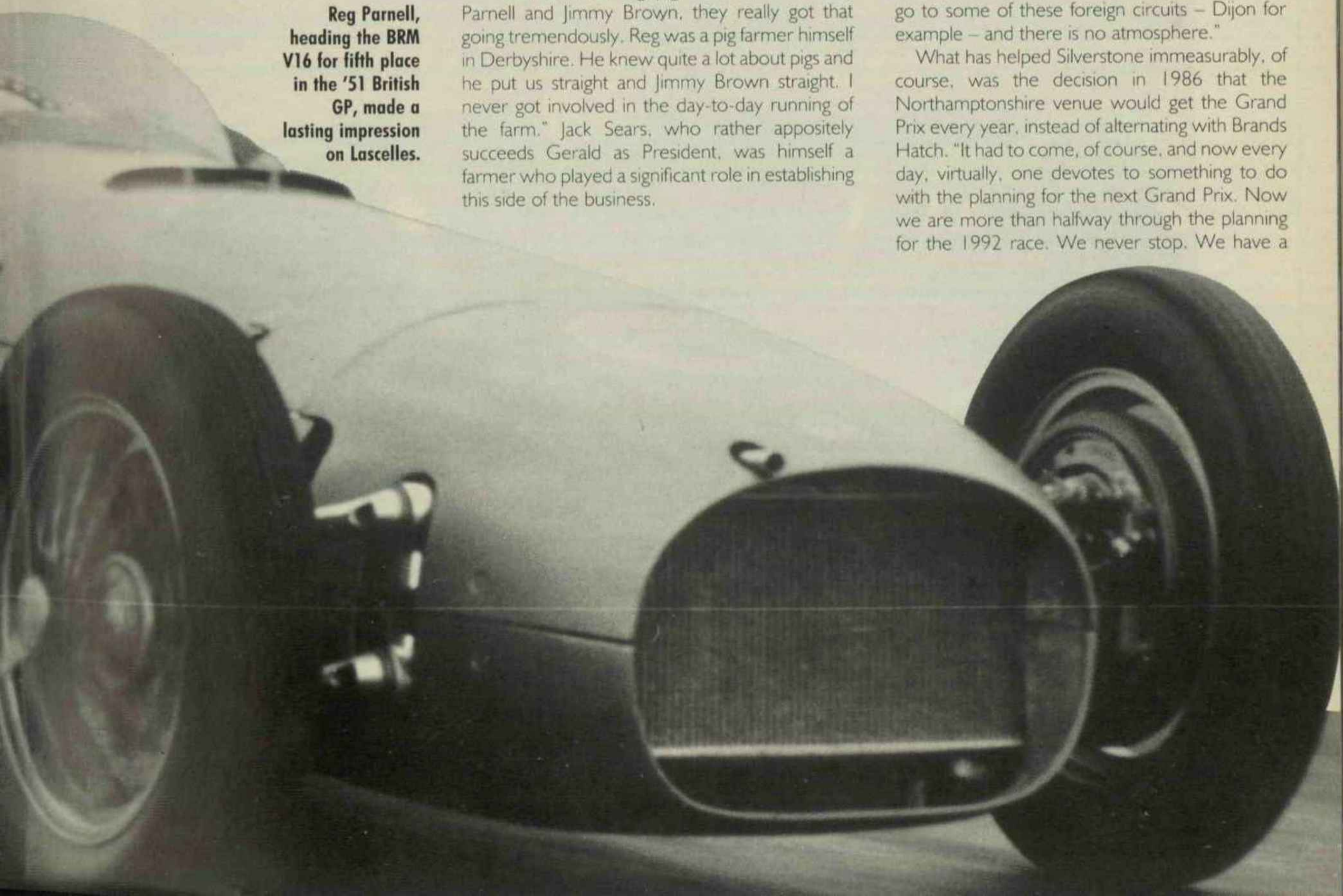
Now the farm is much smaller, mainly grassland. The pigs went in 1970, the arable policy in 1980. Such has been the rapid development of the Grand Prix that every one of the 770 acres of land is now desperately needed in July. Does he ever look back and regret that the pace of such change has been so great, that so much has been altered?

"I'm a fairly adaptable sort of person, really," he says, his response betraying a character that steadfastly refuses to become bogged down in the past. "I accept change when it comes along. We can still run nice friendly meetings at the vintage meetings, or the AMOC meetings, or something like that, where there isn't too much officialdom and locked gates. When it comes to the Grand Prix it's super to see the circuit come alive. All the tents go up. Everything gets a new coat of paint and that sort of thing. It's fascinating to see the transformation.

"I don't think there is anywhere else in the world where you could have a complete invasion of the crowd on to the circuit at the end of a race, without trouble. No other country would dare run a race after the Grand Prix because they would never get the people off of the track. But at Silverstone, once they've done their bit, back they go." The British tifosi have caught up with their Italian brethren, insofar as they now regularly display their fervour and passion in most uncharacteristic style, but for the most part the manic element is missing and the behaviour is an accepted – and acceptable – part of the festival.

"Yes, and it was John Watson at Silverstone in 1981 who first made the crowd roar! I don't regret any of the changes we have made at Silverstone, because we have always managed to retain the atmosphere. I think that's terribly important. You go to some of these foreign circuits – Dijon for example – and there is no atmosphere."

What has helped Silverstone immeasurably, of course, was the decision in 1986 that the Northamptonshire venue would get the Grand Prix every year, instead of alternating with Brands Hatch. "It had to come, of course, and now every day, virtually, one devotes to something to do with the planning for the next Grand Prix. Now we are more than halfway through the planning for the 1992 race. We never stop. We have a



Reg Parnell, heading the BRM V16 for fifth place in the '51 British GP, made a lasting impression on Lascelles.

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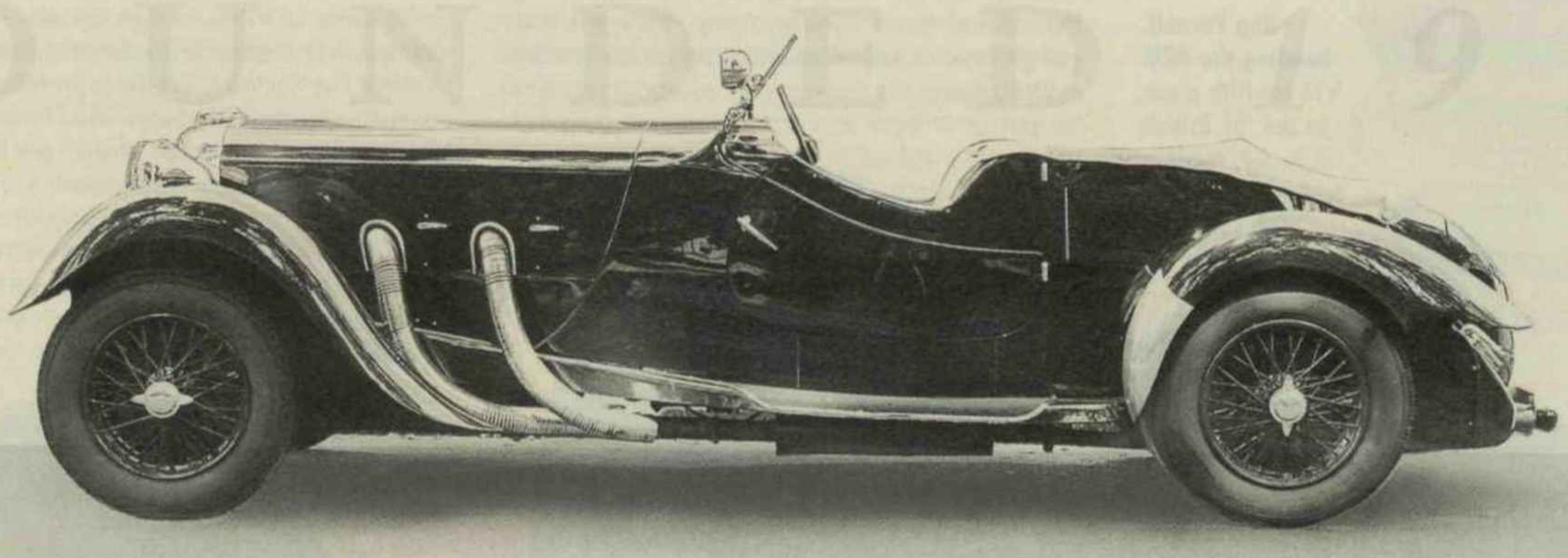
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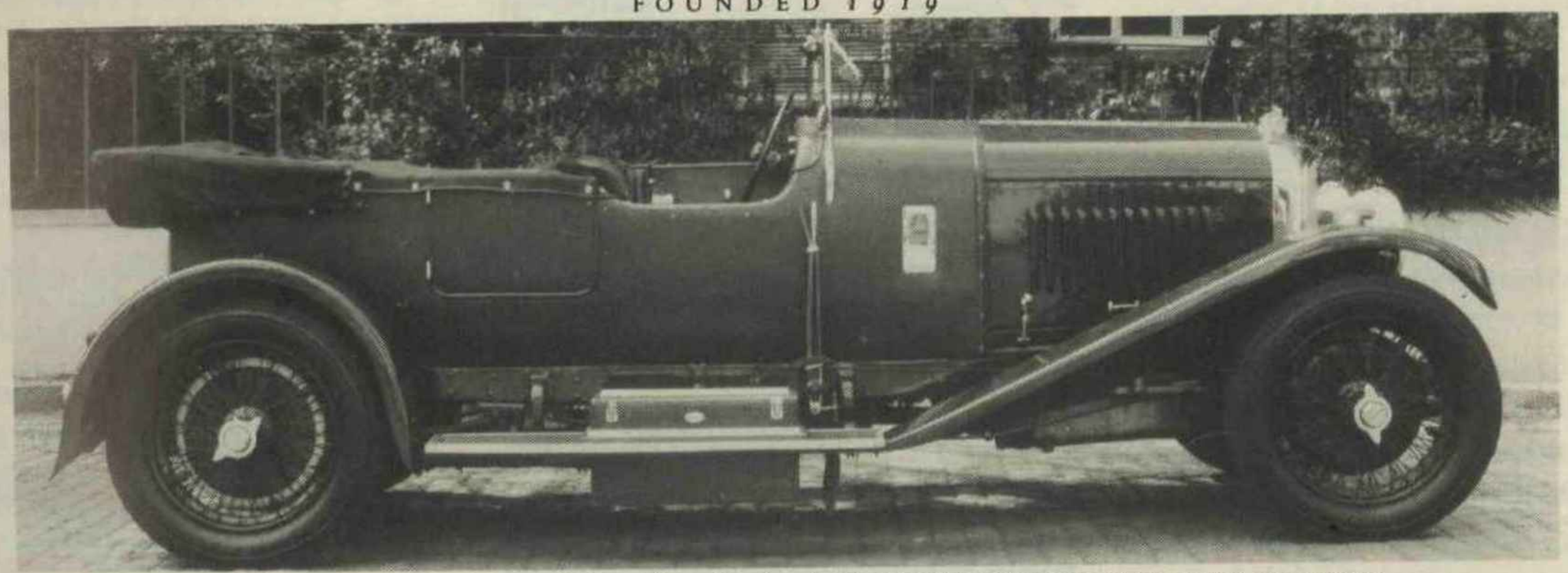
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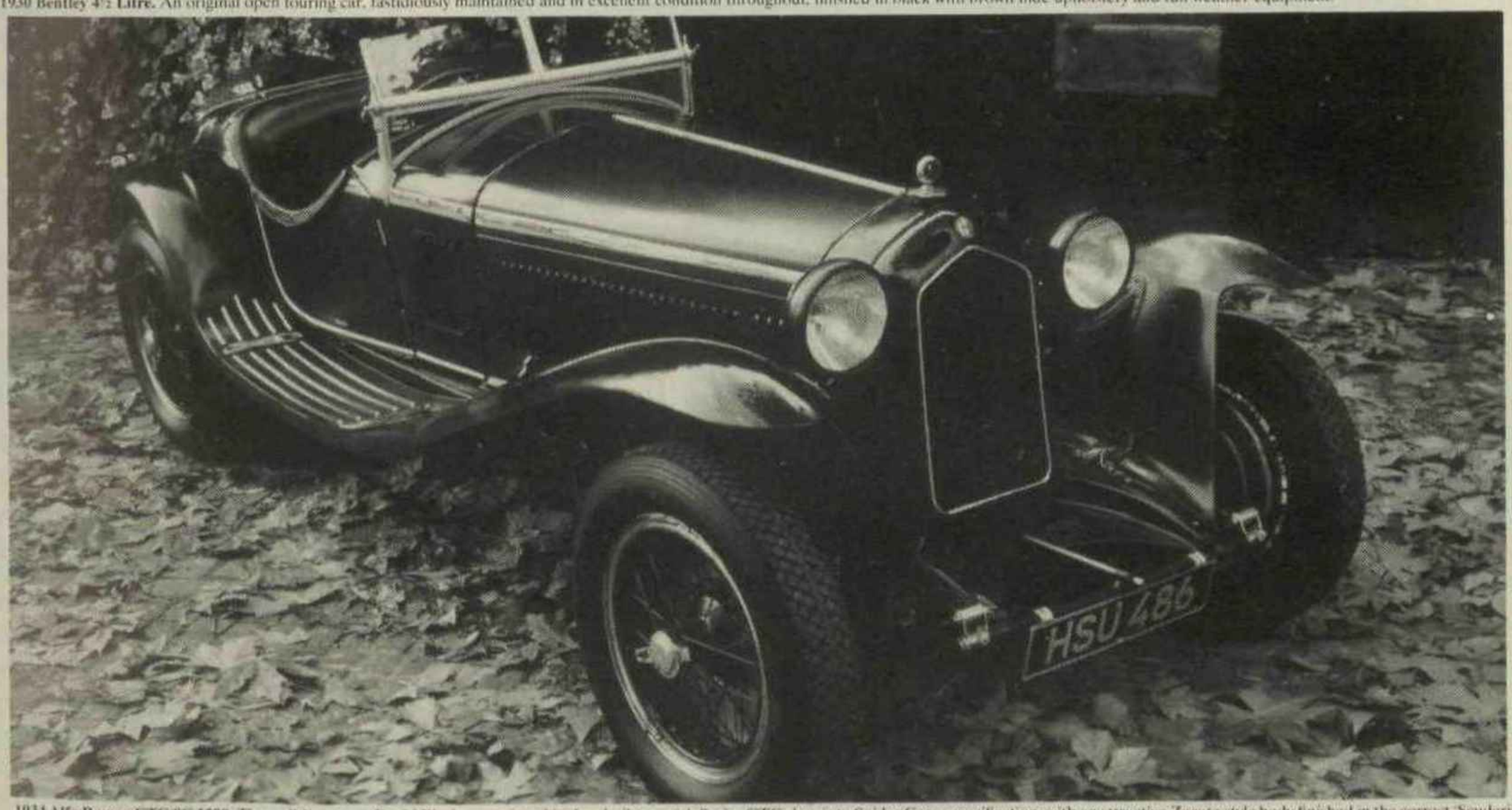
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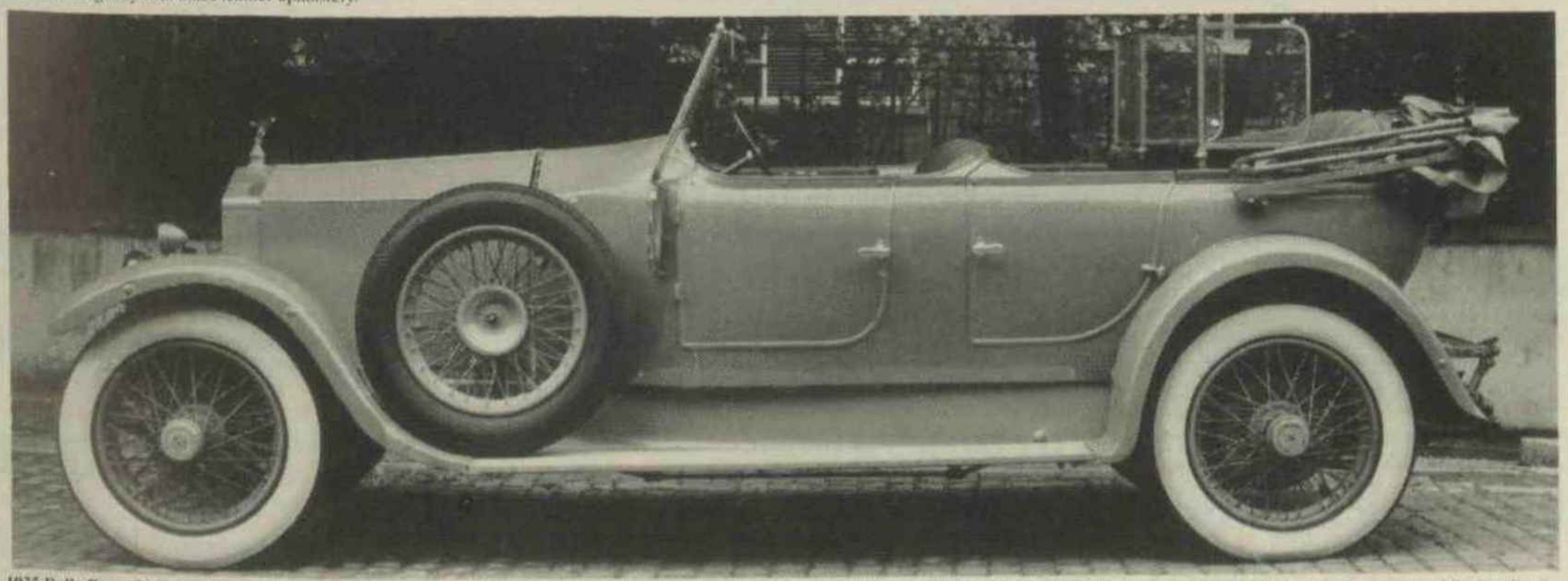
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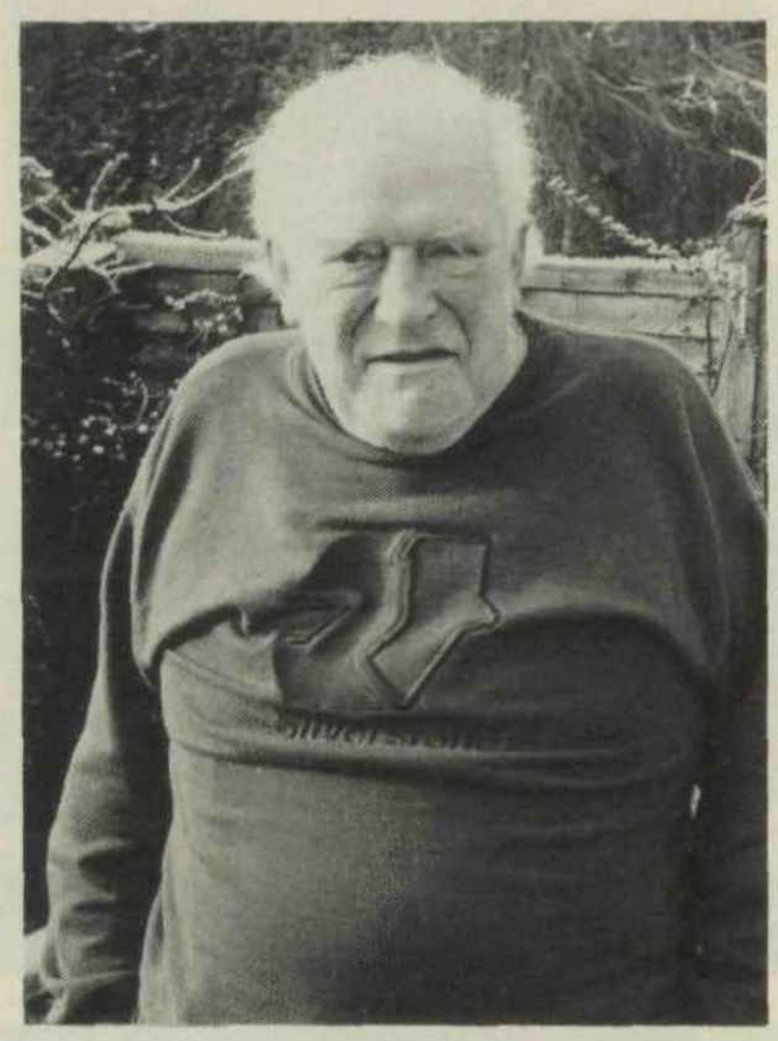
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debrief after one race, and then we're heading into the next. Some of the things, such as booking these mobile grandstands, we have to do from 18 months ahead because we need so many and they're in relatively short supply."

Against that background, isn't he going to find retirement in the Bergerac region of France a trifle on the tame side? "I'm going to take a back seat," he says warmly, in tones almost approaching relief. There are no regrets, nothing but a keenness to sample the fresh pastures. "I shall come back to Silverstone, I shall come back for the Grand Prix and hopefully for the sportscar meeting if that gets off the ground. Who knows, I might even come back for the Historic meeting too. I like that one." But what about coping without the now almost daily 'fix' of motor racing? Again, there is a comfortable chuckle. "I have so many other things to catch up on and to do, and I shall take an altogether more leisurely approach to life." Gone now are the hectic days as director of an engineering distribution company based in London, and other directorships which would tie up a couple of days each month, not to mention RAC functions on the Motorsport Council,





At the opening of the new, heavily revised Silverstone GP circuit in early 1991 Lascelles (above and to the right of the group in the photo left) watches as Bernie Ecclestone takes care of the official duties. Tom Walkinshaw, on crutches, nurses a broken ankle.

"which go back as long as I can remember".

As he now looks back on his career, the Hon. Gerald Lascelles finds himself mainly satisfied with what he has managed to get out of it. "Some things have been a bit disappointing," he will admit, "but the others have been very rewarding." When you probe a little further into the defences of a modest man, to try and pinpoint the achievement that yielded the greatest satisfaction, he shrinks from the question initially.

"That's a very difficult one to answer. Very difficult. But I suppose in a way the formation of the circuit board, because that was the springboard for so many other things that we did. We set up subsidiary companies to cover various activities and established profit centres, as they call them now!

"It is terribly difficult to pinpoint one single thing, but I suppose in a way the turnround of getting Jimmy Brown to come out of his farming shell and really become a moving force in the circuit world was quite an achievement. Because he was a very shy, retiring person. He did a lot of background work at a time when perhaps other people took all the kudos, but he was a major force towards the end of his career and he knew a hell of a lot about the business. Probably more than anybody."

"The commercial side of motor racing has tended to obscure the sporting side, no doubt about it."

Mention of the 'feud' that erupted temporarily between our weekly sister *Motoring News* and Jimmy Brown over a post-1987 Grand Prix questionnaire prompted a laugh of remembrance from Lascelles, as he recalled Brown's nature, but as that hatchet was buried Jimmy became a good friend of the newspaper as a relationship forged on mutual respect became re-established. "Yes, he was a great man to work with," he affirms instantly.

"It has been a very good experience all the way through, working at Silverstone. We've had frustrations, obviously, but yes, a great experience in my life."

It has already become clear that the selection of Tom Walkinshaw to follow in Jimmy Brown's footsteps as Chairman was an inspired choice, for which Lascelles resolutely refuses to take sole credit. "Nobody in particular chose him, I think we unanimously thought 'We've had a Scotsman before, so why not have another one!' When he comes to a board meeting he has a tremendous input. He amazes me. So much energy!"

Of the people he worked with over the years, who stuck most in the mind?

"Of the drivers I came into contact with, especially in the early days, Pete Collins when he was driving for Aston. I thought quite a lot of him, he was a lovely man. Super man. I enjoyed reading Chris Nixon's book very much; I couldn't put it down. Tony Rolt I got to know pretty well, and I saw something of him when he was in his Ferguson business doing his four-wheel drive adaptations.

"Who else? Reg Parnell I had great respect for. He was a wicked old man sometimes when he wanted to be! Tim, his son, is a good sport, too."

A big jazz fan, Gerald Lascelles possesses an enviable collection of records that numbers 4,000, and in the Fifties and early Sixties had regular jazz columns in a number of specialist publications. "I also have a great love of snooker, so we are having a table put in at our new home. I'm not an expert, but I enjoy a game of snooker and I enjoy watching it too. I think having interests outside motor racing is important. I think it's a good thing to be able to switch off and do something else from time to time. But I must admit that my jazz interest has suffered as a result of my motor racing involvement in recent years! There have been a lot of changes, and it has become very sterile music in some ways now, compared to what it used to be. Perhaps I shall spend my time playing snooker while working through my record collection. I shall have a house well plumbed for sound, with music in the kitchen as well as the living room. Wherever I go I can press a button and produce something or other!"

One of the things that saddens him in a way is the almost over-professionalisation of the sport. "The commercial side of motor racing has tended to obscure the sporting side, no doubt about it. There is more formality, but there is also less. Ron Dennis will pick up the phone to Hamish Brown and say, 'We want to do so and so, can we?' and it's all done on a nod, which is nice. But one accepts that if somebody's got – one doesn't even talk now of a million dollar team but a megabuck team – they've got to take the thing seriously. It's a huge investment, both technically and cashwise. So you can't play lightly with them. You've got to keep your circuit up to scratch otherwise they won't come and use it. And the fact that so much Formula One testing is done at Silverstone is a proof that we keep a good house."

The move to France had been planned for months when it happened just prior to Christmas, with the same blend of meticulous detailing he brought to the presidency. He and his wife bought a ruined chateau in September 1990, and it is now nearing completion ready for full occupation this month. Silverstone will miss his amiable presence, and an enduring modesty that leaves him quite unaware that the very comments he made about Jimmy Brown might equally be applied to himself. **DJT**

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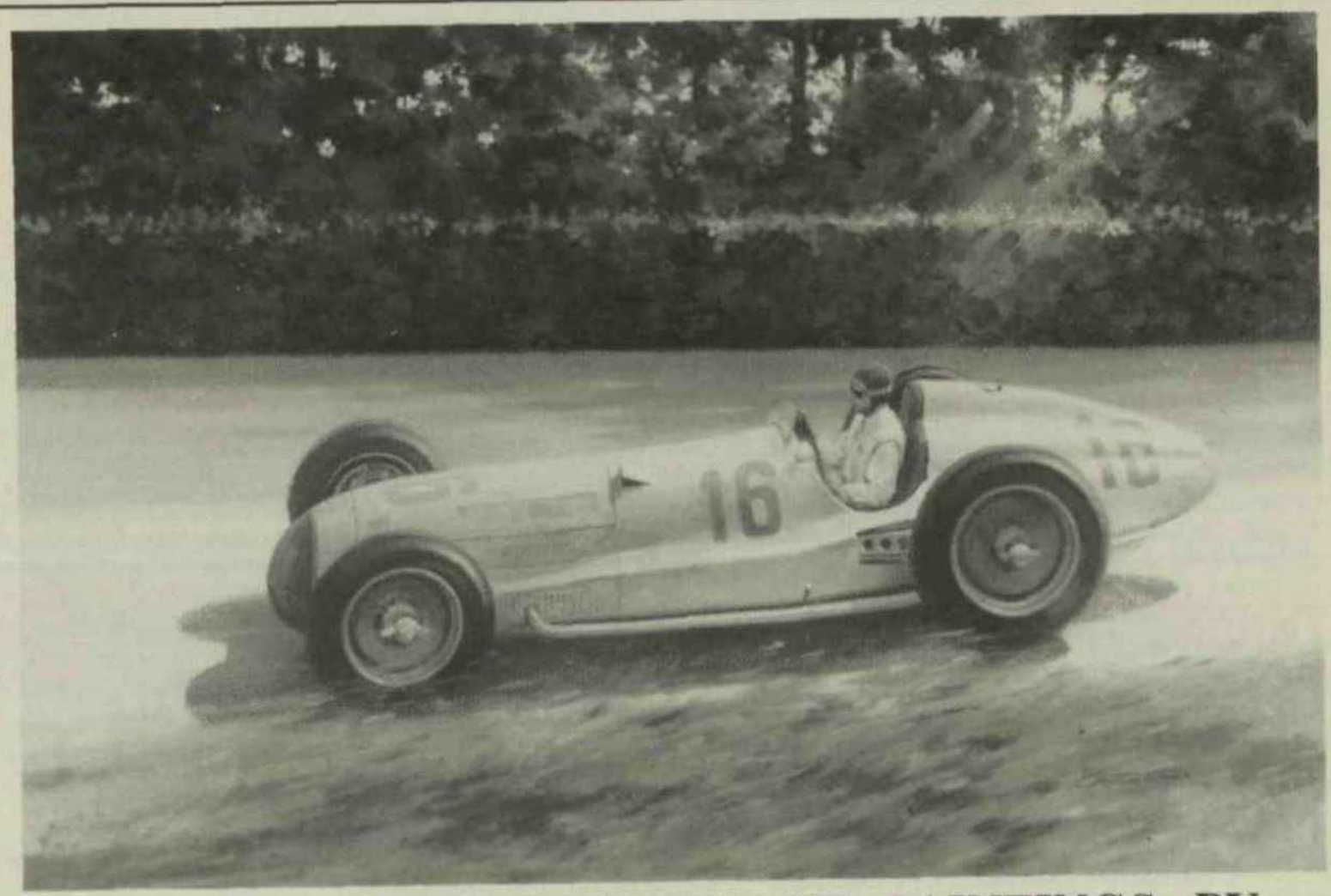
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1992 Motor S

World F1 Championship

March 1 ... South African GP, Kyalami
March 22 ..... Mexican GP, Mexico City
April 5..... Brazilian GP, Interlagos
May 3..... Spanish GP, Barcelona
May 17..... San Marino GP, Imola
May 31 ..... Monaco GP, Monte Carlo
June 14..... Canadian GP, Montreal
July 5 ..... French GP, Magny-Cours
July 12 ..... British GP, Silverstone
July 26 ..... German GP, Hockenheim
August 16 Hungarian GP, Hungaroring
August 30..... Belgian GP, Spa
September 13..... Italian GP, Monza
September 27 .. Portuguese GP, Estoril
October 25..... Japanese GP, Suzuka
November 8 .. Australian GP, Adelaide





PORT calendar

World Rally Championship

January 23-30 ..... Monte Carlo Rally
February 13-17..... Swedish Rally
March 3-8..... Portuguese Rally
March 27-April 1 ... Safari Rally, Kenya
May 2-7 ..... Tour of Corsica
May 30-June 4 Acropolis Rally, Greece
June 24-29 ..... New Zealand Rally
July 20-26..... Rally Argentina
Aug 25-31 .. 1000 Lakes Rally, Finland
September 18-22 ..... Rally Australia
October 11-16 ..... Sanremo Rally
Oct 27-November 2 .. Ivory Coast Rally
November 7-12.. Cataluña Rally, Spain
Nov 22-26 ..... RAC Rally, Great Britain



Sportscar World Championship

April 5..... Autopolis, Japan
April 26..... Monza, Italy
May 10 ..... Silverstone, England
May 24 ..... Jarama, Spain
June 20/21 ..... Le Mans, France
July 19..... Donington Park, England
August 2..... Nürburgring, Germany
August 30..... Suzuka, Japan
September 13..... Mexico City, Mexico
October 4..... Jerez, Spain

European F3000 Championship

May 10 ..... Silverstone, England
June 8..... Pau, France
June 21 ..... Jerez, Spain
June 28 ..... Mugello, Italy
July 12 ..... Enna-Pergusa, Sicily
July 25..... Hockenheim, Germany
August 29..... Spa, Belgium
September 13..... Albacete, Spain
September 27 ..... Le Mans, France
October 11 ..... Nogaro, France



Artist Arthur Benjamins is another to be inspired by the Campbell legend. 'The Christmas Run', which depicts Bluebird at 250 mph with a snow-covered Old Man of Coniston in the background, is the first of six limited run 18 x 25 in land and water speed record breaking prints available via Blue Bird Publications on 0959 74414.

The lure of a legend

25 years since his death, Donald Campbell's name still exerts a magnetic charm

At 8.46 on the morning of January 4 1967 Donald Campbell took what became the last great gamble of his life on Coniston Water. Only moments after speeding down the black lake at 297mph, he elected not to refuel, nor to let his wake die down, but to return immediately. At a speed estimated to be well beyond the 300mph average that he sought, his Bluebird turbojet hydroplane left the surface and somersaulted spectacularly to destruction. His body was never found.

Last month, in a simple but moving ceremony by the memorial that now stands to him in the quiet lakeland village, the 25th anniversary of his passing was remembered. Robin Brown, the chairman of the K7 Club named after Bluebird's racing number, laid a wreath on the memorial that is hewn from Coniston slate.

Ever since I first saw film of Campbell's accident, at the age of 14, I developed an obsession with the man and the many myths that surround him, but it still surprises me just how many others have been so similarly affected. Steve Holter, the curator of The Campbell Hall of Speed in Polegate, East Sussex, and of Paul Ffoulkes-Halberd's adjacent Filching Manor Motor Museum wherein lives a mock-up of K7 and Sir Malcolm Campbell's original K3, is but one example. "At the age of seven my father sat me on his knee to watch the television. Not an unusual thing for a father to do, but the date was January 4 1967. I remember it was about 5.45pm and that my Dad had said, 'It is the end of an era, you'll never see the like of this again. The end of an era and a very brave man.' I would have to be honest and say it was not a day that changed my life, nor were the comments of any meaning to me, but the events of January 7 were.

"I remember waking to find my 'rich' aunty Joan's brand new Triumph Herald convertible outside, which was very odd as she always visited us on Fridays after school. That day was a Saturday, but I was soon to find out what was happening.

"'Last night your father was taken ill, and died,' said my mum. After that I cannot remember a thing. One thing that did occur to me was the last thing I had done with my dad, watching the news from Coniston, and I determined to find out what had so impressed him to make me watch. When time and money allowed I began reading about Donald M. Campbell, to collect the books written by him, about him, by his family, on his family, about the land speed record and about the water speed record. Books, models, postcards – anything that I could find. I quite clearly remember writing to Ken Norris at Norris Brothers for information; that letter was to end up on Tony James' desk, an event he reminded me about when I eventually met him in the flesh some 17 years later!

"But at the back of all this was the reason I got so hooked on record breaking and especially the Campbells: my father, who introduced me to the subject but was not interested himself. I cannot say I remember my father that well, I cannot claim to have known anything about Donald Campbell when he was alive, but I can say that in the intervening 25 years they have both given me a great deal.

"Maybe my reasons for admiring one man are a bit too personal, but I have been very fortunate to meet and in many cases become friends with the people who were around Donald Campbell when he was alive, and they have told me so much about the man himself, things that have never been published, private things, that I have developed a great admiration for him. And that in many ways has been reflected by the people I have since met who knew my father, and the things they have told me about him.

"I suppose it is a little like knowing someone secondhand, but if these two men had impressed these other people so much to have had a lasting effect, which has been passed on to me in recollection, then I am proud to have known them both in such a way."

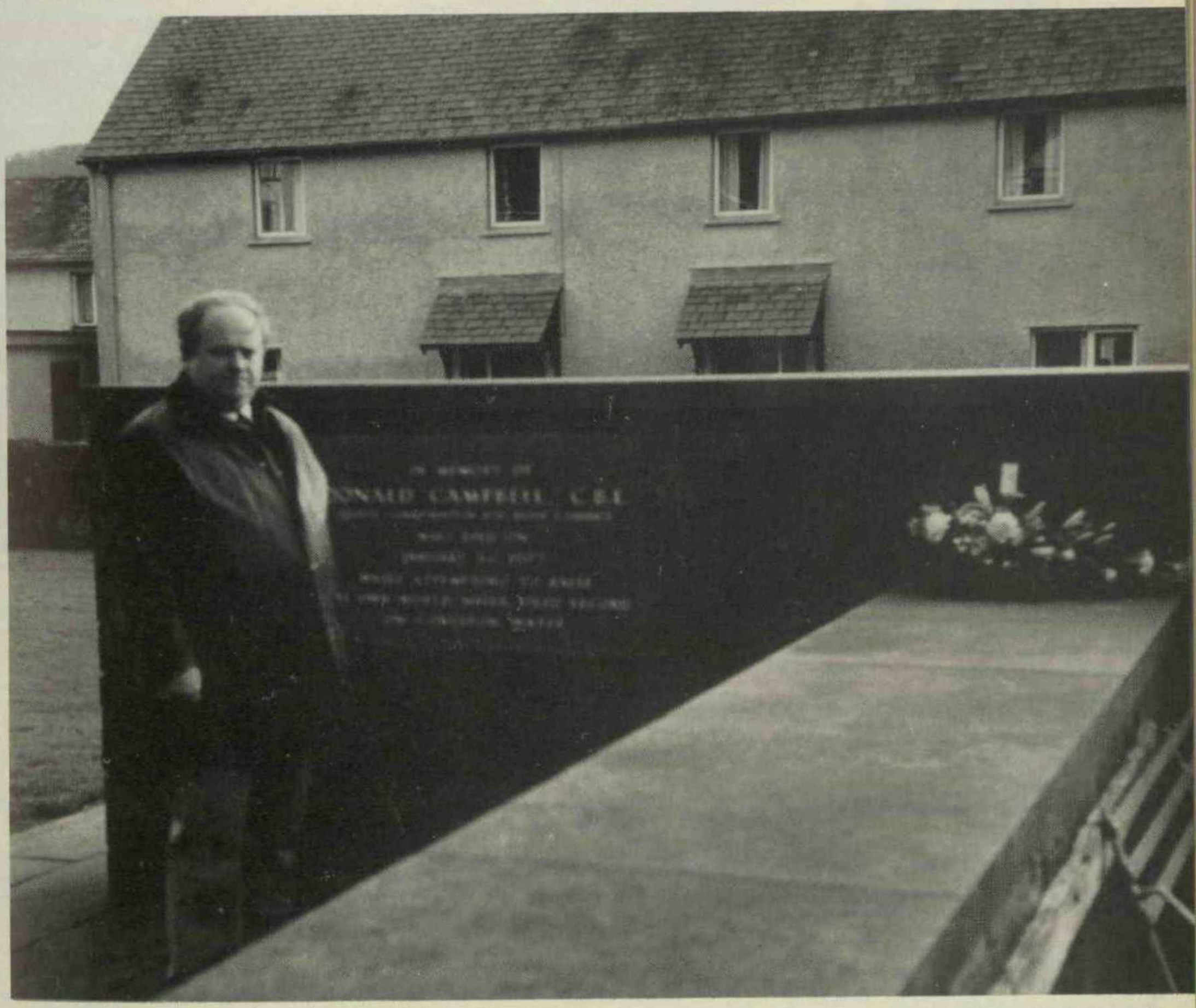
Some have spoken as movingly, while others have been more pragmatic. The motorboat historian Kevin Desmond finds the name Campbell rarely leaves him alone. "In 21 years of my writing articles and books about land, air and waterborne motorsport, Donald Campbell and Bluebird have played a mysteriously recurring role. Although I never met 'The Skipper', just by listening to the anecdotal memories of a dozen who had dealings with him – particularly my dear friends Leo and Joan Villa – certainly gave me an objective knowledge of his character, even if lacking in subjective experience.

"To me, Donald Campbell was a promiscuous, superstitious, courageous and ingenious go-getter. He knew how to fight back when the odds were stacked against him, although at times he suffered such emotional scars as a domineering father.

"As the owner of both a fragment of Bluebird K7's wreckage and two scale models, and of a sizeable collection of the published works of Maurice Maeterlinck (who wrote the theatre play 'The Blue Bird' which so fascinated Sir Malcolm), and having written three books on motorboating history, each of which chronicles Donald's achievements to a greater or lesser degree, I am what might be called a second-generation aficionado. But then so are Ken Warby, the current water record holder, Steve Holter, yourself, Martin Summers, modeller Fred Harris, artist Arthur Benjamins, Speed Record Club founder Robin Richardson and several others bathed in the magnetic 'Bluebird blue' speed haze.

"When, two years ago, Lady Arran and I assembled a team which designed and built a boat which broke the World Electric Water Speed Record, Campbell's persuasive genius in the building of the Bluebird CN7 car was my strategic inspiration for the 50mph An Stradag. I would like to think that, had he been alive today, aged 70, the man who had been on the point of getting heavily involved with the potential of waterjet propulsion, would still have made a very positive input towards our dream of a 100mph superconducting electric hydroplane – British, of course!"

My own obsession began shortly after seeing Campbell's accident on television, when I happened upon a copy of Richard Hough's *BP Book of the Racing Campbells*. I believe it cost me 12/6d, a good week's pocket money. It was instrumental in nurturing my fascination for the land and water speed records. To me Donald Campbell was an intensely loyal, cunning, flamboyant yet ultimately lonely man, abnormally brave. Driven by an inner desire to prove to himself that he was as good as his father had been, yet trapped in Sir Malcolm's long shadow to the point where no matter what he achieved, he would never feel it was enough. What fascinates me most is that he was at times genuinely afraid of what he was doing, and yet he persevered. His successes included not just seven water speed records (more than anyone else), one land record and the unique feat of breaking both in the same year, but a lifetime's triumph over fear, either of a physical nature after his 360mph accident at Bonneville or, to him worse still, of failure.



At a simple ceremony on January 4 1992, K7 Club chairman Robin Brown laid a wreath at the slate memorial that stands in Coniston to commemorate Donald Campbell and Leo Villa.

Such is that fascination that I am now researching the definitive book on Donald Campbell, and would be delighted to hear from any readers who have personal anecdotes they would like to share. I can be contacted at 85 Kingshill Drive, Harrow HA3 8QQ.

To Donald Campbell life was a series of mountains that one had to climb. He spent much of his career atop summits, and was within striking distance of his highest and most challenging when Bluebird flipped. Even today, 25 years on, it is possible to stop in the russet red and vivid green beauty that surrounds Coniston, and be touched by an atmosphere still redolent of the ghost of a great Englishman who spared nothing as he reached out for the ultimate. **DJT**

Pace Notes

The expression "pace notes" in rallying terms refers to the written details that rally navigators use to aid the drivers to know what is approaching. These notes detail everything, such as direction and speed, road surfaces, bumps and dips, water splashes, blind brows and time controls, at all times telling the driver what he cannot see coming. These notes are compiled by the navigator in conjunction with the driver during a reconnaissance run over any particular section before the event. Sometimes rally organisers ban the use of "pace notes" by the simple expedient of banning reconnaissance runs. This tends to cause complaints from the more vociferous competitors, but generally speaking it doesn't seem to make much difference, the same crews win.

In a recent Television programme I was named as being "the inventor of pace notes", which is absolute nonsense, like so many myths and legends promulgated by the world of Television. I will admit to playing some part in proving the efficiency and effectiveness of pace notes, and subsequently spread the gospel on behalf of navigators, but I did not "invent" the idea.

I honestly do not know who "invented" pace-notes, but the first time I heard about the idea was from some friends who had been to the Carrera PanAmericana "Mexico", the open road race over more than 2000 miles, the length of Mexico. The Lincoln team had used a form of roller-map from which the co-driver/navigator could have an accurate check of where they were and what was approaching. This interested me greatly because in 1952, while racing professionally as a sidecar passenger, I had assisted my driver round the original Nurburgring by a system of signals involving a thump on his leg. I learnt the way round the 14-mile "ring" pretty thoroughly, but he was not so sure, so at the approach of dodgy left hand bends I would thump his leg once and for dodgy right hand bends I would thump him twice. For full throttle over blind brows I would give his leg a comforting squeeze and it worked quite well.

In 1954 when I was planning to do the following year's Mille Miglia with American John Fitch we discussed how the passenger could act as an advance pair of eyes for the driver, transmitting advance information from notes made during reconnaissance runs of the 1000-mile course round Italy. When plans changed and Stirling Moss asked me to accompany him in the works Mercedes-Benz 300SLR, and John Fitch sportingly agreed to free me from my commitment to him, I joined Stirling to discover that he was thinking of using me much as John had been planning, but on a slightly less ambitious scale. As a basis for our plans he produced some detailed notes from "Lofty" England of Jaguar Cars, that had been made for the PanAmericana race when Jaguars had been thinking of competing with a team of MkVII saloons in the production category.

From all these sources the idea for the 1955 Mille Miglia gradually took shape and with the resources of Mercedes-Benz behind us I was able to do about 12,000 miles of reconnaissance in order to compile my 15-foot roll of detailed notes of the whole of the 1000-mile route. Between us we settled on what was needed and after a lot of experimentation we devised a system of communication by means of hand signals. In the open SLR there was too much noise and wind to attempt to shout at one another, and there was always the risk of not hearing correctly. Mercedes-Benz provided us with an inter-com system that used throat-microphones and ear-pieces wired into our helmets, but after some serious testing at speed we turned the idea down. At all normal speeds and under normal conditions the system was perfect, but when Stirling was driving on that knife-edge that few drivers can approach he found that his eyes needed all his mental performance and there was nothing left for "hearing". Had I not experienced this phenomenon at first hand, sitting alongside him on a test session, I would not have believed it.

I took the problem to some medical friends I had in the aerospace research establishment and they confirmed that it was quite normal for the human hearing mechanism to diminish if some other faculty was being over-stressed. We perfected our system of hand signals, for we felt they were foolproof, providing Stirling did not lose his eyesight during the race! On my part I memorised to 100% accuracy the first 350 miles of the route, and then my memory diminished to about 90%, not that I was going to rely on memory, of course. The whole route was hand-written in a short-hand that only I could interpret, and I had a second copy in my pocket as a back-up system. My memory for the Brescia to Pescara section was merely a back-up to the back-up, so to speak. I did this as a personal form of brain discipline, and would lie in bed repeating my notes like learning poetry and invariably I would fall asleep somewhere after Pescara!

We would practice our hand-signals even when doing a practice lap in a Mercedes-Benz saloon, so that we could virtually carry on a conversation without saying a word. There were about 12 basic hand movements but they could be used to cover twice that number of "words" by combining two or three of them together. Our "conversation" was a one-way affair, for all Stirling wanted to know was what was coming beyond the depth of his vision, and how we were doing in the race. On some very long straights, of five or six miles, he wanted warning of the braking point and on one stretch early in the race we joined an 11 kilometre straight alongside a canal side-by-side with Castellotti in a 4.4-litre Ferrari that out-accelerated us up to 170mph, though we were equal on maximum speed, and at close to 175mph we sat about 200 yards behind him. Now I knew exactly how long we could maintain this speed, and to within 50 yards the point at which Stirling had to lift off and brake for the left hand bend at the end.

As the end of the road came into view we saw the Ferrari brake lights come on and then off as Castellotti realized he had braked too early. This happened about three times as he tried to pin-point the corner, and all the time Stirling was flat-out, waiting for my signal. By the time we braked we had made up all the ground lost when we accelerated up to 170mph, and we took the left hand bend almost alongside the Ferrari. Some time later, after the race Castellotti asked me about that incident, because it had puzzled him how Stirling had made up so much ground on braking. When I explained it was my responsibility to signal to Stirling the Italian shook his head in disbelief and said he could never have relied on a "navigator" like that.

Stirling reckoned that my "navigational aid" probably saved us 20 to 30 minutes in the 10 hours of racing we did to win that event, so as I say, I am prepared to accept that I proved the efficiency of "pace notes", but I did not invent them.

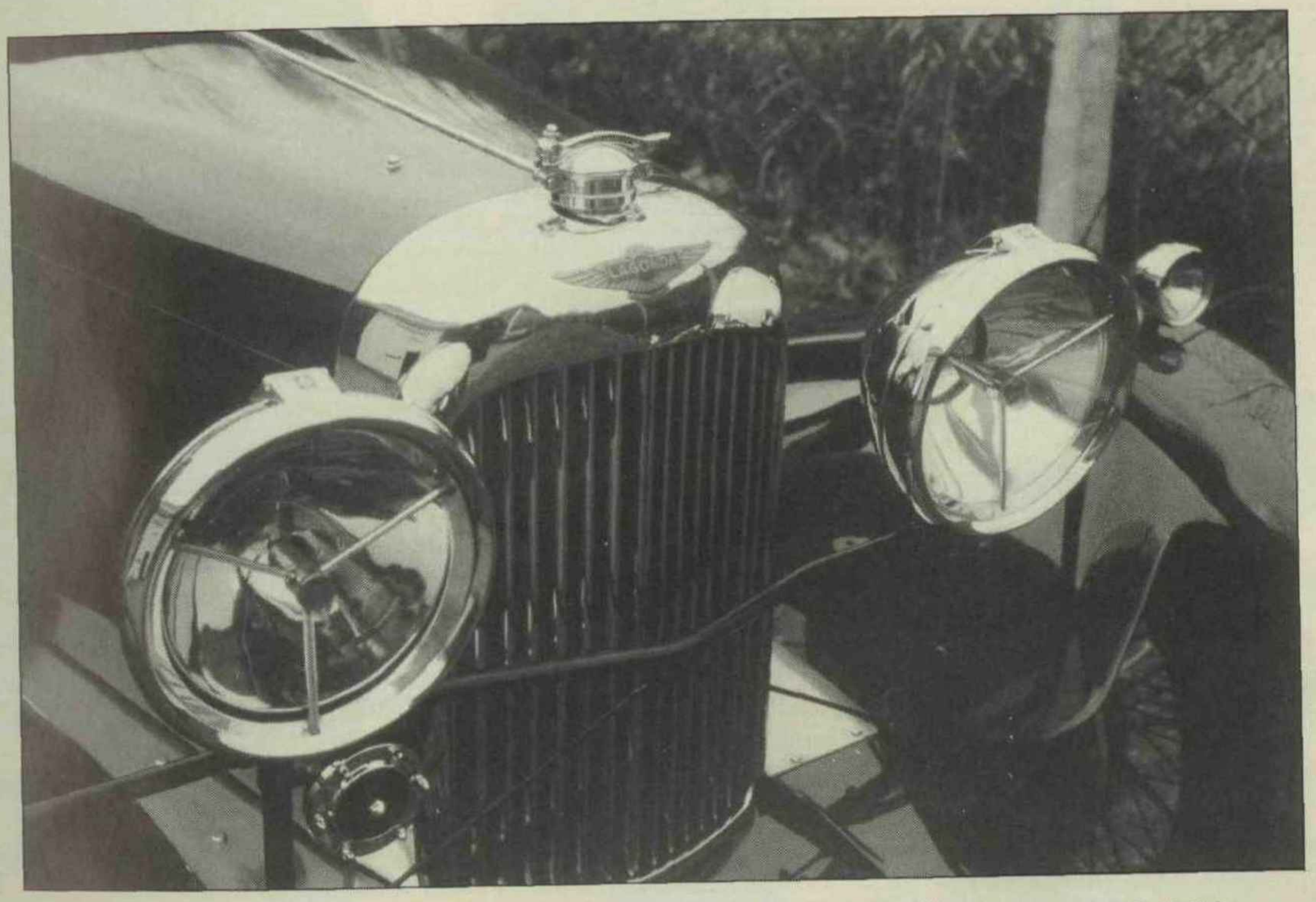
Yours, **D S J**

●PS: This month's Memorable Three Moments come from Andrew Everitt.

1. Archie Scott-Brown coming out of Stowe Corner at Silverstone in 1957, right on the limit in a Lister-Jaguar.
2. Pedro Rodriguez in a Gulf Porsche 917 in a deluge at Brands Hatch in 1970.
3. Ayrton Senna's smoothness and balance as he fed the power on up the Raidillon on the Spa-Francorchamps circuit in the Lotus-Renault in 1985 when winning in the wet.



Recording the route was one thing: relaying it another. DSJ used hand signals to keep Moss on course.



1933 Lagonda 2 Litre Low Chassis Tourer. Sold for £33,000

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London Calling

Recession be damned. If ever evidence that the motor racing industry is hale and hearty was needed, the provision of a *second* national exhibition dedicated to the sport is surely it.

Tucked into the slipstream of Birmingham's January NEC extravaganza is the Earls Court Motor Racing Show, which runs from February 6-9. Backed by *Motor Sport*'s weekly sister *Motoring News*, the Earls Court venture marks the return of such an exhibition to the capital after a couple of years' absence.

In addition to the familiar static racing car displays, there will be several 'theme areas', including a rally service halt and Champion's operational F1 pit lane, complete with Williams FW14, tools, telemetry equipment, engines and so on.

Many of the sport's leading personalities will be making guest appearances, and visitors will have the chance to compete head to head against some of them on one of the *Motoring News* Virtual Reality racing simulators. Live interviews with celebrities will be conducted on stage by Brands Hatch commentator Brian Jones.

Fitness devotees (and/or masochists) can take part in the RaceFit challenge, a fearsome series of tests designed to hone would-be racers into peak physical condition. Those who fare best at the show will be eligible for further suffering; RaceFit is offering full fitness courses as prizes.

Falling, as it does, just a few weeks before the motor racing season gets under way, several significant launches are planned for Earls Court, among them the *Motoring News*/Grand Prix Racewear Cadet Kart Scholarship and another brand new initiative geared towards furthering the careers of promising young Britons.

The plethora of static exhibits will encompass all areas of the sport, from Formula One to banger racing, from drag racing to rallycross. Other stands have been taken by car clubs, after market tuners and a multitude of book, video and accessory vendors. February 6 is reserved for trade and the press. Thereafter, public admission will be £5 per head adult, £2.50 per head children. RAC MSA and FISA competition licence holders will be admitted free so long as they either book in advance or bring a paying friend on the day.



You're approaching Stowe at 170 mph. He's on the outside. What do you do?

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The 1992 Motor Racing Show will let you see motorsport from the inside.

You'll be able to try virtual reality racing against professional drivers specially selected by *Motoring News*, Britain's leading motorsport weekly. And take a series of tests to see if you've got what it takes to be one of them.

You can visit the Tuning Clinic and find out how experts tune road models like yours for maximum performance. And explore theme areas including a working F1 pit lane and an international rally service halt.

Of course, there will also be displays featuring some of the most successful single seaters, sports and rally cars, from Club right up to World Championship level.

Because the Earls Court Motor Racing Show takes place in February you'll even have the chance to see the 1992 season cars up close. And some of the most famous names in the sport will be there, so you can learn more about the cars from people who really know.

Thursday 6th	Press & Trade only	10am - 4pm
Friday 7th	Public	10am - 5pm
Saturday 8th	Public	10am - 5pm
Sunday 9th	Public	10am - 5pm

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Find out the full facts by calling the Motor Racing Show Ticket Line on 081 744 1585.

In association with
Motoring News

The Earls Court Motor Racing Show.
6th – 9th February 1992

Marathon multiplicity

Rallying, so goes the story which we have occasionally retold, began to evolve when enthusiasts of the motor car sought more from its sporting potential than just getting from one place to another in the least possible time. Many felt that their competitive appetites would not be satisfied without a strong lacing of adventure. For them, circuit racing was far too repetitive, even to the point of monotony. They wanted constantly changing surroundings and opponents in addition to their fellow drivers, such as the elements and whatever natural obstacles they encountered.

The quest for such contests led to routes which were sometimes in civilised parts of the world, sometimes not. Snow-covered alpine roads, desert crossings, frozen lakes, boulder beds, muddy tracks, dense jungles, rocky escarpments and open, tropical savannah have all figured in rallies from time to time. In Sweden, one event even sent its competitors underground into the galleries of an iron ore mine, giving them a three-dimensional drawing of the tunnels as a route card.

Alongside the progress of what has become modern rallying came a desire for longer, tougher, more demanding competitions, even spanning several continents. Town-to-town races had been common, and there was even the Thousand Mile Trial in Britain during 1900, but in 1907 the forerunner of long distance events took place when a race for motor cars was held from Peking to Paris, won by Prince Scipione Borghese and Luigi Barzini in a 40hp Itala specially constructed for the prince by the Italian firm of that name. The car was looked after by the prince's own mechanic, Ettore Guizzardi who was described by Barzini's son in his foreword to his father's account of the race as " . . . the moustachioed and silent mechanical wizard who could take the whole automobile apart and put it together again in a matter of hours anywhere, in the Gobi Desert or the Ural mountains . . . " The miracles of roadside servicing are by no means new.

It was inevitable that at sometime or another a competition would be devised which would be even longer than the Peking to Paris race, and what better way to achieve this than to go from one side of the globe to the other? In 1968, sponsored by the *Daily Express* and the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, the London-Sydney Marathon took place, starting at Crystal Palace just a few days after the RAC Rally of that year.

The route went via Europe and Asia to Bombay, from which the entourage embarked on the SS Chusan for Freemantle. Car regulations were minimal, and there were more hybrids than thoroughbreds. Even the winning Hillman Hunter had an Aston Martin rear axle, not to mention Girling brakes at the front and Lockheed at the rear – or was it the other way around? It was also strange to see a Rolls-Royce with an exhaust stack rising from the top of a wing, alongside the windscreen pillar.

Most people were enthusiastic about the adventure that such an event would provide, but some were more cautious in their appraisal. It had a marked effect on the quality of entries for the RAC Rally, and there were fears that other regular rallies would suffer due to budgets being drained by the costly participation in the Marathon.

It was said at the time that this would be a one-off affair, not to be repeated, but it sparked off what turned out to be a rash of long-distance events and works teams were not slow in demanding that such competitions should not be authorised unless full details were announced at least two years in advance, allowing them time to make preparations and to allocate budgets.

When the World Cup football championship took place in Mexico, a rally was devised in conjunction with the series, and this ran from London to Mexico via South America and a sea crossing from Lisbon to Rio di Janeiro. Ford cashed in on its victory with an Escort, subsequently selling great numbers of a model called the Escort Mexico.

When the next World Cup took place in Munich, another World Cup Rally was held, this time from London to Munich via the Sahara. But although the roundabout route was certainly long, London-Munich doesn't sound all that far, and it lacked the magic of something which went from one side of the world to the other.

So it was that, in 1977, there was a second rally from London to Sydney, starting at Covent Garden (the old one) and finishing at the striking Sydney Opera House, this time with the backing of Singapore Airlines. It was about this time that Wylton Dickson, an Australian who lives in London and the man behind the World Cup and Singapore Airlines events, made it known that he was well on the way to organising a re-run of the Peking to Paris race, this time as a rally and in the opposite direction. It was planned for 1982, the 75th anniversary of the original event.

The French didn't seem to like this idea one bit and Dickson, although well advanced with geographical, financial and diplomatic arrangements, was thwarted at every turn by FISA. National clubs along the way had initially agreed to support the event and to provide local organising manpower and knowledge, but they had to back down when FISA refused to sanction the event. What an absurdity that, when all other planning arrangements were close to completion, a sporting event is stifled by a so-called sporting authority. We have not heard one valid reason for this denial. Could it have been simply the result of indignation at the thought of an event finishing in Paris being the brainchild of an Australian, and one living in London at that?



However, although Dickson was denied the chance of seeing his idea through to fruition, the French latched on to it and some years later it was announced that an organistion set up in France was going to run the event in 1991, with FISA's blessing and support. It did not take place, reportedly due to last year's events in the USSR, but a recent announcement proclaims that another attempt will be made in 1992.

Another event destined for failure to achieve its original goal was the Amerathon, an event intended to take in the two continents of North and South America. Organisers Brian Chuchua, he of Baja Jeep-driving fame, and the late Derek Gates, formerly executive manager of the Safari Rally, did get the event off the ground, but in drastically shortened form as a result of diplomatic problems, particularly concerning some sensitive South American border crossings.

Meanwhile, the French had jumped on the marathon bandwagon. The Citroën company was already highly experienced in organising successful expeditions for young drivers (not sporting contests, so it didn't need FISA) across former French territories in North and West Africa and it was not long before a commercial organisation (as distinct from Citroën's non-profit-making ventures) was set up to run long distance rallies in the region.

Attempts to run a rally all the way around the Mediterranean failed, but Thierry Sabine got his Paris-Dakar event off the ground and it has been running for some years, the organising company now headed by his father Gilbert after Sabine himself was killed in an air crash during the event some years ago.

Initially, the event traversed the Sahara after a sea crossing to North-West Africa, but after political problems it moved to the East and began its African sections in Libya – still finishing at Dakar, of course.

As we write, the 1991/92 version of the event is



As we closed for press, Hubert Auriol led the controversial Paris-Sirte-Cape Town.

under way, but this time with a considerable extension to its route. Rather than have it finish at Dakar, the organisers have planned to send it all the way down to Cape Town, via the western side of the African continent.

Traditional rallies have traditional routes, but Paris-Dakar is run for profit and it might be that its route was becoming too repetitive. Eggs kept in one basket can sometimes crack, and the commercial interests within TSO (Thierry Sabine Organisation) may have felt that diversification was necessary. On the other hand, the winds of political change blowing gently in South Africa have led many people to the idea that it is now acceptable, possibly profitable and certainly fashionable, to be seen to be supportive of those winds.

However, lest anyone should get the notion that a way has now been made open for outsiders to "take motorsport into South Africa", to quote one comment we have heard, let's set the record straight that motorsport has been there for many years, and eminently successful it has been, too. We can only speak of rallies, which are tough, competitive and well organised, but the 1992 calendar of events of the AA of RSA is a hefty, 68-page booklet, packed with well-run events of all categories.

By the time this issue of MOTOR SPORT appears, it will be over, but as this is written it remains to be seen whether the event will have used its planned route, bypassing Zaire by sea and continuing via Angola, Namibia and Botswana to the final leg down the West Coast of Cape Province, from Namakwaland to Cape Town itself. There is still trouble in Angola, and land mines can still be encountered on some road verges. Indeed, about a week after the event started, four unfortunate British tourists were shot dead in the country. There is, however, a contingency plan to extend the boat journey so as to by-pass both Zaire and Angola, embarking at Pointe Noire (Congo) and disembarking somewhere in Namibia.

A special stage intended to be held in a sandy area near the Cape Province west coast has already been shelved, which means that nearly all of the tail end of the event will be on good tarmac, and this is a point which has received much criticism, even in France.

As the rally passed through Gabon, the Mitsubishi of Auriol was leading, despite having been rolled, followed by team-mates Weber and Shinozuka. Waldegärd and Vatanen followed in their Citroëns, and all five of them were well separated.

Whether this event will be held in this form one year from now is a matter not yet decided, but it is a complete misconception of ideologists that sport can break down diplomatic boundaries. What happens in the long run will depend more on politicians and the warring state of rival factions than on anything else.

Meanwhile, there is not only Paris to Peking, or Beijing as most people now call it, to think of, but a second event which plans a journey to Cape Town. This time, it will be from London and will accept only pre-1971 classic cars, unlike the French-run event which takes cars, motorcycles and trucks, the latter only taking part to support car and motor cycle contestants because non-competing service vehicles are forbidden. The London to Cape Town event is planned for November this year and it has been called the Third World Cup Rally, although its destination has no connection with World Cup football.

An announcement last year, following diplomatic visits by Sir David Steel and event organiser



Having established that the Hillman Hunter GT was unsuitable for the Admirals Cup, Andrew Cowan (on bonnet) found that it was quite at home on the first London-Sydney marathon.



Great racing cars of the 20th century? Adventuresome spirit was the essence of the original London-Sydney. The Vauxhall Ventora's competition history has not yet been widely chronicled.

Philip Young to South Africa, Namibia, Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Nigeria, Algeria and Tunisia, stated that this was the first time in nearly 40 years that such a route could be considered feasible. We recall many such individual and group journeys accomplished successfully during that period, including overland truck expeditions, a homecoming journey by a lone motor cyclist and even a race from Cape Town to Southampton. Whilst the SS Windsor Castle sailed off the West Coast of Africa, Eric Jackson and Ken Chambers drove their Ford Corsair northwards through Africa and Europe in an attempt to beat the ship to Southampton, only resting properly during the two short sea crossings.

After all manner of tribulations, including the impounding of their service aircraft at Kisangani, implied threats of imprisonment and execution to its crew, and the need to patch inner tubes and refit tyres within the confines of the Corsair as it sped along, they won the race and were there at the quayside to greet the ship's company and passengers when it docked at Southampton. And that was little over 20 years ago.

Yet another long distance event for classic cars is on the cards for the spring of 1993, to Australia again. When entries closed on June 1 1991 for the 1993 London-Sydney Marathon, 25 years after the first and 16 after the second, no less than 191 applications had been received for the 80 available places.

But here is another event whose organisers may have been using sport-tinted spectacles to obscure the darker hues of possible political strife. The route is intended to pass through both Jugoslavia and the territories of the former Soviet Union, and we all know what has happened, and is still sadly happening, in those troubled regions. Furthermore, two long sea crossings were planned to be accomplished, courtesy of the Russians, in a massive Antonov 124 transport aircraft, but whether that will still be available when the time comes remains to be seen.

Taking the view that sporting connections can open all frontiers is akin to sticking your head in the sand.

In an ideal world this might not be the case, but the world is far from ideal and it is downright immoral to consider sending well-heeled rally competitors through regions which are torn apart by riot and uproar, death and destruction, starvation and sickness.

We are not suggesting that any organiser would be foolish enough to persist in plans to run an event through war-torn regions, but there have been cases in which poverty-stricken peasants, scratching for every morsel of food, have watched whilst rally people have devoured the equivalent of banquets, leaving behind more than the local people could hope to gather in years of toil.

Areas uncluttered by the trappings of civilisation are generally ideal for rally routes but, whether there is civil strife or not, care should always be taken not to offend or disrupt the lives of the people of those regions. I once threw a couple of bananas to two monkeys alongside a bush track. Immediately, not only did half a dozen more monkeys appear but a bunch of children, each eager for the same handout. I felt sick, sad and thoroughly disillusioned. Not for their plight, for that was their environment, but because of our intruding presence and thoughtlessness.

Whenever long distance events are planned, spanning a number of border crossings and passing through what are described as the 'best' areas for rallying, let it be remembered that there are always unknown factors and that nothing can be planned with complete certainty. No one may be about to provoke a food riot in Kielder, initiate an independence struggle in Wales or begin civil disruption in the Isle of Man.

Or are they? When other countries and other continents are concerned, the permutations assume Littlewoods proportions.

When we go rallying across borders, we do so by grace, not by right. **GP**

Total recall

During the '70s, the most prominent international rally in South Africa was the Total Rally, inaugurated in 1957, organised by the Pretoria Motor Club and eventually included in the list of qualifiers for the FIA Cup for Drivers, the trophy which was awarded before the World Rally Championship for Drivers was established.

Among its international line-up have been crews from Ford, Peugeot, British Leyland, Chrysler, GM, Toyota, Nissan, Volkswagen and others.

Many of the world's leading drivers and co-drivers took part in the event, and everyone enjoyed both the unique style of this no-practice rally and its extremely enjoyable social background. Sponsored by Total, the French petroleum company which is very prominent in South Africa, the rally was eventually discontinued when the sponsors felt that their term of backing should come to an end.

We are pleased to say that the Total Rally has now been revived, with its original sponsors and organising club, and it remains to be seen whether it will achieve the same prominence as its forerunner. Last October, the event was held over 30 special stages, totalling some 310 stage miles, running with just a three-hour break in the 32hour event which started at Pietersburg and finished at Kyalami.

In recent years, a great deal of hogwash has been written, broadcast and televised about South Africa, much of it biased comment and some even by people who didn't know the country at all. Resisting the urge to put records straight, we won't dwell on this, but we have to say that our experience of the country is considerable and that its rallying has always been open to all.

October's Total Rally was won by SA veterans Sarel van der Merwe and Franz Boshoff in a Ford Laser 4x4, two minutes ahead of Hannes Grobler and Douglas Judd in a Nissan Sentra 4x4. Of the 51 starters, only 14 finished, among them Patrick Njiru and Surinder Thatthi from Kenya, who were 10th in their Nissan Sentra.

We look forward to the readvancement of this tough and enjoyable event. Who knows, perhaps it might even join the list of World Championship qualifiers, although we earnestly hope that by that time FISA's policy of enforced standardisation will have been replaced by the common sense which we trust will prevail following Max Mosley's election to the chairmanship of FISA.

Asides

After the Lombard RAC Rally has swept its way through many of Britain's forests, it is appropriate to recall that the forest roads which provide the very essence of the RAC and many other rallies in the United Kingdom were first introduced to the sport by Jack Kemsley. More than 30 years ago, Jack endeavoured to ease the RAC Rally away from the various manoeuvring and other tests of the time and to introduce proper special stages.

As an exploratory venture, a forest stage was held in Scotland, after which there has been no holding back. Nowadays, no worthwhile RAC Rally would be possible without forest roads, and it should be remembered that the early events, particularly those in the forests, were due to Jack's leadership. Later, they became almost a family affair, being organised from the Kemsley home in Orpington by Jack, his late wife Joan, his son John, his daughters Anne and Sally and various other helpers.

Recently, Jack Kemsley celebrated his 80th birthday and we would like to record not only our congratulations but our thanks for his initiative and, we feel sure, the appreciation of countless rally enthusiasts.

The new version of the Toyota Celica Turbo 4wd, which was unveiled during last September's Frankfurt Motor Show, will make its first competitive appearance during the Monte-Carlo Rally this year, ratification (a far purer word than homologation) having been planned for 1 January. A roadgoing version will be marketed as the Carlos Sainz Limited Edition.

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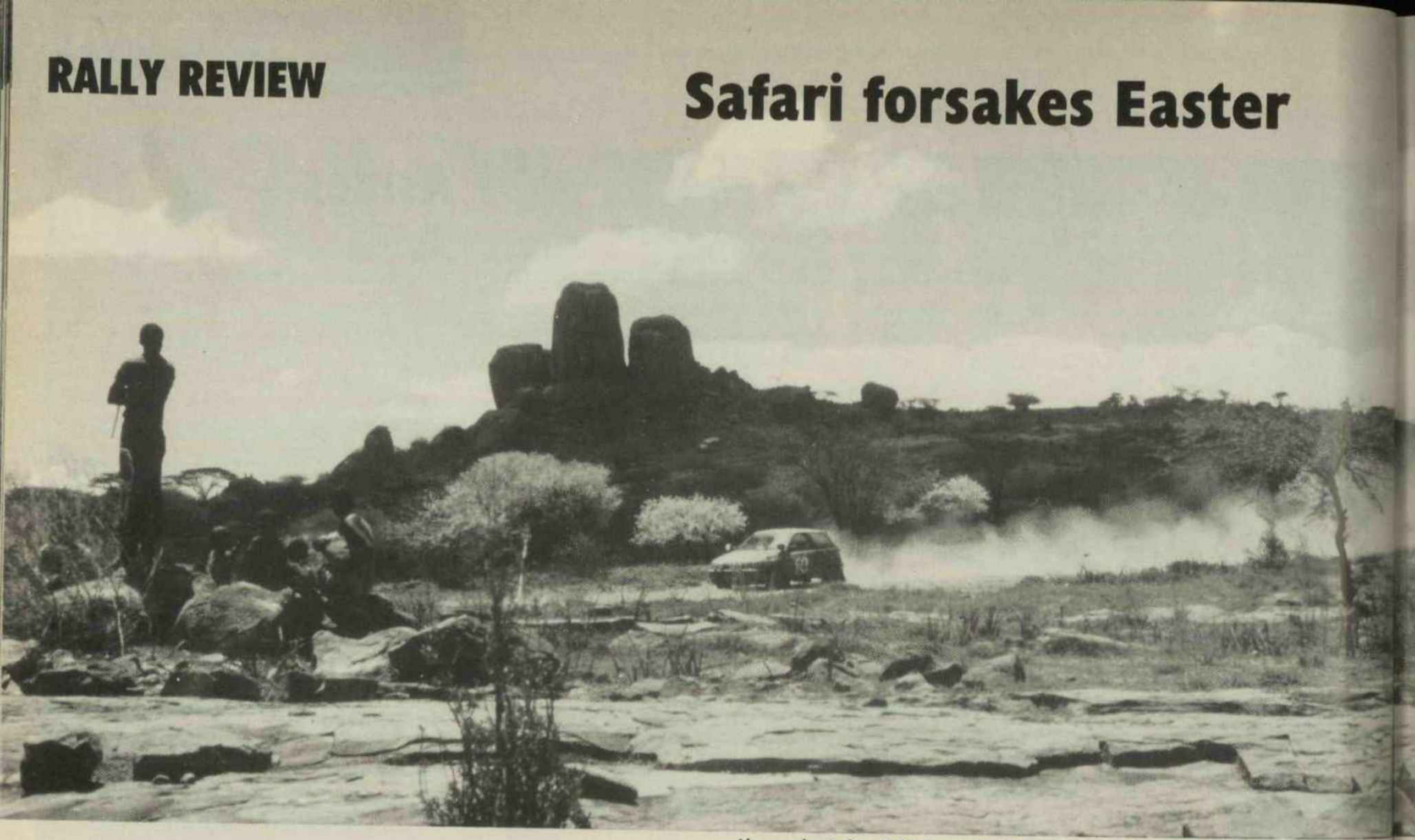
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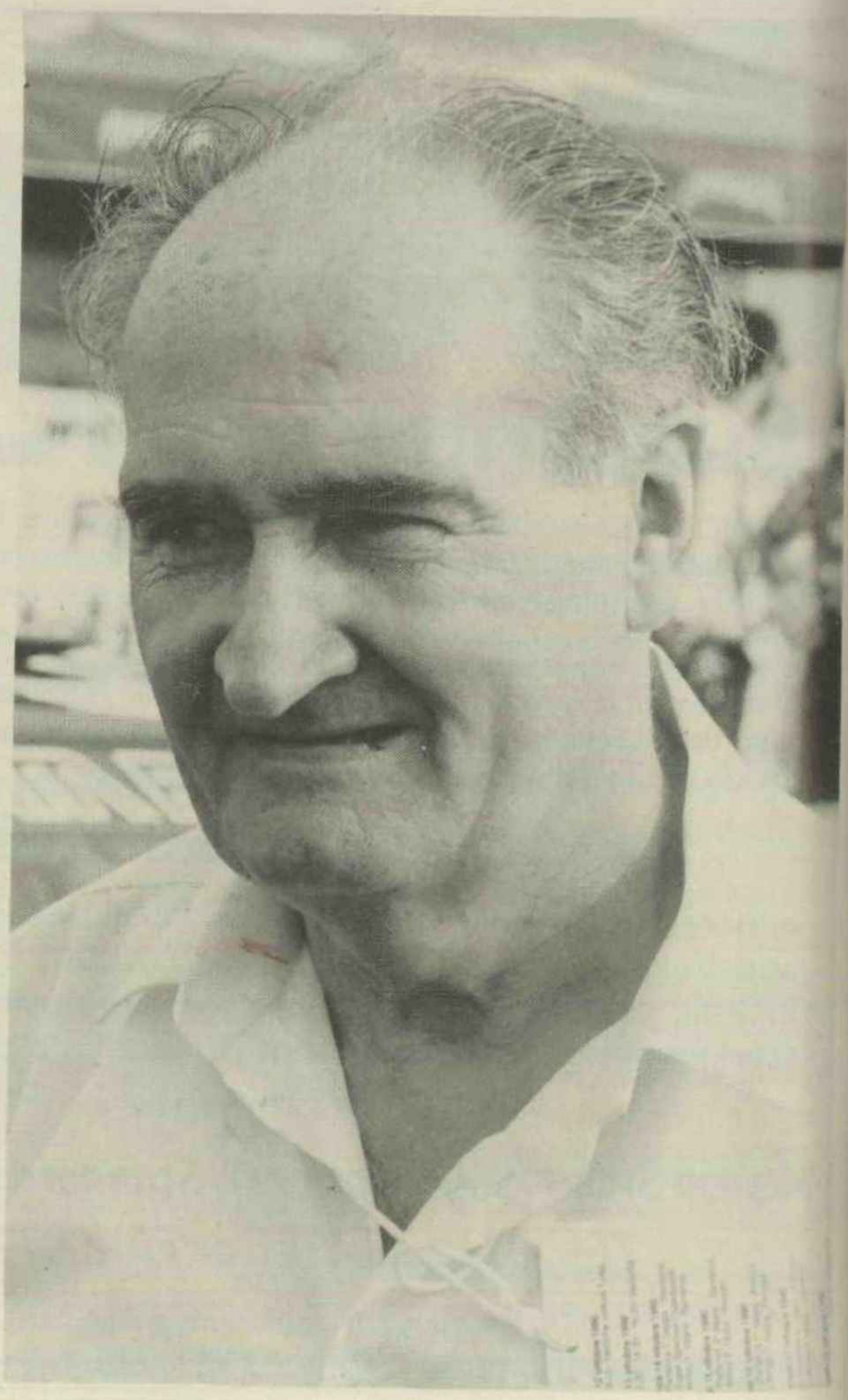
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Safari forsakes Easter



Above: the Safari Rally has ceded its Easter date.
Below: Peter Ashcroft – a motorsporting lifetime.



The World Championship calendar for 1992 is virtually unchanged from 1991. Imminent events are the Monte Carlo Rally (Jan 23-29), Sweden (Feb 13-16), Portugal (Mar 4-7) and the Safari (Mar 27-Apl 1). You will note that the Safari, after some 40 years held during the Easter weekend, has finally succumbed to pressure from FISA and given up its traditional but mobile dates which move each year according to the Easter fluctuation.

This year, it will take place two weeks before Easter, which will make things difficult in three ways: marshals may be harder to find; works teams will certainly find it more difficult to hire the experienced local staff which they always need to man mud cars, refuelling trucks etc; and things may be more dangerous on the roads when the event takes place among working traffic rather than the relatively quiet period of holiday time. In its quest to make rallying safer, we wonder whether the FISA Rally Committee has considered this.

At its new date, the Safari starts some two and a half weeks after the Portuguese Rally and finishes some four and a half weeks before the Tour of Corsica. Would it not have been a lot easier for everyone to have left it within the Easter period? Or does the Corsican event warrant a greater gap than Portugal or the Safari simply because it is French-run?

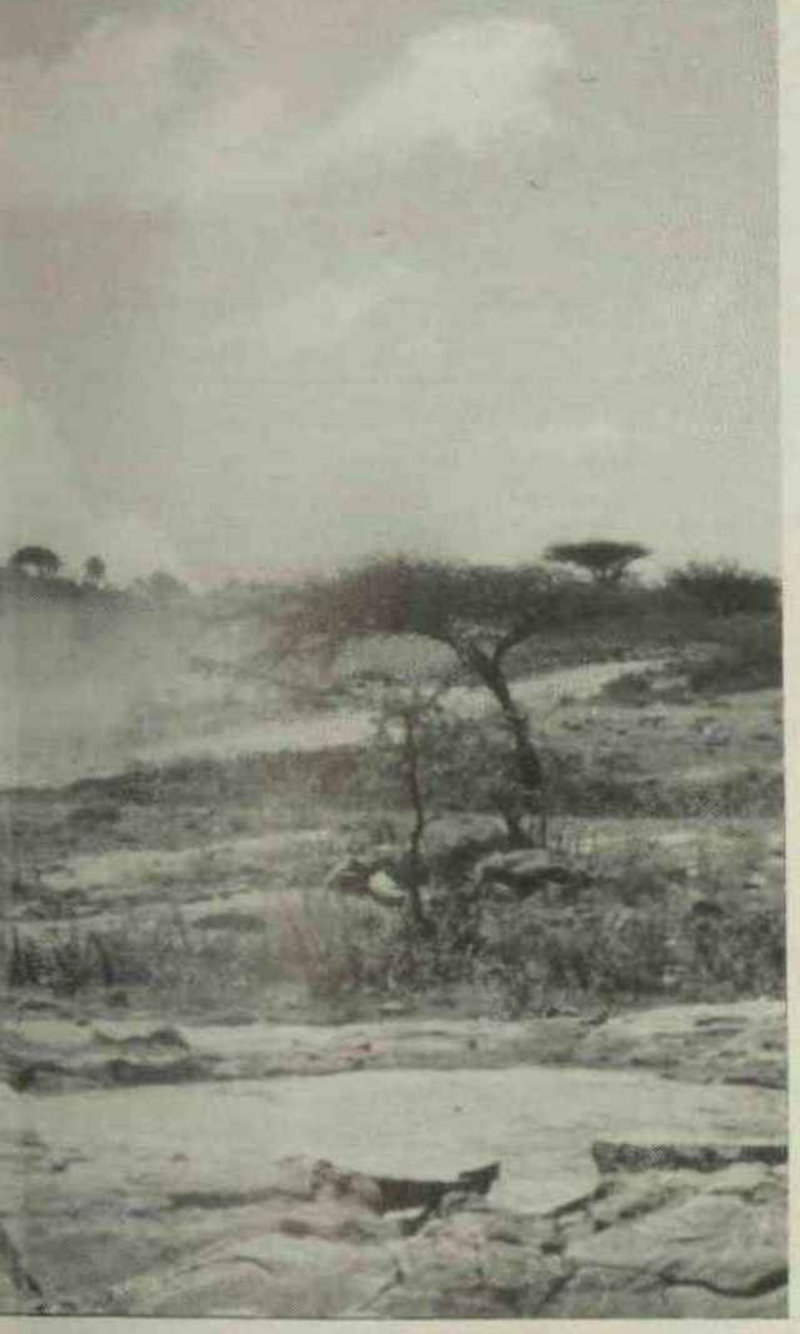
Ashcroft retires

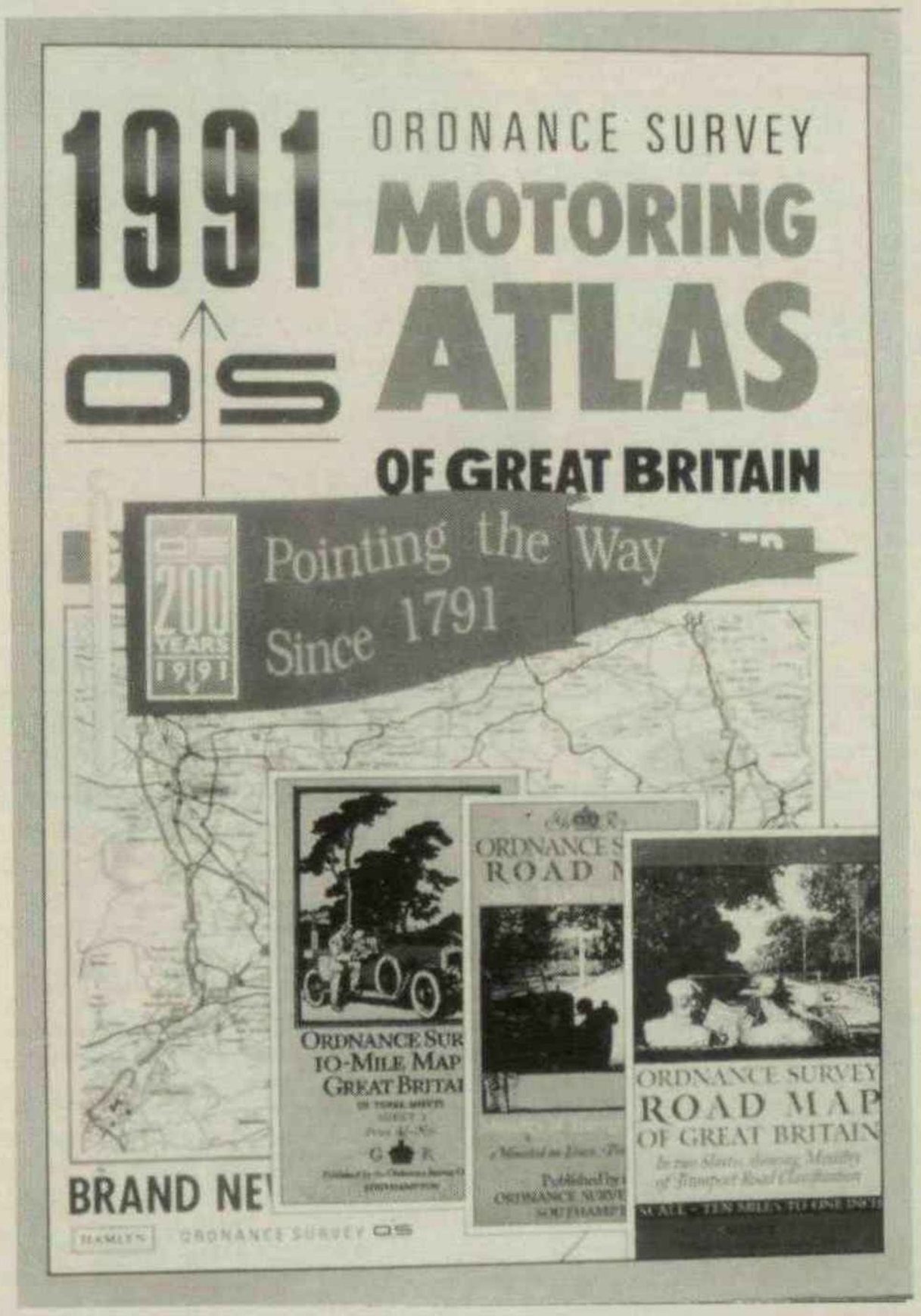
Peter Ashcroft is retiring as Director of Motorsport for Ford Europe. He has a lifetime of experience behind him, beginning as a mechanic then moving on to race F3 single-seaters in the early '50s. After spells as chief mechanic in various racing categories, he joined Ford's competitions department as a mechanic in 1963 and soon moved on to become a highly respected engine specialist, playing an important role in the development of the Ford Cosworth BDA.

In 1972 he became competitions manager for Ford of Britain, moving up in 1980 to take charge of sporting activities throughout Europe. He was appointed Director of European Motorsport in December, 1990, when Stuart Turner retired.

Taking Ashcroft's place at Boreham will be Colin Dobinson, the 47 year-old Marketing Special Studies Manager for Ford of Europe. He joined Ford in 1961 and has held various positions in marketing strategy, product promotion, product development and sales.

At least for the year ahead, during which the final development of the new Escort RS Cosworth will take place, Peter Ashcroft will remain a consultant for the Ford team. We wish him a long, happy and busy retirement, during which we trust his will remain as familiar a face on the Turini, in the Peloponnisos and in the Wynnstay Arms car park as it always was.





The year 1991 was that in which Ordnance Survey, in our opinion the best map maker in the world, celebrated its bicentenary. In recognition of the fact that the sport of rallying is a high-consumption user of its products, Ordnance Survey put up for the 1991 Lombard RAC Rally what it called the Bicentenary Award for the Co-Driver of the Winning Car, won in November by Juha Piironen of Finland.

Since we can remember, Ordnance Survey maps have been essential tools of the rally navigator's trade. In the days of the inch-to-the-mile maps with the red covers, navigators would guard their copies very jealously indeed, adding lots of additional information such as goers and non-goers, rough patches, severity of corners and so on. Indeed, when a map became so tattered that it could no longer be used, or was superseded by an updated version, its additional marks were painstakingly transferred to a new copy.

There was an expression called NAM, usually applied to a junction, which meant 'Not As Map'. This was not to suggest that the map was wrong. In some cases NAM junctions were due to changes in road layout, and in others because, usually due to the necessary thickness of the road line width on the map, insufficient detail was provided to satisfy the perfectionist navigator anxious to provide his driver with every possible scrap of information.

It was in road events that the use of OS maps was primarily important. Practice was not allowed and routes were usually not issued until one hour before start times, so that frantic plotting of six-figure grid references, marking mandatory approach and departure directions, and both choosing and marking the shortest route between them kept navigators hard at work during that hour. Knowing which 'white roads' were usable and which were not was part of the experienced navigator's stock-in-trade, and the marks on his map helped him considerably to decide which route to take between plotted references.

No navigator would be generous enough to provide others with details of his or her marks. They were the result of years of rallying and driving around checking maps with the roads they depicted, and no one would part with them for anything. However, small sideline businesses were set up to provide such information, the best known probably being the Marked Maps service provided by Stuart Gray, a skilled and experienced navigator of the time.

One-inch maps have long been replaced by the 1:50,000 Landranger series, with their familiar mauve covers. The scale is rather better than that of their predecessors, and junctions can be depicted more accurately. Whether they are still marked nowadays depends on whether the regulations of the rally concerned permit the use of marked maps. In any case, marked or not, they still provide navigators with the best possible means of reading the road ahead.

For road travel, we have always used Ordnance Survey's Motoring Atlas of Great Britain, the 1992 edition of which became available just before November's Lombard RAC Rally and was on display at the OS desk in rally headquarters. Mapping information for this atlas was obtained from the OS 1:250,000 Digital Map Database, but the scale of the atlas itself is one-inch-to-three-miles, except for a few sections which are at one-inch-to-five-miles. The atlas is spiral-bound, costs £8.99 and is available at most good bookshops.

200 years of Ordnance Survey

Asides

Motorsporting artist Jim Bamber is perhaps best known for his cartoons, which are both topical and extremely funny. But in Harrogate other aspects of his artistic ability were put on display at an exhibition of his work in a hotel near RAC Rally headquarters. He is indeed a versatile artist, well worth contacting if anyone has a project demanding skill with brush, pen, charcoal or what have you. He can be contacted at 0883-743732.

The superb calendar produced annually by the highly respected and skilled German photographer Reinhard Klein is is now published in numbered, limited edition form. It is available in the UK from Rally Navigation Services, 50 Breck Road, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire FY6 7AQ, the outfit run by Dave Otridge who has navigated both rally cars and RAF Hercules. The cost is £13, plus £3.50 in the UK for postage and packing (£1 extra on p&p for Eire customers). Calendars of '89, '90 and '91 are also available, at cheaper prices.

What's gone wrong?

In 1991, Allan McNish's hitherto meteoric racing career hit a serious stumbling block. Where does the young Scot go from here?

Here is an interesting conundrum for statisticians. In 1987, after many years of karting success (thrice Scottish junior champion, once British junior champion, once British senior champion), Allan McNish celebrated his 17th birthday and immediately took up car racing. In his first season, he showed immense promise in junior Formula Ford racing. On one memorable occasion at Snetterton, he even won a senior national championship round outright, which raised more than a few eyebrows.

In the autumn, he was invited by Marlboro to take part in the tobacco giant's end-of-season driver evaluation tests, where the cream of young talent is skimmed off, sprayed red and white and affiliated to the Marlboro charm school with immediate effect.

McNish, his pace obvious, was recruited alongside current Lotus F1 incumbent Mika Hakkinen to drive for Dragon Motorsport in the inaugural Vauxhall-Lotus Challenge. Allan took the British title and finished third in the European series, in which his Finnish partner triumphed.

Next stop was F3, and with Dick Bennetts' crack West Surrey Racing team the young Scot was immediately on the pace. Five wins initially gave him the British Championship at his first attempt. This was later reversed in favour of David Brabham after a long-standing wrangle over the eligibility of both title contenders' cars – which dated back to the British GP meeting in July – was finally resolved several weeks after teams' transporters had vacated the Thruxton paddock for the last time. Second place was creditable nonetheless, particularly as he'd had to miss a couple of races after a nasty somersault while practising for an early-season round on the Brands Hatch GP track.

At the end of the year, a combination of good form and Marlboro connections earned him a one-off race with Pacific Racing in the European F3000 finale at Dijon, where he finished an encouraging eighth.

With nothing left to prove in F3, his rapid ascension in the sport continued. For 1990, not long after his 20th birthday, he landed a plum drive with the factory-supported DAMS Lola team in the European Formula 3000 Championship, as team-mate to title favourite Erik Comas.

The year started disastrously.

At a greasy Donington Park, where he had made a smart tactical move by coming in for slicks at the end of the warm-up lap, he was climbing his way through the field when he tangled with Emanuele Naspetti's Reynard down the main straight. The Lola was flipped into the retaining wall, where it broke in two as it cartwheeled along the top of the slender concrete ridge. Though stunned by the impact, Allan was otherwise unharmed. A bystanding spectator was less fortunate, receiving fatal wounds from flying debris.

A career that had gone so swimmingly to that point suddenly faced crisis. Allan attended the victim's funeral, where he received encouragment to continue from the bereaved family. When the F3000 circus regrouped at Silverstone one month later, McNish performed without any hint of psychological or emotional damage. He qualified on pole, and won the race from Comas. It was one hell of a comeback.

Eventually, Comas took the title, but McNish kept him on his toes for most of the season, and in the middle of the year there was a period when he was constantly the faster of the pair. There was a second win, despite an extra pit stop in the wet-dry race at Brands Hatch, and he wound up fourth in the championship, satisfied in the main but aggrieved that electrical problems at Hockenheim and Le Mans had denied him certain podium finishes.

By that stage, his future seemed assured. In 1990, he'd spent the first of three seasons as an official McLaren test contractee. A second year of F3000, the first time in his career that he had stayed in the same formula for a second stint, was for most people standard practice. Besides, it all looked so good on paper. He still had the works Lola, with its highly rated Mugen engine. Marlboro was still bankrolling his sport. Most drivers could only dream about getting their hands on any *one* part of such a package, *and* with the McLaren test contract to boot . . .

It was an enviable position for any young driver. And with the modern Formula One design idiom in mind, McNish is even the perfect size for an aspiring racing driver, an aerodynamicist's dream. In an age when Gerhard Berger's feet are too large for the average McLaren footwell, it's useful to be closer in stature to Willie Carson than Willie John McBride. The young Scot has the appearance of an apprentice flat racing jockey, a man who would look as much in place in the paddock at Royal Ascot as he does in that at Monza.

McNish started 1991 as one of the favourites to take the European F3000 title. He finished it with a measly two championship points, earned in one hit at Mugello. The man who everyone expected to be in championship contention all year was classified 16th in the final standings, having collected as many points as had Philippe Gache with his two year-old Lola.



First steps. Graduating from karting to Formula Ford, the 17 year-old McNish was instantly competitive. At the Formula Ford Festival, where he is pictured leading Ringo Hine, he finished fourth.

You do not, one assumes, simply become an also-ran overnight. So what exactly went wrong?

"We were slow," he responds, the accompanying grin a clear indication that the innate self-confidence remains. "Everything looked strong on paper. The car was really only a step on from what we'd had the previous year. The main difference was the adoption of radial tyres. As soon as Avon began testing radials, the Reynards proved to be quick in comparison to the Lolas. We weren't worried though, because Avon was still modifying its product. We kept testing, and although the car was tricky to set up we seemed to be making progress. It was when we got to Vallelunga for the big pre-race test, and all the teams were there together, that we realised the extent of the problem."

The Reynards' superiority came as a bit of a shock to Lola users, for the Huntingdon manufacturer had enjoyed the upper hand in the Japanese Championship, where radials had been in use

since the series' inception in the Far East. Indeed, while Lola struggled for the entire European season, it eventually *won* the Japanses crown, though Reynard was always in the hunt.

The shock of the Vallelunga test was nothing compared to that of the Vallelunga race weekend, where McNish failed to qualify after a couple of practice mishaps, the second borne of desperation to set a good time. In Pau, he qualified well down the field, and at Jerez he failed to qualify once again.

"That was the low point of the season, really. We missed the whole of the first qualifying session with electrical problems, and after that we were really struggling."

Variations in ambient temperature can have an alarming effect on F3000 lap times. That weekend in Spain, the second practice session was, generally speaking, a good couple of seconds slower than the first, heat from the midday sun depriving the tarmac of grip.

"Looking back, I honestly think that my best lap in that session was one of the best I did all year. It was a real struggle to make the car handle, and in that one lap I gave it absolutely *everything*. I honestly don't believe the car could have gone round there *any* faster. In many ways it was a very satisfying lap, yet there was no candy as a reward." Although he was in the top 10 for *that* session, he failed to qualify for the race for the sake of a couple of hundredths of a second.

The mid-season optimism which accompanied the fifth place at Mugello quickly gave way to further frustrations. There were moments, such as at Brands Hatch, where he could see the top six just ahead, but generally it was a season viewed from the unaccustomed, and unflattering, depths of midfield. That cannot have been good for the confidence, and nor can the fact that team-mate Laurent Aiello, an F3000 debutant, managed to outqualify his team leader more often than not, and also outpointed him at the season's end, albeit not by much.

"It has been a difficult year from that point of view, but the outside testing commitments have helped. It was uplifting to be able to get into the McLaren and find that my driving recovered some of its smoothness and flow. It was the same when I tested a Ralt at the end of the year."

That Ralt test earned several plaudits, notably from experienced F3000 entrant Mike Earle, for whom he drove the car at Silverstone. "He's *bloody* quick," enthused Earle, froth setting on his lips, "and his level of feedback is fantastic."

So even after such a pig of a season in a sport where memories are notoriously short, McNish retains his admirers. It may not be insignificant that he has recently been helping with the early development of the new Ralt RT24, nor that Earle is a long-time customer of Ralt's parent company March, nor that both McNish and Earle have long-standing Marlboro connectionsm, nor that . . .

"It's still too early to know what I'll be doing this year," he insists. "I'm waiting to hear from my sponsors, and really it's up to them. My main priority will be F3000 though, and I'll fit in test work for McLaren only when it doesn't interfere with my F3000 commitments." Although a season of F3000 wouldn't be too much of a hardship for most 22 year-olds, at this stage of his career McNish knows that he simply *has* to win in 1992, if not the title then at least enough races to run the eventual champion close. It's a high pressure situation which few could have envisaged one year ago, and as F1 drives become harder and harder to find the pressure on young drivers simply increases. Yet McNish is reluctant to start firing critical barbs now that the most dismal – indeed the *only* dismal – season of his career to date is out of the way.

He proved in 1990 that an Englishman could work very well in a French team (as you might expect of one with his professional demeanour, he has learned to speak the language competently), and – though you can take it as read that he won't be driving for DAMS in 1992 – he bears no grudges. "We had our moments, but you get that in any racing situation. There was no animosity within the team, and we all got on very well." In an era when the cattiness of the relationship between many team-mates would form the basis of a good soap opera script, it was nice to witness the genuine friendship between McNish and Aiello. Civility and sport can still be co-habitees, if you look hard enough.

Apart from the cross-ply tyres on which Lola's 1990 chassis had proved so effective, one key ingredient which was removed from a previously successful formula – and to which perhaps outsiders paid little attention – was Paul Crosby, the engineer with whom McNish had enjoyed such a fruitful relationship. In 1991, Crosby defected to the Paul Stewart Racing team, also Lola-equipped, where he worked with Marco Apicella. The Italian was best – perhaps that should be least bad – of all Lola users, salvaging fifth place in the championship after what, for him too, was a desperately frustrating year (after five seasons in the formula, four of them with competitive teams, he has still to win an F3000 race . . .).

"We missed Paul a little," concedes Allan. "But a lot of that has to do with the fact that, even though the team spoke very good English, little things still got lost in translation. That didn't happen the year before. Mark Williams from Lola arrived in mid-season, which coincided

No joy. 1991 was Allan's second season in European F3000, but results were disappointing.





A three-year F1 testing deal with McLaren keeps you busy between races . . .

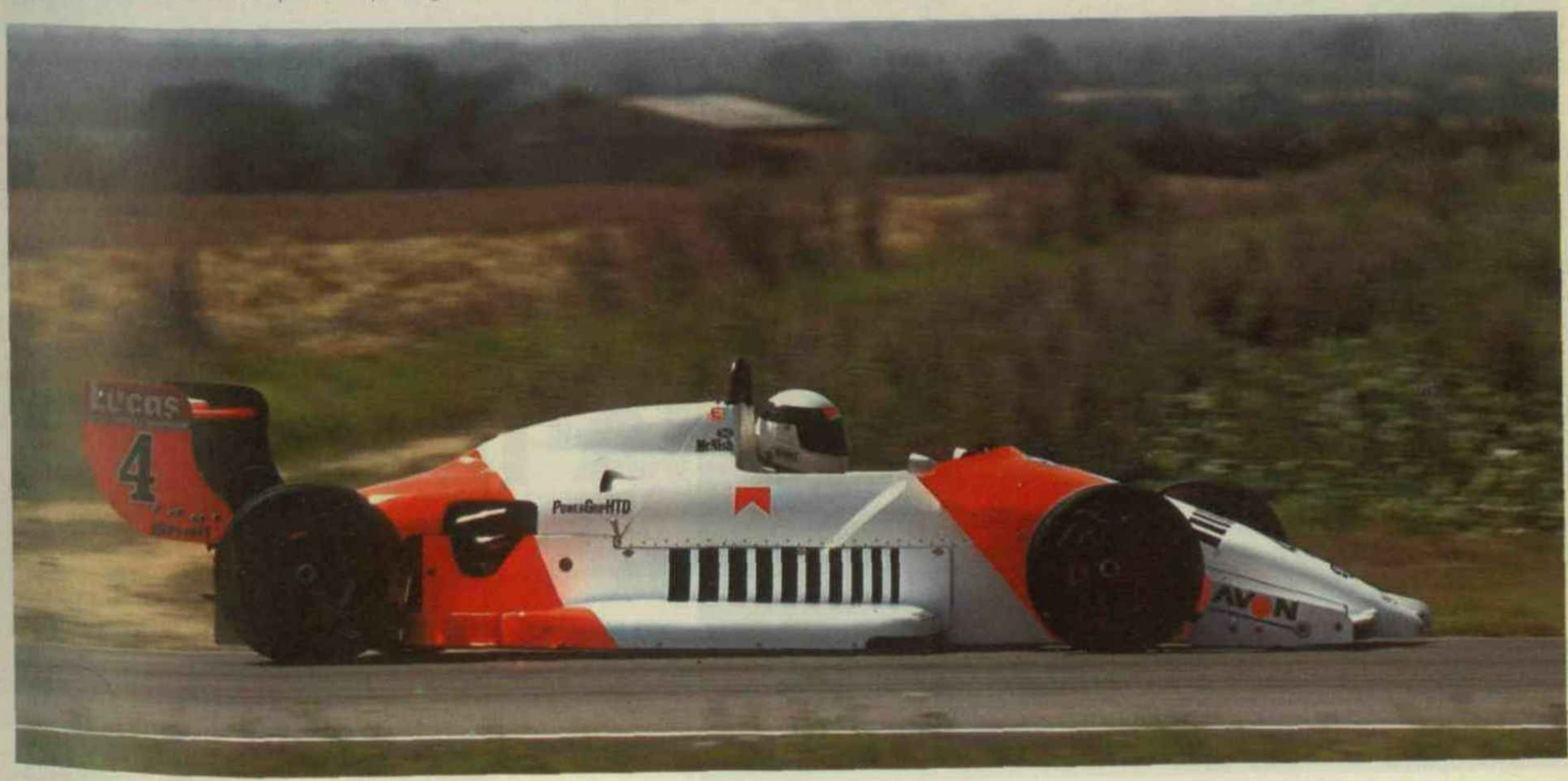
with our improved form at Mugello and Brands Hatch, but like all the Lolas we were still really struggling at the end of the season."

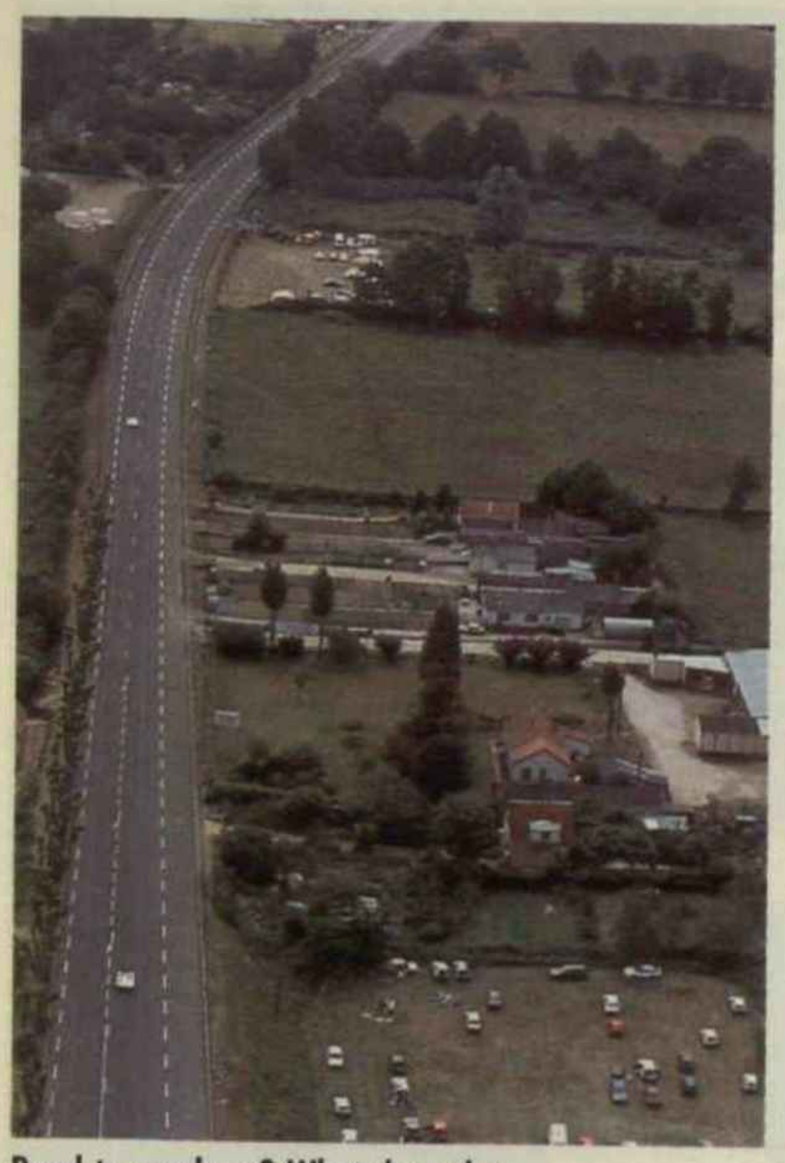
That simply highlighted that there had been a basic problem with the overall 'package', as it is fashionable to call these things. (Drivers talk with decreasing frequency of competitive engines or chassis: a competitive 'package' is the thing to have.) For the previous four seasons, Allan McNish had been in the right place at the right time, and he appreciates that he has done well to get so far so quickly. One rogue season won't lessen his determination to succeed.

"My motivation is still intact. Even though it was difficult at times last year I was always fully committed, and I'm confident that I can still do the job.

"It's not the first time this sort of thing has happened, actually. In 1984, after several seasons of karting success, we found ourselves with an uncompetitive engine. Then I broke my leg and had four months off. When I returned in 1985, everything started to go well again. I hope history will repeat itself." **S A**

During his one F3 season, in 1989, McNish was narrowly pipped to the British Championship title.





Road to nowhere? What does the future hold for Group C?

What in the world . . . ?

The Sportscar World Championship saga continued well into the New Year, adding to the problems of the private entrants. Max Mosley, president of FISA, seemingly crushed hopes of there being a World Championship when he remarked, a few days before Christmas, that "if they can commit themselves to producing 20 cars there will be a world championship."

So far as FISA's World Council is concerned these 20 cars must be registered for the 10-round World Championship, and would not include those registered for the FIA Cup series which is reserved for the seven rounds in Europe.

Mosley knew very well that existing teams could not produce 20 cars, and the World Council thickened the plot by stipulating that the major manufacturers would be held financially responsible for the non-appearance of any cars.

Peugeot, Toyota and Mazda, for three, would not enter such a commitment on behalf of private owners, bearing in mind that each no-show is worth $250,000 which the organisers will claim.

President Mosley seemed to have relented over Christmas. At the opening of the Auto Sports International racing car show at the Birmingham NEC on January 2 he stated: "We have 13 serious contenders who want to run cars this year, and there are a further seven or eight who are keen to run in the FIA Cup.

"With this level of commitment it would be a shame to cancel the championship, and I believe a positive announcement on its future will be made soon."

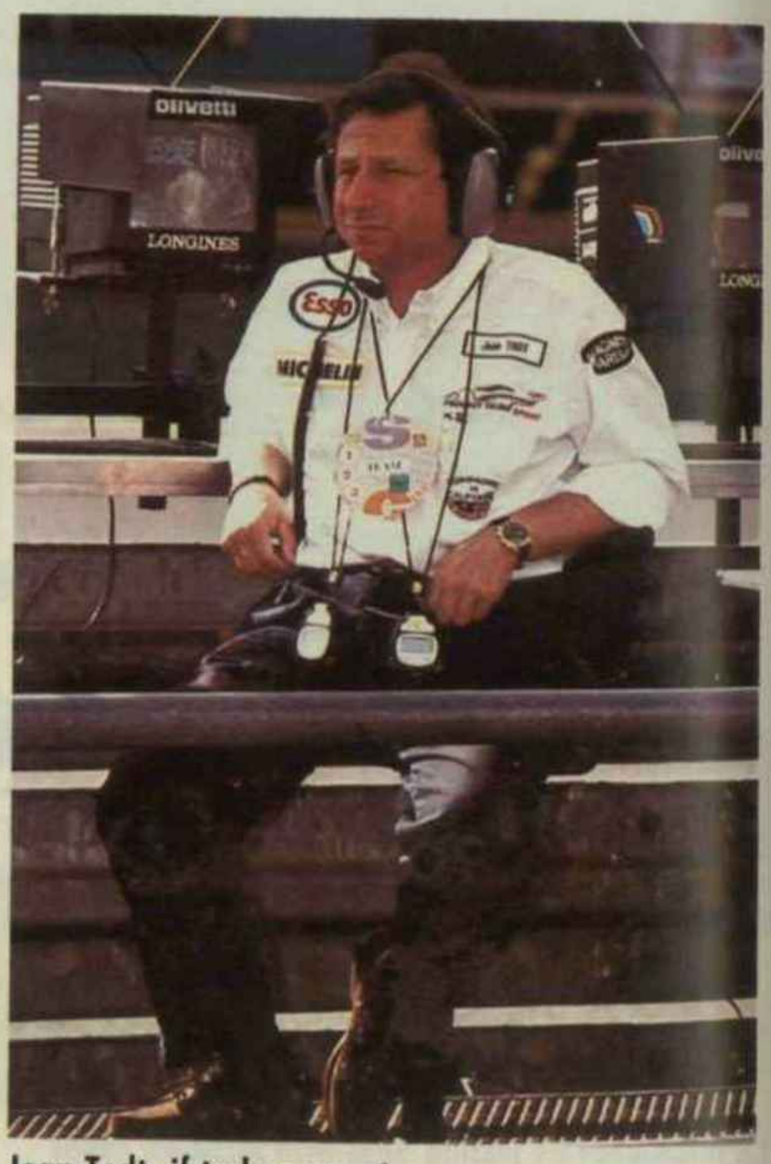
Mosley said afterwards that the race promoters would be asked to accept the FIA Cup cars as part of the 20 entries, and he hoped to confirm the outcome by the middle of January.

The Japanese, with rounds scheduled at Autopolis on April 5 and at Suzuka on August 30, were expected to agree since their own championship cars are eligible for the races.

The Mexicans, however, would not run an event on September 13 for 13 cars. Their choice would be to withdraw from the series, or to enter an arrangement with IMSA to run a Camel GT round as part of the World Championship event, a happening that would tie in well with the recent accord between Mosley and IMSA's Mark Raffauf.

The difficulty everyone had was to read the minds of Mosley and FIA vice-president Bernie Ecclestone. They made it quite clear at the Heathrow meeting in November that they don't want to have a Sportscar World Championship, on the grounds of paucity of entries and lack of public interest. But would they now allow a series to go ahead, perhaps against their better judgement?

Many people hold these illustrious gentlemen entirely to blame for gutting the sportscar championship, which was flourishing until they took control in 1989, but at this stage we are no longer discussing whose fault it is that Group C has got into difficulties.



Jean Todt: if turbos run at Le Mans, Peugeot won't.

FISA is under some pressure now from Peugeot, which has given an enormous commitment to the SWC series, and from Toyota and Mazda. For Mosley it is a time for being nice to the Japanese, and taking note of their wishes, because they played an important part in his election last October and he subsequently had JAF delegates Kamakura and Takagi appointed vice-presidents of FISA.

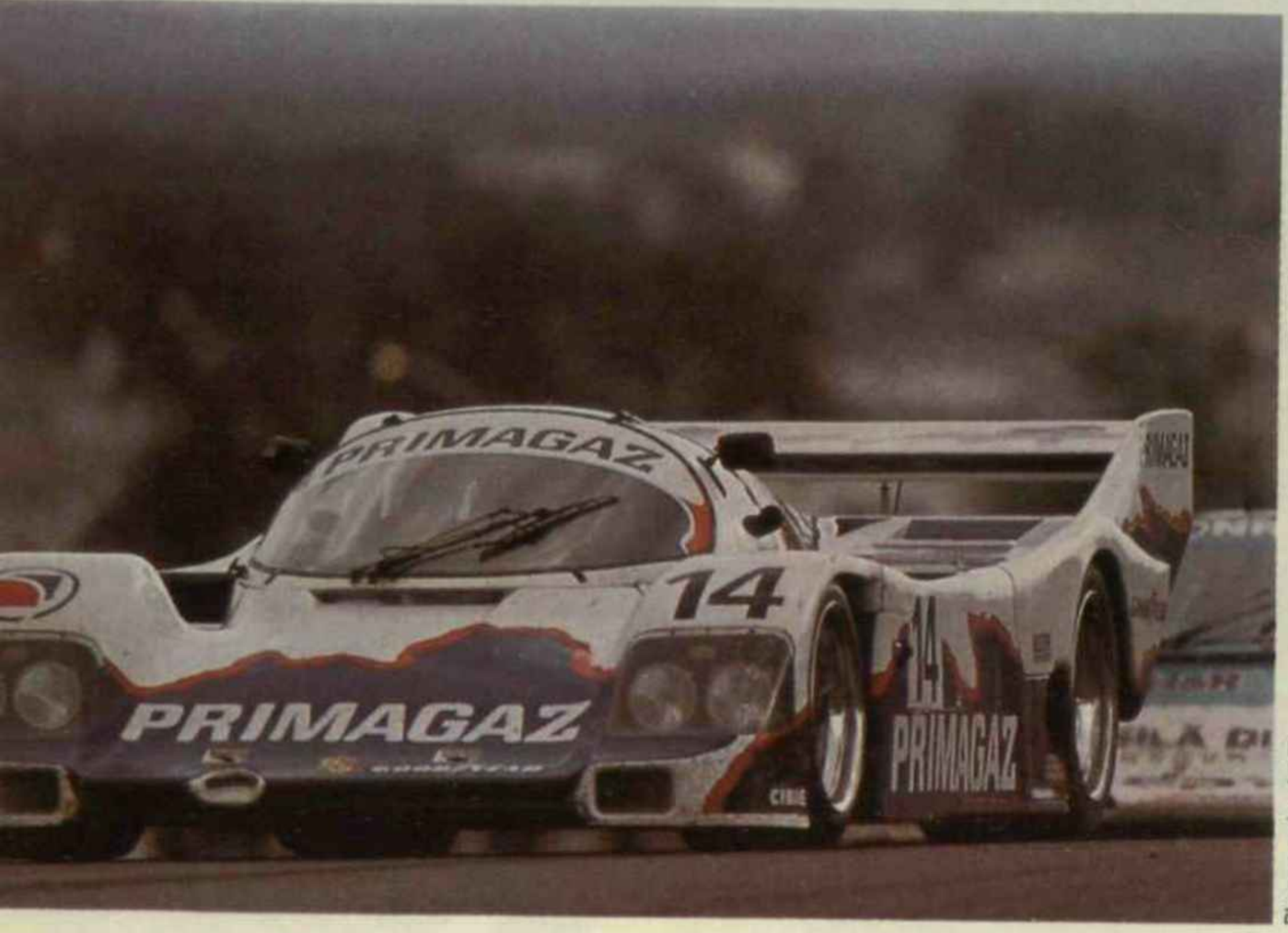
In the New Year Mosley reacted to a demand by Toyota and Mazda that he should clear the SWC series for take-off by January 4, otherwise they would withdraw their commitment.

Bound as he was by the December 5 decision of the World Council, Mosley could not dictate that the Sportscar World Championship will go ahead but he can make the right noises, and on January 2 he possibly did just enough to keep the Japanese happy.

Few people are as clever with words as barrister Max Mosley, and none in motor racing would be more adept at walking a proverbial tightrope. The president said early in the month that the World Council members would be asked to send a telex vote to Paris, once a proposal had been put to them.

Confidence among the teams, organisers and supporters was further eroded with each day that passed, and even if the Sportscar World Championship has scraped over the hurdle this year it's hard to suppose that it will do so again in 1993.

Would Jean Todt really start planning now for a continuation of Peugeot's costly involvement in sportscar racing? Could Peugeot maintain an



Bone of contention. The admission of the Porsche 962 to the 1992 Le Mans 24 Hours has not been well received.

Photography: LAT

interest in the championship knowing that Porsches and other 'unlimited' cars are now eligible for Le Mans?

It has always been made clear that Peugeot is in the championship with the main intention of winning the Le Mans 24 Hours (just as Renault's programme was geared to success at Le Mans in 1978), and only last September Todt made it expressly clear that "if the turbos run at Le Mans Peugeot will not take part".

On December 5 the World Council decreed that the turbos would indeed be at Le Mans, but still Todt is playing a central role in keeping the World Championship in existence. If he wants to maintain his little empire at Vélizy, he has no choice.

Todt called a meeting of SWC teams on December 19 and the privateers such as Allard (Jean-Louis Ricci, Costas Los and Chris Humberstone), Hugh Chamberlain and Alan Randall (RM Motorsport) went to Paris hoping to hear of an aid scheme from Peugeot.

They were disappointed. Asked the question about aid, perhaps in the form of transport to Japan, Todt replied that it was FISA's duty to help the private teams. "Chance would be a fine thing," responded Mosley next day.

The 13 cars referred to by Mosley include two cars each from Peugeot, Toyota, Mazda (TWR XJR-14s with Judd V10 engines), Citra Sports (Allard J2X with Cosworth DFR engines), Randall Motorsport (Jaguar XJR-14s), Euro Racing (Lola T92/10) and one BRM.

Candidates for the FIA Cup category include Randall Motorsport, Hugh Chamberlain and Ranieri Randaccio (all with Spices), Fritz Gebhardt, ROC and Argo Cars.

For many of these teams vital sponsorship deals hang in the balance. Kentish man Alan Randall, who plans to order two Jaguar XJR-14s for Derek and Justin Bell, Raul Boesel and Tiff Needell, has lost one leading sponsor because of the uncertainty, and could not place the order at Kidlington because an alternative sponsor needed to know if the series would indeed be a World Championship!



The changing face of sports-car racing? Allard's J2X breaks fresh ground.

Radical Allard

In our December issue we featured the rebirth of Allard's name in sports car racing, though without any illustration of the part-built J2X. Chris Humberstone, the man who welded the design team together and obtained backing from Jean-Louis Ricci and Costas Los, wanted to keep the radical shape a secret for as long as possible, and when the car was shown at the Auto Sports International show it was easy to see why.

Sports car design has stood still for too long. Porsches designed in 1981 were still a current shape 10 years later, and many others resembled them. With a fresh team of designers, some from outside the racing car industry, Allard has come up with an entirely new concept in sports car design, one which even makes last year's Jaguar, Mercedes and Peugeot shapes look conventional.

As yet we don't know if the Allard will be any good. The young team might yet come unstuck, despite its euphoria about outstanding wind tunnel tests. The J2X looks much like a central, single-seater with bits of bodywork between the wheels, both in track and wheelbase, all designed to act as wing.

Citra Sports, the virtually unknown French team, has ordered two Allards subject to there being a 1992 Sportscar World Championship. One will go to Japan, and two or three might go to America for the IMSA series.

Johnny Dumfries has placed a provisional order for an IMSA car, as negotiations with a sponsor progress, and he plans to install a large capacity Cadillac V8. Chevrolet V8s might be installed by Gianpiero Moretti, founder and proprietor of the Momo wheels concern, and Camel Lights driver David Tennyson.

MLC



Civic Pride

Since its glory days with Lotus in Formula 1, the Firestone tyre company has become low profile. Quite literally, both in its wares and support of motorsports. Under Bridgestone's Japanese ownership, Firestone sports policy has drifted toward the production classes. It backs the Firehawk series in the USA and until recently supported a British production saloon championship that enforced use of its products in a series which acts as an effective link between club fun and aspirant saloon car racers of more international ambition.

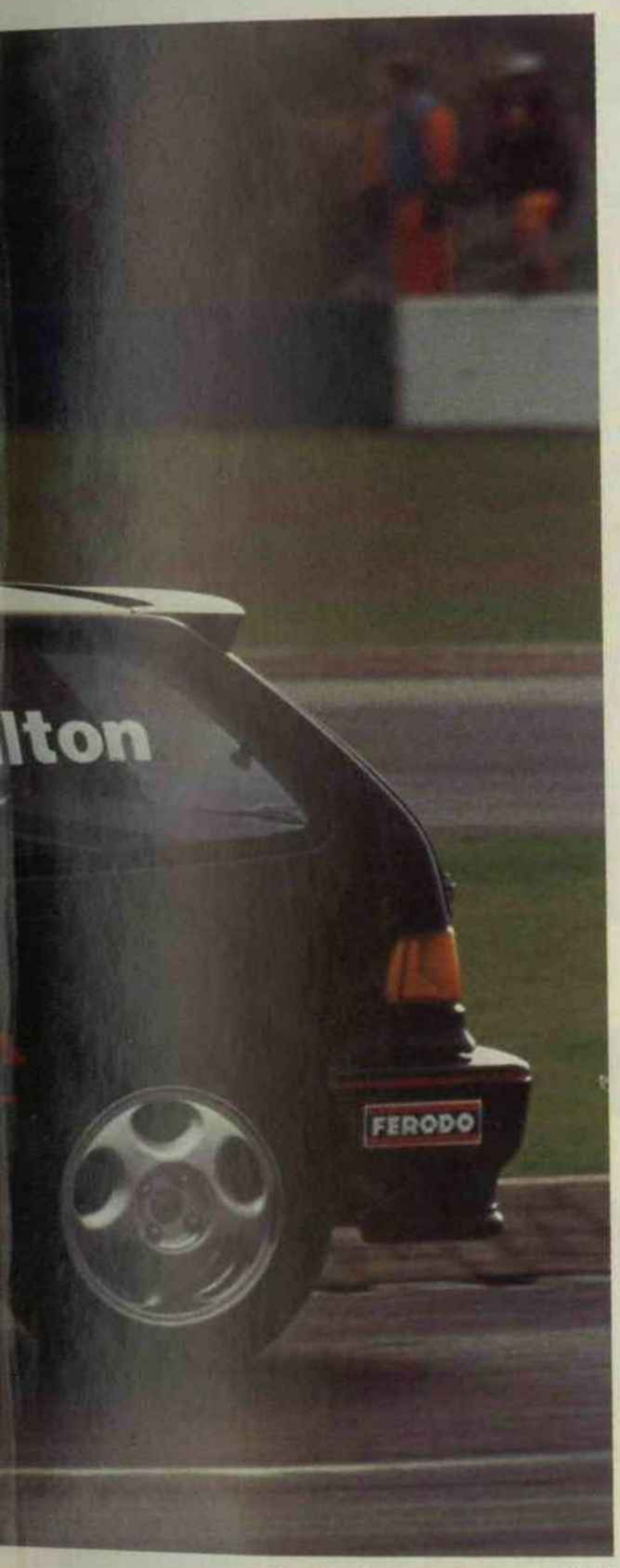
For the 1991 British Firestone finale at Donington Park, *Motor Sport* was offered a chance to sample the front-drive 160 bhp of a 1990 Honda Civic, quite a change from the 500 bhp turbocharged Sierra with which this reporter had competed in the Vecta *Fast Ford* Challenge.

This black 1.6-litre Honda won the Firestone series outright for Meltune and young Piers Johnson, the promising son of Meltune proprietor Melvyn. Who are Meltune? In saloon car racing, it's simply sufficient to know that, a decade ago, the Watford-based concern prepared winning Metros for Steve Soper, who escalated from one marque racing titles to become the only Briton currently racing (and winning, for BMW) in the prestigious and lucrative German Touring Car Championship. In tin-tops, the Monaco-domiciled Soper ranks as the Nigel Mansell of the discipline; to draw a monoposto analogy, Piers Johnson has achieved the equivalent of winning a significant single seater series, such as Formula Renault.

We could tell we were to play in a rather more public pen than usual by a chance remark from Melvyn Johnson. As we settled to the task of acclimatising to the Honda – at Silverstone's national circuit, rather than the unavailable Donington 10-lap race venue – the 1979 founder of Meltune quipped: "We know you'll be new to the series, but who is this bloke Ian Botham in a Cosworth?" The point was well made, the England and county cricketer was to be surrounded by autograph hunters and charity sales personnel for what materialised as an absolutely disastrous weekend. With Botham around, nobody but the puzzled cognoscenti would want to know that champion Piers Johnson was not at the wheel of his regular car, in which he scored nine class victories from 12 races in the two-litre division, secured eight lap records and grasped 11 pole positions. By the way, those cubic capacities are correct, the compact Honda cedes approximately 400 cc and defeats machines such as Vauxhall's similarly dohc 16-valve two-litre Astra GTE in production championship trim.

On one occasion, a wet Brands Hatch saw the Civic challenge for the outright lead against the turbocharged Cosworths and 2.3-litre BMW M3s that comprise the overall victors in this series, finally finishing second after a spell in the lead! What makes the Civic so fast? I could not miss the opportunity to find out, but a look at the standard specification that it brings to racing should give us clues beyond the genuine talent exhibited by its 21 year-old driver.

The basic racing attributes of the Civic VTEC (variable valve timing and electronic control) lie in the light and low body, plus an engine that generates virtually 100 bhp per litre in showroom trim. A look at the standard specification reveals a roof height that corresponded to that of its obsolete CRX coupé stablemate, allowing a low centre of gravity by saloon car standards. Meltune follows normal production racing practice and makes full use of the allowance of a one inch drop in ride heights, plus much uprated damping (from Bilstein or Spax): the Honda is served by substantial 19mm/16mm front/rear anti-roll bars. The VTEC is braked by a quartet of disc units (lacking



Despite its class status, the little Honda embarrassed many more powerful cars in 1991.

the ALB system of 1991 models) and has a kerb weight of less than 1000 kg, which helps. We raced at 969 kg, a power to weight ratio of 168 bhp per ton.

This allows a Civic VTEC sizzling showroom statistics – nearly 130 mph maximum and 0-62 mph in 7.3 sec. The cockpit was largely standard, bereft of as much heavy and flammable trim as allowed. I was advised that the engine, standard save for a Mugen-supplied electronic control unit, could be expected to generate 160 bhp. It had not been blueprinted and felt exactly like those in the press demonstrators of all VTEC ages that I have tried. However, it was happier at the advised 8000 rpm (do not adjust your magazine, you just read that correctly) limit than ticking over in the paddock. Whatever I did, the water temperatures stayed cool and the provision of a six-point safety harness, Sparco competition seat and Italvolanti steering wheel allowed the driver simply to drive, rather than fight the inevitable forces generated on a circuit by standard 5.5x14 inch alloy wheels and Firestone Firehawk 690 195/60R tyres.

We used a variety of tread depths over the three days (practice Silverstone, official practice Donington, 10-lap Donington GP circuit race) and these made the most difference to the car's behaviour. Utilising fresh rubber at the rear allows a surprising degree of oversteer that gradually diminished as depth decreased and grip increased. Yet the baby Honda never degenerated into the ploughing understeer and tyre scrub that the Golf and Astra deviants displayed in battle. Driving technique was simple to say, hard to execute. My basic approach was to imitate the set-up and uncompromising cornering attitude that had taken the younger Johnson to his success. The 1991 Firestone victor was on hand throughout to offer concise and useful encouragement. I soon discovered that to lap within 1.5 sec of Johnson required a demon shoe change (we suffered a fatigue failure of a hi-tech lace) and delicate, but contrarily late, application of the brakes. Very high rpm – 6000 to 8000 seemed best – hardly needed the rev-counter, for the cockpit engine note changes from rasp to wasp as the VTEC allows deeper breathing from 5500 upwards; if there is no enraged rendition of "Flight of the 16v Honda Bumblebee", forget competitive acceleration.

The usually slick quality of the gearchange had succumbed to the pressures of racing changes, feeling vaguely crunchy throughout. Donington was cold but dry throughout the weekend, but Meltune generated its own team temperatures as regular second team driver Dave Cox (a former leading light in Renault 5 turbo racing) had a tyre deflate on the fourth gear approach to the Old Hairpin. Cox and dented (but easily repaired) VTEC ended axle-deep in what is fashionably called the kitty litter. Both the Meltune Hondas were in the same second bracket, and about a second shy of pole position man Tony Lanfranchi, the veteran racing an Astra 16v. The problem was that there were 14 class rivals, most also lapping around the 72-73 mph (2min 2sec) mark and I finally understood why Meltune was so keen to squeeze the last 0.5sec even from a guest driver. Without a top three grid position, it is very hard to overtake in these comparatively low powered racers, especially with the complication of some of the slower larger capacity cars in the way, which are naturally possessed of greater straight line speed. Typical of these would be poor Botham, who was right at the back and never looked as though he had been prepared for this racing weekend. I did not laugh – imagine being selected to play quality club cricket and facing up to Botham's batting and bowling with only schoolboy memories as defence . . .

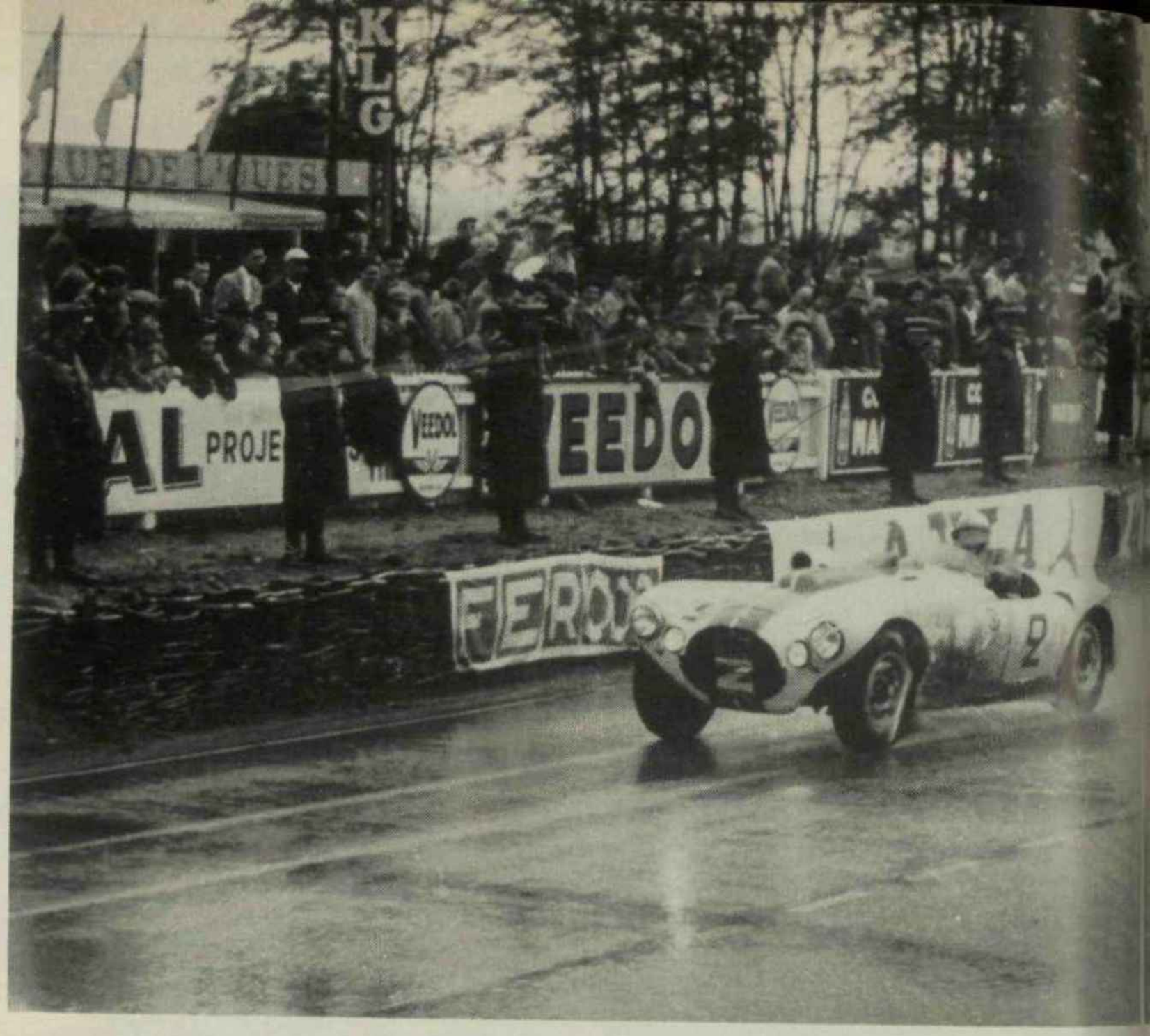
Again, I rediscovered the facts of small capacity racing the hard way. All talk of a sub-3000 rpm start disappeared as the lights changed, I hung too many revs on the unit in first, realised the wheels were spinning and whipped the gear lever back . . . into fourth! The pack, Botham et al, screeched away and I sorted second from the floppy selection on offer. It could have been worse. When I looked up I realised that all was not lost – my 27 grid companions were mostly congregated around the results of a spin and subsequent collision from David Weir and Michael Woodcock in the inevitable Cosworth Fords. As some of the stragglers spluttered away from the dust and debris, I found that the turbocharged Ford could be passed (temporarily) and that I could get amongst the Golfs and Astras that formed the bulk of our class. To recover ground on my classmate Cox, I worked the brakes less (they fade badly by the end of 10 laps anyway) and teetered through the left-hand entry to the Craner Curves with throttle depressed, brakes untouched and morale boosted to the point where I could overtake two class rivals on that lap.

After the Cosworths had finished cavorting in that first corner incident, the BMW M3 representatives scored a 1-2-3 result, Guy Povey winning from Frank Cundell who set the fastest lap (1min 56.31sec/77.37 mph). I gained a bit of ground from towing along behind Del Delaronde's M3, which finally finished 16th after recovering from an earlier incident, a place adrift of Cox's sister car, which was dented once more. My brain whirling with the usual images of wheel-lifting saloons in unlikely situations that always seem to be framed in palls of dust and flying stones, the Honda took me from last away to to 18th of 26 finishers, and seventh of 13 class competitors still running. An analysis of the lap times showed me 1.13 sec from the new class record and 0.75 sec slower than the best from the Cox car.

I went home as satisfied as I had sometimes been in the 500 bhp Ford, for you really have to push yourself to leave the Honda brakes alone and conserve momentum at all costs. Of course there is not that addictive surplus of rear-drive power to slingshot up to 146 mph that I was blessed with in the big white Ford during 1991, yet the Honda, whistling into the downhill Craner Curves at speeds the bigger cars could not match, will be one of the memories to savour from a 15-race 1991 season, standing honourably alongside TVR Tuscan, Porsche and RS500. **J W**



Under pressure: JW fends off whatever the collective noun is for a bunch of production saloons.



An honourable warrior

If you set yourself up as a manufacturer and only built 30 or 40 cars, that might sound like something of a failure. But if eight of those were racing cars, and just three of *those* tallied five top-10 places at Le Mans, beat the best home opposition and won three-quarters of the races they entered — well, your name would have to be Briggs Cunningham.

A fast driver himself in the Fifties, Cunningham's chief legacy has been a handful of cars bearing his name. To get the race-cars to Le Mans, he had to build some road cars. The resulting C3 models were Chrysler-engined like the most successful of his racers, but with auto-boxes inside their Vignale bodies. Interesting, but not significant.

Instead, let's look at the race cars; one particular car, in fact, a car glowing with past glory and boasting an important position in American, and European, race history. Cunningham C4R no 5216R.

What brought the American's name to public notice in the European racing world was his startling Cadillac entry for Le Mans in 1950. There were two. One looked standard, and was looked on by most as a no-hoper, unsuitable for the Sarthe. The other boasted special streamlined open bodywork which was extremely ugly but aimed at closing the performance gap between the solid grunt of the V8 and the high revs of the opposition's sophisticated racing units. This was immediately nick-named *Le Monstre* by the French onlookers. In the event, the doubting Thomases were surprised, and Briggs Cunningham encouraged, when the coupé finished 10th and the special 11th.

Using Cadillac chassis, however, was not Cunningham's original plan. He had tried to enter a pair of Caddy-engined Fords, a high-power, low-weight recipe concocted by Phil Walters in the States, but such a cross-breed was turned down by the ACO. However, Cunningham was convinced that combining a strong American V8 with a simple chassis would produce a car which was fast enough to be competitive and tough enough to outlast more exotic machinery. When the Le Mans 24-hour arrived in 1951, he was ready. Three specially-built sport-racers with Chrysler engines started the race. Two crashed; the third struggled against bearing problems to finish 18th. But before leaving the road, one of these C2s had been running in second place, a significant achievement for the first appearance of a new name.

For 1952, less weight and more power were the goals. By now, having noted the C2's promise (it had won at Watkins Glen and Elkhart Lake) Chrysler itself was tacitly backing the team's attempt to defeat the Europeans on their home ground. The Detroit giant now had a stock engine with real power potential, and the sales impact of victory was tempting. The 'hemi' V8 engine used lateral push-rods to operate splayed valves from the single camshaft in the vee. This gave it the advantage of hemispherical combustion chambers with less complexity than using twin cams, and the stock output was somewhere around 180bhp.

After much rapid development, involving valve-gear lightening, needle-bearing rockers, roller cam followers, solid lifters instead of hydraulic, special cranks and fire-breathing cams, the team was claiming well over 300, even up to 340bhp. Four Zenith carbs hosed fuel into the hefty cylinders, which compressed it at 8.6:1. And with two banks of them displacing 5425cc, the torque mushroomed to some 312lb ft at only 2000rpm. This cast-iron giant with its two-inch valves was hardly over-stressed. Indeed, when 5216, the subject of this story, was overhauled after 30 years in 1986, the main bearings were unmarked. They went straight back in.

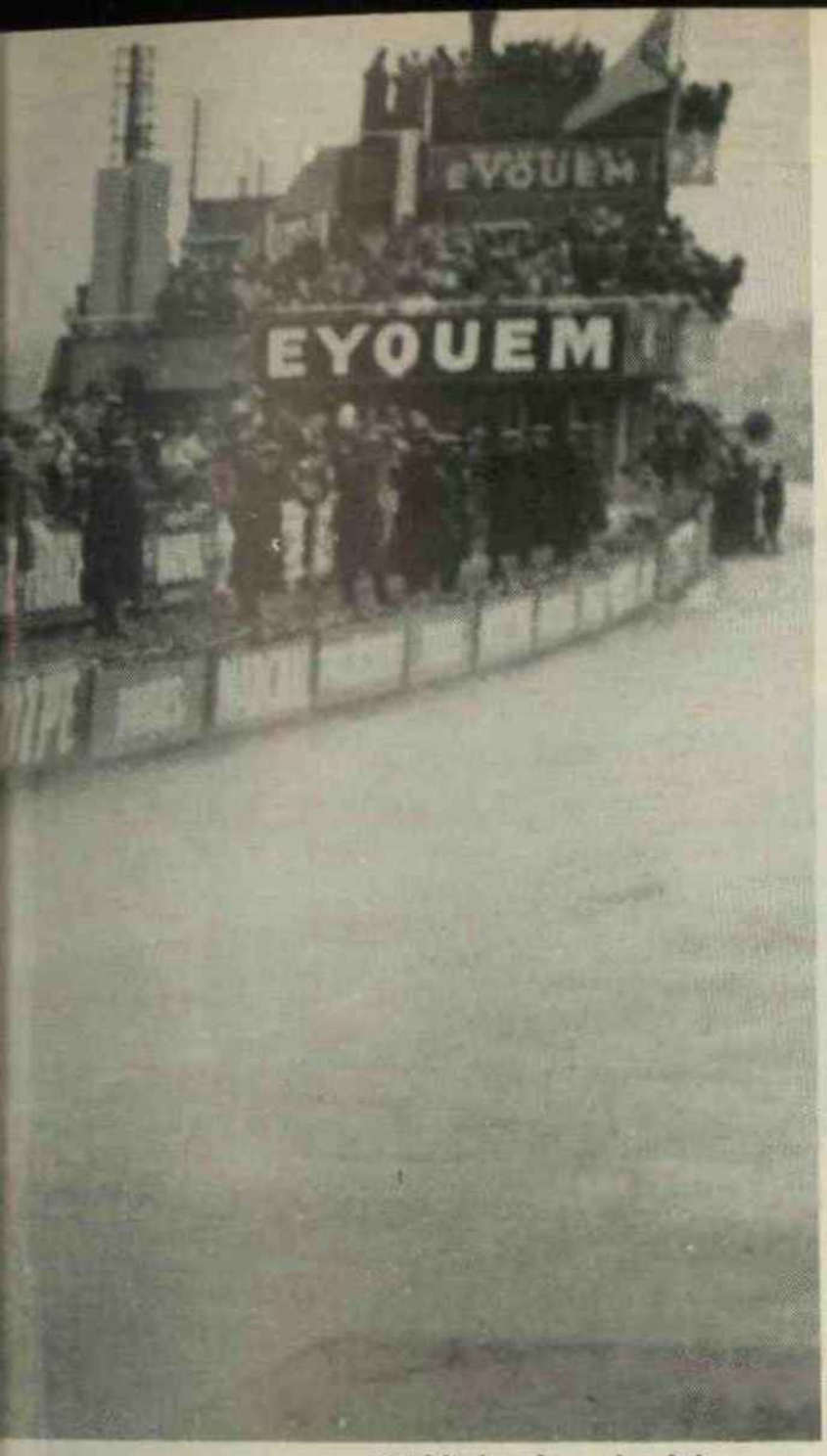
Cradling the massive block, two pairs of steel tubes, joined vertically by tubing and gussets, made up a strong and rigid two-deck ladder chassis. Coil springs and double wishbones handled the front wheels, while a coil-sprung rigid axle replaced the De Dion set-up of the C2. This plain but proven Chrysler item was kept in check by trailing arms and a Panhard rod. Here too, the factory became involved, sorting out the geometry, spring rates and damping. Cunningham's team (Phil Walters, Jack Donaldson and Briggs Weaver) were building their own car, but benefiting from a much broader research programme.

One thing Chrysler could not offer in this pre-musclecar era was a gearbox to swallow all this muscle, and it took a truck unit to cope. Yet this was no bruiser; it came from Italy via a Siata lorry, and enclosed its 4 ratios in an aluminium case. Strong and sweet-shifting, it proved to be one of the C4R's plus points. Not so hot, or rather much too hot, were the brakes. They were big, they were ally, they were finned and drilled, but even 13in drums couldn't get rid of enough heat. They needed babying to stay effective. In 1952 everyone had this problem at Le Mans. By 1953, Jaguar had disc brakes — and everyone else had a problem.

Bridging the 4ft 6in track front and rear, the 7in-wide Firestones covered Halibrand alloy wheels, a novelty in European circles, and the bodies abandoned the elongated lines of Le Monstre. Of the three C4Rs built, one was a Kamm-tailed coupé, while the two spyders barreled down Mulsanne clothed in plain upright shapes designed by Bob Blake, a gaping grille and cutaway wings channelling huge draughts of air to the thick radiator and glowing drums. Rear wing scoops cooled the tyres; neat slots in the trailing edges of the rear wings kept the flow going. For the spiders, instead of siting the oil-cooler low, where it would be vulnerable to stones, the team adopted that distinctive cylindrical aircraft-style unit high up on the scuttle. At 2410lbs, the C4R was a middle-weight, but a vast step ahead of the bulky C2.

Race debut was at Bridgehampton early in '52; for thirteen laps the team exulted as Phil Walters led the field. Then a tail-pipe came loose, and he was black-flagged. It was a minor disappointment, which at the same time raised hopes for Le Mans. Cunningham had entered a spider for himself and Bill Spears, the second, no5216R, for John Fitch and George Rice, while Phil Walters and Duane Carter handled the coupé. By Saturday night, Carter had stuck his car in the sand, and Fitch and Rice had retired with valve problems. But they had been quick, and Briggs Cunningham stuck it out solo in the remaining car for nearly 20 hours, before letting Spear cruise home fourth.

The following year, a new streamlined Cunn-



Highlight of a splendid career: the Spear/Johnston C4 splashes through to third at Le Mans, 1954.

5216R takes on fuel as darkness cloaks the Sarthe circuit.

ingham, the C5, out-paced even the winning Jaguars in top speed, reaching 154mph on Mulsanne. But Dunlop brakes tipped the balance; the C5 placed third, the C4R spider seventh, and the coupé tenth. It looked like solid progress for Cunningham and Chrysler — but Briggs' passion for a win at Le Mans was tempting him away from Detroit. A string of national and international successes in the States ought to have been supremely satisfying, since the blue and white cars were beating the twin-cam Europeans handsomely over there. Best of all was a hard-fought win against the complete works Aston Martin team at Sebring in 1953. Two of the new DB3Ss, staffed by Reg Parnell/George Abecassis and Peter Collins/Geoff Duke, traded positions with Fitch and Walters from the start. After Duke collided with another car, the other Aston couldn't close the small gap; at the end of 12 hours racing the Cunningham scored by 3½-minutes.

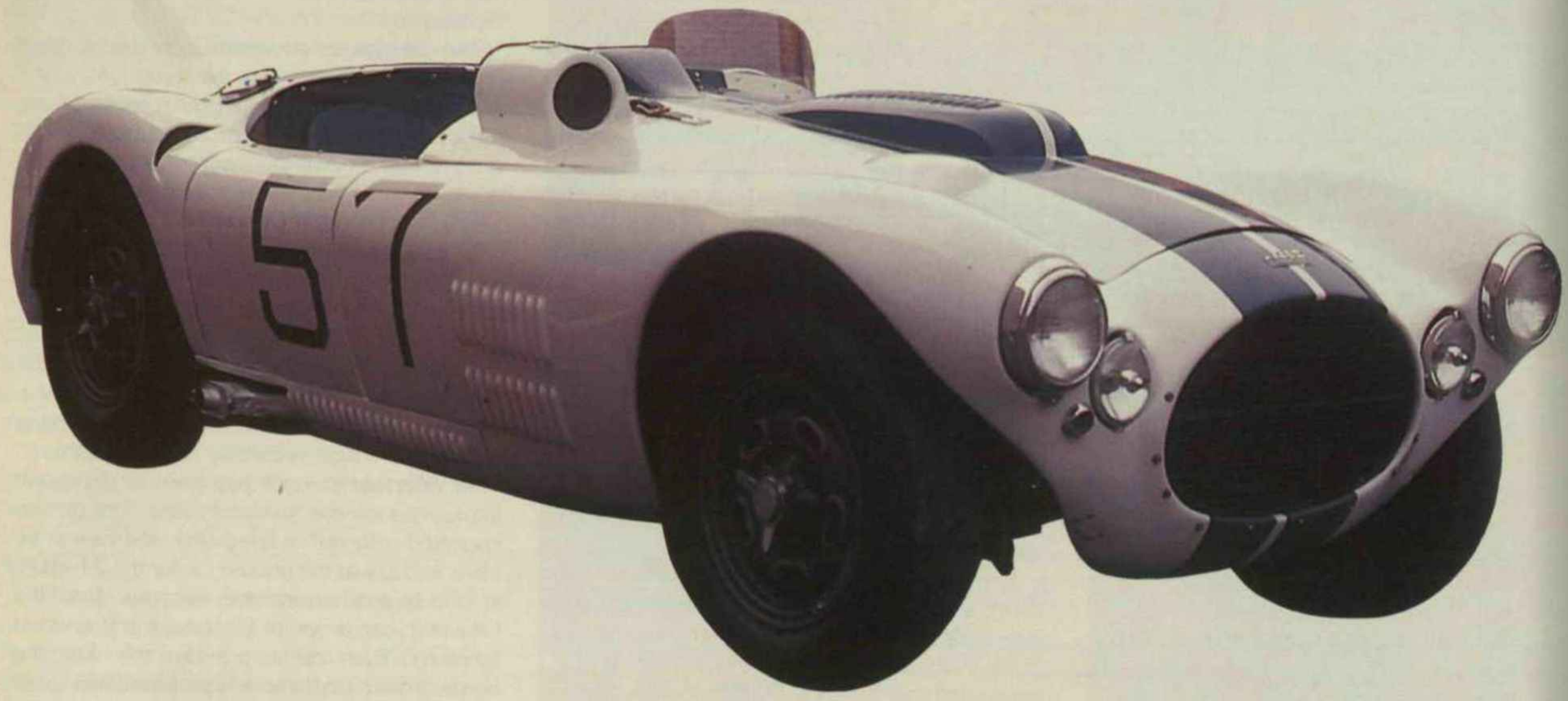
However, in that race, Cunningham himself drove an OSCA, and he wanted a Ferrari engine for Le Mans. The short route to this end was to buy the whole car, and Fitch and Walters according arrived there with a 375MM. A new Cunningham (the C6) was not ready, and the rapid but unstable C5 had been destroyed at Rheims the year before, so the two dependable C4R spiders were pressed into service to complete the entry. The Ferrari broke; the veteran American machines went on to achieve the best result ever for the tiny marque at the Sarthe: third and fifth. Their vanquishers were the cream of works sophistication: a 375 from Maranello and a D-type from Coventry. The holiday resort of Palm Beach seemed an unlikely base for a team in this company.

The Offenhauser-powered C6 proved to be a disappointment, and it was the three C4s which continued to thrust the Cunningham chequered-flag badge under the matching flag for a couple of private seasons, in the hands of Charles Moran and Fred Wacker. Eventually, the coupé and one spider, no 5217R, went into the Cunningham museum. The other open car has stayed in private hands, recently being added to the collection of a sports-car enthusiast on the East coast of the USA, the only Cunningham outside the museum.

Unlike the majority of racing car histories, the C4 Cunninghams' records are straight-forward. All three exist now; none was ever crashed, none underwent major rebuilding or development. They differ visibly, once you learn to distinguish the louvres on the two open cars. The car we inspected is 5216R: it failed Fitch and Rice at Le Mans in '52; was the unused car for the 24-hours in 1953, and scored the valorous third the following year, driven by Bill Spear and Sherwood Johnston. Even more proudly, this was the home-grown machine which triumphed over John Wyer's Aston team at that arduous Sebring confrontation, and tallied six other major USA wins in '52 and '53.

Even for the most fragile old racing car, retirement is only a phase given the burgeoning period racing business, and not surprisingly this sturdy warhorse has been active again over the last nine years at Classic meetings across the USA, and at Brands hatch in 1987. It has also thundered around Italy on the Mille Miglia bash several times.





Even without the high-mounted drum oil-cooler, the C4R's cutaway wings are distinctive.

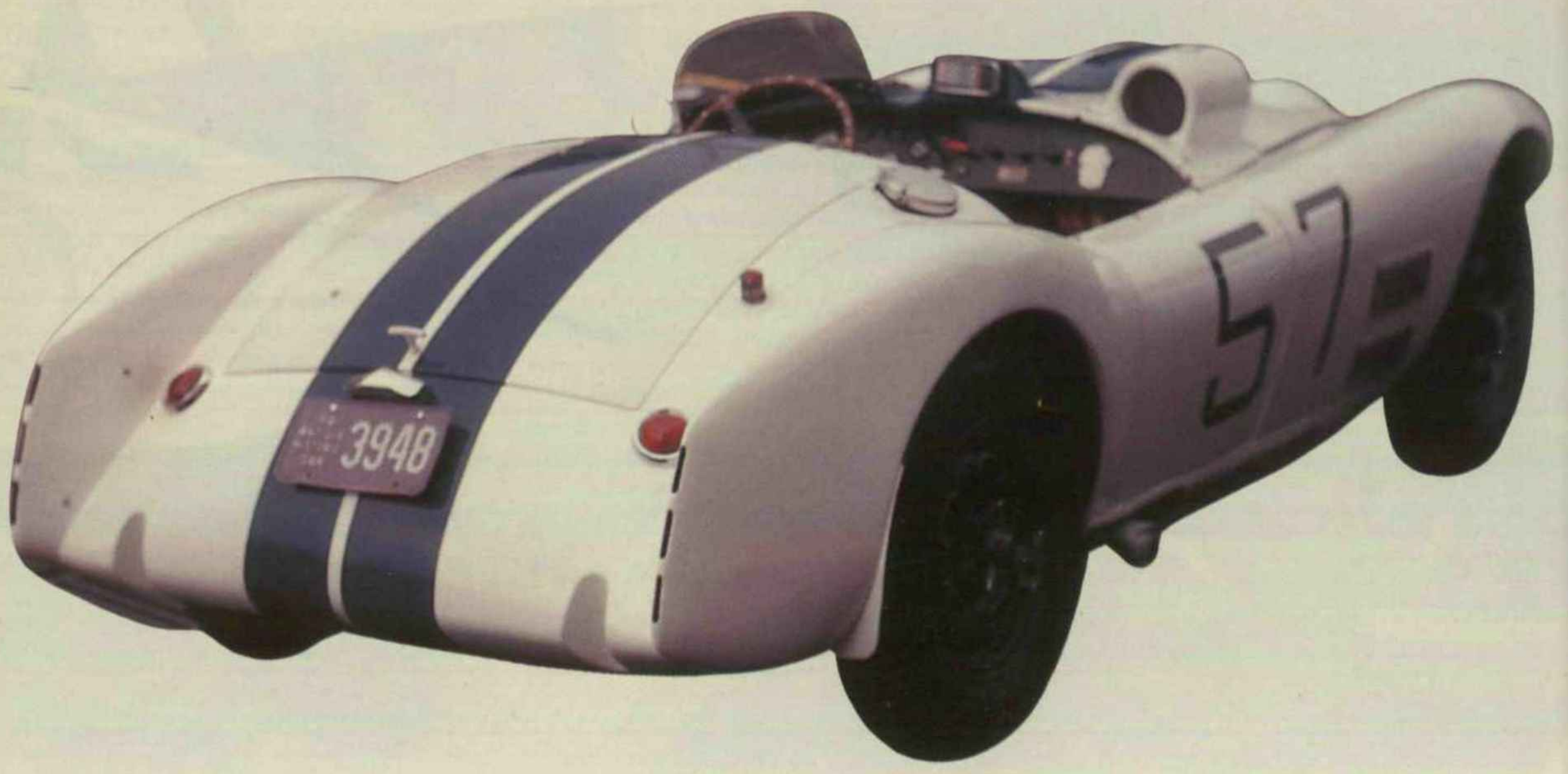
being driven in 1988 by old campaigner John Fitch. In 1986 it underwent a body-off overhaul and was repainted to feature the '57' numbers of that Sebring 12-hour victory, but with no real deterioration to be seen, little has been changed since the late Fifties when the car ran a last couple of seasons in private ownership.

Luckily (and surprisingly given the USA approach to automotive legislation) "vintage" cars can be run on the road in most states with virtually no restrictions. This is a major blessing as far as noise, emissions and seat-belts go, though responsibility for safe roadworthiness is left entirely up to the owner. So on a muggy summer day we were able to fire up the unsilenced monster V8 and emerge into the otherwise quiet streets of Philadelphia to go for a little drive.

Getting close to the car tells you several things: it couldn't be Italian, for one. It's too well finished, the polished aluminium panels nicely trimmed and fitted inside the cockpit. And the bus-driver wheel angle hints at the USA recirculating-ball steering gear. The bonnet blister and square-cut louvres are plainly there for a reason — and it isn't aesthetics. It looks and feels extremely solid, and inside it's really quite roomy, even with a passenger in the skimpy second seat.

The deep door and high flat floor (the result of the twin chassis rails) made access slightly less of a problem for me, but it wasn't easy. Since the accident two years ago which has left me in a wheelchair, climbing into anything interesting takes planning and effort. But with the aid of some friendly muscle-power I was soon strapped in and we set off to unleash some automotive music on

In contrast to the blunt prow, the tail and wings are finely tapered.



the locals.

The starter button is above the throttle, so you can pump the pedal, prod the starter, and catch it on the throttle as soon as it fires. As long as there are enough amps in the battery to churn the massive crank, it erupts very quickly into the typical flat stacatto beat of a hot V8, that irregular cadence which sounds like a galloping horse.

Between the snuffling carbs, the cannon-fire from the half-concealed side-pipes and the hurricane blast over the unscreened passenger scuttle, a live "tell me how it feels" session was out, so I settled for a few shouted questions every time we pulled up, shuddering and heaving, at a red light, before we made it to more open areas. Although the cam is designed to perform at 4000rpm-plus, the idling torque of 5.4 litres is enough to move the car, and it slogs away at a couple of thousand revs with only a smattering of burps and hic-coughs. In its stride, though, the noise becomes a wail, interrupted by the clean breaks that a light flywheel causes when a crisp competition engine readjusts for the next gear. The push in the back is terrific in second and third; we didn't dare stretch top gear out to the 145mph and more it used to peak at. The story is that the unit is good for 6200rpm, though long-distance races would call for more restraint.

Skipping and thumping over tram-rails and drain covers, adjectives like "crashy" and "cart-like" began to assemble themselves in my mental notebook, but as we passed 60 and 70mph, it was clear that the springs and dampers were beginning to do the job they were designed for. The ride became more fluid — but still on the firm side of "hard". What did show was the solidity of the frame; despite the hard springs, it was the suspension which flexed, not the chassis or body. And this in a race car with two 24-hours and a 12-hour race wrung out of it! I felt quite secure as the needles on the plain metal dash spun clockwise. Contemporary accounts agree that the C4s were stable and safe-handling cars.

From my side, minus a steering wheel, the 100in wheelbase chassis seemed to be showing the placid nature of a modern saloon — except for the extra 200 or more horsepower which can instantly order the tall rear tyres to step out. Which helps, because the steering is neither quick nor especially precise. You get more help changing direction by using the brakes. Sadly you can never tell beforehand which way they are likely to twitch the car. Still, it's all excitement.

"... the snuffling carbs, the cannon-fire from the half-concealed side-pipes and the hurricane blast over the unscreened passenger scuttle..."

For a car like this, any motoring this side of a 20-lap race counts as misuse. Yet the brutal-sounding machine stayed cool and kept its blood pressure steady even when our high-speed thrash was over and we were rumbling through narrow residential streets, blowing over cats and small children with the blast from the side-pipes. Was it exhilarating? Yes. Was I glad to get out of it? Yes. The racket, and the co-driver's inability to breathe against an 80mph gale saw to that. That high floor means that the occupants' shoulders stick well up, and while the upright driver's screen does a fair job, passengers must grin and bear it. Full-width screens were not a requirement until 1956, and the Cunninghams ran with a metal tonneau over the second seat.

Later, back in Britain, I asked Gerry Marshall for his recollections of driving 5216 at Brands in 1987. Immediately he praised the gearchange — light and accurate — the rigidity, and the very neutral handling. "Like a C-type," he thought, "not that I've driven one..." Brickbats were aimed at the slow steering and the erratic brakes. More surprisingly, he felt that it was short of the go that 5.4 litres of hemi should serve up. He must be a braver man than me.

Drive any interesting open car in Britain and people talk to you; go soft-top motoring in the voluble USA and you can make life-long buddies at the traffic-lights. Yet of all our questioners on our excursion, even those who asked reasonably knowledgeable questions ("It's a '50s Maserati, ain't it?"), none had heard of Cunningham. A sad obscurity for one of only four American sportscar makes to have made serious international impact. Scarab, Chaparral, and Ford are the rest of the quartet — Cunningham was the first.

G C



C5 (left) was smoother successor to C4. On the right is 5217R, known as "Brigg's" car.

ROAD TEST

Everyday supercar

Can any Ferrari in the current range be called a family car? If it can, then the 2 + 2 Mondial t is that Pininfarina-designed coupé.

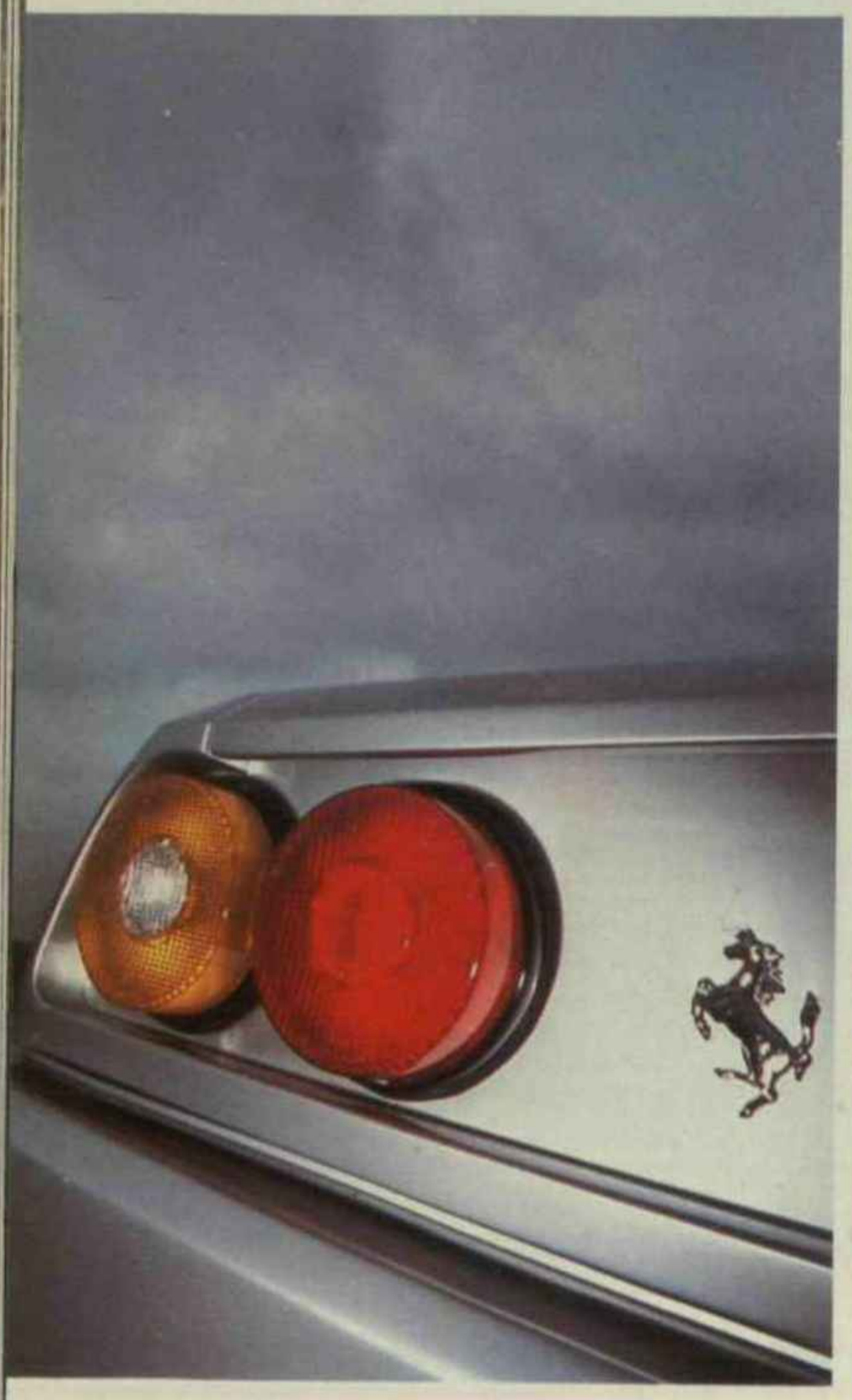
It has never been easy for Ferrari to meet the tastes of the 2 + 2 cognoscenti, for its strict two-seaters always seem to steal the limelight. Ferrari's mid-engined V8s, back to the 308 GT4 2 + 2, always struggled for recognition alongside the 308 GTB/QV series. Today the 348 tb remains the most popular choice amongst British market Ferraris, but since the now TKM-owned Maranello Concessionaires is still not accepting orders for new Ferraris, any new Ferrari, this is a somewhat academic statement. The small 't' suffix to the Mondial name plate is not for the usual turbocharger connotation, but to recognise the transverse mounting of the gearbox behind a longitudinal 300 bhp V8. The powertrain is shared with the two-seater 348 t, providing a claimed 158 mph in the Mondial. As the cheapest Ferrari in Britain, a positive snip at less than £70,000, the Mondial t ironically also boasts the longest list of showroom incentives in the Ferrari line, items such as power steering, air conditioning, ABS, central locking, partial leather trim and electrical operation of side glass and mirrors are included. There is more, but the point is that the Mondial provides a well padded contrast to the £197,500 F40 (still in production for the USA), where even a brake servo is absent in the interest of purist driving pleasure.

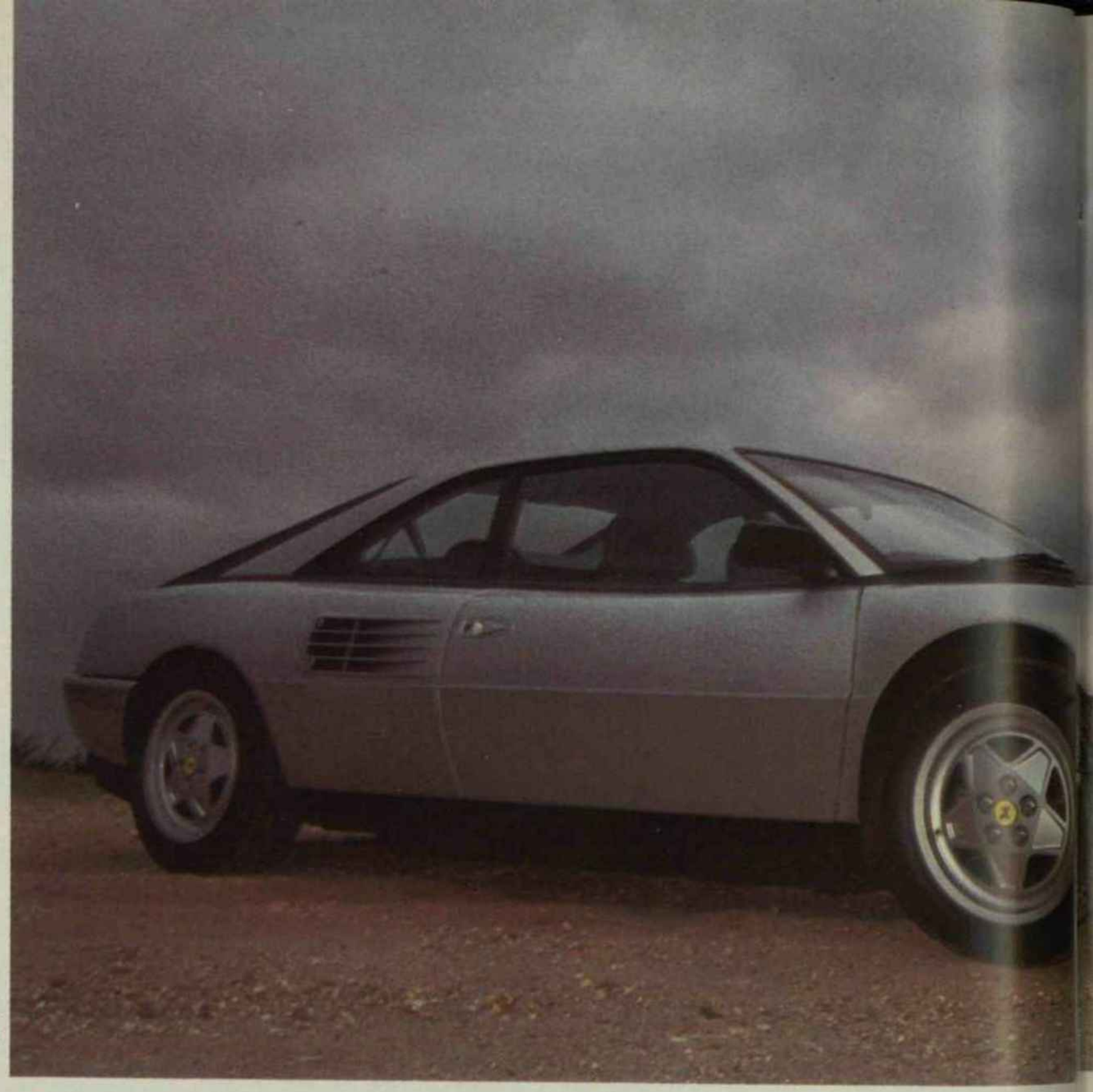
Does the Mondial measure up to a Ferrari pedigree, or is it more redolent of Fiat product planning? We were allowed a long weekend to find out, one that included a trip to our test track as well as the Welsh borders.

The UK range

The £69,310.31 Mondial t is one of the oldest bodies offered by Ferrari in 1991, having debuted as a three-litre in spring 1980. Thus it has been adapted to technical and body introductions at regular intervals, taking on the four valves per cylinder version of the V8 in 1982, listed with the alternative cabriolet soft top from 1984 (which now costs £74, 720.21 in the UK) and implanted with a 3.2-litre/270 bhp V8 from 1985.

The 3.4-litre layout tested here was introduced at Geneva Show, 1989. An automatic clutch system from Valeo was shown at Paris in 1991: it is not listed for British customers, but this ingenious unit (working upon vacuum servo principles) has been promoted actively for North American customers. We used the transverse five-speed gearbox, equipped as standard with a ZF limited slip final drive. The only extras on the test car were the slowest electric sunroof we have ever commanded (£1,378.57) and a leather dashboard finish for £969.96. Other Ferraris listed for Britain are the popular 348 in open and shut form, but we are only talking of less than a total 300 Ferrari imports per annum in the rigidly controlled production totals, so the 'popular' adjective is simply to define the model that sells most on our home market. The 348 tb (closed coupé, b for Berlinetta) would retail for £76,534.12 and the 348 ts (s for Spyder, convertible) for £78,348.02. I say "would" because Alan Mapp, spokesman for the official importer, reports that waiting lists are still measured "by the year" although he admits that the recession has seen customers ask for their deposits back, or for a place further down the priority lists. As an average, we understand that the primary effect of the recession has been to cut Ferrari delivery times from seven to five years: not in the Morgan class for tardiness, but they are a mite more expensive.





Photography: LAT

The real supercar Ferraris in most minds, rated as capable of 171 and 201 mph respectively, comprise the £127,005.25 Testarossa, and the £197,501.93 F40. The Testarossa is no longer made: a basically similar 512 TR successor has been unveiled, existing orders merely transferred for deliveries that will begin next summer (lhd production from February). The powertrain remains based on the Boxer 12, now yielding 422 bhp from five litres.

Our test car came from the sole importer for Britain, Maranello Concessionaires at Egham in Surrey. We were also allowed a few hours to look around the new multi-million pound technical centre. A detail examination of the five Ferrari F40s on the premises showed a number of running changes which reflect the lessons learned about public road practicalities in a production run of more than 1100 that continues in modified form for the States. Star exhibits are the restoration facilities that are literally capable of fabricating and jig building a complete Ferrari, even the most abused, 'chopped top' convertible conversion.

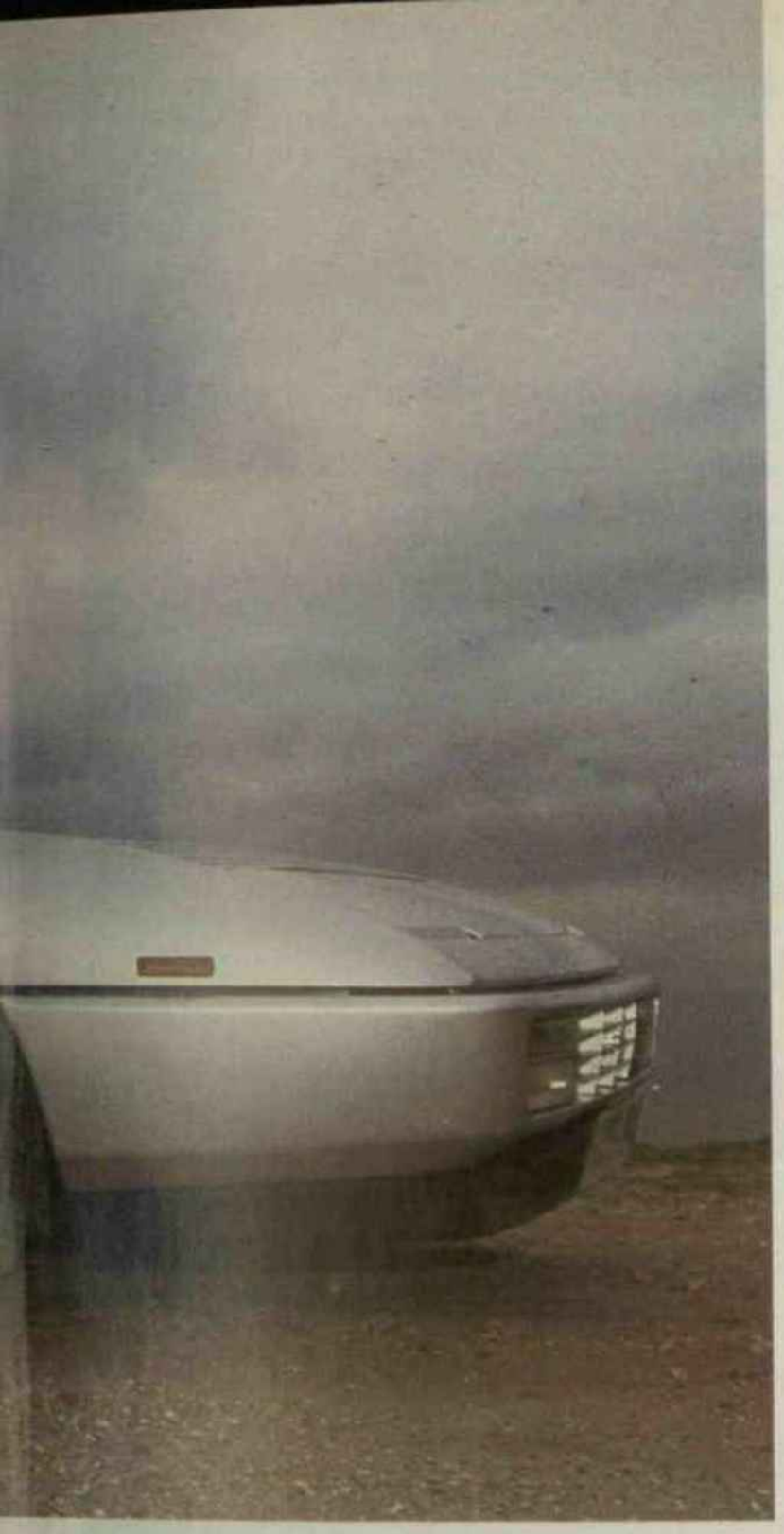
Technical analysis

The Ferrari legend has been built around 12-cylinder engines of varying configurations, but the V8 at the heart of the Mondial and 348 ranges is a far cry from those operatic performers. The competitive heritage emerges in items such as the generation of 88 bhp per litre, dry sump lubrication and a 7500 rpm limit for its short stroke 3.4 litres. The 300 bhp generated at 7200 rpm has to shift over 3300 lb. The company claims a Mondial accomplishes 0-62 mph in 6.3 sec with a maximum of 158 mph, figures we found credible after our test session.

The body (left and top) is built by Ferrari to a Pininfarina design.

There is a handbook recommendation to check oil level every 500 km/310 miles and replenish from the two containers of Agip sent out with every new Ferrari. After 704 test miles the contorted dipstick reported no need for replenishment. In other key areas the alloy V8 is a much more routine motor, its twin overhead camshafts on each bank driven by one belt and its fuelling and ignition needs efficiently managed through the thickest of London Christmas traffic by Bosch M2.7 Motronic. The technical novelty amongst the mid-engined classes is the disposition of engine and gearbox, Ferrari adopting a longitudinal engine location and transverse gearbox in 1989 for this model. The advantage is a particularly compact power pack when installed in the 348, the gearbox/transaxle wrapped tidily aft of the V8.

Power is taken from the crankshaft directly through a gearbox mainshaft, which has the flywheel attached on the far side of the gearbox, not the engine crankshaft output, and the flywheel is a twin mass unit that allows power transference via a clutch to a transverse pinion that turns the power through 90 degrees. The rest of the gearbox is described as "a pretty conventional twin shaft unit" by Maranello technical director Peter Whittle. He adds proudly that "the plus point in service is that the clutch can be changed in 20 minutes, no bother." The body is built at Ferrari to a Pininfarina design and features a mixture of external steel panelling and the traditional Ferrari tubular and box section chassis sections; the company also panels its underbodies to provide the equivalent of a racing car's flat form. The aerodynamic drag factor is not quoted (above 0.36Cd is the informed guess), but it is worth noting that this Ferrari is significantly lower, wider and heavier than the two Porsche 911 derivatives tested last month. When Ferrari built a 2+2 it chose a generally bulkier platform (wheelbase is in the middleweight saloon car league at



104.3 in) than the 911. The traditional Ferrari steel chassis is massively rugged tubular and box section structure that shows up well in the restoration booths of Maranello. This plump approach increased comfort levels rather more than the three-position electro-hydraulic damper ride comfort adjustment selector provided in the cockpit to activate a Bilstein-Ferrari system.

Action

Although the handbrake is mounted to the right, in the perfect trouser turn-up ambush position, and works along fly-off principles, there are few other tricks to operating the Mondial.

These days, even the steering column adjusts (vertically) and you soon adjust to a markedly offset driving position, one that does allow room for a decent footrest. There are far too many controls, and far too much Fiat in the switchgear, just as there are too many ex-Rover ancillaries in a Lotus Esprit, for any Mondial owner to become unduly snooty about his purchase. It is also similar to the Lotus in the fact that the instrumentation is far from clear, but the reason is different. The six Veglia dials of the Ferrari (complete with prancing horses on 180 mph speedometer and 10,000 rpm tachometer) are finished in an orange hue which renders the smaller gauges almost illegible, whilst the fuel gauge needle is afflicted with extreme melancholic bouts of depression followed by equally annoying bursts of optimism about how many of the 21 gallons remain at a steady 15.5 mpg.

At night, when the instrument lighting adds to the confusion, the Mondial would be an easy car in which to run out of fuel, despite the 20-litre reserve. Ferrari has adopted the Japanese habit of cockpit release buttons with such enthusiasm that there is a line of them across the centre console to cover the plastic fuel filler lid (a stark contrast to the beautiful spun aluminium caps of oil and petrol reservoirs, each a work of Ferrari-embossed art), boot lid, engine cover and front luggage area. Inspect the contents of each compartment and the slim boot proves sufficient to take weekend or sports bags, whilst the front compartment is unusually spacious because there is no spare wheel or tyre at all! Instead, an exquisite brown leather satchel is strapped behind the capacious front radiator with its twin fans. Within is a useful tool kit and selection of all the spare bulbs you could need, plus a canister of gunk to squirt within the (completely) deflated tyre that will get you home at speeds beyond that of a Run Flat tyre or an emergency slimline cover.

A modest set of keys, one of the few items to lack the Prancing Horse insignia, command an engine that starts promptly and idles at a slightly rapid 1000 rpm. The car is well equipped to deal with adverse weather conditions, having excellent pop-up lights and windscreen washer that imitate the old rallycross trick of mounting the jets on the operating arms. Also, the heating and ventilation are notably effective, along with the electric elements in the U-curve of the rear screen. The front screen bears a deep blue shaded band at the top and the only time you are really conscious of the bonnet extremities is when the headlamps are raised.

Cabin trim is erratic: we benefited from a leather finish instead of plastic to the dash panel, yet two unprompted onlookers commented on its spartan appearance. The handbrake and its surrounds are in a variety of plastics and fits that do not belong in this price bracket and the variety of cabin noises was more akin to an orchestra, albeit an unusual one, for there were gulps (distressed ventilation valving?), buzzes (excited by particular low speed engine rev ranges) and some authentic transmission speeches. These covered everything from a gentle whinge to an occasional hard gear whine that was a modest imitation of the toothed audibility of competition car transaxles.



The barren cockpit is somewhat at odds with the opulence of leather seats.

There was one overwhelming cold start bugbear: the traditional Ferrari aversion to selecting second gear with anything other than steamy Agip temperatures. It sounds simple enough, just miss out second and take advantage of the excellent torque curve and closely stacked initial ratios (fourth and fifth are widely spaced) to putter along for the couple of miles that it takes to warm-up from four- to five-speed gearbox. In fact the four-speed characteristic made us feel pretty vulnerable after a clean start at minus five degC, for 400 yards after said ignition, the Ferrari would face the morning qualification session that takes place on our local dual carriageway, hard pushed to blend in with the traffic when we were using a self-imposed 3000 rpm (the oil pressure soaring above the usual 70 psi when cold) and were forced to shift from 3000 rpm in first to little over 1500 in third. This was not a fault peculiar to one Ferrari. We were warned about the trait when we took delivery and can actually remember it occurring on other Italian brands with all kinds of power train layouts, particularly front-engine, rear-gearbox Alfa Romeos. That aside, driving the Mondial was an unmitigated pleasure.

The driving position, offset aside, was a pleasant surprise, as was the vision offered by the Mondial's low (it cuts a couple of inches from the roofline of a 911) but excellently glazed cabin. The only operational snag was that the seat upright moved half an inch or so under braking and acceleration, but we learned to live with that. Initially the steering simply seems like any other power assisted device for tackling tight confines, assitance being vital because of the poor lock. A welcome opportunity to cover an hour's run on remarkably empty A and B roads revealed the truth: Ferrari engineers have wrought a power system that chats constantly with the driver, yet the vehicle itself remains stable despite the constant messages at the wheel rim about the cambers and surfaces that are passing beneath. The Mondial also rides over bumps and crests equably, so much so that we only needed to resort to the 'soft' setting on the cockpit adjustable Bilstein layout for the slowest and roughest of city streets.

The 'hard' position was only selected for maximum speed and some track handling research. The steering has to be outstanding in its perception of the road and the Mondial's position, because the Mondial has more low speed oversteer than any current production vehicle assessed by the author in the last 10 years.

At first you simply think that it cannot let go at this speed, that it must feel worse than it is. The Ferrari can be easily (and enjoyably) recovered from such situations, but it might be better if they provided more grip in the first place. We have the

Despite its in-line V8, the Mondial has a usable, though not capacious, boot.

additional dimension of a test track to explore these characteristics, and the ultimate speed potential. Under such circumstances, a clear morning emphasised that the combination of Goodyear Eagles and a ZF limited slip differential would provide the kind of acceleration figures claimed by the manufacturer, provided that we took advantage of the engine's outstanding flexibility to motor away at no more than 2500 rpm – otherwise the wheelspin and histrionics were truly spectacular. The straightline performance was not a match for £60,000-plus Porsches tested last month, but an honest 153 mph on the banking of Millbrook and 0-60 mph in 6.5sec was excellent in conditions that were not perfect for performance tests.

"At speed the Ferrari lost all trace of its second and third gear tail-happiness and seemed to become more stable the faster it went"



At speed the Ferrari lost all traces of its second and third gear tail-happiness and seemed to become more stable the faster it went. Settling into an easier rendition of 150 mph than the BMW 850i, equating roughly to the now far more stable 911 Porsches. Another Ferrari bonus point was the exhaust and engine note: even cynical bystanders from other magazines commented that the harder it worked, the better it sounded.

Inside the cockpit the V8 sounds vaguely sporting, almost buzzy, until 4000 rpm, when the note entices you to explore further. By 5000 rpm there are some faint echoes of a glorious parentage, fully confirmed if you keep the motor between 5500 and the 7500 limit in pursuit of performance. The gearchange promises more than it delivers. The slim wand of the chromed selector, topped by simple black knob and the favoured orange to indicate shift patterns (spring biased to the strongest extent we have encountered) marches through the traditional polished and formal gate. The shift speed is enough to cope with the demands of clipping tenths away on acceleration runs, but in less hectic use, the change never loses its slightly ponderous action, clanking from slot to slot. At least the ratios are a pleasure to utilise: rounded off they provide 40, 63, 89 and 120 mph in the first four ratios at the 7500 rpm limit, which was also indicated when we recorded consistent maximum speed runs of 152.9 mph (2.029-mile lap) and 153.06 mph (best flying quarter mile).

Ferrari provides gear and tyre diameter charts to cover most of the four tyre companies that provide standard equipment for the Mondial.

From these we can see that the rpm counter should have been showing the equivalent of 7236 rpm. The ability to pick up speed in third, fourth or fifth without any fancy drag strip antics should be more valued by most motorists than the 0-60 mph statistic, and here the Ferrari is an outstanding performer. Third gear is particularly muscular between 50-70 mph, so that you would find the Ferrari totally unembarrassed, even in the company of last month's Porsches, when confronted with ordinary road overtaking situations, rather than shifting its 1500 kg bulk from a standstill.

Where permitted, the Ferrari is also an exceptional consumer of motorway miles. The gearing is shortish at 21.15 mph per 1000 rpm in fifth, but the highish rpm limit means the Mondial feels unstressed at 5000 rpm (106 mph) and would be perfectly happy to run from 5000 to 6000 rpm (127 mph) from one end of Germany to the other. Only the oil temperature gauge shows how hard the alloy V8 is working, rising to 210 degC when worked in the 5000 plus zone regularly. No sign of oil consumption could be found in 700 miles despite conscientious and trying sessions with the dry sump stick.

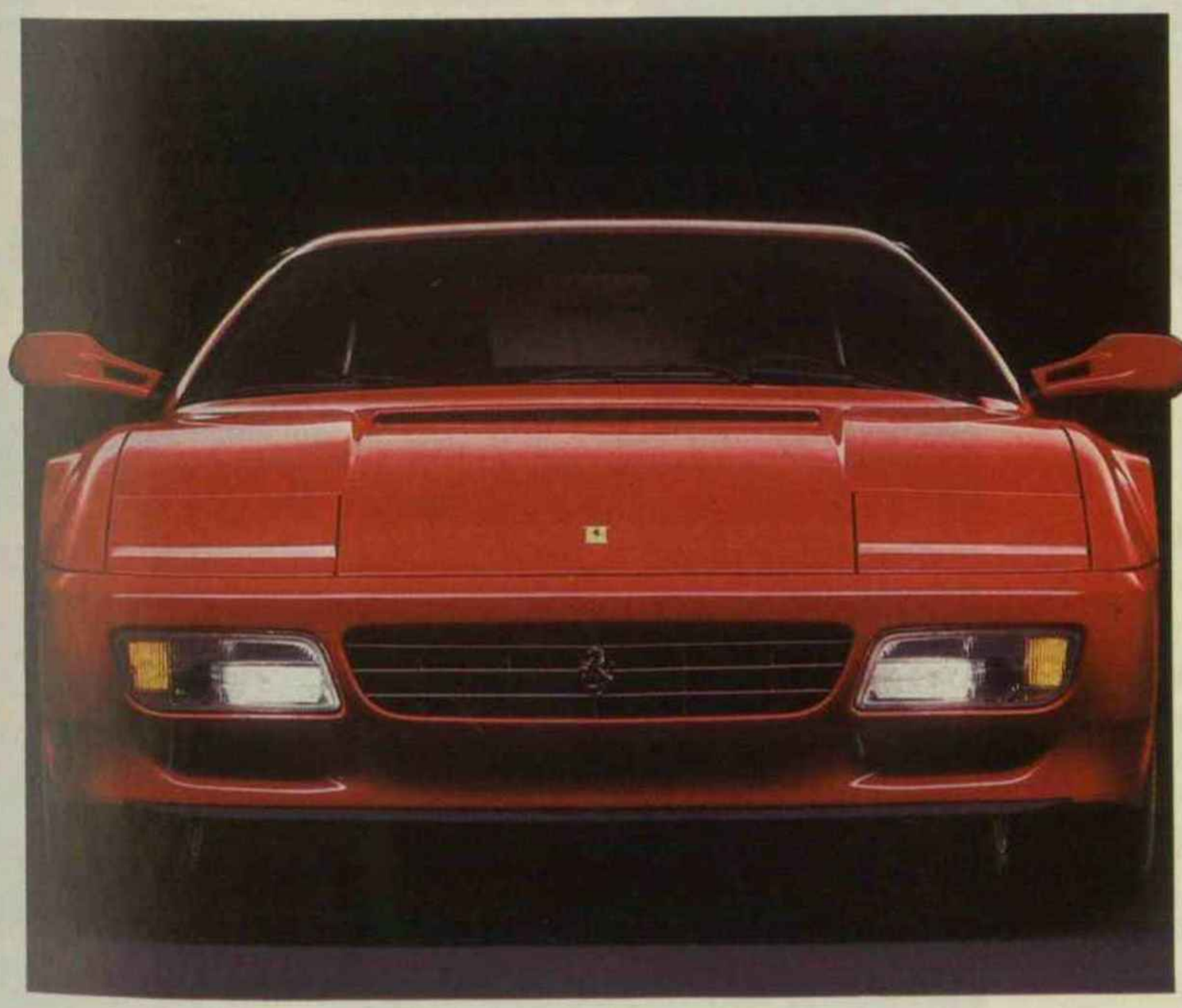
Verdict

There were some areas in which the Ferrari did not measure up to its obvious Porsche 911 opposition – particularly in the number of assorted buzzes, squeaks, trim deficiencies and a slow gearchange – but the Mondial emerged as that motoring contradiction: a practical Ferrari.

The Mondial t has enough performance to be enthralling, ride comfort enough to teach some mid-range saloon car manufacturers a thing or two and a mild whiff of the Prancing Horse mystique. This becomes positively rampant when the V8 is busking in the higher rpm ranges and the plump tyres are being asked to do some work.

Maranello Concessionaires candidly admits that it is not easy to persuade customers to try the charms of the Mondial, "but once we get them into one, they swear by them and are quite likely to buy another." After a 700-mile long weekend and our track sessions, we can understand why this Ferrari, a modest performer by the standards of the marque, is the model for those who want to use a Ferrari every day of the week. **J W**

Son of Testarossa



On January 2, the Ferrari 512TR was unveiled at the Los Angeles Motor Show. This replaces the Testarossa, launched at the Paris Salon in 1984, in the Ferrari range.

Ferrari claims improved handling, thanks to refinement of the double wishbone suspension and increased chassis rigidity.

Although emphasis has predictably been placed on keeping exhaust emissions to sufficiently low levels, both power (422bhp/6750rpm) and torque (387lb ft/5500rpm) figures are superior to those of the Testarossa.

Claimed performance capabilities are 0-62mph acceleration in 4.8sec and a top speed of 194.5mph.

FERRARI MONDIAL T

ENGINE

Location	longitudinally mid-mounted
Cylinders	90 deg V8
Bore × stroke	85 × 75 mm
Capacity	3405 cc
Compression ratio	10.4 to 1
Valve gear	dohc, four valves per cylinder
Power	300 bhp/7200 rpm
Torque	234 lb ft/4200 rpm

TRANSMISSION

Type	five-speed manual, rear-wheel drive

GEARBOX

Gear	ratio	mph 1000 rpm
First	3.214	5.66
Second	2.105	8.65
Third	1.458	9.71
Fourth	1.094	12.49
Fifth	0.861	21.15
Final-Drive	3.706	

SUSPENSION

Front	double wishbones, co-axial coil springs, cockpit adjustable Bilstein dampers
Rear	double wishbones, co-axial springs, cockpit adjustable Bilstein dampers
Wheels	light alloy 7x16 (f), 8x16 (r)
Tyres	Goodyear Eagle 205/55 ZR16 (f), 225/55 ZR16(r)

BRAKES

Front/Rear	ventilated discs all round

STEERING

Type	rack and pinion, servo assisted
Turns, lock to lock	3.0

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	2650 mm
Front/Rear track	1522/1560 mm
Overall length	4535 mm
Overall width	1810 mm
Overall height	1235 mm
Kerb weight	1503 kg
Fuel tank	21.1 gallons

PERFORMANCE

0-30 mph	2.66 sec	0-80 mph	10.25 sec
0-40 mph	3.87 sec	0-90 mph	12.96 sec
0-50 mph	5.27 sec	0-100 mph	16.33 sec
0-60 mph	6.52 sec	0-110 mph	19.17 sec
0-70 mph	8.26 sec	0-120 mph	23.14 sec

50-70 mph in fourth/fifth gears	5.3/7.5 sec
Maximum speed	153.06 mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Average for test	15.51 mpg
Government figures:	
Urban	12.8 mpg
56 mph	30.0 mpg
75 mph	25.2 mpg
LIST PRICE	£69,310.31

The fourth dimension



"The MX-3 feels utterly gutless . . . it just needs another 30 bhp or so to make it fun"

"Have you been drinking,sir?"

"Most certainly not, officer."

"And you claim it was emerald green, had four wheels, and was proceeding in a northerly direction up the A23 in Norbury?"

"Yes, yes, yes."

"And you're sure it wasn't a car?"

"Positive."

"Take him away, sarge."

But there had been no mistake. It was emerald green, was heading north up the A23 and there were definitely four wheels. But if that was a car, I was an artichoke.

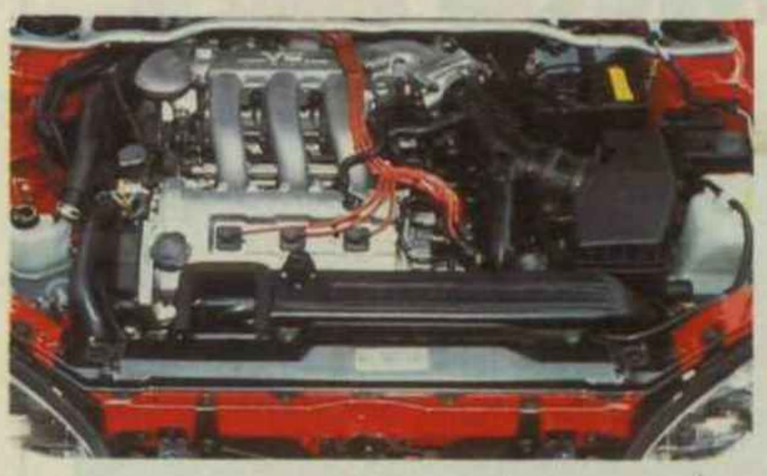
OK, so I'm an artichoke. The lurid projectile in question *was* a Mazda MX-3. It's just that, when painted a particularly violent shade of green, it looks like nothing else on earth. Apparently it was a competition prize, one of only two finished in that hue. Despite having relinquished a similar, charcoal grey machine only a couple of weeks beforehand, I didn't initially identify its jade sister.

When first unveiled in Geneva last year, the MX-3 had a mixed reception, responses ranging from 'plug ugly' to 'different'. The flame red show car looked most ungainly. Perhaps, like the bright green monstrosity floating around south London, the florid paint job showed the car in a bad light. In a darker shade, it doesn't look quite so weird.

In an age when cars are increasingly indistinguishable, Mazda's brassy approach to design is to be admired. In this respect, the chunky MX-3 is not a first. The RX-7 remains the world's only volume production car with a rotary engine, and the nimble MX-5 with its retro appeal has, quite rightly, been a huge success.

Visually, the MX-3 stands out from the crowd thanks to a curious blend of sharp angles and voluptuous curves. It's a sort of cross between Rubik's Cube and a marshmallow. A less obvious deviation from the norm can be found under the bonnet, where, in the more potent of the two UK versions, a tiny V6 displaces just 1.8 litres.

This is where Mazda's sense of adventure grinds to a halt. Although seeking to create its own niche with this sporty looking coupé, comparisons with such as Honda's recently discontinued CRX are inevitable. The MX-3 has a fair bit more interior space than the latter (the rear seats are just about usable), but a whole lot less fizz.



Quite why the engineers settled for just 134bhp is a mystery. The four-pot CRX has 150, is markedly perkier and would make more sense if you like to traverse B-roads with a pillar-to-pillar grin. Mazda makes modest performance claims for the newcomer (126mph and 0-62mph in 8.5sec), and a stint at the wheel shows why.

The MX-3 feels utterly gutless, and that shows what appears to be a well-balanced chassis in an artifically favourable light. This is a nicely engineered motor car, well finished (although the interior plastic looks a touch too cheap) and reasonably comfortable for those perched up front. It just needs another 30 or so bhp to make it *fun*. At present, it is an efficient but rather dull means of transport, so the recent removal of the CRX from the market leaves Mazda with an open goal at which to shoot. It needs to hurry, too, before the revamped Nissan organisation thinks about importing the similarly-sized 100NX with its potent, two-litre 16-valver. **SA**



The shape of the MX-3 (top) is certainly distinctive. Tiny V6 displaces just 1.8 litres (centre). Vestigial rear seats fold to increase the carrying capacity (right).



Photography: LAT

Affordable fun

Our recent round-up of the performance hatchback crop, one that had been released for last autumn's motor shows, highlighted the headline contenders from Ford and Vauxhall (RS2000 reborn and Astra GTE 16v), but commented in passing on the considerably cheaper 16v merits of entries from Fiat (Tipo 2.0ie 16v) and Renault (19 16v). At the time, the Fiat was not available in Britain, but we have now driven the belatedly available £13,949 Tipo *sedici-valvole* and are glad to record that our warm Italian driving impressions of this fluidly fast five-door remained valid in winter Britain.

Despite saving over £1600 against the list price of the similarly powerful two-litre Vauxhall, the metallic silver Fiat demonstrator bore a host of standard equipment and has an appearance that is uncommonly individual. Excluded from that seductive pricing is the electronic ABS system that Vauxhall and Ford include, while the metallic paint was an option as well. Standard Fiat incentives embrace power steering, electrical assistance for the sunroof, wing mirrors and front side glass, remote 'plip' control of the five-aperture central locking and a four-speaker stereo radio/cassette of erratic receiver quality. The remote control for the central locking was similarly inconsistent.

Quality is always a prime issue when assessing a new Fiat. The demonstrator fared well, save for constant wind whistle on the export-only standard sunroof and a petrol cap flip top that rivalled Ford for dowdy plastic finish and fit.

Internally, you can forget all those jibes about Italian gorillas at the three-spoke Momo wheel, although the drilled throttle pedal made us apprehensive. The adjustable steering wheel obscured some of the comprehensive instrumentation. The only dynamic faults we could list were wheel scrabble in slow (second gear) corners and a brake pedal that exhibited more travel than expected on a young car equipped with a quartet of disc brakes. There was also an occasional confusion between brake and throttle, which are set closer together in the interests of easy heel and toe operation.

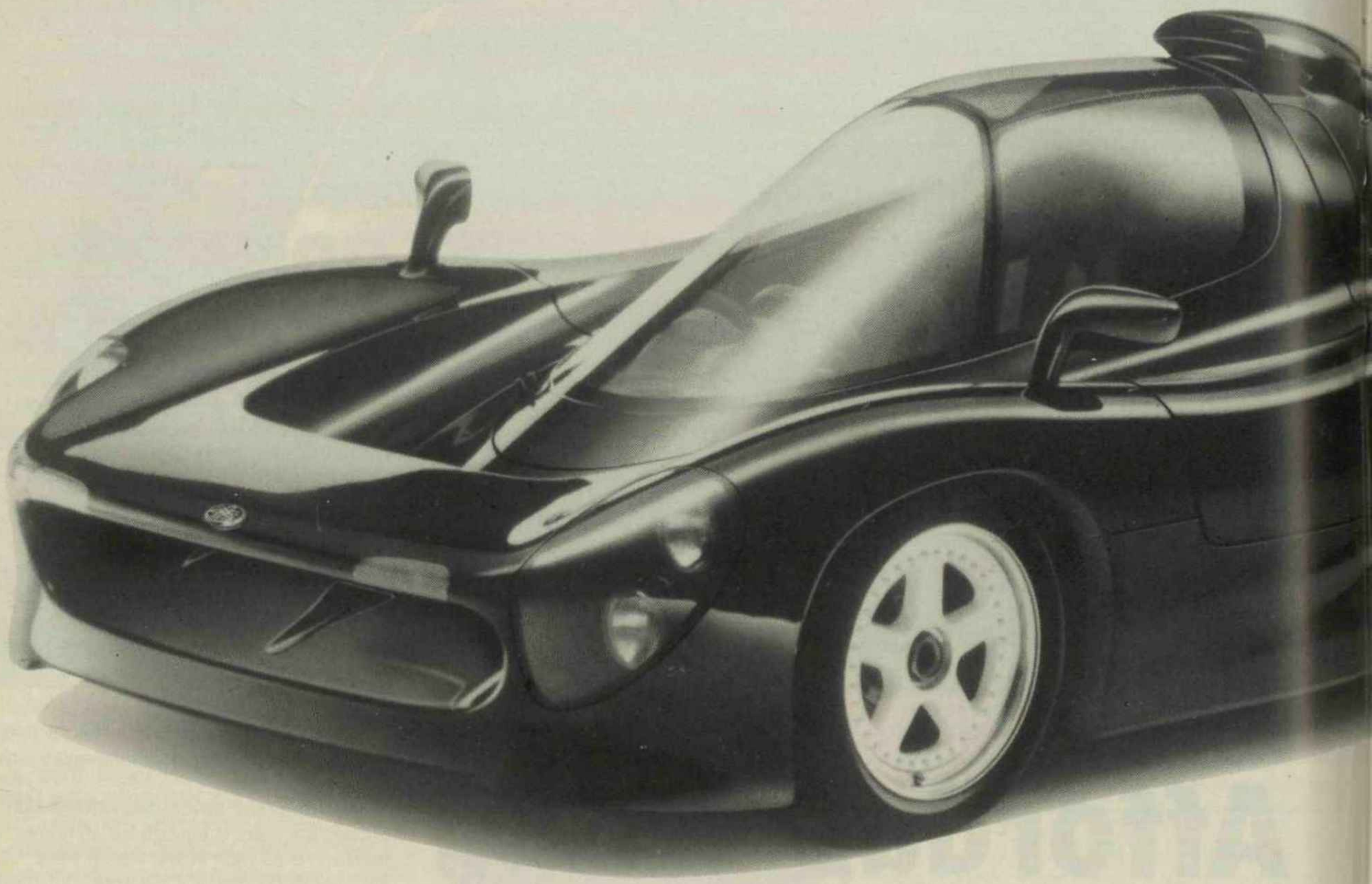
The machine ran jerkily in town traffic, although it did not reach the point of stalling. Whilst we recorded 34.9 mpg in country usage, we would expect closer to the Fiat figure of 24.6 urban mpg to be the truth on cheaper unleaded fuels. Highly commended were the balancer shaft twin-cam motor and a remote but slick gear selector operating notably close ratios.

The Tipo 16v never overwhelms with its power, but there is enough for an honest 130 mph and 0-60 mph in less than 8.5 sec. Utilising over 6000 rpm is a pleasure, but there is also plenty of pulling power from 2000 rpm in top. As a five-door, the Fiat proved exceptionally roomy and usable. It is also more comfortable than its rivals, yet remains composed under extreme pressure and proved a pleasure to conduct, whether shopping or indulging in fully orchestrated operatics. **J W**



The Tipo 16v is a welcome, though late, arrival in the UK.

Pointless durch Technik?



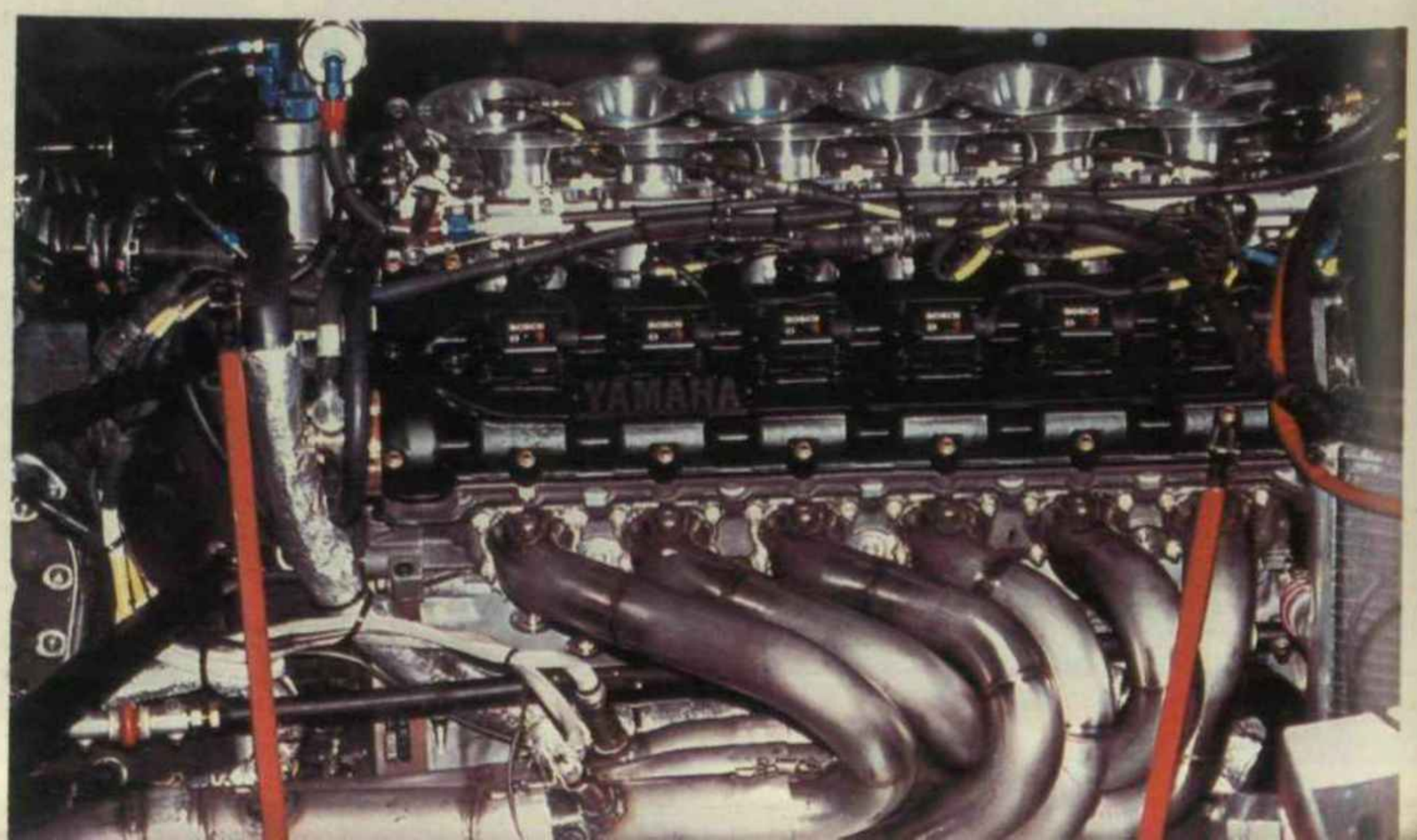
What does the automotive world really, *really* need right now? Cheap to produce, economical cars comprising recycled materials, powered by efficient, low emission engines? That's one school of contemporary thought. Seems even a 1.1 Fiesta is too toxic for some people.

Personally, I believe that there has, eventually, to be a compromise which will allow cars to perform in a manner capable of satisfying those with a penchant for fast driving whilst at the same time running on carrot juice. If everyone were to drive around in a four-seater milk float, life on the road would become a touch dull.

Don't ask me how any of this may be achieved. To this day it remains a mystery that I ever passed my chemistry O-level.

What I *do* know is that impressive technological statements such as the Porsche 959, Ferrari F40 and new Bugatti are all very well for those with a bank balance the size of Brazil's national debt, but they make no sense in a modern driving context. The only place you could feasibly pull 200mph in Britain would be up the M1 at around three in the morning (though the M50 is quieter . . .); even in derestricted Germany, the volume of traffic is such that speeding Porsches and S-Class Mercs have to lift off once in a while to allow Helmut Public room to manoeuvre his Kadett in safety.

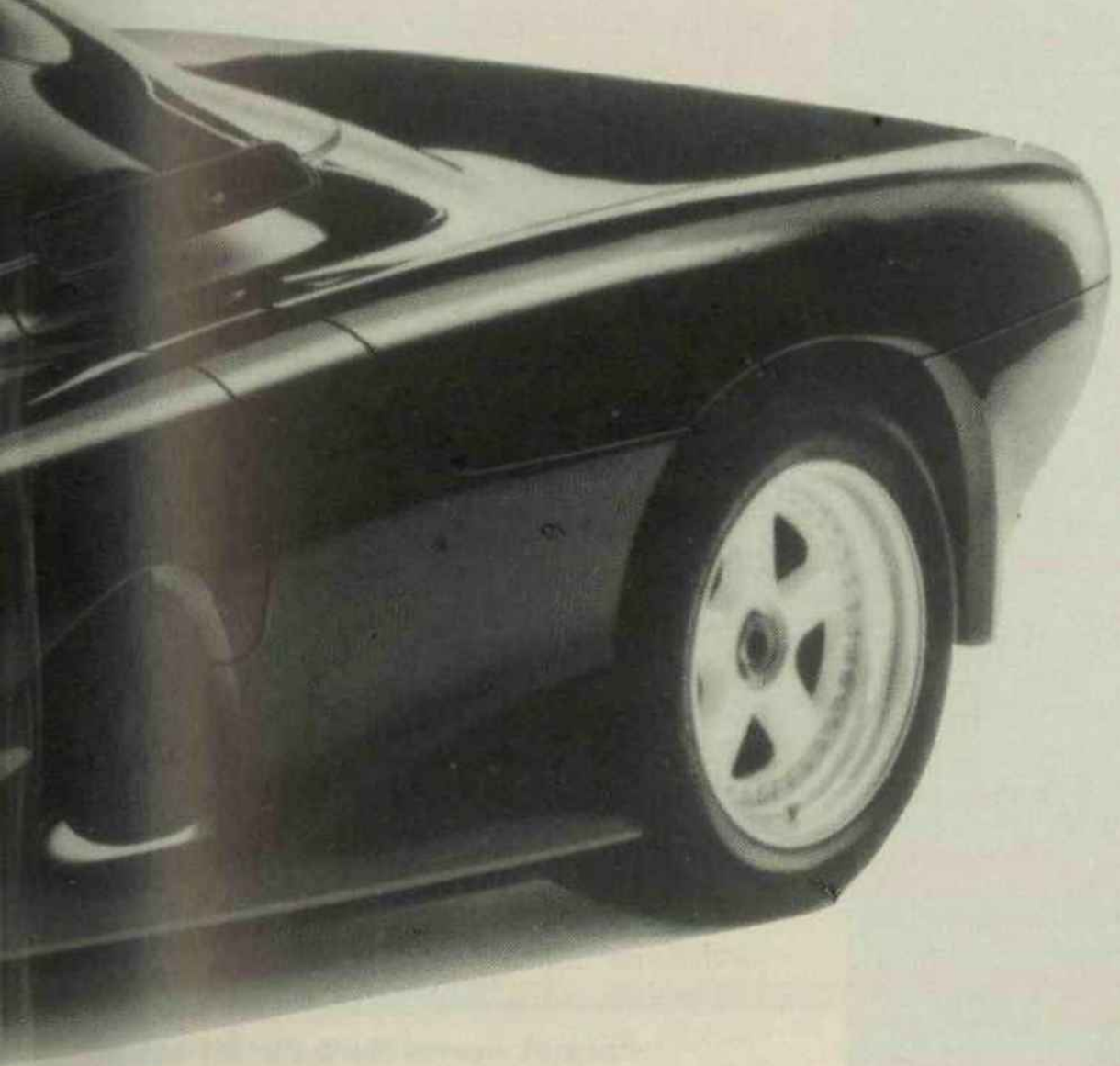
Despite the worldwide recession, however, a trickle of impractical



The OX99 engine has seen F1 service with Brabham, and is destined for the Jordan team in 1992.

supercars continues to emerge. The McLaren F1, complete with anticipated £500,000 price tag, is expected to be shown to the world before the summer. The Yamaha OX99-11, subject of a surprise press announcement late in December, likewise.

Yamaha, which has been at the forefront of World Championship motorcycling since the mid '60s, has not put its name to a car before, and managed to keep its first such project remarkably quiet. It has produced engines for Toyota in the past (the first collaboration, in 1966, produced the 2000GT, and nowadays it concentrates mainly on high-performance twin-



cam units for sporting hatchbacks), and also designed the V6 which powers Ford's SHO Taurus in the States. Future plans include volume engine production for both manufacturers, but senior managing director Takehiko Hasegawa stresses that Yamaha has *no* plans to enter the frantic mass-volume production game as a manufacturer in its own right.

Instead, it is happy to concentrate for the time being on a limited production run (50 units per annum) of an exceptionally high-performance sports car, drawing on the experience it has gained producing racing engines for F2, F3000 and – latterly – F1. Until the McLaren appears, the OX99-11 looks set to be the closest thing to an F1 car for the road. It is powered by the same OX99 engine that will see service in the Jordan 192, and which performed with occasional distinction in the Brabhams of Mark Blundell and Martin Brundle throughout 1991.

For the moment, Yamaha won't divulge its performance forecasts, any questions relating thereto being deflected by the response: "It will be adequate." That much we could probably have figured for ourselves. Although the engine, which will be catalysed, won't be running in an F1 state of tune, it is still likely to churn out around 600bhp. The factory was claiming 700 by the close of the last GP season.

As for the seating arrangement, the driver will be located centrally, in line with single-seater traditions. There will be a vestigial passenger seat directly behind. Interestingly, McLaren road car project leader Gordon Murray produced a tandem seating arrangement in the motorcycle-powered Rocket two-seater which was unveiled last year . . .

Continuing the F1 way of thinking, the OX99-11 features a six-speed transverse gearbox and a carbon-fibre monocoque chassis, onto which is draped a set of hand-crafted aluminium body panels.

The car will be built in Britain, at the Milton Keynes factory of Ypsilon, a Yamaha subsidiary. The plan at the moment is to market it only in Europe, though the proliferation (relatively speaking) of Jaguar XJR-15s and F40s in Japan leads us to believe that more than a few OX99-11s will make it to the Far East as personal imports.

Price? That, like the performance, remains a secret for the moment. Given the specification, it will inevitably resemble a long-distance telephone number.

S A

TVR TVR TVR



Presidential support

Along with most prestige manufacturers, Porsche has found the going tough of late. Here Arno Bohn, president since March 1990, expresses optimism for the future, in the face of scepticism on the part of his interrogator

Porsche is not alone in finding the business of selling expensive motor cars increasingly tough. Jaguar at Coventry could not independently have survived its current commercial woes, and so it is natural to question the independent future of Porsche and the nature of products it intends to provide to secure a life without the sort of safety net provided by a proud potential parents such as Mercedes-Benz or Volkswagen-Audi.

To answer such queries, the current president and chief executive officer of Porsche AG, 44 year-old Arno Bohn, has been flying a number of missions to the sales markets with the largest problems to reassure media (and, through them, the bewildered dealers) that Porsche intends to remain robustly independent in the business of making high-performance sports cars.

Porsche's basic pitch is that it is in a unique aspect of the motor business and its ownership is also unique amongst majors in that it retains family control. Leaving aside mass production dynasties such as the Ford family and Agnelli at Fiat, we can report that 8666 workers made 26,486 Porsches in the 1990/91 financial year. Despite significant volume losses (15.2 per cent in production, nearly 30 per cent export loss), Bohn is confident of the future because turnover, and profitability, remain high.

Partially, this was because expensive 911 derivatives such as the Turbo and RS types began to sell in this period, but that is far from the sole reason why Porsche was able to survive the potentially disastrous switch from 944 to 968, along with the switch from Audi's Neckarsulm line to in-house production at Zuffenhausen.

What is not apparent, and was not clearly defined by Bohn (save to confirm that it is enormously profitable, compared to conventional car building activities), is the immense strength of the independent research and development facility at Weissach. Naturally, no client list was forthcoming, but we have seen for ourselves that everyone from SEAT to Rolls-Royce does take advantage of Weissach to the point at which one Scandinavian manufacturer appeared totally dependent upon Porsche for a future engine programme.

The first question centred on the number of dealerships the company could support in Britain, the case of Roger Clark Porsche (deceased) in Leicestershire being cited to spark discussion. It now appears that Britain will be served by slightly *fewer* dealers than before, but any replacements will probably operate in different sales areas to their fallen predecessors; currently there are 30 such outlets in the UK, where there were 38.

The bespectacled Mr Bohn, at ease in the standard issue German business suit, commented on the slow sales patterns, pointing out that some markets were now more successful than before. Porsche sold an extra 19.7 per cent to the home market and Japan is threatening the USA in terms of export sales.

Porsche traded on 60.6 per cent export sales in 1990/91, a drop of 28.7 per cent over the previous financial year. But Bohn is undaunted, declaring that Porsche could now be profitable on smaller volumes, certainly as low as 25,000 units per annum. Besides, the 968 is coming on production stream in Germany (on



The new 968, which will increase Porsche's production volume, is due in Britain this spring.

sale in the UK this spring) to boost the volume of Porsche's output.

A German market price for the 911 is quoted as 120,000 deutschmarks (approximately £41,811 at the time of the interview), whilst the 968 is sold at home for DM89,000 (an extra DM10,000 for the cabrio), equivalent to £31,010 in the first case.

At this point the predicted British price of £40,000 for the 968 was brought up for discussion and Porsche GB's managing director Peter Bulbeck heatedly denied that this figure was to be regarded as definitive (although it was widely quoted on the international 968 press launch by a PR representative who has since been victim of a round of corporate redundancies), leading to hopes that the 1992 figure will indeed be under 40 grand.

Whatever the price of a British market 968, it will still be a substantial step away from the days when the company offered the 924 and cheaper 944s. Bohn was questioned vigorously on the rumoured company project to "sell a more accessible Porsche" and he responded in kind, stamping firmly on any ideas of a baby brother to 911 along the old 356 lines. "That car was too expensive to make then, never mind now," was the consensus of insider opinion. However, "a simplified 968" does seem to interest Weissach, as does a full four-seater.

President Bohn denied that they would build anything along the lines of a four-door 928, but did discuss the inspiration they had drawn from the deal with Mercedes-Benz to develop and build shorter runs of "very high quality" cars for others. This was defined as under 10,000 units, and the practical result had been the awesome 500E saloon (five-litre V8, 326 bhp).

The impression left is still that Porsche intends to replace the slow-selling 928 with a four-seater coupé. As to how that will look, Bohn's insistence is that all future Porsches are developed along a corporate 'round eye' headlamp appearance with an air of 911 styling. This will contrast with Japan's present preference for narrower 'eyes' and aerodynamic wedge profiles, which Bohn rightly feels are indistinguishable from each other. The vehicle nominated for most 'clone' concern was the 1985-91 Mazda RX-7 rotary, which has just been changed into a serious 911 competitor at 255 bhp . . .

Other hostile questions to be dealt with by Bohn concerned the public failure in CART of the Porsche V8 and in Formula 1 of the V12-engined Footwork, as discussed in November's MOTOR SPORT by David Tremayne.

Did these competition failures affect the company commercially? Bohn responded: "We find only 15 per cent of our customers watch sport on TV, and many of those do not know the difference between American and European single-seaters. In the case of CART, we were the victims of rule changes from the organisers that made our chassis less competitive overnight.

"In Formula 1, we thought it would take three years to win anyway. Obviously both these programmes did not help us, but we remain committed to motorsports and will have a completely new strategy ready by next spring. At this moment I cannot say if this will concentrate on Formula 1 or sports cars, or what it will be."

As an aside it was confirmed that promotions such as the Porsche Carrera Cup will continue, the company quandary in motorsports being restricted to the major international programme it should adopt. Bohn also stressed that they would not be building any roadgoing supercar derivative of the legendary 962. "It would cost 50 million deutschmarks to do all the crash-testing and environmental things we must do as a manufacturer." It was also evident that Herr Bohn thought that such 962 development would compromise the racer so much in road guise "that it would be unrecognisable."

At this crucial moment in Porsche company history the opportunity to discuss, sometimes heatedly, the company's current problems and future plans was much valued. Yet the writer left the table wondering why Porsche, perhaps *the* synonym for pedigree sports motoring, was not guided by a man with a similar performance pedigree (his previous career was with Nixdorf, in the computer world)? In this business Porsche rather arrogantly recognises no European contemporaries – not Ferrari, nor Lotus, nor Renault-Alpine, just Porsche alone to pit its wealthy wits against the wicked Japanese.

What we were told seemed to have more to do with anti-Japanese sentiment than providing superior products – specialist cars to fit the needs of a clientele which is in any case different to the bulk of those attracted by the multi-level, high output assault from the Far East. **JW**

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LATEST SUCCESSES

Ealing and District M.C.C. London-Holyhead Trial, May 16th and 17th, 1924.

A Standard 14 h.p. Ansaldo Car, driven by Rex G. Mundy, won a **Gold Medal** and the **Maude's 50 Guinea Challenge Shield** for **Best Performance.**

Herts County A. & A.C. Hill Climb at Aston Clinton, May 17th, 1924.

In the class for Sporting Cars of **unlimited cubic capacity,** R. F. Oats, on a 14 h.p. Ansaldo Car, was placed **first** on formula and **second** on time.

For 1924, the Ansaldo's importers were stressing the car's performance and the safety of four-wheel brakes.

Ansaldo

In trying to decide which make to feature this month I thought of the Maxwell, but I expect you have had quite enough of that name for the time being.! So having dealt with the Diatto, let's take a look back at another Italian car, the Ansaldo.

Both makes had some things in common. Both came from Turin. Both had aspirations to go in for mass-production and tumble Agnelli's great Fiat empire. When overhead-camshaft engines were used, these each had extra cams to damp out valve-gear fluctuations; whether this was co-incidence or liason between the designers, I do not know. That neither make made any impact on Fiat domination does not surprise me. When I was in Italy some years ago I was reminded by a companion that the wine I had drunk the previous night was undoubtedly from a Fiat vinyard, that the newspaper I had been handed was run by Fiat, and that the hotel we were in was Fiat-owned. Later I was being taken from one factory to another by a Fiat driver, when he asked if I would like to see inside the new building that was in preparation for the Olympic Games. "Would it be allowed?" I questioned. "There will be no difficulty", replied my driver, "after all, it belongs to Fiat!" And of course, there wasn't...

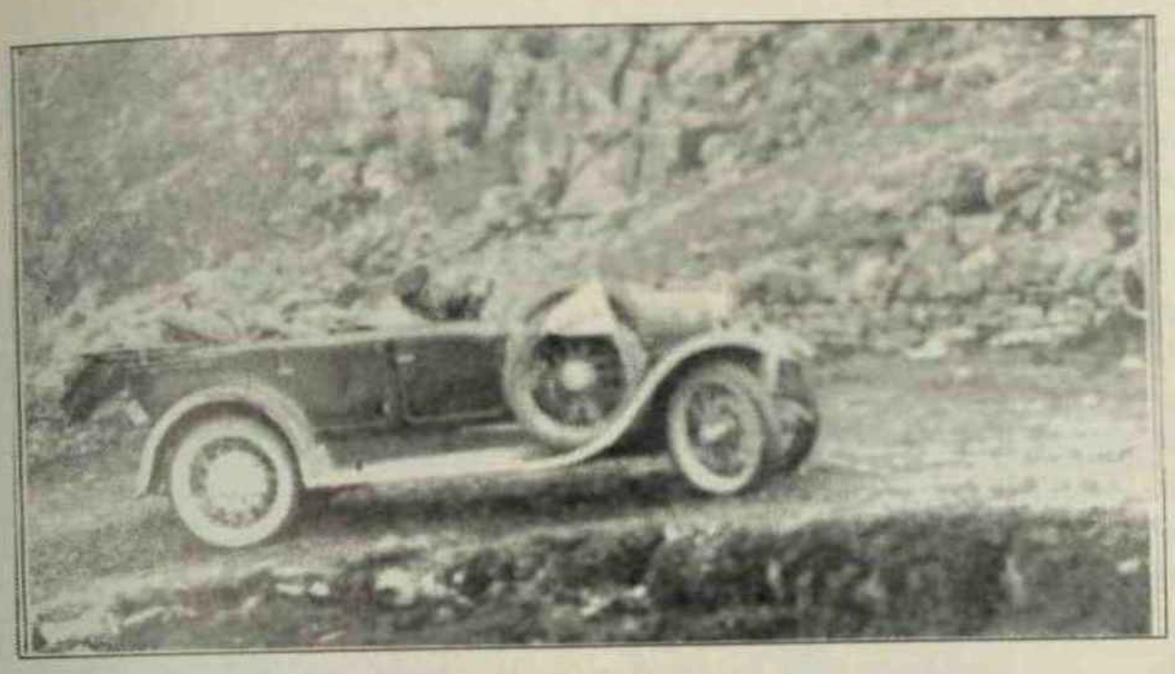
Ansaldo cars were made by what in 1918 represented one of Italy's biggest engineering concerns. During the war it had made aero-engines and when these were no longer needed for military purposes it was left with surplus capacity, and the mass-production of a popular car was the obvious answer. They engaged Ing Soria as the designer. He put an ohc power-unit into otherwise undistinguished cars. If the Ansaldo of 1918/19 resembled a Chevrolet and had only three centrally-controlled forward gears and wooden artillery wheels; it is said that you could wind it up to around 65mph. That from the first of the series, the Type 4A 1.8-litre tourer.

The Ansaldo achieved recognition in insular Great Britain sooner than did the Diatto. Why was that? I like to think that it stemmed from appearances in competition events quite soon after the make had been marketed. Tazio Nuvolari in only his second appearance as a car-participant was second in an Ansaldo, in the 2-litre class in the Circuit of Garda race of 1921, beaten only by the other Ansaldo driver, Corrado Lotti. Nuvolari was not yet the immortal figure he was to become, to car folk, although successful on motorcycles. Nor would these and other Ansaldo successes have had much impact on the English, in spite of their weekly motor journals keeping them informed of such excitements, when you might have expected them to devote such space to articles on how to drive and maintain the new play-things of the post-war period. It was, I suggest, more likely that the Ansaldo became known here through its appearances in our speed-trials and hill-climbs that were then more easily understood by new and would-be car owners.

The successes in such competitions and in those far-distant Continental races and hill-climbs were owed to the next Ansaldo model, the 1980cc Type 4CS, which retained an overhead-camshaft engine. With it, at Leghorn, Lotti won the Montonero Cup race of 1921, took a class victory at Mugello, and was successful in an Ansaldo at the Consuma and Guan-Moncenisio speed hill-climbs the following year. Indeed, in such far-away places these cars won more honours when driven by Palte, Marinoni, Lazzaroni and Bacchetti in the years up to the 1930s.

English followers of the sport would have been more aware of the way in which Bentley drivers Barlow, Ivy Cummings, ES Mayers, HD Coates, who vanquished Cyril Paul's famous Beardmore and Keen's fast Morris at Caerphilly in 1923, and W Dickie, whose Ansaldo took one time win and two formula wins at Kop Hill that season, performed. RF Oats, later to become the respected OM concessionaire and racing driver, was second fastest to the Beardmore at Thundersley hill climb, and this same driver defeated two Bugattis at South Harting, with a fastest ascent in 29.8 sec, only 0.6 sec. slower than Humphrey Cool's Vauxhall, which was second-best to Dario Resta in a GP Sunbeam. Such performances brought Ansaldo to the attention of the sporting public, especially as Oats ran his very frequently, beaten mostly only by the Beardmore and, at Brighton speed-trials along the Madeira Drive, by Joyce's single-seater AC that scored so many FTDs. At that last public road speed hill-climb, at Kop near Princes Risborough in 1925, Oats' Ansaldo was third quickest, beaten only by Segrave in one of the 2-litre 1924 GP Sunbeams and Giveen driving Mays's Brescia Bugatti "Cordon Bleu", which ran off the road, broke a spectator's leg, and caused the RAC to ban such events from then on.

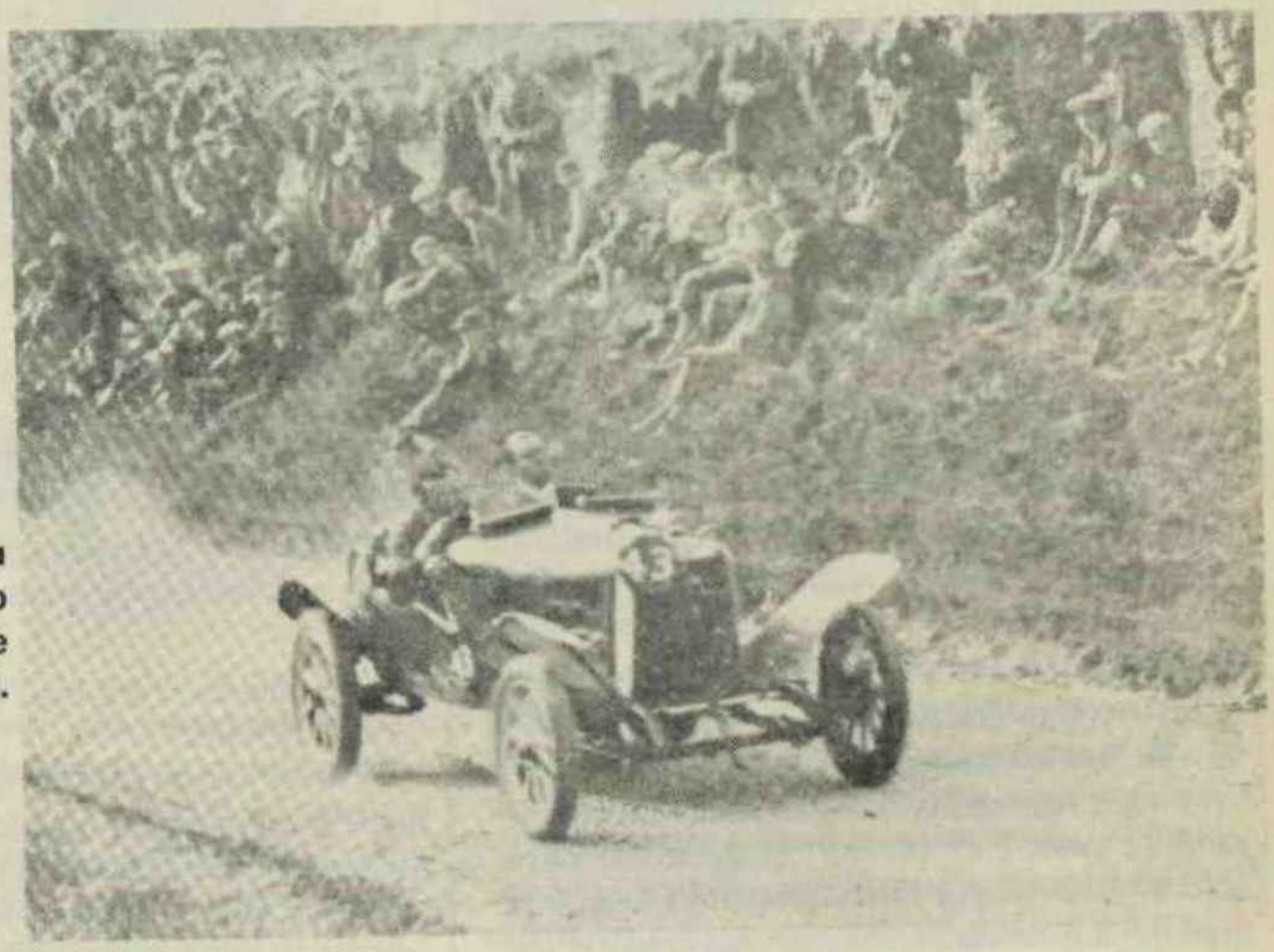
Down at Brooklands the public, who were flocking there in increasing numbers, would have seen a red 2-litre Ansaldo driven by none other than millionaire Capt Woolf Barnato. This was a 70 mph car in normal form; at the 1922 Whitsun race Barnato's went round at just less than



A standard 2-litre Ansaldo during its road-test for the Brooklands Gazette in 1924.

80mph in winning the 75mph Long Handicap, in which it finished ahead of a Hampton and a Crouch, before the steeplechase jockey/racing driver George Duller took it on in 1923. And Rex Mundy, the KLG plugs representative, did well in trials with an Ansaldo.

This must have pleased Watkins & Doncaster Ltd of Great Portland Street, who had the Ansaldo agency and who exhibited the cars at the 1921 London Motor Show, with a 70mph guarantee for the sports two-seater. At that time the standard Ansaldo had a 70mm bore (1847cc) and the tourer sold for £550. Compare this with the Austin Twelve at the same price, and which many English motorists preferred, £595 asked for a Talbot-Darracq 12, £620 for the 11.4hp Humber, and £725 for the Sunbeam 14 tourer. The Ansaldo was more advanced than these, with its ohc engine, the camshaft driven by a vertical shaft and skew gears at the front of the block, operating slightly-inclined valves through rockers, the rocker-shaft above the camshaft receiving oil from the main pump-fed supply. The head was detachable and a cross-shaft drove the magneto and water pump. A Westinghouse generator was driven from the nose of the crankshaft. The brake pedal operated on the back wheels, the lever on the transmission, but very soon front brakes were standardised, some time before they became commonplace. The wheelbase was nine feet and the tyres on the steel wheels 765 X 105.



RF Oats was a frequent Ansaldo competitor. Here he attacks Kop Hill.

In the winter of 1921 a test car was available and at Brooklands it covered the mile at 48mph although the engine was not fully run-in, climbed the Test Hill at 13.35mph, and Kingston Hill in the 4.5 to 1 top gear. It was regarded as a comfortable, practical car, rather more spacious than many cars of £13 tax-rating, and the power was there, although like other Italian cars, the Ansaldo was over-cooled, which had a deleterious effect on the Zenith carburettor in the cold weather, even with a blanking plate on the rather American-shaped radiator. A three-speed gearbox was to hamper the sports models to some extent and the tourer weighed just over 19cwt 2grs.

The dashboard petrol tank, which held 8½ gallons, was apt to drum (the mpg was 20 to 25), the steering was light, the clutch and gear change easy to use, and the foot brake pulled the car up sharply on the downhill 1-in-4 Brooklands Test Hill. Criticisms were the tall hand-brake (both levers were central) being set a little too close to the passenger, and that the speedometer, on the left of the dash, could be obscured by the passenger's coat, an important point in those days of a 20mph speed-limit and frequent police traps.

Later *The Times* had a stab, finding the three-bearing engine with its aluminium pistons, said to produce 36bhp at 2900rpm, flexible, but objecting to the inter-connected throttle and ignition, which was later to be replaced by automatic advance-and-retard. The 13hp model was soon known as the 13-40hp, and the wheelbase had been increased to 9ft 10in. A 65 x 100mm six-cylinder ohc engine was available in much the same chassis, known as the 18-50hp Ansaldo, the bore later enlarged by 3mm, giving a capacity of 2180cc. With a 13-45hp car *The Times* got up Dashwood hill near Oxford at 13mph in top gear and ascended Amersham hill at 32mph in second gear.

Various minor improvements kept the Ansaldo up to date, the straight-cut back-axle gears were replaced by Gleason spiral bevels, prices came down, and some fine bodywork was put on these chassis, of both English and Weymann fabric types. All of which seems to have profited the British Concessionaires, who by 1923 had moved to fashionable Albemarle Street, in London's West End. Coil ignition, with a vertical distributor replaced the magneto and 48bhp was extracted from the production 4CS. But Soria resigned in 1927, design deteriorated although luxury straight-eights were tried, and by 1932 sales had slumped. The end came when CEVA absorbed the automobile side, Fiat the aircraft plant of the Ansaldo armaments and engineering company.

W B

V to C Miscellany

●The Mercedes-Benz Club, which seems to enrol almost as many new members every month as the Rolls-Royce EC, and which claims to be the oldest club in the world for cars made by the oldest motor-manufacturer, is to celebrate its 40th Anniversary with a five-day rally in this country next June, sponsored by Mercedes-Benz (UK) Ltd, Castrol (UK) Ltd, and the German Wine Information Service. It will be open only to Benz, Cannstatt Daimler, Mercedes and Mercedes-Benz cars, but friends from the world's M-B clubs will be welcome. Entries close on February 1st, to Stan Smith, 2 Craighall Road, Sharples, Bolton, Lancs, BL1 7HH (0204-51973).

●It seems probable that those who read this section of MOTOR SPORT also enjoy *The Bulletin* of the VSCC (it would be tactless to speculate in which order) and when these sources of vintage inspiration have been exhausted, they might well turn to the *Chain Gang Gazette*, official magazine of the Frazer Nash CC — and it is debatable whether any single car has been more especially aimed at pure sporting and jollification motoring than the Frazer Nash. The December 1991 issue of this Gazette had a splendidly balanced piece by Barry Clarke about his Godfrey and Proctor pastiche, an enjoyably long article by W G Craddock about fun with GNs, and John Gott's account of three seasons rallying with his Le Mans Replica Frazer Nash, etc. We believe copies may be available to non-members, who should apply to Editor Brian Heath, Spring Cottage, 20 High Street, Milford-on-Sea, Hants, SO41 0QD.

●We are glad to learn that the AFN archives are safely stored at Henley-on-Thames, although the ambition to house them in the old Robin Jackson sheds at Brooklands has had to be abandoned. The Frazer Nash Group of companies has gone into receivership but John Aldington has registered Frazer Nash Ltd to promote and protect Frazer Nash history via the FN archives, which include works records, sales books, letters going back to 1924, etc, a complete list of GN and FN drivers and cars in BARC races from 1921 to 1939, with lap speeds, car colours and race numbers, compiled by WB, as well as trophies and other mementos. WB



Out of the past

Reading the unpublished *mss* of a book written just after the last war by the late Ronnie Malcolm, I was reminded of what fun people had, not only in cars, but in the then-carefree pursuit of private flying, in the days before Hitler changed most of that. A keen frequenter of Brooklands, Malcolm acquired the old racing ABC car which EC Gordon England had driven there, including in three JCC 200 Mile Races, for one of which he installed a Bristol "Cherub" light aeroplane engine, in order to lift it into the 1½-litre class, although this, the smallest of the aero-engined Brooklands cars, was still giving away some 280cc.

Ronnie Malcolm raced this ABC, its airship-like two-seater body in black and white stripes, in handicap races at Weybridge in 1925. He was now using an air-cooled flat-twin power-unit of a full 1493cc (89 x 120mm). A contempory account says this was one of Granville Bradshaw's ABC "Gnat" engines as used for unmanned flying targets during WW1 and for small aeroplanes like the Sopwith "Sparrow" and Grain "Kitten". However, the dimensions do not fit in at all, nor do they for the family of ABC and Bristol light-plane power-units that followed. So the origin of Malcolm's racing car engine remains a mystery.

The fact is that it gave sufficient speed (it could lap Brooklands at over 77mph) to net a third place at the Whitsun races, behind Dr Benjafield in his winning Salmson and Aldridge's 12/50 Alvis. The plump, cheery Ronnie Malcolm was racing as a private competitor, being a junior clerk in the City, learning the family business. Early in 1927 he replaced motor-racing with private flying, after some friends and he had discovered that the flying clubs were being subsidised to train pilots. After a Dry Martini session in the Cocktail Bar of the Branksome Towers Hotel in Bournemouth, three letters with the requisite fees were posted to the London Aeroplane Club, which was giving flying lessons at Stag Lane, Edgware, where de Havilland aeroplanes were then made, in a couple of Cirrus-1 Moths.

At first Malcolm took his lessons at week-ends. But it seemed a good idea to put in some time in the air during the week. This was contrived by driving rapidly to Stag Lane four days a week, in a lunch hour extended by a little co-operation from the other clerks and making use of the delays involved by taking shipping documents to the Port of London Authority! Half-an-hour's tuition could be enjoyed during one lunch "hour" . . . Soon it was time for the first solo flight. There is a splendid tale of how Malcolm had taken a girl-friend to a night club, her parents thinking they were at a dance at a private house, and finding his Instructor there, with another girl. The Instructor not wishing his wife to know of this gave Malcolm the chance of a little blackmail, and his first solo was duly arranged the next morning, before the weather broke.

The next hurdle was the A-licence test. All the Instructors being busy, Capt Geoffrey de Havilland himself agreed to observe it. Malcolm, being a heavy man, found that it took ages for the 60hp Cirrus-Moth to attain the stipulated height. He then set about returning to earth, for the dead-stick landing within a prescribed area of ground. He had noticed as he took-off that Capt de Havilland had gone into the workshops, so hoped his surreptitious throttle-openings for the final 100 feet or so of his descent and a couple of bumps on landing would go unseen! He duly got his licence but the Captain told him later that his performance had been observed, through the workshop windows. This may have been an example of de Havilland's kind and understanding nature, but one imagines he had an interest in the Club which used his aeroplanes, and the more pupils who passed their test the better . . .

Soon after this, air-racing superceded motor-racing. Ronnie Malcolm's first visit to the Ensbury Park meetings at Bournemouth was done crammed into the front seat of a Club Moth with the golf-clubs and suitcase of the pilot who was flying it, none other than Sydney St Barbe, who coped admirably with the strong head wind, low cloud, and rain that had persisted all the way. But they were glad to be down! For the next meeting another Instructor flew Malcolm down, lunch being taken on the way, at Worthy Down, with some RAF friends. In the races, of the round-the-pylons variety, they had just taken off and were half-way round a turn when the engine cut out, almost over the Press building, at about 200 feet. The pilot was left facing two hangars and in the limited space between these and the Mess he glided in to hit the brick arch of the hangar wall. The Moth bounced off the tarmac, writing off its undercarriage, which came through the floor and hit Malcolm on the ankle. The aeroplane then hit the arch again, to fall to the ground and catch fire. Two RAF pilots got the occupants out. Both spent a pleasant week recovering in Bournemouth.

To advertise the Ensbury races machines were encouraged to fly along the sea-front to increase attendance in the afternoon. Malcolm was taken on one of these flights in an Avro 504K with 130hp Clerget rotary engine. Just as they had cleared a fence the engine began to cough and Ronnie was told to pump up fuel pressure with the hand-pump. When he stopped from exhaustion, the engine promptly stopped! Not only was his suit ruined by the castor oil blown back into the front cockpit but even when pumping hard, as they returned to the aerodrome, the Clerget began to fail just as the boundary fence had been cleared. Had they been over the sea a dip would have been inevitable.

On another occasion a well-known pilot had been unable to race his machine, a rare French SECM biplane with a 300hp Hispano Suiza V8 engine, due to a leaking radiator. After this had been dealt with, using soap and chewing-gum, Malcolm went with him in the side-by-side-seater

cockpit, back to Hendon. This Spad-like aeroplane had a poor take-off and a high landing speed. They only just cleared the boundary fence and then, over the New Forest, the pilot shouted to his passenger to turn on the oil tap behind the dash, which he had overlooked before take-off. It proved both stiff and inaccessible but by leaving the aeroplane to its own devices it was shifted at last. Over Hendon the pilot demonstrated a patent anti-stall device, a piston on the stick being supposed to push this out of the pilot's hands if he moved it back too far. Of course, it failed to function, and the SCEM stalled and spun. It came out at the last moment, and the hard landing burst a tyre, the resultant swing bending the axle. As the owner was fed up with it and there were no spares, the aeroplane was left to rot in some far corner, this presumably being its last flight.

The pylon-racing at Endbury was full of incidents: the police had to intervene when an irate farmer shot at a Blackburn "Bluebird" with a 12-bore. The well-known Brooklands pilot Dudley Watt flew his old Hispano Suiza-engined SE5a, on one occasion having to exert such force to avert a collision at a turn that he stretched the aileron cables, and had to finish the race with sloppy controls. These Endsbury Park meetings were cancelled after an accident in which the passenger in a DH37a had been killed and later a collision between a Bluebird I and a Widgeon III killed both pilots; this ground, where the Hon C S Rolls had died flying in 1910, was closed and is now a housing estate.

Malcolm having decided on a flying career, he wanted his own aeroplane. His family put up the money and he bought from an RAF pilot a Boulton & Paul P9, delivered to Stag Lane. This ancient two-bay, two-seater biplane had a 90hp RAF V8 engine which blew oily mist over the occupants from its large 4-bladed propeller. It had no trimming device and was best flown from the front seat. It cost £200 and was, I believe, the only one of its kind, used from 1919 by the maker's sales department. It could do 103mph but a heavy landing could bend the axle carrying the large wheels with high-pressure tyres, and a carburettor flat-spot made the take-off exciting. A morning would sometimes be wasted in trying to start it, traced eventually to a cracked cylinder. So the P9 was sold for what it cost to a keen chap who flew it to St Moritz for the winter sports, landing on a frozen lake. How it cleared the mountains *en route* remains a mystery and it is believed to have crashed into some fir trees and been left for firewood.

After this Malcolm joined the RAFVR, completing a training course on Renault-Avro 504Ks, Cirrus II Moths and DH9s and 9Js. One of the pilots knew the Duchess of Bedford and flew into her landing strip in Woburn Park, a trip involving difficult departures in the DH9Js, chased by wild animals, after she had met them in her aged Rolls-Royce. There is a story, possibly apocryphal, of a Bristol Fighter force-landing in the bisons' enclosure. The pilot and navigator climbed a tree to safety and were rescued by a steam-roller, onto which they climbed while the bison, which later demolished the aeroplane, blistered their noses on the hot parts of the roller . . .

Ronnie Malcolm now joined the Sales Staff of the DH Company, private flying having truly taken off. He had his own Cirrus II Moth (G-EBNC), later replaced by a new Gipsy I Moth (G-AAA1). The latter was eventually sold to Misr-Airwork in Cairo and when flying home from India by KLM, Malcolm broke his journey to borrow it for a visit to the Pyramids. During this time pub-crawls by air were popular! One such visit would be to the "Lambert Arms" on the Oxford road, the proprietor of which raced a 30/98 at Brooklands. Two fields were useable, one involving a low approach and a take-off over 'phone wires, the other the opposite procedure. A river pub near Sutton Courtney was another attraction, but a haystack in the middle of the private owner's field could be a hazard; one pilot taxi-ed into it while doing up his harness and, his propeller broken, had to be flown three-up in a Moth back to Stag Lane.

The "East Arms" on the Henley-Oxford road had a field calling for some skill, as it was on a slope and approached by a hill fringed with tall trees. You side-slipped in, but one pilot of a Simmonds Spartan left this too late and a lorry had to take the wreck home. The "White Hart" at Sonning had a good field three-quarters-of-a-mile away, used until its owner protested. The "Quarry Inn" on the Thames near Bourne End had an excellent field behind it, if you did not mind taking off beneath 'phone-wires before climbing away, and coming in on a turning sideslip to avoid the hill to the West. A Moth once hit a cow there and had to return to Stag Lane with one wheel missing but the owner of a Mew Gull would do a last-minute swerve and finish up with the hotel wall four feet from his wing tip.

In those carefree days the owner of the "Fountain" at Bletchley on the A1 advertised a small field up the road and provided transport to and from it, but with little lift in the air three Moths, in clearing the high hedge, brushed the surrounding trees. The "Hinds Head" at Bray was also visited by air and if you use any of these hotels it might be worth a glance around, to see if any of these impromptu landing-grounds remain . . .

When war came Ronnie Malcolm flew with ATA, but that is another story. And if any readers find this aviation intrusion unpalatable, may I remind them that at one time MOTOR SPORT's title page bore the slogan "Land-Air-Water"!

W B

Enstone Results

Last month's VSCC Enstone report was done before the results were available. For the record, here they are: There were 17 non-starters and D Marsh (Bugatti), P Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash), A Felthouse (A7), J Brewster (A7), and B Collings (Bentley) failed to complete the tests. **First Class Awards** were won by W Mahany (HRG), R Wills (FN-BMW), R Smith (MG), M Hewson (MG),and A Hall (A7). **Second Class Awards** by P Bullett (A7), M Parkin (A7), B Bowles (MG), R Winder (A7), P Glover (Alvis), C Marsh (Bugatti), and R Nice (A7), **Third Class Awards** by R Threlfall (A7), R Daint (A7), J Marsh (A7), P Livesey (A7), W Mahany (HRG), D Robinson (Riley), T Gosling (A7), A Van Deneynde (Lagonda), B Harcourt-Smith (Alvis), D Lee (Salmson) and H Moffatt (Bugatti). Best saloon; P Rosoman (A7), Best tourer; P Nun (Riley), Best light-car; A Marsh (A7). **W B**

As the number of 4WD Fords in use is ever increasing, I thought it opportune to relate to how the twin-cam 2-litre XR five-door hatchback I have been driving is faring. The significant thing is that there is nothing to report! Just as the previous XR 4WD Sierra with the 2.8-litre V6 engine notched up over 42,000 miles with not an iota of trouble, not as much as a blown lamp bulb, so this smaller-engined Sierra is proving equally reliable at 18,223 miles.

It went into a local Ford dealer's for repairs, admittedly. But only because the woman driver of a little FSO pulled out from a lay-by without looking and clobbered us, an approaching car making it impossible for me to give her as much room as I wished to. "Oh", was her response, "I have caused a few scratches". Both the near-side doors had to be replaced, at a cost to the insurance firms involved of some £700. I lost the use of the car for nearly two weeks, during which time I was hired an Escort 1.6 LX, which had impossibly heavy manual steering and a noisy engine, at a cost of some £400. There was the waste of time and petrol going to a Main Ford Agent to have the repairs assessed and then the work done.

What I find so annoying is that a driver who causes such an unnecessary accident gets away completely scot-free, if the police are not involved, apart from perhaps losing his or her no-claims bonus. On the 'knock-for-knock' system, all our insurance premiums will presumably increase as a result of such carelessness. But the perpetrator does not even incur licence penalty-points, as others may do for exceeding a speed-limit by a few mph or for incidents in which bad luck, rather than bad driving, are the cause.

Ford service is good as a rule, so I was rather surprised that the Sierra was declared ready for collection before the damaged body rubbing-strips had been replaced (apparently the Main Dealer had forgotten to order them or else Ford had not sent them to him), one new door-seal was faulty, and the radio had not been re-coded.

The Ford's mechanicals have been 100% trouble-free, oil consumption alomst unbelievably moderate, and the performance and green-fuel economy perfectly satisfactory, by my present standards. In fact, my choice of future transport will be decidedly limited, because I must have four-wheel-drive, preferably on the convenient and fool-proof Ferguson system, ABS anti-lock anchorage, and a car no smaller than this accomodating and convenient Sierra.

Tyres have been a mild problem. The car was delivered on Uniroyal Rallyes, on which I understand testing and research of the Ford/Ferguson 4WD was carried out. Fine, until one of them developed a slow puncture, said to be caused by a rift in the sidewall. I sent it to Uniroyal for examination. One report said it had suffered damage at my hands, another that it was holding full pressure and would be returned for re-fitting to the car. It never materialised! Not liking to be without a spare, I settled for a Dunlop SP Sport D8 cover, the only make of the Sierra's size the local NTS depot had in stock. The off-side rear Uniroyal is now below the new legal-minimum 1.6mm, so two new back tyres will be required, and new front tyres not all that long afterwards. The previous 4WD Fords have worn out their front tyres first; the Twin-cam Sierra's o/s rear was illegal, the n/s rear down to 2mm, the n/s front to 4mm, the o/s front to 2mm. Summing-up — no complaints; full marks, Ford!

W B

Conundrums

Motor-racing history is littered with puzzles for historians to try to unravel and just recently quite a number have surfaced, which readers may care to devote some thought to. After which, we may be able to have a discussion about them.

The article last December about the Jameson is a case in point. The chassis of this advanced supercharged two-stroke racing car was apparently that of one of the 2-litre V12 GP Delage team. The problem is, which one?

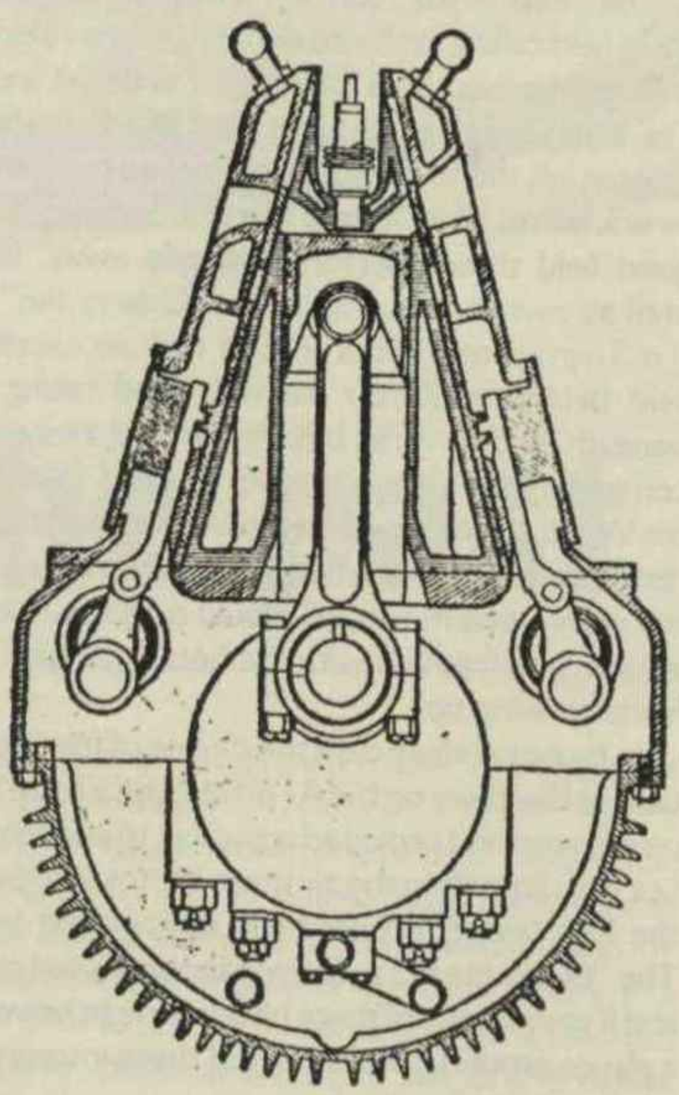
The Jameson problem does not rest there, however. I have been reminded that, apart from the racing car we described in which Sir Malcolm Campbell showed an interest, an earlier one was designed, perhaps built, for Earl Howe, although I do not think he ever raced it. It had a slide-valve two-stroke supercharged engine, as shown in the accompanying drawings, and one wonders if reference to a Jameson with a Bugatti chassis might have referred to this car? Prior to that, Jameson had run a rear-engined 500cc car in sprint events.

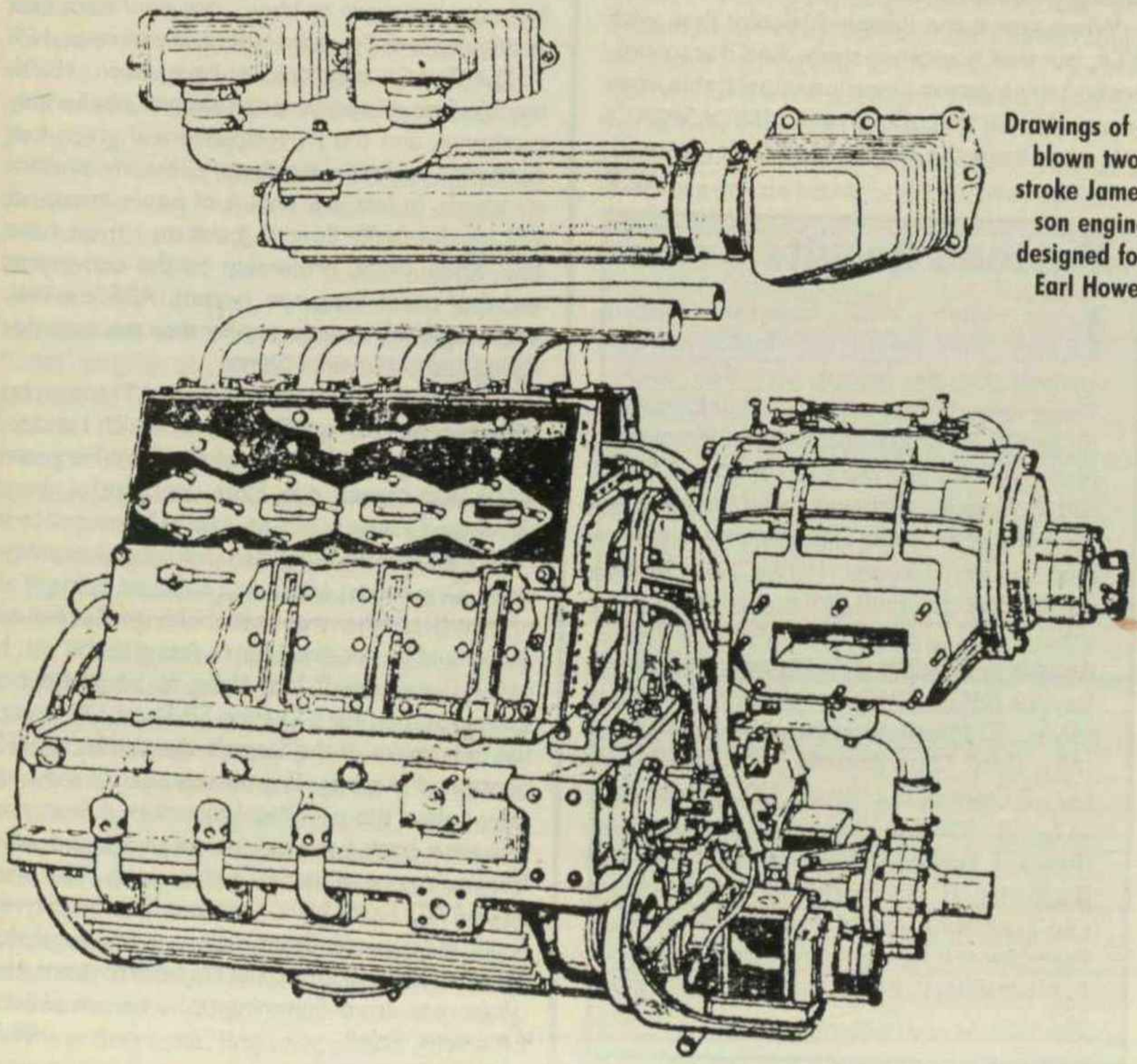
On the subject of engines, David Harrison, who owns that fine Edwardian racing Renault, has raised the matter of the exact size of the 1907 Kaiserpries Darracqs, the dimensions of which are variously quoted in Gerald Rose's usually authoritative record of early motor-racing as 140 x 130, 139.9 x 130 and 150 x 113mm. And as Mr Harrison points out, the first of these dimensions give an engine-capacity of 8005.8cc, which would surely not have been allowed in a race for cars not exceeding 8 litres?

Then I have been taken to task for calling the engine of the famous ex-Malcolm Campbell 350hp V12 Sunbeam a Manitou, in our recent "Too Big, Too Late" item. I did this so as not to confuse the issue, as the detailed antecedents of this 18,322cc car were not then in question. Anyhow, that is how it was described when the car first appeared, although later its creator, Louis Coatalen, admitted that it had been specially designed for the car and Anthony Heal's masterful book *Sunbeam Race Cars-1910-1930* (Foulis, 1989) goes into this and illustrates the three-valve-per-cylinder, two-plug head used, with valve-gear of the kind associated with the war-time Sunbeam Arab aero-engines.

The great and very successful Sunbeam made its initial appearance in anger in October 1920 but I believe it wasn't until he wrote a piece for the BARC Year Book in 1924 that Coatalen explained that the car had an engine with, as expected, a car-type crank-case and a direct-drive crankshaft. Prior to that it had been said that the car's engine had was "obviously the outcome of experience with aero-engine plants." But by the summer of 1920 The Autocar explained that the engine was not, "as had been erroneously stated", a 350hp aero-engine but one which had been specially designed for racing purposes, from racing experience, allied to the maker's knowledge of high power aero-designs gained during the war.

Thus Coatalen, who was fond of the supposition that "The racing-car of today is the touring-car of tommorrow", had the best of both worlds, with publicity for his automobile research and his aero-engine expertise! But why did he use a combination of Manitou and Arab for the car, with the number of valves-per-cylinder not being stated in early descriptions of it (the Manitou had four)? The not-so-very-successful Sunbeam Arab aero-engine was a vee-eight, so the cylinder heads could not have been used for V12 car, apt as Coatalen was at adopting anything that was handy in the factory. Perhaps it was simply that the Arab valve gear and head were better suited to a racing-car and by using wartime drawings the design-staff saved time? **W B**





Drawings of a blown two-stroke Jameson engine designed for Earl Howe.

Babs Saga

●Litigation over who is the legal owner of "Babs" (the LSR car in which Parry Thomas was killed at Pendine in 1927), Owen Wyn-Owen, who dug it up in 1969 and removed it from Pendine for restoration, or Pendine Council in whose area it was buried after the fatal accident, has been resolved.

The arrangement is that "Babs" is to live in the Welsh Industrial & Maritime Museum in Cardiff but return to Pendine for ten weeks each summer to attract tourism, Wyn-Owen to have access to it when he wants to exercise the famous car — so we hope it will be seen in action again, not too infrequently. Unfortunately, there appears to be disagreement between Pendine Community Council and Pendine District Council as to where "Babs" should be displayed at Pendine. Pendine Council wants the car in a building on the outskirts of the town, while the District Council is in favour of putting the car on display (for those ten weeks) in an extension of the Beach Hotel (where Parry Thomas stayed) and of extending the out-buildings to form a motor museum, conference centre, etc, at a cost of some £60,000.

The plan was to have had "Babs" back at Pendine by the summer of 1992. But at present there is wrangling between Carmathen District and County Councils over the £25,000 legal costs of having obtained partial ownership of "Babs". They were each to have put in a maximum of £10,000 but one Councillor has suggested only £2000 and another objected entirely. The matter has gone to the Financial Committee.

Never before has a racing car caused such a stir, extending over a period of nearly 65 years! **W B**

●The Salmson once owned by M Meo of GN memory, is now cared for by Salmson expert Chris Draper; it now has a San Sebastian engine and a body from an 18/100 MG.

●A recent letter about a Rhode car has reminded Lord Deramore that when he was "up" at Cambridge in 1929-32, a friend who was reading engineering was refurbishing one, the Reg No of which was OK 7185 and his Lordship wonders whether it has survived? Rhode history formed the "Forgotten Makes" feature in our November 1989 issue.

●The MGCC announces a one-day Seminar in St Neots when the T-Register will have four lectures on maintaining such cars, cost £16.00 to include a hot lunch. All MGs up to 1935 are welcome. Details from R Furneaux, 65 Kings Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 2RD.

●A reader who is rebuilding a 1938 Riley Big Four after owning a Riley Falcon 12/4 has discovered that this car was originally owned by George Allen, who before the war was a well-known member and official of the VCC. He was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1940 and the Riley passed to his sister, the Hon Mrs Phoebe Anderson, wife of a director of Anderson & McAuley, the well-known Belfast store.

●The recent article "Two GNs" brought a letter from Mr Tom Kennedy, who after running a Riley 9 Monaco, M-type MG Midget and 14/45 Talbot, etc bought the 1926 Frazer Nash once the property of Richard Twelvetrees, then Editor of MOTOR SPORT, for £23. It had by then passed through many hands, but PF 4766, which featured in many MOTOR SPORT articles when new, is remembered with affection.

●Ron Shelley, now in his 89th year, whose collection of aero-engines we went to see many years ago, has just completed the re-build of a 95hp Cirrus-Minor engine, with the correct propeller, and his son, who spent five years with 51 Squadron, RAF, will be carrying on the good work. Among the cars owned by Mr Shelley Senr in the 1920s were a sports Eric Campbell and an Eric Longdon, recalled by a recent article in MOTOR SPORT.

●Besides its traditional speed hill-climbs at Prescott, Shelsley Walsh and Wiscombe Park, this year the VSCC is holding a hill-climb at Loton Park, near Shrewsbury, on June 20/21st. The STD Register is planning a National Sunbeam/Talbot Weekend in the Midlands on June 6/7 and VSCC racing opens at Silverstone on April 11th. The 1991 Inter-Register competition, which originated from a suggestion in MOTOR SPORT, was won by the STD Register, from the Riley Register.

●Bath Industrial Heritage Centre has published a little 24-page book about the origins of the two-stroke engine, by Hugh Torrens, of 12/50 Alvis fame. It is called "Joseph Day — 1855-1946", is available for £4.95 post-free, and is sponsored by the Cross Mfg Co (1938) Ltd. which has associations with the pre- and post-war Cross rotary-valve engines, as once raced at Brooklands in an HRG. Apply for the book to BIHT, Camden Works, Julian Road, Bath, BA1 2RH. **W B**

●History is known to repeat itself and this is as true of motor-racing as it is of other pursuits. For example, last season there were those shuntings-off and close-encounters at the corners which modern F1 cars take so fast, under braking that often represents the divide between victory and defeat, Senna and Prost and then Mansell and Senna being in the forefront of this highly skilled, dangerous driving. The matter crystallised with Senna's admission that he had deliberately run into Prost during the 1990 Japanese Grand Prix.

This has reminded me of a similar incident that happened before the war. It involved Manfred von Brauchitsch and Hermann Lang in the 1938 Coppa Ciano Grand Prix, on the Livorno circuit. According to the MOTOR SPORT Continental Correspondent at that time, presumably our 'man-on-the-spot', the aristocratic von Brauchitsch and 'mechanic-made-good' Lang were battling towards another victory for Mercedes-Benz. They were wheel-to-wheel, or as they said in those days, 'bonnet-to-bonnet', as they raced past the pits into the long, fast right-hand bend that followed. Brauchitsch forced the pace into the corner, causing Lang to lift off a shade. Then von Brauchitsch decided that it was not possible to pass, but noting that Lang was giving ground, changed his mind and opened up. He used too much power and spun round, clouting the straw bales which guarded the corner. The excited Italians rushed to his aid, although he waved them back, presumably hoping he could re-start his Mercedes unaided and avoid disqualification. He continued the race, which Lang would have won, had the latter not had a tyre go. I believe Mercedes-Benz had expected tyre problems and that Lang had been told to drive with circumspection, ready to take over from other team drivers if the need arose, or to let them use his car, as was permissible then. Instead, he and Brauchitsch tied for fastest-lap, at 89.2mph, and the latter crossed the finish-line first although Count Trossi's Maserati had overtaken Lang and Caracciola to lead in the early stages, running away from them until his engine expired.

Caracciola had also retired, so von Brauchitisch was acclaimed the winner. A handsome man, popular with the ladies, he was presented to the Countess Ciano at the post-race celebration. It was hours later that, following a protest by Furmanik, a furious Lang was given the race, von Brauchitsch disqualified, against the wishes, it seems, of the RAC!. Two of the Maseratis driven by Italians in the small-car race had been pushed back onto the course at the same spot as the Mercedes but were not disqualified. Mercedes-Benz secured photographs of the incident which had involved their car and considered a counter-protest to the AIACR, but refrained. All of which has topical overtones . . .

You will not have forgotten that after Mansell's unhappy spin-off in the 1991 Japapnese GP he blamed it on the brakes playing up. Well, at Pescara in 1938 there was the incident of the Ecurie Bleue Delahayes. Dreyfuss was supposed to lead Comotti but the latter would not obey, and Dreyfuss signalled his displeasure. The American Laurie Schell, controlling the team, thought that the fist-waving was at Belmonda, whose Alfa Romeo appeared to be obstructing the two French cars. He protested to the RACI, then realised that it was Dreyfuss who was furious that Comotti was ahead of him. A terrific scrap resulted, in which Dreyfuss broke his gearbox trying to get past Comotti and Comotti went off the course, for which he blamed the brakes. Schell examined them, found that they were working properly, and cancelled Comotti's contract on the spot! According to our man who reported these happenings in that Coppa Acerbo race. Finally, in one Obituary of TASO Mathieson, who sadly died in Paris last year, it is stated that his last race was at Caen, when he had finished third and decided to do another lap to make sure of this placing, when his Maserati was hit by another car, the driver of which thought the race to be over. TASO was hospitalised for a long time and it is said that he never raced again. But another account has him at Brands Hatch with a Ferrari in 1955 . . .

The Caen accident, if correct, recalls another, a much more tragic one, that befell the Swiss driver Gubelin in the 1938 Prix de Bremgarten at Berne. The fastest car in the race, Baron de Graffenreid's 1100cc Maserati, seized up on the last lap, within sight of the finish. This encouraged Gubelin to make an extra effort, and he overtook two cars in his BMW and crossed the line the winner. Alas, the official with the flag was distracted by the Maserati stopping and failed to acknowledge Gubelin, who instead of slowing down got into a bad skid, hit the barriers hard, and was killed instantly, within moments of achieving victory...

Verily, history has a habit of repeating itself! **W B**

Obituary: Lindsay Eccles

The motor racing world and the Bugatti fraternity in particular will mourn the loss of another driver who was prominent in the sport before the war, when amateurs mixed it with the professionals. Lindsay Eccles was in the former division, his wealth stemming from Welsh steel production. With his brother Roy Eccles, remembered for his blown Lagonda Rapier, Lindsay raced for relaxation, at the pre-war circuits, notably Brooklands and Donington, and in the road races of those days. He favoured Bugattis, racing 2-litre GP, 2.3 s/c GP in which he survived a horrific crash at Dieppe and a T37, finished in his colours of black-and-green and prepared by the celebrated HW Papworth, although his competition career had opened with a 4½-litre low-chassis Invicta at Shelsley Walsh in 1931.

In 1934, with three other British drivers, he bought from Molsheim one of the T59 3.3-litre GP Bugattis, and used it for long-distance racing, and at Shelsley Walsh and Brighton, where it gained class wins. Eccles also shared a single-seater Frazer Nash with "Tim Davies" in the BRDC 500 Mile Race at Brooklands, and he continued to race a 2.3 Bugatti while owning the T59, the latter driven in the IoM and in important races at Donington, and at Brooklands, where he gained his 120mph badge in 1935.

Most of AHL Eccles' successes were in the shorter Brooklands and Donington races but he preferred road racing to the Track. He had a T57 Bugatti before the war, with James Young saloon body to his own design but in later days ran an Aston Martin and was a keen member of the Silverstone Club. Our condolences are with his wife, step-daughter Bunty Moffatt and his many motoring and business friends. **W B**

Planes in books

After a long wait, the local lending library was able to obtain for us a copy of "Open Cockpit" by John Nesbitt-Dufort, DSC (Speed & Sport Publications, London, 1970-ISBN 85113-140-2), in which he describes what it was like to fly a dozen pre-war training and military aeroplanes, and compares some of them with cars.

For instance, the author remarks that, like motor-cars, most aeroplanes have their own individual virtues, and in some cases vices, so that he had taken the liberty of comparing one or two of them to makes of cars. Thus he remembers the Hawker Fury as having the sparkle of a Bugatti coupled with the docility of an Hispano Suiza, or as something between a Ferrari and a Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III. The Gloster Gauntlet he likens to a Bristol 400, as both shared speed, flexibility and comfort, while the Avro Tutor he thought of as in the same category as an old Austin Ten, reliable but unexciting. These recollections of flying the older aeroplanes were originally published as articles in aviation magazines, under the nom-de-plume of "Wing-Commander X" (not to be confused with "Flying Officer X", whose diaries we serialised in MOTOR SPORT some years ago!).

From them we learn that the author had his first flight in an Avro 504 with RAF V8 engine as a boy, that in later years, posted to a Siskin Squadron, he was rumoured to have won a low-level race with the Fyling Scotsman express, that the Armstrong Siddlely Jaguar IV engine in the Fairey Flycatcher blew back exhaust-smuts and oil over the pilot's face, that the Sunbeam Arab engine in the Bristol Fighter caused excessive vibration, the Armstrong Siddely Puma instability, and that the latter was liable to burn out exhaust valves in its original form, the earlier Bristol Mercury in a Gauntlet to fail, even catch fire, on the very rare occasions when the valve-gear lubrication broke down. The Liberty engine in a DH 9A was said to represent a severe fire hazard in a crash due to its Delco Remy coil-ignition, which makes one wonder whether this was the cause of the mild fire which broke out in "Babs" after the LSR accident which killed Parry Thomas at Pendine in 1927?

Nesbitt-Dixon is warm in praise of the old Avro 504, one of which he discovered hanging from the roof of Avro's Ringway factory when he was an AFEE test-pilot in 1942 and got flying again. Of the Hawker Tomtit he says he only wished he could have afforded to fly such a little thoroughbred regularly. Another book for those who collect aviation titles. **W B**

Cars in books

In about the best biography there is about the author PG Wodehouse, creator of Jeeves, Bertie Wooster, Psmith and Lord Emsworth, etc, who was still writing good books after the age of 90, we learn from this book, *PG Wodehouse* by Frances Donaldson (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1982), that Wodehouse bought a car, a Darracq, in 1905 and after one driving lesson from Seymour Hicks, from whom he had bought it, for £450, he set off for Emsworth, presumably from London. Wodehouse got almost to his destination when just outside this Hampshire/Sussex village he ran into a ditch. He left the car, took a train to London, and never drove again.

When war broke out in 1939 the Wodehouses were living at Le Touquet. Before being arrested by the Germans they had tried to escape, in their two little cars, a tiny Lancia — probably an Aprilia or an Augusta — which Mrs Wodehouse drove, and another unnamed car. The Lancia, which had been involved in an accident some time beforehand, broke down after 15 miles and was abandoned in a field. Friends with a large Ford, no doubt a V8, then took them abroad, using petrol from tins buried in the garden, but this only got as far as the golf club when it, too, broke down. They returned home and Wodehouse was duly interned and made those controversial broadcasts from Germany, for which he was eventually forgiven. **W B**

Vintage Postbag

Delage Search

Sir,

I was very interested to see your article on the Jameson Special, having first read about it as a schoolboy in the Dec 1933 issue of MOTOR SPORT, a copy of which I'd found in the library! The front brake plate shown in that article gave it away as a GP Delage and I've been looking for it ever since.

It started life as one of the 4 (or possibly 5*) completely new 2-litre V12 Delages made for the 1925 GP season, these differing in virtually every detail from their 1924 unblown predecessors. I'm still unravelling the early career of each car but so far I know team-car No 3 was in Argentina in the late 1920s being driven by Eric Forrest Greene. I'm not yet sure who took it out there but suspect it to be one of the 3 cars that were in Italy in 1928. At that time there were already 2 of the earlier V12s in Argentina; a 1924 unblown machine (now with Bob Sutherland) and a 1924 factory modified blown car, both of which were being raced by their owner Juan Malcolm as early as 1927.

Eric Forrest Greene sold his car in 1931 to a visiting Englishman Captain J V Nash, who I can find nothing about other than there being no Frazer Nash connection. TASO Mathieson recalled it being driven sedately at Brooklands during 1932 by Nash while it was for sale, but there seem to have been no takers for this highly complex 7 year-old. Jameson appears to be the next owner and the car as pictured in your article, is pure Delage with the exception of the bonnet and radiator surround which presumably was the work of Gurney Nutting. Looking closely one can see there wasn't an engine under the bonnet. I've spoken to one of Jameson's sons who claims to have taken a large load of Delage engine parts to the tip when moving out of their factory!

Charles Martin used it as the basis for his special, circa 1937 which had 4 JAP engines fed from the Delage supercharger all cleverly joined together. By this stage it was rebodied and the front axle replaced with one from a P3 Alfa Romeo. The next owner, Stephen Mond, installed a V8 Riley engine and called it the "Bentley Special" after which it vanished, although it's possible it was the Autovia Special, registered HC 8410.

I saw an 8c Alfa Romeo front axle advertised recently in the VSCC Newsletter and ended up with the Delage rear axle which I guessed wouldn't be far away! Unfortunately there was no chassis frame. The V8 engine had passed through Nigel Plant's hands some years earlier. The last time the car was seen in one piece was 1975 in Bill McFarland's scrap yard in Dunfermline, not far from the Forth Bridge. I wonder if the chassis (which was assumed to be a Riley) survived? Doubtful but so far I've located the gearbox, radiator, and front and rear axles. As far as the Jameson engine goes, the last reference I've seen mentions one being fitted to Howe's ERA R8C towards the end of 1939. While looking for this car and other V12 parts I was offered various pieces in Argentina and was told that an engineless car was still there — it turned out to be J Malcolm's supercharged car. I'm hoping to have it running within living memory.

Julian Majzub,
Little Wolford, Warks.

Did they copy Alfa Romeo?

Sir,

The Beverley Barnes engine used in the Burney Streamline was certainly not copied from Alfa Romeo! At £50 each they were surely surplus Beverley-Barnes engines originally intended for their own cars.

The designer was E Petit, better known for his work for Salmson, which included an 1100cc straight-eight with central timing gears and a supercharger for each bank of four cylinder. A layout better used by Alfa Romeo. Did they copy Petit? I honestly don't know! I have some photographs of the Beverley Barnes engine given to me by Petit but I have never had the chance to inspect one. Do any of your readers own a BB-engined car?

C B Draper,
Koniferendfad, Germany.

Cruising Speeds

Sir,

I know Trevor Tarring drives his Frazer Nash at 60-65 mph — I followed him once and was most impressed, but Nash drivers tend to cruise at maximum speed, a splendid tradition and long may it last.

When mentioning 45 mph in a general way as a cruising speed for Vintage light cars I was thinking more of the sedate type of Frazer Nash with running boards and a tall windscreen; the screen on my own Nash absorbs a surprising 7 hp at 60 mph. Actually, it cruises just above 50, largely due to the 3:1 top gear – exceptionally high even by F/N standards.

Modern cars seldom need to rev above 3000 on regular roads thanks to fifth gear. Consequently if we admit that there has been some faltering progress in the last 66 years, then 2200 would seem appropriate for cars built only 25 years after the dawn of the industry, resulting in quite a moderate cruising speed.

For relaxed cruising Trevor would like my 1700cc 2-cylinder G N, restored, sorted and adjusted for 60 at 2000rpm even without its intended 2½:1 top gear. It makes me wonder why Alfa Romeo decided on 6 cylinders for their famous 1750: cold starting perhaps?

E Riddle, Shaftesbury.

Green race!

With news of experimental and forthcoming electric cars penetrating the news, an observant reader has noticed that *Motor Transport* recalled, in its September issue, a "green" race which took place at Brooklands 26 years ago and had even dug out a photograph of the competing vehicles. He asked if we could identify them. Well, they were Paul Dutoit in a 1924 200 Mile Race Alvis, a Gordon England Brooklands-Super-Sports stripped A7, and RM Hanlon on a Greenbat electric trolley of the kind used at that time to carry luggage about railway station platforms. The cars carried passengers and the truck was laden with two tons of sacks containing sand.

In fact, this seems to have been a publicity picture for the Press, as the actual race, over three laps, was contested between the Alvis. Parry Thomas in his Leyland-Thomas, and George Duller, the jockey/driver, in the supercharged racing A7. Hanlon had expected his truck to get progressively slower as its batteries exhausted themselves. He was given a start of one hour, 25 minutes and 38.4 seconds (Ebblewhite had been at work on the handicapping!). The A7 had a start of one minute and 24 seconds and Thomas was on scratch. As it happened, the Greenbat went faster and faster, to record a best lap of 5.48mph and it won by 32.4 seconds from the Alvis, which had done a lap at 91.22mph. The A7 and the Leyland Thomas misfired and both pulled in after the first lap; perhaps neither driver had taken this stunt race very seriously.

To see how far it would get, the Greenbat continued after the three laps had been completed but in hard braking for a rapid pit-stop for another driver to take over, as Hanlon had understandably got fed up after circulating the Track for getting on for three hours at this snails-pace, a transmission-shaft was damaged and the electric vehicle was out after covering 13 miles 1055 yards (the meticulous Brooklands calculations!). However, this "green" happening gained much publicity in the newspapers and in the motor journals, and the Greenbat was given a BARC Certificate recording its average speed of 4.79mph for the distance, on one set of batteries. Just one of the unusual things that went on down at Weybridge in those days. **W B**



Bugatti centre-stage at The Verdons for New Year.



A Lister proved that VSCC members aren't narrow-minded.

New Year Cheer!

On New Year's Day VSCC members gather at various hostelries to celebrate the forthcoming season of activity and endeavour. For those in Herefordshire and the Welsh border this means going to The Verdons near Ledbury, for Mark Garfitt's traditional party. This time just over 100 pre-war cars filled the car-park, with friendly aliens in a field alongside. Too many to list but noticed were Judy and Roger Collings with the 1913 Zust, two Edwardian Buicks of Southall and Fenton, a cluster of GP Bugattis and two Brescias, Moffatt's now with one of these new-fangled electrical conveniences for starting its engine, which thus draws it faintly closer to an EB110. The other Brescia belonged to Rodney Felton, who had brought three other cars, his Testarossa Ferrari, his Monza Alfa Romeo, John Harper 'up', and his 2.9 Alfa driven by his wife.

The Alvis marque totted up eleven cars, Morgans and A7s about eight each, the latter including Seymour Price's rapid Ulster, a fabric saloon and my 1931 saloon (on its maiden voyage since overhaul and smitten with problems), representing the trio from the Principality. Nicholson brought a very smart 9.5hp Renault tourer, Luscot Evans his Trojan and Chris Clark came in the isolated dignity of his handsome straight-eight Lanchester, flying a Union Flag as if remembering that it was built in pre-EEC days, when this country had a reputable Motor Industry, 30/98s mingled with the Bentleys, as Happy New Year was bandied about. Before leaving I had a run on Greville Neale's 1904 Aster and was made to present the Landlord's bottle-of-bubbly to the driver coming the longest distance, RCI Browning, who had come the 102 miles or so from Sandbach, home of the Foden steamwaggons, in his 1933 TT Replica Frazer Nash (he told me that the Foden factory is even now being demolished, another historic building lost). It is a time of don't drink and drive but we know that members of the Chain Gang never open a bottle until they get home, don't we? Last year's winner, AC Stephens from Neath, in his Lagonda, was only a mile or two short of target. Among more modern cars the Traction Avant Citroen fraternity contributed a saloon and a very fine Roadster. **W B**

Tailpiece

After the Party: Blakeney-Edwards' problem after the Frazer Nash Christmas party did not affect his record points in the Lycett Memorial Trophy.



BOOKS

Formula 3000 Yearbook. Editions Drapeau à Damier, £19.95.
This is the fifth appearance of the F3000 yearbook, a glossy celebration of one of motor racing's best kept secrets. If only the formula had a PR package that was as well put together . . .

The bi-lingual text was much improved a couple of years ago when direct translation from French to English ceased; for the first couple of years, this task appeared to have been carried out by Martians.

Now, separate scripts are put together either side of the Channel. These are short and to the point. Much of the story of the season is told in pictures, all colour, of which the reproduction quality is superb, though one or two shots have become a little grainy when blown up.

Coverage of the European season is complemented by brief reviews of the domestic seasons in both Japan and Britain, and a results section mildly flawed by messy typography.

The big question? Who buys it? The crowd at your average European F3000 race is no more than a couple of thousand. Hopefully there are sufficient customers to justify its continued existence. This is just the sort of vibrant publication Formula 3000 needs to promote its cause. **S A**

Anatomy And Development of the Sports Prototype Racing Car, by Ian Bamsey. GT Foulis & Co, £19.99.
With the present uncertainty over the future of Sportscar World Championship Racing this may not be the most opportune time for a book on the subject. However, the future does not detract from the interest generated by the super-fast, technically-advanced cars which have contested these contests up to the end of the 1991 season and Ian Bamsey has sorted out their complex anatomy and development in his usual effective and clear style.

From the early days of this type of racing sports car, and after explaining the regulations governing them from 1952 and the changes made in 1962, 1968, 1972, 1977, and in the '80s, Bamsey sets about their evolution, from the early days, and through the entry of Porsche, how wings and ground-effect techniques affected those SWC cars, the Southgate revolution, how the 250mph target was achieved, with a case-study of the Nissan participation and so on. The five famous engines which played such a part in this class of racing, the stock-block Chevrolet V8, Porsche flat-six, V12 Jaguar, Mercedes V8 and Nissan V6, get the author's expert coverage and the book includes discussions on structural, transmission, brake and suspension-system changes, with relevant illustrations. There is no index, though blank pages for one are provided. **W B**

1972-1990 Panthers. Brooklands Books, £10.95.
Brooklands Books latest comes in the form of reproductions of write-ups from the leading motor journals, of which six are from MOTOR SPORT, out of a selection of 57 articles. The publisher's address is: PO Box 146, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 1LG. **W B**

VIDEOS

British Grand Prix Greats. Britannica Sport, £10.99.
Perhaps the bottom has fallen out of the encyclopedia market, for Britannica of that ilk has branched out into the world of motorsporting videos. *British Grand Prix Greats* is an excellent 50-minute documentary, focussing on Hawthorn, Hill, Collins, Clark, Brooks, Stewart, Moss and Hunt.

Splendid archive footage is backed up by interviews with the four living subjects; the deceased are remembered fondly by those who knew them well, a sensitive interview with Rob Walker about Mike Hawthorn being a particular highlight.

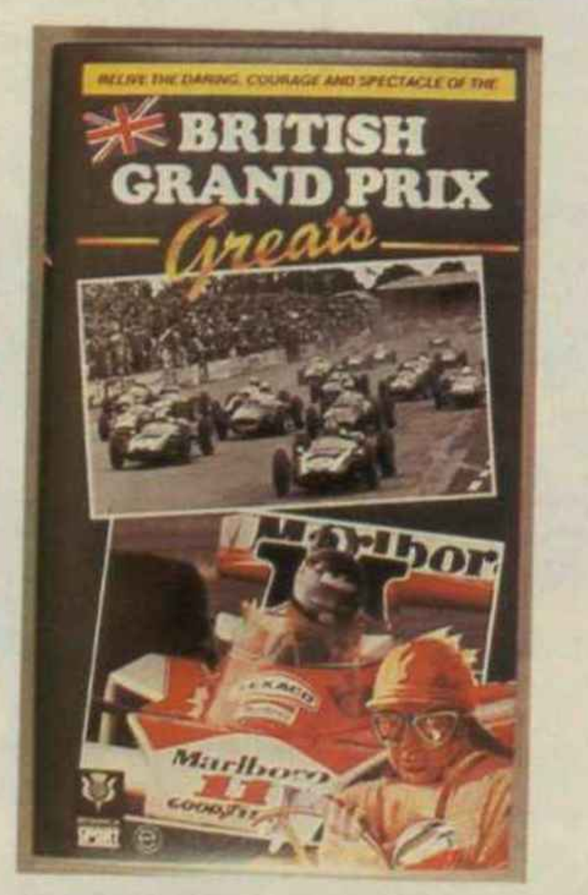
Entertaining and well produced, this is one of the best of the recent wave of restrospective tapes that we have seen. **S A**

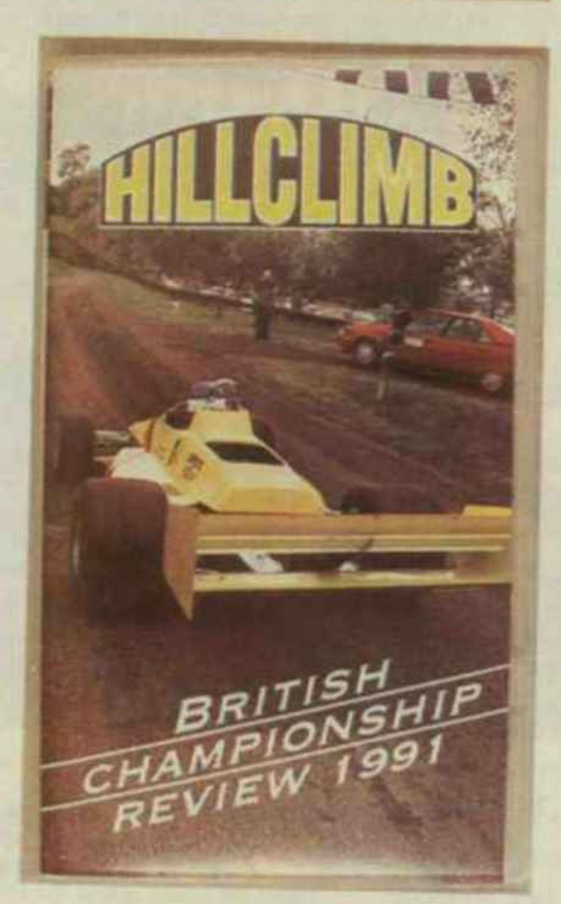
British Hillclimb Championship 1991. Duke Marketing, £10.99.
This is a welcome release, if only because hillclimbing – a branch of motor sport where the accent is firmly on *sport* – gets about as much TV airtime as synchronised crop-spraying.

Although the production quality is first class, the overall feel of the film is a little disjointed, as only selected rounds of the series have been included.

Hopefully the exercise will be repeated this season, with coverage of *all* championship events. **S A**







Crash n'Splash. Britannica Sport, £10.99.
In as much as it is produced by Britannica Sport and lasts for around 50 minutes, this is similar to *British Grand Prix Greats*. It differs from the former, however, in that it is terminally dull.

Surely the market for this sort of thing has reached saturation point? Even the better-produced 'calamity' tapes – and this curious blend of motorised and water skiing mishaps is definitely not one of them – are becoming a little tiresome. **S A**

The Rally Supercars. Sports Seen, £10.99.
Remember Group B? All those lightweight technological marvels which brought Formula One acceleration to forestry roads? This is a tribute to a period in rallying's history which was as spectacular as it was fraught.

This is intended to portray vibrant images of Audi Quattros, Peugeot 205 T16s and Lancia Delta S4s shattering the tranquility of the countryside in Scandiwegia and elsewhere. In addition to the nominal stars of the show, however, there is a plethora of spectacular footage featuring everything from Lancia 037s to (briefly) a Group 4 Escort . . .

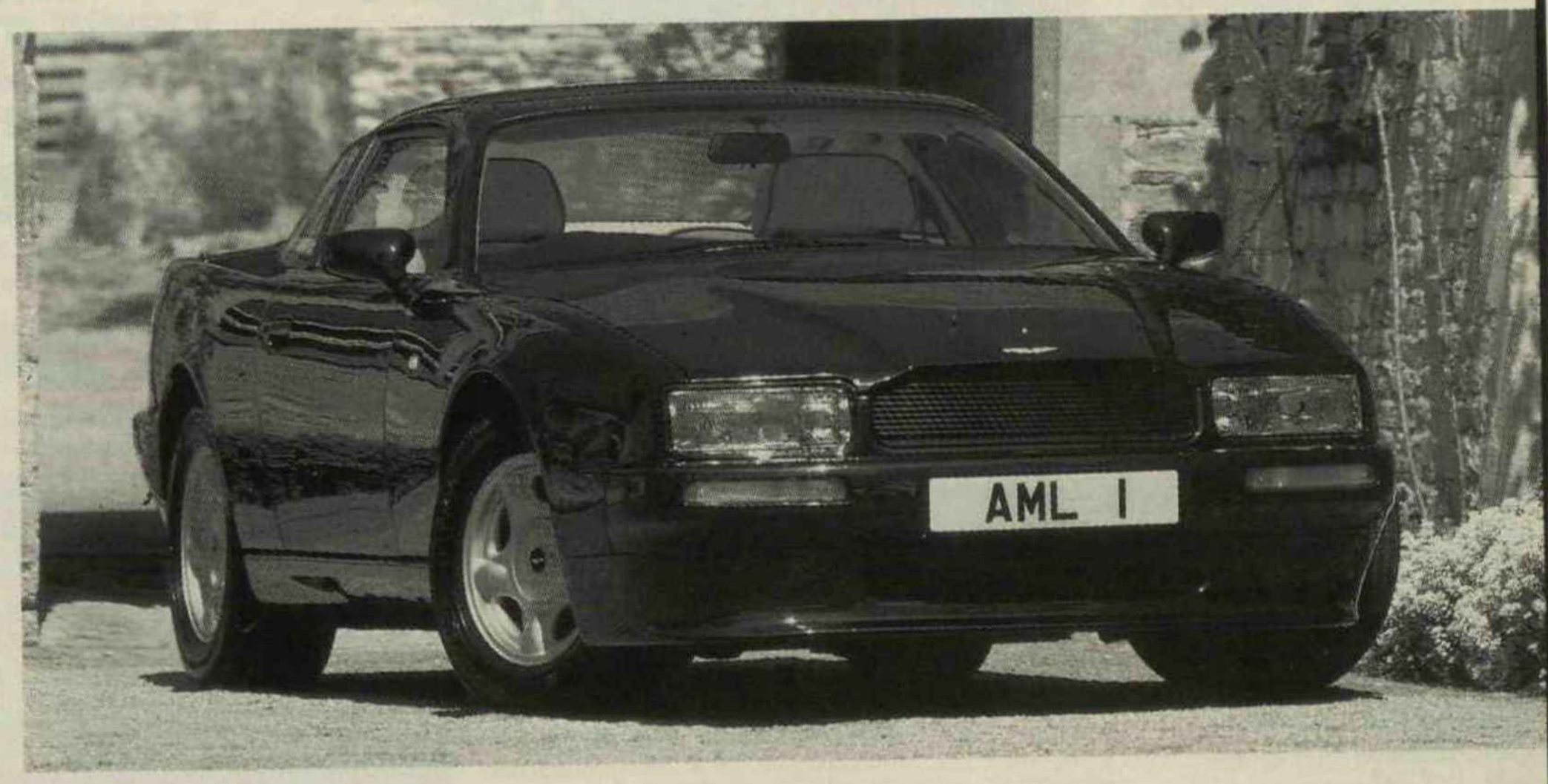
As a consequence, the tape appears a little muddled at times, though the breathtaking action sequences provide more than adequate compensation. In-car film from Walter Röhrl's Quattro in Portugal is exceptional, with cameras pointing at hands and feet as well as out of the screen. The vantage points chosen by rally spectators often lead one to believe that they are a sandwich or two short of a picnic; on this evidence, the Portuguese are at least a bakery in arrears.

Tacked on at the end is a brief tribute to the Ford RS200, which is rather superfluous in this context. It was to rallying what Norwich City are to football; neat and attractive, but seldom victorious in major events. **S A**

Formula 1 1956. Terrific Stuff Videos, £17.99.
Chris Nixon, author, amongst other things, of *Racing the Silver Arrows* and *Mon Ami Mate*, has recently set up his own video enterprise, after stumbling across a pirate copy of this title while researching his epic work on Messrs Hawthorn and Collins.

BP still had the original film, a high quality review of the 1956 season covering F1 action from Monza, the 'Ring, Rheims, Spa and elsewhere. It is now available in video format, and is the first of what Nixon and BP hope will be several releases. The three Ferraris screaming down the straight at Rheims together justify the cover price on their own. All in all, a rare treat. Stop reading and get on the mail order line now. The tapes are available direct from the appropriately-named Terrific Stuff on 081-891 1872. **S A**

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LETTERS

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The art of CART

Sir
I fully endorse your comments about the CART series in December's Arront Nonsense. I must confess to previously subscribing to the Euro-view of Indycar racing. That is until 1988 and the purchase of a video recorder which enable me to watch Anglia Television's full-length, but not live, transmissions at a more reasonable hour than they chose to broadcast. I gradually appreciated the package which makes it so difficult for Americans to relate to so-called Grand Prix racing. Short circuits, with lap lengths often only just over one mile, mean the spectator sees more of the cars and of the circuit. Full course yellows increase safety for the drivers, prevent boring processions and add to the tactical significance of the compulsory pit stops. Stop/go penalties are used by CART officials to resolve both technical and disciplinary infringements instantly and often result in charged-up performances from behind by the transgressors.

The television viewer is also presented with a thoroughly professional product. Stunning on-board camera pictures and comprehensive coverage of pit lane action, including mid-race interviews with team managers, compensate for not being trackside. Throw in the spectacle of speeds regularly in excess of 200mph, genuine city street racing and a couple of ex-Formula One World champions and you might be forgiven for questioning which series can more truthfully claim the title Grand Prix. Sadly Anglia reduced their output to one-hour highlights in 1990 and failed to cover the series at all in 1991. Might I suggest that, for those of us not fortunate enough to live in Croydon or possess satellite dishes, MOTOR SPORT extends its excellent reportage to include race-by-race coverage of the CART championship in 1992.
Clive Beckwith,
Hertfordshire.

Gains, not games

Sir
Are we lowly readers proffered the belief that the professional contributors to publications such as MOTOR SPORT did not equate the realities behind the 1990 Japanese Grand Prix shunt. Formula One in the nineties no longer represents a game played largely by Europe's gentlemen, but a nucleus for world competition orchestrated by the worlds leading industrialists.

These "gentlemen" pay for, expect and get results; poor Senna, Prost and company merely represent the brilliant fit aggressive young athletes operating in this twentieth-century arena, who the public in glorious oblivion require to behave like Olympus whilst armed with equipment that Mars would have coveted.

Indycar racing sets the pinnacle of achievement for that type of road racing, but does not yet achieve world wide commercial coverage and therefore does not attract the same amount of cash and resultant results pressure. Cable TV etc may alter this situation which would be the one reason why sponsors may fall into different camps regarding driver behaviour. Regretfully however, promotional activities thrive on goodies and baddies — witness the speculative money which still flows on history's various examples.

The gentle ramblings of DSJ regarding epithets and the media are becoming obscene from a scribe still at the privileged centre of the white heat of development, who has produced motor racing pieces approaching Ayrton Sennas fastest laps.
C K Luton,
Bristol.

Anti-fashion

Sir,
Far from having a blind spot, about Senna or anything else, (Letters, January issue), DSJ may come to be recognised by a less credulous generation of motor racing enthusiasts as the only one who actually saw things clearly. Nor should it be forgotten that he is one of the few writers with personal experience of racing. I for one hope he will continue to advance the unfashionable view, because all sides of any controversy ought to be considered. There are plenty of others who can be relied on to take the party line, regardless of its merit.
G Ship,
London.

Idol talk

Sir
I am rather fed up of people who keep on at Ayrton Senna about the incident that happened with himself and Alain Prost at the Japanese Grand Prix in 1989. They just won't let it lie. For goodness sake, we are almost into 1992 and yet people of the press especially insist on digging up his past.

They're like a bunch of vultures, just waiting for Ayrton to say or do something wrong and get him into trouble. I wouldn't be surprised at all if some of them deliberately try and get him all fired up. I am a very big fan of McLaren-Honda and the team and especially of Ayrton Senna. He's my hero and the best of the best and nothing is going to change that, so I don't care what people say about him or even think about my views. Why can't people say a few more good words about him?
C A Reader,
Southampton.

Jim Clark Room

Sir,
I have just read your article on the Jim Clark Room and it brought to mind an incident earlier this year. A party of American walkers and bird watchers were visiting St Abbs nature reserve and stopped for a rest in St Abbs village. Whilst showing some of them around the lifeboat shed I asked one woman where she was from. "Indianapolis — you ever heard of it?" "Of course, the 500 mile race". "And your Jimmy Clark won it", was her instant reply I asked her if she had been to the Museum as I thought they had a special display of the 500-mile photos etc. She did not know of the room and was very disappointed to learn it was only 15 minutes away when the group's tight schedule would prevent her visit to it.

Surely it is not beyond the wit of the local cultural Tourist Board to write a press release annually to organisers and media of the famous Grand Prix and other triumphs of Jim Clark i e Indianapolis reminding them of his race victories and the location etc, of the Memorial Room.
Peter Scott,
Berwickshire.

Folk hero

Sir
I have just read the Jan '92 issue of MOTOR SPORT re the Jim Clark Memorial Trophy Room story.
As a Jim Clark fan from when he started at Lotus I feel I have to write. If as the story says the room needs brightening up, do this by all means. But the name stays as The Jim Clark Memorial Trophy Room. As Graham Gauld says, Jim Clark *is* the story. I read of Jim's race in a Lotus 23 at the Nurburgring 1000km in 1962 where after 8 laps he had a 2-minute lead beating Ferraris, Porsches, Astons etc, until the exhaust broke and fumes made him spin off; all this with only 1500cc says a lot for his ability. This had a lasting impression on me. So much so that every Tasman Series from 1964 to 1968 I watched him race at Sandown Park and Longford Tasmania. I saved and took my holidays to do it. That was the effect Jim Clark had on people.

His 1968 Sandown race stands out. He raced Chris Amon over 100 laps in 100 deg heat to win by 10 feet. When he got out of the car he looked as though he could have done it again. His race-craft and gentlemanly ways made him a hero to many people. My two daughters are lucky not to be boys as I know what one's name would have been.

My sister visited Scotland 2 years ago. I had mentioned she should visit Duns and see the Trophy room. She did, liked it and placed a flower on his grave. I intend to visit Duns and the Trophy room in the future. People of Duns, Scotland, you have a Folk Hero in Jim Clark. He has made your town known the world over.

I hope sense prevails and that the Jim Clark Memorial Trophy Room is open to fans old and new to visit in years to come.
Michael Johnstone,
Victoria, Australia.

Never a dull moment

Sir
The above, as ever, thought-provoker from the pen of WB struck a chord in my consciousness. Can we look forward, in the context of "greenery" to comment on the *Equinox* programme, quoted in a recent *Practical Motorist*. The message was that in the rather chilly UK a catalytic converter is non-functioning for 66% of the time and that engines so fitted are less efficient than a lean-burner, consuming more fuel and pumping out more CO.!

So much for the intellectual prowess of all these Cambridge Arts graduates!
Charles Fisher,
Chester.

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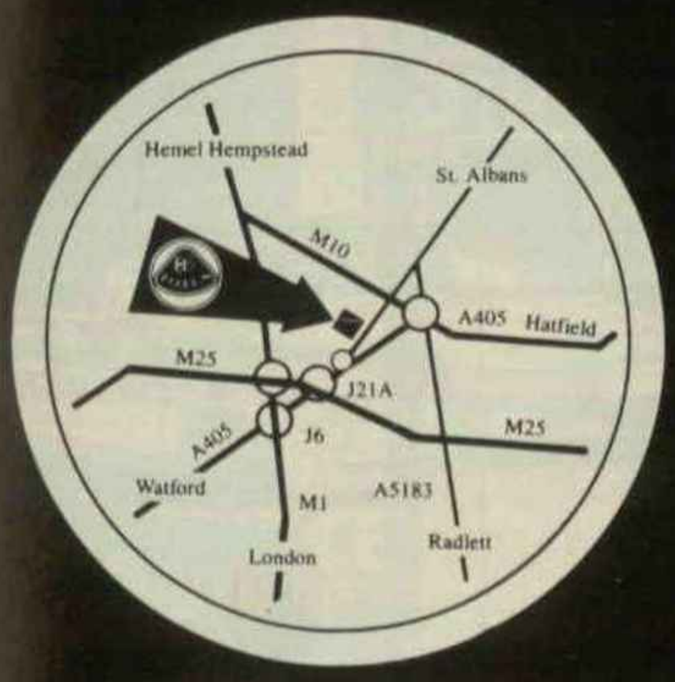
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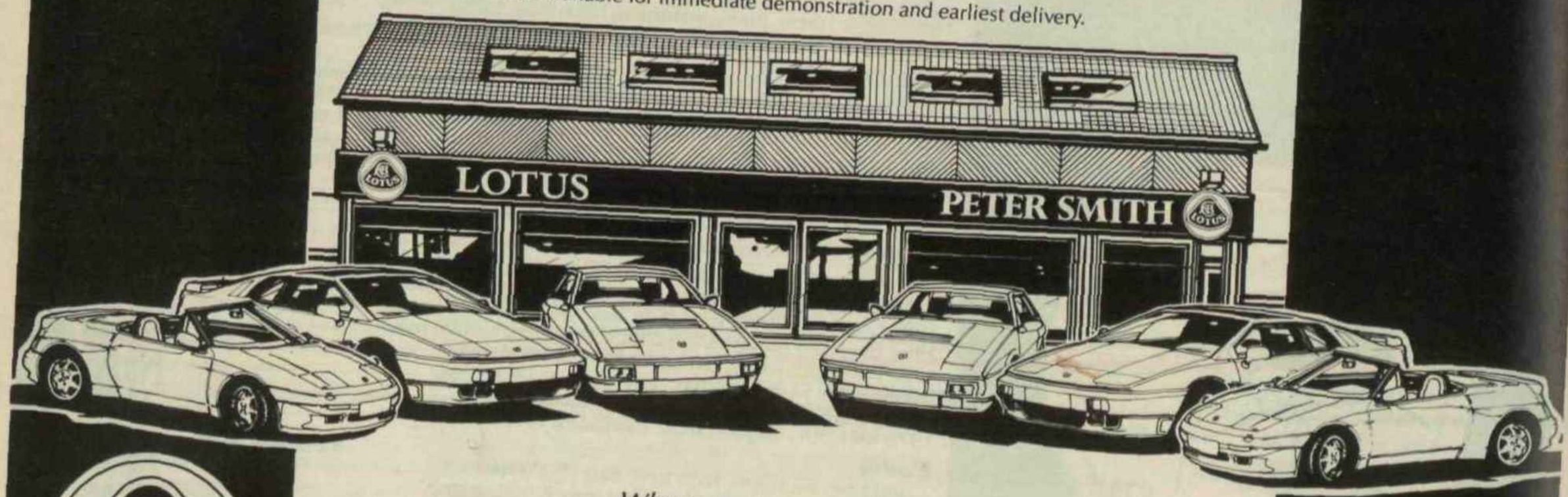
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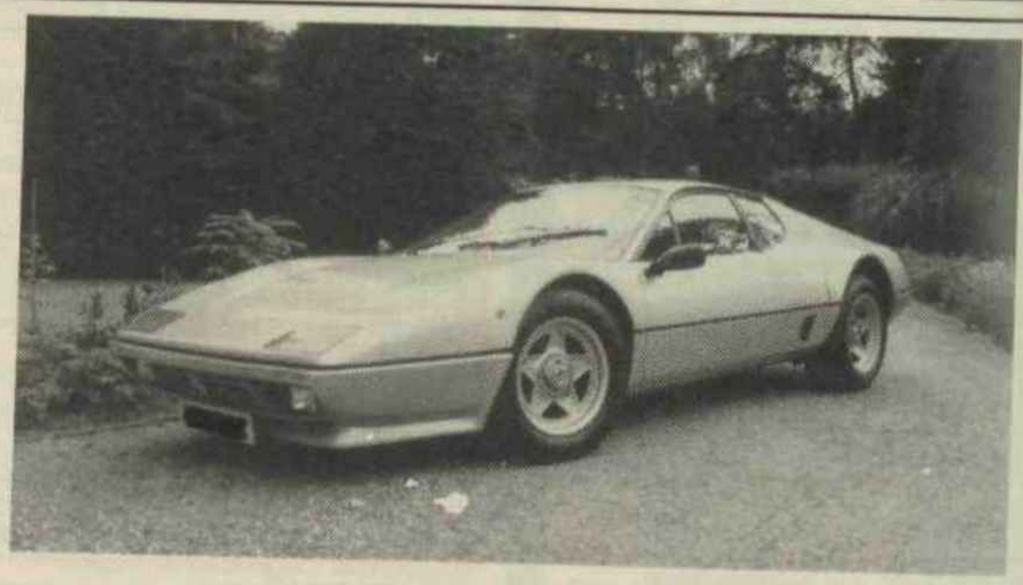
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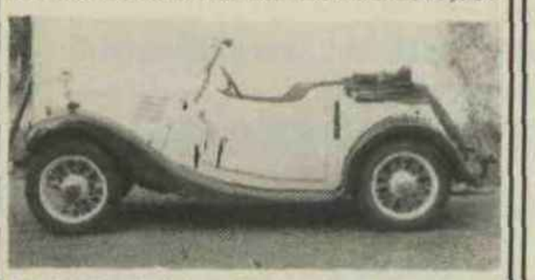
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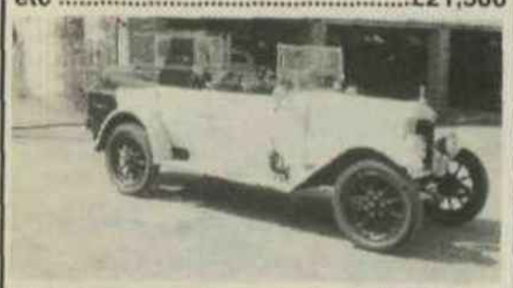
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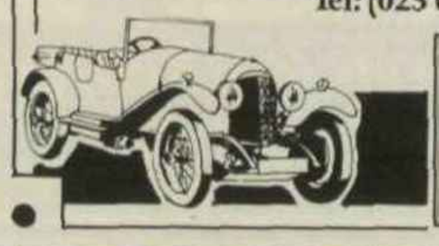
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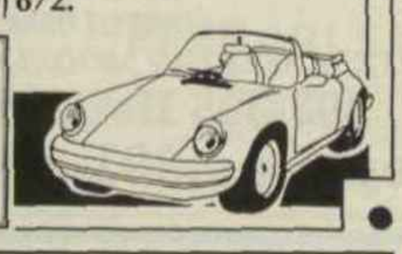
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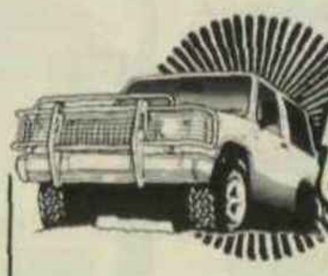
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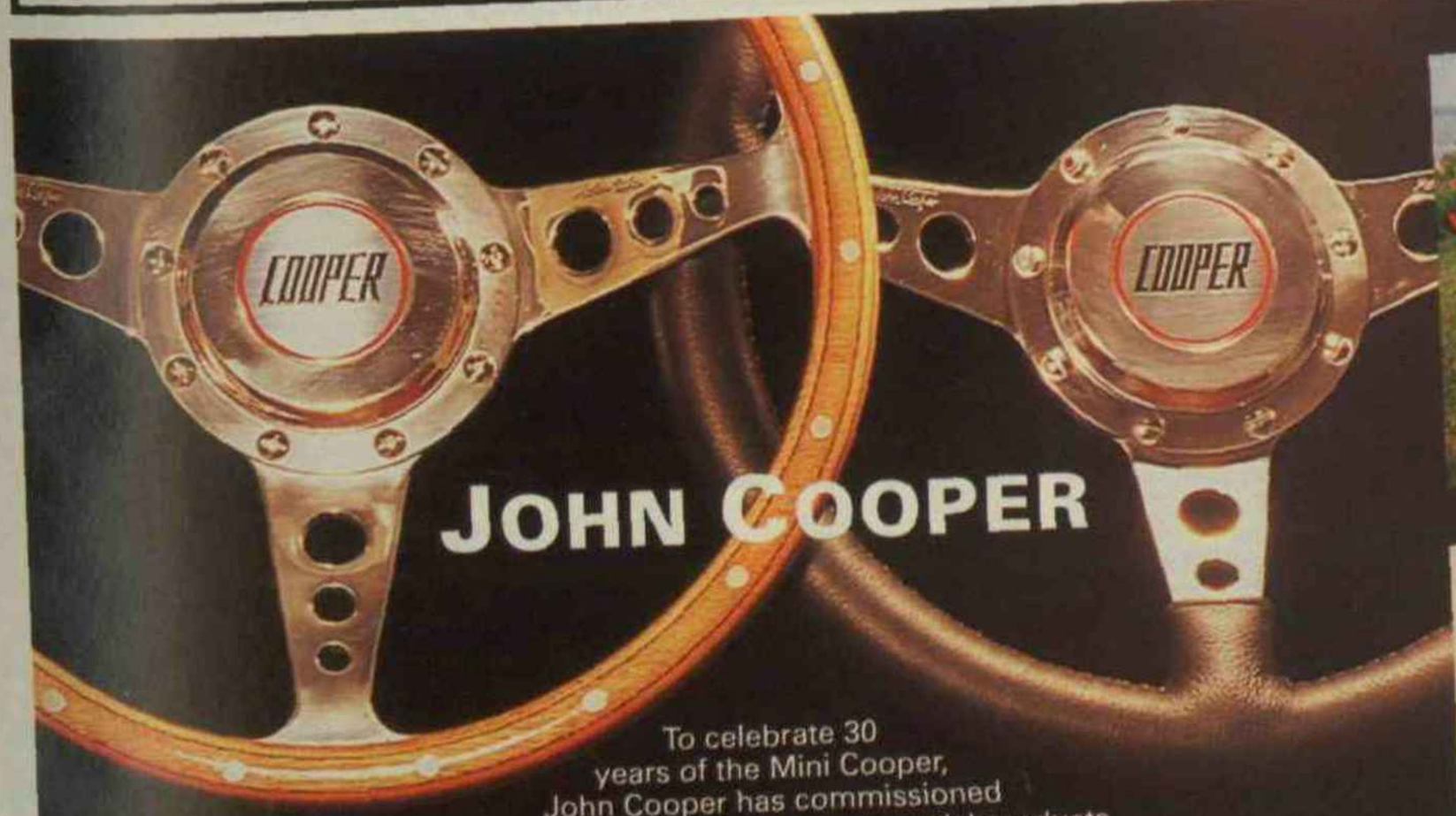
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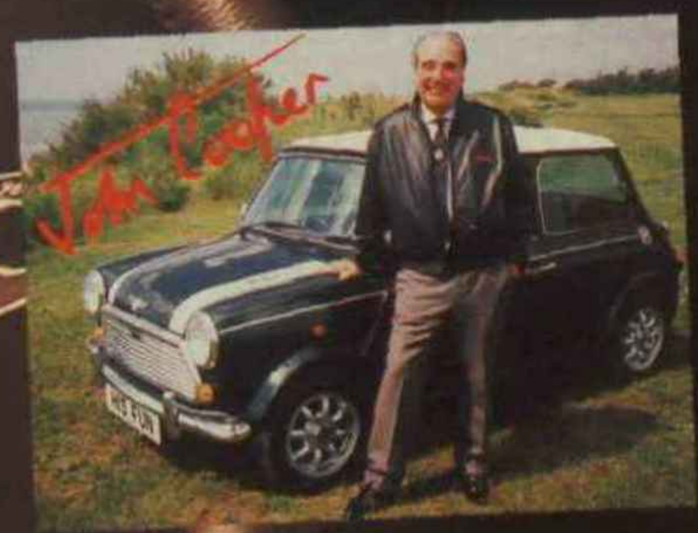
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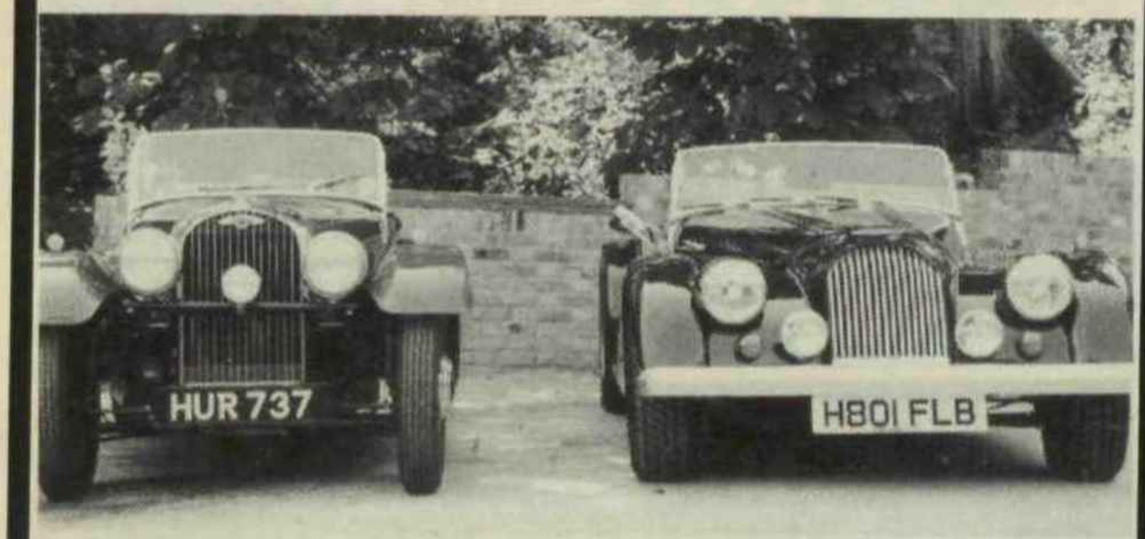
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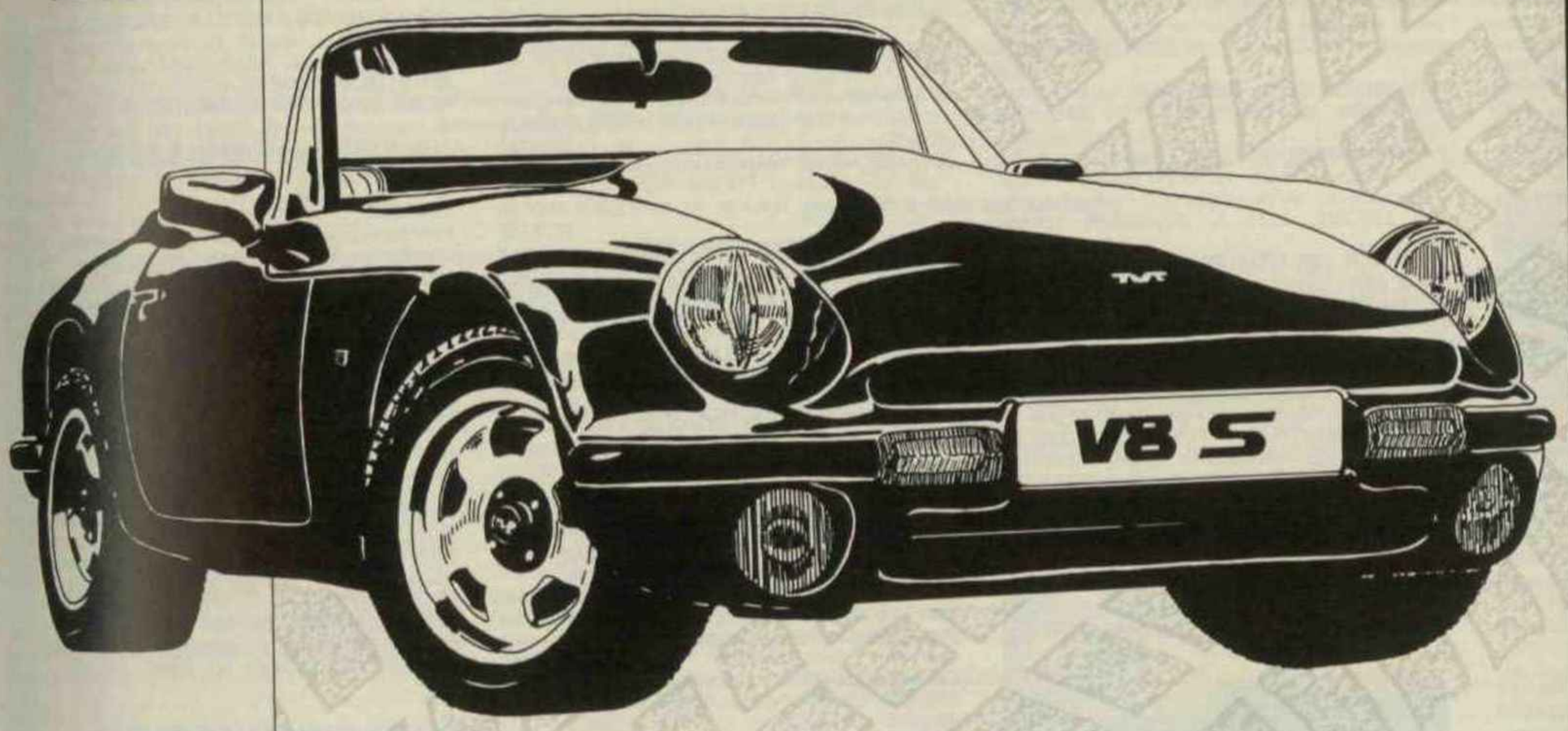


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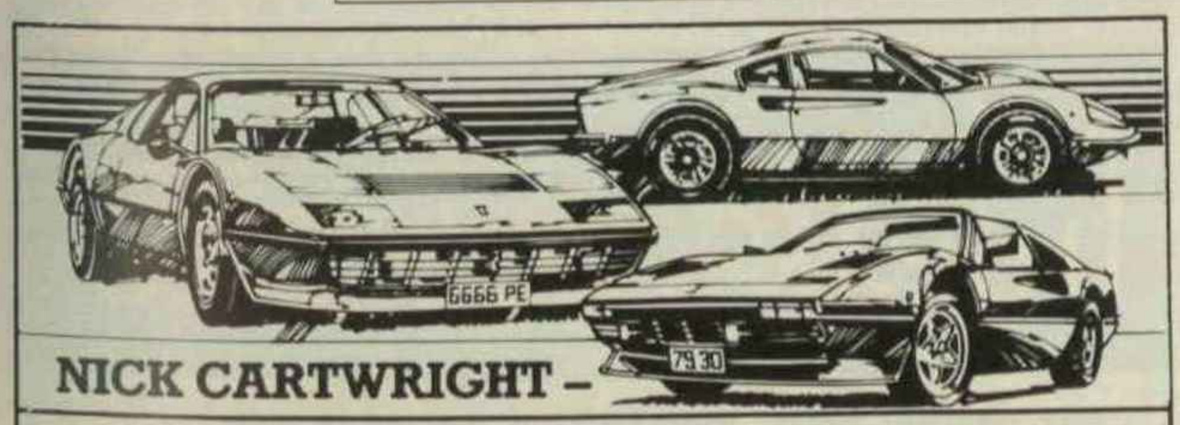
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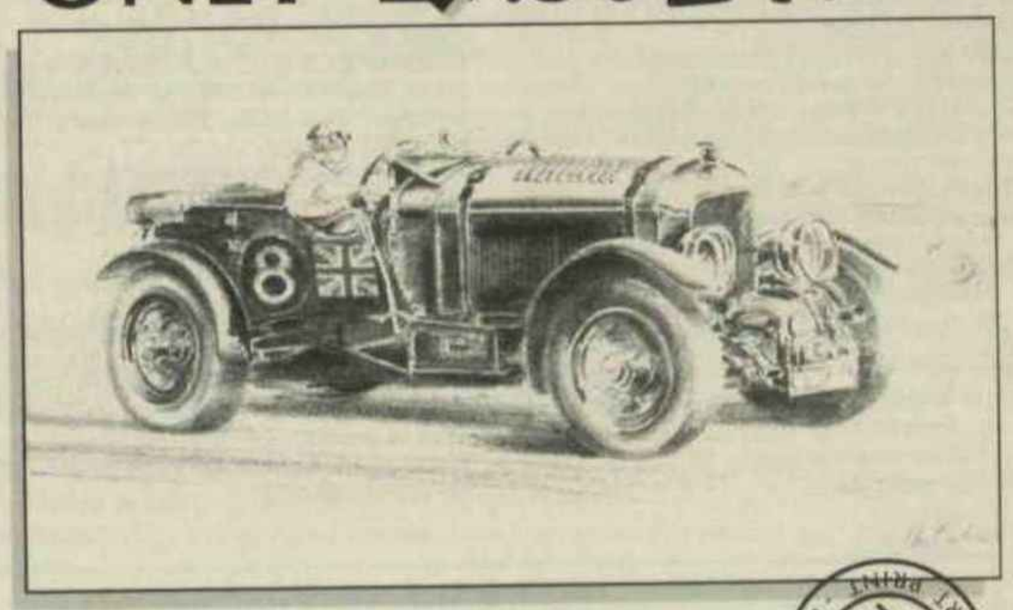
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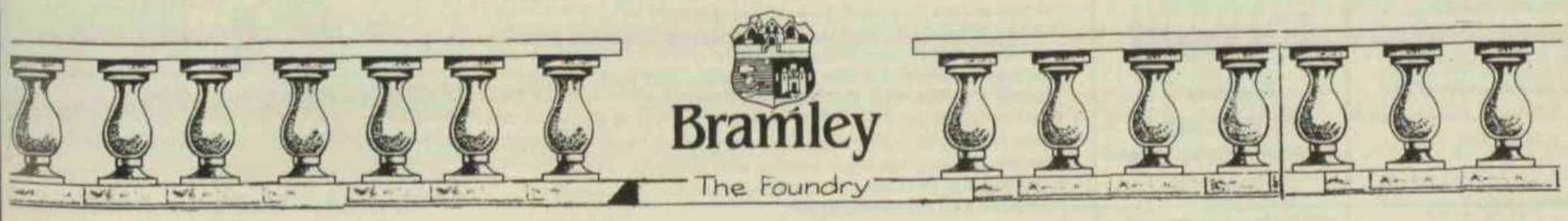
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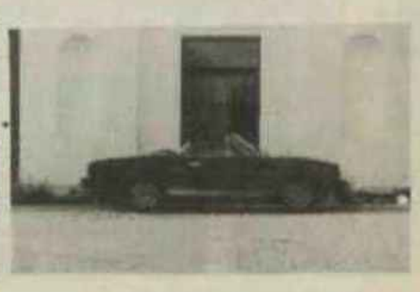
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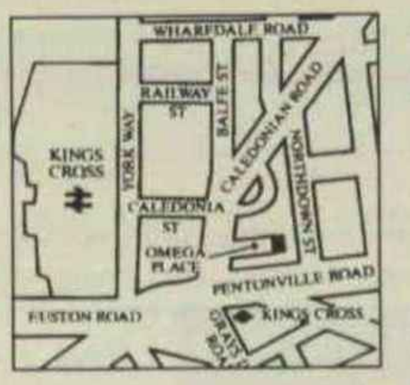
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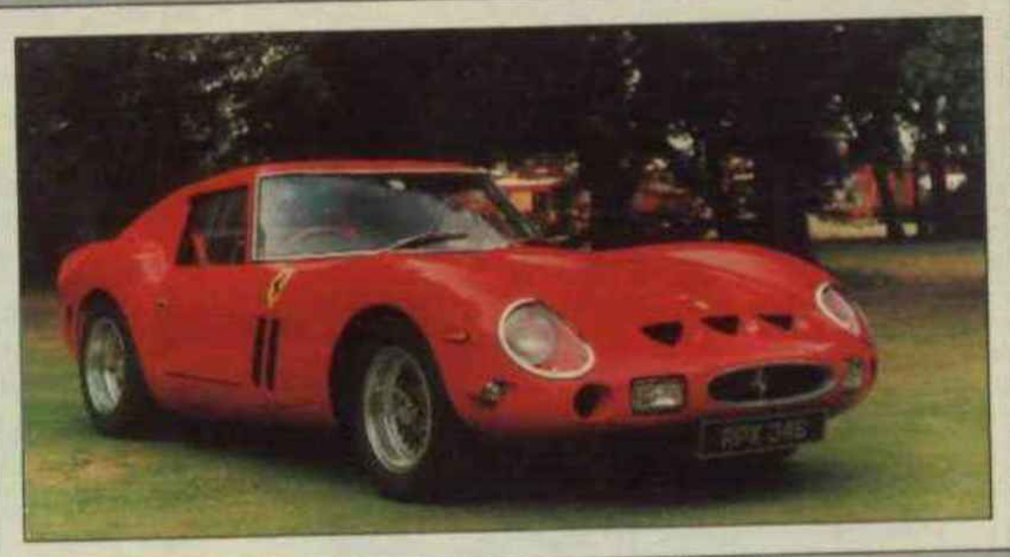
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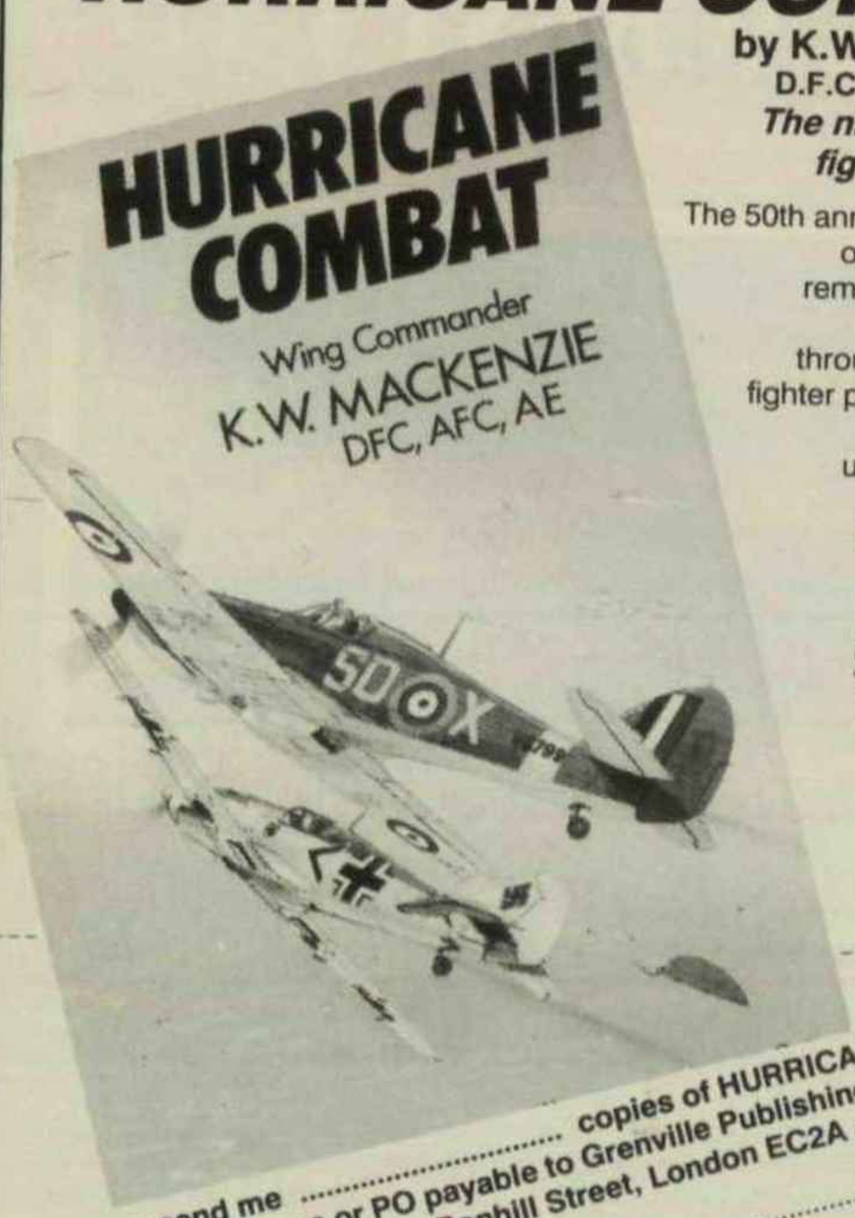
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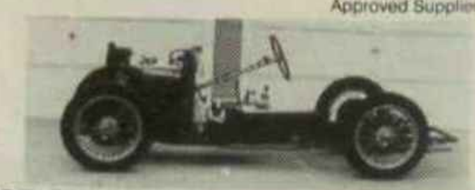
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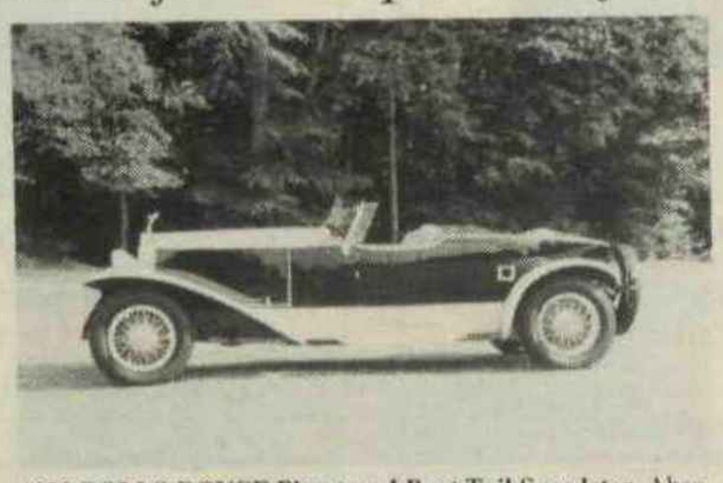
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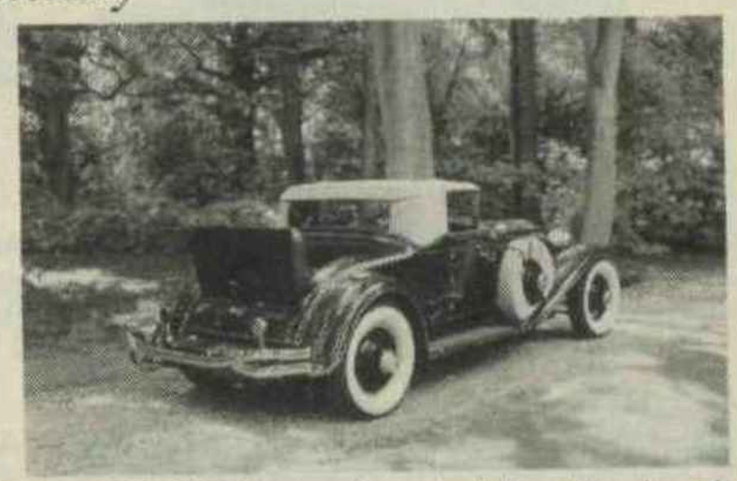
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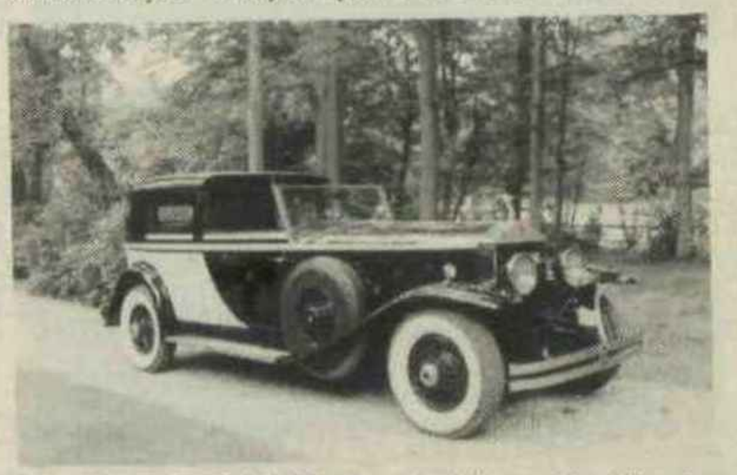
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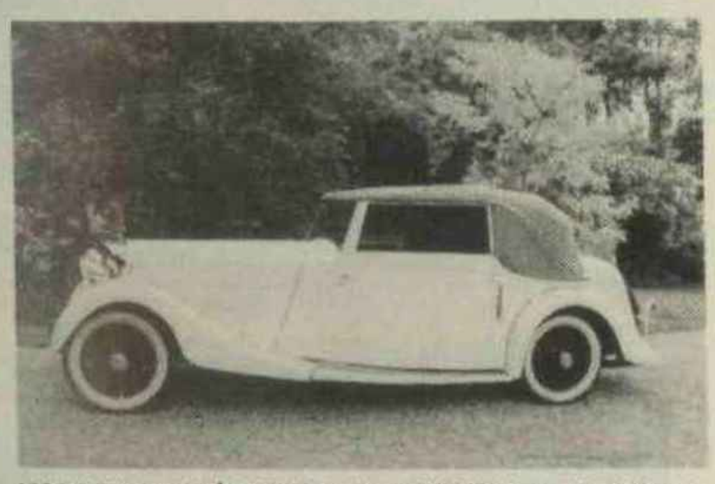
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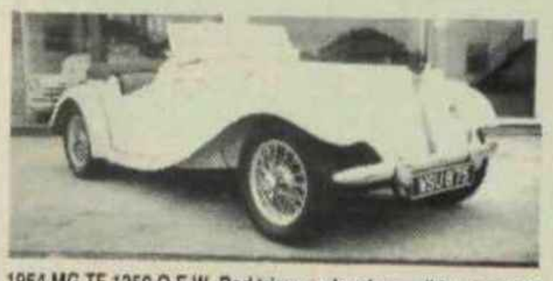
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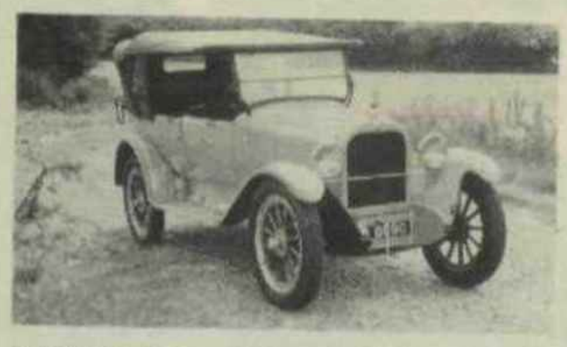
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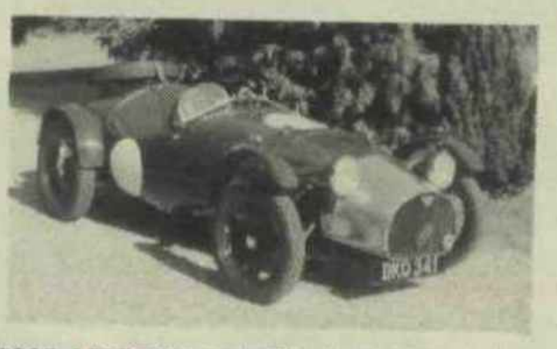
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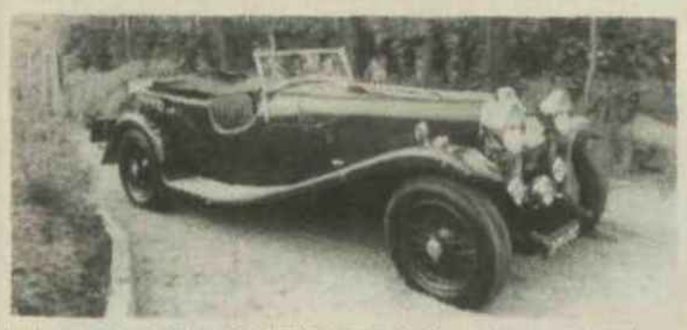
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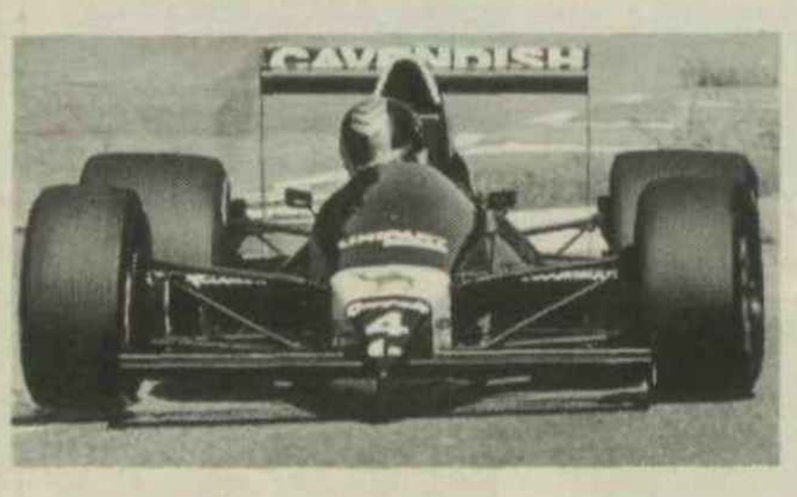
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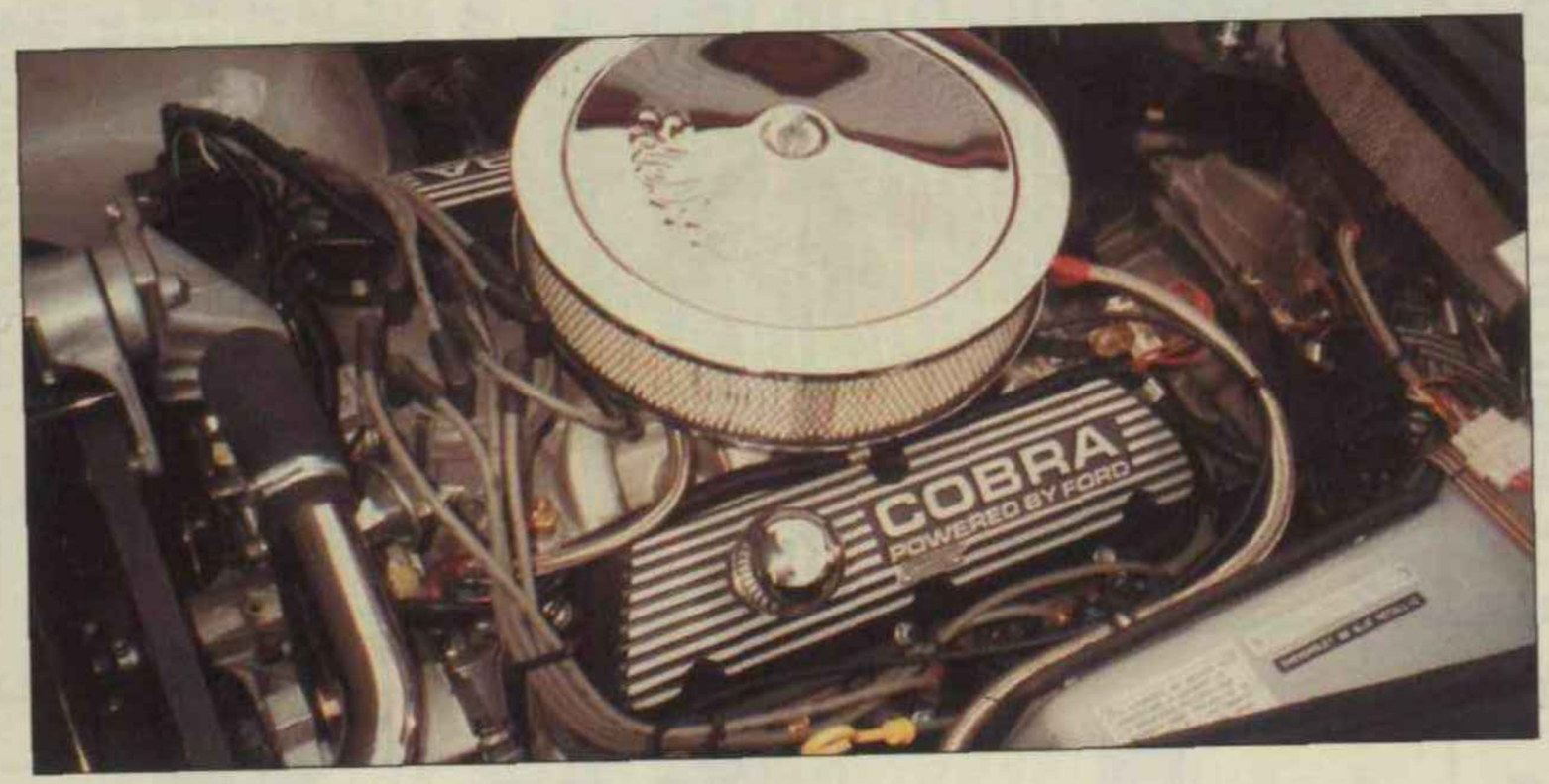
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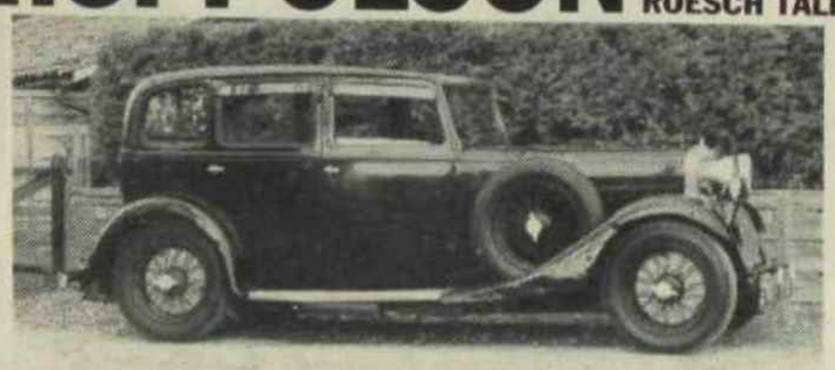
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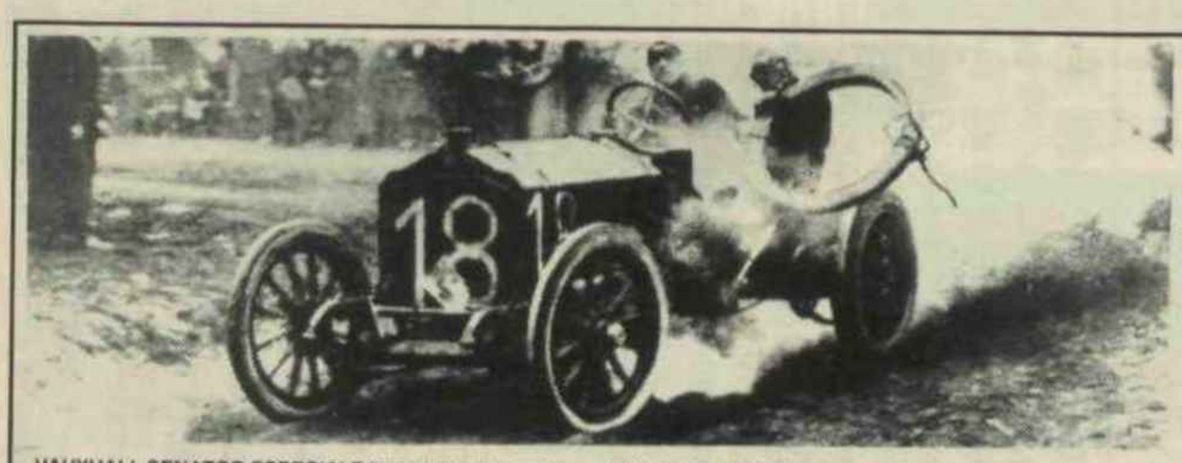
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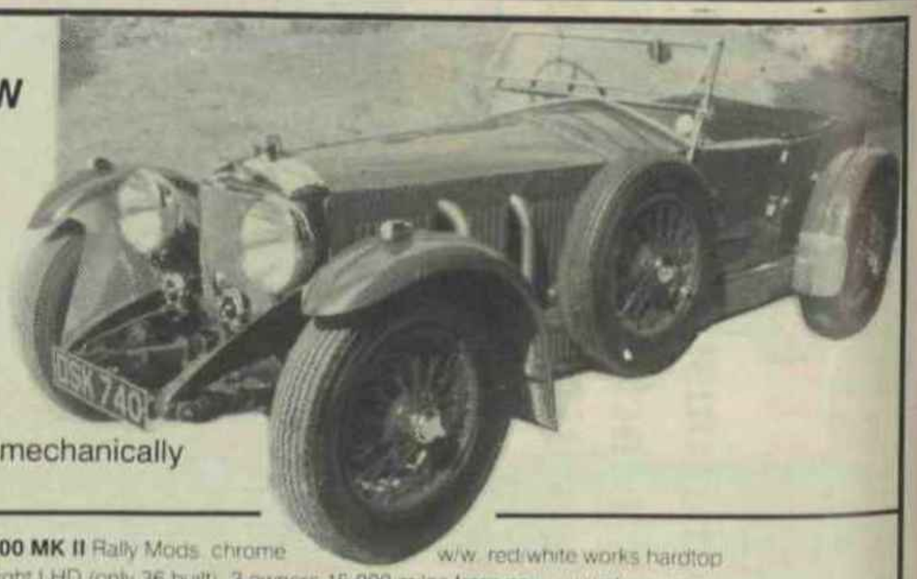


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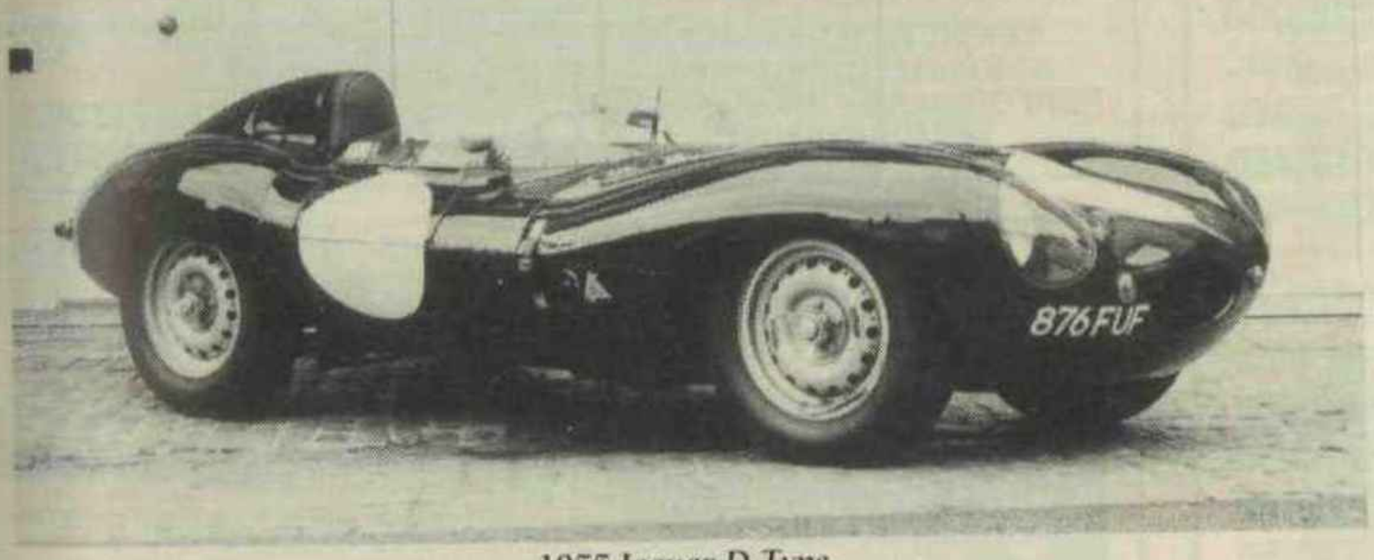
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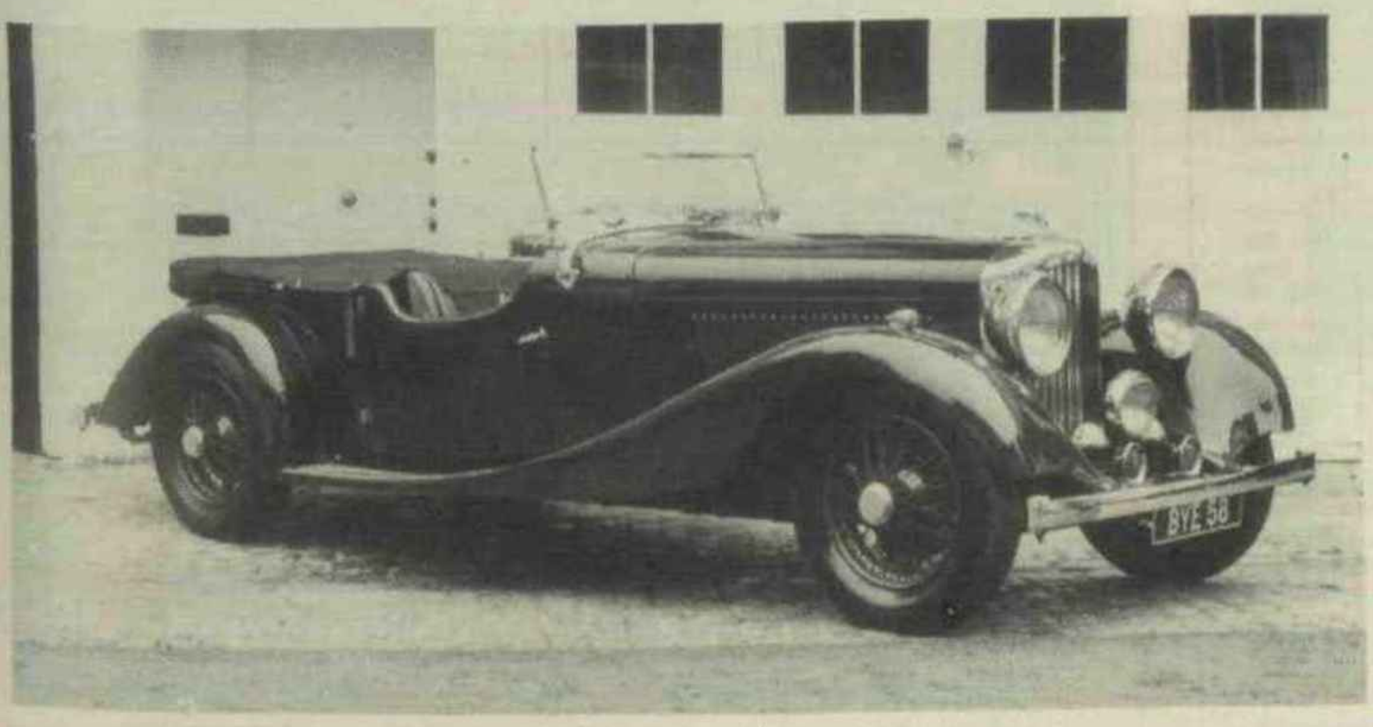
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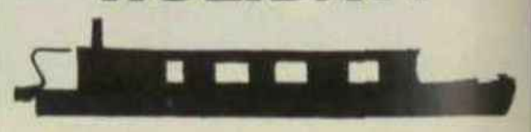
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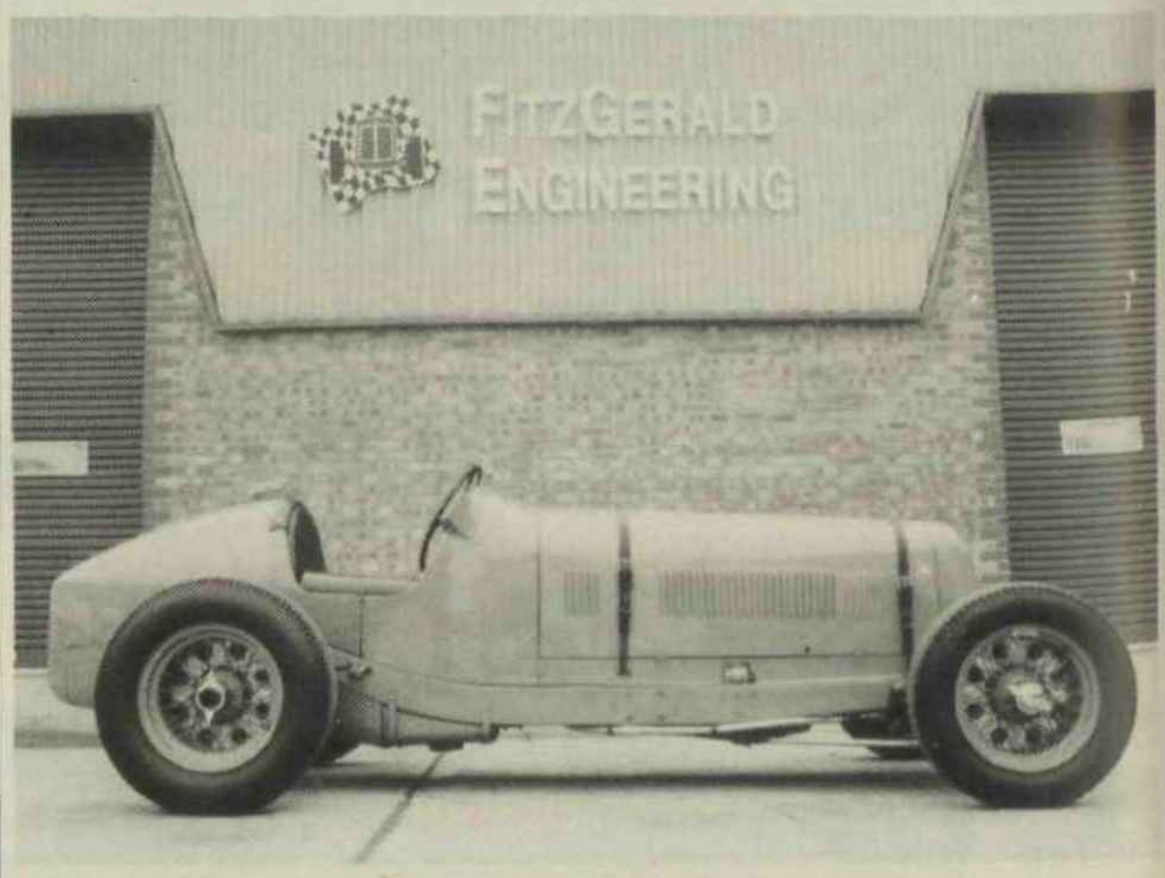
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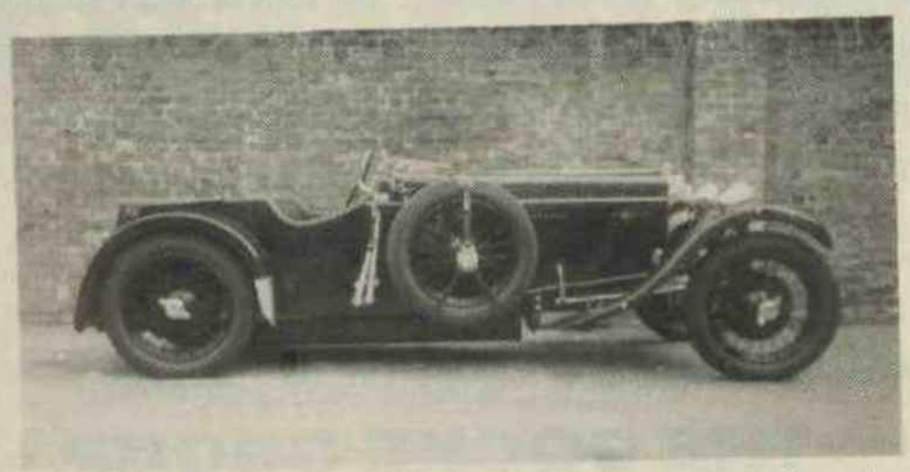
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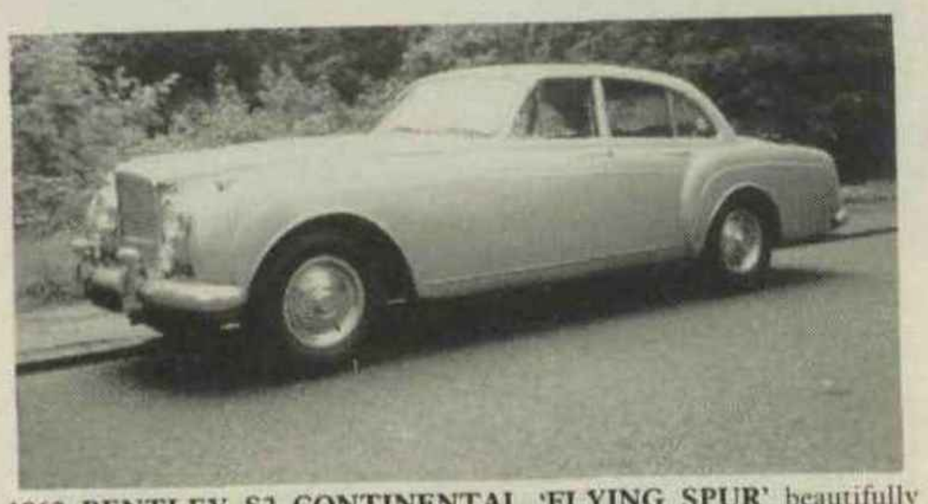
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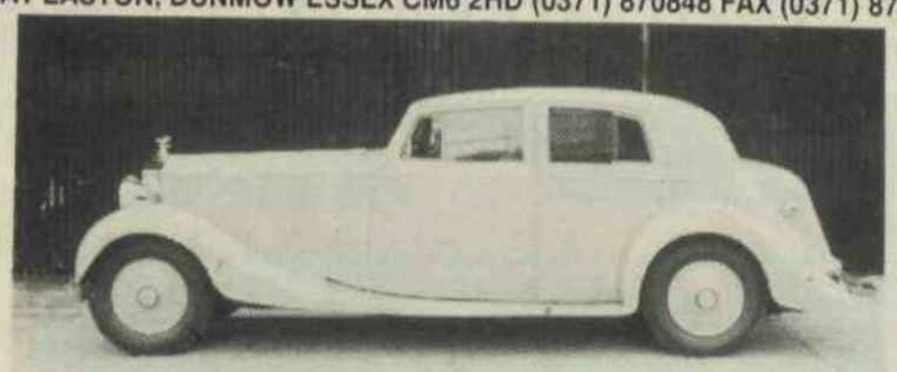
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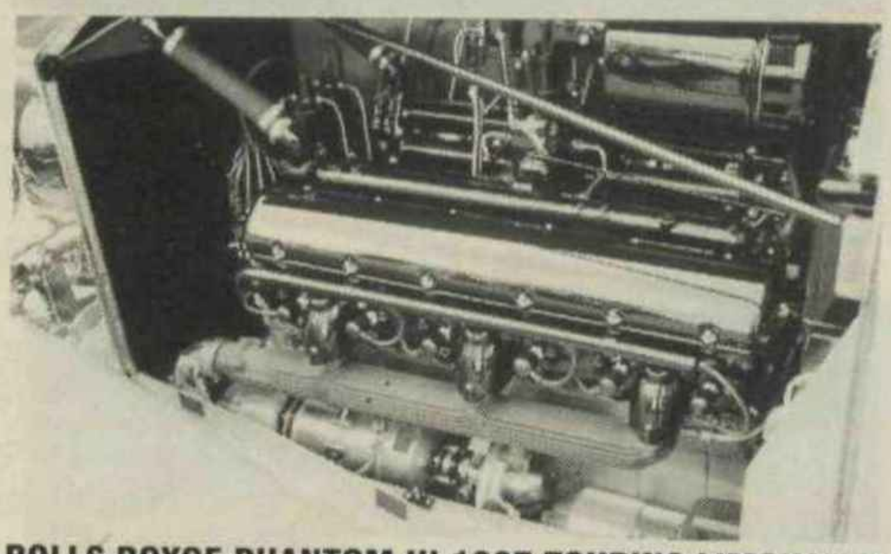
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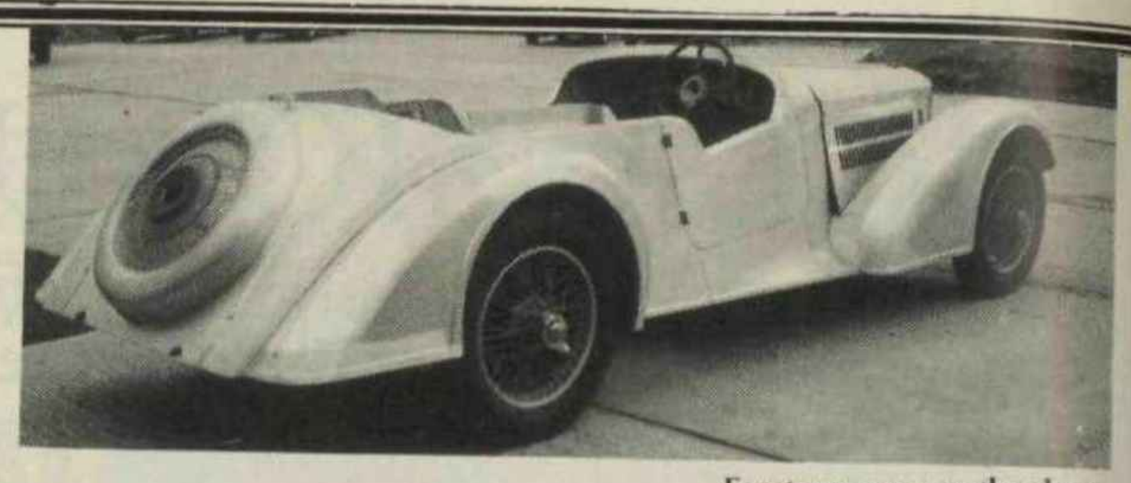




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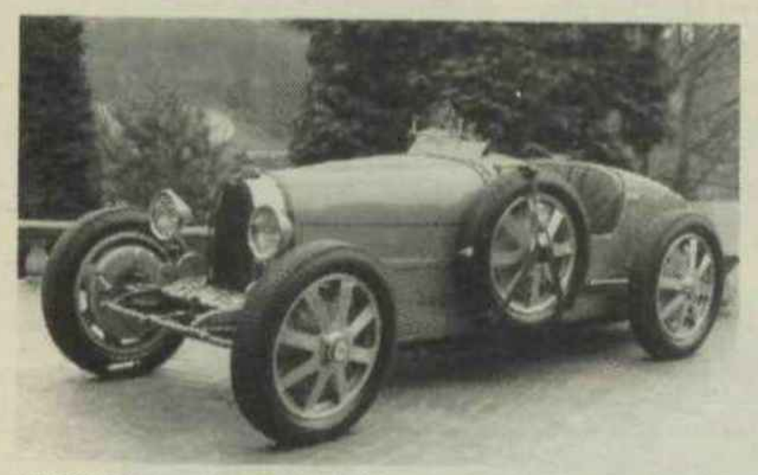
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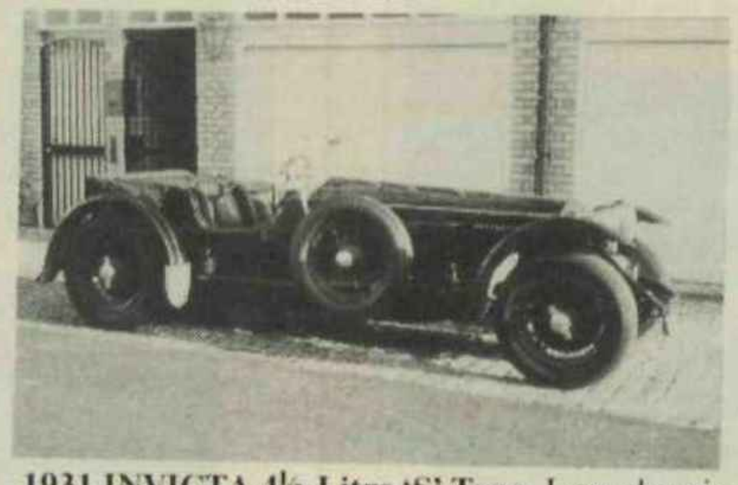
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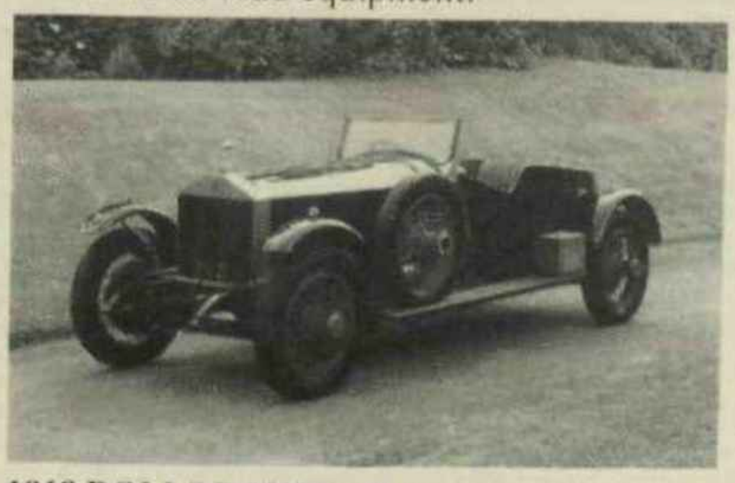
1927 BUGATTI TYPE 35T. Chassis No 4887. Continuous history converted to 35B specification. Full road equipment.



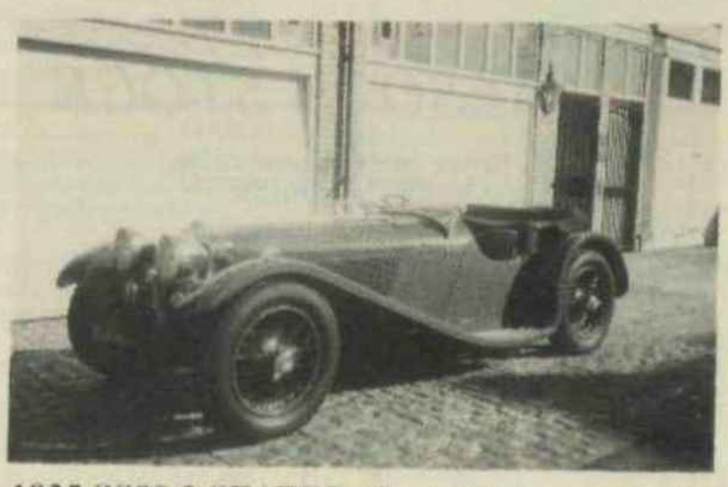
1931 INVICTA 4½-Litre 'S' Type. Low chassis 2/4 seater.



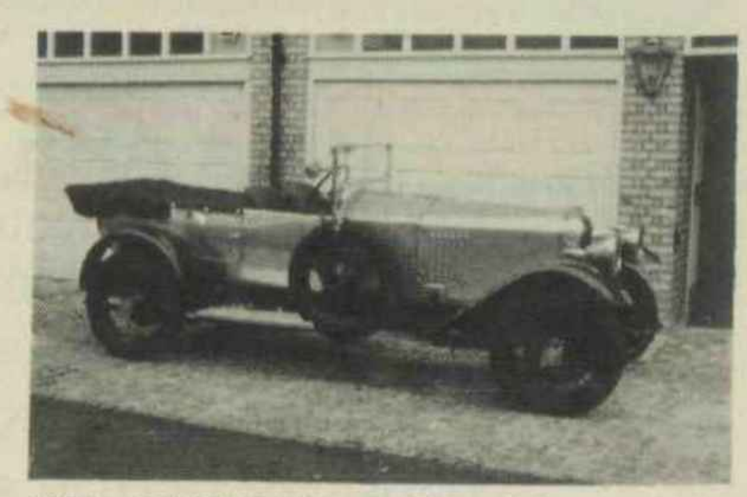
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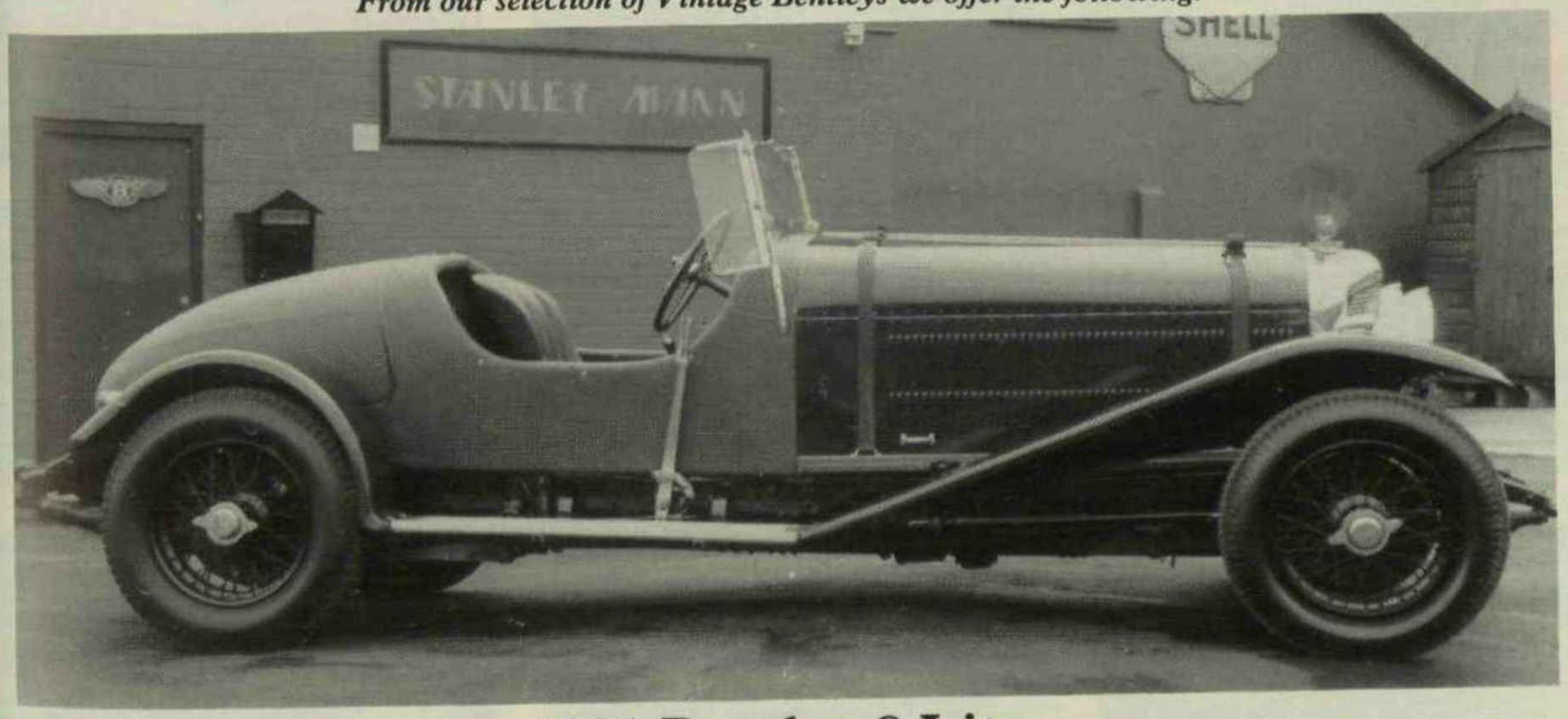
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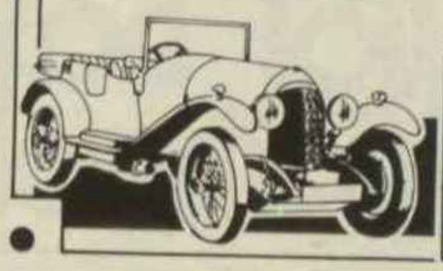
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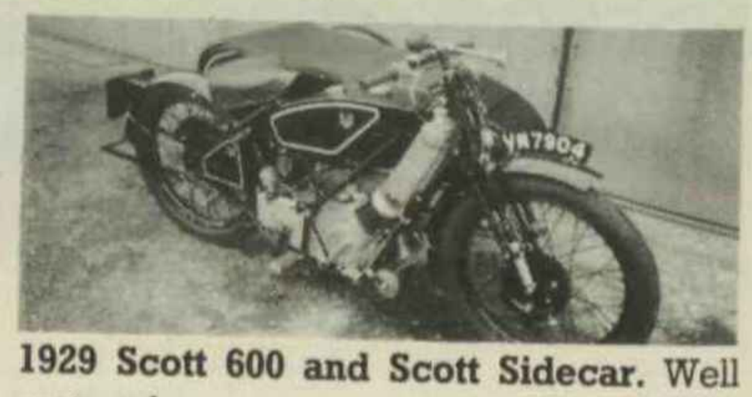
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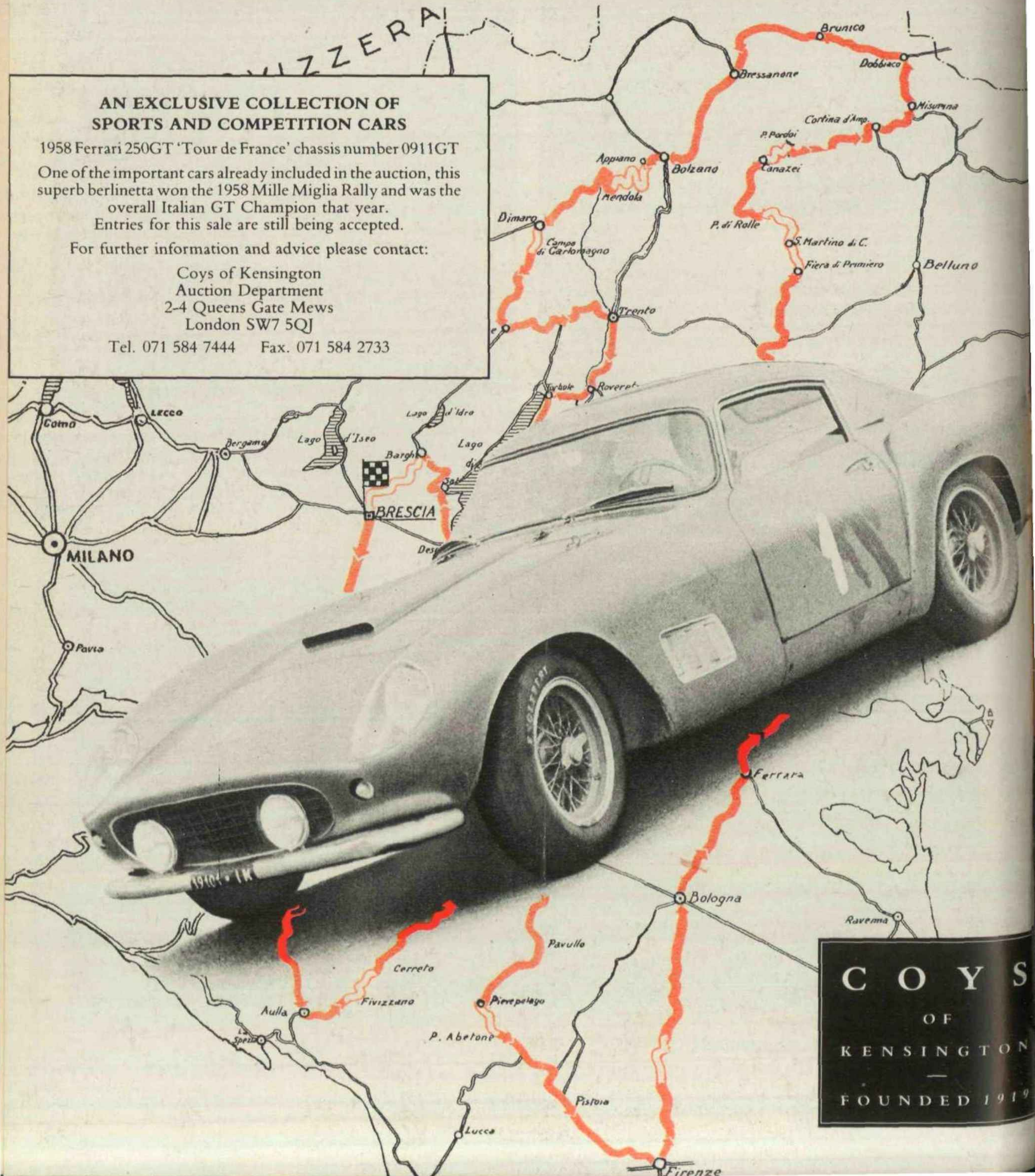
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