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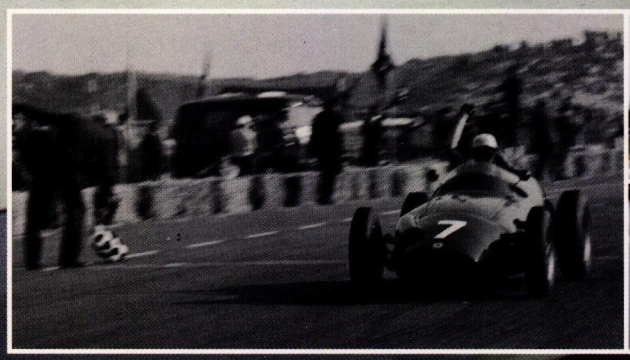
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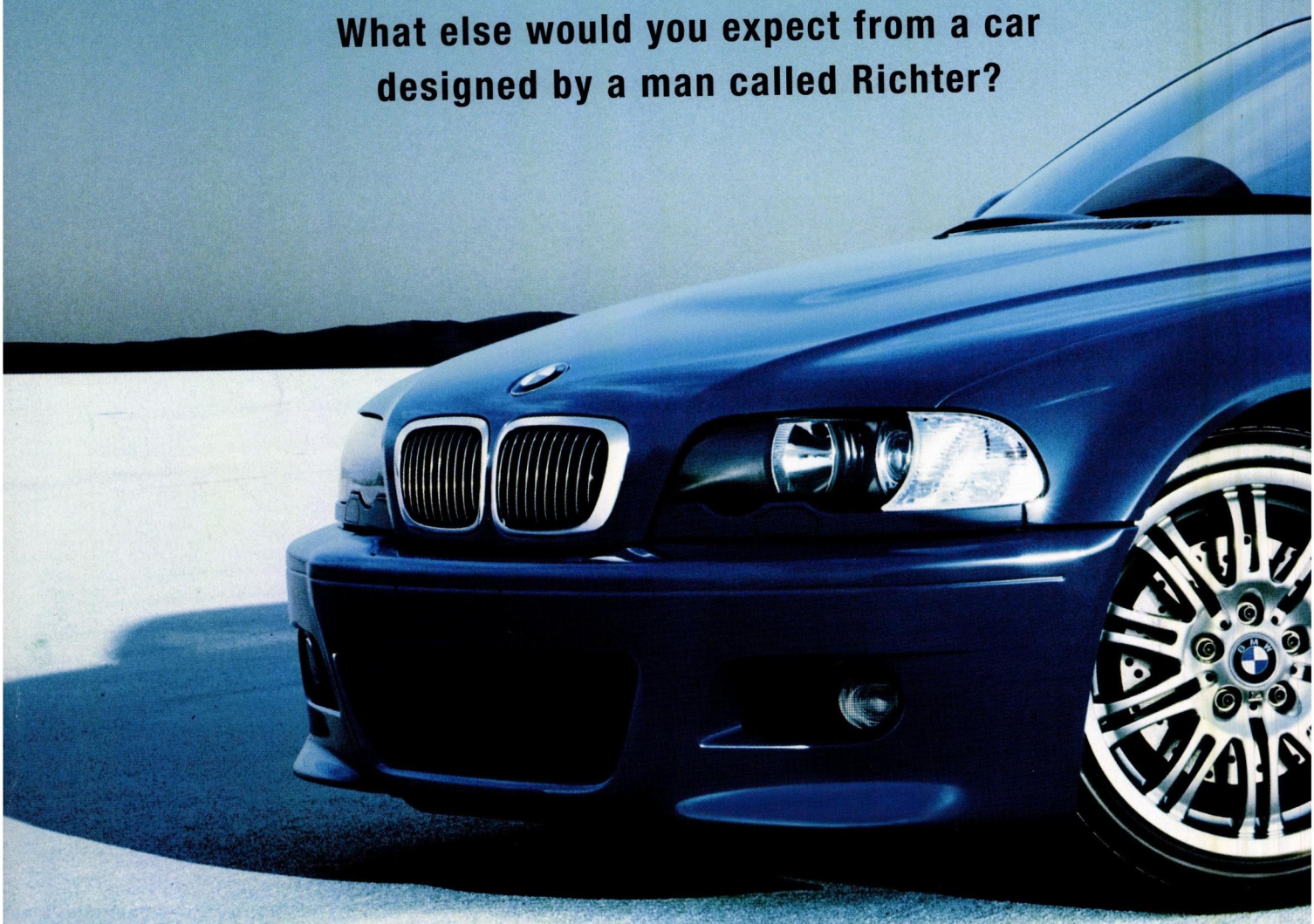


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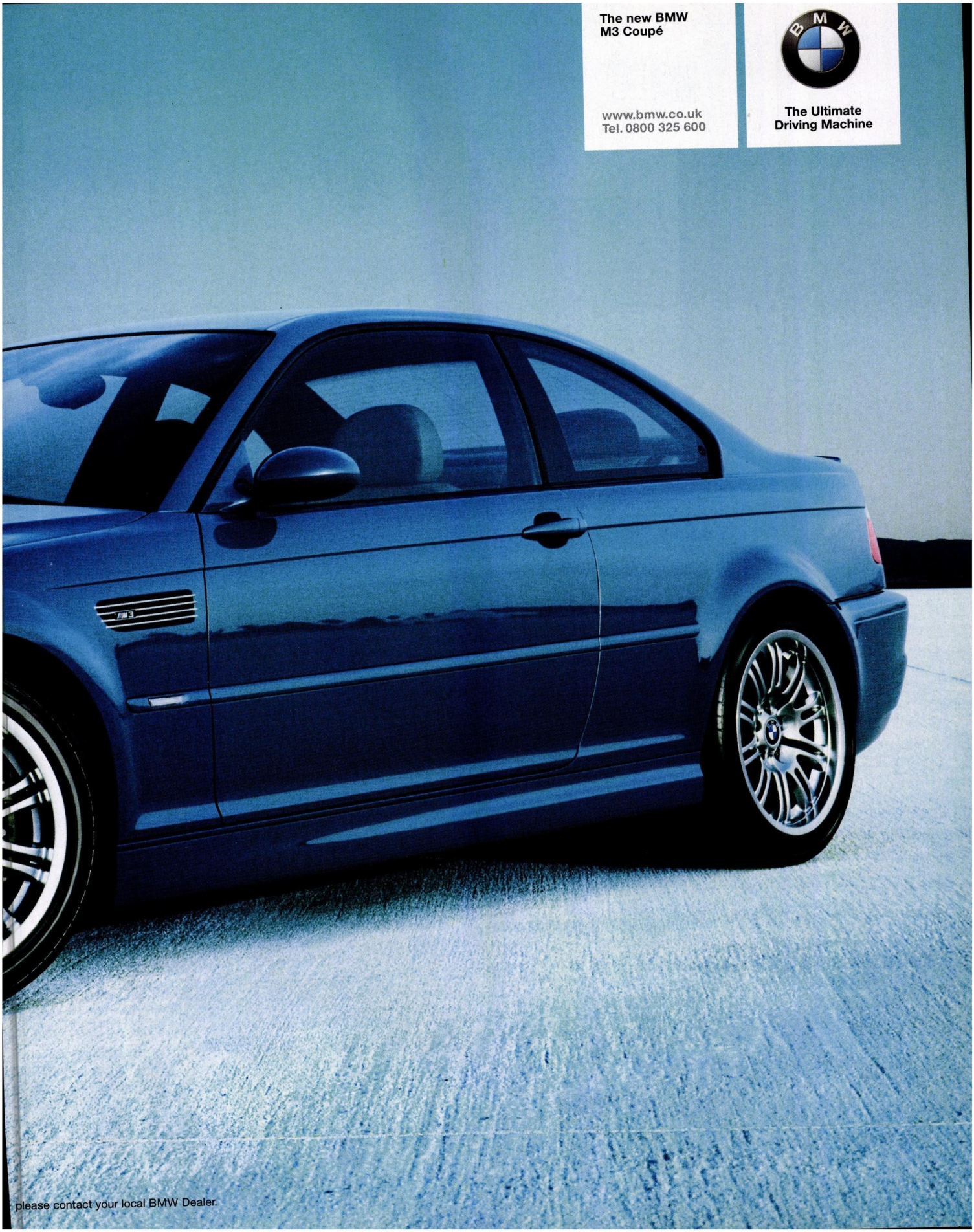
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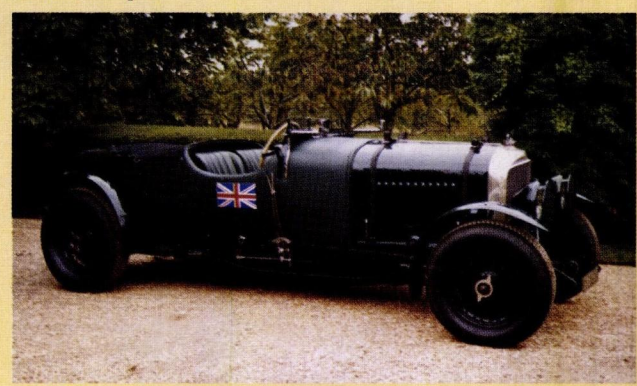
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editorial



THERE USED TO BE A TIME WHEN Ferrari couldn't hit a barn door from three paces. They were publicly loved, privately ridiculed – all that money, all that failure. These days, though, they run like a Swiss timepiece, fabled Latin temperament subjugated to the process of winning. Right now, they just can't miss – as Herr Schumacher proved in Australia.

Formula One without Ferrari, heroic or chaotic, is unthinkable. But it was a distinct possibility 28 years ago, when I attended my first grand prix. The trip was a sixth birthday present. It was a gift akin to the Hornby 00 or Scalextric a father buys his new-born son – or daughter – but handed-down tales of motor racing meant I was on the edge of my seat (we stood, actually, adjacent to the Copse braking area) come race day. I was straining to see the Ferraris – and the BRMs.

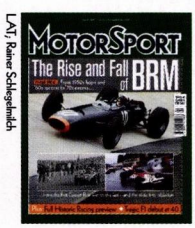
Little did I know that both teams were in a slump. Ferrari, riven by industrial action back home, entered just one car for the 1973 British GP, to be driven by a disenchanted Jacky Ickx. I am pleased to say that in between sight-bites of black-and-gold Lotuses, Frank Gardner's Wagnerian Camaro and a startline shunt in a single-seater support race, I can picture the Belgian star's gold-wheeled Ferrari shimmering over the rise to Maggotts. He finished a distant eighth, and his second spell with the Scuderia only had one more race to run.

Ferrari's batten-down-the-hatches approach made sense. Regroup. Assess. Act. And in 1974, they were one of the top teams again, winning races, challenging for the title – a remarkable turnaround, when you come to think about it.

BRM sent three cars to Silverstone, at a time when two-car teams were the norm. Such practice was not unknown at the time – McLaren memorably had an extra car for Jody Scheckter that race – but what was different was that this was BRM's idea of battening down the hatches. They had regularly run four, even five cars, the previous season. This grapeshot tactic was a desperate bid to raise revenue (Marlboro's first F1 deal had a strong performance-related element to it) but it bankrupted the team – in terms of human resources as much as financially. They soldiered on, almost in denial, until 1977, but there was to be no Ferrari-like turnaround. Formula One without BRM, chaotic or heroic, was unthinkable. But it was reality.

Like Ferrari, BRM were loved and ridiculed. Like Ferrari, they were prone to theatrics. Like Ferrari, there were times when, and tracks where, they just couldn't miss, and times when the barn was as safe as houses.

Big egos, tall stories, stranger-than-fiction truth, BRM was this country's Ferrari. It's a shame they went under, not Down Under.



LAT, Rainer Schlegelmilch

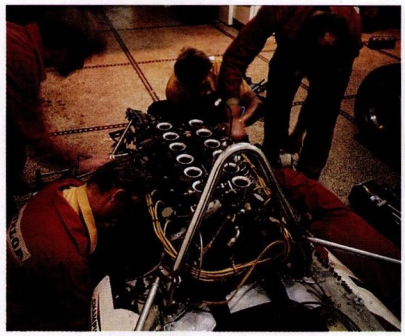
Cover: Jackie Stewart, BRM P261, 1965 German GP, Nürburgring (main image); Jo Bonnier BRM P25, 1959 Dutch GP, Zandvoort (inset left); Jean-Pierre Beltoise, BRM P160B, 1972 Monaco GP (right)

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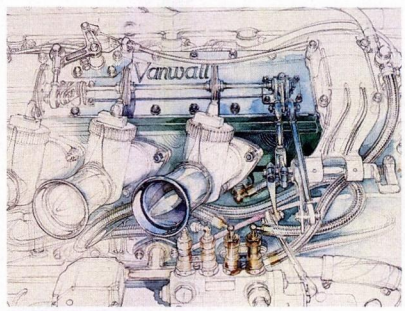




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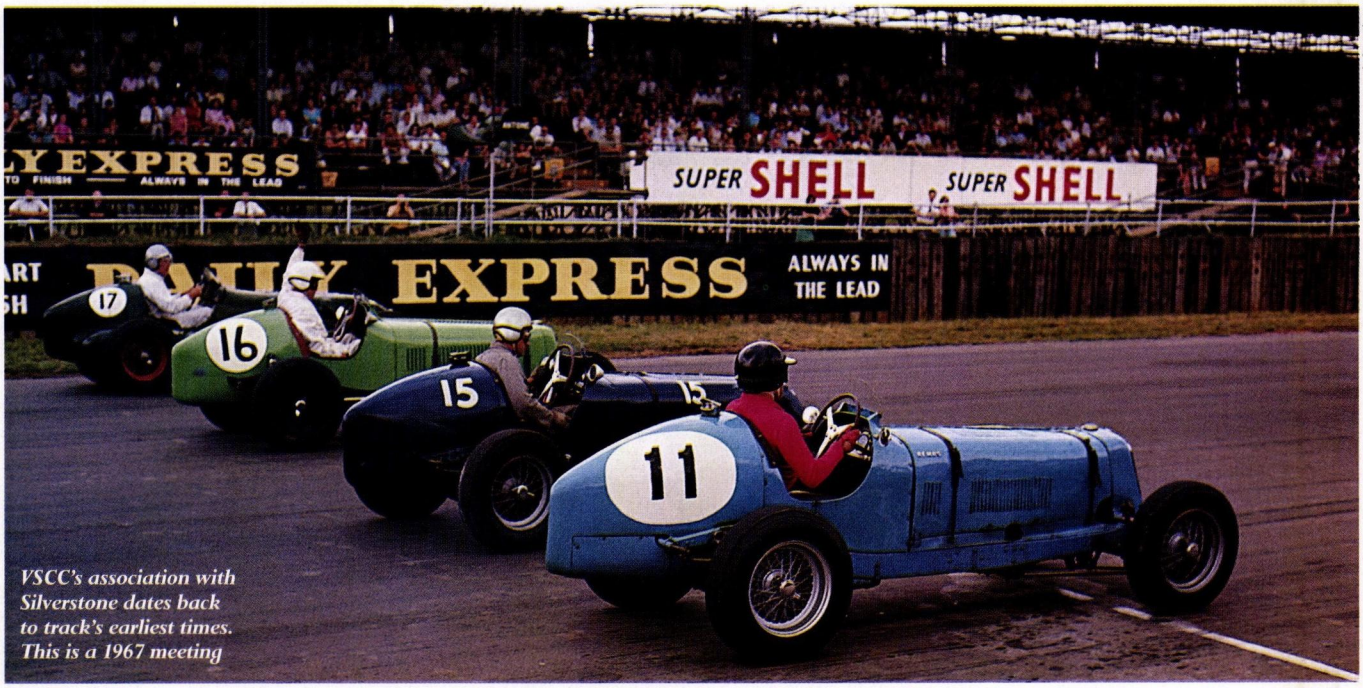
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Say it ain't so, Jo *Having waited patiently, Jo Schlesser got his F1 chance, aged 40. But it was to all end in tragedy. Page 90*

MATTERS *of* MOMENT

NEWS, VIEWS AND COMMENT



VSCC's association with Silverstone dates back to track's earliest times. This is a 1967 meeting

All photographs: LAT

CLUBS BATTLE TO MAINTAIN DATES AT SILVERSTONE

THE FUTURE OF VINTAGE AND HISTORIC RACE MEETINGS at Silverstone has been thrown into doubt by recent changes to the circuit hire charges. Following the recent agreement between Octagon Motorsport and the BRDC, clubs running meetings at the track face a sizeable increase in costs.

For decades, clubs like the VSCC, the Aston Martin Owners' Club and the Historic Sports Car Club have used Silverstone as a key part of their racing calendar. Not only do they now face a substantial rise in the basic hire cost, they could also lose the benefit of a long-running subsidy offered by the BRDC.

The new terms also take gate receipts away from the clubs, leaving them facing difficulty in making meetings commercially viable.

"The new deal means that circuit hire costs will almost double," said a spokesman for one club. "It hurts the economics of the whole meeting. A Silverstone meeting is always a big event of the year for our members."

Dialogue over the future of any possible subsidy has been opened in the hope of persuading the BRDC to continue assisting such events.

The VSCC organises two race meetings at Silverstone and its president Julian Ghosh hopes to resolve the situation: "The VSCC has had a good relationship with the BRDC ever since the airfield was acquired, and wishes to continue this with the new operators. We are sympathetic with their desire to maintain Silverstone as a world-class GP circuit. This can only be good for motorsport, but obviously this will change the face of club racing.

"And since the VSCC heavily promotes its events and enjoys good attendance, we feel there is scope for some commercial common ground between us and Octagon Motorsports."

BRDC secretary Roger Lane-Nott said: "We understand the situation and have received correspondence from some clubs. It may be possible to help this year, but it is likely that the subsidy will not be available in 2002."

CRYSTAL PALACE HERITAGE UNDER THREAT

DEVELOPMENT WORK WITHIN THE CRYSTAL PALACE PARK HAS PUT THE remaining sections of the former race circuit under threat.

Although not used for racing since 1972, a considerable amount of the original track remains and has been used for the last four years for a sprint event run by Sevenoaks and District Motor Club. In its heyday, the circuit hosted rounds of the European Formula 2 Championship.

Now Bromley Council is planning to return the park to a condition mirroring its state in Victorian times, and the Tarmac racetrack could be dug up. "The track will be narrower under the work that is going on," said a spokesman for Bromley Council. "It will be designed for cycling and work should be complete in 2002." Although work has not yet started, it is scheduled to begin later this year.



Glade runners: Stewart heads Cevert, F2, 1970

Neil Brooks-Johnson is lobbying the council on behalf of Sevenoaks DMC: "There is still a chance of saving some of the track, but I'm not sure how much. There is some hope of a reprieve."

SNETTERTON'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SNETTERTON circuit will be celebrated in June during a two-day race meeting organised by the Aston Martin Owners' Club.

Central to the event will be a recreation of the *Autosport* three-hour sportscar race and the newly-instigated John Cooper Memorial Race for 500cc F3 cars.

The *Autosport* three-hour race will run into the evening of Saturday, and there will also be a fly-past by the US Air Force.

The 2.71-mile circuit on the site of the Snetterton Heath wartime airfield hosted a number of international events in the 1950s and 1960s before becoming better known as a national racing and testing venue.

AMOC, which ran the first competitive event at Snetterton, plans to attract some drivers from that opening meeting to the 23/24 June event.



Snetterton, a child of the '50s, is still going strong 50 years later

EVENTS OF NOTE

MARCH

31-APRIL 1 NOGARO (F)
Opening round of the FORCE Classic Grand Prix Series. Tel: 01306 73051

APRIL

7-8 BARCELONA (E)
FIA Cup for Thoroughbred GP Cars season begins. Tel: 01621 892814

8 DONINGTON PARK (GB)
HSCC meeting includes most of the club's categories, including the Group 6 cars of the RJB Thundersports. Tel: 01327 858400

9-14 FRANCE
Tour Auto – a five-day blast around some of the country's famous racing venues. Tel: 00 33 1 4259 7340

15-16 BRANDS HATCH (GB)
Opening round of BTCC includes an HGPCA race. Tel: 01935 872255

16 THRUXTON (GB)
Easter Monday: opening event of BARC Classic Race Meeting series. Tel: 01264 882200

21 SILVERSTONE (GB)
VSCC's Spring Start meeting at Silverstone. Tel: 01608 644777

22 MALLORY PARK (GB)
HSCC meeting. Tel: 01327 858400

Dependent on foot-and-mouth restrictions

BRITS VS YANKS AT ROCKINGHAM

THE COYS HISTORIC FESTIVAL AT ROCKINGHAM WILL feature a Transcontinental Historic Saloon Car Race for pre-65 cars with six-cylinder engines or greater.

Julius Thurgood is bringing together a capacity field for the meeting and British and American cars will go head-to-head on the oval track.

"We have had a terrific response," says Thurgood, who promises Ford Mustangs, Falcons and Zephyrs, Jaguars – and even an Alfa Romeo 2600.

The 45-minute race will be an optional two-driver event, with at least 34 cars on the grid.



Muscle bound for Rockingham: Ford heavy metal will star in Coys Festival

news in brief

PRINCE BIRA'S RACING career will be one of the themes of the annual Louis Vuitton Classic to be held at the Hurlingham Club in London on Saturday 2 June. It is planned to reunite his three ERAs (Romulus, Remus and Hanuman) as well as several of his sportscars at the concours d'elegance event.

* * *

OLLON-VILLARS HILLCLIMB in Switzerland will be recreated with an historic event over the weekend of 15/16 September. More than 160 cars and motorbikes will tackle the 8km hill in the Swiss Alps. The hill was used between 1953-71 as a round of the European championship and the record is held by François Cevert in a Tecno, 3min 47sec.

* * *

THE XK CHALLENGE SERIES of races run by the Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club and the Historic Sports Car Club is booming. Up to 50 Jaguar XK120s and XK150s will be racing this season, nearly half of them in the hands of drivers new to the sport.

* * *

THE FIA CUP FOR Thoroughbred GP Cars and the European Historic F2 Trophy will include races at Ireland's Mondello Park. The weekend of 1/2 September should mark the most significant historic meeting to date at the Co Kildare track.

* * *

JOHN QUENBY IS RETIRING as Chief Executive of MSA, the sport's governing body in the UK. He will be succeeded by Colin Hilton, but will retain a consultancy role until the autumn.

DISASTER STRUCK THE Brooklands Museum recently when it was engulfed by two feet of floodwater from the River Wey. Most exhibits were moved to dry ground by the museum staff and helpers, but damage is still estimated as high as £1 million. The museum is launching an appeal for repair funds.

* * *

UP TO 100 JAGUAR E-TYPES will gather at Donington on 9/10 June to celebrate 40 years of the model. The weekend's race meeting, organised by AMOC and the Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club, will celebrate the E-type on and off the track.

* * *

CAN-AM AND GROUP 6 sportscars will return to Thruxton in August for a round of the International Supersports Cup. Not since the early 1970s have cars of this nature competed at the fast Hampshire track.

* * *

THE COYS HISTORIC Festival at Rockingham will feature an auction of Jaguar race cars during the three-day meeting over the weekend of 26-28 May.

* * *

DUKE NALON, THE LONG-time Indianapolis Novi driver, has died aged 87. The Chicago-born ace never won the great US race, but gained legendary status for his qualifying performances in the big V8 front-wheel-drive cars. He almost won at the Brickyard in 1948, and the track almost claimed him the following year, Duke escaping a huge fireball of an accident. Nalon also raced a Mercedes-Benz W154 in the 1947 '500'.

All photographs: LAT



Before his black Chevys became a US institution, Earnhardt recorded the first of his seven Winston Cup titles in this less menacing version in 1980

obituary

Dale Earnhardt

A LATE SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 1996. THE GREAT ROOM of London's Grosvenor House looks like a bomb's hit it as frantic, last-minute preparations take place for that evening's *Autosport* Awards. A figure in black Wranglers and cowboy boots swaggers through the lobby, takes in the scene, then thrusts out a paw to a harassed journalist.

"Hi, I'm Dale Earnhardt, pleased to meet you. Looks like you're gonna have quite a show here tonight. Y'all look awful busy, but if there's anything I can do to help, I'd be pleased to oblige."

I'd invited the seven-time NASCAR Winston Cup champion and full-time legend to London to receive a Gregor Grant Award for lifetime achievement – and to my surprise, he'd accepted. But only on the smiling proviso that we'd bring him over and give him another when he landed titles eight, nine and 10. "I could become a tradition," he joked.

Earnhardt's stamina was legendary, and so it seemed were his travel arrangements: private jet from Charlotte to JFK, Concorde to Heathrow late on Saturday, a few hours sleep, then a Sunday morning shopping with wife Teresa – 'Man, she had me at Harrods before the darn thing had opened!'

After the awards, it was back on Concorde – a total of just 36 hours on UK soil. Earnhardt reckoned he and the trophy would be back on his Mooresville, North Carolina farm just after lunch. "Sure it's pretty hectic," he told me, "but to know that what I'd accomplished was being recognised outside my own country, that was pretty special."

Earnhardt never did come over to pick up a second award, but perhaps 2001 would have been the year. After a couple of seasons in the doldrums, '99 had seen him a genuine title-contender again. The desire, the effort and the aggression had never waned – and never would. But it wasn't until he'd teamed up with new crew chief Kevin Hamlin in '98 that the chemistry which had allowed him to dominate much of the '80s and early '90s finally returned. 'The Intimidator' – a perfect title – had finished runner-up in 2000, and was confident of going one better in his trademark black Chevrolet Monte Carlo this time around.

As usual, the Daytona 500 cranked the season into life and, as usual, Earnhardt was the pre-race favourite for



an event he'd come to regard as something of a necessary evil, a tightly-packed lottery created by power-sapping carburettor restrictor plates to keep speeds below the taboo 200mph mark. Earnhardt, the 1998 '500' winner, had a better record than anybody at Daytona. In the all-important draft, his rivals believed he could actually see the air. But Earnhardt preferred his thrills a little less subtle than the 40-car games of chess the much-loathed plates supplied.

In the 2001 running of the 'Great American Race', Dale had been near the front all afternoon, leading when he pleased, holding back when he wanted, until a 19-car accident after three-quarter distance meant the race would boil down to a 20-lap sprint – the perfect stage for 'The Intimidator' to do his stuff.

With a couple of laps to go, he was third, but Chevys owned by him and driven by friend Michael Waltrip and son Dale Jr held first and second. Rather than attack, he chose to defend and, entering the final turn of the final lap, his car brushed Sterling Marlin's Dodge. Earnhardt over-corrected, rode up the 31-degree banking and hit the wall, collecting Ken Schrader's Pontiac on the way. No big deal, something we'd seen hundreds of times before.

The two cars rolled to the bottom of the apron and Schrader got out. Earnhardt didn't. He had been thrown against his steering wheel, killing him instantly.

As well as those seven titles, equalling the record of 'King' Richard Petty, Earnhardt notched up 76 Winston Cup victories and US$41m in prize money, plus a staggering 25,000 laps in the lead. But for years the son of NASCAR great Ralph had lived in near-poverty as he attempted to break into the big time. He was a shy, ill-educated former textile worker from Kannapolis, NC, who had failed to set the world alight in his eight sporadic Winston Cup starts between 1975 and late '78. But Charlotte Motor Speedway promoter 'Humpy' Wheeler thought he saw a lot of the late Ralph's aggression in the kid and recommended him to Californian businessman Rod Osterlund.

In 1979, Earnhardt was Rookie of the Year, and followed that with the overall title in '80. But after Osterlund lost interest in stock car racing, Earnhardt endured two relatively unsuccessful seasons before being rescued by the legendary Junior Johnson, who told journeyman driver Richard Childress to quit playing at racing and get serious as a team-owner. If he took Earnhardt on, he'd lend him engines and advice.

Earnhardt and Childress took six titles together.

But at 49 years old, Earnhardt was beginning to look at a life away from driving. His cars were winning races, his businesses were thriving and there was a whole lot of huntin' and fishin' to be done. Two more years of racing? Well, maybe three, or four. Then sit back and watch the boy Dale pick up where dad left off.

Talented Jr will continue the family's winning tradition but, tragically, his father won't be there to see it.

Laurence Foster

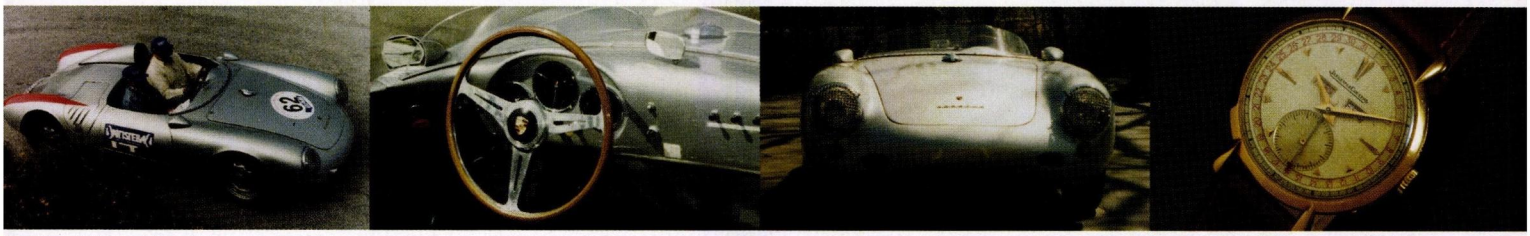
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Illustrated above: 1956 PORSCHE 550A SPYDER – an impeccably restored example of the Stuttgart marque's landmark competition model in its ultimate 'A' version, unusually still fitted with its original engine and coachwork.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Write to: MOTOR SPORT, Somerset House, 80 Somerset Road, Teddington, Middx TW11 8RT, Great Britain. **E-Mail (please include address):** motorsport@haynet.com

The Editor reserves the right to edit all letters

FULL-FACE THE FACTS

SIR,

I write to refute the remark made in the February 2001 issue, page 62, stating that the Vintage Sports-Car Club has banned open-face helmets. This is not true.

While the VSCC is very determined in its approach to encourage young people to participate in motorsport, this does not extend to any autocratic belief that we are an authority on safety standards.

There are many scientifically-based facts to indicate that a choice must remain and, as such, may depend on the application.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

JULIAN GHOSH, PRESIDENT OF THE VSCC

* * * *

INJECTION INTERJECTION

SIR,

As a Lucas worker, I was interested to read the article 'Lucas Fuel Injection' in December's issue.

It is true Lucas were never able to capitalise fully on their motor racing successes with fuel injection. Under the guidance of R H Wood, the Lucas racing manager, they were successful in having the equipment fitted to either the F1 drivers' or constructors' championship-winning car for a total of 25 consecutive years (1956-81).

During this period Lucas tried very hard to persuade the motor industry to fit fuel injection as standard equipment, but only Triumph and Maserati did so, though various others, who I cannot remember, tried it out but did not take it up as either standard or optional equipment. It was probably in advance of its time and, as always, cost played a decisive part as far as manufacturers were concerned.

You would only have to check the end-of-season Lucas Success advertising on the back cover of MOTOR SPORT and other motoring journals, to verify the facts. So to say 'Lucas Prince of Darkness' may be glib, but it is not entirely true.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

H B HOMER, BROMYARD, HEREFORDSHIRE

* * * *

DRIVING US CRAZY

SIR,

I must applaud Bill Boddy's recent article, 'War on Car Owners', having fallen victim myself. We moved house recently and I drew up a list of some 25 organisations needing to be notified. Seven of these replied to our new address, saying in effect, 'Thank you for telling us of your new address'. Every one of these seven was a local or national government department.

Following the instructions on my old driving licence, I filled in the change of address section and waited for my nice new licence. Silly me. I must now apply for a photocard driving licence, like it or not. I have had a mugshot taken at the local Post Office, cost £3, and must now get both this photograph and part of the application form filled in by a person of 'good standing' who has known me for two years or more, so good that they will be checked by the DVLA. I do not have a current passport so this option is not open to me. This list of suitable persons to sign my photo makes interesting reading, I am a normal law-abiding citizen so do not know a magistrate or a police officer; I do not attend church so cannot call a local vicar, etc.

Fortunately, we did not move far on this occasion so I can ask our doctor to do the necessary (at a cost of £8 for his trouble). What would happen if I had moved 2-300 miles? The photo must be signed in my presence, so would that have meant a return trip at yet more cost?

I have now sent off my form together with my birth certificate and am waiting to see what I get for my £11 – certainly not a red book licence that was something that seemed worth having.

I have complained to my MP (who also is not trusted by DVLA) but don't expect a sensible reply. As Bill Boddy says, roll on the next election – but don't hold your breath.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

P DOWLER, BIDEFORD, DEVON

* * * *

CAT FLOP'S TOP LAPS

SIR,

Recently, I was pleased to see your features on the career of Tony Brise, (a champion in the making, if ever there was one). Despite the necessarily sad reporting of his unfair ending, along with Graham, I felt the article was fair on all concerned. What could have been mawkish was actually just good reportage, and did justice to all.

The issue on 1976 was a complete joy and, for once, I can definitely say along with Simon Taylor, 'I was there!'

One feature stands out from recent issues and epitomise my reconciliation with MOTOR SPORT. I firmly believe that The Best Racing Car Ever was the Jaguar XJ5.3C. One finds little on it in current literature, and this is a shame. Even grudgingly allowing that it was maybe only 'potentially TBRCE' (for it suffered shamefully from lack of commitment and development money from British Leyland), if you were there at the TT in '77 when it came round the chicane at Woodcote you would have to agree that nothing has ever looked or sounded so good again. And then, in September 2000, there you are, at grips with the best car in the world. I think that I must now commit myself to you forever, and I am arranging a subscription.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

PAUL W HIRST, HAREWOOD, LEEDS

* * * *

LEST WE FORGET

SIR,

May I congratulate you on the theme of the editorial of your March issue in which you rightly draw attention to Gordon Cruickshank's magnificently-constructed feature on Brooklands as it exists today.

Like Gordon and the vast majority of people who write about motor racing, I never witnessed the action on the track and have had to rely on the words of those who did, notably Bill Boddy.

As Mr Cruickshank makes clear, only by actually visiting the site can one obtain a true measure of the grandeur of the place, the magnitude of the engineering achievement, and the skill and bravery of those who competed over the various courses which were created there, so often in cars as notable for their fragility as for their sometimes immense power.

It is important that such a significant part of the history of British motorsport should be firmly implanted in the minds of all racing enthusiasts who, probably through age, were denied the opportunity to witness it at first-hand. This is why, during the summer, Motor Racing Publications will republish Bill Boddy's long-out-of-print definitive history of Brooklands in an entirely new edition which we intend to restrict to 2000 numbered copies.

May I therefore take this opportunity to express my thanks to the Brooklands Museum and to the Brooklands Society for providing us with access to their respective archives, and to Bill himself, my long-time friend and former colleague (back in 1960 we worked from adjacent offices in City Road) for his continuing industry during the past year in carrying out extensive revision of his original text and adding new material where he has deemed it necessary. It is our hope that the quality of the end product will be judged a fitting and lasting tribute to the famous motor course, the remnants of which so many people these days work so hard to sustain.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

JOHN BLUNSDEN, CROYDON, SURREY



Jaguar's ill-fated XJ5.3C – best race car ever? One reader thinks so



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LETTERS FROM READERS

CANDID CAMERA

SIR,

I enjoyed reading your track visit to the Aintree circuit and thought you might be interested in the following story.

In 1962, as a teenager, I decided to go to the British Grand Prix at Aintree with my friend, Peter. We took only our cameras and sleeping bags and, after the practice session, slept under a hoarding out on the circuit so that we would be on the inside on race day.

I was very keen on photography and had recently covered a local scrambling meeting where the organisers gave me an armband printed 'Official Photographer'.

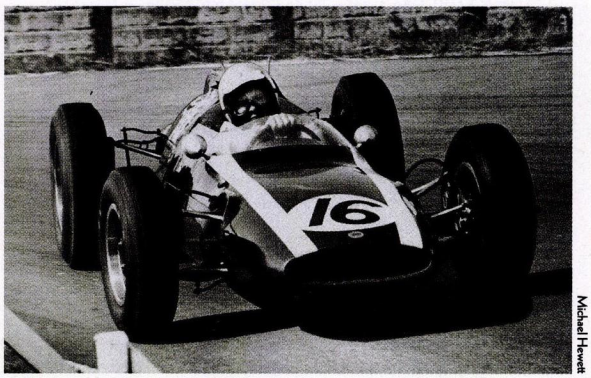
As the GP was about to start, my friend and I were still on the inside of the circuit (I was wearing the armband) so we decided to stay at Anchor Crossing as there was no-one else around.

After a few laps the Police arrived to evict people not wearing a pass. They escorted my friend back to the paddock and then questioned me. I told them I had applied for a photographer's pass but the organisers had run out and given me this armband instead. It worked!

With my new-found confidence, I decided to get as close as I could to the action, and took the enclosed picture that has never been published.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

MICHAEL HEWETT, CATERHAM, SURREY



Michael Hewett

Sheer cunning helped get this shot of Bruce McLaren at Aintree

* * * *

STERLING ROVER

SIR,

The main reason for my writing is to thank you for the article on the timeless Frank Lockhart and his 'affair' with the Rover Special. I met Frank himself at a VSCC meeting at Thruxton and he was at all times charming – something which obviously hasn't changed.

At the time the Special had the same radiator cowl as today but with a flat grille rather than the current, much more 'in-keeping' item.

Having been rather out of touch with the 'oldie' scene, it's great to see that this pair are still together after all this time. Any chance of seeing them mixing it with the rest of the cream at this year's Goodwood Festival?

I AM, YOURS ETC,

SIMON FENWICK, FLEET, SURREY

* * * *

NOT AT THE DOUBLE

SIR,

I enjoyed Simon Taylor's *Modern Times* column in last month's issue where he comments on how difficult back-to-back F1 titles are to achieve, and that only the four greatest drivers in the last 15 years (Senna, Schumacher, Hakkinen and Prost) have achieved this feat.

One might say that his list of four could have extended to five to include Nigel Mansell if Williams had not instead signed Prost for 1993, sending Nigel off to America – where he became a back-to-back champion of sorts.

Likewise, Damon Hill might also have done the double in 1997 had he also stayed at Williams. Still, my money this year is on Schumacher to do the back-to-back feat again, proving that he is now the greatest of the great.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

ROBERT SINFIELD, NAILSWORTH, GLOUCS

* * * *

RUDI REMEMBERED

SIR,

I thought all your readers would be enlightened to discover that the *Rhein-Zeitung* reported that the Karussell will be officially named the 'Caracciola-Karussell' – after Rudolf Caracciola, who was born 100 years ago in January and won five German GPs on the Nürburgring.

It was Caracciola who first used the banking of the Karussell, before it was paved.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

TOBY MOODY, WORCESTERSHIRE

* * * *

MORE TRACK VISITS, PLEASE!

SIR,

May I say how much I enjoyed the Brooklands track test, and how pleased I am that there will be a new series in the Autumn – great stuff!

Just in case you need any more ideas for track tests, I suggest the following: Pescara, Mille Miglia, Berne, Barcelona (Montjuich Park), Brno, Chimay (Belgium) and Vila Real (Portugal).

All of these are public roads, so would still exist in some shape or form, and would therefore make interesting subjects. Perhaps when you have finally track-tested everywhere, you can do a series on great races at these tracks you have featured – it would also be a good excuse to raid the photographic archives for lots of scenic shots.

One final thought – may I make a request, through your columns, to the powers-that-be at Goodwood: please try to attract Karl Kling, Hans Herrmann and Manfred von Brauchitsch to this year's Festival of Speed for the Mercedes-Benz feature. Also, they could try bringing Mario Andretti to the Goodwood Revival meeting, bearing in mind he may already be going to the Rockingham ChampCar race the following week!

Well, I think that's a pretty good wish-list. Many thanks for a superb magazine,

I AM, YOURS ETC,

JULIAN NOWELL, BRENTFORD, MIDDX

* * * *

PARTY PROPER

SIR,

May I, through your pages, express a huge thank you to those responsible for the Grand Prix Party at The Royal Albert Hall on 12 February. The whole event was in aid of the Brain & Spine Foundation headed by Professor Sid Watkins

The selfless attitudes of those who gave their time and effort, combined with the generosity of the F1 teams, made us feel extremely privileged to have been able to attend, sit in front of Jackie Stewart and lend our support to this worthy cause.

Well done Tony Jardine, we can't wait for next year's Party.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

STEVE BROOKER, HEXTABLE, KENT

* * * *

DE VILLOTA IN THE DETAIL

SIR,

It is not often that I can find errors in your articles, but one that I have noticed, especially as I designed at Team Lotus at the time, is your incorrect captions of Emilio de Villota on page 85 of the March edition. In both photos he is driving a Lotus 78, not a McLaren M23 as quoted.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

MARTIN OGILVIE, NETHERGATE, NORFOLK

* * * *

THAT'S YOUR SLOT!

SIR,

Reading William Boddy's article on Vauxhall 30/98s at Brooklands, with the great picture of the Birkin Bentley thundering around the top of the banking, I am very pleased to say that this year, at Brooklands, a Birkin Bentley will again be thundering around the track.

The track in question will be in the Chequered Flag room in the Clubhouse. This is the world's only full-size rail-racing track and was constructed last year to put on the Brooklands Memorial Races, which were held on 20 August at Brooklands. The event was a tremendous success and featured in two television programmes.

Pictures of the cars, track and details of the event are on the Rail Racing website at http://homepage.ntlworld.com /j.davies4

I AM, YOURS ETC,

JEFF DAVIES, NEWPORT, WALES

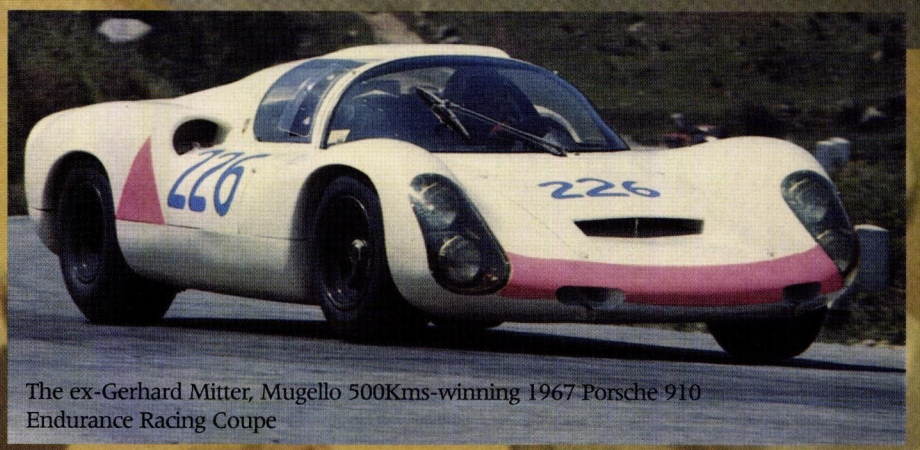
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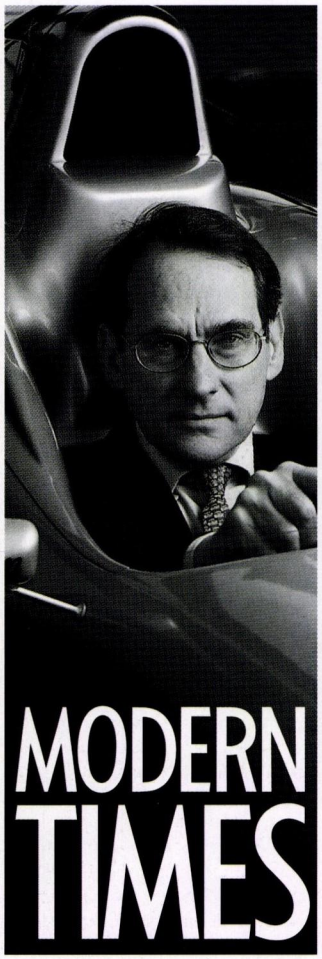
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MODERN TIMES



To serve and not be protected: safety was low on the agenda for marshals in the 1950s. A ringside view of the lead battle at Monza, '53, was compensation

All photographs: LAT

IT'S A TRUISM THAT MARSHALS ARE THE unsung heroes of motorsport. Motor racing simply wouldn't take place, at any level, without the skilled dedication of those orange-overalled enthusiasts who give their time and wholehearted involvement to making racing work.

Many people still think that getting the closest view of a Formula One race for free in return for waving a flag is a cushy number, but they couldn't be more wrong. These days, the marshals who do the key jobs at major events are invariably well-trained and very experienced. They'll have done their share of whatever is their national equivalent of standing in the rain at Lydden Hill or Cadwell Park. In this country most marshals at this year's British GP will have worked the previous weekend at a far less glamorous event, and will be working again somewhere else the weekend after.

I've got close to plenty of marshals down the years. More than once, during my own inept efforts to be a racing driver, they've pulled me out of a wrecked car. And countless times, as a journalist lucky enough to have a track pass, I've stood by as they've done their job, and got to know many of them by sight if rarely by name. Their common denominator is an extraordinarily well-informed understanding, and love, of motor racing. Without that they wouldn't work from dawn till dusk, exposed not only to all weathers but often to considerable danger, and usually for little more than a complimentary sandwich. Added to that is usually an indomitable sense of humour, together with a common-sense ability to react to any sort of incident. They are, in motor racing terms, the salt of the earth.

Marshalling in Britain has always been considered the best in the world, primarily because the sheer amount of sport in this country allows for a lot of experience. But, like everything else in Formula One, the levels of competence in marshalling around the globe have changed out of all recognition over the past two decades. I still feel a shudder of horror and regret at the needless tragedy at Kyalami in 1977, when Renzo Zorzi's Shadow came to a halt beside the undulating main straight with a minor fire. As the driver climbed out, two inexperienced young marshals ran across the track to his aid. One of them got to the other side moments before Hans Stuck's March and Tom Pryce's Shadow came over the brow, wheel to wheel at about 170mph. The other, a 19-year-old ticket clerk from Johannesburg Airport, had grabbed a heavy fire extinguisher and was still in the middle of the track when Pryce struck him. The Shadow killed the

marshal and the fire extinguisher killed Pryce, in one of the saddest and most unnecessary of F1 accidents.

Such a thing surely wouldn't happen today. But when a marshal does get hurt or worse at a grand prix, the hard-bitten, cynical world of Formula One feels genuine sadness and concern. Each driver knows the marshals help to make his world go round, and realises he may one day owe his life to one of them. Two marshals have died in the last five grands prix and, although the circumstances of each death are different, the FIA must now be under strong pressure to ensure that marshals are better protected while they do their job.

In the long run, perhaps, part of the problem will be solved by technology. For some time there have been plans for flag signals to be replaced by a system of lights, both on gantries around the circuit and automatically in the cockpits of approaching cars. FIA president Max Mosley also expects the safety car procedure to be superceded in a season or two's time by a speed limit flashing up in each cockpit, which will be centrally monitored in order to punish disobedience. (He proudly reckons the authorities will soon be able to demand the same on-board system in our daily cars, to adjust speed limits according to conditions and identify speeders. After Dutch rally driver Gatsonides gave us the Gatso, will ex-F2 driver Mosley's contribution be dubbed the Moso?) But, as far as I can see, none of these technical innovations will totally remove the need for some human involvement trackside to help the race run safely and efficiently, and to rescue drivers who need assistance.

The Australian fatality had nothing to do with this year's dramatic increase in lap speeds, and I hope the FIA doesn't try to pretend it did. Nevertheless, the governing body must feel frustrated that its efforts to reduce cornering speeds by insisting on raised front wings and simpler rear ones – and, three seasons ago, by bringing in grooved slicks – have been obliterated by the instantaneous effect of Michelin's return to Formula One. Bridgestone, very sensibly, produced conservative tyres when it had a monopoly, but has reacted at once to the return of competition. Mika Hakkinen's pole position time around Albert Park last year was 1m 30.556s; this year Michael Schumacher achieved 1m 26.892 – an extraordinary leap of 3.6 seconds.

In fact, I regard this combination of reduced downforce and improved tyres as thoroughly encouraging. I've said for a long time that the way back to races that are won and lost by overtaking on the track rather than in the pits is to have less aerodynamic grip and more mechanical grip. To a small degree that, perhaps without the FIA wanting it to be so, is what we've now got. I hope David Coulthard's neat, decisive and successful move on Barrichello was something we can expect a little more of this year.

Of this season's other regulatory innovations, the admirable insistence on stronger monocoques and extra cockpit padding must have done Jacques Villeneuve no harm at all during his horrifying accident. The doubled requirement of twin retaining cables on each wheel failed to keep any of the BAR's wheels on, even though they are calculated to withstand 10 tonnes of force. But that simply underlines the frightening energy of a car launched at 175mph, and I have no doubt that the cables will play their part in reducing mayhem and potential injury this season.

As for other lessons from Australia, the domination of Schumacher M. and Ferrari is a depressing augury for the rest of the season. In 1992, so great was the supremacy of the Williams-Renault that Nigel Mansell had clinched the world championship by mid-August, with five races still to run, and we could be in for something similar this year. I thought McLaren might be hunting for reliability this early in the season, but I wasn't expecting them to be short of speed.

Most frustrating moment of the race was when Barrichello's Ferrari clumsily booted Frentzen's Jordan into touch, because the yellow car could have finished ahead of everyone except Schumacher, and that would have pleased a lot of people. Grand prix returnee Olivier Panis was never far from team-mate Villeneuve's pace all weekend, and the penalty that dropped him from fourth to seventh ended a harsh weekend for Craig Pollock's team. Prost disappointed again, despite its Ferrari engines and its apparent speed in winter testing, but Sauber was the biggest surprise of all. What odds would you have given over the winter for Sauber going to its main sponsor's home race lying third in the constructors' championship?

Which brings me to the much-hyped rookies. Jenson Button's success last year has started a trend for teams to take a low-cost gamble on a young driver. Of this year's crop, Enrique Bernoldi put his Arrows in the wall on lap three. Juan Pablo Montoya – just as Villeneuve was in 1997, a rookie of a rather different hue – ran a strong, sensible race and would have given Williams and Michelin an impressive fourth but for a blown engine late in the race. Fernando Alonso, a Spanish teenager who was noticeably quick and courageous in Formula 3000 last year, brought Paul Stoddart's underpowered, totally untested Minardi smoothly home. And Kimi Raikkonen wrote himself indelibly into the record books as the most inexperienced driver in history to have scored a world championship point. In his 24th car race ever – and his first in a car of more than 185bhp, or lasting more than about 20 minutes – he brought his Sauber home seventh, which became sixth with Panis' penalty. More to the point, his lap times were pacy and consistent throughout the race.

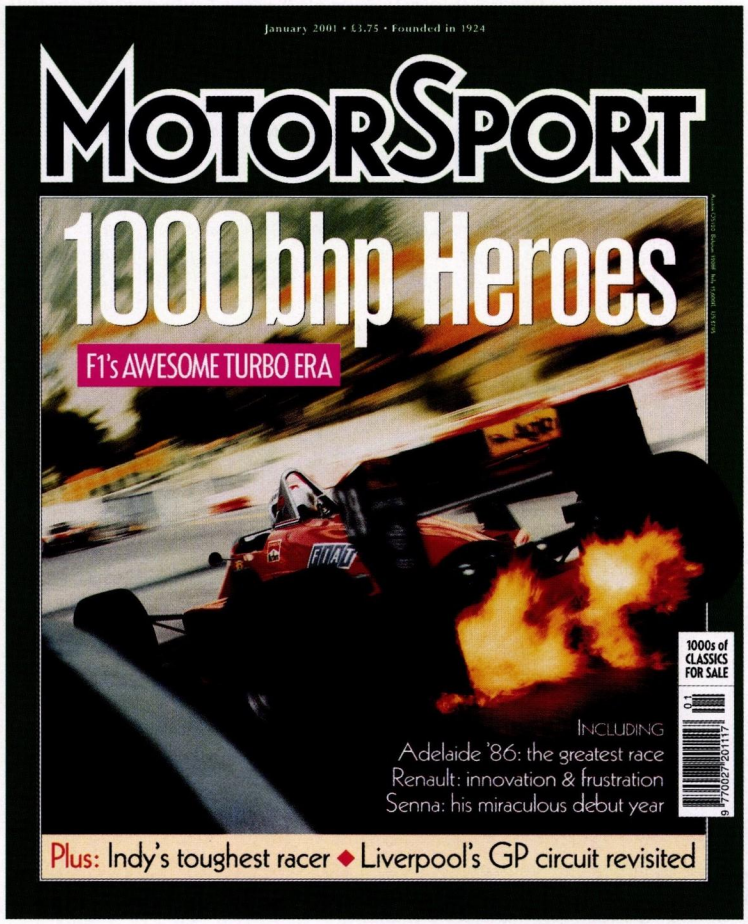
Listening to Kimi's dispassionate, relaxed comments after the race, I was reminded of his countryman Keke Rosberg, who as an F1 newcomer astonished everyone except himself by winning the torrentially wet 1978 Silverstone International Trophy in, of all things, a Theodore. But, though Keke's name was new to many, he'd already had several hard seasons in SuperVee, Atlantic and F2. That Finn was world champion four years later. Sixteen years on another man from the same sparsely-populated Scandinavian country was winning the first of two consecutive world titles. Surely this new Finn is on his way to great things, too. M

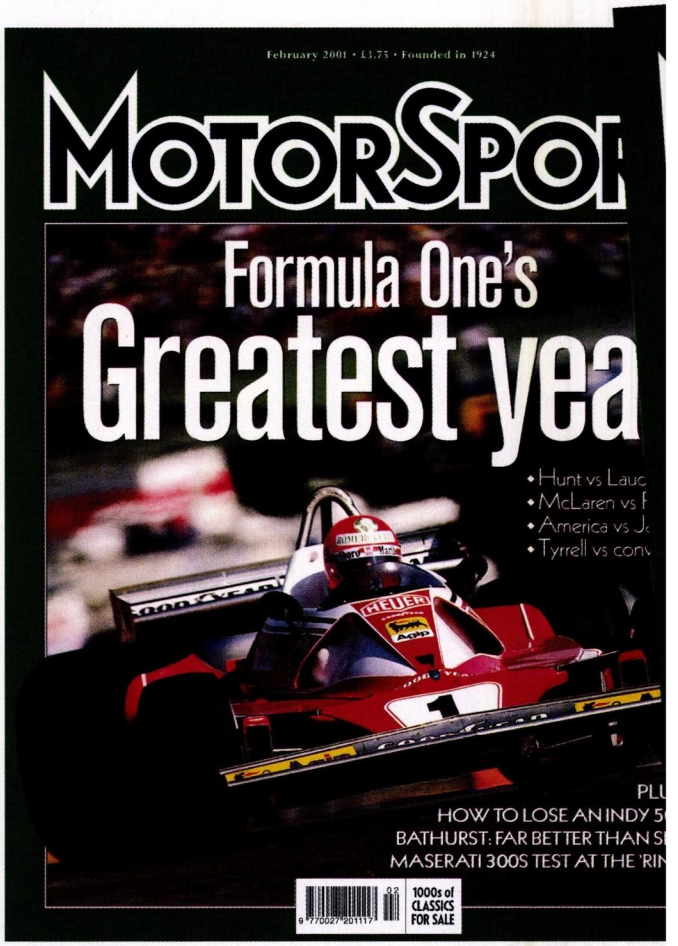


Finland's Kimi Raikkonen has taken just 23 races to reach Formula One and scored a point in his maiden grand prix

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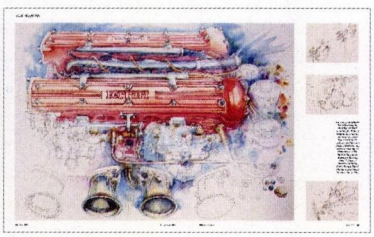


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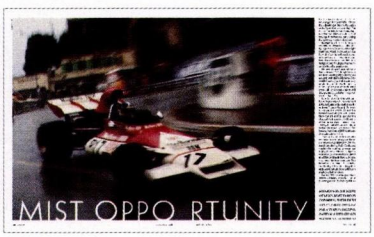
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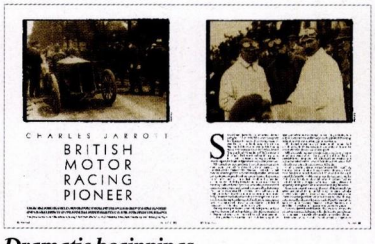


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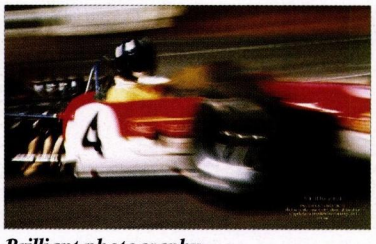
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LEGENDS

JAMES HUNT

NIKI LAUDA'S RETURN TO THE WORLD of Formula One, with Jaguar, is fine news for anyone with an appreciation of a man who speaks his mind. Asked about the return of electronic 'gizmos', like traction control, Lauda's response was to the point. "I don't like it – it should depend on the driver, not all this technical bullshit. Do we want developments for road cars, or proper racing? We need to get back to overtaking *on the track*!"

Think of Lauda, and in the same beat you think of James Hunt, good friends, yet implacable rivals, in the Formula One of 25 years ago. Both, it may be said, came into the category of 'characters'. Ye Gods, yes.

At the time, I was very much in Niki's camp, for I really didn't care too much for James during his racing career. At the height of his fame, his posse of hangers-on set your teeth on edge, but when he gave up racing, in 1979, it mercifully disappeared, and there remained a man charming and witty and kind.

Later Hunt began a second career, as a broadcaster and journalist, and I was one of many former detractors who came to hold him in great affection, as well as respect. Ultimately he came to love racing a great deal, but it wasn't always so. While he was actually doing it, he once told me, he didn't really like it very much.

Hunt became one of the great sports commentators, unsurpassed as an analyst of grand prix racing. There was always the substance of personal experience: the ability to apply his considerable intelligence to a race had come very much into play in his own career.

He loved to talk about his days with Hesketh Racing. Lord Alexander Hesketh, a racing fan from childhood, was but 22 when his association with James began. After an unsuccessful F3 campaign in 1972, it was decided to do F2 the following season. "We were all set up, with a new Surtees and a Ford engine," James recalled, "but it quickly became evident a Surtees certainly wasn't the thing to have, and neither was a Ford engine.

"We did four or five races, which were disastrous. Early in the year, though, we did a one-off F1 race, at Brands Hatch, with a rented Surtees, just for the Lord" – James invariably referred to Alexander as 'the Lord' – "to get a taste of it, and finished third. So he then suddenly took the rather intelligent view, we all thought, that we might as well do F1. At that time it was possible to do it for about 30 per cent more than F2."

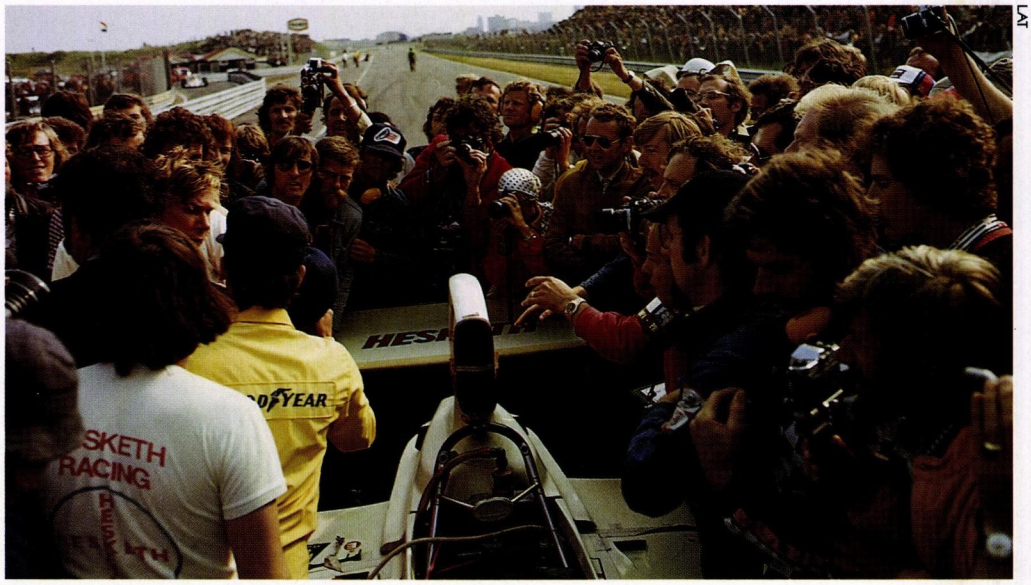
Hence, Hesketh Racing purchased a new March 731, and entered for its first grand prix, in Monte Carlo. With three laps to go, the car blew up, but it was running sixth at the time, and both driver and team had made a good impression. On the track, anyway. Off it, few knew quite what to make of Hesketh Racing.

During that week on the Côte d'Azur, Hesketh hospitality was – even by the standards of Monaco – at the lavish end of the scale, although Hunt, who liked a party as well as any man, always stressed that this was not the whole of Hesketh.

"There were two divisions: the workers, who had come along to do a job, and the social side, which was Alexander's friends, a set of extremely committed party-goers. It was just the same as a weekend in the country, and they'd certainly have been on the vodka by 10 in the morning if they'd been at the Lord's place at Easton Neston."

The workers were entirely committed to what they were doing. The lamented Harvey Postlethwaite was brought in, and 'Bubbles' Horsley was the team manager. As the season progressed, Hesketh Racing, for all its apparent fripperies, ceased to be a joke. By the time of the British Grand Prix, Hunt was among the front-runners.

"At Silverstone we were competitive," James remembered, "but I didn't have the confidence to mix it with the three in front of me – all I did was follow them round. My career had been so chequered, because of financial problems, and so on, that I'd hardly done any racing. Plus there was a lot of pressure from the team



Hunt is swamped by the press and well-wishers after proving that Hesketh Racing had substance as well as style



Hunt, 'Le Patron' and 'the workers' in Zandvoort's pits. Set-up gamble and cool, calm drive brought them victory

to keep it steady – we didn't want a crashed car, because we didn't have a spare, and so on. In my first year, I was not encouraged to race."

By season's end, though, on pace Hunt was right there. At Watkins Glen he finished at the heels of the victorious Ronnie Peterson, and for 1974 Hesketh Racing built its own car, designed by Postlethwaite. At Silverstone's International Trophy, it gave team and driver their first F1 victory, but otherwise the season was largely barren for what Hunt reckoned a 'second-division car'.

In the first race of 1975, at Buenos Aires, James got into the lead, but spun, under pressure from Emerson Fittipaldi, and finished second. "It was a long time," said Hunt, "before I learned how to win. When I made mistakes in F1, it was usually when leading, just through abject panic!"

He was to break the mould at Zandvoort. "For the first time," he always said, "I won a race more with brainbox than balls."

An hour or so before the start, it began to rain intermittently, and soon the circuit was soaked. Then the umbrellas came down again. What to do? Set up for the wet, softening rollbars, cranking on wing, or play safe with compromise settings?

Hunt and Horsley spotted a clear patch in the sky, and gambled further, leaving the Hesketh on 'dry' settings. Lauda, knowing he had the fastest car, went for compromise.

There was no option but to start on 'wet' tyres, but as soon as the race had begun, the rain stopped altogether, and the Hesketh gamble was looking good. James ran fourth, behind Lauda, Scheckter and Regazzoni.

As a dry line began to emerge, the next decision was when to stop for slicks. "Not easy," Hunt said. "The racing line itself may be dry enough for slicks, but effectively you only have two wheel tracks in which to drive, and if you go a few inches off, you're on a wet track again."

For all that, he came in after only seven laps, and at once knew he had done the right thing. So long as he had a clear track, and could keep to the dry ribbon, slicks were emphatically quicker, but Lauda, taking no chances, did not stop until lap 13. By this time Hunt had taken a chunk of time from him, and as the Ferrari rejoined, James went into the lead.

It took Niki a lap or two to get accustomed to his slicks, during which time he was passed, for second, by Jean-Pierre Jarier's Shadow. Not until lap 44 was he able to find a way past, and by then the Hesketh was some way clear.

Even so, I remember, at that point we still thought Niki would win, reasoning that the flat-12 would eat the Cosworth V8 down Zandvoort's long pit straight. As it was, Lauda, running more wing than Hunt, found his power advantage nullified, and the Hesketh, with 'dry' settings, was superior to the Ferrari in the quick corners; only in the slow stuff did Niki's high downforce work to his advantage. This went on for almost 30 laps, right to the flag. "In the closing stages," Hunt said, "I really got myself settled in, and began to pull away from him a bit." At the flag, Lauda was 1.06 seconds behind.

"We all did a lap of honour on a lorry afterwards," the Lord recalled, "and there were Union Jacks all round the circuit. Even today, the memory of that race gives me goose pimples."

Although the team continued, after a fashion, beyond 1975, it was never a force again; Hunt joined McLaren, and won the world championship. At James's memorial service, in 1993, Hesketh recalled that brief period when a quintessentially English mix of eccentricity and genius took on the establishment.

"James represented something very English, didn't he?" Alexander said. "He was the combination of the Corinthian Casual and the anarchist. Hesketh Racing gave him very little, but he gave a great deal to us.

"It was my honour and privilege – and still the greatest thing I ever took part in – to have been able to give James his chance." M

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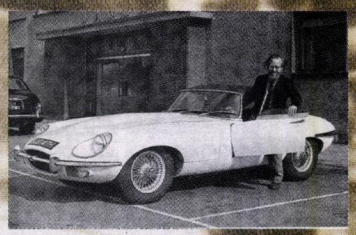
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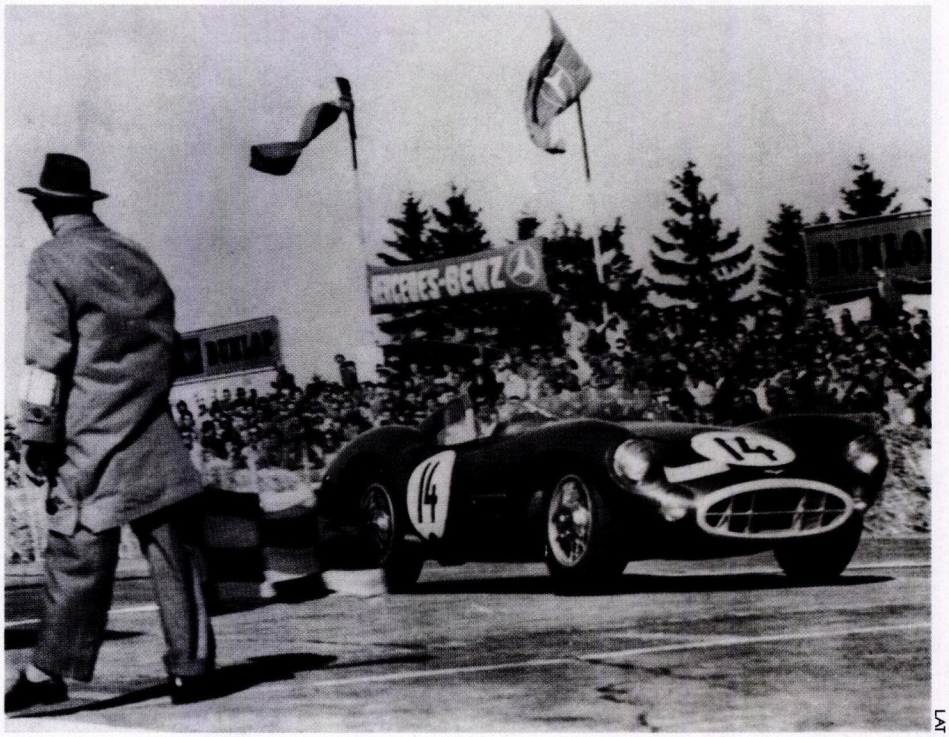
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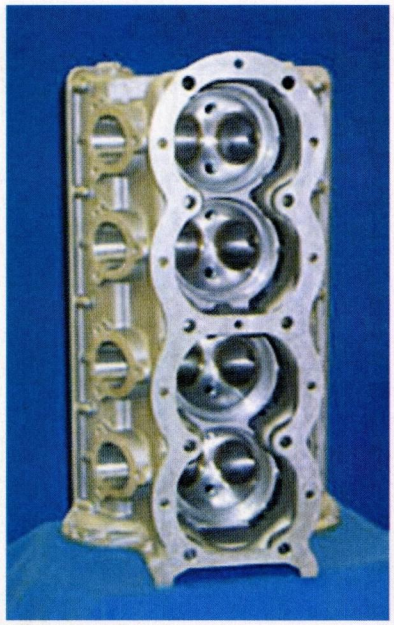
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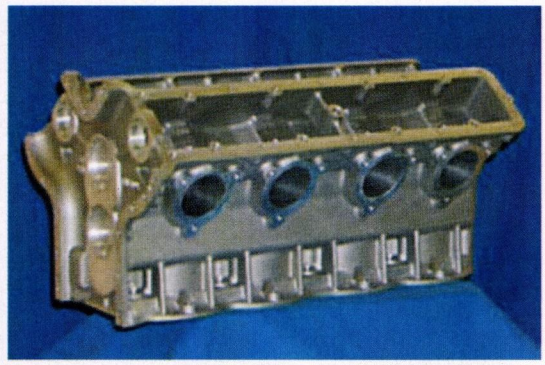
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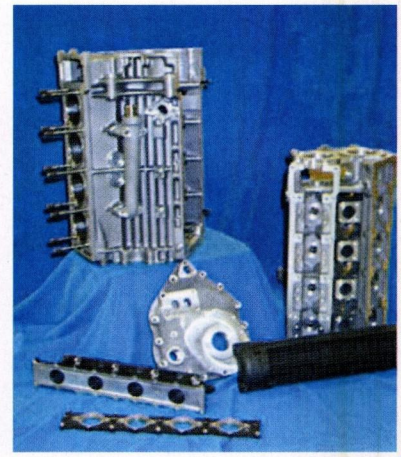
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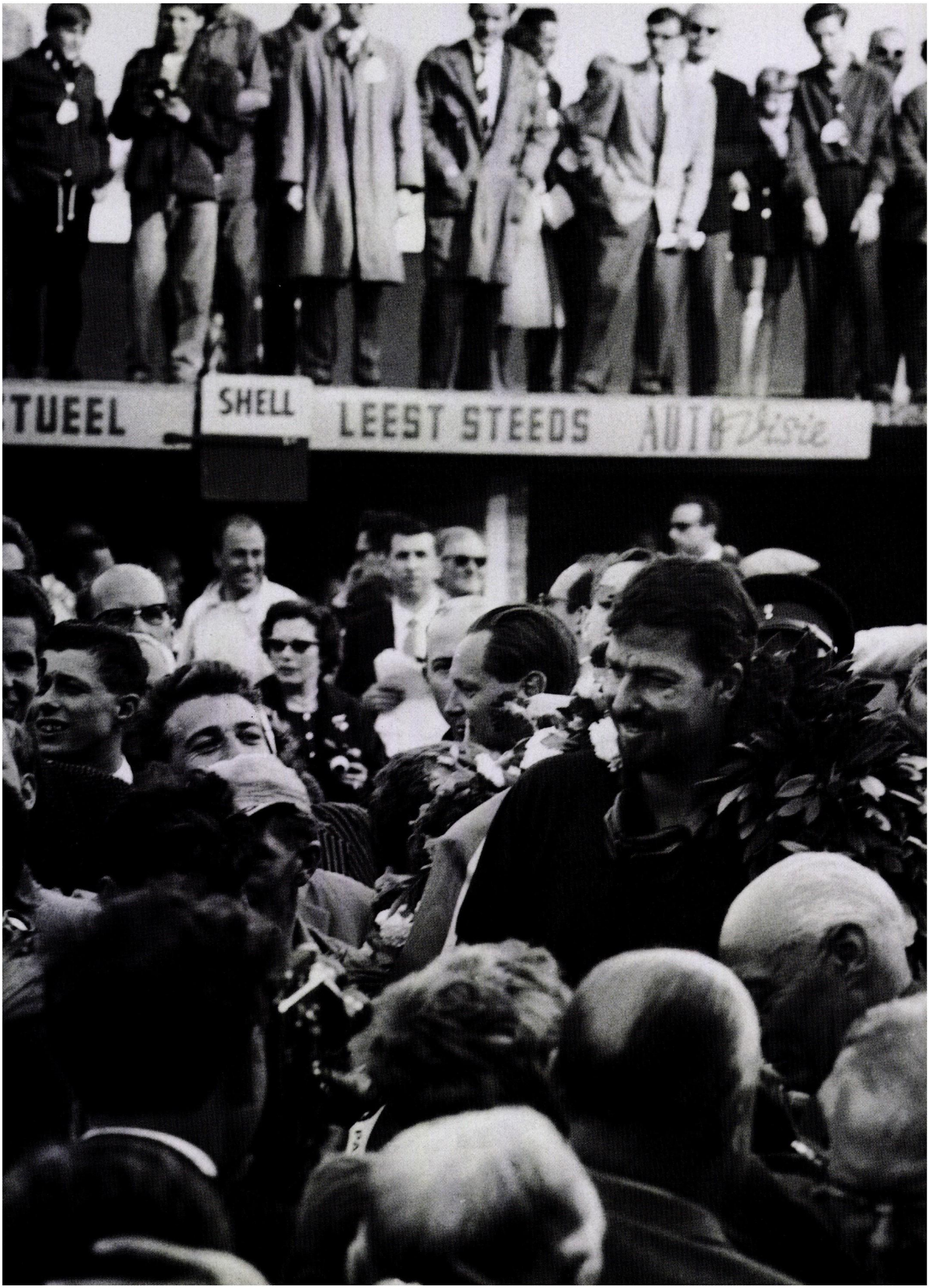
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AFTER YEARS OF DISAPPOINTMENT, IT WAS IRONIC, SAYS PAUL FEARNLEY, THAT BRM'S DEBUT GRAND PRIX WIN CAME JUST AS THE SPORT CHANGED

Glory AND Hope

Jo Bonnier accepts the plaudits at Zandvoort in 1959

BRM AND CONTROVERSY, BRM AND DISAPPOINTMENT: EXCELLENT examples of 1950s tautology. The team was subsumed by one, consumed by the other. They raised the British public's hopes time and again. And dashed them time and again. Good intentions and advanced engineering, entangled in a web of mismanagement.

Zandvoort 1959 was no different. BRM were up in arms. Their owner had, not before time, given them a short, sharp shock. Egos were bruised, resignation letters penned. The previous GP had been a disaster: the speed of the Coopers – Monaco had seen Jack Brabham record the works team's first GP victory – meant the writing on the wall for the front-engined cars was now in block capitals; what's more, although BRM had spent four years honing their P25, they couldn't prevent all three cars retiring with brake problems. There had been glimpses of potential, but there was precious little to show for the heartache and all-nighters the project had caused. And now, still unfulfilled, the car faced obsolescence. The recriminations swirled like sand whipped from Zandvoort's dunes.

There was, however, an oasis of calm: Jo Bonnier. The high-born Swede was often accused of being aloof. He kept his racing and private life separate, chose his words carefully, and would retreat behind his neatly-trimmed beard when it pleased him. Signed by BRM after just 12 GP starts, all in Maserati 250Fs, he made a good impression by finishing fourth in the 1958 Moroccan GP. His quiet approach was in stark contrast to the playboy shenanigans of Harry Schell, but they were to be BRM's unlikely duo for '59. A midfield pairing, with perhaps a podium or two thrown in.

BRM had tried, but no amount of persuading could convince Stirling Moss to sign. His dislike of the team ran deep; when he called the V16 the worst car he'd ever driven, BRM's co-founder Peter Berthon countered by stating that Moss was frightened of it. Such things are not easily forgotten. But there was a complication, Stirling



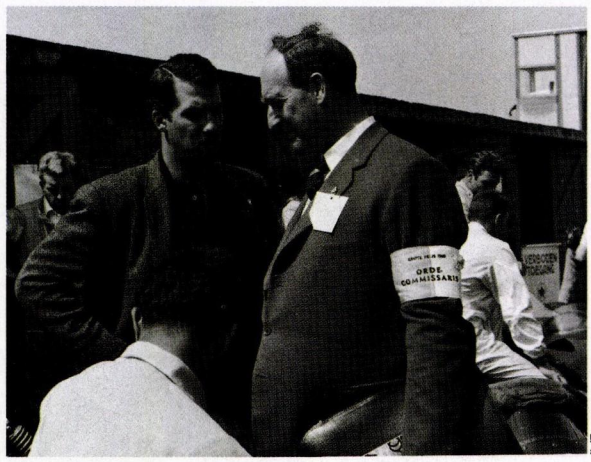
'Moss couldn't be criticised for his distrust: good car, bad team, was how he saw it'

liked the P25. A lot. A dilemma, then. One of many. For the immediate period following Vanwall's withdrawal was the one for which Moss received most criticism. Every works team would have given their back teeth to have him on their books, but he went with Rob Walker *and* Ken Gregory's new British Racing Partnership outfit instead. And so began his 'car-breaker' phase.

He could have sat back and relied on his talent, but the search for that vital extra tenth was too compelling. He became what most designers of the period would label a meddler. Let's run a Cooper. Let's try it with a BRM engine. And let's try a Colotti gearbox. And we'd better assess the P25 as well. This constant striving is what stood him apart from the Bonniers and Schells – but it cost him wins too.

He couldn't be criticised for his distrust of BRM, though. His hopes and fears were confirmed when he drove a works-run P25 in the International Trophy on 2 May. He set pole, took the lead, and was romping away – when the front brakes failed, pitching him into a mother-and-father spin. Good car, bad team, was how he saw it.

Sir Alfred Owen, the patron whose money BRM was sluicing away, was reaching the same conclusions. He had been patient, but when Moss approached him directly to ask for two P25s, to be run by BRP, he jumped at the chance – and no amount of argument from a slighted Berthon would change his mind.



Team owner Sir Alfred Owen and Bonnier had much to talk about

The week after Monaco, therefore, a P25 was hooked up behind the team's Standard Vanguard van and trailered to Zandvoort for a test. For Moss, that is – not Bonnier, not Schell.

"It was a peculiar session," remembers chief engineer Tony Rudd. "We did one hell of a mileage, which gave us a lot of confidence. We learned a lot about tyre wear rates." And improved the brakes. According to Rudd, Moss made no drastic changes. But Bonnier and Schell did not rush to revert to their old settings – that vital extra tenth thing. The biggest change was a switch to 15in Dunlops from 16in.

Then came the real bombshell: Moss would race a BRP-run P25 at selected GPs. He planned to debut the car at Reims on 5 July, so it was undergoing an overhaul at BRP's Lots Road HQ while he used the Walker Cooper to set fastest time in Friday's Zandvoort practice. It all seems unnecessarily complicated but, in Stirling's defence, 1959 was a difficult season of huge transition.

Bonnier was eight-tenths of a second shy of Moss. But he was comfortable with that, happy to be competitive – and much quicker than his team-mate.

His determined mood was mirrored by the team's sense of purpose. Despite the resignation letters that had been pressed into Rudd's hand, nobody left. Quite the opposite in fact. "The BRP/Moss thing actually united the mechanics like nothing else," remembers Rudd. Bonnier was



Bonnier stepped up his game, and this GP win looked like the first of many…

LAT

something Peter Collins, Mike Hawthorn, Tony Brooks and Jean Behra had not – a pole position for BRM in a world championship GP. And best of all, he appeared to be taking it in his stride. The team had not yet realised the main aim of his GP career was to secure solid finishes; neither, probably, had he.

What they also had was a car well-suited to the track. Despite its long pit straight, Zandvoort was considered medium-speed; it was, in comparison to Reims and Spa. Whereas the powerful Ferraris had the edge on the latter, and Cooper held the upper hand on tighter circuits, the flowing Zandvoort was heaven-sent for the P25.

So how would the cool Swede have played it out in his mind? Brabham was quick, but hard on his tyres. Ferrari were all over the place. The new Aston Martins were cumbersome. The Lotus 16s appeared very stable but surely couldn't be expected to last the pace. BRM had them all covered. Except that damn Moss.

Bonnier's composure did not crack at the start, and he led into the banked Tarzan corner. Masten Gregory's works Cooper made a lightning getaway from the third row to be second. The American was a firebrand behind the wheel, and he impatiently bullied his way into the lead on the second lap. Jo knew the score, though. He kept the pressure on, driving smoothly, and retook the lead on lap 12, by which time Gregory was already struggling with his gears.

What of Moss? He made a steady, gearbox-friendly start and was eighth at the end of the first lap. Then he got bottled up behind Jean Behra's Ferrari, the Frenchman signalling Moss to pass on the straight, knowing full well the Cooper did not have the legs. A fuming Moss eventually drove around the outside of him at Tarzan on lap 25. Free at last. But had there been one hurried downshift too many?

Bonnier now had his mirrors full of Brabham, who took the lead on lap 30. But his gearbox was also baulking and, as Moss loomed, Jo upped the pace and retook the lead three laps later. He appeared

'A team renowned for last-minute tinkering, blind panic even, had composed itself'

not adept at keeping his spannermen sweet – despite his wealth – but his misanthropy was forgiven the next morning when he set a stunning 1min36sec lap to annex pole.

Rudd: "I don't know who was more surprised, Jo or me." Jo probably, but he didn't show it. He retreated behind his beard and sat out the afternoon session. BRM, a team renowned for last-minute tinkering, blind panic even, had composed itself.

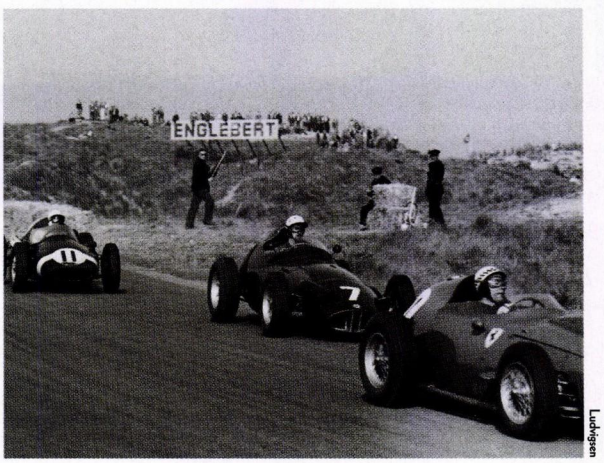
Moss, who was two-tenths off pole, sat it out too, but that had more to do with him nursing his Colotti gearbox. Its late-race failure had cost him victory in Monaco, and team-mate Maurice Trintignant had already broken his here.

Brabham went out, though, and matched Bonnier for a place in middle of the front row. But he was worried about excessive tyre wear. BRM made great play of practising wheel changes, even though they reckoned on going the distance on a single set. But they were enjoying the time and space to pull a flanker. Ferrari, meanwhile, stripped their out-of-sorts 246s and were constantly mixing and matching their V6s. BRM appeared, at last, to hold all the aces. Except a top-rank pilot.

What they had was a driver at the start of his works career. The BRM wasn't the best seat in the house, but it was the best he'd ever plonked his backside on. This was only his fourth GP start with them, yet he had achieved unruffled. That pole position was no fluke. This was a driver in the right car, making the most of his opportunity.

But that still wasn't enough to stave off a fired-up Moss. The gap didn't close as quickly as it might, a combination of Bonnier's day of days and Moss eking out his gearbox, but the inevitable happened on lap 60 of 75. That damned Moss was leading.

Brabham was 17sec back, but Jo did not back off into what would become his usual comfort zone. He was dropping away from Moss, but remained there and thereabouts, ready to pick up the pieces – one of which broke inside the leader's Colotti on lap 63. For the first time in eight years, Rudd was able to give the 'slow' signal. Twelve laps remained – a distance often beyond BRMs in the past. But not this time. The wait was over.



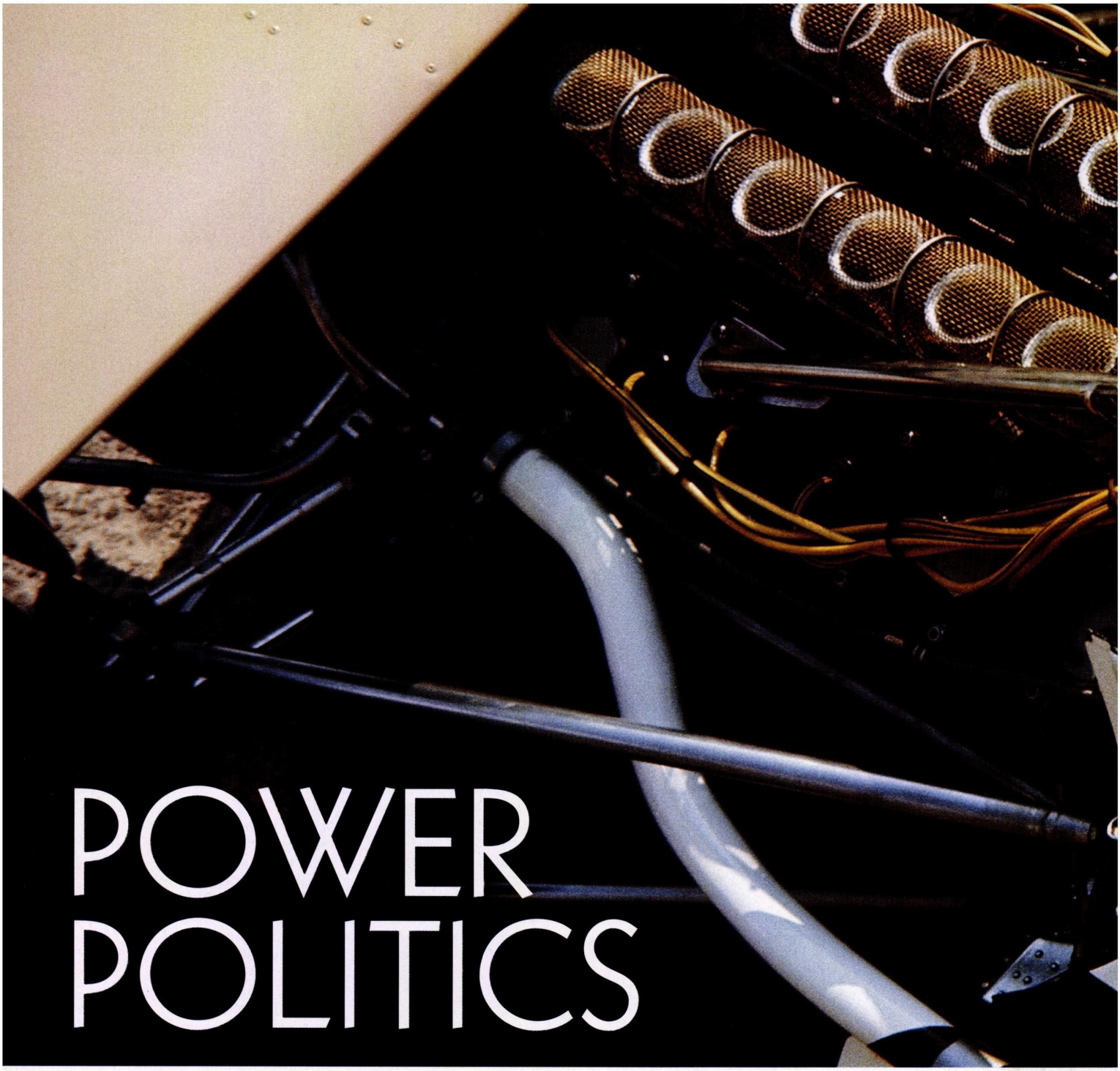
Behra was in obstructive mood. Moss passed Bonnier seconds later

Ludvigsen

Rudd remembers the transporter disappearing into the sunset with joyous mechanics perched on its roof. They surely deserved their moment. But it was no more than a moment.

Designer Aubrey Woods had been given a rare weekend off to watch the race, and he returned home subdued, Bonnier-like. For on his desk were blueprints of BRM's first mid-engined F1 car. The recently- announced 1.5-litre formula, scheduled for 1961, was the *real* chance BRM had to break free of its shackles, to forget the past and make that engineering ability count.

Back to the drawing board. M



POWER POLITICS

COSWORTH'S DFV TRANSFORMED FORMULA ONE, DOMINATING THE SPORT DURING THE SEVENTIES AND KICK-STARTING THE 'KIT CAR' ERA. BUT BRM RARELY TOOK THE EASY WAY OUT. KEITH HOWARD TELLS THE STORY OF THEIR V12 – A STORY OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

FOR ONCE-EMBATTLED BRM, F1'S 1.5-LITRE ERA HAD been the occasion of long postponed fulfilment. The grand enterprise had finally come good, winning the drivers' and constructors' titles in 1962 and coming second in both through '63-65. As Bourne pondered the arrival of the 3-litre formula in '66, it's understandable that some in the organisation were keen to build on established know-how by carrying over the cylinder dimensions of the little V8. That meant 16 cylinders – an unlucky number for BRM – but the logic seemed persuasive.

Harry Weslake, whose Rye-based engine firm was part-owned by the Owen Organisation, had different ideas. Aubrey Woods, co-designer of the 1.5-litre V8, had been seconded to Weslake with Peter Berthon to research 3-litre options, one of which was a four-valve V12. This was Weslake's personal favourite and he did his utmost to promote it, but the 16-cylinder proposal eventually won out in the form of Tony Rudd's infamous H16.

An Institution of Mechanical Engineers paper quoted the key statistics for the two prototype engines: the H16 was 20lb heavier at 380, but was 6in shorter than the 30in V12 and was reckoned to



BRM V12 was powerful, but was no match for the DFV in terms of reliability, economy and packaging. Pedro Rodriguez's P153 won at Spa in '70, though

be 25bhp up on its rival with 500. In other words, the H16's superior packaging and power potential won out. In the event, of course, the H16 would never deliver anything like 500bhp.

'Serious consideration' had also been given to a V8, according to the text, but Bourne's engineers doubted they could reliably attain the 10,000rpm-plus that would be necessary to keep it competitive by 1970. As events were to prove, it wasn't a notably well-informed piece of soothsaying.

The V12 had lost the battle but it would win the war. While the H16 went on to disgrace itself, reviving dark memories of previous dalliances with 16 cylinders, the V12 concept lived on. Weslake – having bought out the Owen interest in 1965 – developed the four-valve to power Dan Gurney's Eagle, while Bourne's chief engine designer Geoff Johnson was instructed to develop a V12 customer engine, a task he began in July 1966.

Although both power plants were classic 60-degree V12s with seven main bearings rather than five, in other respects they were quite different: Johnson's engine (BRM Type 101) was a two-valve, had different cylinder dimensions (74.6 x 57.2mm as opposed to the Weslake's 72.8 x 60) and used simplex chain to drive the camshafts rather than gears – a first for BRM – to help keep the cost down. The drawings were completed by early 1967 and the first prototype ran on 26 July. Johnson recalls it gave 360bhp immediately before any experimentation with ignition and valve timing.

Initially intended for sportscar racing – John Wyer had expressed interest in a Le Mans engine – the first customer V12 found its way into the back of Bruce McLaren's M5A for the last four GPs of 1967, where it quickly caused the struggling H16 added ➠

Rainer Schlegelmilch



Despite four-valve heads and 464bhp on Bourne's dyno (opposite top and bottom), BRM V12s had a dreadful '69. This is Spain, where John Surtees was fifth

All photographs: LAT

embarrassment. On its first outing, at Mosport Park, McLaren finished seventh, two places adrift of Mike Spence's BRM, but would have won had he not suffered a flat battery as a result of leaving off the alternator. Second time out at Monza, McLaren qualified third – only 0.8sec off Jim Clark's pole in the Lotus 49 and four places ahead of Stewart's BRM P115 – but retired with engine trouble.

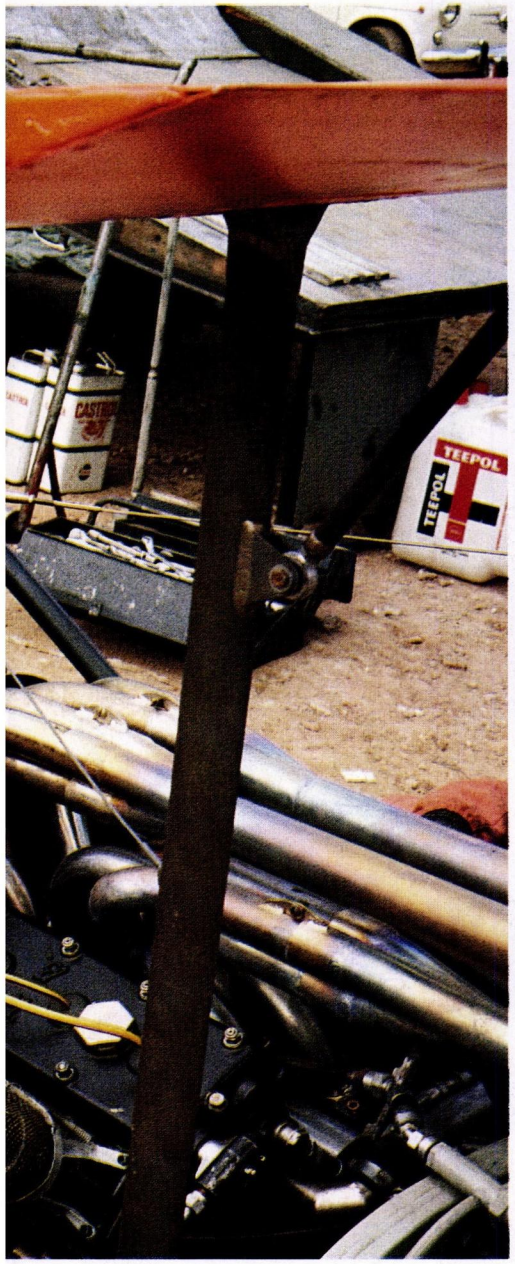
When Sir Alfred Owen finally lost patience with the H16 – it appeared for the last time at Kyalami in the opening race of '68 – the simplest solution was for BRM to revert to Plan B, the V12.

Keith Duckworth at Cosworth had meanwhile decided that a V8 was the way to go, and in 1967 had demonstrated the perspicacity of his decision in spectacular fashion. To be fair, Bourne wasn't alone in thinking 12 cylinders superior. Ferrari had rekindled its old love affair with 12s, flat or vee – and others tried V12s too: Honda, Maserati, Matra.

The choice between V8 and V12 was a complex one: each had its advantages. A V8 was shorter (the DFV was just 21.6in long, albeit 26.5in wide), lighter and stiffer, the last making it better as a stressed chassis member. A V12, because of its larger piston area, promised more power, but only if it didn't squander it in increased frictional and other losses. Extra length and weight made it potentially harder to package, and torsional stiffness was poorer.

After a modest showing in 1968 – by which time the V12 was delivering a consistent 400bhp – it was decided that, to be fully competitive, the engine needed four valves per cylinder like the Cosworth. Prior to the H16 being abandoned, it had been destined to have a four-valve head – in fact the castings had been made – so that design was carried over.

Unusual features were a valve included angle of only 13 degrees – a consequence of the H16's restricted space – and exhaust ports outletting into the vee. As before, the inlet ports were located between the cams, which gave an almost straight flow of air into the cylinder – though this and the valve angle would change more than once in subsequent variants.



When the new Type 142 posted 444bhp during its first power test on 13 February 1969, everyone was delighted. It was way more than had ever been achieved by the H16. Three days later, Rudd recalls, the V12 made 464bhp at 10,000rpm – ample power to take on the DFV, which even a year later was only rated at 430/440bhp at 10,000rpm. Downsides were a narrower, but still usable, power band and a 10kg increase, caused by the extra valves, springs, followers and cam lobes. The V12 now looked a match for the DFV and more (see table below).

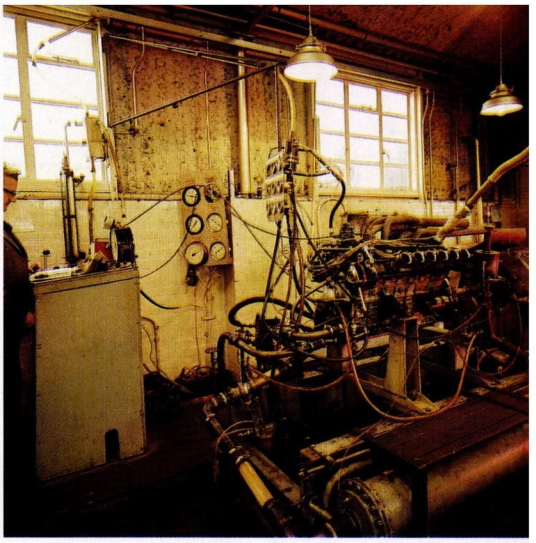
Major personnel changes occurred at Bourne later that year. First Rudd, tired of the friction with John Surtees, left to join Lotus. Six months later, Johnson departed to become chief engineer of diesel and petrol engines at Austin Rover. Woods, who'd returned to Bourne when Anglo-American Racers closed its doors at the end of '68, took over the V12, and another AAR refugee, Tony Southgate, set about designing a chassis to do it justice.

Southgate's P153 certainly looked the business, but didn't really deliver in 1970, despite Pedro Rodriguez winning at Spa and coming second at Watkins Glen. By common consent its successor, the P160, was a championship contender, but in the event could only secure Jo Siffert joint fourth in the drivers' championship and BRM second in the constructors'. Despite changes to the induction and exhaust systems, the development of a short-stroke version that revved to 11,500rpm, and further changes to camshaft profiles etc, the V12's power remained much the same.

Power wasn't the problem, though: it was poor reliability, coupled with the V12's appetite for fuel. Southgate recalls: "We had 12 engines and there wasn't one that didn't have a repaired block. A con-rod would come out the side and we'd just weld the hole up. The engine was very light, very compact – a nice design – but to keep it short they'd made the crank and rod bearings too small. It needed bearings 20 per cent bigger, which would have made the engine a couple of inches longer. Plus we'd start races with at least eight gallons more fuel than a Cosworth car."

When Woods left in 1972 to work for Matra, Peter Windsor-Smith, ex-chief designer at Coventry-Climax, took over development of the engine, with his previous employer Walter Hassan acting as a consultant at Louis Stanley's request. The pace of change was not exactly electric. In his book *Climax in Coventry*, Hassan wrote: "I soon found, at BRM, that the problems of administration and getting delivery of a small quantity of special parts had become even more difficult. I am not trying to make excuses, either for myself or for BRM, when I say that changes agreed in 1972 were still not fitted to the grand prix cars at the start of the 1975 season." With such stifling inertia, BRM fell rapidly behind.

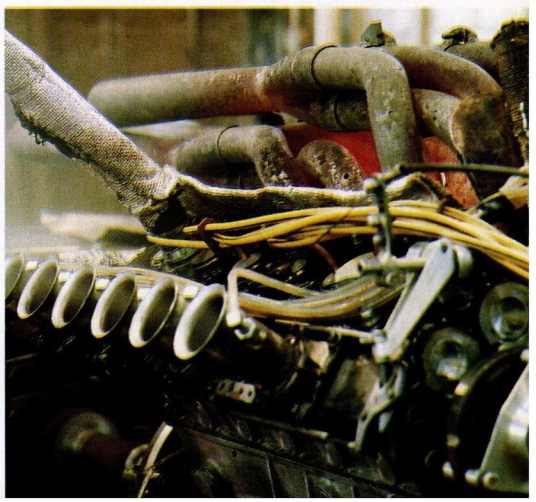
Reliability continued to be a headache. Jean-Pierre Beltoise, who notched 20 retirements in 1972-74, is clear where the weaknesses lay: "We had a lot of mechanical problems. I was made very welcome in the BRM team but in fact, for the time, it was not a very professional team. Tony Southgate was a good engineer, it was only a question of the engine – and [Firestone] tyres too – but the main problem was the engine."



Woods returned to Bourne in 1974 and, finding little changed in the V12's output, set in train the modifications that would define the final BRM V12, Type 200. Echoing work he'd done on an abortive V12 for Hesketh, he designed a new crankcase with six separate compartments and external scavenge and pressure pumps to reduce the churnage and windage – power losses that Duckworth had been alert to from the outset with the DFV. By 1978, Type 200 would deliver a rousing 510bhp – 10bhp more than the DFV ever mustered. But it was too late. BRM was spent and F1's turbo era was imminent.

'On the V12's first outing, at Mosport Park in 1968, McLaren was seventh, but would have won had he not suffered a flat battery'

It might all have been different had the H16 never happened. A 390hp 2-valve V12 would have given the 360hp Repco-Brabhams a good run in 1966. It might even have been strong enough to challenge the Cosworths of '67 – and Graham Hill and Jackie Stewart might have stayed. An earlier-emerging V12 might have sneaked BRM another world title or two ahead of Northampton's hegemony. M



THE VITAL STATISTICS

	Cosworth DFV (1967)	BRM Type 142 (1969)
BORE (mm)	85.7	74.6
STROKE (mm)	64.8	57.2
BORE/STROKE	1.32	1.30
SWEPT VOLUME (cc)	2993	2999
PEAK POWER (bhp)	405	465
SPECIFIC POWER (bhp/litre)	135	155

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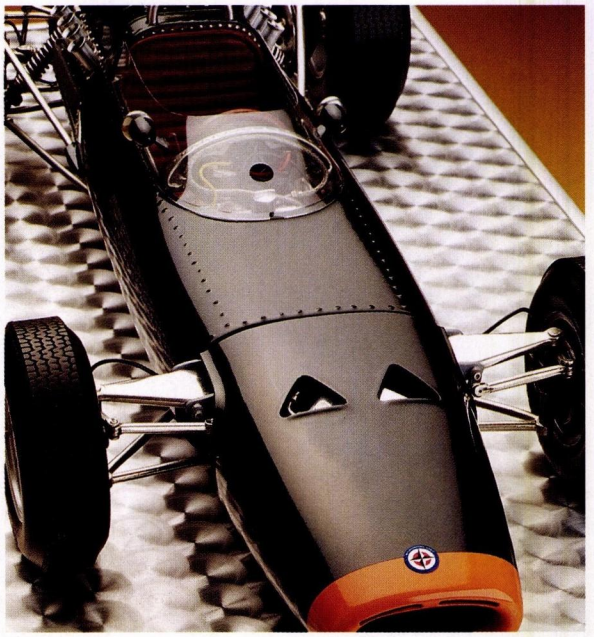
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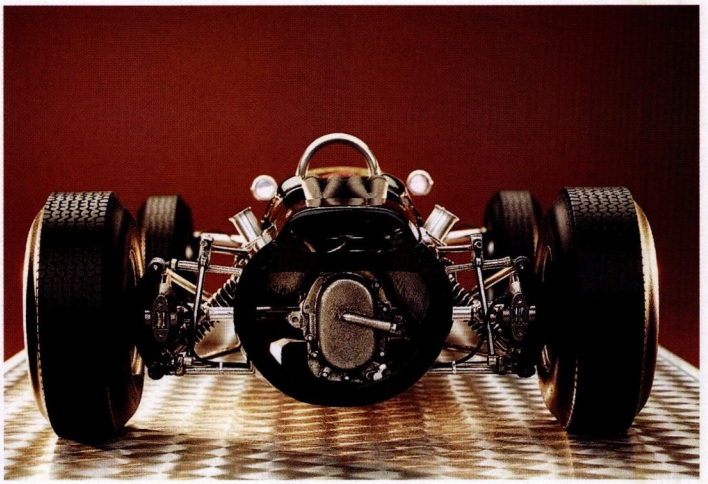
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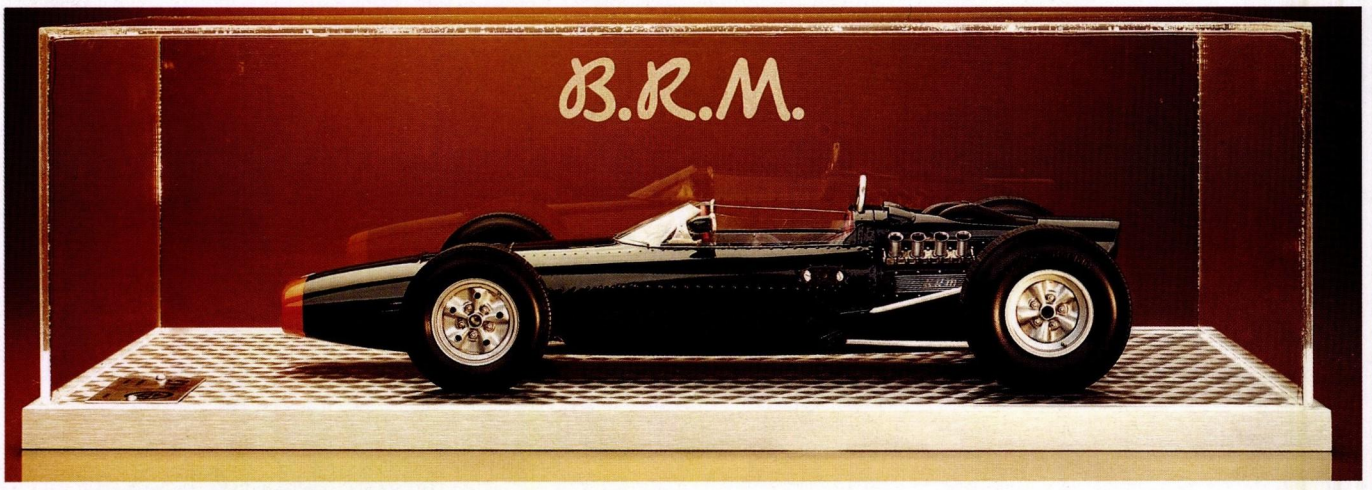
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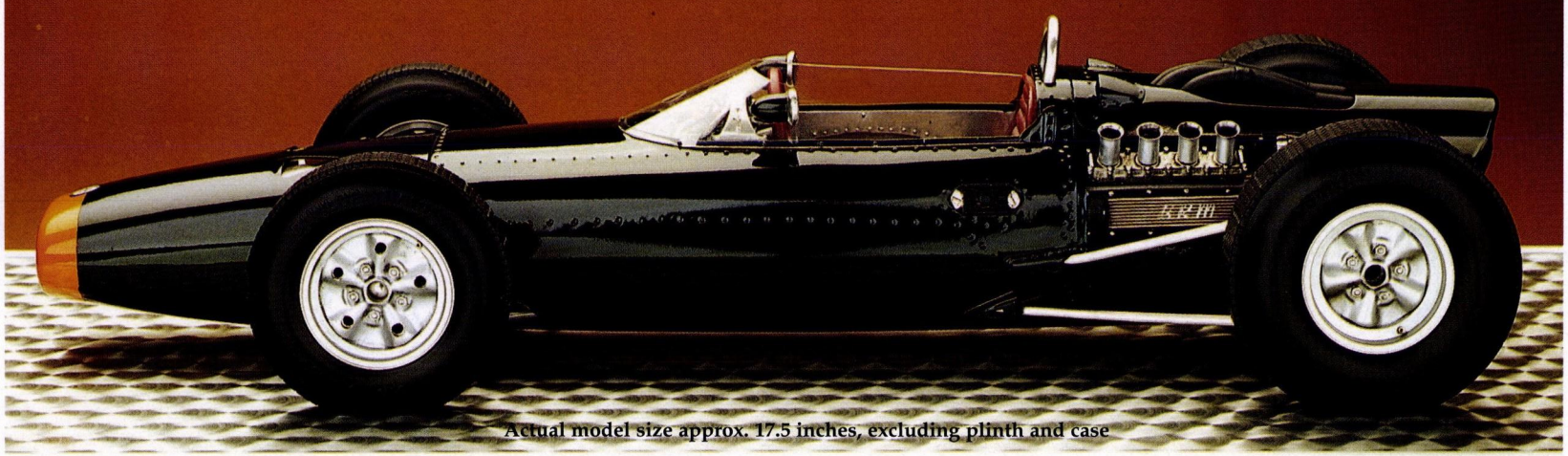




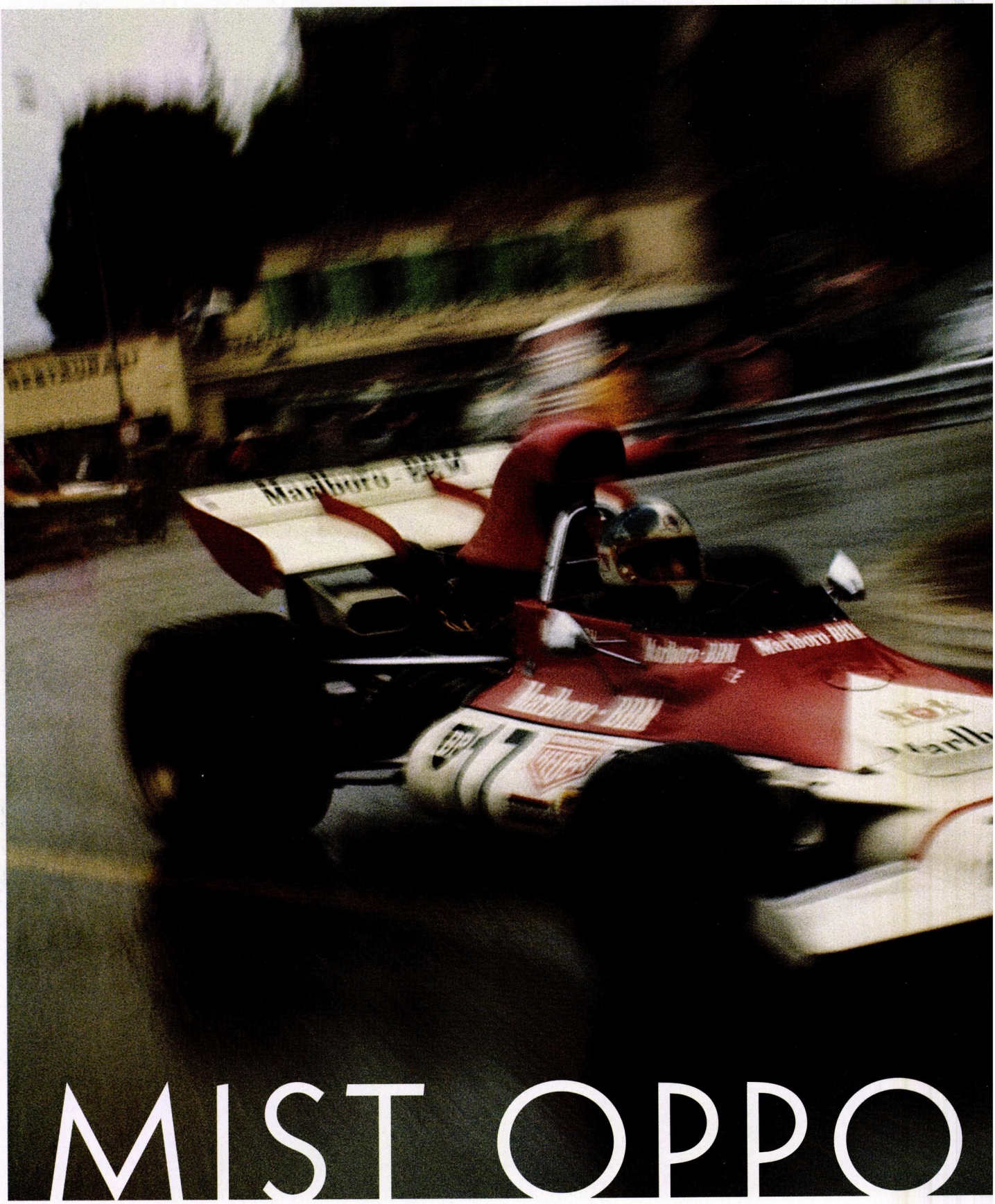
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The B.R.M.P261
Driven by team mates Graham Hill and Jackie Stewart

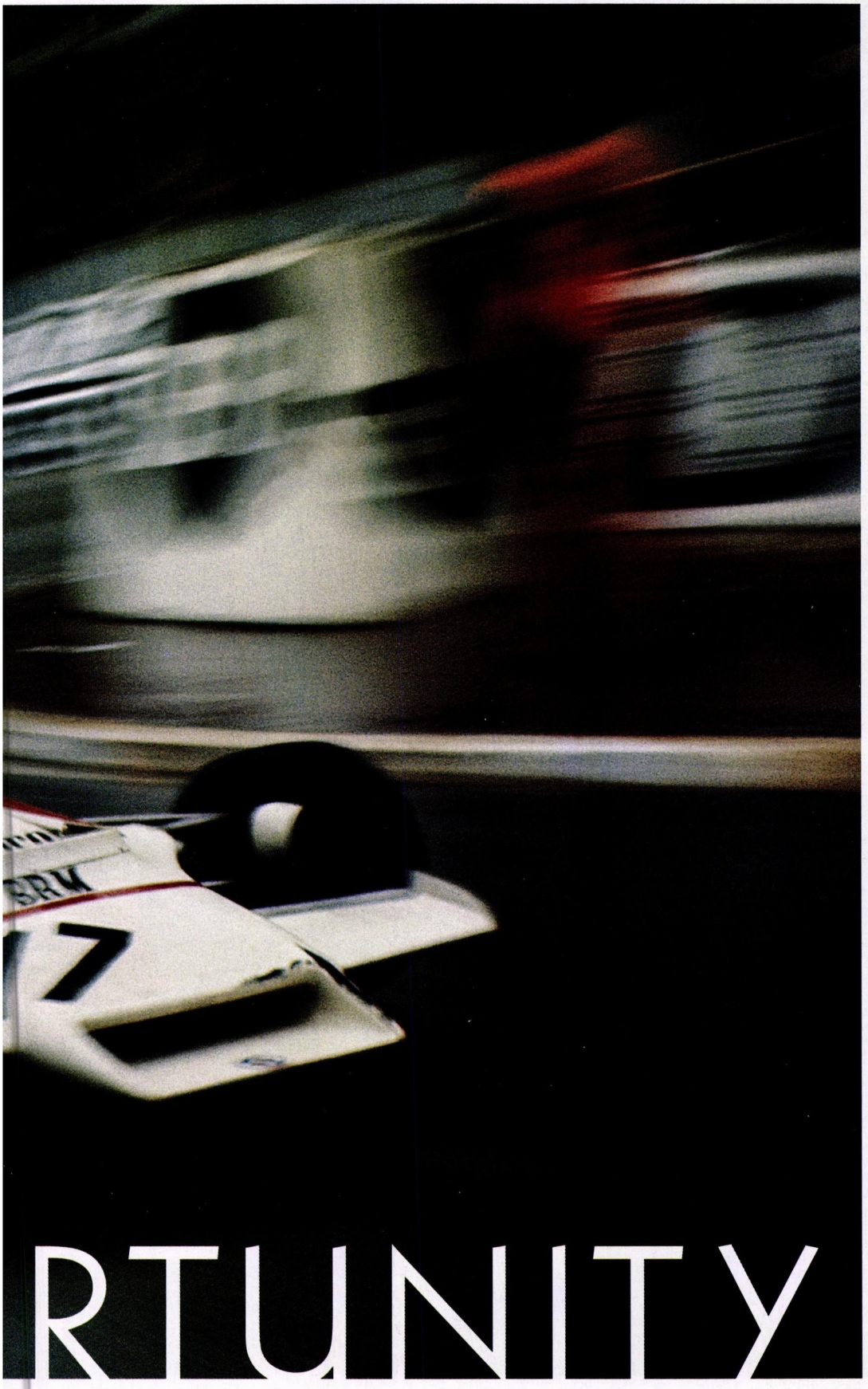


Actual model size approx. 17.5 inches, excluding plinth and case



Rainer Schlegelmilch

MIST OPPO



RTUNITY

MONACO WAS THE SCENE OF BRM'S MOST FAMOUS TRIUMPHS: THEIR FIFTH WIN WAS ALSO THE LAST FOR A TEAM IN DECLINE. DAVID MALSHER CHARTS BOURNE'S LAST HURRAH

RAIN DRUMMING ON YOUR HELMET AS you snuggle into your BRM. Check the belts are tight. Release the clutch and off onto the warm-up lap. The track is flooded. A river. What's happened to the Riviera sunshine? It's all you can do to keep the car pointing the right way – even at this speed.

It's especially hard work for you: your left arm doesn't have full mobility, legacy of a shunt at Reims eight years ago, which put you in a coma for eight days. So awkward is your enforced style – swivelling your locked arm from the shoulder – that designer Tony Southgate has had to cut a hole in the monocoque.

He needn't have bothered doing that to the new P180, though. It's been too slow in testing, which means you are stuck with the P160B for the foreseeable future; it's proved occasionally quick but, as fate would have it, reliable only in non-championship races. Still, if this season has started disappointingly, it is better – way, way better – than 1971.

Louis Stanley: "Our link with Jean-Pierre began when he was accused in the Argentine of the death of another driver [Ignazio Giunti]. I'm sorry to say that the GPDA [Grand Prix Drivers' Association] didn't help him. He not only lost his licence but was charged with murder. I offered to defend him and act as surety. It was all very distasteful. Because of this, he had an additional loyalty to us. We became very close and I had tremendous admiration for him."

The bond you have formed with your team boss is a strong one, for he, too, went through it last year. First, the team's torchbearer Pedro Rodriguez was killed in a piffling sportscar race in July; then in October, his tigerish team-mate Jo Siffert was fatally injured in a BRM at Brands Hatch. But the way men like team manager Tim Parnell, chief mechanic Alan Challis, and Southgate have pulled together, and shown faith in your ability, has made you feel welcome.

Parnell: "When we lost Jo most top drivers had already been taken for the following season. But I always felt ➳



LAT

Jean-Pierre gave us 100 per cent – he was a real racer, a real trier without a doubt. He had a lot of spirit – and he was terrific in the rain."

Southgate: "Beltoise was the best driver we had in 1972. Peter Gethin would shine on occasions, as did Howden [Ganley], but Beltoise would always be there, though not as good as Rodriguez. At 35-years-old, Jean-Pierre had already dropped a peg."

Qualifying went surprisingly well, and you line up fourth. Reassuringly, it is clearly no fluke, for as you glance in your mirrors while wending to the grid, you see more Marlboro – the P160B of team-mate Gethin. He's another little fighter, as his Monza win last year proved. He outqualified you at Silverstone three weeks ago, but which of you kept the pressure on Emerson Fittipaldi's Lotus 72 all the way to the flag, finishing less than two seconds behind the best F1 car? It was you, Jean-Pierre Beltoise.

So you are confident you have the measure of Gethin, especially round Monaco, where you fought a great tactical duel with Chris Irwin to win the F3 race six years ago. Since then, you have experienced being paired with a true genius, Jackie Stewart, and discovered he really is everything he's cracked up to be. But where's Jackie's Tyrrell today? Two rows behind you, that's where. Only Emmo and the two Ferraris are ahead of you.

The spray settles as the pack slows to a crawl. You've just experienced what it's like to follow cars in these torrential conditions – and it's not much fun. You glance across at Clay Regazzoni, a hard racer from the Jack Brabham School: don't look in your mirrors, don't give a quarter. Similar aggressive traits have been noted in your driving, too. This could all end up in a big mess at Ste Devote.

But if you stay out of trouble, it could be very good indeed; you asked the BRM boys to take out the rear anti-roll bar completely. And Alan Challis has been fiddling around at the back of your car, and reckons he might have given you an edge.

Challis: "On the grid, we adjusted the fuel timing on both Jean-Pierre's and Gethin's cars. The pump was driven by a belt and, if you had the knowledge, you could take it off and retard it a bit so that the engine became much more driveable."

The moment's arrived. You get the revs just so, the clutch is beginning to bite and Louis Chiron drops the flag. Damn! Jacky Ickx has got his power down well. But with the long gearing you've been given for the rain, you draw closer to the Ferrari at the top of the rev range. You brake and notice Jacky's taking the conventional line through Ste Devote. Which means there's a gap. A flick to the right and you're alongside. Let the car run wide on the exit. Ickx must have backed off, there's no thump on the rear. You're through, and the track in front of you is clear. You hurtle past the pits; they're going to be pleased to see you.

Parnell: "The pits were down by the harbour that year and, of course, the starting grid had been retained in its traditional place in front of the Royal Box. As team manager, I elected to stay in the pits in case there was any drama on the first lap, so I never saw the start."

There's a board out next time, through. Looks like 'Regga' is your nearest pursuer, then Fittipaldi. Did Ickx stick it in the fence? Well, Clay should be easier to handle. Five laps later, though, you see the word you've been dreading – 'Ickx'. He's up to second, and you can't go much faster – especially now there's a hazy blur up ahead. Lap seven and you are already hitting traffic. Who had the smart idea of letting 25 cars start instead of the usual 16? This is going to be a long afternoon.

Lap 21 and the board says you're 20sec up on Ickx. Wahey! So just who is the wet-weather hero?

Certainly not the guy you catch seven laps later; he's all over the place. He hasn't seen you. You slither down the inside. It's Tim Schenken's Surtees. Your front wheels are alongside his cockpit. He's got to let you past. Perhaps not. Calm down, Jean-Pierre! Keep it together; there are 50 laps to go. Thankfully, the problem goes away, hitting the Armco with a clanging thud. Could be some debris at Mirabeau next time through.

Lap 35, a dark shape looms out of the murk ahead. It's a Lotus; Emmo's fifth, but a lap down. And the board says Stewart is in third place. Too late for Jackie to catch you, even if he was on Firestones. On Goodyears, he hasn't a hope in these conditions.

Southgate: "We didn't go Firestone by choice. But at the end of 1970, we didn't have big sponsors, and we were relying on Dunlop and Shell. Then Dunlop told us they couldn't give us any money, because Stewart wanted all of it (£125,000, I believe). Come to think of it, I don't know why we didn't go to Goodyear."

Taking it steady now. The rain's started to fall again, and whatever problems you're having with backmarkers, Ickx is going to be suffering the same. The rest of your rivals have been put in their place. So, too, have your team-mates: you've already seen Gethin reversing (!) his car to the pitlane, and a flash of red and white on lap 48 reveals to be the crumpled remains of Ganley's P180.

Still, there's no time to gloat. What's happening? The car's trying to get away from you up the straight to Ste Devote. Ease off the accelerator, get it turned in, catch the slide – and there's the answer. Mike Hailwood's been rear-ended, and he's left a stream ➤



LAT

Beltoise (above and left) made a blinding getaway, literally, and led the race from the first corner to the chequered flag



'Lap seven and you are already hitting traffic. Who had the smart idea of letting 25 cars start?'

Courtesy of Marcus Pye



LAT

of oil since Gasometer. What is it with Surtees drivers this race? Someone's going to lose it there, for sure.

It's not long before you see the first casualty: Regga heaving himself out of a bust-up Ferrari.

And now you're catching Stewart. Quickly. It feels good to lap a double world champion – but his engine sounds rough. Water in the electrics?

Three-quarter distance, you're ahead of Ickx by 17sec. But what's that? Your V12 sounds like a vee-nine. You go hot and cold. No, wait, it's cleared. Miracle. Time to ease back, you're well ahead of Ickx now. But you can't help yourself lapping Stewart again.

Then, there it is – the chequered flag. A Grande Epreuve at last. The crowd is on its feet, the miserable weather forgotten. You're the first Frenchman to win here since Maurice Trintignant in 1958; it matters not a jot that your average speed is slower than that set by his Cooper.

As you collect your trophy from Princess Grace, you think about how your brother-in-law François Cevert must have felt at Watkins Glen last year. Pretty good, but you wouldn't swap, you reckon.

You look across at Ickx. He's probably driven a beautiful race, may indeed have made fewer errors than you over the last two-and-a-half hours. But he committed one cardinal sin that you know of: he left a BRM-sized gap at Ste Devote on the opening lap. M

It never Rainiers but it pours: J-PB savours the moment (above). He won again in 1972, the Victory Race at Brands Hatch (below)

'But what's that? Your V12 sounds like a vee nine. You go hot and cold. No, wait, it's cleared. Miracle'



LAT

BRM'S LAST FRONT RUNNER

THE SMALL, SLIGHTLY STOOPED, WHITE-HAIRED Frenchman has a distant look in his eyes, almost three decades later, but smiles at the memory.

"I remember that although that was one of the longest grands prix, to me it felt like quarter of an hour, because I was concentrating so hard. It was quite difficult for me to be in front, and two or three times I risked my car overtaking people."

Parnell: "I remember Ronnie Peterson walking up to me after the race and saying, 'When Jean-Pierre came up to lap me, the first time I knew about it was when he stuck his car's nose under my back wheel and jacked me up!'"

So what made Jean-Pierre so special that day in Monaco?

Parnell: "At Silverstone's International Trophy, three weeks earlier, when he was second to Fittipaldi's Lotus, the first thing he said to me when he got out of the car was, 'If I'd had two good arms today, I would have won that.' But in the rain, his talent was able to shine because he didn't need so much arm strength."

Challis: "Jean-Pierre wasn't as good as Pedro and Jo in all truthfulness, but if he had had two operational arms, he would have been exceptional. I would think that, had he not had his permanent injury, he was a potential world champion."

Southgate: "I remember there were comments that it was easy for him, he was in the lead, problems with spray etc., but we calculated that he actually overtook an incredible number of cars. Obviously there is a difference between lapping people and racing them, but even so, I thought he did an ace job."

And the car held together. "Well, quite. Those V12s were not the world's most reliable lumps. We only had 12 engines, I think, and I don't think we had one with an unrepaired block. We had an oil system problem, too. The rain would have helped; the engine ran cooler, which gave the bearings an easier time. The g-forces would have been less also, reducing the surge in the engine."

Beltoise himself? "Taking out the rear anti-roll bar was a success. Also, we had Firestones, and they were the best tyres that day."

He's too modest. Jean-Pierre went on to win the John Player Victory Race at Brands Hatch that October, in the P180. It was an inspired drive using slicks on a damp-but-ever-drying surface.

Another example of his ability to adapt to changing grip levels was his soft-tyred second at Kyalami in 1974 with the P201.

But it is, of course, his drive on 14 May 1972 that has passed into legend.

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MISSION: IMPROBABLE

BRM meant British Racing Motors. But racing was only a part of their activities. The team was a small cog in the massive Rubery-Owen engineering group, and they went racing, according to Sir Alfred Owen, to "prove the firm's competence". Gordon Cruickshank investigates the spread of projects, from the rational to the bizarre, that tested Bourne's ingenuity

RUBERY-OWEN, THEN THE BIGGEST FAMILY BUSINESS in Britain, comprised some 80 companies, producing anything from bricks to aircraft systems. With sophisticated facilities available to it, this meant that BRM could tackle a wide variety of engineering projects, not always automotive, as well as undertaking some very forward-looking research. Drive-by-wire throttles, four-wheel-drive, on-board data logging and even ground effect all surfaced at Bourne in the '60s, before other teams tried them out.

But this creativity faced a raft of other commissions which filtered down the perpetually fragmented Owen Organisation and had to be fitted in with the racing projects. Tony Rudd, who joined BRM at the beginning of the V16 era and became chief engineer, had to deal with them. He has a pragmatic view: "Well, the group had to make money, and Sir Alfred was very successful at that, but I wanted to win races, and we were being pulled in too many directions."

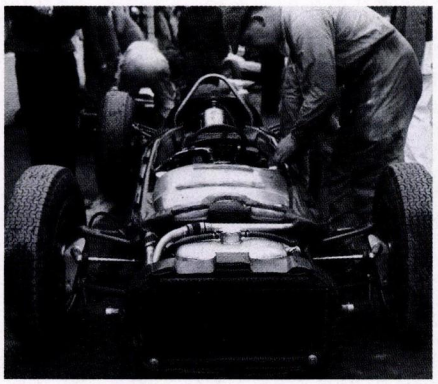
Peter Wright, aerodynamics guru at BRM and later Lotus, concurs: "Owen tried to involve BRM in all the projects – it was a drain on the company's resources, so he used any opportunity to bring in money." Louis Stanley, latterly BRM's principal, pinpoints the difficulty: "Alfred was a brilliant businessman but not an engineer. If you are not an engineer, you will inevitably have problems. That perhaps was his biggest failing."

That and a soft heart. Says Rudd: "Sir Alfred knew what he wanted, but was too good-natured to enforce it. He always went for compromise, or set up another committee. That was his usual solution."

BRM's great era began with the 1961 shake-up which gave Rudd priority for the racing. Yet this did not strangle the extra projects. As Rudd says, "a racing machine shop works in fits and starts, so it makes sense to have other work to keep it going." Some of this was unconnected with racing: heat sealers for plastic bags, industrial burners, fuel metering units. Some involved road car tuning: hot heads for Zephyrs, an engine design for Talbot-Lago. Others were racing units – F2, F3 and F Atlantic engines, even twin-cam units for friendly rivals Lotus. And some were brave racing experiments.

Chrysler Indycar

Ford's Indianapolis link with Lotus from 1963 upstaged Chrysler, who very soon turned to the other top F1 name at that time – BRM. They wanted an Indy winner for 1964, and they had a daring scheme. This was dropped unexpectedly in Rudd's lap, and off he flew to Detroit. He found a plan to mate a transverse 4-valve V8 with 4WD; with power take-off at the end of the block, it was easy to run a driveshaft beside the driver. That was complex enough, but the really unusual extra was a fin. This was pivoted and weighted, so that centrifugal force would turn it and provide inward force.



Above: 4WD car was ahead of its time. Blind alley for F1, later hillclimb success vindicated engineering. Right: 1964 Chrysler Indycar another 4WD, with transverse 4.2 V8. Pivoting aero fin not shown here

"They'd done a lot of work with the fin already," says Rudd, who commuted to the US once a month, even during the '64 season. "But when their big rival, Ford-Lotus, failed in the 1964 Indy 500 because of tyre problems, Chrysler cancelled the project."

Rudd continued to work on a road car, "a sort of mid-engined Plymouth Barracuda", and a proposed Le Mans car with mid-mounted turbine inhaling through the spine of a backbone chassis, but those too got the chop.

1.5-litre 4WD car

Mike Pilbeam joined in 1963 as a stress engineer, but soon found himself tackling completely fresh ground – a four-wheel-drive car. "It was one of the good things about BRM, especially under Rudd – they were prepared to experiment," he says. "There was lots of research going on. We never seriously intended to race a 1.5-litre 4WD car, we were just checking the potential for the 3-litre formula. It was pretty low budget – I was told I could have any bits no-one else wanted, and one mechanic. On the other hand, Ferguson did us a proper 4WD system."

Graham Hill, who pushed for the idea after driving the Ferguson P99, tested the car but soon lost interest. "It worked pretty well," says Pilbeam, "but it threw up all the same problems everyone else had several years later – weight, power loss and handling. You couldn't drive it on the throttle, couldn't squeeze the last drop out of it."

Rudd agrees: "Mike did a very good job, and we learned a lot – principally not to bother. It only helps in the rain, and you can get the same effect with some sand ballast and a throttle stop."

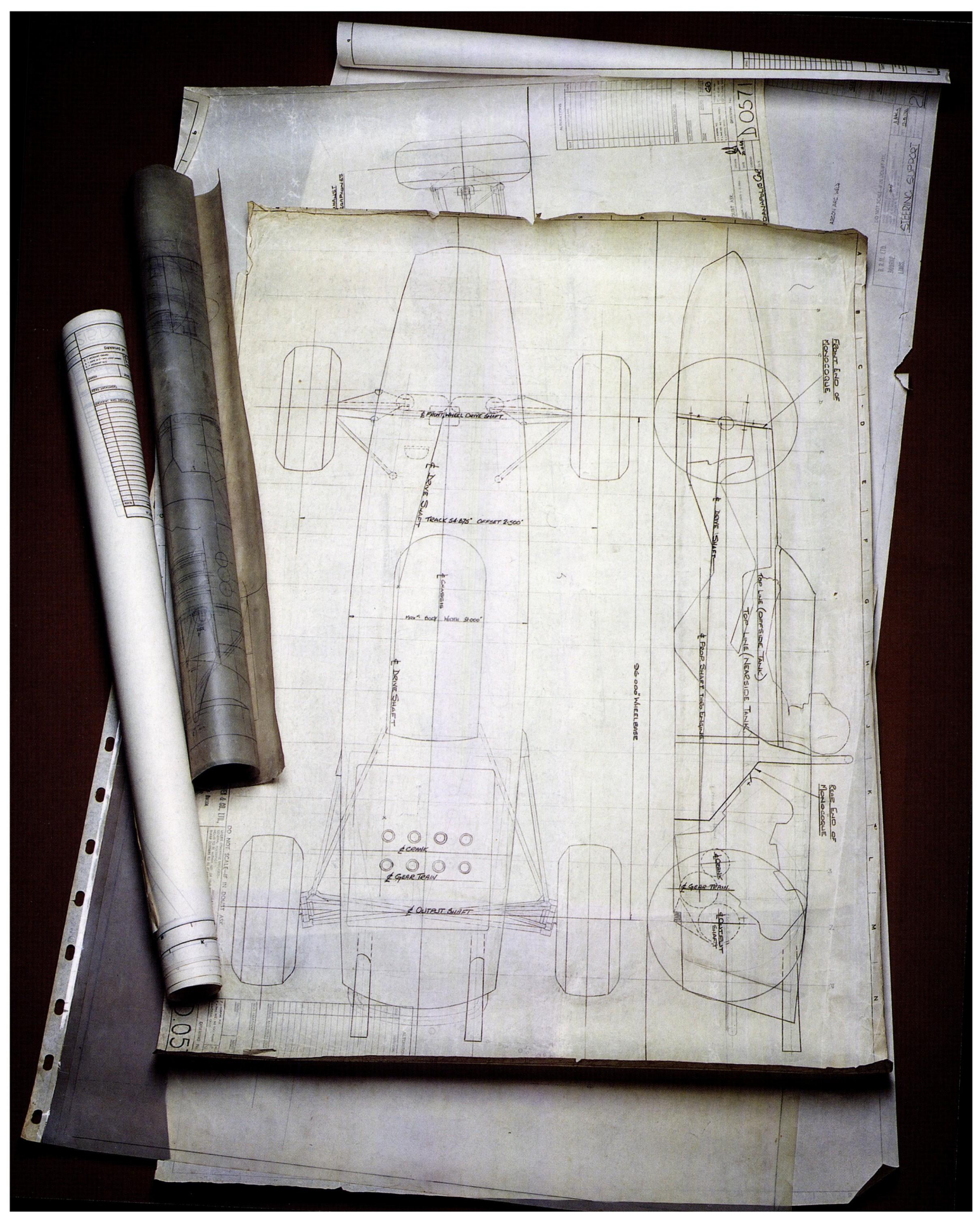
The car never raced, but became a hillclimb success, winning the British championship in 1968 for Peter Westbury. This was a source of aggravation, as Westbury constantly wanted attention and Wilkie Wilkinson, then BRM's team manager, continually complied. If Rudd grumbled, Peter Spear, the Group's research director, would back Wilkie and tell Sir Alfred, who would send a stern note to Rudd. It was hardly an atmosphere to relish.

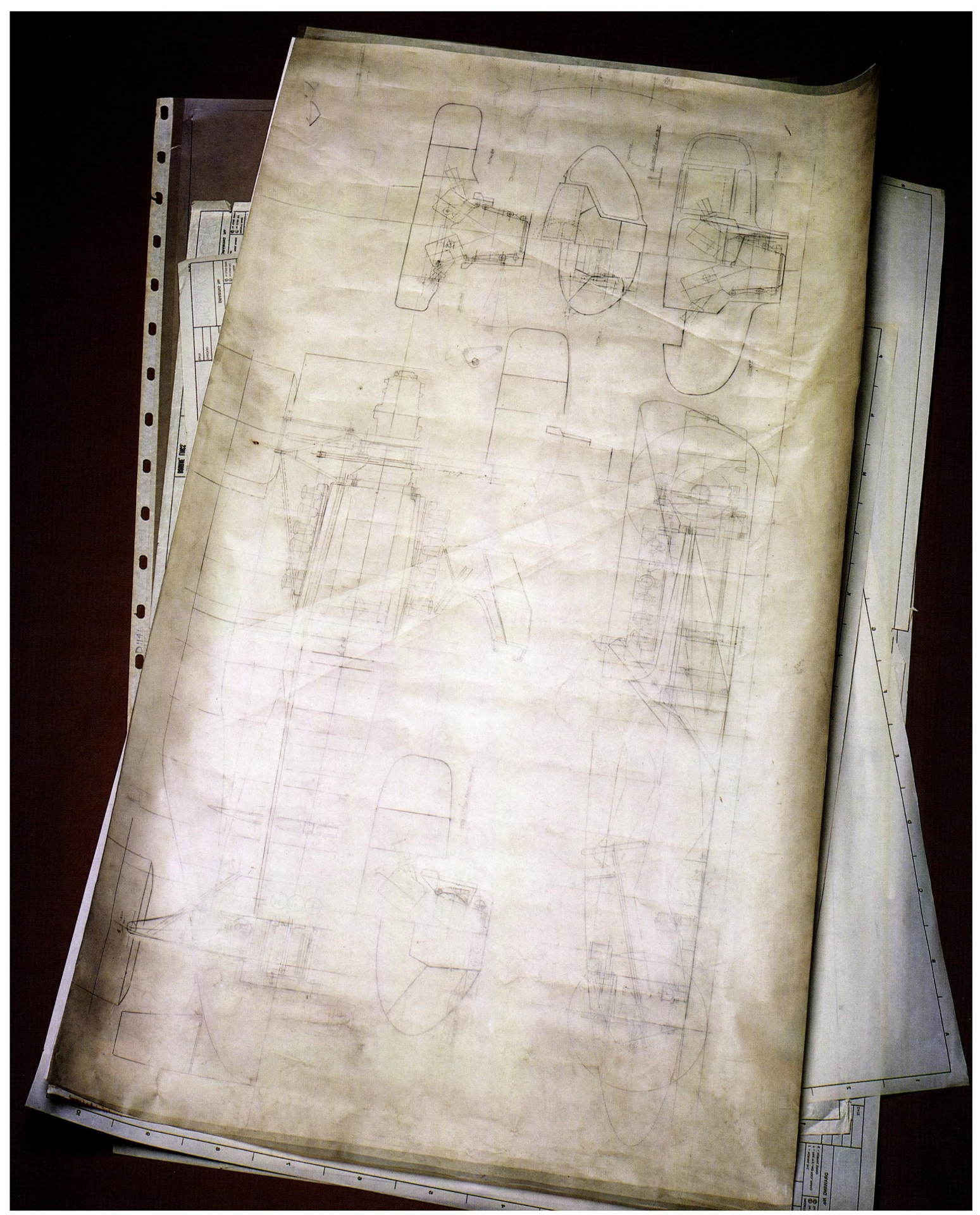
Spear landed Rudd with another problem in early 1963 – the job of building Rover's gas-turbine Le Mans car. In nine weeks.

"Spear would promise clients all sorts of things that weren't possible," says Rudd. "They thought June was the only date which mattered. They'd not heard of the March qualifying weekend. So we had 10 days to design the chassis." It was one of the team's strengths, responding to a crisis: Rudd took a P57 chassis and sliced it lengthwise to accept the turbine; the car finished the 24 hours and collected the prize for the first gas-turbine car to do so. ➳

Will Boxall/J.W.P. Ludvigsen

'Well, the group had to make money, but I wanted to win races, and we were being pulled in too many directions'


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On-board Data Logging

Rubery-Owen's range of activities brought many spin-off benefits. The firm possessed a rare device called a computer, and Pilbeam used this to produce suspension set-up tables. And long before telemetry became standard, BRM was running on-board logging systems. "I think we were the first to do that," recalls Pilbeam. "In 1964, Sid Derry, who worked at the Midlands R&D facility, brought a neat little box which went on the gearbox and logged up to 18 channels of data on paper tape – things like lateral g and suspension movement."

Wright recalls this system as being ahead of its time, but flawed: "It was so laborious to extract the data; no electronics to analyse it then, you used a ruler to measure the traces." However, it did point the way to a significant new area of research, by showing strong front-end lift.

Data-logging experiments ended when Pilbeam left in 1967, but by then downforce was high on the agenda, and when a young aerodynamicist called Wright joined that same year, Rudd gave him a flexible brief which would eventually revolutionise F1.

1969 Wing Car

The season began with high-level wings on every car – and several serious accidents due to wing breakage. Clearly a ban was imminent. "Tony Rudd didn't like wings and suggested that the car itself could do the same job," Wright remembers. "So I drew up some ideas. The obvious one was to make the car wing-shaped." Working with models in the Imperial College wind tunnel, Wright's early results showed astonishing new levels of downforce, especially with sideplates on the sidepods. Rudd, sensing something important, creamed off a few key individuals and set up a secret project in a separate workshop in Bourne. "There was me, Alec Osborne and a couple of boys," says Wright. "But we didn't feel the cash was restricted by the standards of the time."

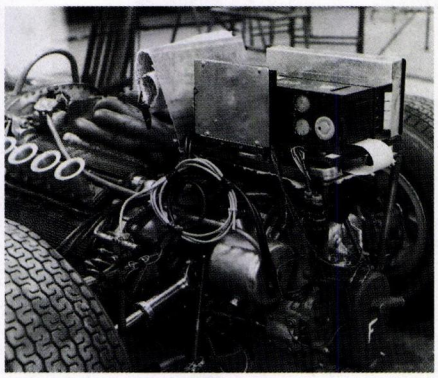
By cancelling one of the planned new slim-line V12 chassis, Rudd liberated the resources to build a full-size car, and the clandestine team set to work to produce it for the Monza race in September. Osborne designed a monocoque with driver and engine in a slim centre section with wing-shaped sidepods rising to a high, wide tail. Moulds were under construction – when suddenly the concept which might have precipitated the ground-effect revolution was stifled.

Increasing political tensions inside BRM had been undermining Rudd's efforts for some time. Close to quitting in 1968, he'd been temporarily mollified by one of Sir Alfred's famous compromises. Now Louis and Jean Stanley held a controlling influence and, according to Rudd, they were more inclined to listen to John Surtees, BRM's No1 driver, than to him. In June 1969, at Zandvoort after the race, Rudd was summoned to the Stanleys' suite and told to stop his secret project immediately.

"It was," says Wright, "one of those big BRM blow-ups that happened every few years."

Shortly afterwards, Wright left to join Specialised Mouldings, the Huntingdon composites pioneers, where he continued to work on ground effect – but in reverse, designing powerboat hulls which would lift and ride on the ground-effect cushion.

From there it was a pretty short step to the revolutionary Lotus 78 and 79.

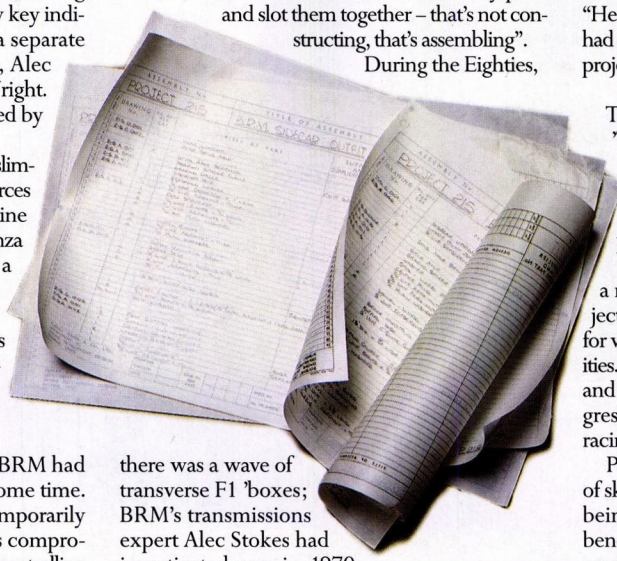


Above: Early data logging system used paper tape. Left: Drawings reveal Wright's prophetic '69 wing car with aerofoil sidepods. Internal politics killed it. Below: Worksheets list parts for monocoque sidecar

Transverse Gearbox

Britain's 'Cosworth kit car' movement from 1968 on made a DFV and in-line Hewland 'box virtually standard for years – except at BRM, who of course built their own. Says Stanley, "We were constructors, the others were kit merchants: buy parts and slot them together – that's not constructing, that's assembling".

During the Eighties, there was a wave of transverse F1 'boxes; BRM's transmissions expert Alec Stokes had investigated one in 1970, with the aim of shortening the wheelbase to compensate for the lengthy V12 engine. A drawback is that you lose the simple ratio change of the drop-gears on an in-line 'box and, in the end, BRM elected to stick with their old unit. Stokes didn't mind; he designed that one too.



Mobile Hospital

In between racing cars, Stokes also worked on the well-known mobile hospital Stanley provided for FOCA. Although Louis was campaigning for better circuit safety and medical facilities, this too was intended as a commercial project, for sale to developing countries. Stokes recalls building one for Saudi Arabia: "It had two operating tables, and one had to be higher than the other because it was for the king. And they wanted a portable mortuary too, so I went along to Peterborough Hospital to see what a mortuary looked like."

And all this on top of the race schemes. "We just had to bodge it in," says Stokes, "though there were normally only six of us in the design office and 12 in the machine shop. The labour force did a marvellous job. Worked bloody hard, often 80 hours a week. In the V8 days, our peak time, the engine builders could do 100 hours a week." Was there any reward after a victory? "Oh, there would be a barrel of beer. After work, of course."

Jumping Jeep

Sometimes a project brought concrete benefits. When the MOD asked for a lightweight V8 engine, the deal included funding a new dynamometer. This engine was for a 'jumping jeep', which drove normally until meeting a fence or a river, when the driver would engage two V8s powering ducted fans to leap 20 or 30ft in the air and clear the obstacle. And yes, it did work; but it was pricey and Mr Callaghan cancelled it – leaving BRM with the dyno.

Snowmobile

This was an idea of Stanley, according to Pilbeam: "He thought there was a huge market for it, so he had one sent from Canada. We dismantled it, but the project soon petered out."

These are only highlights from a string of '60s and '70s projects, including a three-pot Norton 'bike engine, a proposed flat-12 F1 unit, the BRM Avenger, electronic mixture/throttle control, a 16-valve Reliant 750, an air-portable armoured personnel carrier – the range is remarkable.

In some ways it seems obstructive to load up a racing team with such a variety of extra projects; yet many of them were useful experiments for which few other teams at the time had the facilities. Stanley: "Some were very rewarding financially, and in research. We made some tremendous progress. We could take information from them for racing purposes, and we gained from it."

Perhaps only Lotus could claim a similar breadth of skills during the '60s, though it differed through being far more tightly focused on racing. BRM benefited from belonging to a major engineering group, but suffered from an inevitable conflict of interests over profits. Rubery-Owen under the Owens was certainly profitable but if, as Tony Rudd claims, Sir Alfred spent millions on BRM, it's not surprising that he tried to make sure the race team earned their keep.

Thanks to Hall & Hall for their help with this article M

Will Boxall/LAT/WP, BRM

'We were constructors, the others were kit-merchants: buy parts and slot them together – that's just assembling'



Larry Perkins and Len Terry discuss the latest drama during P207's grand prix debut. It retired after just one lap

Bourne to be Reviled

WHEN 1976 PASSED WITH ONLY ONE BRM GRAND PRIX ENTRY, IT SEEMED THAT THE TEAM FROM BOURNE HAD REACHED ITS END. BUT SUDDENLY AN ALL-NEW CAR WAS ANNOUNCED. PAUL FEARNLEY EXAMINES THE FALLOUT FROM THIS LAST, SPECTACULAR ACT IN THE BRM SOAP OPERA

photography by LAT

THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY, THEY SAY. NOT everything is black and white, however – some of it is British Racing Green. But through the fog of acrimony – it's lifted since 1977, but has yet to disperse completely – shines an incontrovertible truth about BRM's final F1 fling: this is a sad and cautionary tale.

Everyone thought they had seen the last of BRM. An aged P201 driven by Ian Ashley had made an underwhelming appearance at Buenos Aires – the opening round of the 1976 F1 world championship – and that was that. Done. Best forgotten. Outsiders could see the team had lost the plot: to build a car in its entirety, while commendable, was no way to go motor racing in the Cosworth/Hewland 'kit car' age – unless you had the backing of Fiat. To compound this by running three, four, or more, cars in a GP, was sheer lunacy. The team was blessed with talented engineers, but they were overstretched. The slide following Jean-Pierre Beltoise's season-closing win in the 1972 Victory Race at Brands Hatch and Clay Regazzoni's season-opening pole position in the 1973 Argentine GP had been swift, inexorable and painful to watch.

But Lou Stanley, who owned BRM jointly with his wife Jean, is not a man beholden to convention. He turned the F1 world on its ear: BRM were coming back in 1977, with an all-new design, the P207. It wasn't until the car was unveiled at the swanky Dorchester Hotel on 3 December, 1976, that he was truly believed. He'd pulled it off, though, thanks to backing from Rotary Watches and the speedy pencil of Len Terry, the freelancer he had called in and given four months to design a car. When 'Big Lou' was fired up, nothing was allowed to get in the way. In front of the assembled press, the doubting Thomases, he railed against this and that, and promised much from his team – his words becoming ever more passionate, ever more lavish, with ever more pomp and circumstance.

His cohorts must have cringed. In a few weeks' time they were due to fly to South America for the Argentine and Brazilian GPs – and they simply weren't ready. An extended test at Snetterton would have made more sense. They grabbed some straight-line runs on a Cambridgeshire airfield in December instead, where matters got worse: the car boiled – despite the snow!

Australian Larry Perkins was the team's sole driver. He'd had a tantalising glimpse of how an F1 team should be when he contested three GPs at the end of 1976 for Bernie Ecclestone's Brabham, replacing the Ferrari-bound Carlos Reutemann. Larry was rated by many, but made a bit of a Horlicks of it, and was hardly spoilt for choice the next season.

"Sometimes," he says, "a driver finds himself in a good situation, the next moment you're thinking, 'Christ, will another opportunity come along?' Well, BRM came along, and I reckoned it was better than nothing. There were some capable people at BRM, and I'm a hands-on sort of guy who reckons you should be able to turn things around if you have good people around you." He was just 26 at the time, used to winning back home and in Europe's lesser formulae.

Courtesy of Marcus Pye

Chief engineer Aubrey Woods, in contrast, was BRM to his core. He'd worked for other outfits, but had been given his break by BRM's Peter Berthon. He had been with the team when it was nothing more than six men in a drawing office, been through the bad times, been through the good times. BRM meant a lot to him. Which is why he was tempted back. And why he didn't appreciate being told what to do and how to do it by a straight-talking Aussie young buck. When Perkins buttonholed him to point out he knew a thing or two about radiators and cooling after spending his childhood on a farm in the Outback, inwardly Aubrey must have agreed with his sentiment, for he too felt this was a particular design flaw. Yet, according to Perkins, his viewpoint was met with a wall of indifference.

In Woods' defence, he states that he had been told to keep his nose out of the design side; his job was to oversee engine development *and* manage the team. It was not a role he was totally happy with. In an earlier BRM comeback, he'd been asked to act as designer, and the commercial and team manager. It was an impossible task, so he persuaded ➤

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Larry Perkins and Aubrey Woods did not see eye-to-eye, but appear relaxed despite the dramas of Interlagos (left)

Perkins had more success in Brazil with a push-bike than P207 (below) and left the team after three races

Sir Alfred Owen, BRM's patron, to sign Tim Parnell as team manager, a suggestion which reaped dividends during the Yardley/Marlboro era. But now he found himself back at square one, watching someone else do the job he wanted. Put plainly, Woods wasn't enamoured by Terry's appointment – even though they'd worked on Dan Gurney's Eagle project. In the rush to pull everything together, toes were being trodden on, corners were being cut. The team had a great name, there was a huge willingness to make it work, but it wasn't gelling.

Terry has a slightly more detached view. He had been freelance since leaving Gurney's operation towards the end of 1967, his first commission springing from BRM, who asked him to design the V12-engined P126 F1 car. This, too, was a tricky time politically, long-time BRM chief designer Tony Rudd persisting with the troubled H16 engine.



'There just wasn't enough money. We had £300,000, a top team had £1.5m. And we were building the engine'

"Like the P207, I only had four months to design P126," Terry recalls, "but it was a reasonably successful car given that it had a touring engine rather than an out-and-out racing unit." P207 was to prove a lot more problematical and a lot less successful.

"The big problem was there just wasn't enough money," Terry continues. "We had about £300,000 when a top team had approximately £1.5m. And you must remember that we were building the engine and gearbox as well." Tight budget, tight schedule, pressure building – radiator and all.

Naturally enough, Terry disagreed with Woods about the cause of the overheating problem: "Aubrey thought it was an airflow problem, but I reckoned it boiled down to the design of the water pump housing. The pump I designed was intended to send the water in two directions, diagonally opposite to each other. But because of a lack of finance, the actual pump was a cobble-up of two pumps cut in half. As soon as I saw it, I knew we would have trouble with it. The interior of the pump was such that it was stirring rather than circulating – and the water was just sitting in the head."

That should have been a small problem, easy to solve. The bigger deal was the clash of personalities. As Terry recalls: "I was saying that the main problem with the car was the engine, and Aubrey was saying it was a fundamental design problem. He wouldn't accept it, and I wouldn't accept it. In fact, looking back, it was neither an engine problem nor a design problem." Heels were being dug in. They'd all soon be up to their necks.

The project descended into farce because of a logistical lulu. The team were sat in Gatwick's departure lounge, ready for the flight to Argentina, when an urgent message called Woods down onto the Tarmac apron: the car wouldn't fit in the plane.

"We had been given the dimensions for a commercial freight airliner with double doors," explains Woods. "But now we were faced with a passenger flight which only had a single door. The crate would fit through it but there wasn't enough room to manoeuvre once inside the fuselage. We couldn't go." It was an understandable oversight given the whirligig schedule, and the divvying up of duties, but it was hugely embarrassing nevertheless.

And infuriating. An expectant Perkins waited to greet the team at Buenos Aires airport. And waited. And waited. You can imagine his mood. It wasn't improved when, in his new role of unwilling spectator, he read the race programme and discovered the mugshot purporting to be him was actually of Derek Bell, with a pair of glasses drawn on.

A last-minute deal with Brazilian airline Varig meant the car arrived at Interlagos in time for the year's second GP. It was, however, stubbornly 12sec off the pace, boiling like a kettle every time it ➤



Running without the engine cover cured the misfire, but the P207 still kept overheating at Interlagos (left)

Conny Andersson was one of the hapless pilots who tried to qualify it. He fails in the rain at Zolder (below)

went out. The 'Stanley Steamer' nickname was cruel but accurate. It started the race but lasted only a lap before disappearing in a puff of smoke. Perkins was resigned to it by then, his mood alleviated a little by his victory in the one-lap drivers' bicycle race, beating "Jacky Ickx, who was said to have been training with Eddy Merckx". Every straw had to be clutched.

The team managed a modicum of testing back home, which only served to break enough bits to put the car out of action for the South African GP. They'd have to take an old car instead. "I think it had Jo Siffert's name on it," says Perkins.



between Aubrey and me. It was one big cock-up."

Woods stayed on as the team lurched from crisis to crisis during a European season notable only for the car's failure to qualify. A hue-and-cry at the time was that the independents felt they were being squeezed out by the big wheels, and there'd often be 30 cars gunning for just 22 places. Sweden's Conny Andersson, Guy Edwards and Teddy Pilette wrestled with P207 to no avail.

Woods reckons his reworked V12 was giving a very competitive 480-490bhp. Pilette concurs, but also remembers that it kept dropping valves: "There

I don't remember having a long chat about it – I think I just rang up and said, 'You won't be seeing me again'

It wasn't quite that old, but it was the car that hadn't run since Argentina in 1976. This was loaded onto the slow boat to Cape Town – there wasn't enough cash to fly – and it arrived, according to one journalist, looking as though it had been used as the ship's figurehead. The beleaguered team trailered it to Kyalami, near Johannesburg, where Perkins did well to qualify, especially as the old girl sauntered along Kyalami's long, downhill straight at a steady-as-she-goes 148.51mph. Larry finished, too – last, five laps down, his hands and arms numbed by a vibration caused by missing wheel weights.

P207 returned to the fray at Brands Hatch's Race of Champions on 20 March, but withdrew when some old 'parts bin' uprights showed signs of wear. This was far from being an all-new car. Terry: "I was told to use as many existing bits as possible." The more forthright Perkins calls it "old rubbish recycled". His BRM adventure had come to its end.

"You dream that someday you will become an F1 driver, and now here I was doing it. I couldn't believe it. But then I couldn't believe that, having got there, you could be treated so badly.

"The car had some nice bits. The engine lacked power initially, but they found 50bhp with a new sump. It sounded beautiful. But then it would break. The gearbox was lovely, too. There were some good engineers at BRM.

"I wasn't politically correct; I don't remember having a long chat about it all – I think I just rang up and said, 'You won't be seeing me again.'"

Terry left at about the same time. It was his last foray in F1: "There was a lot of energy and ideas, but much of it was at cross-purposes, especially was just no money. There was a patch on one block that was leaking. So we sealed it with Araldite."

Iniquity followed iniquity: the team gave Monaco, scene of its greatest triumphs, a miss; BRM was demoted from the F1 Constructors' Association just days before the British Grand Prix; both P207s (yes, they built two) were entered for the 1978 British F1 championship – and still couldn't win.

Yet Woods stuck it out, designing the car he hoped would modernise BRM, a Lotus-like wing car. It ran, briefly, on Donington's Melbourne Loop, but went no further.

Woods: "There's only one good thing I can say about all this: I was there at the start and I was there at the finish." He even oversaw the sale of BRM on 22 October, 1981.

And that was that. Done. Best remembered. M

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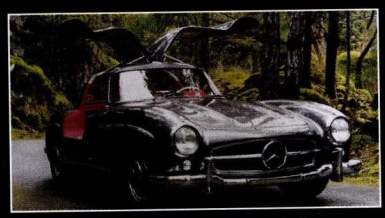
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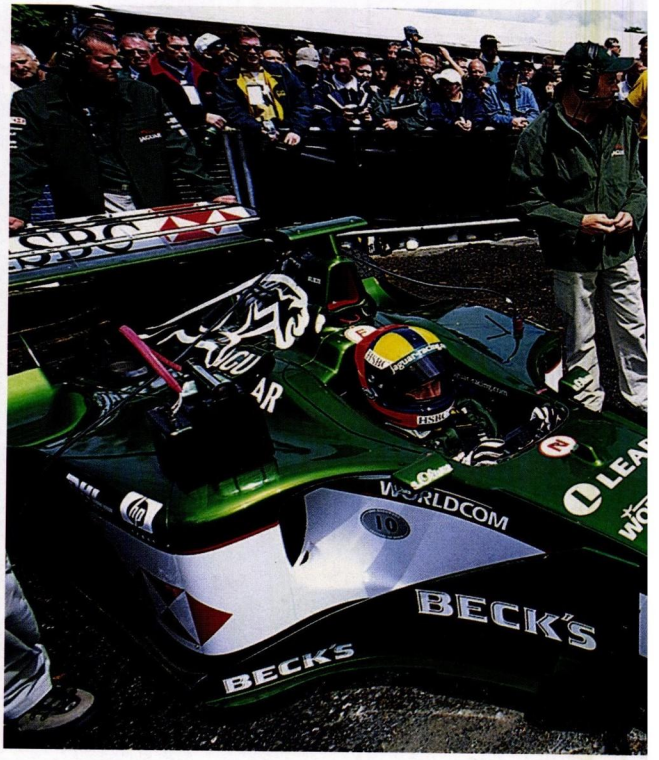
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Photography by LAT

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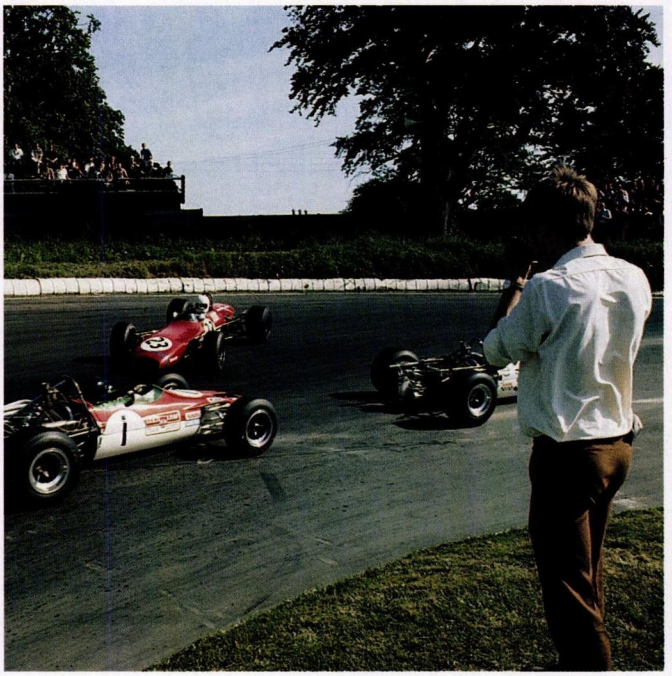




ABOVE: **FORMULA 5000 WILL MAKE A STARTLING RETURN TO STRENGTH IN 2001, WITH McLAREN M10S LIKELY TO STAR – AS THEY DID IN PERIOD.**
RIGHT: **GROUP C REVIVAL RELIVES THE LAST GREAT SPORTSCAR ERA.**
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Back-to-back races on the Silverstone (July 14/15) and Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuits, on successive weekends in July, will make a marvellous centre-piece to the eighth TGP series for 3-litre Formula One cars of the 1970s/early '80s. And for the first time, it has been granted a GP support race slot.

On track, the return of triple champion Bob Berridge with an Arrows A4 will throw the cat among the pigeons. His rivals include Richard Eyre and Joaquin Folch (Williams FW08s), Duncan Dayton, Steve Allen and Fredy Kumschick (FW07s) and Christian Glasel (Brabham BT49D). Celebrity car of this year will undoubtedly be the twin-chassis Lotus 88 of Steve Hitchins.

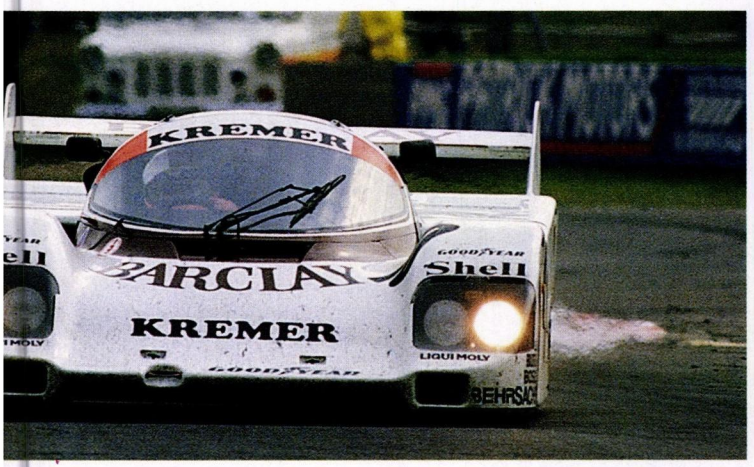
Fifty cars and drivers have signed-up for the series which, apart from the staples at Donington (5/6 May), Monza (19/20 May) and Nürburgring (10-12 August), will visit Mondello Park (1/2 September) for the first time.
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FORCE F5000 & CLASSIC GRAND PRIX

After a couple of well-intentioned false starts, F5000 is back with a vengeance. New converts have made massive investment in hardware over the winter, so it's going to be big in 2001. More than 70 cars are now said to be in Europe, and Mondello Park (6/7 May) is up for the first Transatlantic Challenge race.

Lola T330 and T332 models should be the class of the field – as in period – piloted by the likes of Simon Hadfield and Keith Baldwin. Another former TGP race winner, Ian Giles, should challenge in his ex-Elliott Forbes-Robinson/James Hunt Eagle, and Historic F2 graduate Nick Crossley's March 73A, and American Ray Boissoneau's McRae should be right there too. Chevron, Lotus, McLaren, Surtees and Trojan cars will complete the snarling pack.

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retrospective. Stronger F2 class action is promised too, with a gaggle of Brabham BT30s and McLaren M4As likely to be in the thick of things. Expect them to shine on the streets of Pau (9/10 June), where agility counts over power.
The Force: 01306 730517

INTERNATIONAL & ACEMAI FORMULA 2

Phillip Harper defends his OCEI/Acemai Trophy title in his familiar blue Ralt-BMW RT1, but is looking forward to some strong tussles. Deposed champion Michel Quiniou (March-BMW 782) and triple FIA Lurani Trophy Formula Junior champ Tony Thompson, who graduates from his Lotus 27 to an ex-Eddie Cheever Ralt-BMW RT1, are the men most likely to oblige. Ludovic Caron is more than capable of mixing it too, in his highly-developed March-BDG 742.

The old Euro F2 Club Trophy gets a facelift and a new International prefix for 2001, and will be far more open since dominant champion Fredy Kumschick is making TGP his priority. The shrill 1600cc BDA-engined Brabham, Lola, Lotus and March cars fly, and a concerted effort by co-ordinator Peter Stobinski and Kumschick to get bigger grids should be rewarded.
Acemai F2 Trophy (Pascal Legris): 00 33 1 4640 1818
International F2 Trophy (Peter Stobinski): 00 49 70 3122 6151

1-LITRE FORMULA 3 & FORMULA JUNIOR

Remember when Formula 3 was about screaming 1-litre cars, and races were won by the bravest of the brave outfoxing rivals at the final corner after slip-streaming battles involving a dozen or more cars? More than 25 – including Herrmann Unold, who raced F3 in the '60s, and HSCC champion Richard Urwin – have already signed up for the unmissable chance to race at Spa, Montlhéry, Silverstone and Imola.

The F3s are logical successors to the Formula Juniors with which they will share the circuits initially. The Junior movement has enjoyed huge growth in recent seasons, and now embraces not only the FIA Lurani Trophy series, but also a very strong series run by the Aston Martin OC in Britain. The keenest owners can now race them most weekends, as in their original heyday.
Formula 3 (Geoffroy Rivet): 00 33 6 60 98 29 91;
Formula Junior (Duncan Rabagliati): 020 8946 1730

SPORTS PROTOTYPES

This June at Le Mans, Stirling Moss will race the ex-Hamilton/Rolt Jaguar C-type which beat him into second in the 24-hour classic, 48 years ago. The event, on the Saturday morning preceding this year's 24 Hours, is the first of three Le Mans Legends showcases, to be continued in 2003 and 2005. The Automobile Club de l'Ouest aims to have as many original cars from the 1949-'64 races as possible on the grid, including Jaguar Ds and the '59-winning Aston Martin DBR1.

Group 4's European Sports Prototype Trophy harbours a stunning array of machines from the late 1960s and early '70s. This year sees prime mover Jonathan Baker switch to David Piper's Ford F3L to take on Lola T70s, a trio of Alfa Romeo 33s, the occasional Matra and Nicholas Zapata's Ligier. Reigning champion Michael Schryver's Chevron B16 heads the chase.

Highlight of the International Supersports Cup calendar should be another visit to the Oldtimer Grand Prix, where a monster grid last August demonstrated how great a spectacle the Can-Am, Interserie and Group 6-dominated fields can be. Sweden's Jonas Qvarnstrom carries the coveted number 1 on his Chevron B19. The series also visits Thruxton, scene of superb races in period.

Following the lead of the HSR organisation in the USA, whose category for IMSA GTP-dominated cars provides some mind-blowing racing, the Group C equivalent is beginning to go great guns in Europe. With aces like Win Percy, Anders Olofsson, Gary Pearson and Charlie Agg in the fray, in some of the ultimate sportscars of the pre-1991 era, it's going to get bigger.
Group 4 (Jonathan Baker): 0207 440 8721; Supersports (Caroline Sabourin) 01420 87622; Group C Racing (Roger & Brian Bailey): 01782 722147

GOODWOOD FESTIVAL OF SPEED & REVIVAL MEETING

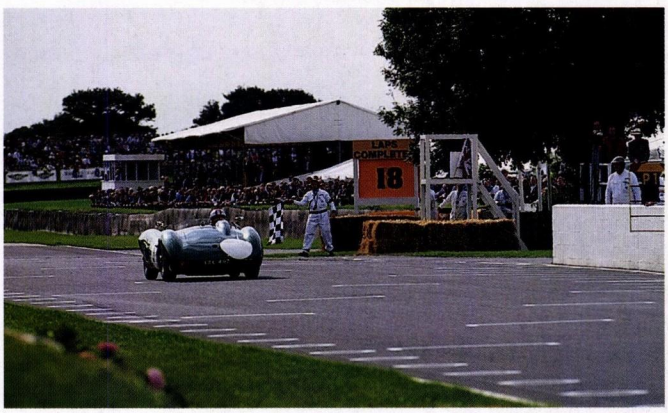
If half of the promised jewels stud the Festival of Speed's crown come 6-8 July, spectators are in for a real feast, with the strongest-ever current F1 element. Mercedes-Benz's museum and leading private collectors are also bringing 25 of the marque's most important competition cars to celebrate its centenary.

The Indianapolis 500 clocks up 90 years too. From the big yellow Marmon Wasp on which the intrepid Ray Harroun won the first '500' in 1911, the ➳





TOP: **THE HGPCA'S PRE-66 CLASS WILL BE AS ENTERTAINING AS EVER, BUT WILL BRM P261S RUN IN TASMAN 2-LITRE OR F1 1.5-LITRE FORM?**
ABOVE: **FORCE ARE ORGANISING THE F5000 BRUISERS' RETURN**
BELOW: **ASTON MARTIN DBR1 STILL TURNS HEADS, STILL WINS RACES**



tribute to the Brickyard's bravest tells the tale, through Miller, Mercedes and Maserati cars and a particularly strong section devoted to the 1960s and '70s.

The Monte Carlo Rally is also 90, which gives masses of scope for excitement from early touring cars, through the Lancia Stratos and Group B eras to current World Rally Championship contenders. And a splendid selection of Brabhams commemorates the 40th birthday of Black Jack's marque.

A fabulous new event for Sports Racing cars, headlined by those built between 1963 and '66, should wow the crowds at September's Revival race meeting (14-16 September) as Lotus 23, 30 and 40 models get to grips with Ferrari Ps and LMs, and early Ford GT40s. Fourth time round, a wider range of machines with Goodwood history is likely to populate the Tourist Trophy, while another eclectic selection of grand prix, sports and single-seaters forms the bulk of the cast. Motorsport theatre does not come finer, so dig out your '50s wear and join the *dramatis personae* in the time warp for the weekend of the season.
Goodwood Road Racing Company: 01243 755055

VINTAGE SPORTS CAR CLUB & HGPCA

The sight of Bernd Rosemeyer's V16-engined Auto Union C-type and Tazio Nuvolari's V12 D-type fishtailing round Donington Park on 19-20 May will be a priceless spectacle. Audi is planning to bring the actual cars for an emotional reunion with the only venue at which they raced in Britain during the Vintage Sports Car Club's annual Richard Seaman Trophy event.

The VSCC and Historic Grand Prix Cars Association have jointly pulled off this great coup, and are now working together on other projects which should prove mutually beneficial as many of their members cars compete in both sets of races. The GP Itala Trophy meeting kicks off the VSCC's five-event domestic programme, at Silverstone, on 21 April. Hugely enjoyable family entertainment is guaranteed. HGPCA competitors travel to Pau in June (where the BRDC's '50s Sportscars are also on the street race bill).

Controversy surrounds the association's pre-'66 series, now in its third year, because BRM owners have been asked to revert their V8s from 2-litre Tasman spec to original 1.5-litre F1 trim to face the Climax V8s on an even pitch. How many will make the costly mods to go slower remains to be seen, so P261s might be thin on the ground.
VSCC: 01608 604777; HGPCA: 0207 607 4887

COYS FESTIVAL, ROCKINGHAM

The sight of aero-engined leviathans from the Brooklands era thundering round the banking at Britain's newest racetrack cements a vital link with the past as the Coys Festival opens a new chapter in motorsport history. In truth, the shallow gradient perimeter circuit is more of a speed saucer than a speedbowl, but every square inch of the venue is visible from the stands, which should have the crowds flocking to Corby on 26-28 May.

Other flashbacks include a retro Race of Two Worlds, recalling the European-American challenges which saw hybrid grand prix cars and sports-racers take on Indianapolis roadsters at Monza in 1957 and '58. Jimmy Bryan and Jim Rathmann triumphed for the overseas side on both occasions. Averaging more than 160mph, they were brave souls indeed. Offy-powered roadsters should whet appetites for September's inaugural ChampCar race at the venue.

A Daytona 24 Hours feature brings superlative Group 4 sportscars out, while GT and saloon cars from the 1960s, and Historic Grand Prix machinery is also christening the blacktop. For fans of the Daytona 500, the new ASCAR saloon series will give a glimpse of the contemporary side of the facility.
Rockingham: 01536 500500

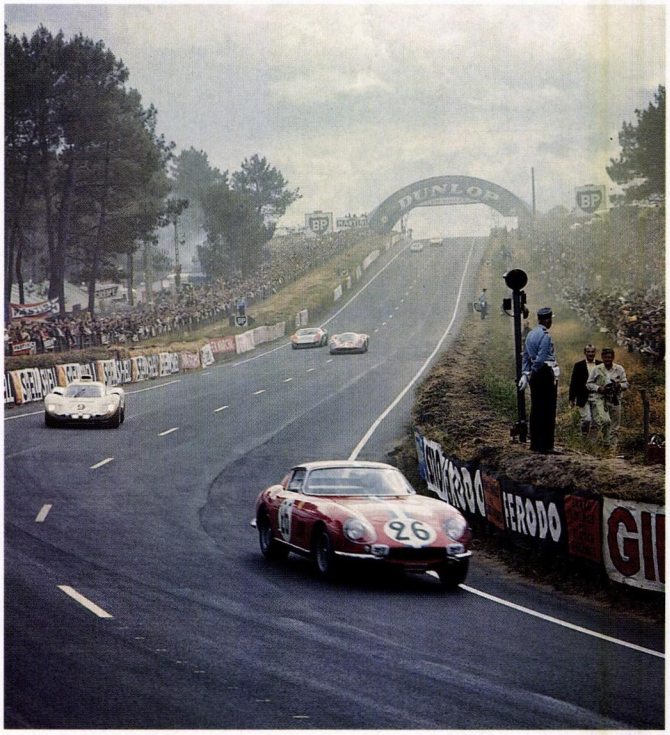
SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL HISTORIC FESTIVAL

Group C cars will add a tremendous new element to this year's Festival, in its new end-of-August (25-27) slot. Formula Ford also makes its Festival debut, and deservedly so since the HSCC's Chris Alford Racing & Sportscars-backed championship has been one of the club's success stories of recent seasons. The race will be for the Walter Hayes Memorial Trophy, as a tribute to the man who put Ford's name on the DFV engine and nurtured Formula Ford in 1967.

Expect the racing to be the usual high-quality stuff, with grand prix, sports and GT cars revelling in the excellent Historic GP layout. But, with dozens of star drivers, pageants, car clubs, air displays and a rallysprint on campus, the event – now in its 11th year – is so much more than a race meeting.
Silverstone: 01327 857271 M



ABOVE: **TWIN-CHASSIS LOTUS WILL STAR IN THOROUGHBRED GP SERIES**
BELOW: **LE MANS WILL FEATURE A TRULY MAGNIFICENT LEGENDS RACE IN JUNE, IN WHICH NONE OTHER THAN STIRLING MOSS WILL STAR**
BOTTOM: **CUTE F3 COOPERS RESPOND WELL TO BEING RACED HARD**





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UP THE CREEK WITHOUT A SADDLE

NUVOLARI, ROSEMEYER, SURTEES AND HAILWOOD WERE BIKE STARS WHO MADE SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS TO FOUR WHEELS, FROM LEANING TO SLIDING. BUT A TWO-WHEEL HERO'S SPEED, BALANCE AND COMPETITIVE EDGE DOESN'T GUARANTEE FOUR-WHEEL SUCCESS – FATE CAN PLAY A HAND, AS COLIN GOODWIN EXPLAINS

Geoff Duke

Lancashire's Geoff Duke was at the top of motorcycle racing at the end of the 1951 season. He'd just won the 350 and 500cc world championships for Norton and, to round the year off, had been voted *Sportsman of the Year*. The trophy was awarded in a ceremony at London's Savoy Hotel where Lord Brabazon was among the guests.

"Lord Brabazon asked me if I'd ever thought of having a go at four wheels," remembers Duke, "which I hadn't at the time, though I enjoyed driving fast cars on the road. Lord Brabazon said he would get in touch with Aston Martin and organise a try-out in one of their sportscars."

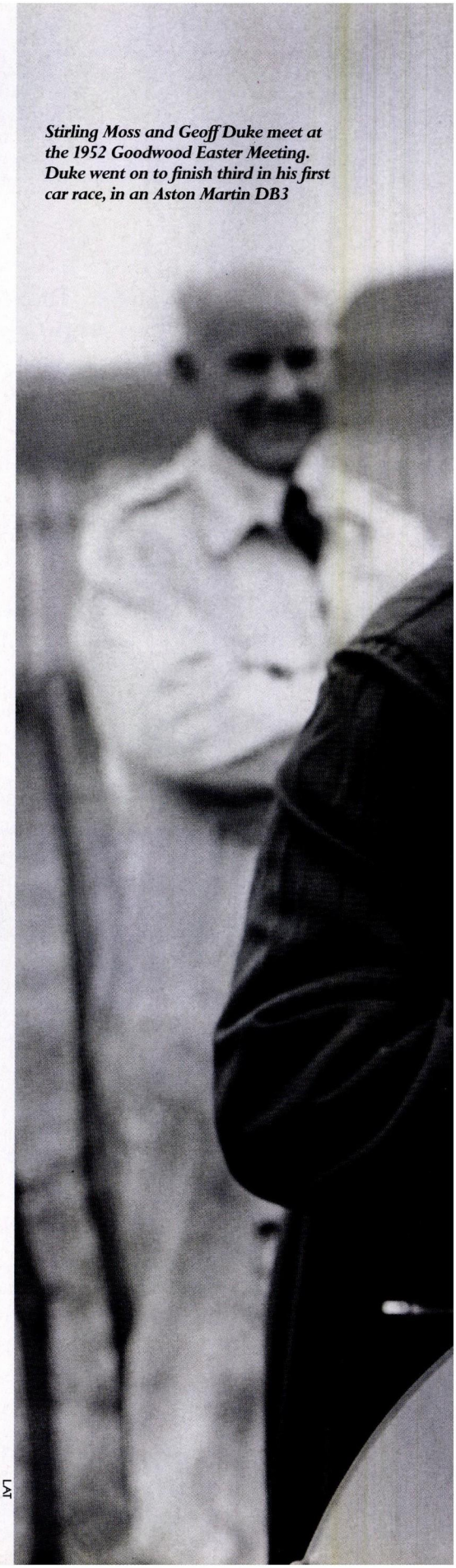
John Wyer, then Aston's racing manager, had already seen Duke in action at MIRA's (Motor Industry Research Association) small circuit near Hinckley, Leicestershire. Wyer remembered the occasion in the book *Racing with the David Brown Aston Martins*: "I had met Geoff Duke when he was testing Nortons for Joe Craig [Wyer's equivalent at Norton]. It was the first time I'd seen him ride. It was an astonishing performance – I had never seen anything like it in my life and was enormously impressed."

Wyer was equally impressed when Duke had his first go in a lightweight DB2 at MIRA. Duke asked Wyer to let him get the feel of the car for a few laps before the stopwatch was put on him. Wyer agreed but started timing anyway for his own interest. In the first session Duke's best lap was only 1sec off the quickest time the DB2 had managed there. In his next session he went quicker than any driver had gone in the car at MIRA. Wyer signed him immediately.

Duke made an even stronger point at Goodwood's Easter Meeting in 1952. Though he found the prototype DB3 a little harder to drive than the DB2 – "the DB2 would track dead straight and was very stable, just like a motorcycle" – and the car's bonnet popped open early in the race, he finished third behind a pair of XK120s.

Stirling Moss is hazy about the race details, but hasn't forgotten Duke: "I'd seen Geoff on a bike, and it was pure poetry. He was so natural, so quick, and obviously had many of the skills that would readily transfer from two to four wheels: balance, understanding of circuits and throttle control."

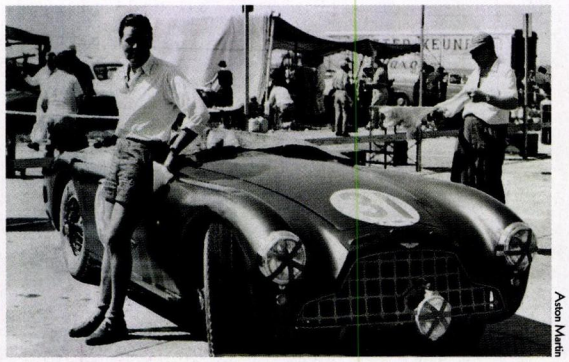
Motorcycle commitments meant that Duke could only drive for Aston Martin four times in 1952, one of which was a fabulous fourth at Berne behind three works Mercedes, again in the DB2. He was also leading ➤➤



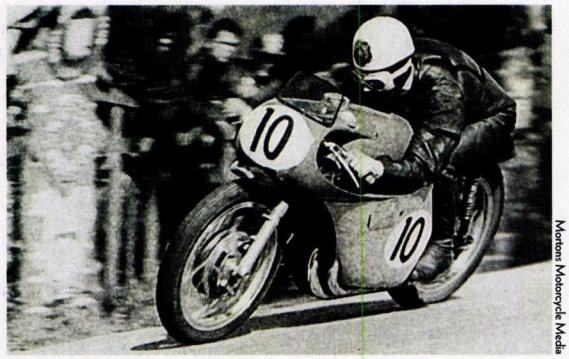
Stirling Moss and Geoff Duke meet at the 1952 Goodwood Easter Meeting. Duke went on to finish third in his first car race, in an Aston Martin DB3

LAT





Aston Martin



Morton Motorcycle Media

Above: At Sebring, Duke's Aston led but struck a backmarker
Below: Geoff adopts his more favoured pose astride a Gilera



'I hit a bank, the car flew into the air and then landed on me. A real mess' Geoff Duke

the British Empire Trophy on the Isle of Man, ahead of Duncan Hamilton's Jaguar, until the crankshaft snapped. All strong enough performances for Wyer to sign the 29-year-old Duke for 1953. And then came Sebring.

"I didn't much like the Sebring circuit," says Duke, "very flat and boring. I shared a DB3 with Peter Collins, who had put up a strong lead from the start. I was very anxious to do well, which probably caused me to make a serious misjudgement. I overtook a much slower MG in a corner. The trouble was that he wasn't in a drift and I was. I hit the MG and then clobbered an oil drum filled with cement. I got back to the pits, but the rear suspension was damaged beyond repair."

Understandably, Collins was less than happy. Here was this famous motorcycle racer, who'd just arrived in the team, blowing a victory in a major race with a silly mistake. Talking to Duke now, almost 50 years later, you can tell Collins' reaction still stings. Duke admitted he'd made a mistake and never tried to make excuses for it; that Collins made so much of it left a scar. Worse, Duke didn't feel he fitted into the car racing world, finding some people aloof and resentful. Hard to imagine; our view of '50s motor racing is of a friendly and relaxed world. "It was," says Moss, "but then I'd grown up in that world and was used to it. I can understand someone coming into it from motorcycling might have found it daunting."

A Silverstone motorcycle meeting soon after the Sebring disaster reminded Duke how much he loved racing motorcycles, and how much more at home he felt around motorcycle racing. By his retirement at the end of 1959, Duke had added another four world championships to his CV, on Nortons and Gileras.

With bike racing behind him, he had another stab at car racing, this time at the wheel of a front-engined Gemini Formula Junior with Graham Warner's Chequered Flag team. This Chiswick-based outfit were developing their own rear-engined FJ, which took up so much time that Duke did not get to race it that often. Worse, the money ran out.

Duke's last car race came in June 1961 with the offer of a drive in an F1 Cooper from former speedway rider Fred Tuck. "The deal was to do a race in Karlsloga, Sweden, and at the Nürburgring. I didn't like Karlsloga – very bumpy and tight – but I loved the idea of racing a car at the 'Ring. Unfortunately, Fred couldn't get a decent start money deal in Germany and decided he couldn't afford for us to race at the Nürburgring. I'd agreed to drive for him so felt obliged to race the Cooper in Sweden.

"The gearbox seized in the race and I spun into a bank. The car flew into the air and landed on me. It nearly killed me. Ribs torn from the sternum, punctured lung, torn heart muscle, cracked pelvis and a broken collar bone. A real mess." That was it.

"It wasn't the fear of getting hurt again," he comments, "more the fact that I'd taken part in a race against my better judgement and had nearly stuffed myself. I think that if I'd done the race at the Nürburgring instead, which I know I would have enjoyed, then I would have carried on."

Bill Ivy

Goodwood, early 1969, and Bill Ivy is about to step into the Brabham BT23C F2 car he's just bought from Winkelmann Racing – the ex-Alan Rees chassis, sister car to that driven by Jochen Rindt in the 1968 European F2 championship. Ivy doesn't have a clue about racing cars – he's never driven one.

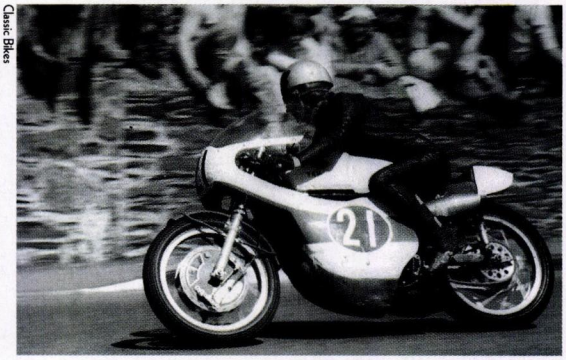
The 1968 motorcycle racing season had been a grim one for Ivy;



Giacomo Agostini (left) and Bill Ivy. Ago's four-wheel debut came after his bike career, but Ivy was in his prime, and was a sensation

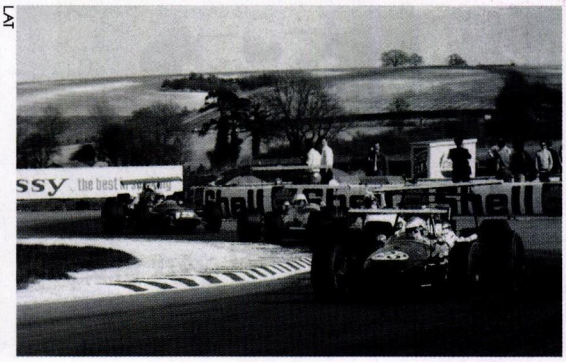
Classic Bikes

'Ivy had more ability than anyone I'd seen coming into motor racing' Jackie Stewart



Classic Bikes

Above: Ivy on his 250cc Yamaha in 1968, a year before his death
Below: Bill was quicker than all but Rindt in F2 at Thruxton



LAT

especially compared to the year before when he had won the 125cc world championship. Nasty accidents and terrible acrimony with Yamaha teammate Phil Read over team orders had made for a depressing time. The dispirited Ivy decided to pack up motorcyle racing and have a crack at cars.

An offer from Jawa to race its new V4 350cc two-stroke changed his mind, partly because he was swept up by the company's enthusiasm, but also because he knew he'd need the money for racing the Brabham. He would do two *and* four wheels.

Back to Goodwood: Ivy fires off a lap that is a mere two seconds off the fastest F2 lap at the Sussex circuit. Too confident, he spanks the car a week later at Oulton Park while testing.

Brian Hart, now more famous for his engines, was a talented F2 driver in the late '60s, and he too was at Oulton Park: "He was mad. Never the same line twice, car all over the place, flat out everywhere – the norm for bikers. Gary Hocking was the same. They'd get into cars and go like crazy."

Fortunately, the Brabham isn't too badly damaged and it is fixed up and readied for the Easter international F2 race at Thruxton.

With the Formula at its most competitive, the entry list contains a fair chunk of grand prix personnel: Jackie Stewart, F2-master Rindt, Graham Hill and Jean-Pierre Beltoise. Ivy is there with his mechanic who, according to Winkelmann's Peter Briggs, a future F3 and F3000 team boss, knew barely more about the car than Ivy. "We gave them a hand with the set-up and let them get on with it," says Briggs. "The cars were quite simple back then and Ivy's was a good one."

A good car perhaps, but no one at Thruxton is expecting the sort of performance Ivy produces. Rindt is right on form and bangs off a staggeringly quick 1min 13.2sec lap. Stewart is behind him with a 1min 15.4sec. So too is Ivy, who equals Stewart's time exactly, but is placed ahead of the Scotsman on the grid for their heat because he had set the time earlier.

Another newcomer, John Watson, remembers the reaction: "I was competing in my first international race so was too hyped up to take in much of what was going on around me, but I remember the stir when Bill put his car on pole for the first heat. People couldn't believe it."

Ivy himself was somewhat fazed. Briggs remembers him going to an official and asking if he could be allowed to start from the back of the grid because he'd never started a car race before and didn't have a clue what to do. That might have suited some of the other drivers too, some of whom were heard to say: "Who's going to try and overtake him? I haven't got the guts."

Ivy came fourth in that heat and was running sixth in the final when his engine let rip. That didn't put a damper on one of the most ballistic debuts in racing history. Stewart was deeply impressed: "He had a tremendous talent and more natural ability than anyone I'd seen coming into motor racing. But he also had an incredible personality. With him came a fantastic breath of fresh air and levity into motor racing."

Ivy raced the Brabham and Jawa. in 1969, crashing the former at the Nürburgring, but not before setting third-fastest time in practice on a damp track. Another performance Stewart considers outstanding.

On 12 July 1969, what Ivy had most feared, happened. In practice for the East German GP at Sachsenring, the two-stroke Jawa seized while its rider's left hand was away from the clutch lever. Ivy was spat off into an unprotected wall and received serious head and chest injuries, from ➤



Doug Nye/GPL



LAT

Above: Another meeting of greats – Agostini and Mike Hailwood
Below: Giacomo raced Williams FW06 in British Aurora series

'Formula Two was full of crazy young guys who would go like mad' Giacomo Agostini



On bikes, Ago had the talent to make it look easy. Here he heads for another win aboard a 750cc Yamaha in 1976

Classic Bikes

which he died in hospital.

Never again would Ivy roar into a paddock in his Maserati Ghibli, which he called 'The Gobbler'. Never again would his laughter and jokes be heard at prize-givings.

Bill Ivy came into car racing with a bang. Instantly fast, immediately loved, and still mourned by those who met him, however briefly.

Giacomo Agostini

In contrast to Duke and Ivy, Giacomo Agostini came into car racing when his motorcycle career was over. He had won 15 world championships between 1961 and '77, including seven back-to-back 500cc and seven back-to-back 350cc titles. Yes, his MV Agustas faced little opposition after Honda pulled out of racing in 1967, and yes, in the late 1960s and early '70s it was still possible to race in several different capacity classes at the same time – but you don't win 122 motorcycle grand prix riding like a muppet. And it takes some skill to get through a 16-year bike career without ever hurting yourself seriously.

Coincidentally, Ago's car racing debut was also made at Thruxton, in an F2 car, at the Easter Meeting. Unlike Ivy, however, Agostini had sampled a racing car early in his career.

"Ferrari asked me if I'd like to try a Dino sportscar," he remembers, "which I did, but my bike career was going very well and I was earning lots of money. But after I'd retired from motorcycle racing, I was very bored and badly needed to do something that would help me forget bikes."

The Italian struggled to qualify his Chevron-BMW B42 at Thruxton, and finished last in the race. The season hardly improved.

James Hunt once explained the Hesketh philosophy thus: because they were spending a fortune in F2 and not doing very well, they might as well go into F1? Agostini followed their example and sorted himself out (thanks to a major Marlboro deal) with a Williams FW06. Setting his sights slightly lower than Hesketh, he entered the British F1 championship, which was called the Aurora AFX series in 1979.

"I much preferred driving the Williams," says a reflective Agostini, "and had much better results in it. Formula Two was full of crazy young guys who would open the throttles and just go like mad. Hungry drivers. I was 37 by then, with a successful career behind me."

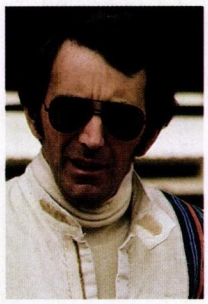
It's easy for people to be scathing about Agostini's performance, but Guy Edwards, who also raced in the series, could see why the Williams suited Ago better than the Chevron: "I couldn't get on with those F2 cars either, edgy to drive, with relatively peaky engines. With over 500bhp, the FW06 would have been much simpler to drive – like an enormous, powerful go-kart."

Agostini: "Winning is always difficult, even though it sometimes looks easy from the outside. Reaching 100 per cent is hard, in cars or on bikes. The lines around the circuits weren't that different, but what really was different was the speed at which you came into corners and the braking ability of the car compared to a bike. That was very difficult to adjust to."

Agostini stayed with the series for 1980 with, as the year before, Dave Price running the Williams FW06 for him: "Giacomo did okay with the car, but he made a deeper impression on me as a person. A real gentleman. Dead easy to work with, friendly and totally relaxed."

Bike genius Giacomo Agostini did not leave the motor racing world in awe of his speed as Ivy had done, but his culture and laid-back attitude were glimpses of the man himself. M


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THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

THIRST FOR SUCCESS

JOHN WATSON 1977 FRENCH GRAND PRIX

THAT JOHN WATSON NEVER WON A GRAND PRIX FOR BRABHAM DEFIES LOGIC, FOR HE WAS SO CLOSE SO MANY TIMES. BUT THIS MISSED OPPORTUNITY REALLY HURT, HE TELLS ADAM COOPER

JOHN WATSON SCORED HIS FIRST GRAND PRIX WIN IN Austria in 1976, and his second in Britain in '81. Those two career landmarks were separated by almost four years of frustration and disappointment for the Ulster driver, who at times thought the second win was never going to come.

But no single race was as cruel as the 1977 French GP at Dijon-Prenois, when 'Wattie' came within a mile of what would have been a glorious victory over Mario Andretti's Lotus.

When Penske decided to switch to ChampCar racing at the end of 1976, John moved to Brabham to replace the Ferrari-bound Carlos Reutemann. Bernie Ecclestone's outfit had endured a difficult first season with Alfa Romeo flat-12 power, but Watson knew the team well, and believed in the ability of designer Gordon Murray to turn the situation around in '77.

That faith was repaid at the opening round in Argentina, where he qualified second. His front suspension failed in the race, but a second place for team-mate Carlos Pace showed that the combination had potential. This was further underlined in South Africa, where Pace qualified second and Watson set fastest lap.

"It was a good car," John recalls. "The Alfa Romeo was a nice engine to drive, for the flat-12 offered tremendous flexibility."

After Kyalami, the team was rocked by the news of Pace's death in an aeroplane crash in Brazil. Watson stepped up to the challenge of remotivating the team, and was a regular front runner. He took pole at Monaco, and then qualified second in Belgium, only for Andretti to take him off on the opening lap.

"I was pissed off with Mario because I had the lead going into the chicane behind the pits. And he just misjudged it. But in those days you didn't harbour those kinds of grudges."

In Sweden, John again qualified second, but this time his race was ruined by an assault from Jody Scheckter. At the time, he was in second place behind Andretti, who would eventually run out of fuel with three laps to go. Another chance wasted.

Then came Dijon. John qualified fourth, but

All photographs: LAT

The battle that mesmerised the crowd: the Alfa-powered Brabham BT45B keeps Mario Andretti's Lotus 78 at bay – as it would until the very last lap





Andretti's face displays the elation that Watson (right) clearly isn't feeling. John waited four more years for his second victory; Mario was champ in 1978

a blinding start got him ahead of the Lotuses of Andretti and Gunnar Nilsson, and left him behind only James Hunt. It took him just five laps to relieve the world champion of the lead. Some 12 laps after that, Andretti also passed Hunt for second, and thus John had black and gold in his mirrors.

"To me, it was a bit of a David and Goliath race; I was Goliath and Mario was David. The downside of the Alfa at that stage was that it needed a lot of fuel, and so carried much more than did a DFV-powered car. So we were heavy at the start.

"Dijon was one of those circuits where it was virtually impossible to pass, even in those days, unless the guy ahead of you made an error. I knew Mario was all over me like a rash, but I was able to maintain my advantage round the back of the circuit and then, coming onto the pit straight, I could get into that long right-hand corner and Mario couldn't get a run at me. I could then take the thing up the hill past the pits, and maintain my distance.

"I also realised that if Mario got ahead of me, I couldn't get back. I knew I could stay ahead of him, but if he got ahead of me he had enough advantage on certain parts of the circuit to stay ahead. He had a car that was more nimble, arguably easier on its tyres – all those kinds of things. It had less weight, because of lower fuel levels, so it would have been at an advantage, particularly in low-speed corners, and marginally so in the medium-speed corners. In high-speed corners, there wasn't much difference."

John led from laps five to 79, and never put a foot wrong, despite intense pressure. But this race had 80 laps, and that last 2.36-miles proved to be every driver's worst nightmare.

"Everything was normal, and I was thinking, 'Wow! Here we go, number two, a nice win under a lot of pressure.' I got to the lowest part of the circuit, which was the downhill left-hander, accelerated to the hairpin at the far side of the circuit, which was an uphill second-gear corner, turned in, picked up the power. And all of a sudden, 'B-r-r-r-r-r-r'. It just died.

"I couldn't believe it. Mario saw me slowing down, and now he had the momentum, and I'd lost it. So he was able then to get up alongside me, then fractionally ahead. The engine coughed back into life at this point as fuel got back into it.

"We went virtually side-by-side into the next left-hand corner, which took us back onto the original circuit. But he was on the inside and had the advantage, and again the thing gave a hiccup. And that was it. All over."

Barely able to believe his misfortune, Watson followed Mario round that last sweeping right and up the hill onto the pit straight. After 109 minutes of racing, he'd lost by a mere 1.5sec. It might as well have been a lifetime.

"The little amount of fuel that was in the car was being surged under braking and cornering. And that was enough to cause it to go away from the valve that was feeding the collector tank. Whether it was because of a faulty valve or there was not enough fuel, I just don't know."

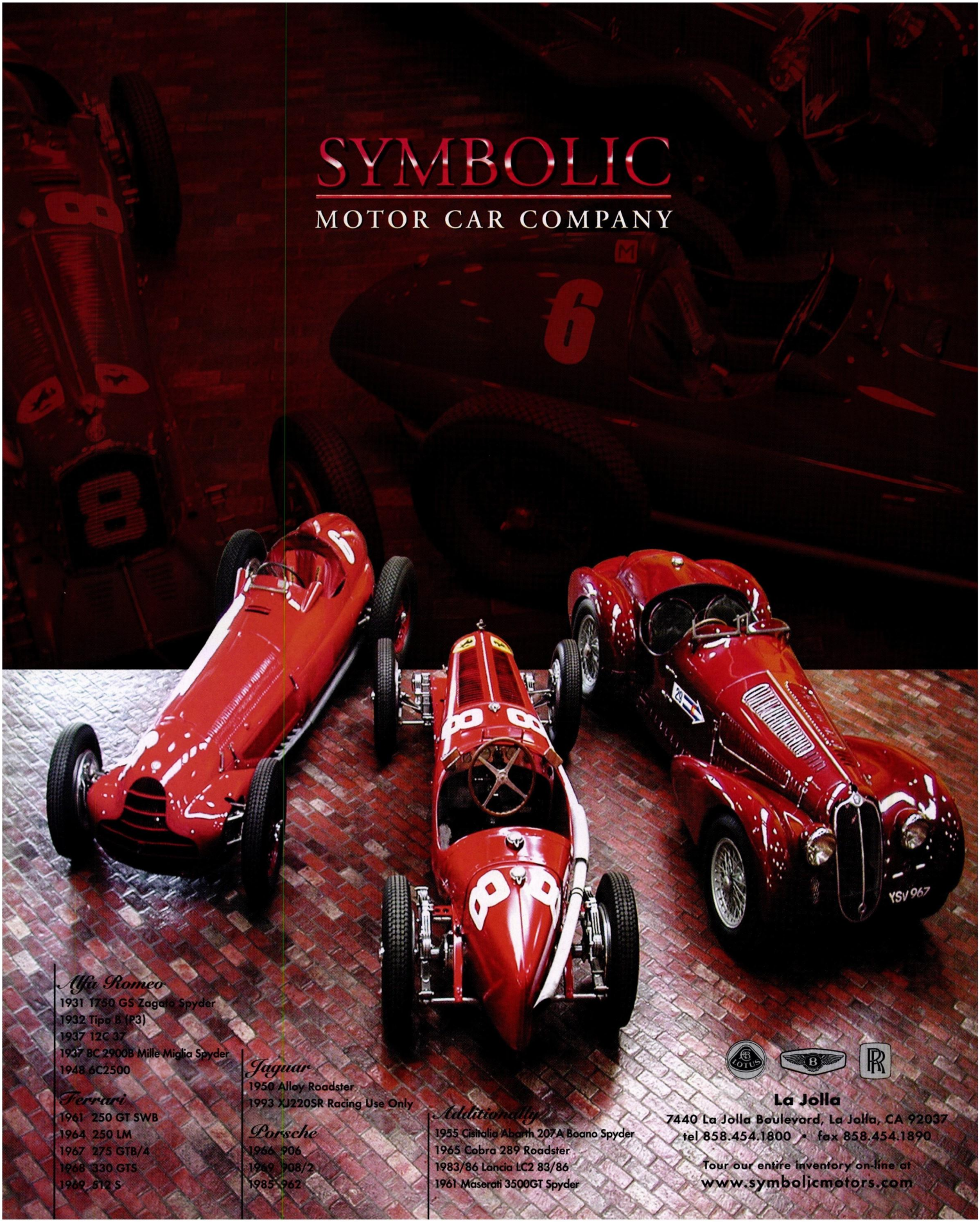
When he got back to the pits, John couldn't hide his disappointment.

"What can you say? Everybody was gutted. Bernie was gutted. I was gutted. Alfa was gutted. I was pissed off because I thought I'd done a good job on the day. Very often races are won not by being the quickest – all that matters is getting across the line first. I'd done a good job of bringing the car home, I thought, until the last lap. The win was there, but for a mile."

The 1977 season still had some trouble in store for him. Just two weeks later at Silverstone, he lost a victory after a famous battle with Hunt, this time because of a fuel-feed problem. At Hockenheim, he was in second, and about to take the lead, when the engine blew. And so it went on. In fact, he failed to score a point between Dijon and the end of the season. Not surprisingly, it got him down.

"When events conspire to cause you not to get the results or consistency of performance that you're looking for, then you again start to become – in your own thinking and your own perspective – slightly negative. And then you start to think, 'What's going to go wrong now?' So you start being negative in your approach to it. It's almost as if you're willing things to go wrong."

In 1981, Watson would take a more satisfying second place at Dijon in the McLaren MP4. And two weeks after *that*, Lady Luck finally smiled on him, at Silverstone. M



Alfa Romeo
1931 1750 GS Zagato Spyder
1932 Tipo B (P3)
1937 12C 37
1937 8C 2900B Mille Miglia Spyder
1948 6C2500

Ferrari
1961 250 GT SWB
1964 250 LM
1967 275 GTB/4
1968 330 GTS
1969 512 S

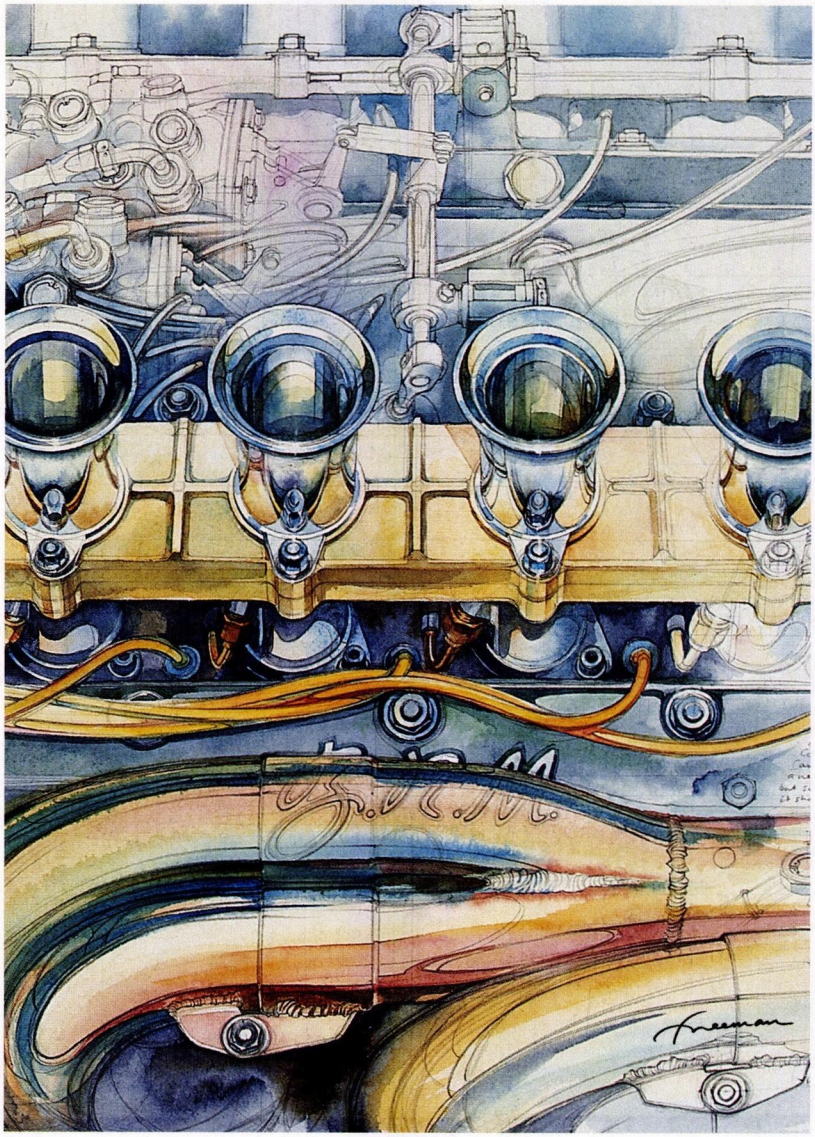
Jaguar
1950 Alloy Roadster
1993 XJ220SR Racing Use Only

Porsche
1966 906
1969 908/2
1985 962

Additionally
1955 Cisitalia Abarth 207A Boano Spyder
1965 Cobra 289 Roadster
1983/86 Lancia LC2 83/86
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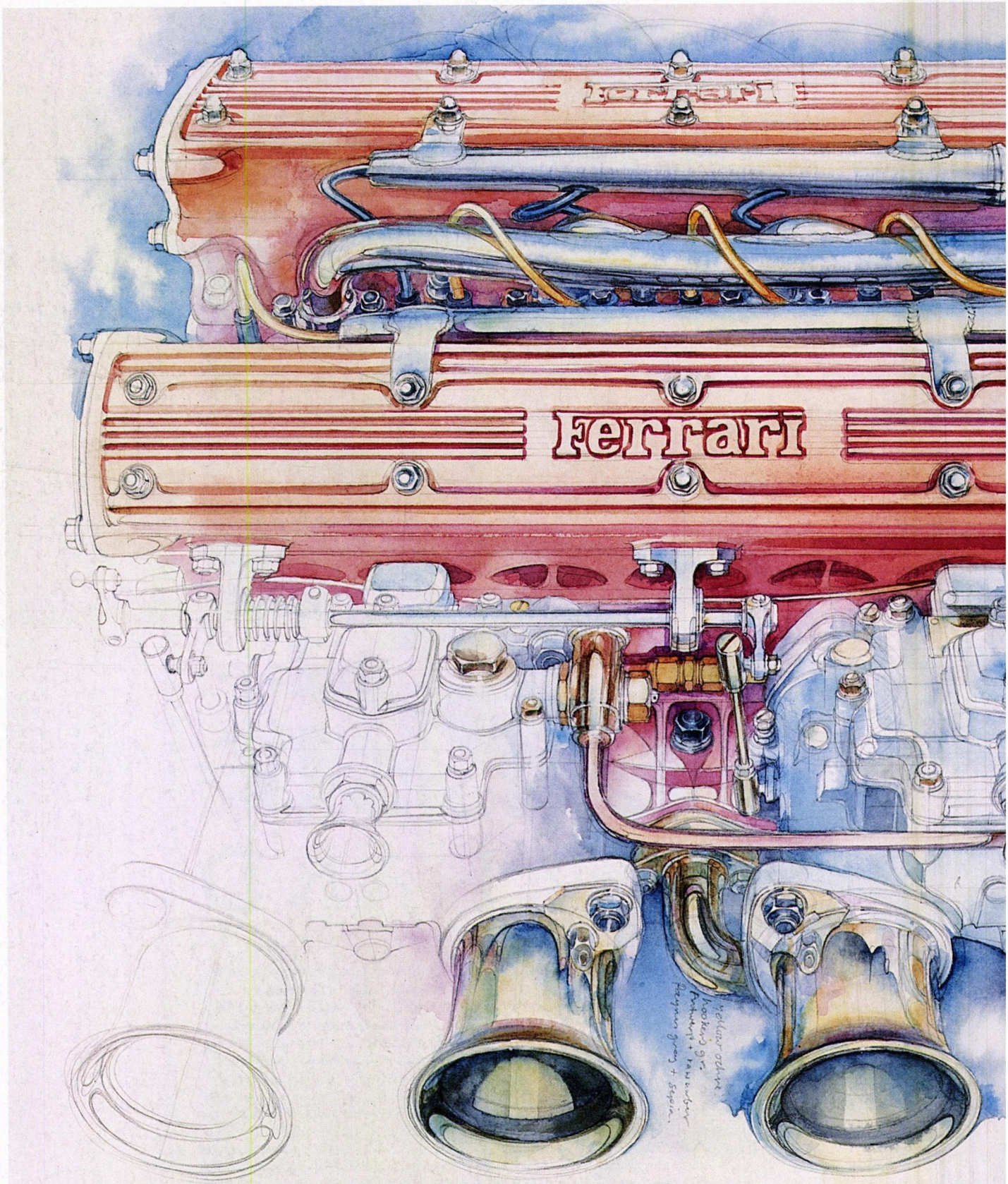


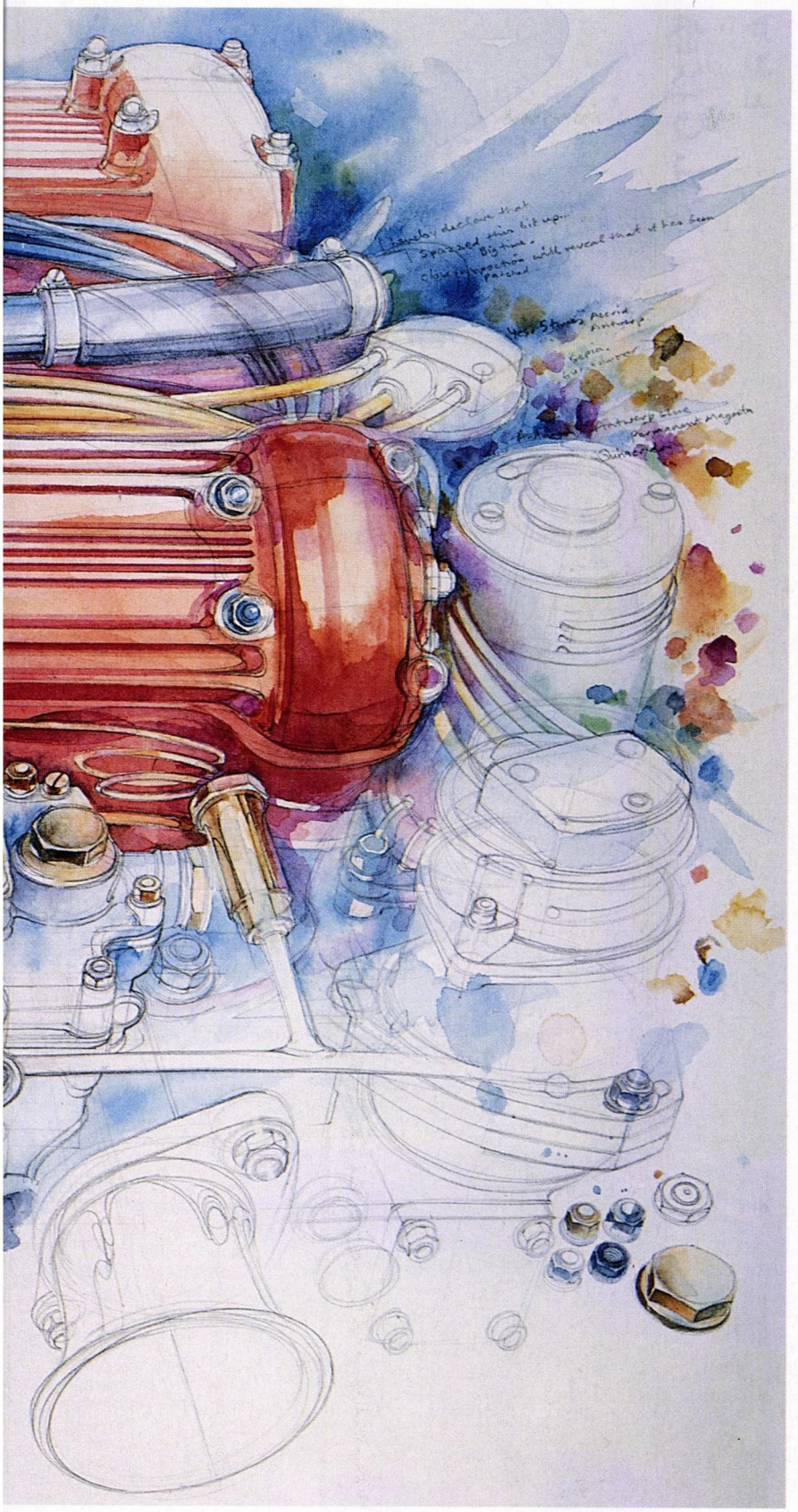
FREEHAND

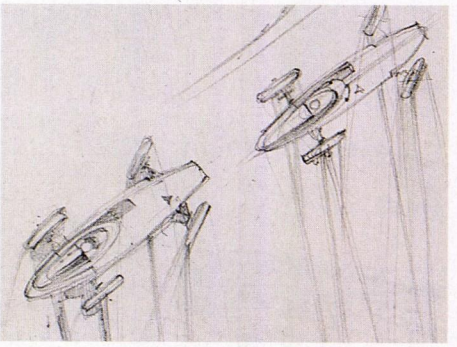
Illustrations by Bob Freeman - www.bobfreeman.co.uk

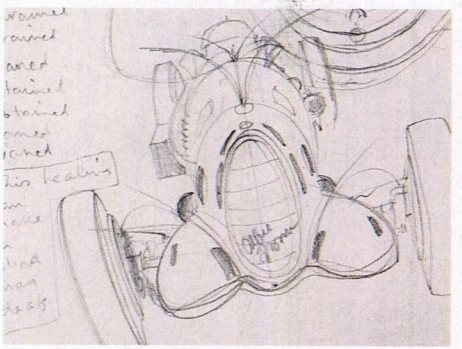
BOB FREEMAN IS NEVER ENTIRELY HAPPY WITH ANY OF HIS DRAWINGS; HE SAYS HE NEVER KNOWS exactly what direction they will go in, or how they will finish – if they ever do. Technical illustrations can often be slaves to accuracy, with limited scope for exploring the personally crafted details that make Freeman reach for his pencil; freehand drawing, by contrast, is a beautifully inexact science. "A drawing can appear in a few seconds, or become a technical cactus, growing very slowly, and developing small, prickly bits you daren't touch for fear of spoiling it." Freeman's artwork has graced many magazines, its sheer eccentricity harmonising well with the precise technical and historical writings that it often accompanies. The jotted notes and experimental splashes of colour that appear on his work are witness to a constantly evolving method, a dangerous habit when working to commercial deadlines, but one that gives his work a unique spontaneity. For the first time, we have been allowed access to his sketchbooks: "People may be surprised they have such a disorganised feel, but sketchbooks are of the moment; the drawings in them are the most candid statements you ever make."

BOB FREEMAN



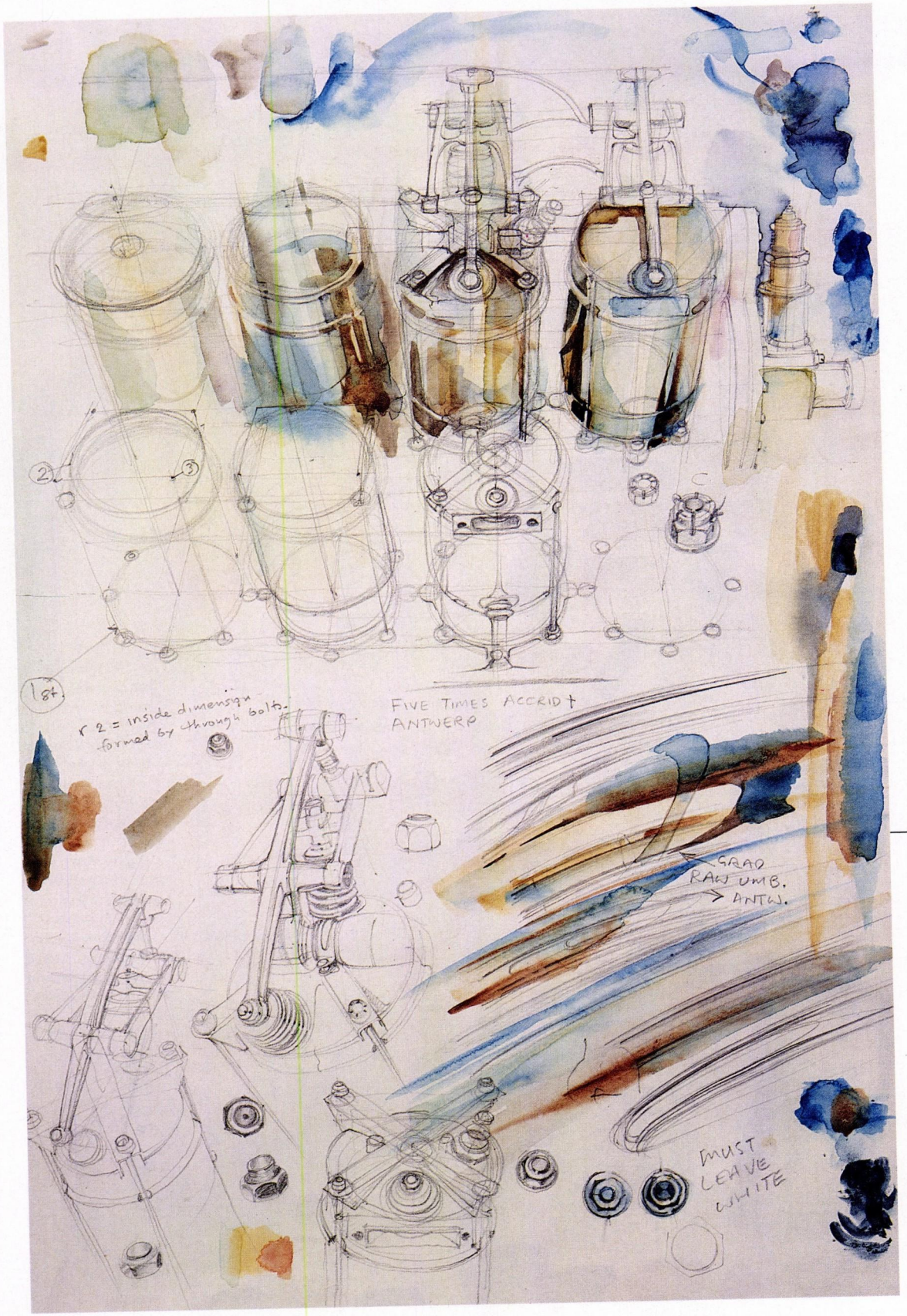






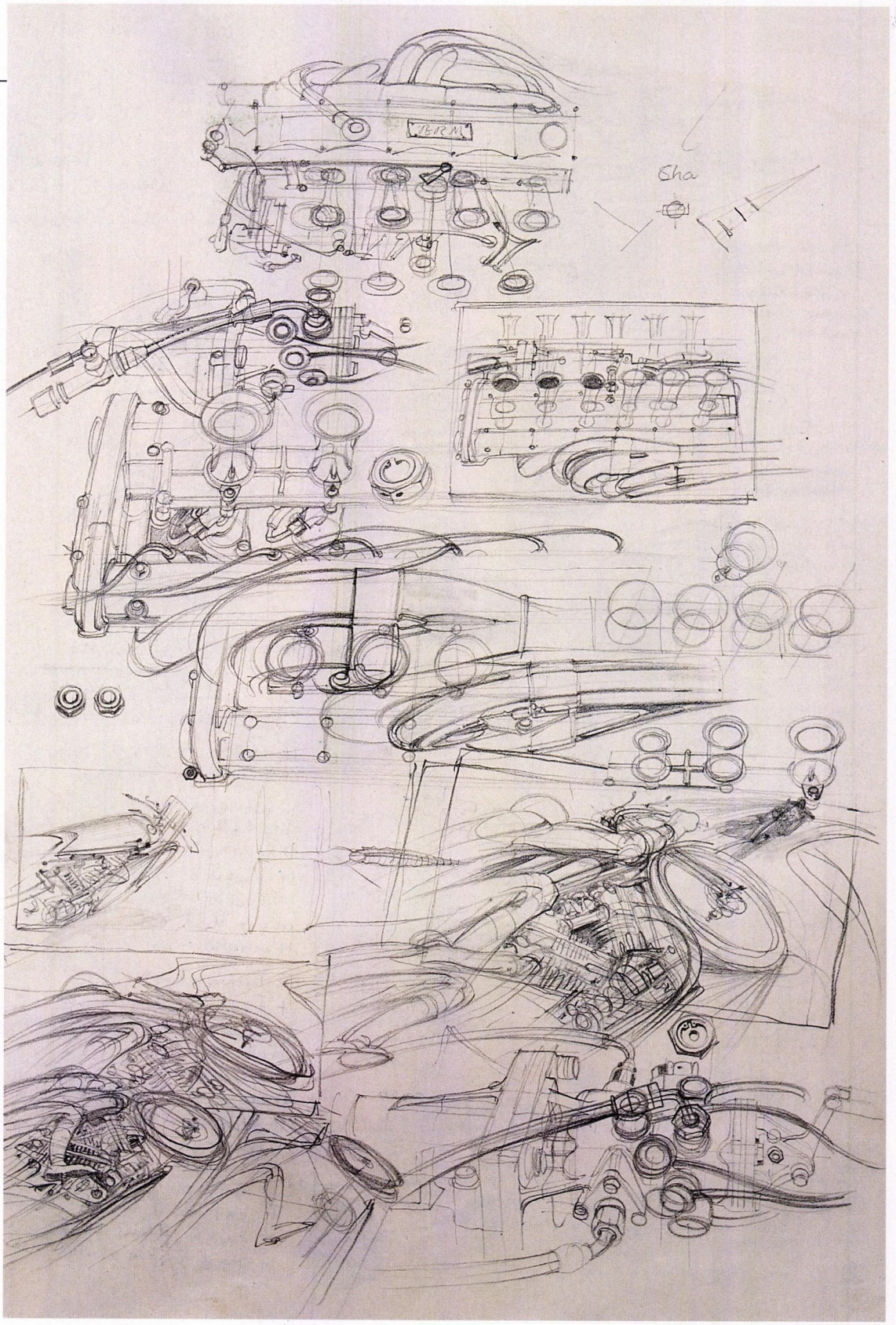
I saw this four-cylinder Testa Rossa engine awaiting a rebuild, and thought, 'What a lovely lump'. I had the photos for five years before starting. It's neither a prelim, nor a finished work (I'm not sure I can distinguish them anyway). The hardest thing about drawing is knowing when it's finished. Sketches: spinning Vanwall (top), Tipo C Alfa (above); prelim for Monza action (below)

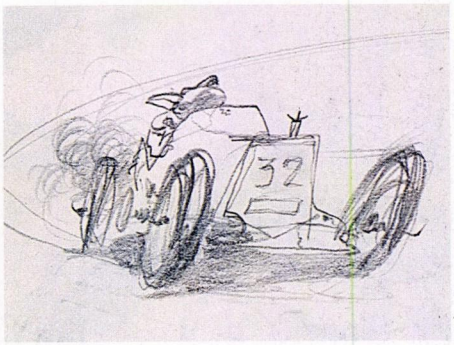




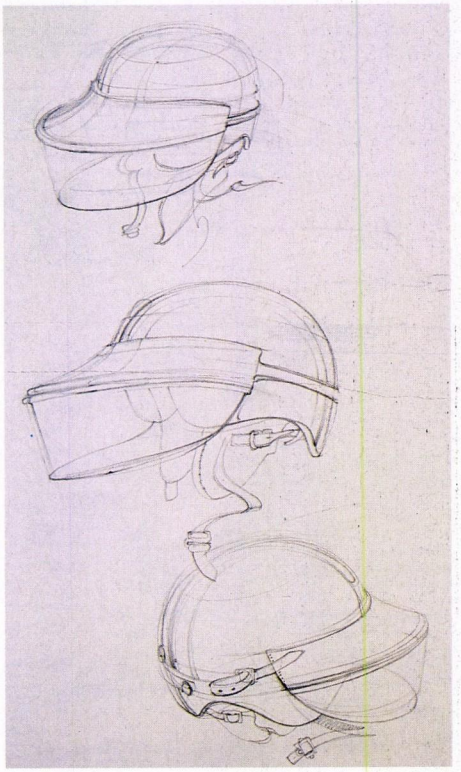
This 1907 Curtiss engine caught my imagination. It's a wonderfully organic structure. Exquisite. Glen Curtiss fitted it to planes, boats, cars – even motorbikes. The man was a bloody hero. It's difficult to explain, but some of the mechanical things I get to draw seem to be almost haunted by the mystique of the people associated with them – that's what fires me up and that's what I try to capture

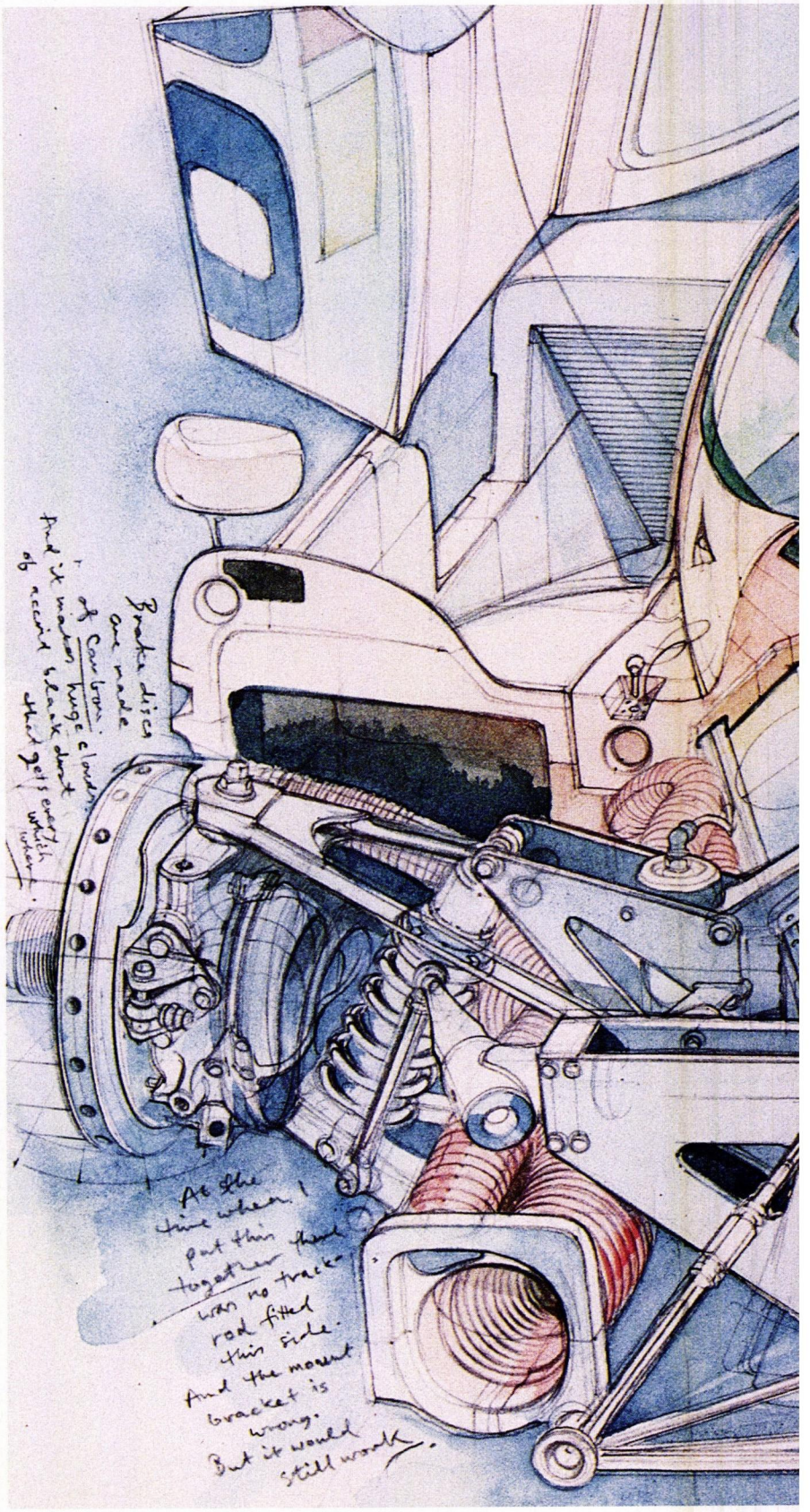
These are the preliminary sketches of the drawing that appears on the first page of this feature – they are of a BRM V12 F1 engine. BRM are one of my favourite marques – their successes were so hard-won. Triumph and tears all the way. Bikes are a recurrent sketching theme. This page has been invaded by ideas about JAP-engined Brough Superiors

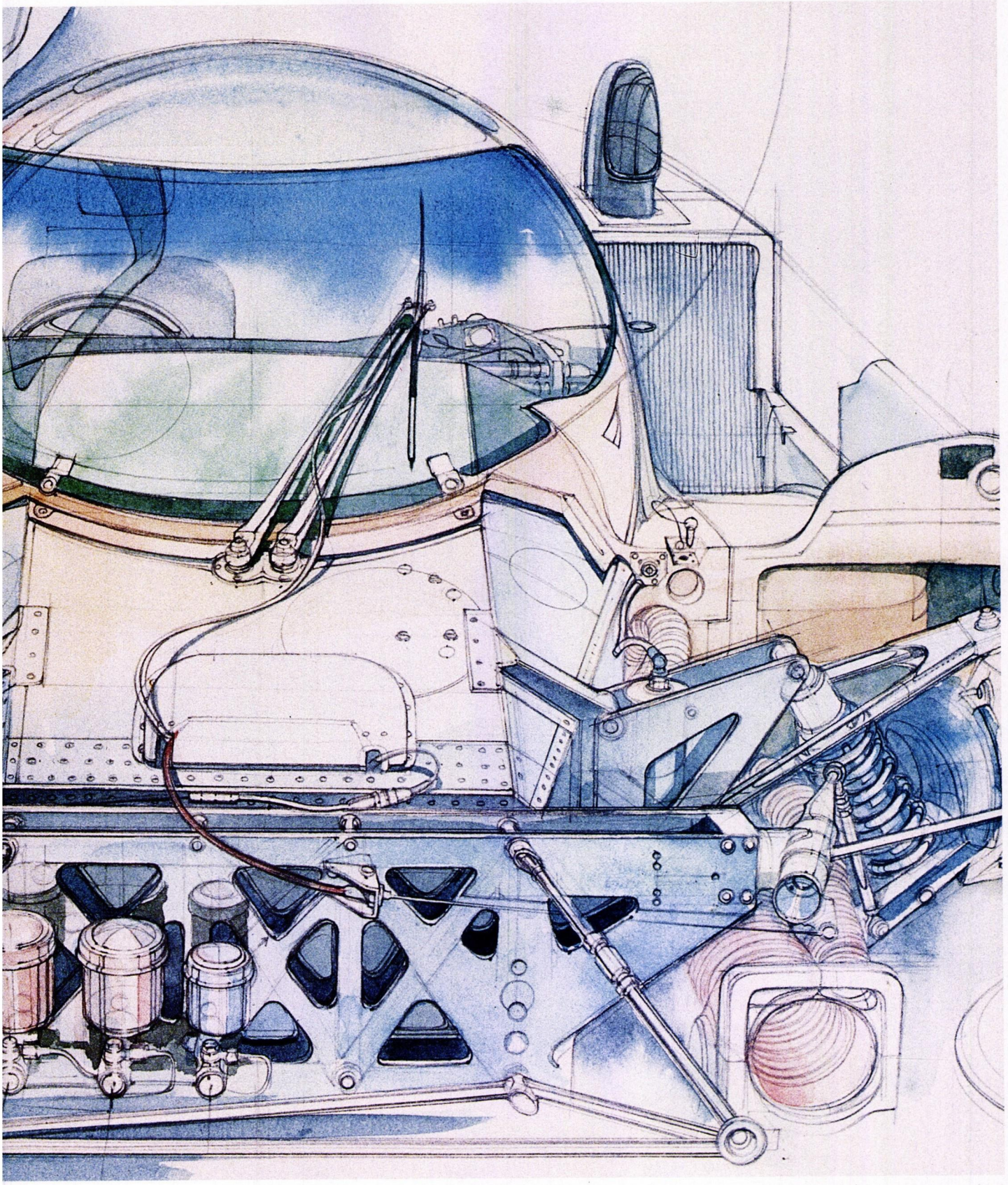


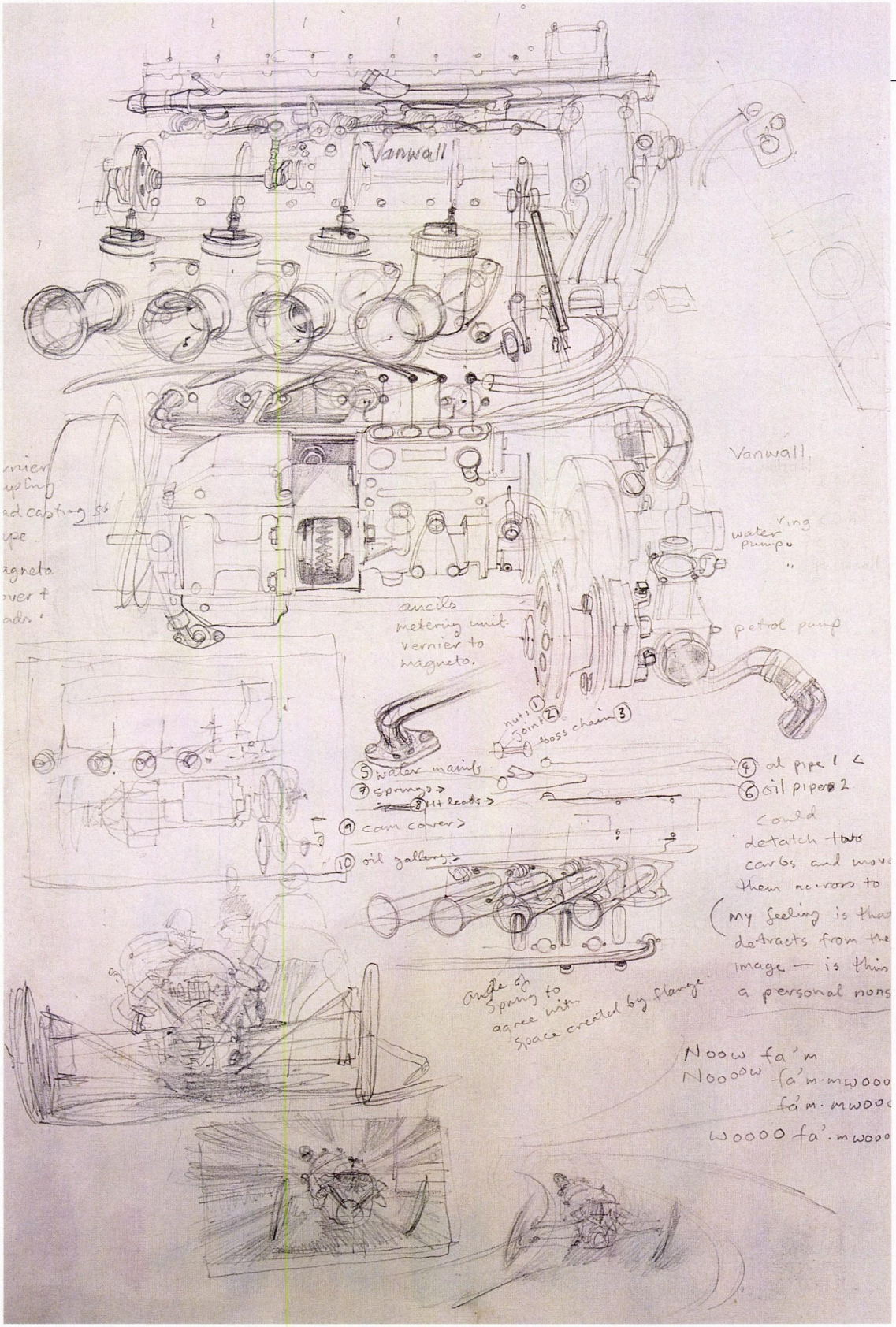


This is an Eagle IMSA car. I'd been given a brief by 'Automobile' in the US, and was with the team as they tested at Watkins Glen. There was a moment when they had a door open and the nose off – a fantastic shape. There's something wonderful you get with one-off race cars you never get with mass production. Sketches: GP Panhard (above); repro visor

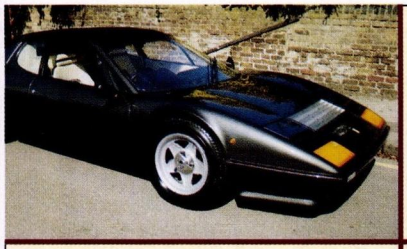








There's so much interesting detail on a Vanwall, but you can't see it all at once. This is the first stage in designing a drawing that shows more than can actually be seen from one angle. I drew the right-hand side then cheated by sitting up so I could see the left-hand cambox. This is another eclectic sketchbook page, including Morgans and my efforts to capture the fabulous din of a V12 that fired up next to me at a Coys Festival



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Maserati 3200 GT 370bhp and room for four

Six brothers, five engineers and an artist, and a lifelong dedication to motor sport and the construction of fast, beautiful road cars, the Maserati story began with an unprecedented class-winning debut in the 1926 Targa Florio. Since then it has continued with a succession of jewel-like creations, each characterised by its close focus on aesthetics, innovation and outstanding performance.

Throughout the 1930s the Maseratis' cars made their mark in Grand Prix and voiturette racing, replacing Bugatti as the privateer's first choice and by 1936 securing the world record for the flying mile with a car boasting just four tiny cylinders. In 1939/40 Maserati triumphed at Indianapolis and in 1957 it was a 250F which battled through to win what many still regard as the greatest race of all time. Trailing the leader by 45 seconds and with just 10 laps to go, Juan-Manuel Fangio succeeded by a supreme effort of will to overhaul the Ferraris of Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins to take his fifth World Chamionship.

Abandoning single-seaters around this time, the 1960s instead saw the company further consolidate its position as one of the greatest names of all time in sports and GT car design. The legacy survives to this day, even though it was as long ago as 1964 that Maserati first set a new record at

Le Mans for the fastest sports car ever down the legendary Mulsanne Straight.

Along the way the story has been one of innovation, inspiration and continuing sensation. That first Targa Forio win, for example, was achieved with one of the brothers behind the wheel and in the very first car ever to be called a Maserati. And by 1948 it was the application of a supercharger and a novel tubular chassis to a version of the brothers' 4C (which had first burst onto the scene in the early 1930s) which gave Alberto Ascari a maiden outing victory in the San Remo Grand Prix.

But it was perhaps not until the mid-1960s that the marque really came to the wider public's attention. Even then it was not merely through the high profile exploits of these all-conquering competition cars - although the highly intricate tubular chassis of the fabulous 1960 Tipo 60/61 'Birdcage' is still remembered as one of very few racing machines which looks equally attractive with or without its body - but thanks too to a series of aspirational production cars designed to capitalise on the success of the 3500 GT.

With its 3.5 litre six cylinder engine and striking Vignale styling, this had been the company's first real luxury Grand Tourer although almost decade earlier Pininfarina had been commissioned to build a coupé body for a version of the sporting A6. The 3500 was superceded by several even more effective continent shrinkers, each placing the emphasis on achieving the limits of real-world performance and luxury but with truly distinctive styling always well to the fore. Indeed, it has always been precisely this combination which has marked out Maserati from its younger but still highly accomplished rivals.

Cars like the highly original V8-engined Quattroporte (in 1964 by far the world's fastest saloon car), the Frua-bodied Mistral which with 255 bhp and a top speed of 160mph raised the touring car stakes still higher, and most striking of all perhaps the even faster Ghibli. Styled by Ghia with an impossibly long bonnet and outstanding proportions, the Ghibli's four-cam 4.7 litre V8 developed a staggering 330bhp which in 1969 made 0-60mph in 6.4 seconds a reality and 170mph a beguiling possibility.

Then as now (to quote a recent issue of Autocar describing the current Maserati 3200 GT) the emphasis at Maserati was always on building cars which 'enthusiasts can relish'. And just as today's individually-styled coupé 'beats Jaguar's XKR and Aston Martin's DB7 as a purist driving machine' - Autocar again - those of the 1960s and '70s proved themselves more than capable of resisting the stiffest possible competition.

By the early 1970s and in common with Ferrari and Lamborghini the company had launched its first mid-engined production car, the beautifully configured Bora which in turn spawned the smaller but sculpturally similar Merak. In production until 1983 (and easily the company's best-selling design until the appearance of the 3200 GT more than two decades later) even the Merak's success, however, did not tempt the company to abandon its long, well-established front-engined heritage.



Maserati win Indianapolis 500 in 1939/40



The 3500GT, first production road car



Stirling Moss and Birdcage in 1960



Bora, today sought after by collectors

Even whilst riding the mid-engined wave, therefore, Maserati continued to build such cars as the brutal, dart-like Khamsin of 1974, later the deceptively conventional-looking (and unashamedly luxurious) Biturbo, the Karif, the Shamal, eventually even new iterations of the Ghibli and Quattroporte. Such cars maintained the front-engined/ rearwheel-drive connection with that first Pininfarina-engined Maserati A6 coupé; significantly they also carried forward that vital Maserati tradition to 1997 and the first appearance of the 3200 GT.

By then of course Fiat had stepped in, the brothers long since departed and deceased. Investing billions of lire in the company before handing control of it to Ferrari, the takeover heralded a golden new era for this long-lived Italian thoroughbred. Once powerful rivals on the track and on the road, the two companies now find themselves stablemates with a very bright new future.

For British enthusiasts, the impact has been enormous. With sales and marketing now handled by Surrey-based Maranello Concessionaires - Britain's long-established Ferrari importer - Maserati has never looked better. Indeed, celebrating 75 years at the top, the company has just had its best year ever in terms of UK sales with the 3200 GT - and quite deservedly too - pressing all the right buttons.

Fast, muscular, luxurious and truly practical like all the greatest Maserati road cars, it is a driver's car par excellence. Honouring its predecessors, over many miles the twin-turbo 3200 GT also proves itself a more than worthy inheritor of everything that much vaunted Trident badge stands for.



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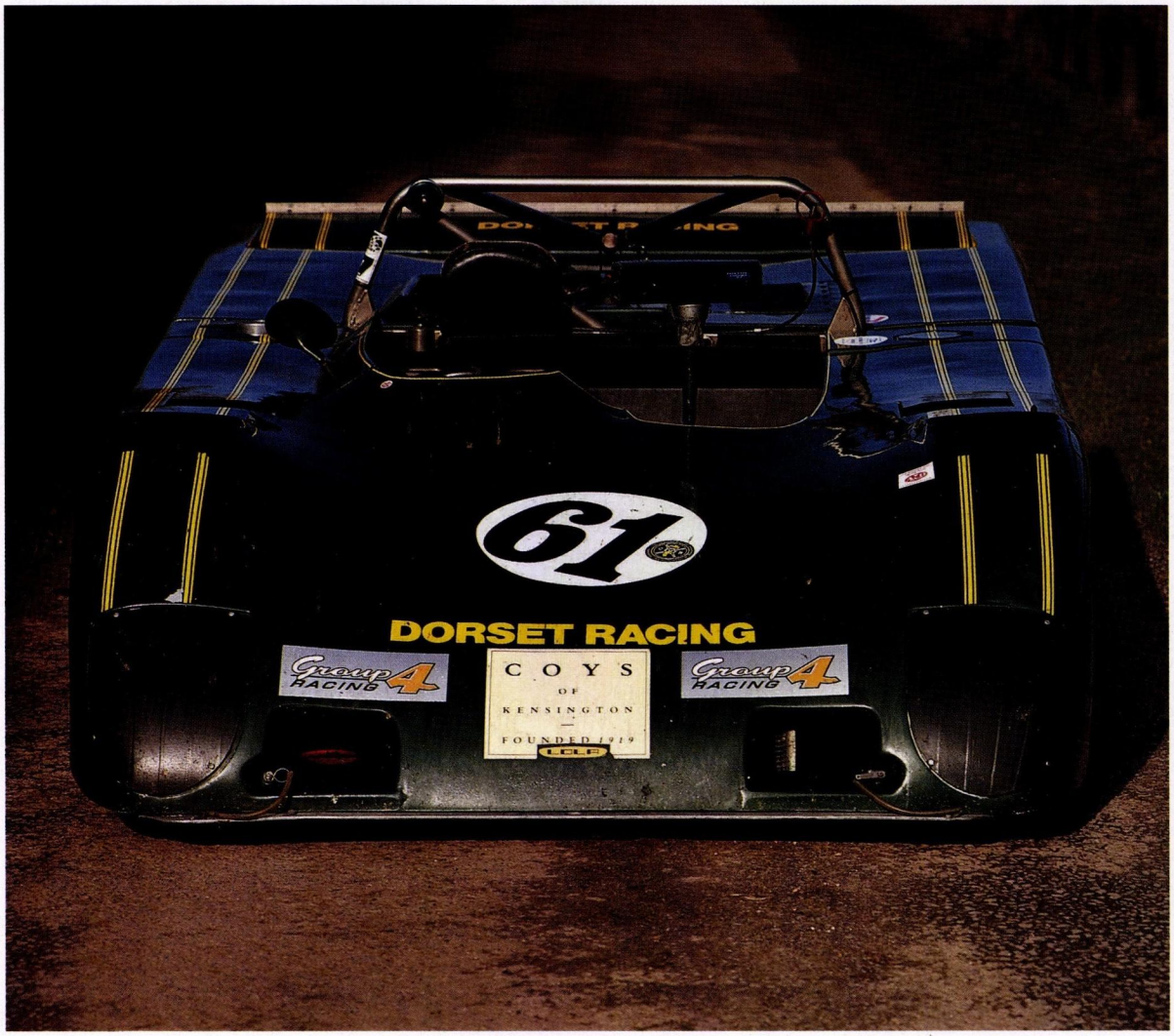
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WARHORSES

Lola T290

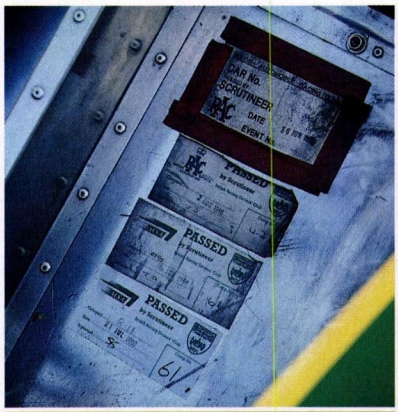
CHASSIS NUMBER HU22

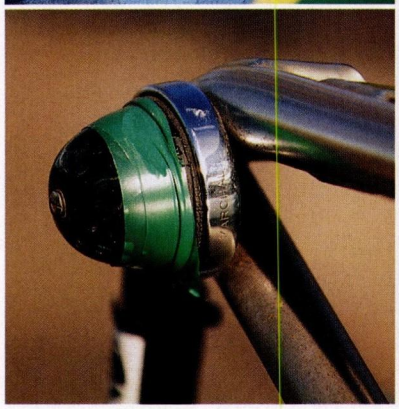
WHILE IMPECUNIOUS PRIVATEERS IN THE '70s FELT MONOCOQUES WERE FLIMSY AND NOT RUGGED ENOUGH, THIS CAR PROVED THEM WRONG, SAYS MARCUS PYE



photography by Charles Best

CREDIT FOR THE T290 CONCEPT IS ASCRIBED TO A DESIGN TEAM HEADED BY LOLA FOUNDER ERIC BROADLEY, WORKING WITH A PAIR OF BRIGHT YOUNGSTERS NAMED JOHN BARNARD AND PATRICK HEAD. CHIEF ENGINEER WAS BOB MARSTON







Lola T290 chassis HU22 – or 'Old Faithful' as it is affectionately known to Dorset Racing's Tony Birchenhough – has the finest CV of any 2-litre Gp6 sports prototype. With five Le Mans 24 Hours starts and 25 gruelling world championship rounds on a staggering 80-plus race logbook, it's no contest. Following an amazing success record in contemporary events over 11 seasons, it's now a Historic racer, driven by the man who knows it best. And its still boasts the original 1972 monocoque.

The Le Mans statistics are remarkable, particularly since Birchenhough's tiny team tackled the world's greatest endurance event from 1976-80, with 12 different drivers. That the car finished four times, winning the coveted Index of Performance (for fuel efficiency) twice, and completed no fewer than 8852 punishing miles of the celebrated French track, is extraordinary. And that's not taking into account the fact that it had already been campaigned incredibly hard for four years.

British marques Lola and Chevron were arch-rivals in the class, with very different

'For poise and balance, the Lola's engine sat well forward in the chassis'

design philosophies. While Derek Bennett's Bolton-built Chevrons had relatively simple spaceframe chassis, down in Huntingdon, Eric Broadley took the sheet metal monocoque route for his Lolas. Both schools had strong followings, although most privateers opted for Chevrons because they felt tubes were easier to repair, especially in the field. Unfortunately for the northerners, Lola was ahead of the game.

Their T210 caught Chevron napping in 1970, the open-topped Lola running rings round the gorgeously sleek B16 coupes. Bennett countered with a cut-down 'B16S', in which Brian Redman beat Jo Bonnier in the epic race of the era at Spa, lapping four seconds faster than his outright record in a Porsche 917 and snatching the manufacturers' title. It spawned the classic B19 for 1971, but Helmut Marko won the crown in a T212. While Chevron continued its theme, Lola responded for 1972 with a new family of cars which would outlast Group 6.

The T290 was neat and elegant, the curvaceous beauty of its lines in stark contrast to those of Chevron's B21 chunkier hewn-from-solid look. For poise and balance, its engine sat well forward in the chassis, mating to the Hewland FG400 gearbox via a long bell-housing. Radiators sat either side for endurance racing, protected from below by rigid sills and fed by fluted ducts in the flank panels. Suspension was conventional wishbone, with outboard brakes all round (the rears went inboard from 1973, but remain there on HU22), the whole wrapped in a stylish low-drag body.

HU22's history begins very successfully when Guy Edwards' works-assisted Barclays International machine won first time out, at Snetterton on Good Friday, 1972. It was then whisked to the Nürburgring's Interserie event, where Guy won his class on Easter Monday. Six days later, he was sixth in Paul Ricard's European 2-litre race, before heading back to Brands Hatch where he and David Hobbs won their class in the 1000Km. A fortnight

Main rival Chevron stuck with spaceframe while Lola went monocoque route. Latter had its doubters, but Lola eased their fears: T290 was plenty tough for rough-and-tumble Group 6 races and Le Mans grind. Rubber 'marbles' leftover from most recent outing, at Dijon-Prenois; identification light vital for night stint at La Sarthe; HU22 given new lease of life by Historic racing

STEERING WHEEL HAS BEEN WORN BY 33 DRIVERS OVER 28 YEARS. CAR IS DELIGHT TO DRIVE, IDEAL FOR LONG-DISTANCE RACES; FORD FVC ENGINE HAS BEEN MODEL OF RELIABILITY, ITS ONLY MAJOR FAILURE SIDELINING DORSET RACING AT LE MANS IN 1978. SPELL WITH CHEVROLET-BASED COSWORTH EA ENGINE MUCH MORE PROBLEMATIC; T290 SHAPED BY WIND TUNNEL. THROW-AWAY SIDEPODS DESIGNED TO ABSORB SMALL IMPACTS

later, Guy was second at Vallelunga's Euro-round. The pace never slackened.

"It was a lovely car," says Edwards, "a joy to drive after the T212, which was a twitchy, short-wheelbase thing. I didn't have the experience to stay with the hot boys like Vic Elford and Helmut Marko. When you stepped over the limit in a T212, there was nothing you could do. I destroyed seven tubs that season. But the T290 was special out of the box."

Edwards stopped winning abruptly, once reliable Ford FVC engines were forsaken for Cosworth's powerful but fragile Chevrolet Vega-based EA. Guy persevered in Europe and South Africa's Springbok series in the winter (sharing with Paddy Driver), and into 1973, a decision which arguably cost him the European title. "The winged T292 was the best car I ever drove," he says, "nothing came close. It responded to tiny changes, and handled brilliantly. After a couple more Vegas blew, I went back to FVCs." Victories at Clermont-Ferrand and the Österreichring followed, but Chris Craft and John Burton remained beyond reach.

Meanwhile, Birchenhough had bought Edwards' T290 for £2200, complete with an FVC. The farm equipment specialist had taken over Guy's T212 a year earlier, after his Chevron B8 was rendered obsolete, and had watched the new generation car with awe. Once its pale blue livery was supplanted by red paint, HU22's adventures really started.

Previously a combatant in the dizzy world of one-litre Formula 3, Birchenhough adored the lifestyle of the impecunious racer. Long tows from Dorset to the Continent would have deterred less stout individuals, but the lure of world, European 2-litre and Interserie championships was too great for him and his staunch associates.

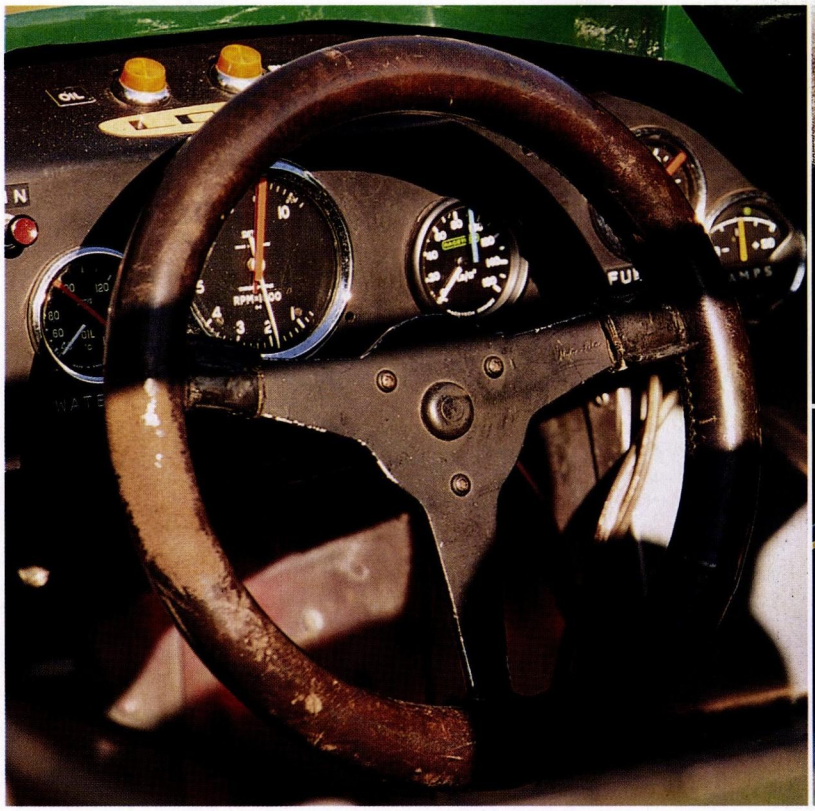
"As ordinary folk, we shared the world's finest circuits with the aces. They'd blast past our little car with great regularity," says Birchenhough, "but being overtaken by a Porsche 917 or Ferrari was awesome – an unforgettable experience, a privilege."

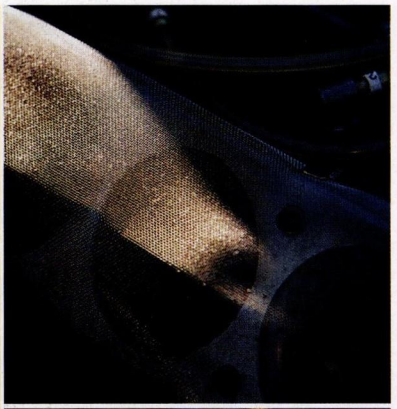
'Long tows from Dorset would have deterred less stout individuals'

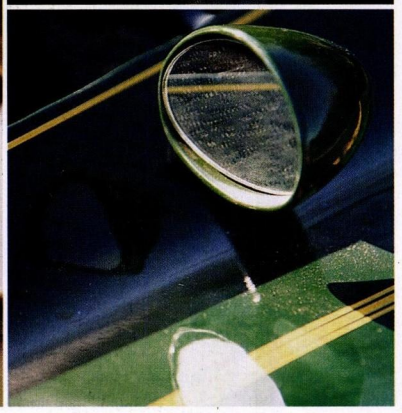
With co-drivers Brian Joscelyne and Lee Kaye, Tony made four trips to the Nürburgring and one to Spa – in 1973 alone. Third in class in the 'Ring 1000 with Kaye was a highlight, but the season was split by a seven-week sojourn to Portugal and Angola, its colony in West Africa. "After Villa Real – one of the most unbelievable circuits ever, with its narrow viaduct – and Estoril, the 2-litre cars were flown to Angola in a cargo plane," Birchenhough recalls. "The reception we received was astonishing.

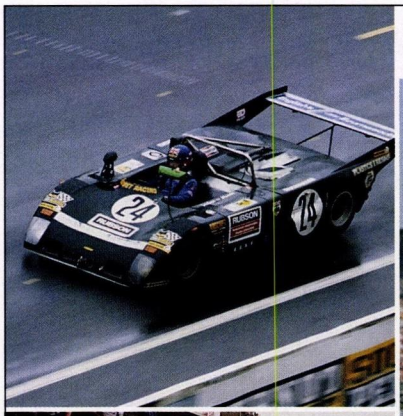
"Three races in three weekends, on a new circuit at Luanda, six hours on the streets of Nova Lisboa, and at Benguela – a beautiful place – were hard work, but it was a fantastic holiday. We went in 1974 too, the last time the series ran, which was especially memorable. At Nova Lisboa a pedestrian bridge half fell into the track as the cars left the start. Somehow, we all scraped through. And then I won the Benguela 500Kms, driving alone. Emilio Marta, who owned the Luanda track, was so impressed with the T290 (by then in T294 bodywork) that he offered me a straight swap for his Ford GT40."

Four 1000-kilometre races and the Spa ➤



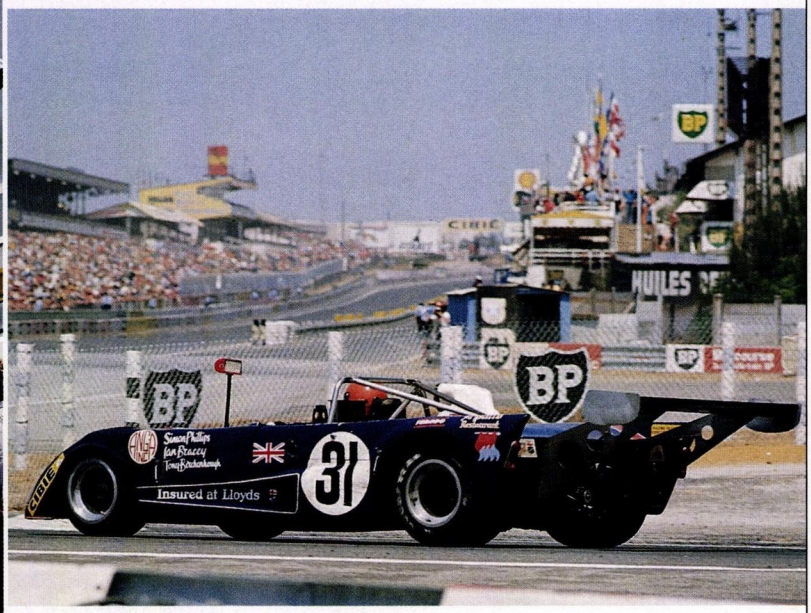








24-HOUR LOLA COASTER: MORE UPS THAN DOWNS



SHAPE CHANGED IN SEARCH FOR MORE MULSANNE SPEED, BUT SAME HEART BEATS BENEATH. HU22 MADE LE MANS DEBUT IN 1976 (ABOVE) AND FINISHED SECOND IN CLASS. NEXT YEAR BROUGHT DISAPPOINTMENT: CAR CLOCKED INSUFFICIENT MILES TO BE CLASSIFIED (LEFT). BUT 1980 BROUGHT RETURN TO FORM AND ANOTHER SECOND PLACE IN 2-LITRE CLASS (TOP LEFT)

750Km were tackled in the 1975 world championship, and the 100 per cent finishing record speaks volumes for Dorset Racing's preparation. Although an essentially amateur effort, it had a distinctly professional air to it, with Chris Crawford [later of ADA Engineering, and Nissan's BTCC team, and now running Group C cars in Historic events] and Andy Britten [who took over ADA's gearbox business] on the beer-and-hamburger roll as mechanics. Who mentioned pay?

Inspired by their results, Birchenhough, Joscelyne, Ian Bracey (the Lloyds insurance man a team regular in '75) and accountant Simon Phillips took the plunge and entered Le Mans for the first time in '76.

"With a budget of £9000 it was ludicrous, but we finished, second in class, and were hooked," says Tony, eyes alight. "Having just done the Monza and Imola 1000-kilometre races, it made it a triple success."

Spiralling costs of competing restricted outings in later years, but the T290 soldiered on, albeit in different clothes as aerodynamic development slung rear wings further back for greater speed on the Mulsanne.

"It ran arrow straight – unless some other bugger pinched your air – and would pull over 170mph in qualifying trim," says Tony. "Having made the cut, we'd put a detuned engine in for the race. On the later Richardson BDG engines, which replaced our FVCs, we

'Spiralling costs restricted outings in later years, but the T290 soldered on'

cut maximum revs to 8400rpm through the gears and 8700rpm in top to make it last."

Stalwart Ian Harrower, Dutchman Ernst Berg and Irishman Martin Birrane raced in 1977. Although running at the end, they covered insufficient distance to be classified.

The only bitter disappointment of Dorset Racing's Le Mans record came the following season, when Juliette Slaughter – the first British woman in the race since 1951 – and Joscelyne joined Birchenhough. Engine failure put them out before midnight.

Nick Mason – architectural student turned rock musician – entered HU22's life in 1979. Teamed with old hands Tony, Brian, and the capable Richard Jenvey, the Pink Floyd drummer had a dream run at his first Le Mans, finishing 18th overall, runner-up in class. Mason returned in '80, with the versatile Peter Clark and Birrane, to finish third in the 2-litre split. He also had the car painted to promote his band's album *The Wall* at the 'Ring in '81.

Group 6 cars became ineligible for contemporary events at the birth of Group C in 1983, and were too modern to contest Historic races, the cut-off point for which was then 1971. Having reached the end of the road, for the time being at least, the later chassis were redundant. Mason duly bought the T290 from Birchenhough, adding it to his eclectic Ten Tenths collection.

A new chapter began 10 years later when the car was invited to a demonstration at Le Mans. Mason asked Birchenhough to prepare it, back in Dorchester and, following subsequent demos, he subsequently restored it to original T290 spec for Historic events. Now gracing the European Sports Prototype Trophy series, the Lola also raced at Dijon last year, where Tony's godson David Alborough co-drove. Now Birchenhough is looking forward to the Le Mans Legends race and a return to La Sarthe in 2003.

"It's marvellous to have the car back, and very generous of Nick to allow me to exercise her," says Birchenhough. "Racing cars quickly go sad if they are not used.

"We competed for fun throughout a golden age of sportscar racing. But without the support of tremendously talented people, including Dave Scotney of Lola, it could never have happened. Having survived 29 drivers [a veritable A-Z, from Eddie Arundel to Manrico Zanuzo], 33 circuits, five Le Mans and 16 1000-kilometre races, this Lola is dear to my heart. After 28 years, I know her better than my wife." M

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CHARLES JARROTT

BRITISH MOTOR RACING PIONEER

THERE ARE SOME FIGURES IN MOTORSPORT WHOSE IMPORTANCE HAS BEEN UNFAIRLY IGNORED, AND CHARLES JARROTT IS ONE SUCH. BILL BODDY BELIEVES IT IS TIME TO REDRESS THE BALANCE

Top: Jarrott and mechanic Bianchi start the tragic 1903 Paris-Madrid. Their de Dietrich finished third. Top right: Jarrott, de Knyff and Edge



Geoff Goddard

So why Charles Jarrott? Because at the dawn of motor racing he, S F Edge, and C S Rolls were among very few British participants in this new, very exacting – even dangerous – undertaking. Apart from Austin, Napier and Wolseley, there were no British racing cars, or none that could win the Gordon Bennett Trophy as Edge's Napier did in 1902. Jarrott was in there, but had to borrow French cars for the purpose. In fact, in the first decade of motorsport, only Napier scored a big win for Britain, and Jarrott won only one important race.

What races these must have been! I was not there, so cannot be dogmatic, but anyone who has driven a big Edwardian racing car like the existing 1908 GP Itala or 1908 GP Panhard, can visualise, in small measure, what the great town-to-town contests truly entailed. But the cars just mentioned competed on closed circuits where, if they ran into trouble, help – mechanical or medical – would not have been far-distant. In those early 1900s, drivers had not only monster cars with threshing chains and crude tyres to contend with, over unsurfaced roads, but passing was almost impossible because of the dust clouds. Protection from weather and flying stones came scarcely above ankle height, and drivers drove flat-out for hour after hour, most corners being unmarked, the brakes unreliable, the steering heavy. And yet speeds were climbing to not far short of 100mph, as ever bigger engines were used. That was what it was like when Charles Jarrott decided to race cars instead of bicycles and motor-tricycles.

You may be the proud owner of an early racing motor, and you may take it on some of the long-distance club rallies or social jollies of these times. But you cannot compare them with the pioneer motor races from, say, Paris to Amsterdam and back. Indeed, you probably spare your heirlooms by trailering them to meetings or driving them only for short distances, and in that you are fully justified. But racing, as Jarrott knew it, was something far more awesome.

The drivers then were bravely dedicated, tough, and had a kind of skill not required in later days, as they controlled their primitive cars at what were then seen as massive speeds.

Of the successful pioneer drivers, Jarrott regarded Levegh (whose actual name was Velghe) as shining brightest of them all and an especially formidable opponent when driving a Mors. Levegh enjoyed a great duel with Panhard in the Paris-Toulouse-Paris race of 1900, which he won after a 21-hour drive over 838 miles.

Giradot, according to Jarrott, was so often second due to bad luck, but he was sound and safe and fought Fournier all the way in 1901 from Paris-Berlin, but a bad crash in 1905 retired him. De Knyff, named *'Le Roi de l'Automobile'*, was in from the start, and when his Panhard was the only French car left in the 1903 GB race, he drove to finish behind the dashing Jenatzy's Mercedes – calm, collected and apparently untiring even after hundreds of punishing kilometres.

Charron, in contrast, was a bag of nerves, of slight build for the severe racing task, but dapper and charming – and, Jarrott added, a daredevil when required. Jarrott never forgot another ex-racing cyclist, Fournier, for that great Paris-Berlin drive when he led all the way, hotly pursued by other top drivers, to win for Mors. He then quit the sport to set up his Paris garage business. Jarrott saw Maurice Farman as brilliant, especially at nursing a car through those long races.

So what of Jarrott himself? Born in 1877, Jarrott, like many of his generation who craved adventure before the advent of the motor car, was a competent racing cyclist who turned to motorcycles and motor-tricycles when these were available. Even these could be dangerous ➤

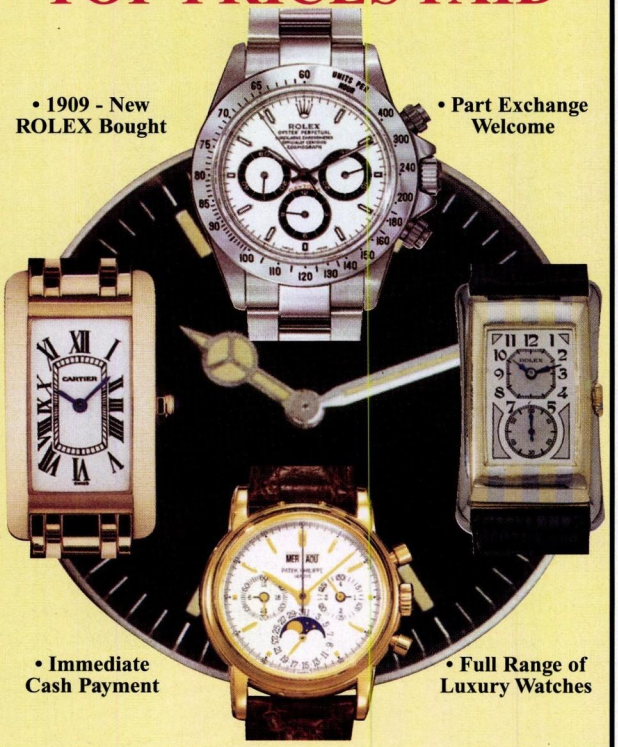
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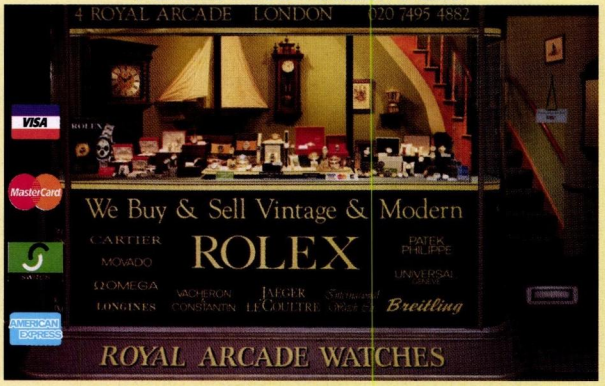
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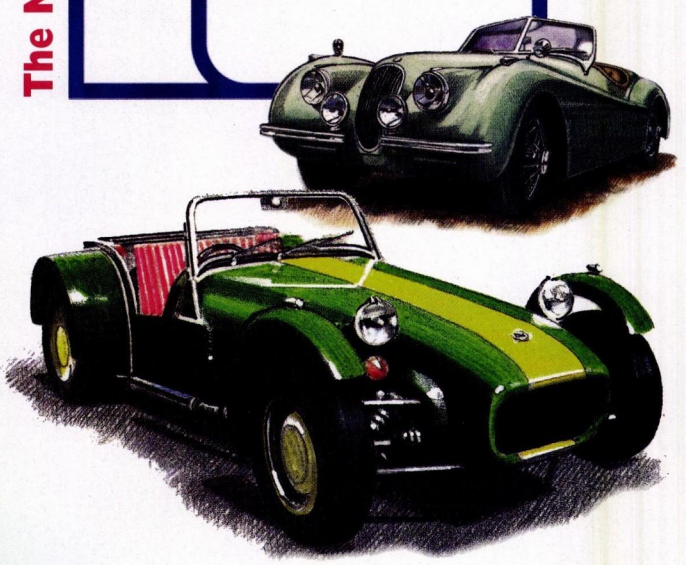
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when a front spindle broke, but Jarrott advanced from a 1lhp machine to a fearsome 8hp de Dion-engined tricycle and set the hour record to over 43mph.

His interest in cars was fostered by seeing the 1896 Emancipation Run from London to Brighton, after which he gained experience learning to drive on a 3Hhp Panhard-powered van and taking a Bollée three-wheeler on the subsequent Coventry-Birmingham Run of the Motor Car Club. He helped to bring back Panhard No5, which Monsieur Levassor had driven in the 1896 Paris-Marseilles race, and later he drove the sister racing Panhard No8. Then came an exciting ride with Charron on the fast 8hp four-cylinder Panhard with which this driver had won the Paris-Amsterdam-Paris 901-mile contest in 1898. Getting keen, C J took a 6hp Panhard on the 1898 London-Richmond Run, with smartly-dressed ladies as his companions.

The seed was sown; Jarrott drove in the 691-mile Paris-Berlin event of 1901, one of the great races which all the top drivers and cars entered. Not only had he no racing experience but his personal Bollée (of the kind which S C H Davis of *The Autocar* and others drove in the Brighton Runs of much more recent times) was fast but temperamental and crude. However, the resourceful Charles got Harvey du Cros, the English Panhard agent, to persuade the *Chevalier* René de Knyff, who controlled Panhard affairs, to find him a car. With understandable reluctance, one of the 40hp racers was offered, not just one of the cars in the light car or Voiturette classes.

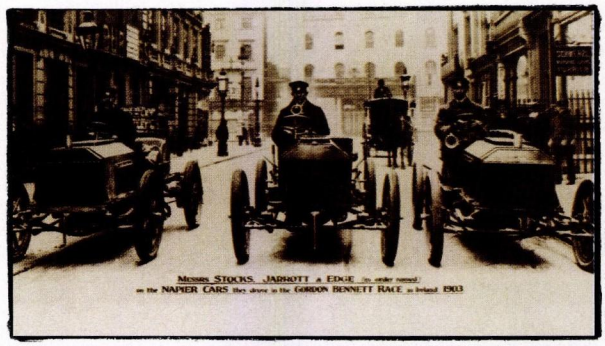
Fifteen of the 40s were entered, but this was a tough assignment for Panhard, its 40s up against the new 60hp Mors, which weighed only 100kg more than their lower-powered rival. 'Batting' for the latter were top drivers like de Knyff himself, Charron, Henri Farman and Giradot; Mors had Fournier, Brasier and C S Rolls among the six 60s entered. Both makes were of similar specification, apart from the Mors' long-stroke engine, coal-scuttle bonnet and low hung radiator; both had automatic inlet valves but, instead of a low-tension magneto, Panhard had battery and coil ignition. Mors used a metal clutch instead of the usual leather-lined cone. It was the age when drivers 'threw out the clutch' in corners, losing engine-braking – whether to save strain on chains and tyres, or to avoid the engine stalling, I do not know, but am sure I shall soon be told.

Jarrott went to Paris for his car a week before Paris-Berlin. De Knyff gave him a few words of advice, and he set off on a trial run. The car was numbered 13, but to compensate was painted green, France's lucky colour – which rather rules out the suggestion that this was a British ploy to compliment the Irish in the 1903 Gordon Bennett. In the race he did well, being 10th out of 22 Heavy-class finishers even though he was delayed on the first day by a broken commutator spring and sticking governors. He and his mechanic Smits (also in his first race) then changed three tyres and eight tubes on the second day of the three-day contest.



The Veteran Car Club

Jarrott with the 1900 de Dion racing tricycle on which he set records



National Motor Museum

Left to right: Stocks, Jarrott and Edge before the '03 Gordon Bennett

'Finally, rushing to the finish, they hit a Police Inspector who ran into the Panhard's path'



Geoff Goddard

Jarrott took the Napier to 10th-in-class in that Gordon Bennett race

The finish attracted crowds estimated at some 20,000, and at a great banquet afterwards, the winner Fournier (Mors) was given the Kaiser's cup, the Grand Duke of Luxemburg's Cup and £500 from the city of Hamburg. Giradot was second, de Knyff was third, only 0.2mph separating the three. On the parade into Berlin, Fournier broke a chain; he had no spare, only links, so Giradot was so very nearly a winner. Only five of the many big Panhards retired. Who says real racing did not commence until 1950?

De Knyff had told Jarrott that finishing his first race would be sufficient and, thus pleased, he made another, lighter Panhard 40 available for the 540-mile Circuit du Nord, run on alcohol fuel to appease a French Government which was against racing, as this would benefit the Ministry of Agriculture. Jarrott took du Cros as his passenger, whose first race this was. Du Cros' son had a 16hp Panhard for the light-car class. De Knyff had the first of the 70hp Panhards, a formidable car, light but powerful, its handling perhaps not enhanced by a very slender transverse front spring, but the forerunner of such 'greats' as the much later Mercedes-Benz W125 and Alfa Romeo P3, but handling very differently – which *Punch* would call a blinding glimpse of the obvious. But everything is relative; Jarrott described his 40hp car as "beautiful to handle, sensitive, and delicately responsive to each movement of steering wheel, clutch and brakes".

Du Cros sat on the step to attend to the oilers, urging full speed. A bomb and bugles alerted crowd-control soldiers in the towns to approaching cars. But fuel blockages delayed C J and then rain shorted out the coil and a water pipe broke. Finally, rushing to the finish, they hit a Police Inspector who ran into the Panhard's path. This was amicably resolved. They eventually finished second to Farman's Panhard 40, but over an hour in arrears. De Knyff had clutch trouble and the new 70 was fifth.

Jarrott's next race was Paris-Vienna, for which he was given, three days beforehand, a Panhard 70. Its wooden frame had not been strengthened, as on the other 70s, and it broke up. So the 50 miles of rough road to Provins were ➳

taken carefully, after which in went fourth speed. Edge on the big GB Napier and others were soon swallowed by C J's dust. A terrific battle raged on the run to Belfort between de Knyff, Jarrott and the Farmans. The 70's chassis had cracked along the o/s before the second day's racing through Switzerland. A puncture, and leaks from the delicate soldered water jackets, had also occurred before the 369km to Salzburg.

Drastic measures were called for. Jarrott and du Cros bought tools and broke up furniture in their hotel bedroom – and repairs were made! C J's powerful 70 then made a very fast climb of the Arlburg Pass. De Knyff still had a big lead, though, only to retire 30 miles from the end, the differential gears broken. Thus Edge was given the GB Cup at the Innsbruck finish. Eliot Zborowski's Mercedes 40, officially delayed at a control, was sandwiched by the Farmans, Henri winning and the Panhard 70s finishing 1-3-4-5. But Marcel Renault's 16hp Renault was 0.5mph quicker.

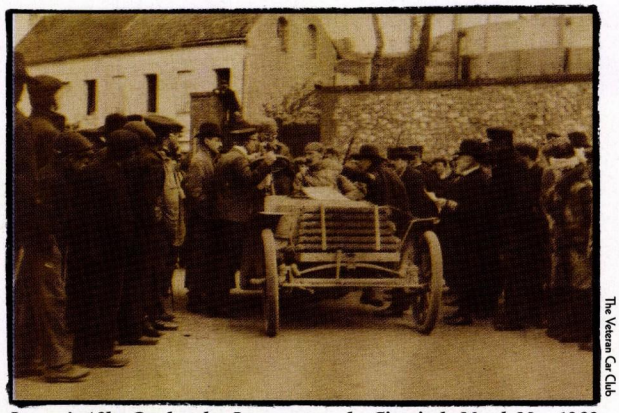
On went Jarrott, but the car's frame was now truly collapsing and, 5km from the finish, the gearbox did likewise. C J cycled to find a Panhard mechanic but eventually drove to the finish in first gear

Jarrott was now a top British driver of difficult cars, able to average over 70mph on those difficult roads, with a top pace of some 90mph; but keen as he had been, du Cros had had enough. In the 1902 Circuit des Ardennes, Jarrott proved this. A closed-circuit contest of 16 laps (320 miles), one leg was of the old-style very dusty roads. C J had intended to do the kilometre speed-trials at Welbeck on the Duke of Portland's estate (I walked this oldest of courses a few years ago) but was told his stricken Panhard could not be prepared in time. But entry into the Belgian race ensured that it was! He took as his mechanic another newcomer, A McCormack, Manager of Panhard's London repair depot.

Off at 5.23am on a 70 Panhard "car of the year", after a duel with Vanderbilt (Mors) and Gabriel (Mors), Jarrott won at 54.0mph after six hours' racing. Gabriel was second, delayed by replacing a broken chain. Vanderbilt was third.

For the tragic 1903 Paris-Madrid, stopped at Bordeaux because of the terrible accidents, Jarrott had a 45hp de Dietrich, for which his London motor business was agent, along with Crossley and other makes. Untried up to the 3am start, with a lever and strap hastily fitted to be hauled on if the clutch still slipped, hopes seemed slender.

But then things improved and, apart from a fuel blockage and change of an igniter, C J, with Bianchi as mechanic,



The Veteran Car Club

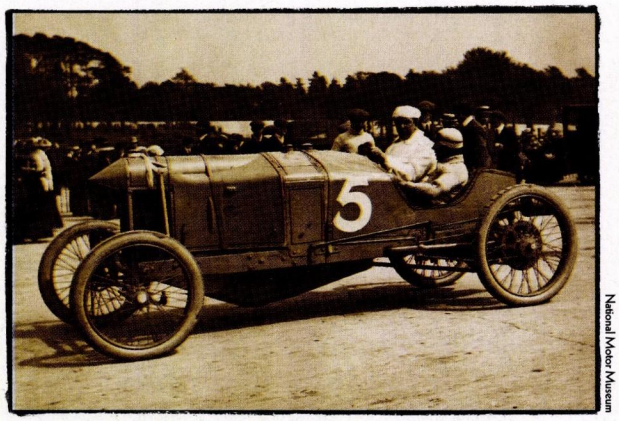
Jarrott's 40hp Panhard et Levassor on the Circuit du Nord, May 1902

'Jarrott and Bianchi were laid out under sheets, believed dead ... they were merely unconscious'



Geoff Goddard

Jarrott's Wolseley overcame huge odds to finish the '04 Gordon Bennett



National Motor Museum

C J with Bianchi in the Sizaire-Naudin at Brooklands in June 1909

got along well. Nevertheless, it was a sad time, Lorraine Barrow of the de Dietrich team being among those killed. C J was third, behind the two 70hp Mors, of which Gabriel's streamlined car had won, at 65.3mph for the testing 342 miles.

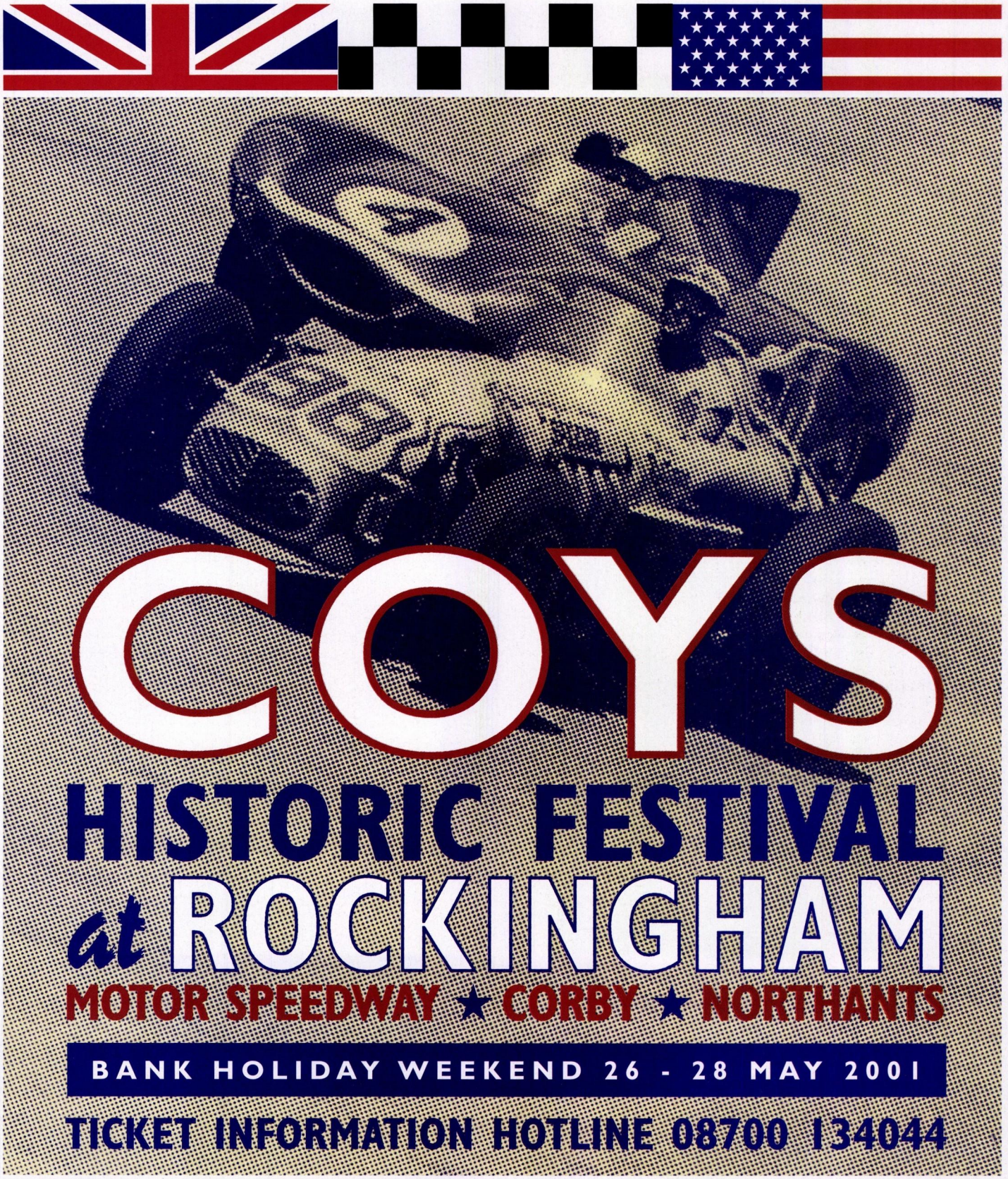
The nationalistic Gordon Bennett race came to Ireland as a result of Edge's 1902 victory, and C J had a Napier for it – but crashed. He and Bianchi were laid out under sheets, believed dead, when they were merely unconscious, it is said. Jenatzy's win for Mercedes in 1903 took the prestigious event to Germany in 1904. Austin asked C J to drive one his 96hp Wolseleys. C J had hedged his chances by also driving an 80hp de Dietrich in the French Elimination Trials prior to Austin's request. The Wolseley broke first gear of the four-speed 'box at the start of the IoM test race; the untried de Dietrich had radiator trouble in France, giving Jarrott a miserable 12 hours on the test course with nothing to show for it.

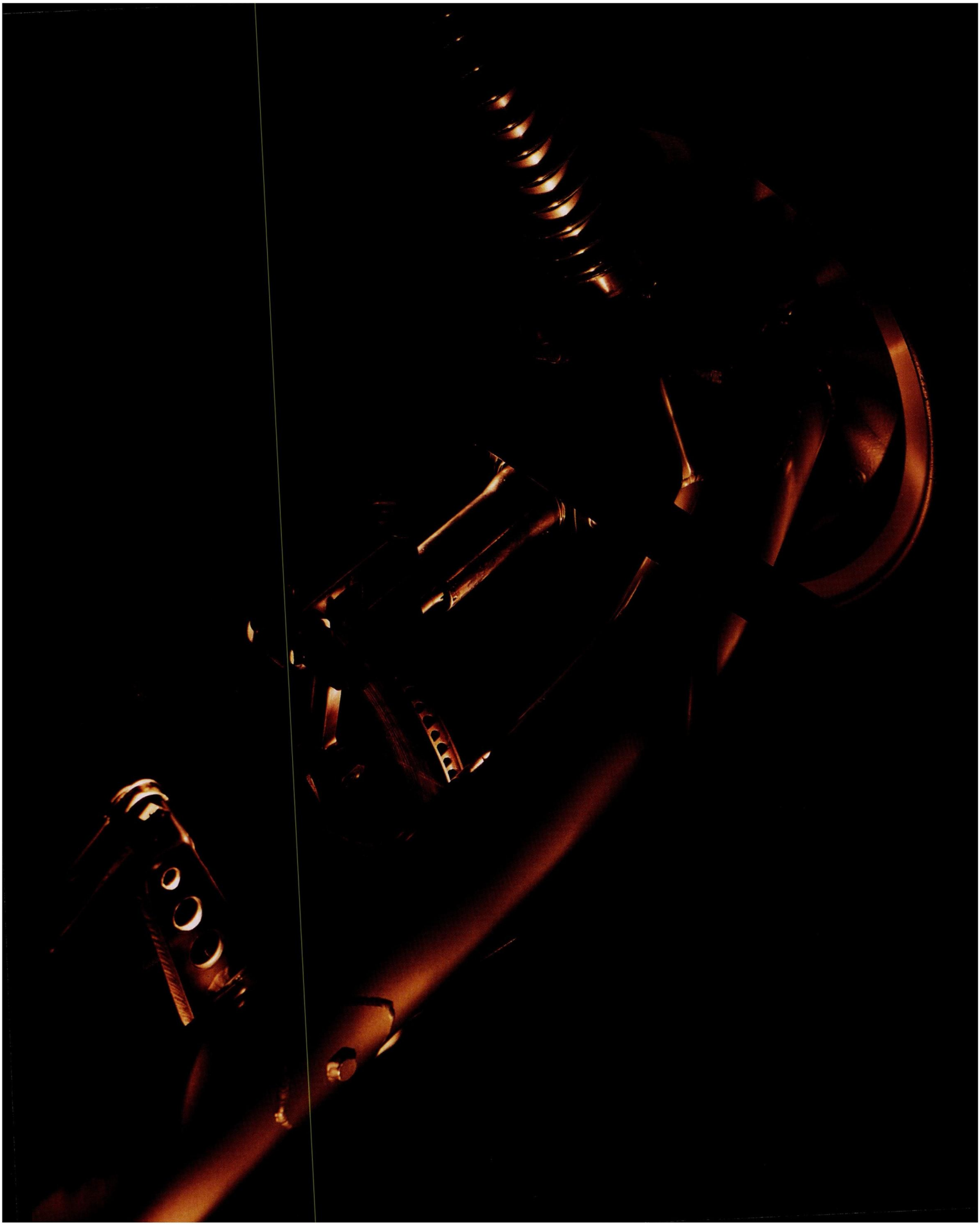
In the Gordon Bennett race proper, Jarrott had the Wolseley – improved after his IoM tests – but the railway delivered it four days late. It was fast but developed many troubles, losing third speed and, for a long time, running on just three cylinders. On top of this, Bianchi had to switch off at corners when the governor packed up. Unsurprisingly, the result was that, in a very hot, tiring race, C J was 12th – and last.

Jarrott now retired from road racing to run the business of Jarrott & Letts, with agencies for Oldsmobile, Crossley, de Dietrich, Bugatti and other cars. Crossley took over in 1910, and it was probably William Letts who persuaded them to build 16-valve Bugattis in Manchester. It was said that all or some of the few made had a wheelbase shorter on one side than on the other, which is probably apocryphal, but the cars did exist; indeed, I have a Crossley-Bugatti radiator badge among my oddments.

Jarrott's subsequent experiences are as follows: two London-Monte Carlo record runs with Crossleys; drove a de Dietrich in the 1907 opening parade at Brooklands; tied with Newton's Napier on a de Dietrich in the Byfleet Plate at Brooklands' first race meeting; second in a Sizaire in a 1908 race; set an hour record of 83.1mph on a de Dietrich 60; raced occasionally in 1909; took part in the 1911 joke race for Fiat taxis. Bianchi also took class records for him in 1912 with a Crossley. Jarrott was also present to watch Lambert's 100-in-the-hour Talbot record in 1913. Nor did he neglect sprints, using a 120hp de Dietrich at one event.

This well-respected driver from the true pioneer days of motor racing died in 1944. M


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DE DION AXLE

SUCH WAS THE LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF SUSPENSION DYNAMICS, THIS CRUDE, BENT PIECE OF TUBE RULED THE GP ROOST FOR ALMOST TWENTY YEARS, EXPLAINS KEITH HOWARD

photography by Charles Best

Barring the notable exceptions of Earle MacPherson and, to a much lesser degree, Colin Chapman, the only person whose name has become inextricably linked with a particular form of car suspension is French nobleman Comte Albert de Dion.

Actually, he didn't invent the axle which carries his name: it was conceived by two engineers who worked for him, Messrs Trépardoux and Bouton, who patented it as early as 1893. Except for this inaccurate accreditation, de Dion's distinction is well deserved.

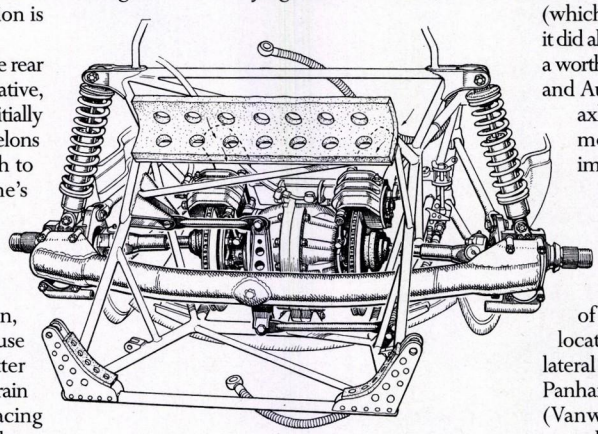
Acting as a halfway house between live axle rear suspension and the fully independent alternative, the axle which carries his name – although initially disregarded – reigned supreme in the top echelons of motorsport from the mid-1930s through to the late '50s. Only then did Formula One's reactionaries finally offer grudging acceptance that fully independent rear suspension was its superior.

Today we think of the live axle, the favoured means of rear suspension prior to the de Dion, as belonging only on off-road vehicles because of its superior wheel articulation and better maintained ground clearance over uneven terrain – attributes which hardly commend it to racing cars. But once belt- and chain-drive had been abandoned in favour of the propshaft and differential gear in the early years of the car industry, the live axle became the established standard. And despite its very obvious shortcomings, it remained dominant in racing into the 1930s.

A live axle, for readers unfamiliar with the nomenclature, is one which houses the differential gear and halfshafts in a rigid cross-car assembly to which the wheel hubs are attached at either end. Its failings are legion but, with the physics of suspension design so poorly understood in the early decades of the 20th century, it took some time for these to become widely appreciated.

The first major problem with a live axle is that of high unsprung mass. Suspension designers divide a car's structure into two distinct components: the sprung mass, which largely comprises the main body of the vehicle, being that part which is isolated from the road by the suspension springs; and the unsprung mass, which comprises those components 'upstream' of the road springs (tyres, wheels, hubs, outboard brakes, etc.) that are isolated from the road only by the compliance of the tyre. The ratio of these two masses is of fundamental importance to vehicle dynamics, because as well as influencing vertical acceleration of the sprung mass, and therefore the ride quality, it also – and much more importantly for the race car designer – affects grip. Increasing the sprung to unsprung mass ratio reduces the vertical load variation experienced by the tyre as it traverses the uneven road surface, and squanders less of its grip potential as a result. So minimised unsprung mass is good news.

It goes without saying that the live axle, with its rigid casing and differential and halfshafts on board, is the very antithesis of low unsprung mass. This disadvantage alone counts heavily against it – but the list goes on.



1958 Vanwall's de Dion rear suspension, above and left, showing its Watts linkage and the inboard disc brakes developed by Vandervell and Goodyear

Because a live axle carries the differential, torque reaction becomes a second major problem in powerful cars. Application of engine torque causes the axle to rotate in the opposite direction to the propshaft, winding up the road springs and tending to lift one rear wheel – usually the right. As well as harming traction, this can have disconcerting effects when applying power in a corner, the more so as the car behaves differently according to whether it is turning left or right.

Although having the rear wheels rigidly linked by an axle tube has the advantage of keeping them, nominally, at right angles to the road surface whatever the roll attitude of the body, it also means that disturbance of one wheel – by a bump, pothole or kerb – is immediately translated to the other. Again this does little for rear-end stability. Use of an axle also prescribes the height of the rear roll centre, encouraging jacking under hard cornering, and has potentially undesirable consequences for roll stiffness, which is less than for an equivalent independent arrangement.

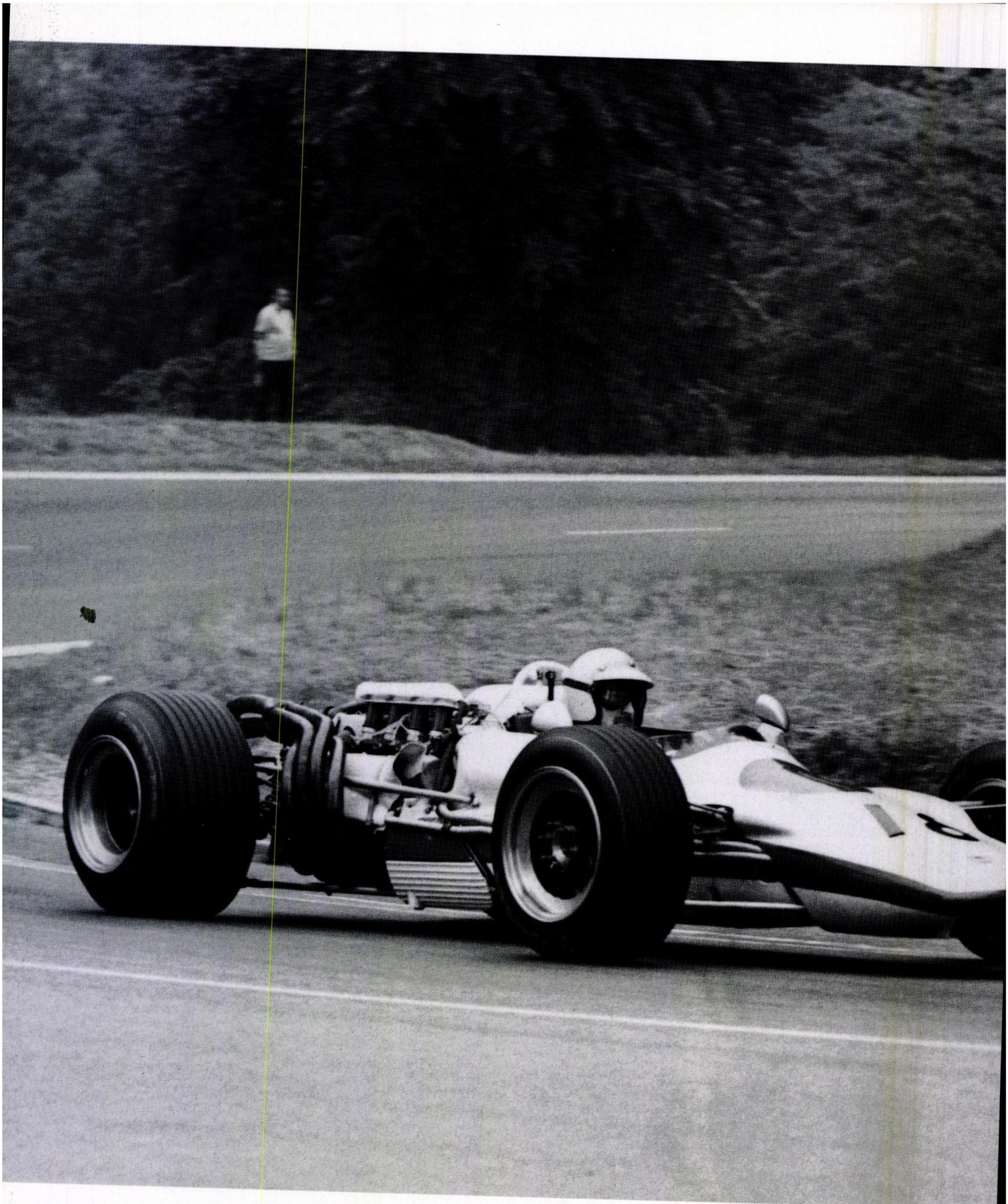
De Dion's rear suspension couldn't solve all these problems as it was still an axle. But because it was a dead axle rather than a live axle – in other words, it no longer carried the halfshafts and differential (which was now attached to the body of the car) – it did alleviate the torque reaction problem and allow a worthwhile reduction in unsprung mass. Mercedes and Auto Union (after their dalliance with swing axles) both saw the advantage of the arrangement and put it to good use in the years immediately prior to WWII.

It would be no exaggeration to call the de Dion rear axle ubiquitous in grand prix racing of the 1950s: almost everyone used it, although the details differed. In some cars, the bent axle tube was located ahead of the differential, in others behind. Fore-aft location was typically by trailing arms whereas lateral location inspired all manner of solutions – Panhard rod (Auto Union Type D), Watts linkage (Vanwall, Aston Martin DBR4/250), A-frame central link (ERA G-type) – the oddest contrivance of all being the sliding block in a vertical groove. Crude as this sounds (and looks), it was first deployed by technocrats Mercedes-Benz in the W125 and widely copied, by BRM (V16) and Maserati (250F) among others.

Mercedes would later question the supremacy of the de Dion rear axle when it introduced the W196 with independent rear suspension and won the championship with it in 1954 and '55, but the team's early departure from racing allowed F1's traditionalists to carry on as if nothing had changed. Only when the rear-engined Coopers arrived with independent suspension all round, was the de Dion apple-cart finally upended, and a lot else besides.

Too many F1 teams of the era waited for someone else to demonstrate a better way: they didn't take the risk themselves. The gale of change blowing from Surbiton and Cheshunt, though, would soon sweep them – and the de Dion axle – aside.

Thanks to the Donington Grand Prix Collection (01332 811027) for their help in this feature



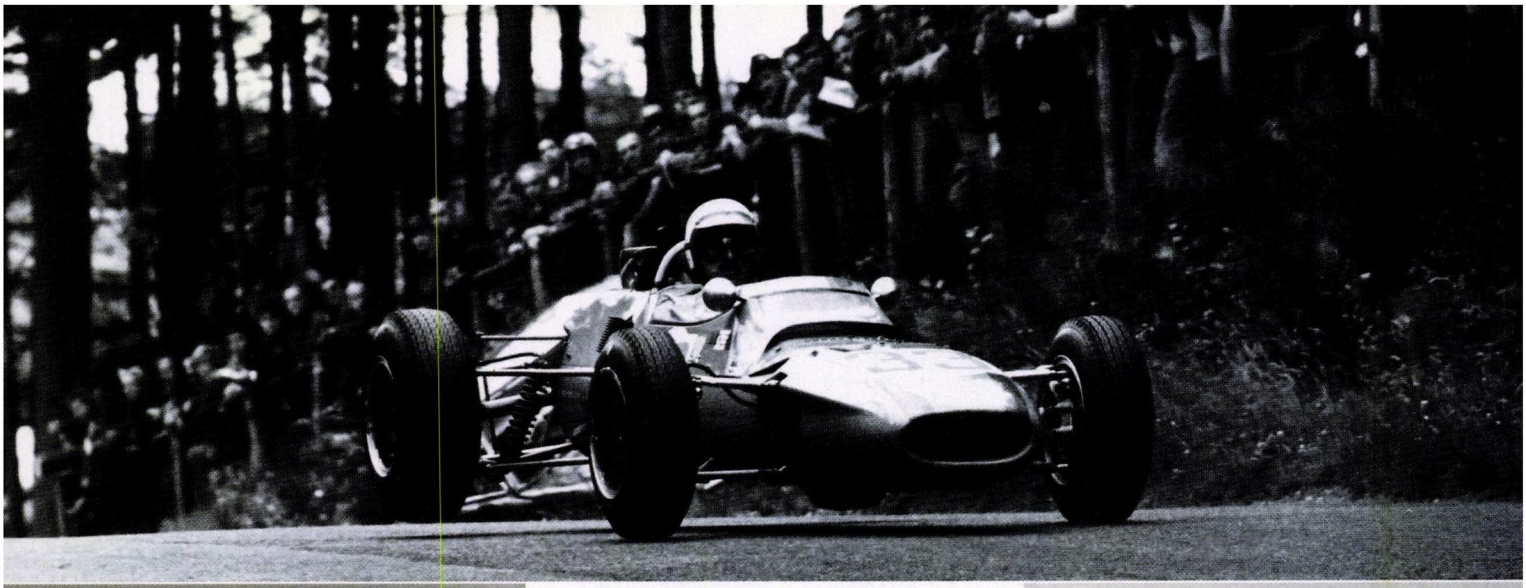


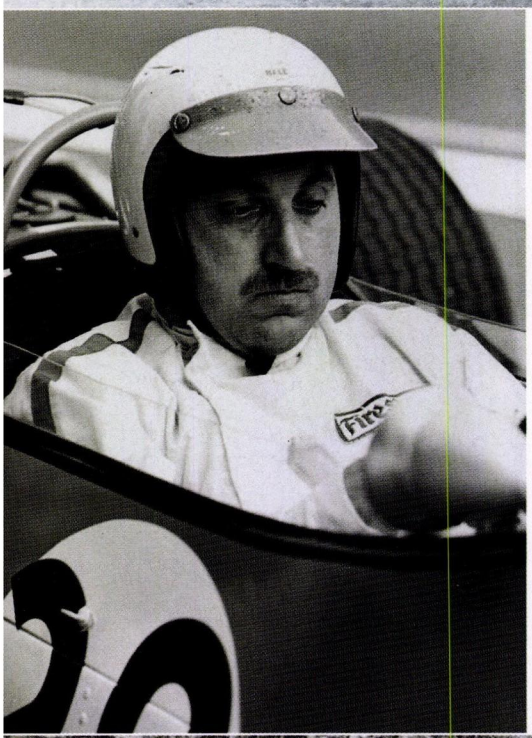
LAT

ROAD to ROUEN

BY STARTING THE 1968 FRENCH GP IN A WORKS HONDA, 40-YEAR-OLD JO SCHLESSER REALISED HIS LIFE'S AMBITION. BUT A MERE TWO LAPS LATER THE DREAM TURNED INTO A NIGHTMARE. ADAM COOPER PAYS TRIBUTE TO A GENTLEMAN DRIVER

Left: Schlesser wrestles the new V8 Honda RA302 around Rouen. The encounter was to prove fatal



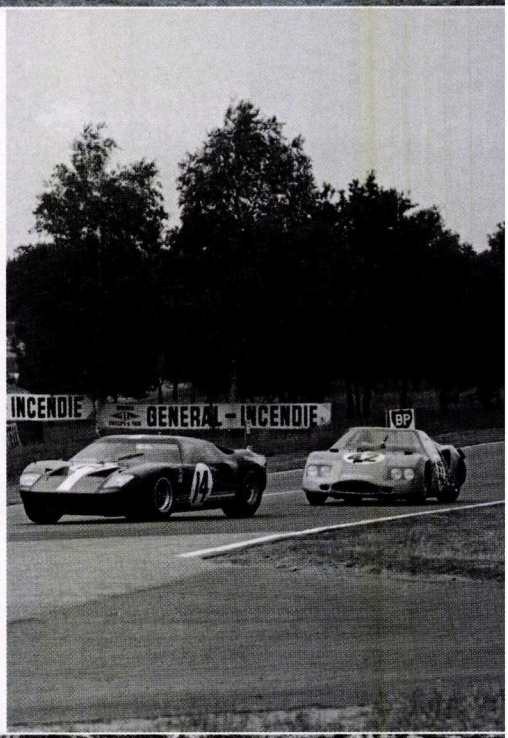


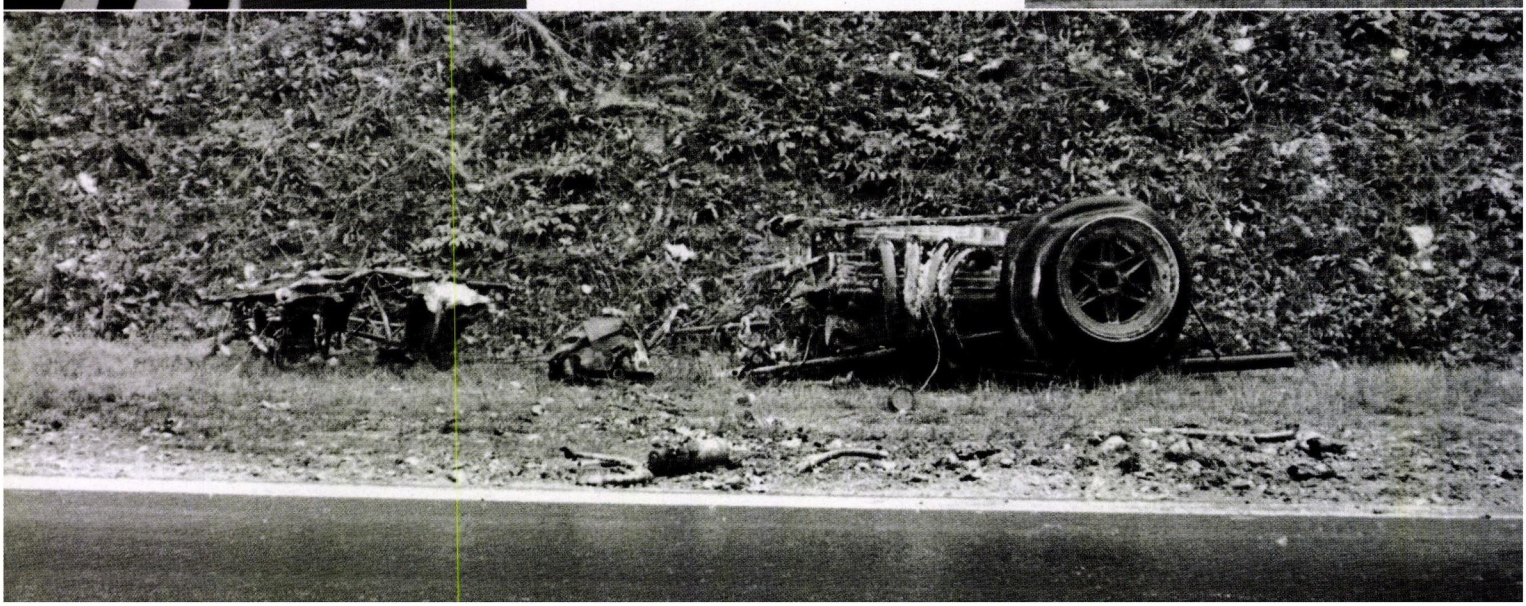
Above: Schlesser proved one of F2's stars, racking up several podiums between 1964 and '68. His Matra MS5 is seen here in the 1966 German GP

Right: In a Matra-BRM M620, Jo chases a Ford GT40 at Le Mans in 1966. A year later he would be racing a MkIIB for Ford France, but was involved in the accident which took out his team-mates, Mario Andretti and Roger McCluskey

Below: All that was left of the mainly magnesium-chassised Honda RA302 after the Rouen accident in 1968. Poor Schlesser didn't stand a chance

Left: "He was very friendly, very nice – everybody liked him," recalls Jo's nephew, Jean-Louis, who himself forged a very successful career in motorsport





ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING SCENES IN THE FILM *Grand Prix* is the GPDA meeting at Spa, in which actors James Garner, Yves Montand and Antonio Sabato mix it with a dozen real stars – half the 1966 field, in fact. But among them is a ringer, who at the time could not truly lay claim to being a Formula One driver. And while the likes of Jochen Rindt and Jo Siffert are content to grin inanely, this card-playing impostor is actually allowed to contribute to the safety debate, albeit in French.

Two years later Jo Schlesser justified his place in the movie's elite group. He had run in the F2 class at the German Grand Prix a couple of times, but that didn't really count. Nor did a handful of appearances in non-championship races in the 1.5-litre era. His dream finally came true at the 1968 French GP. And he did it at the age of 40, thus becoming the oldest rookie since the influx of pre-war racers in the early 1950s.

But just minutes after starter Toto Roche waved the *tricolore*, Schlesser was dead, the fourth victim in a freakish same-time-of-the-month line of fatal accidents that had claimed Jim Clark, Mike Spence and Ludovico Scarfiotti. The chilling statistic of dying in his first GP doesn't do justice to the man.

"He was a cheerful bloke, and a lovely guy," recalls friend Jabby Crombac. "He had a lot of guts – a 'big balls' driver."

Schlesser was born on 18 May 1928, the son of a civil engineer who spent much of his time in Luxembourg. He had two older brothers, Norbert and Jean-Charles, or 'Carlo'.

"When I was very young, my uncle came many times to take me to school," recalls Carlo's son, Jean-Louis, who was born in 1948. "He'd take me in his car and drive, and teach me to repair things if we had a problem with a carburettor or something like that. He'd take me to the airfield in Nancy. He was very friendly, very nice. Everybody liked him."

Crombac: "He was a bit of a bad boy initially, from the area of Nancy that had a bad reputation. He didn't really know what he was going to do, but he had a doctor friend who owned a Panhard and was very keen on rallying. He knew Jo could drive better than him, so they did an event together – and they won."

The following year Jo showed some promise in the Monomill single-seater category, winning at Montlhéry. Deciding he needed to earn money in a hurry, he spent several years in Madagascar, where skilled Frenchmen could double their wages. He worked for a company that sold adding machines and cash registers, occasionally racing a Triumph TR2, before graduating to a Mercedes 300SL.

In 1957, Jo appeared at Le Mans with a works DB-Panhard, while later that year he took the 300SL to second place in the gruelling Liège-Rome-Liège rally, with wife Annie co-driving.

Schlesser saved enough to replace the Merc with a Ferrari 250GT, and it was with this car that he began to make a name for himself internationally, showing well on the 1959 Tour de France before crashing out. The following year he finished second, behind Willy Mairesse.

Single-seaters beckoned, however. Schlesser had become friendly with Crombac and his partner Jean Lucas, who had a management business. They arranged for Jo to buy Harry Schell's old F2 Cooper, and he raced the car throughout 1960.

"He was very impressive for a total newcomer to important racing," says Jabby. "I entered him in quite a few good races, and he did quite well."

Jo intended to run the same car in 1961, but his career suffered a huge blow when he crashed a works Ferrari at the Le Mans test weekend. He suffered a broken right leg, arm and other injuries, but still worse was the knowledge that he'd blown a big chance.

"It was terrible for him," says Jabby, "and I don't think he ever recovered full movement of his leg."

He was out for most of the season, and when he first returned he used a string arrangement to help shift his leg from accelerator to brake.

Jo's Madagascar funds now depleted, Annie took a job as secretary at Crombac's *Sport Auto* magazine to help pay the bills. Fortunately, the sociable Jo now found the first in a series of enthusiastic patrons, namely Jean Moench, an old friend from Nancy who had come into money when his family business was sold. Moench wanted to start a two-car team with Schlesser, and had his eyes on the new machine being built by Jack Brabham and Ron Tauranac.

'Jo had a doctor friend who owned a Panhard and was keen on rallying. He knew Jo could drive better than him, so they did an event together – and won'

Jabby Crombac

"In those days the car was called MRD, and you know what that sounds like in French!" smiles Jabby. "I told Tauranac, if you will change the name to Brabham, we'll buy two, one for Moench and one for Schlesser. Of course they changed the name, and it took years for Ron to forgive me."

Armed with the first production BT2, Schlesser gave Brabham its first-ever victory, at Montlhéry, in 1962. The following year he proved a regular winner all over Europe, although he was lucky to escape unhurt from a huge crash at Chimay in a Lotus. He also appeared in a few non-championship F1 races, and drove a works Aston Martin at Le Mans. At his side throughout these weekends was Annie, who effectively acted as team manager.

As Crombac recalls: "If she thought he wasn't going quickly enough, she would say, 'Jo, you are walking instead of racing!' She was very good at lap scoring and doing the letters for him."

Schlesser was established as France's most promising prospect, although the competition was slim. But he was now 35, and few considered that he had a future. Crombac came to the rescue when a new Ford France PR man turned up at the infamous bar below the office of *Sport Auto*.

"We more or less became advisors to this guy, and the first thing we did of course is say you should sponsor Schlesser. He was really never sorry for it, and for years he was backing Jo in a big way. Jo really was, at that time, the best French driver."

With backing from Ford France, Jo launched a serious F2 programme with a Brabham in 1964. He won a poorly-supported race at Vallelunga; more impressive was third behind Brabham and Stewart at Montlhéry. He also had sportscar outings, sharing a GT40 with Richard Attwood at Le Mans, and finishing fifth in a Cobra with Phil Hill at Sebring.

Schlesser was a natural choice for the new works Matra F2 team in 1966, but he was gradually overshadowed by rising star Jean-Pierre Beltoise, who was nine years younger. Jo regularly qualified well, but appalling reliability spoiled the season until he finished second to Brabham at Albi.

In 1967, Beltoise took centre stage in Matra's works F2 team, while Schlesser retained a seat only with Ford France sponsorship.

"The Matra hierarchy never considered him as a Matra driver," says Crombac. "Part of the reason Matra was racing was to attract young engineers to work for them, and they didn't want the image of old drivers."

That year Jo was often the leading non-graded driver, taking thirds at Oulton Park, Rouen and Brands, the latter behind only Rindt and Stewart. He also drove a works Ford MkIIB at Le Mans with Guy Ligier, and was caught up in the crash that claimed team-mates Mario Andretti and Roger McCluskey. A fortnight later the pair overcame early delays to win the Reims 12 Hours in a MkIIB against strong opposition. It was Jo's biggest win to date.

The 1968 season started well when Jo took a works Porsche 907 to third at Daytona; a broken alternator cost the car half an hour and potential victory. For F2 he teamed up with old pal and regular sportscar partner Ligier to run a pair of McLaren M4As under the Ecurie Intersport banner. Jo was on the pace, qualifying fourth at Pau and third at Jarama, but again reliability was poor.

Relief came at the end of May when he had another run in a works Porsche 907 in the Spa 1000 Kilometres, just eight days after his 40th birthday. Sharing with Gerhard Mitter, he finished a close second. When conditions were at their worst he lapped quicker than the GT40 of winner and local ace Jacky Ickx. A month later his F2 season got back on track when he finished fourth at Monza.

It was then that he got the opportunity he'd dreamed about, courtesy of Crombac. At the time Jabby assisted the French GP organisers, and when a last-minute entry was received for a second Honda, his advice was sought. ➠

Top and middle right: Alois Rottensteiner, bottom and middle left: LAT

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"One day I had a phone call from Rouen. They said, 'We've just had a letter from Honda France, who want to put Eric Offenstadt in a second car.'"

Offenstadt, a Parisian Honda dealer, had raced in F2, but was not regarded as top-notch material.

"They said, 'What do you think of him?' I said, 'Absolutely no way. He has no experience of fast cars. If you exclude the Matra drivers – Matra won't let them drive a Honda – there's only one guy: Schlesser.' Since the beginning, he was always broke, so I never charged Jo anything. It was not because I was his manager that I gave his name; it was in my capacity as advisor to the Automobile Club of Normandy. I rang up Jo, and he was delighted."

Schlesser arrived at Rouen in an excited mood, unaware of the political unrest within the Honda camp caused by the twelfth-hour entry for the unproven RA302 (see sidebar overleaf). There was much to learn, but the organisers did him few favours by restricting practice to short sessions on Thursday and Friday evening, with nothing at all on Saturday. Jo spun and damaged a wheel on the first day, but improved a little on the second.

"We spent Saturday evening together," says Crombac. "We didn't talk much about the car, because frankly it was a disaster. Although Jo was thrilled to be in a works Honda, he said it was awful and unbalanced. But he said he'd do his best; in his mind, he was going to be number two to Surtees."

When the race got under way, some 15 minutes late, rain was already falling. Schlesser struggled around at the back, and the car could be heard misfiring, perhaps because water had got into its complex electrical system.

On the third lap he lost control at the fast right-hander before the Nouveau Monde hairpin. The RA302 slammed into an earth bank, and turned over, spraying burning petrol as it did so. The fire took hold, fed by the V8's large oil supply and the extensive use of magnesium in the chassis. Marshals were slow to react, but Jo probably had no chance.

"I have never seen such an inferno develop so quickly," wrote Innes Ireland in *Autocar*, "and this great towering column of flame and black smoke reached high into the skies."

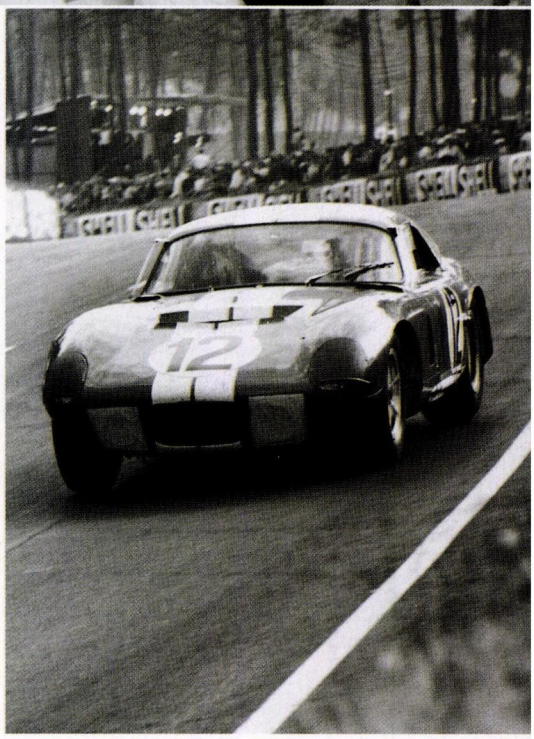
"It was absolutely horrible," says Vic Elford, who also made his GP debut that day. "The thing was like a giant firework, and it went on for laps before it finally shut down."

'We didn't talk about the car, because it was a disaster. Although Jo was thrilled to be in a works Honda, he said it was awful and unbalanced'

Jabby Crombac

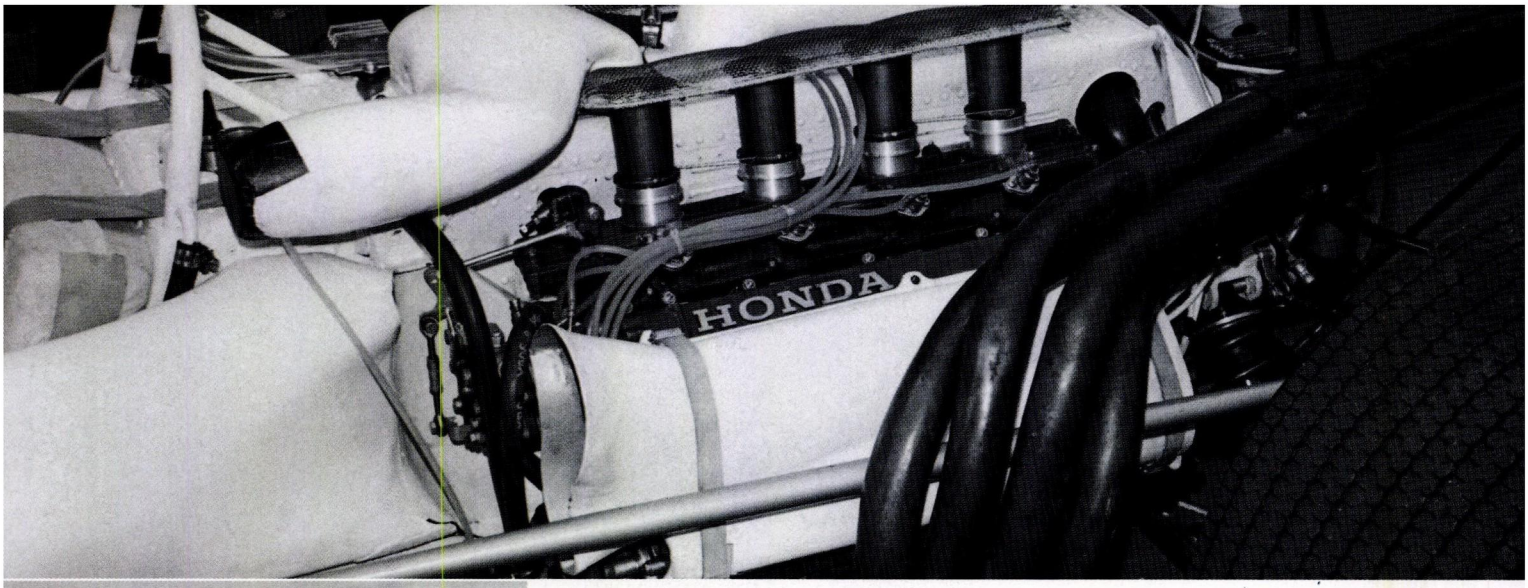
The race carried on, and for several laps cars had to pass through the smoke and huge puddles of foam. In a scene uncannily reminiscent of *Grand Prix*, Schlesser's body was brought to the paddock before the end of the race. Friends and officials kept Annie away from the awful sight. That evening Crombac faced the task of looking after her: "All the Paris chums were in the hotel room and, suddenly, they looked at their watches and they said, 'We must get going because we are having dinner.' And, like birds, they flew off. So I was alone with Annie Schlesser, her daughter, and my wife.

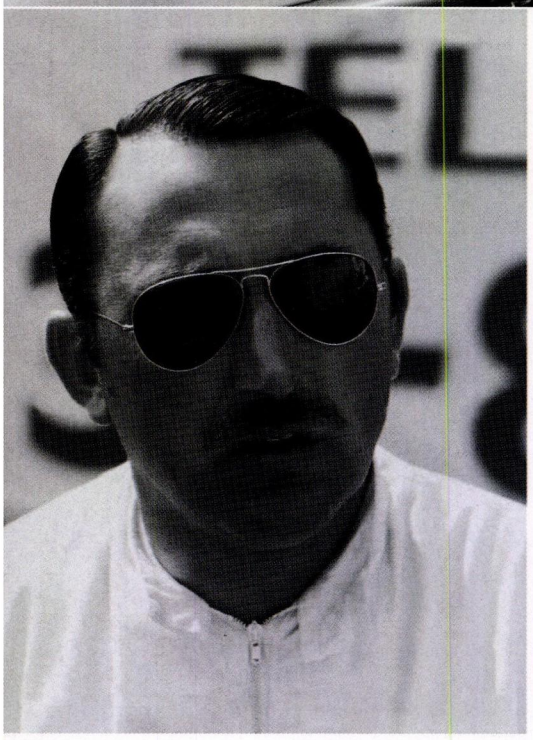
"Fortunately, Mrs Louis Stanley turned up, and she spent the night in Annie's room to stop her jumping out of the window, which she was threatening to do. 'Big Lou' has really been badly branded, but whenever there was a thing like that, he was ➳



Above: Schlesser shared a Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe with American Allen Grant at Le Mans in '65. They completed 110 laps before being sidelined by clutch failure

Top: Schlesser and Guy Ligier celebrate winning the 1967 Reims 12-hour race in a Ford MkIIB. The 'JS' prefix on Ligier's F1 cars was in honour of his dead friend





Above: The fact that Jo was saddled with a bad car for his F1 debut didn't dampen his enthusiasm, for he had hopes of being Honda's No2 alongside John Surtees

Top: The air-cooled V8 was a diversion that Honda could have done without

'I tried the RA302 at Silverstone. You'd drive it out of the pits and it would feel quite sharp, but it wouldn't drive any distance performing as it should'

John Surtees

there. I'll never forget that. My wife and I took the little girl, who was 12 or 13, in our room."

"When it happened I was in Morocco," recalls Jean-Louis Schlesser. "My father came in during the night and he was crying. He said, 'Tomorrow morning I have to go to France, because Jo died.' That was it."

The following day Ligier flew Annie and her daughter back to Paris. Later, when he started his F1 team, he would give her a job as secretary.

Crombac says the whole episode was the worst time of his life, and he'll never forget the emotions surrounding that weekend.

"I spoke to Annie and said, 'I am so sorry I put him in this.' She said, 'Jabby, this was the best day of Jo's life. If he had been given a choice, he would have still driven the car. For him, the impossible thing was to die without having driven a works Formula One car.'"

THE HONDA RA302

The ill-fated debut of the Honda RA302 took place against a background of strong opposition from lead driver John Surtees. He had been expecting an improved V12 for his existing car, and was thus surprised when the all-new R302 was delivered to Honda's UK base at Slough. Its 120-degree V8 engine was air-cooled, fed by ungainly scoops on the side of the cockpit and at the front of the engine. It was a mobile test bed to showcase the sort of technology Soichiro Honda wanted to use in his new road cars.

"I tried it at Silverstone," recalls Surtees. "You'd drive out of the pits and it would feel quite sharp, but it was impossible to drive any distance with it performing as it should. Mr Nakamura told Japan we could not take this to a race."

Soichiro Honda was in France on a trade mission that week and, perhaps influenced by his local representatives, he decided to enter the RA302 under the Honda France banner, with a French driver. Surtees, and even team boss Nakamura, didn't know of the plan until 7.30am on Thursday, the first day of practice.

"It was not run by the existing Honda team," says John, "but people who'd previously worked with us were brought over from Japan. They worked as a totally separate unit."

Surtees can shed no light as to the cause of Schlesser's crash, but acknowledges the circuit is tricky at the site of the accident, describing it as "the sort of place on the circuit where you were fully occupied".

It's generally thought a misfire or complete engine cut-out caused Schlesser to lose control. Honda acquired film showing him getting into a tank-slapper before going off – but there were never any official conclusions.

Engine designer and future Honda boss Nobuhiko Kawamoto was in Japan that weekend. "I thought the cause may have been a transmission seizure," he says. "After three months, the residuals came back – small amounts of steel parts, the engine and transmission, but we found it was really clean. The cause was not revealed."

Surtees would briefly drive a second RA302 in practice at Monza, but by then it was academic.

"The episode of that car and the accident brought Honda's whole Formula One programme to an end," says John. "The fact that it didn't work meant there weren't the resources to go back to what we were originally going to do."

Top: LAT, left: Alois Rottensteiner

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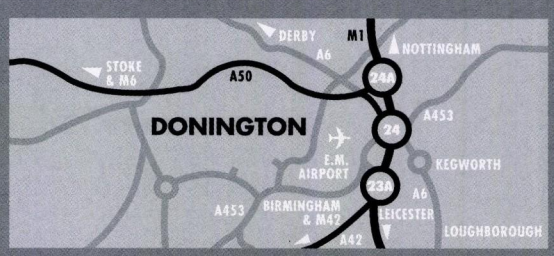
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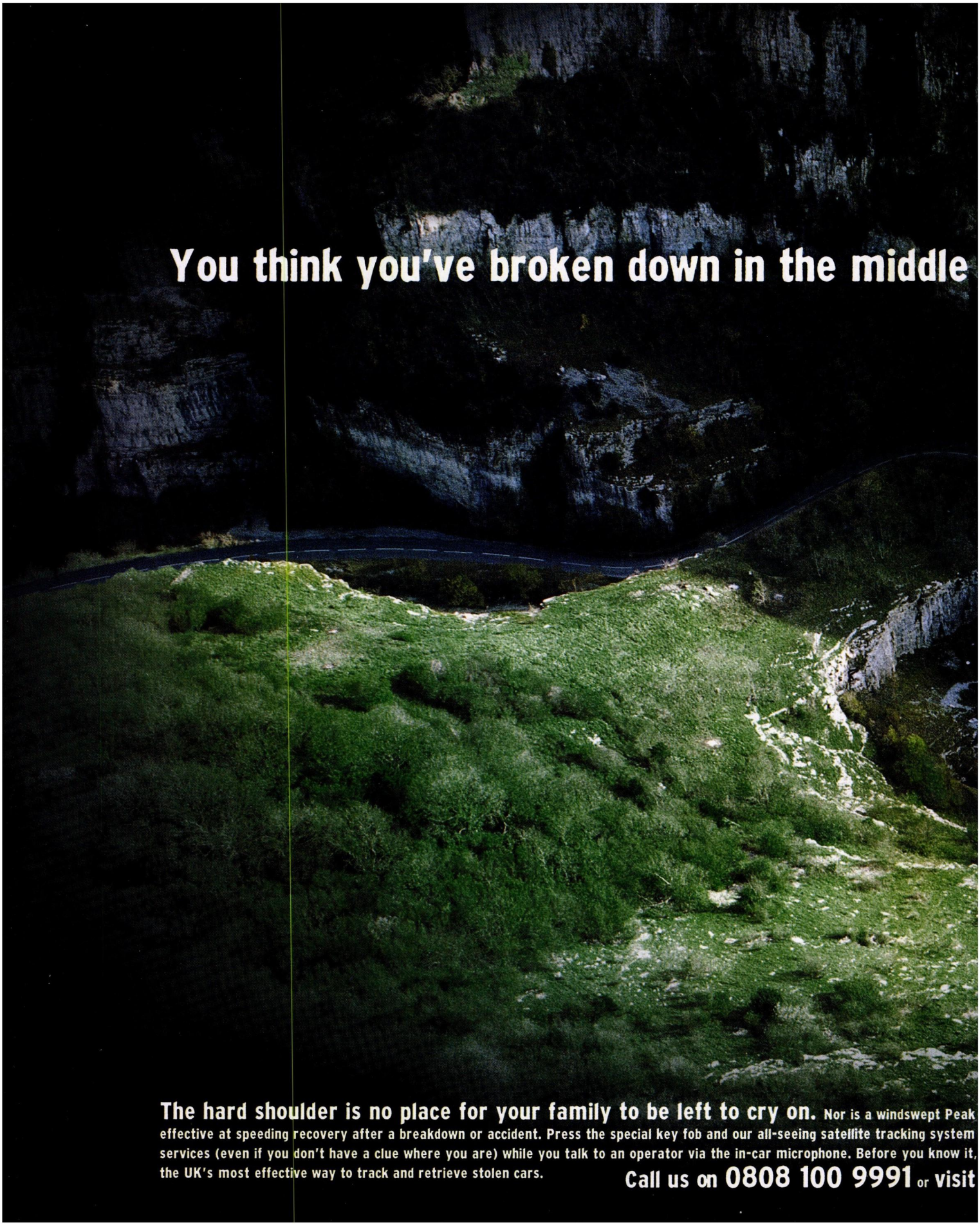
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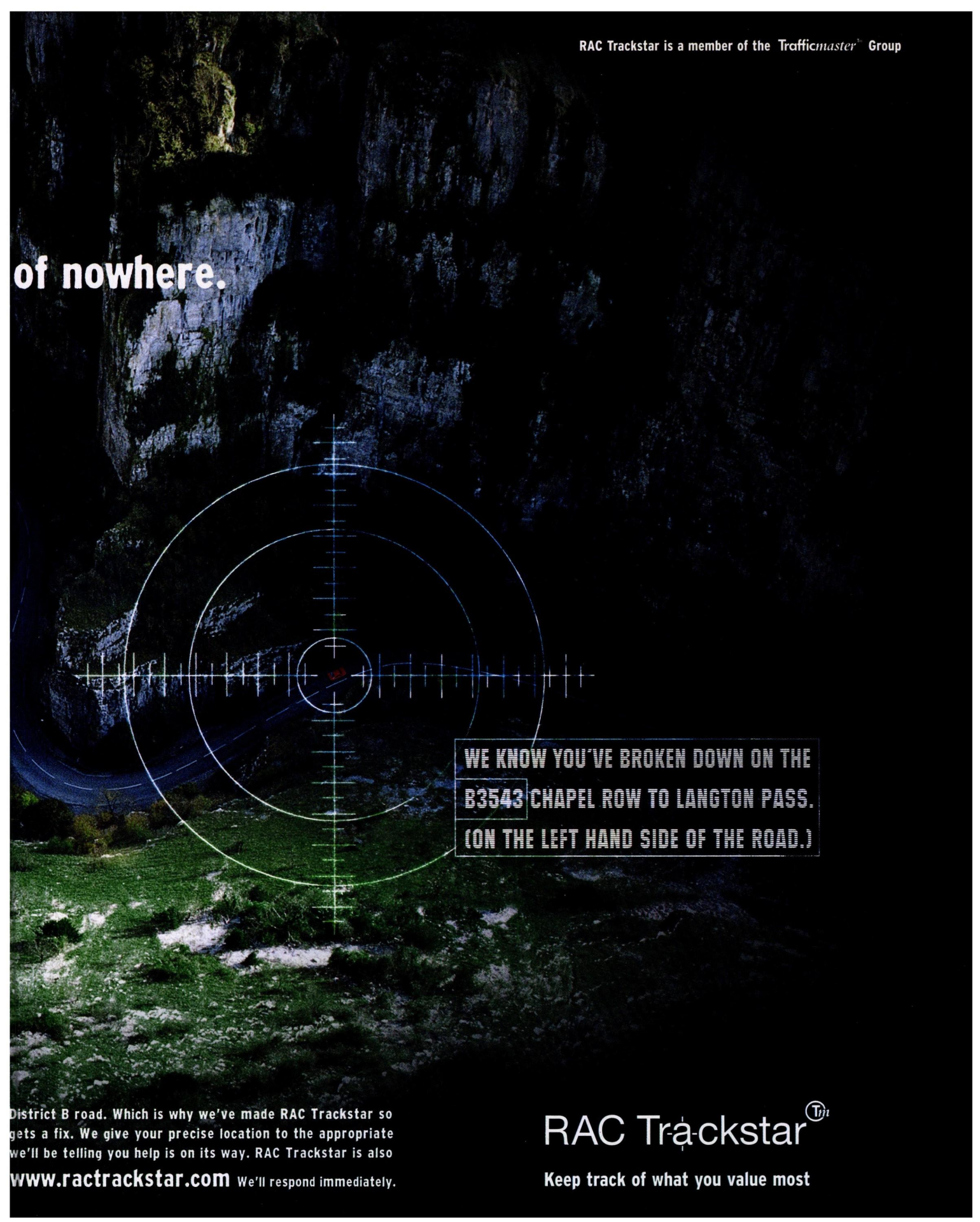
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The infamous VW Transporter which won a rally, here being used for its intended purpose, circa 1958
Below: Spot the famous members of Ecurie Cod Fillet!





With the route plotted, it seemed a shame to waste the evening, so they did a quick divert and swapped the Herald for the only other vacant machine, the VW Transporter pick-up used for delivering the Fidler fish



ECURIE COD FILLET IS AN UNLIKELY NAME FOR A TEAM, YET THIS IS THE TRUE STORY OF A BAND OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS UNITED BY THEIR LOVE OF RALLYING – AND MUCH MORE BESIDES. FULLY-PAID-UP, CARD-CARRYING MEMBER JOHN DAVENPORT RECOUNTS A FISHY TALE

HOW TO TELL YOU ABOUT ECURIE COD FILLET? WHEN ASKED TO explain jazz, Louis Armstrong famously replied, "Man, if you gotta ask, you'll never know". Even within rallying circles, exact knowledge about Ecurie Cod Fillet is hardly widespread. A few years ago, *Autosport* published a picture of ECF's assembled members and were so baffled when it came to writing a caption that they entitled it, 'Past winners of the RAC Rally', which was, of course, only partially true.

Truth is frequently stranger than fiction, and it was in search of the former that I recently travelled north to a point almost within sight of the Manchester Ship Canal to meet with the founders of this unique phenomenon, Roy Fidler and John Hopwood. The venue for our interview was to have been the Hazel Grove Pussy Cat Club but, sadly, it had been closed down only the previous week. Fortunately, the Bramhall Pensioners' Association were having their Late Nite 5 & 3's in the local Methodist Hall and kindly let us have a table near the door as the venue for our little chat.

According to Roy, it all started while he was hanging upside down at Knickerbrook. During the 1950s he was the proud owner of a Buckler 90 powered by a Ford 1172cc side-valve engine. This chariot was used for rallying and for 30-minute time trials at Oulton Park. For the latter, his rally navigator John Hopwood turned pit crew-cum-team manager to oversee the mandatory change of one wheel ➳

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using a quick-lift jack. It was during one of these time trials that an experimental tyre arrangement featuring larger wheels on the front proved sufficiently unstable to result in the aforementioned inversion and a positive decision to stick to rallying in future.

It was at this time that Fidler and Hopwood were both put in the position of having to take over control of their family businesses. For Hopwood it was a traditional glove-making company, while for Fidler it was a fresh fish business originally founded in 1895. Neither company was trading at any kind of zenith and both needed a lot of hard work to make them successful. So British road rallying, which only took up a Saturday night, fitted in rather well. Before long, the Buckler was making a better impression than it had done on the Oulton Park scenery. In 1959, the pair won the Lakeland Jubilee Rally outright.

The following year, the Buckler had gone and they started No1 on the same event with a Triumph Herald. Overcome by the occasion, the poor thing ran its bearings as they set out from Macclesfield towards the Peak District. With all the route plotted on the maps, it seemed a shame to waste the evening, so they did a quick divert and swapped the Herald for the only other vacant machine, the VW Transporter pick-up used for delivering the Fidler fish.

'This time they entered the Volkswagen pick-up legitimately – and famously won!'

They got back to the rally route somewhere near Buxton and joined it in their rightful place. To everyone's surprise, they managed a whole string of controls on time before deciding that this was not the safest way to proceed through a national park. Discretion having triumphed over valour, it was thrown away again when, on the way home from the end of that rally, they remembered a daylight event being run by Stockport Motor Club on the Sunday morning. This time, they entered legitimately and famously won it. It was the first – and last – time the VW was pressed into rally service, but it had set them thinking.

Hopwood wrote the rally reports for Stockport MC's magazine and he began refer-ring to the Fidler/Hopwood combination as 'Ecurie Cod Fillet' as a bit of a take on continental rally teams. The next thing was that a badge was devised and cut out of fablon. Other crews, especially the stalwarts of the Stockport MC, saw it and, since the word Ecurie predicates more than one car and crew, they were soon sporting similar badges. At the time, Stockport MC had a particularly strong rallying contingent and soon other northern drivers, including Reg McBride, Phil Simister, Mike Sutcliffe, Phil Crabtree, Derek Astle and Don Grimshaw, wanted to have the fishy emblem on their car. Right from the start, there was no suggestion that you had to fill in an application form or pay a subscription. It was sufficient for you to be a regular and successful rallyist.

Ecurie Cod Fillet was soon being used as a convenient name for teams entered on the new *Motoring News* Rally Championship and, before long, recruits from outside the north-west were swelling its ranks. When Erik Carlsson won the RAC Rally with John Brown in 1961, his works Saab carried an ECF badge that was removed by the Saab people just before the finish.

Like Topsy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, ECF 'just growed'. Indeed, the members of its illustrious ranks won every major event in the rally world between 1960 and 1980.

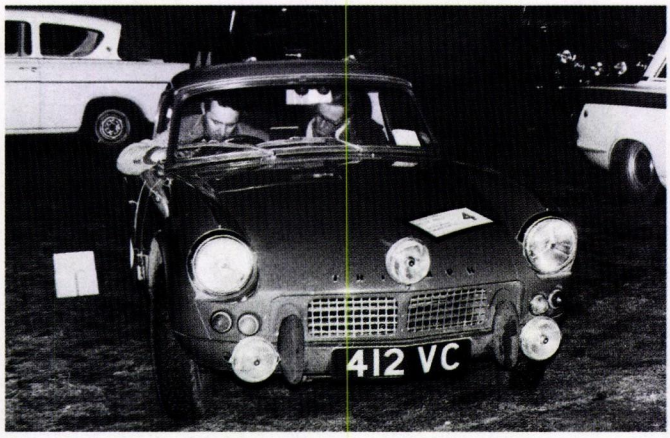
Ecurie Cod Fillet could have stayed like that, awarding its annual trophy for the best organised rally, and then just gracefully followed similar organisations such as Ecurie Île de France, Ecurie les Mordus and Squadra Cinquanta into obscurity.

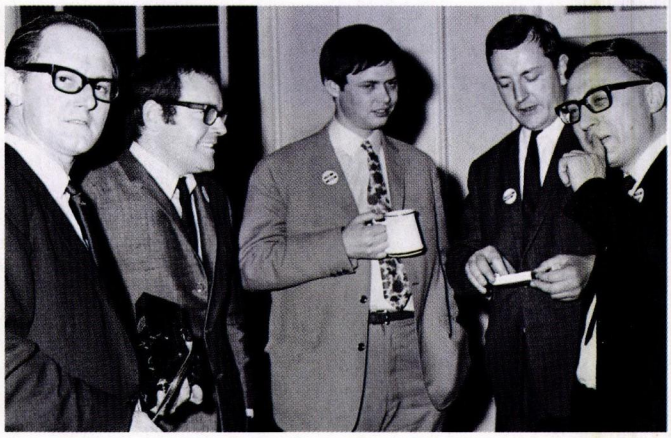
But then in 1962, Hopwood was invited to suggest a plan for running a motor rally on the Isle of Man. Len Bond of the Manx Tourist Board invited him over to look at the place and make some suggestions that they could put to the Manx Government. They drove round and saw there were roads that would make a very fair, if rather short, night rally. It was only when John and Roy were about to leave that Len said: "Of course, if it is of any help, we could always close the roads for you." That off-the-cuff remark changed the face of British rallying, since, with the exception of Ulster, the only possibility to have proper special stages at that ➳



Top left: Roy Fidler (left) and John Hopwood with the recalcitrant Herald. Top right: Ladies helped ECF jaunts go with a bang

Left: Fidler and Hopwood with their Ford Anglia on a British night rally. Fidler at this time also co-drove in Triumph's works team





time was to use Forestry Commission roads. And those were only just being made available in any quantity for the RAC Rally.

The rally that Hopwood and Fidler devised with help from the ECF membership was a short night rally followed by a full-blown daylight stage event. The involvement of ECF with the success of that first Manx Rally of 1963 was to get it even better known throughout British rally circles. And the various social engagements that came as part of the Manx Rally package – the party on the ferry going over, the prize-giving party, the driving tests on the promenade and the impromptu hill climb on the ferry going back to Liverpool – all contributed to the legend.

At that time, Fidler was playing a double role, driving his own 1340cc Ford Anglia on British events and co-driving for the Triumph works team on continental rallies. Indeed, later in 1963, he was the victim of a nasty accident at Mont Ventoux when Mike Sutcliffe put the TR4 into a wall. Roy broke his left leg and sustained quite a few other knocks. Happily, within a couple of years, Roy was a number one driver at Triumph and soon the little ECF logo started to appear on a wide variety of works rally cars.

The next big step came in 1967. By this point Ecurie Cod Fillet had only been in existence for 12 years but had spread widely – the membership was already well over 200. The nature of rallying, however, especially in Britain, was changing fast. Road rallies were now frowned upon and special stage events were in the ascendant. Where the core members once met a couple of dozen times a year on events, it was now unusual to have more than a few together at any one time. Thus was born the exciting new concept of the Ecurie Cod Fillet reunion. The first event was held in Stone, Staffordshire. The location may simply have been chosen because it was halfway between the north of England and the south. Or it could have been because Stuart Turner's mother lived just round the corner. No one is certain. But they can all remember the strippers! Subsequent reunions featured competitions which involved the placement and removal of advertising stickers from young ladies, or hands-on tests of proficiency in the undressing of inflatable dolls. Apart from the serious side though, these events became enormously popular and remain a forum in which the rally fraternity asserts an identity often lost at other motorsport jamborees in the razzmatazz of racing.

Since they started, the venues have moved around a bit with ECF reunions held in Douglas IoM, Worcester, Oldham and Birmingham. More recently, they have settled on Nottingham and gradually, as the membership has matured, the content has become slightly less Rabelasian. Indeed, after some 42 years, Ecurie Cod Fillet is now very much a collection of senior citizens, albeit some of them quite eminent.

The membership stands at approximately 340 and is now virtually closed. It is not, and never has been, a commercial organisation, and most of its financial support has been drawn from the businesses of Fidler and Hopwood, who themselves labour tirelessly on its behalf. John sends out a regular newsletter while other volunteers such as – and this is to literally name but a few – Alan Jolley, Mike Broad, Jackie Francis-Lucy and Tony Mason work to ensure the continuation of the reunions.

Based as it is in the era of road rallying, it is little wonder that ECF has been highly visible in the great historic rally revival of the last two decades. The Fidler/Hopwood combination has been seen at work in the latter's TR2 while other members, throwing away their Zimmer frames for a day, have shown their old skills have not disappeared. On the 1992 Charringtons RAC Historic Rally, for example, Ecurie Cod Fillet won the team prize with their B team comprising three Mini Coopers driven by Timo Mäkinen, Stig Blomqvist and Rauno Aaltonen. A contemporary journalist was heard to mutter: "If that's their B team, who's in their A team?"

Being a peculiar institution, it is doubtful whether Ecurie Cod Fillet will ever completely disappear, as is the way with legends. But one's thoughts do turn more frequently to the question of whether cars and decent OS maps exist in the afterlife. M

MIRTH, DEATHS AND CARRIAGES

Northern humour is no respecter of time or place. Recently, the advancing age of the ECF's original members has led to more frequent use of a black tie among the fraternity.

Is the ghost of Mike Sutcliffe wandering restlessly after his last wish went awry? The funeral route from church to crematorium took in a section of M62. In his last testament, he requested the ECF choose a suitable hearse so that, during his last journey, he could once again exceed 100mph. Much time was spent quizzing funeral directors in the North-West; finally one was found who reckoned he could deliver. But despite giving normal traffic a never-to-be-forgotten moment, the hearse managed only 98mph.

No such problems of speed for Phil Simister. At his funeral service, the six pallbearers chosen from ECF's senior ranks had great difficulty manoeuvring the heavy coffin into the church. They came back out again, puffing and staggering, to discover the burial site was at the furthest and highest end of the churchyard. As they grimly set off up this grave-dotted Everest, a voice was heard from underneath the coffin: "By gum, Phil. I knew you said you were going to take it with you, but not in half-crowns."

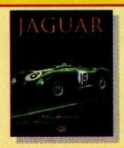
Top: ECF wasn't all just a laugh. Fidler/Hopwood combo took this Triumph Spitfire to second overall in the 1964 Welsh Rally

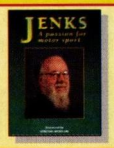
Top: An early 1960s ECF reunion. From left to right, Hopwood, the author, John Brown, Andrew Whyte and Stuart Turner

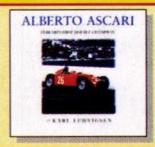
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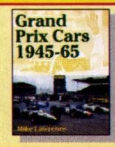
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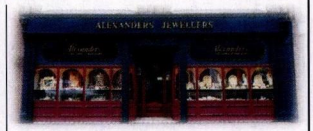
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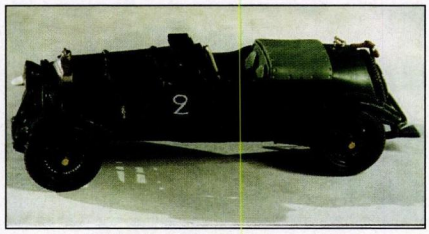
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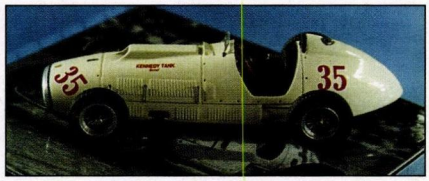
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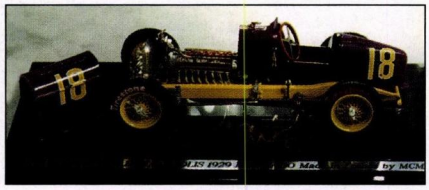
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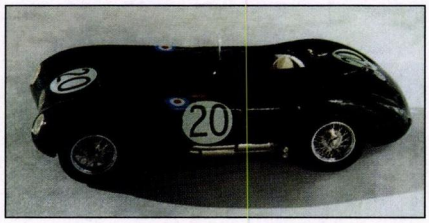
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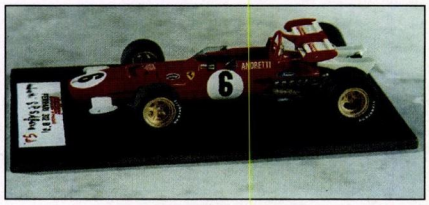
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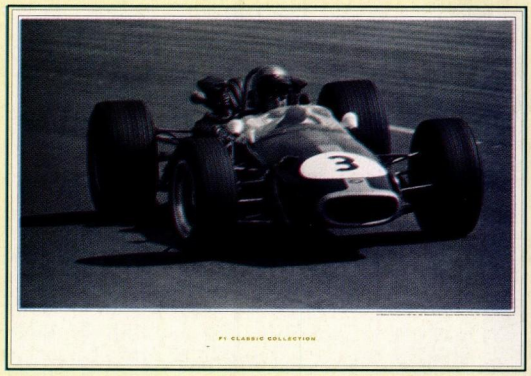
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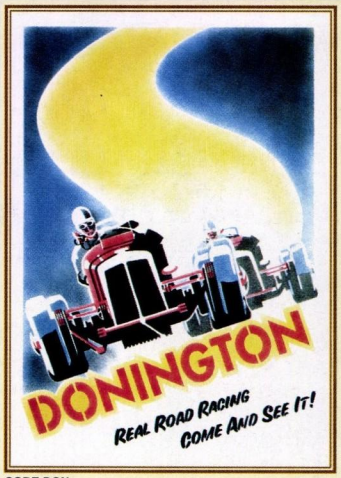
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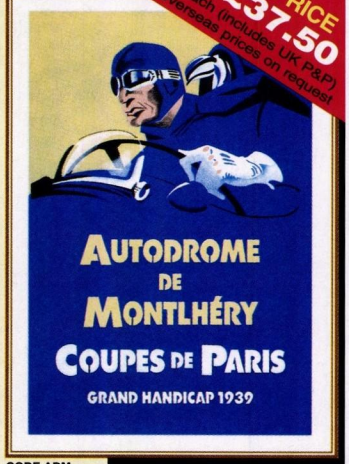
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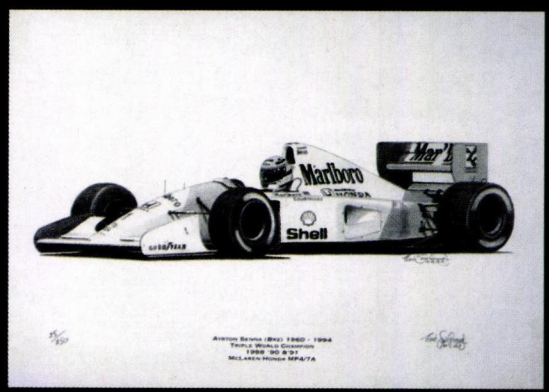
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LOTUS 49

PUT OFF FORMULA ONE FOR YEARS BY THE DEATH OF JIM CLARK, IT WAS THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS, NOT HUMAN ONES, WHICH RENEWED HIS INTEREST. HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE CAR WHICH COMBINES BOTH

ALAN JENKINS
Freelance designer



ALTHOUGH NOT MUCH OF A HISTORIAN, I'M INCLINED to choose a car from the period which really got me excited about Formula One and drove me to get involved. The Lotus 49 is significant for me because it was the last F1 car to be driven by Jim Clark.

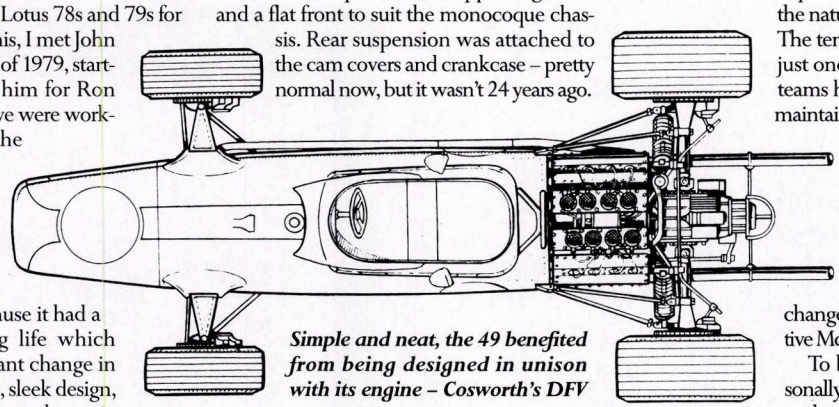
My interest started when my father took me to the Oulton Park Gold Cup in 1960. Stirling Moss won in a Lotus 18, but I also recall seeing Jim Clark in a Formula Junior and my interest in Formula One grew as his career progressed. I followed his every race – to me there was no one else even close. People say they can remember exactly what they were doing when President Kennedy was killed; for me it was Jim Clark. I can remember my sister leaning out of the bedroom window to tell me the news, having just heard it on the radio. When he died, so, for a long while, did my interest in F1.

It didn't resurface until I began helping some local friends who ran McLarens in the Aurora series, then progressed to GPs with Lotus 78s and 79s for Hector Rebaque. Through this, I met John Barnard and, toward the end of 1979, started working full-time with him for Ron Dennis at Project 4. The car we were working on eventually became the McLaren MP4/1 and, as they say, the rest is history. Since then I have worked with Onyx, Footwork, Stewart and Prost

The 49 is interesting not just technically but also because it had a long and successful racing life which spanned a period of significant change in Formula One. From a simple, sleek design, it later acquired a variety of aerodynamic appendages which (in some eyes) spoiled the effect. The 'tea tray' rear spoiler used to win at Monaco 1968 soon gave way to huge, Chaparral-style, suspension-mounted rear wings including foot-operated feathering controls. Additional high wings attached to the front uprights were fitted the following year just before, rather belatedly, all the high wings were banned after a series of spectacular accidents.

Although the 49 was quite simple, and a logical progression from its predecessors, I remember the appearance of the cars at the 1967 Dutch GP causing quite a stir. The main technical talking point, using the engine as a stressed member, seemed to create as much impression as the monocoque Lotus 25 had done five years earlier. Yes, this had been tried before, including on the Lotus 43 with its BRM H16 engine, but the difference was this time it was done right. The engine was designed for the car and the credit for that – and to a large extent, the 49's initial success – must go to Cosworth.

That season was only a few years into the era of so-called 'kit cars'. Yet the 49 clearly had the minimum of compromises which could be attributed to working around an existing engine package. The DFV's shape went a long way to determining the 49 chassis' cross-section, with two bolts at the bottom, a flexible plate for the upper engine mounts, and a flat front to suit the monocoque chassis. Rear suspension was attached to the cam covers and crankcase – pretty normal now, but it wasn't 24 years ago.



Simple and neat, the 49 benefited from being designed in unison with its engine – Cosworth's DFV

With half the bhp of current F1 engines, the fuel consumption was less in a similar ratio. However, they had to carry fuel for a 200-mile race with no stops, so having a short engine and keeping the fuel near the CoG was very important. Added to that, the cars had to be on the weight limit which, when the engine was conceived, was as low as 500kg. When I saw a Lotus 49 again at a recent Goodwood Revival meeting, the first surprise was how small it seemed. The whole car looked spindly, particularly the roll-hoop, but the aluminum monocoque chassis must have been strong judging by the accidents people survived.

In addition to its simple design, the car was the last F1 Lotus to carry a relatively simple colour scheme, incorporating their version of the national colour green with a central yellow strip. This was later replaced by more garish colours and sponsors' logos. Even though by today's standards these cars were unbelievably cheap to build, it was evidence of the fact that F1 was costing more and more.

Despite winning world championships in 1968, and contributing in 1970, the Lotus 49 was a lot more dominant in terms of speed than the results suggest. It was a clearly superior package, but a lot of races were lost through unreliability; Lotus pushed forward so fast, often with great concepts, but were perhaps not so good at the detail.

As I know all too well, this is an easy situation for a race-car designer to get into. Often the innovation is not the problem, but the effort required to achieve it diverts resources from everyday matters which previously had not been a problem. On many occasions it is the mid-level teams who are tempted to take a chance on innovation to leapfrog them to the front, and it is the top teams who have learned to temper the natural desire to do something new. The temptation is always there to push just one step too far; however, the top teams have become extremely good at maintaining continuity in finance, management and design direction as well as focusing on where real performance comes from. In the 1960s and '70s, it was quite normal for teams to follow good years with bad, something which did not change until the sequence of consecutive McLaren titles which started in 1984.

To be fast in Formula One, I personally believe you need aerodynamics and engine in that order. To win, you need lots more, and need to be pretty good at all of it. In addition, there is more than one way to get to the same level. The closeness of McLaren and Ferrari in 2000 is evidence of that.

In the current era, development dominates and innovation is a dangerous word. However, to dream for a while, it could also be said that a big step forward will only be possible with the level of integration shown on the 49, whereby a complete package is designed from scratch with chassis, engine and transmission totally integrated in a new way. Teams with strong relationships with their engine partners will be best placed to do this, and those with integrated aero/chassis/engine facilities even more so. Ferrari already have this and, just maybe, Cosworth can look forward to the new Jaguar Racing facility offering the same potential. M



Jim Clark's Lotus 49 in the Le Mans pits at the 1967 French Grand Prix. The use of the engine as a stressed member set F1 on a new design path

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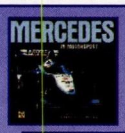
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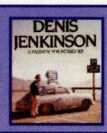
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MOTORSPORT

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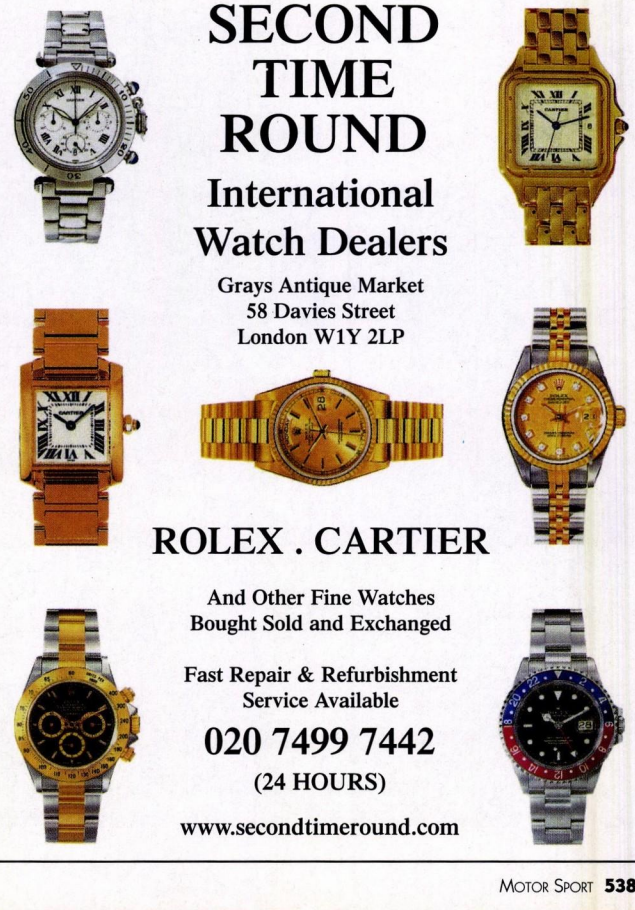


The motor racing photography of Robert Fellowes was last seen in the 1948 publication "Grands Prix 1934-1939". Until now, more than half a century later, his work finally gets the exposure it deserves in this album. 200 pages comprising more than 300 previously unpublished photographs, selected from the private collection of Neil Corner's negatives entrusted to Chris Nixon & TB, covering 26 continental Grands Prix from the 1930s. Foreword is by Louis Klemantaski.

SCHEDULED FOR PUBLICATION EARLY APRIL...
PRICE £39.95

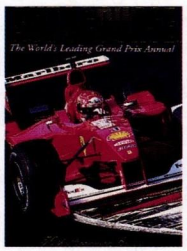
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AUTOCOURSE

EDITED BY ALAN HENRY
ISBN 1 874557 79 9
Hazleton Publishing, £35



YES, THIS HAS BEEN OUT for three months, but is still worth a look. For many, it is an automatic purchase each year, and perhaps, over time, this serves to make it less special. But this 50th anniversary edition may well attract more than the completists, reviewing as it does the season in which Ferrari shook off a 21-year-old monkey.

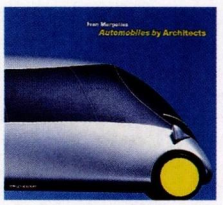
The 'Top 10 Drivers' remains the book's star feature (though why this is so remains a mystery; it is merely a journo's opinion). As for the rest of it, the pictures are very good, as usual, but the design is looking a little tired.

The same accusation can be levelled at Hazleton's ChampCar and Rallycourse tomes, too, though their words and photography are excellent.

David Malsher

AUTOMOBILES BY ARCHITECTS

BY IVAN MARGOLIUS
ISBN 0 471 60786 X
Published by Wiley-Academy, £29.95



THERE HAVE BEEN MORE cars designed by architects than you'd think, and this book has no trouble in supplying something eye-opening on almost every page.

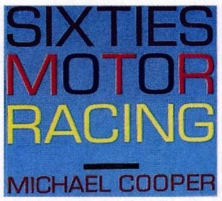
Though Margolius is an architect, not a car historian, he knows his automobiles; I hadn't realised, for example, that the first monocoque car was a 1903 Vauxhall. But it is the crossover between the design disciplines which is the book's main thrust.

Even if four wheels and two rows of seats has yet to be improved, it can only do the industry good to be faced with the occasional shock from outside the car world. And it may be salutary that Citroën's most visually creative years were those when a sculptor and then an architect were in charge.

Gordon Cruickshank

SIXTIES MOTOR RACING

BY MICHAEL COOPER (TEXT BY PAUL PARKER)
ISBN 0 9523 009 7 4
Published by Palawan Press Limited, £250



TO CAPTURE THE SPIRIT of an age is a tough call. But this book manages it. Michael Cooper is a name that faded from motor racing's view in the early '70s, but this stylish collection of his work has brought him back to the forefront of motorsport photography, which is exactly where he belongs.

As you would expect of Palawan, the book is beautifully produced – and different. Pulling the images together is a year-by-year narrative by Paul Parker, combined with 165 everyday images, that interweaves the social, cultural and political upheavals of the time with the history of F1. It may sound contrived, but it works.

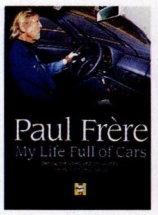
It's the photographs, though, that take centre stage. Cooper liked to get close to the action, really close: my favourite image is of Jim Clark screaming abuse at him because his foot is on the Scot's line – at Eau Rouge!

Superb. Shame it's not £150 less.

Paul Fearnley

MY LIFE FULL OF CARS

BY PAUL FRÈRE
ISBN 1 85960 670 9
Haynes Publishing, £19.99



I 'DISCOVERED' PAUL FRÈRE when he was a correspondent for *Motor* magazine back in the 1980s, and it was only much later that I learned of his impressive motorsport career.

Now we can at last enjoy, in book form, the intelligent analyses of a fine racer and a top car-tester, who never forgot that the majority of his readers don't possess his talents, and therefore hadn't enjoyed the experiences which he described with such clarity.

Many MOTOR SPORT readers will find Frère's racing career is of the most interest in this book, and that is when his writing is at its best.

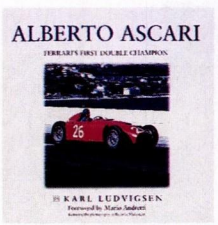
But most of the road cars to which he refers are 'performance' models, and therefore worth looking at, as are his relationships with the Japanese motor industry.

Some of this is a bit dry – who cares about shaving two-tenths of a second off a 0-60 time? – but it is perhaps predictable that Frère should ensure his facts are correct to the nth degree.

David Malsher

ALBERTO ASCARI – FERRARI'S FIRST DOUBLE CHAMPION

BY KARL LUDVIGSEN
ISBN 1 85960 680 6
Haynes Publishing, £25



MOST PEOPLE WOULD put this chubby little Italian in their top dozen drivers of all time. It is remarkable then that so little has been written about him in English.

The latest volume in Karl Ludvigsen's driver series still leaves the door open for the definitive history of the two-time world champion, but has plenty to recommend it.

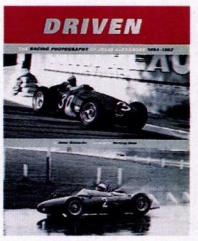
For some reason, photographs of Ascari have not lodged in my brain like those of Fangio and Moss, so those offered up in this volume, especially the colour stuff, comes as a delight and a surprise.

The story is told at a fair old clip, and gets the message across – the superstitions, the fastidiousness, the need to lead – but I was left wanting more. And there surely is more.

Paul Fearnley

DRIVEN

BY JESSE ALEXANDER
ISBN 0 8118 2851 4
Published by Chronicle Books, £22.50



IT'S THROUGH THE PHOTOS of Jesse Alexander that I should like to imagine the motor-racing world of the 1950s and '60s.

Alexander enhances his subjects; the characteristic chiarusco lighting effect he so brilliantly captures infuses them with a dramatic intensity, transforming the heroes of the day into mythic superheroes, a frantic pitstop into a furious interplay of light and shade.

This book is one to delight and pore over, the stark design and high-grade paper resulting in every picture being reproduced to best effect.

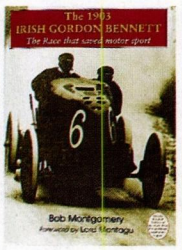
Although many might disagree, I feel that grouping the captions at the back allows for uninterrupted absorption of the magnificent images. After all, a picture can say more than a 1000 words.

Ian Marshall

BOOK REVIEWS

THE 1903 IRISH GORDON BENNETT

BY BOB MONTGOMERY
ISBN 1 870519 55 8
Bookmarque Publishing, £49.99



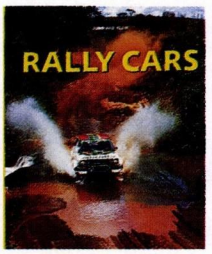
BOB MONTGOMERY FEELS so strongly that this race proved the salvation of motorsport in the aftermath of the horrors of the Paris-Madrid, he has researched far and wide to include many of the reports in Irish papers and magazines of the time. His work has paid dividends. He goes into detail about Jarrott's crash, the Act of Parliament that enabled the race, and the fire that destroyed the Mercedes 90 intended for eventual winner Camille Jenatzy.

Although a number of the 163 pictures have been used previously, their enlargement is one of the attractive aspects of this book. A high-class record of an important race, it will not only inform but grace the bookshelf. Essential for every motor historian and book collector.

Bill Boddy

RALLY CARS

BY REINHARD KLEIN (TEXT BY DAVID WILLIAMS & JOHN DAVENPORT)
ISBN 3 8290 4625 1
Published by Könemann, £19.99



GERMAN PUBLISHERS Könemann have established an excellent reputation for books of high quality and low price. However, with this monster 600-page publication, edited by ace rally photographer Reinhard Klein, they've excelled themselves.

Every significant model of the last 40 years, from early two-stroke Saabs to the latest 'bells and whistles' WRC cars, via the outlandish Group B thunderers, is recalled in detail. No aspect of the rally car is left untouched.

Combined with the lavish photography, this is less a fusty reference work and more a joyous celebration.

No more lovingly-prepared book will find its way onto the rally fan's shelf this year.

Ian Marshall

LONGFORD – FAST TRACK BACK

BY BARRY GREEN
ISBN 1 875 401 85 7
Published by Barry Green



THREE REIMS-LIKE BLASTS, a left-right flick under a railway viaduct, a yump caused by a level crossing and two wooden bridges mark the Longford circuit out as being a bit special. That its lap speed was 20mph quicker – at 122 – than the better-known Bathurst, and that the best drivers in the world raced on it as part of the Tasman series, confirms this. That it is situated in Tasmania adds to the mystery – and perhaps explains why it has taken until now for its story to be told in such depth.

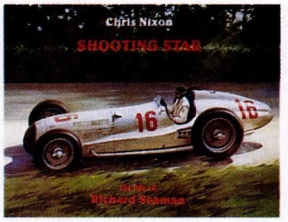
Barry Green's year-by-year narrative – Longford held races between 1954 and 1968 – is imbued with enthusiasm, which means he almost carries off a format that can get a little tedious. More of the forthright, Aussie-style anecdotes would have been appreciated. But this is still a story worth telling – and reading.

Longford fanclub? Count me in.

Paul Fearnley

SHOOTING STAR – THE LIFE OF RICHARD SEAMAN

BY CHRIS NIXON
ISBN 0 85184 065 5
Published by Transport Bookman Publications, £39.95



THE INGREDIENTS are very *Boy's Own*: wealthy British amateur proves the equal of Europe's best. Yet this, surprisingly the first Seaman biography since Prince Chula's of 1941, shades the story to give a more three-dimensional and not always more attractive picture.

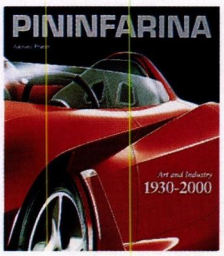
Seaman achieved his position in the top team, Mercedes, not by luck and plucky sportsmanship, but following a determined campaign fuelled by his burning self-belief.

Seaman's single-minded dedication shines through Nixon's copy, and much intriguing detail from Seaman's mother, his widow, and friends makes this as much a personal as a racing tale, while generous pictures show much more of his off-track life than usual in a biography.

Gordon Cruickshank

PININFARINA – ART AND INDUSTRY 1930-2000

BY ANTOINE PRUNET
ISBN 1 85960 684 9
Haynes Publishing, £50



PRUNET CHOOSES AN unusual structure for this hefty book. He begins with a condensed history of the firm, running alongside a gallery of their design work: trucks, trains, yachts, kitchens, watches and ski boots.

This is followed by a picture-based journey through the staggering range of cars styled or developed by this legendary company, punctuated by short but sometimes revealing conversations with the firm's clients, key figures and rivals.

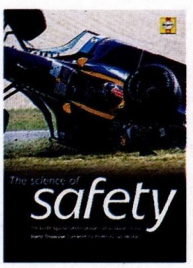
An eye for beauty was vital: a Pininfarina veteran is quoted saying: "Pinin had the car in his head, and we had to make it with hammers and tongs."

Comprehensive and enjoyable.

Gordon Cruickshank

THE SCIENCE OF SAFETY

BY DAVID TREMAYNE
ISBN 1 85960 664 4
Published by Haynes Publishing, £19.99



IN LIGHT OF THE GRIM accidents in Melbourne earlier this month, and at Monza last September, it seems appropriate that this book is up for review.

Initially, I wondered if *The Science of Safety* might prove superfluous to those in possession of *Life in the Fast Lane* by Prof Sid Watkins. My fears were unfounded, however, and the book does indeed live up to its title, though thankfully the science isn't blinding.

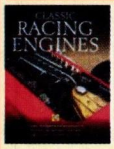
Tremayne's efforts to quote everyone of significance in these matters is praiseworthy, and though another proof-read would have picked up a few typographic errors and one or two caption mistakes, this book was a revelation. I expected a dull but worthy read, but now believe it an entertaining and significant tome.

David Malsher

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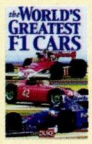
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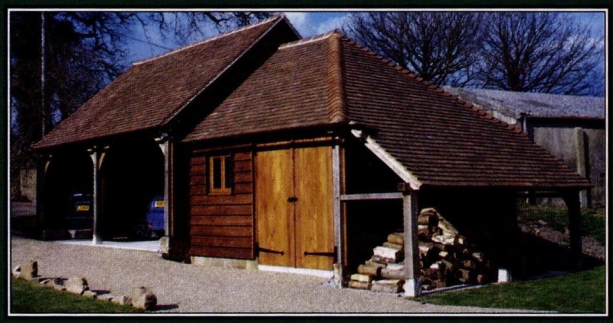
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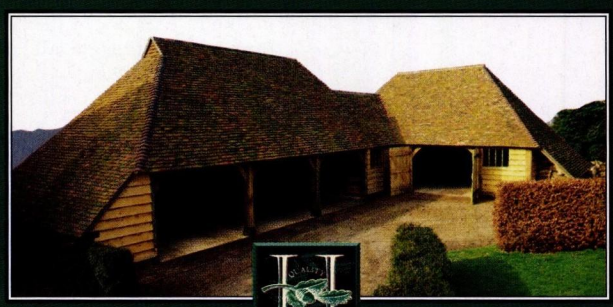
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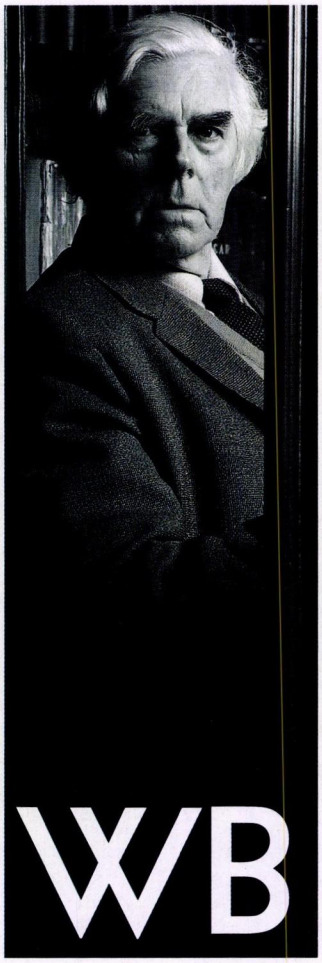
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Humber mystery solved



All photographs: Bill Boddy

The Humber team in the Isle of Man for the 1914 Tourist Trophy, with one of its specially-built cars

WHICH ARE THE MOST ENIGMATIC racing cars ever? My vote goes to the 1914 TT Humbers. They were built in complete secrecy by this famous firm, which had done little racing since the 1908 TT, but were prominent at Brooklands. Yet these 1914 Humbers were of very advanced twin-cam design. But how many were built – three or four? Why did they have no identifying features, no badges, only their offside exhaust pipes for the knowledgeable to distinguish their engines from current Peugeot and Sunbeam designs? Were they made in Humber's Coventry factory, or elsewhere?

In the two-day IoM TT they were driven by designer Fred Burgess, who had been with Calthorpe, WG Tuck, and Sam Wright, but all three retired. But at the August 1914 Brooklands Meeting, Tuck won the 100mph Short Handicap, with a 92.23mph lap.

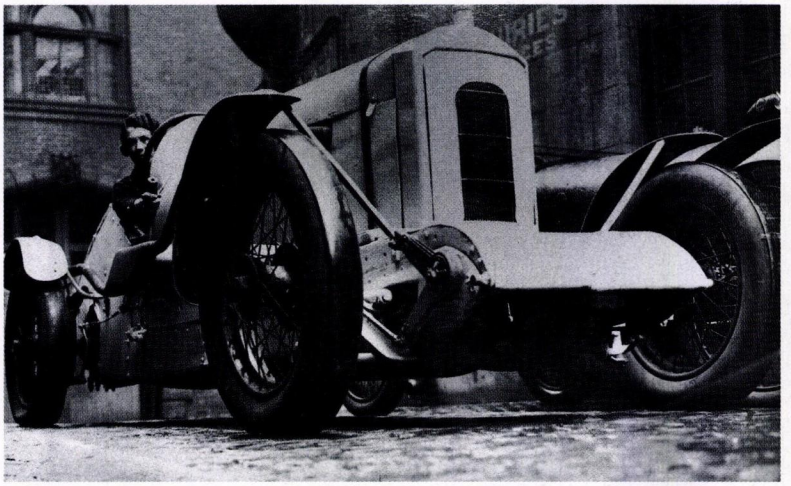
The enigma continued after the war, when WG Barlow and wine importer Philip Rampon each purchased one of the Humbers, as did Welsh bike-racer Sgonina. To this day some of us play motor-chess trying to decide which TT driver had which car. One of these Humbers went to Bentley Motors, where its chassis was copied for the 3-litre Bentley. Burgess was one of the engineers associated with it.

During hostilities two of these TT Humbers had been advertised for sale in unexpected places. Afterwards AJ Sgonina used his for speed-trials in Wales, the other two being raced at the Track. WG Barlow had some success with his before turning to a 3-litre Bentley in 1921. But another conundrum now intrudes, the mystery of which has only just been solved.

Rampon ran his Humber with Barlow's in 1920, but this Humber blew up. It later appeared with a mysterious 102x160 (5230cc) engine. After doing a lap at 95.96mph at the 1921 Brooklands Easter Meeting, it let go in a spectacular fashion.

The Motor had it that Rampon was favourite, in the absence of Chitty I with a broken petrol pipe. But as the Humber was coming under the Members' Bridge at 100mph, the engine seized, and it spun round twice and then emerged, backwards; a con-rod was found on the Track and the cylinder was missing. *The Autocar* implied that the car spun only once, and that the engine was not a Humber product; in the caption to a sketch it named this as being from a GP Vauxhall. A further enigma.

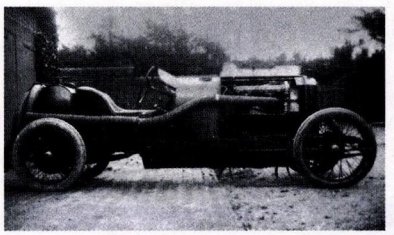
The dimensions of this mystery engine did not fit any known Vauxhall racing or production engine. Moreover, when writing to me years later, Rampon said he used only Humber



C D Wallbank's rebodied 1914 TT Humber, with Miss Victoria Worsley in the driving seat

engines in his car until installing a V8 14,477cc Sunbeam Arab aero-engine in what he now called the Martin-Arab.

There the conundrum rested, unsolved. Until, very recently, Nic Portway, author of that great book on the 30/98 Vauxhalls, I think the most evocative in sportscar history, was looking at some material from the old Vauxhall/Pomeroy archives. Among data on a great many engines was one under 'racer', with just those 102x160 dimensions, designed by Laurence Pomeroy Snr, probably before 1914. This must surely be what Rampon found and put into his stricken Humber. But where did he find it? Did he think it was Humber, or was he asked not to divulge its origin after that monumental blow-up; or was his memory at fault, understandably, when he wrote to me so long after the incident? (Rampon next bought John Duff's 1910 10-litre Fiat and had many successes with it.)



1914 TT Humber raced in 1920 at Brooklands by WG Barlow; note the offside exhaust pipe

One wonders how Humber got the advanced 1914 engine. We know that Sunbeam's Louis Coatalen got hold of a 1913 3-Litre Coupe de *l'Auto* Peugeot and had it dismantled incognito in his drawing room, before reassembling it to form the basis of the 1914 TT and GP Sunbeams. (In 1977, I met one of the draughtsmen who was present.) Is it significant that when, in 1925, CD Wallbank found one of the 1914 TT Humbers in Folkestone it was sold to him as a Peugeot? At Brooklands, Douglas Hawkes, who must have seen the Humbers racing there in 1920, pointed out the error, no doubt noting the offside exhaust pipe.

Anyway, Portway points out that the Humber had four valves per cylinder at 90 degrees included angle, whereas Ernest Henry used a 60-degree angle for the 1913 Peugeot, and that apart from the Humber's reversed cylinder block there were other differences, like the Humber's larger 82x156 (3295cc) dimensions, to exploit the TT rules.

Kenneth Neve found one of the Humbers in 1939 and raced it in a great many VSCC events; in the paddocks it was an imposing sight on its trailer behind Kenneth's Continental Rolls-Royce, with Pomeroy-standard picnics in progress! But this does not provide confirmation as to who drove the cars, later raced by Sgonina, Barlow, Rampon, Wallbank and Neve, in the TT, or which one WO had studied when planning his 3-litre Bentley.

Another puzzle also remains. After Wallbank had got his tuned Humber to lap Brooklands at 91.72mph, it won the 1929 Brooklands Autumn 100mph Short Handicap. Burgess is said to have come up, with tears in his eyes, saying, "I have waited 15 years to see the car I designed win a race". Either he had forgotten Tuck's win in 1914 or perhaps he had been away on aero-engine work at Humber's on that occasion!

I can think of no more enigmatic racing cars than these Humbers. But at least Nic Portway's chance discovery of that Vauxhall engine, perhaps for a tentative 1913 French GP car, has answered one query, 80 years on.

miscellany

THE GREMLINS GOT AT LAST month's piece on the GP Opels. The last line of the paragraph commencing "It passed to Bill Short..." should have read: "...this Opel (the Westwood/Lindsay car) then joined Mavro's as a respected VSCC competitor."

* * *

MONTLHÉRY TRACK HAS had a reprieve until 2004. But make the most of it while those vintage meetings in the style of the 1930s are held in such a happy atmosphere, with Lalique sponsorship. The next one is on 21/22 April, Tel. 00 33 1 6424 2127.

* * *

THIS YEAR'S BROOKLANDS Society Reunion is on 1 July. Last year Aston Martin was the invited make; this time it is to be Bentleys. The usual Test Hill ascents and banking runs by all manner of cars and motorcycles promises a great occasion.

* * *

GEORGE STANTON HAS rebuilt the 1923 14/40 HE which the late Alan Southon, who ran the Phoenix Green Garage when the VSCC met in the hotel there, had made into a special during the war years. He had kept it as original as possible, except for having to resort to 14/40 Vauxhall axles.

THE FORD SPECIAL WHICH had made FTD at the 1951 Gosport speed-trials and which I tried for MOTOR SPORT the following year to see how an American Ford V8 'Hot-Rod' performed, is being rebuilt by Alan Collins in Malden. It was brought back to England and his son now owns it. It is scheduled to appear, largely unchanged, at the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

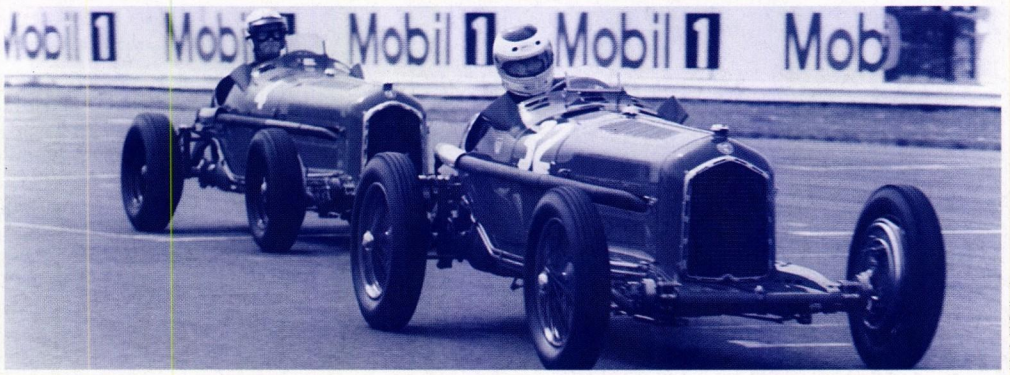
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ALMOST ALL THE MAJOR one-make clubs have full-scale magazines, and the smaller registers and clubs useful bulletins or newsletters, as those of the Trojan OC, Humber Register, Fiat Register, Crossley Register and Gwynne 8 Register. The Clyno club has a four-page sheet, the *Clyno Gazette*, for owners of Clyno cars and motorcycles, its title taken from the Rootes inserts which appeared for a time in *The Autocar*'s advertisement pages in the 1920s. The latest has a picture of 10 Clyno flat-radiator 12/35 taxis, some of which were shipped to Hong-Kong, but others used in Birmingham. The club secretary is Ron Sulman, Swallow Cottage, Langton Farm, Burbage Common Road, Elmesthorp, Leics LE9 7SE.



Return to form: the HE which became a special during WWII

THE CREAM AND THE CAT'S BIRTHDAY



Mark H Ballard

The Vintage Sports-Car Club's first meeting of the year at Silverstone signals the start of a new season of historic motor sport and, as ever, it will feature the cream of pre-war sports and racing cars.



Steve Welsh

In 2001, marking the 50th birthday of the C-type Jaguar, there will be even more interest than usual in the 1950s sports car race. With low admission prices and free access to the paddock and grandstands it's the perfect recipe for a spring day out.

SATURDAY 21ST APRIL – SPRING START SILVERSTONE

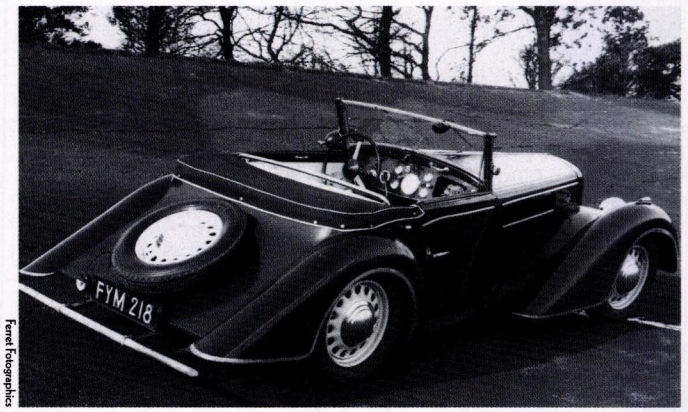
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Silverstone is just off the A43, near Towcester. Admission on the day will cost £10 including access to grandstands and paddock, accompanied children under 16 free. Tickets booked in advance cost only £8. Simply ring the Silverstone box office on 01327 857273. No booking fee.
Last date for booking Saturday 14 April.

THE VINTAGE SPORTS-CAR CLUB

THE CLUB THAT SPARKED A PASSION

Georges Irat



Ferret Fotographics

This Georges Irat gave WB a rare test outing during the Second World War

WHEN A READER WROTE TO ASK ME about a Georges Irat I had tested for MOTOR SPORT in 1940, I was reminded of how pleased I was to get a test car, which were scarce in the war.

This was the last type made by the French firm before they turned to diesel-engine manufacture. It used the 1911cc Citroën engine and fwd transmission in a rigid chassis with all-round rubber-strand suspension.

I took two friends with me on the bench seat to Brooklands where, with a wartime pass, I was able to use part of the track that was not already closed. The Georges Irat managed 75mph over the flying-start quarter-mile with no4 plug in a poor state, and I made the front tyres scream on the Campbell Circuit banking corner. The ride was commendable but the weight of 18cwt inhibited performance. We felt that 85mph might have been possible from a car which had not been so hard-used.

On the way home we met 'Antone' Curtis in his Wolseley, who led us to the HRG works and kindly found a new plug, but the factory was out of bounds, on secret war production.

Our enquirer had just acquired a Georges Irat of the kind I had tested. His father had intended, with Guy Bochaton – who had premises at Notting Hill Gate, W1 – to import these cars to sell for about £300, but war intervened. And it was he who had owned the actual car (FYM 218) I used. It was sold by his wife in 1946 before he had returned from a Far East posting.

The Georges Irat was a rare car in Britain, and even in France. Made at Chatou, by the Seine, from 1921, the first model had a four-cylinder 69x130mm (1944cc) engine with pushrod ohv and Delco coil ignition, a wheelbase of 9ft 10in, and 105x815 tyres. When many cars still had iron pistons, Irat had aluminium ones. A Zenith carburettor, four-speed 'box and Dewandre vacuum-servo brakes were used – front-wheel brakes more acceptable then to French drivers than to the cautious British motorist.

This Irat was a good fast tourer rather than a sportscar. The engine was designed and made 'in house' and the new car got to the 1921 Paris Salon. But not much publicity for it seems to have been generated, even when life-sized wax figures occupied a saloon at a later Salon, by which time a six-cylinder, with the same engine dimensions, had appeared.

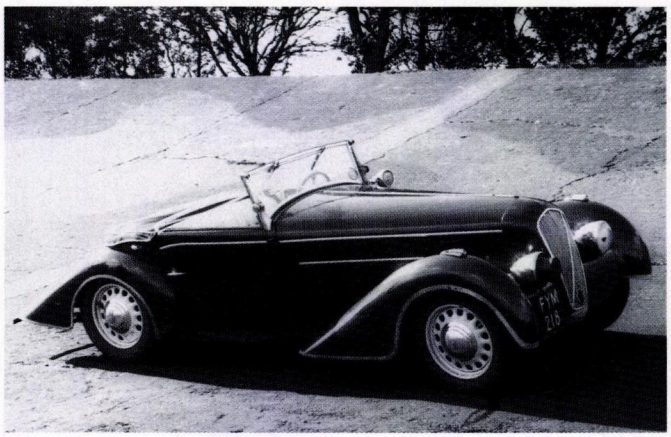
Nor was the make very prominent in racing, although the first 24-hour race at Le Mans was regarded as 'a must'; a couple of 2-litres ran, finishing 15th, tying with a Salmson, and ninth. They ran again in 1924 and '26, but both retired.

Rost, the firm's top driver, made a speciality of the odd *Circuit des Routes Pavées*, the roads intentionally rough, if not to exhibit comfort, at least to demonstrate durable suspension systems which kept the wheels on the ground, as speed was the aim. Rost won the event in 1923, '25 and '27.

The early cars sold well, a figure of some 1500 being claimed up to 1929, but after a move to Neuilly, the firm seems to have lost its way, building big luxury Lycoming-engined chassis. In 1935, they moved yet again, to Levallois-Perret, and policy changed again, to Ruby-engined fwd small cars, smarter than the usual little French offerings but not so sporting. Perhaps 1000 were sold.

On the approach to war, the 11cv Citroën-powered Georges Irat of the kind we tested was put into production, and in 1946 an 1100cc flat-four with magnesium-alloy body was made, but only as a prototype. After this, the company concentrated on diesel engines.

The French Georges Irat Club says that only 15 Citroën-engined cars are known to it. Our correspondent's car was lengthened by a previous owner, with larger doors, but the appearance is authentic otherwise.



miscellany

MAY I SAY THAT THE C-TYPE AND D-Type Auto Unions which will be demonstrated at the VSCC/HGPCA race meeting at Donington in May, exciting though this one-off occasion will undoubtedly be, are not the actual cars which won the 1937/38 grands prix, as has been stated. I don't think Auto Union Tradition have ever made such a claim. The engine of the D-Type 3-litre is, however, that from the car driven in 1938 by Christian Kautz, who retired after the second lap when he hit a bank. WWII caused these fabulous AUs to be scattered, and only a few have been found and restored to running order.

* * *

THE VCC'S MAGAZINE *Veteran Car*, has an eight-page account of the Kelvin in issue 275, a car made from 1904 by the well-known marine-engine concern, but a make little known about until now. There are also excellent colour pictures of the Club's events and cars, not always found in Club journals, including a splendid study of the 1875 Grenville steam-carriage passing Big Ben at 8.42 am on last year's Brighton Run. The club is to visit VSCC Headquarters on 31 March, has a rally at Old Hunstanton on 20/22 April, a Cheltenham Rally on 11/13 May and, on 20 May, will re-enact its first Croydon-to-Eastbourne Run of 1931.

* * *

LAST YEAR, THE NORTHANTS section of the VMCC held a version of the Castle Ashby speed-trial, first held in 1906 (FTD: the Rev W Pratt, 16hp FIAT), and this is to be held again on 2 September at Castle Ashby House. The estate is off the A426; racing starts at noon. Admission £3, children 5-16 £1.50. The contact is M Laundon on 01604 586144.

Arpajon – record road

AN ENJOYABLE, IF TIME-CONSUMING, aspect of writing for MOTOR SPORT is tackling interesting problems put to me by readers. The most recent one relates to a fine picture of a racing car, to be identified. It is of a sleeve-valve single-seater Panhard-Levassor in a speed-trial. Almost certainly, I thought, at Arpajon.

Oh, Arpajon, that road some 20 miles north of Paris, made forever famous as the last place where an LSR was made on a public road, such an unsuitable venue. It was in 1924 that the irrepressible Ernest Eldridge let loose his 21.7-litre aero-engined Fiat there and set the LSR to 146.01mph for the two-way kilometre – he had been slightly faster during the speed-trials. But René Thomas, who recorded 143.31mph with the 10½-litre V12 Delage, protested that the Fiat had no reverse gear and Eldridge was disqualified. With that rectified, he got permission to try once again, the road closed by the gendarmerie.

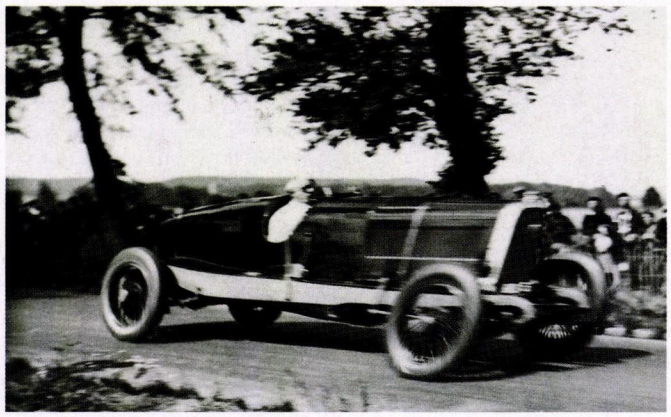
He was a brave man. The Arpajon course was 4½ miles long, narrow and bordered by trees and ditches. *The Autocar* described the 300hp Fiat as "skidding continuously, at some 150mph and taking the entire width of the road, the spectators finding cover behind trees or in the ditches". Gedge, the Fiat's intrepid passenger, was truly courageous, his only previous experience being with GNs at Le Mans and at Brooklands in the Isotta-Maybach.

Back to the problem Panhard. The photograph, by Meurisse, is of the 8-litre racing car with which Eyston took the world's hour record to more than 132mph in 1930 and then on to 133.01mph at Montlhéry in '34.

The open-sided cockpit indicates it is in the latter form. The caption says the picture is of Michel Dorequi doing 222.8kph; probably this was at Arpajon, in the Panhard used by Eyston and driven by Doré at Arpajon in high-sided form back in 1930, timed at 138mph.

It had twin rear wheels at one time, for long-distance record bids, when driven by Ortmans.

The historic Arpajon road still exists but the actual course is difficult to define; when on the way to Montlhéry after WWII, even Jenks wasn't able to point it out to me, although we were on the main Paris-Orleans road...



A reader's picture of Dorequi in the ex-Eyston Panhard on the Arpajon road

A vintage birthday treat

WENT THE OTHER DAY TO SEE SOME OF THE CARS BEN Collings is restoring for various people. Coming upon the Mexican-owned 1912 Type KM 10.6-litre four-cylinder Isotta-Fraschini was breathtaking – that enormous vee-radiator somehow more Teutonic than Italian, and the chassis of enormously long wheelbase. The top of the cambox, nearly as high as the radiator, conceals the four slightly-inclined valves per cylinder, operated by overhead camshaft. The massive four-speed gearbox is in keeping. It has an inboard brake drum on each side, the brakes operated independently from two pedals. Characteristically IF is the narrow-angle vee-bracing rod below the radiator and the rear snubbers with enclosed springs. The chassis has the typical rod-and-pedestal bracing beneath the side-members. I have often wondered whether this really was effective, but Ben tells me that it does definitely keep the chassis frame in shape.

In another garage was a 3-litre Bentley looking just like the Le Mans cars of around 1927, with its long strip mudguards and lightweight upholstery. A spare car perhaps, if there was such. The make-up is definitely racing, with duralumin rockers, close-ratio gears, fuel tank pressure pump close to the driver's left hand, a vacuum servo just ahead of the brake pedal, and a professionally cord-bound steering wheel. I then went to my birthday lunch kindly laid on by Judy and Roger Collings, after which we drove home on this sunny day, before winter set in again.



Massive 10.6-litre overhead-camshaft Isotta-Fraschini

miscellany

IT WAS SPLENDID THAT David Malsher commented that the ban on traction-control in F1 may be the nail in the coffin of true driver skill in grand prix racing. How right to make this important point!

I was privileged to see the wheel-spinning, oversteering Mercedes-Benz W125 in action pre-war. Difficult cars to drive effectively, so much so that, despite their purpose as Nazi propaganda, top foreign drivers had to be added to the team. Cross-armed cornering was definitely the norm, certainly with the rear-engined Auto Unions, which only Bernd Rosemeyer conquered at first.

* * *

CONGRATULATIONS. THE ONLY car to clean the dreaded Simms Hill in this year's MCC Exeter Trial was Ian Williamson's ex-'Cream Cracker' MG, which won the pre-war class.

* * *

THE BEXHILL FESTIVAL OF Motoring is to be staged at Bexhill-on-Sea on May 6/7, from 10am to 5.30pm each day. Public entrance is free and owners of classic older cars will parade along the former speed-trial course and through the town. Concours d'Elegance prizes will be awarded, with a class for female beauty. A replica of the Serpollet steamer which took the Land Speed Record at Nice at 75.06mph and then ran at Bexhill will be on show. More details are available from The Festival Director, Brian Storkey, on 01424 730504.

* * *

THE JOWETT CC'S 2001 RALLY will be held in Coventry on May 25-28 with classes for all types of Jowett cars and commercials, including Bradfords and special-bodied Jupiters, etc, of which its monthly *Jowetteer* has many pictures. More details are from available from D R Grounds, on 0121 355 1488

LAP OF HONOUR

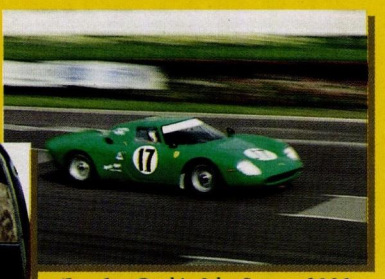
by Tim Hain

"...A golden age of Motor Racing, through the eyes and lens of a twelve year old schoolboy"

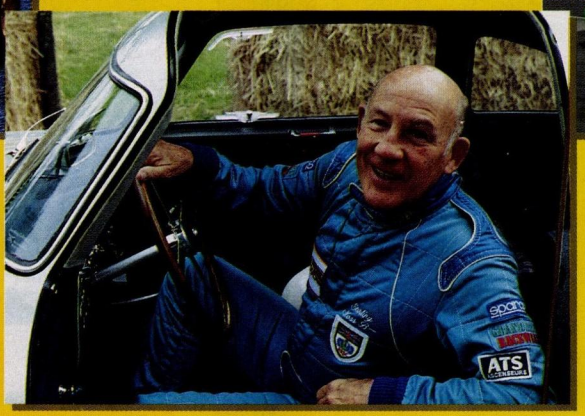


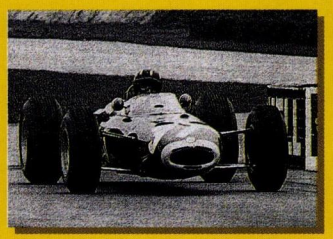
'Mr Natural' - Jim Clark, 1963

"Great. Charming... Its amazing that Tim has never held a press pass" *Sir Stirling Moss*



'Last Lap Dash' - John Surtees, 2000





'Racing Line' - Graham Hill, 1965

'Life Begins at 70'

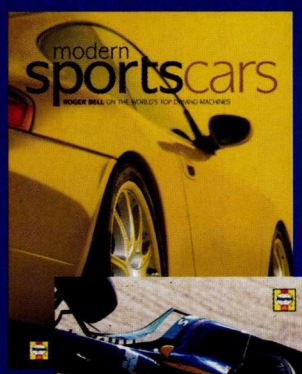


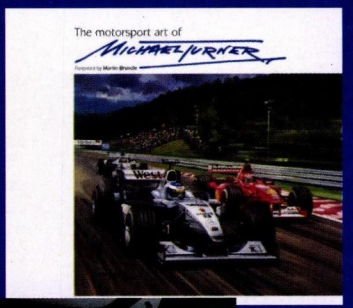
'Smokescreen' - Brands Hatch, 1964

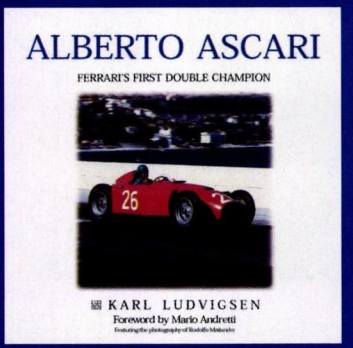
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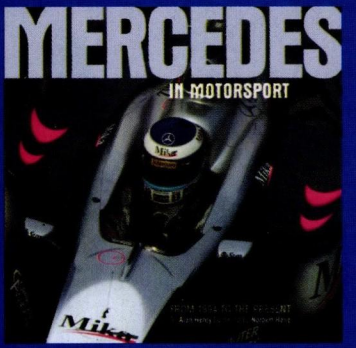
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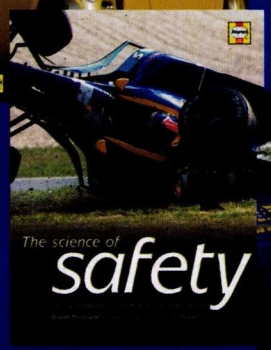
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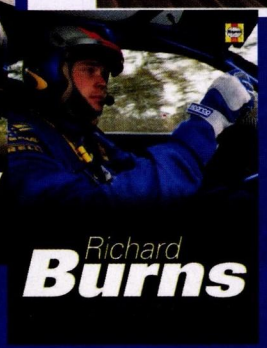












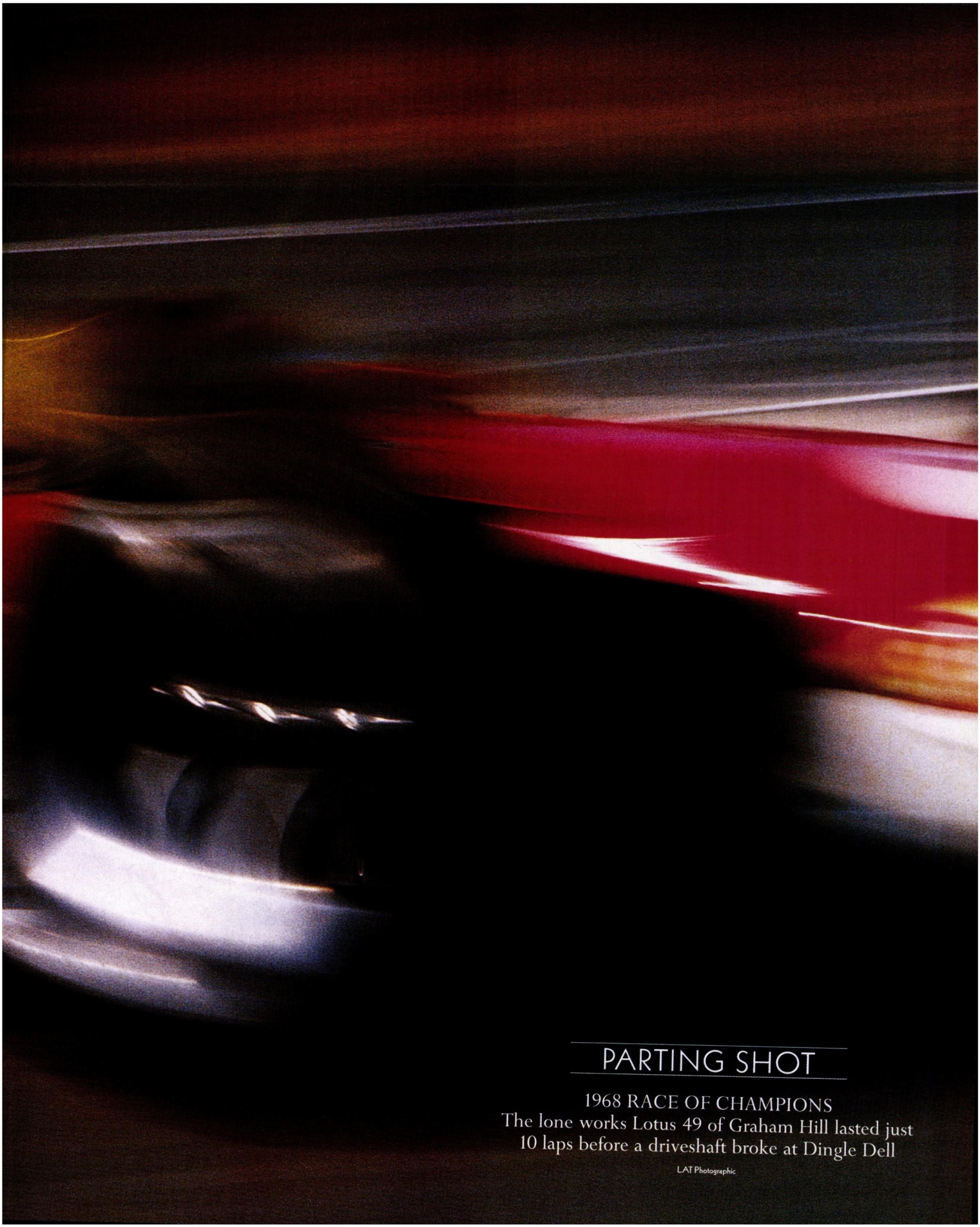
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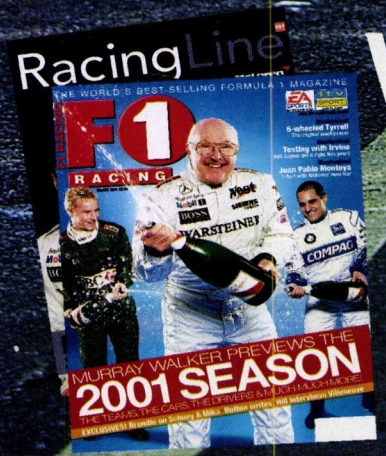


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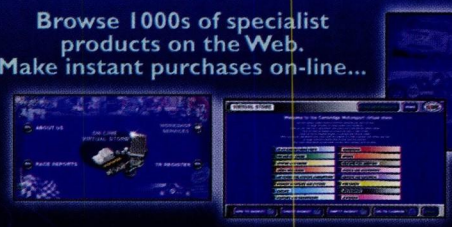
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SPORTING EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH
25 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge MG Car Club Brands Hatch

APRIL
7 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge MG Car Club Oulton Park
22 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Curborough
29 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge AMOC Brands Hatch

MAY
5 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge 750MC Donington Park
6 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Olivers Mount
13 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Harewood
19 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Shelsley Walsh
28 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge BRSCC Castle Combe

JUNE
9/10 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Prescott
9/10 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Gurston Down
16 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Barbon Manor
17 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge 750MC Snetterton
24 MSCC Autotest at Eelmore, Aldershot (Organised by the Thames Valley Centre)
24 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Porlock

JULY
13 - 15 Mog 2001 International Event Cheltenham
14 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 MIRA
21 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Loton Park
28 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Goodwood
29 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge 750MC Silverstone

AUGUST
4 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Goodwood
12 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge JCC Cadwell Park
19 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Elvington
26 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Harewood

SEPTEMBER
8 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Aintree
9 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge AMOC Mallory Park
15 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Wiscombe
22 The Morgan Motor Company Challenge BDC - Silverstone
22/23 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Shelsley Walsh

OCTOBER
20 Morgan SCC Speed Championship 2001 Castle Combe

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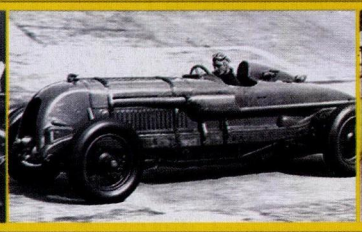
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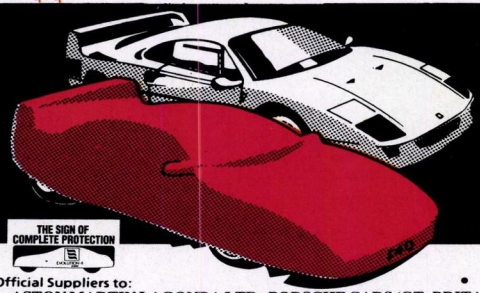





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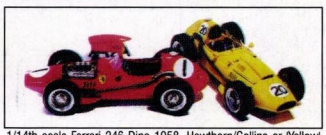


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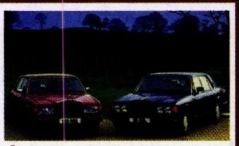
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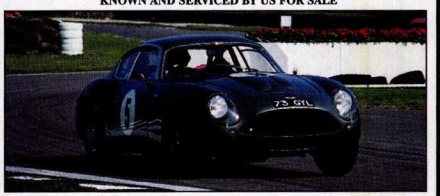
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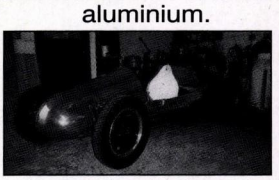
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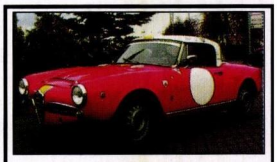
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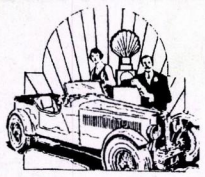
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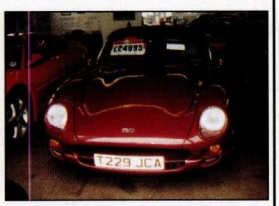
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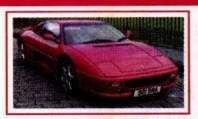
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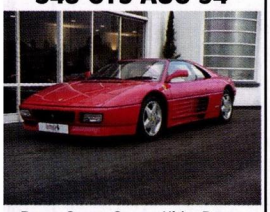
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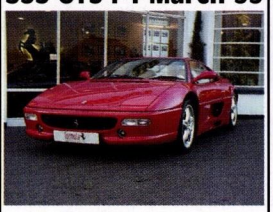
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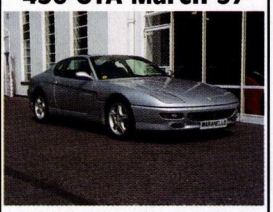
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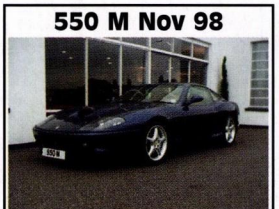
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J

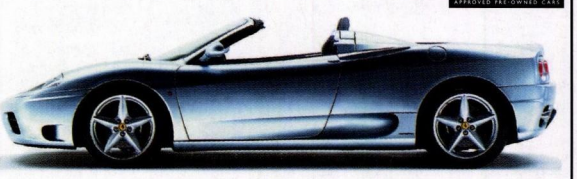
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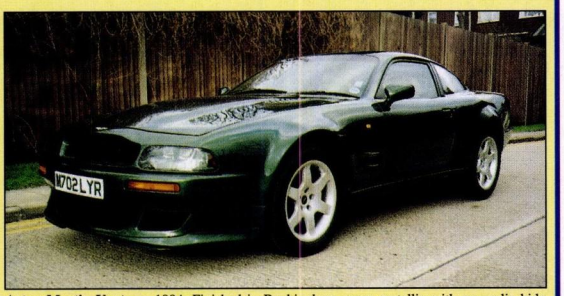
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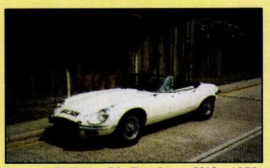
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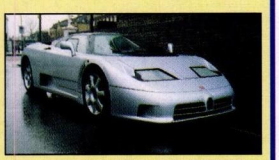
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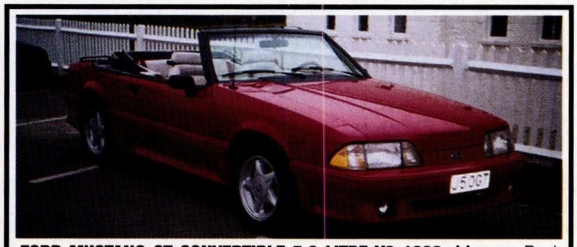
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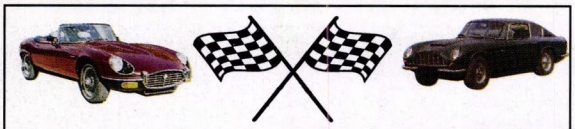
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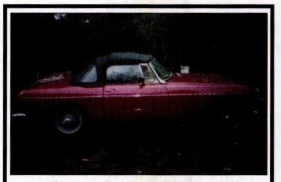
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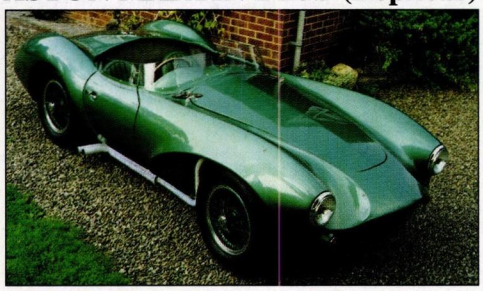
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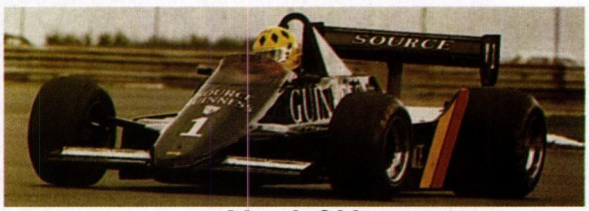
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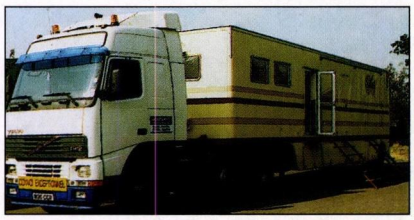


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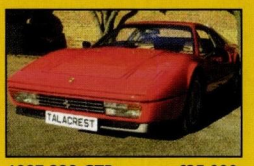
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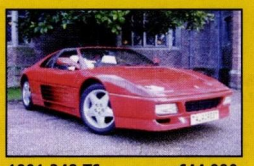
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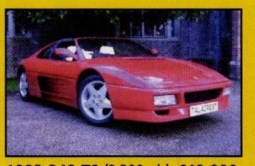

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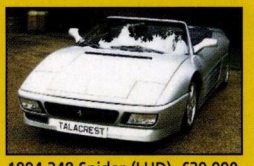

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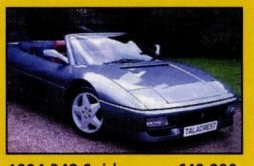

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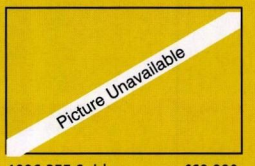

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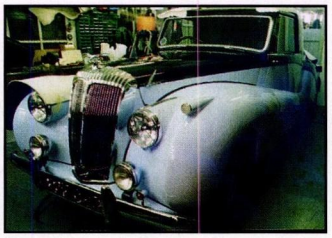
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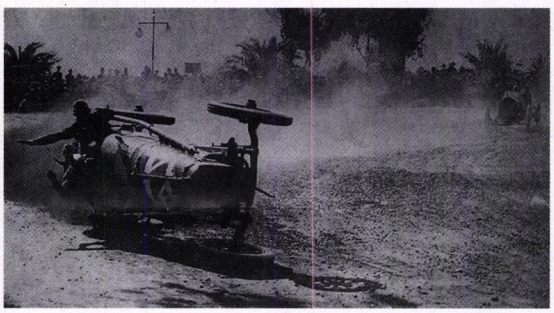
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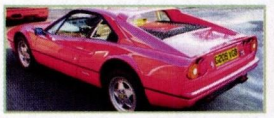
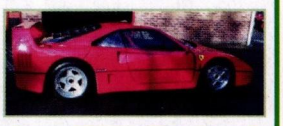
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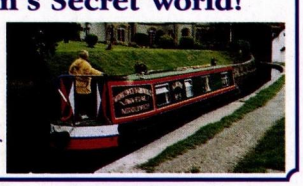
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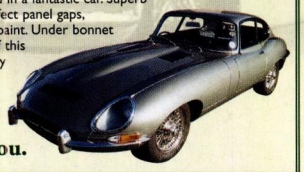
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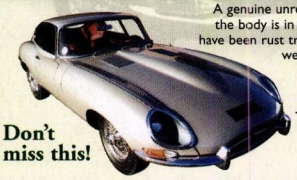
1966 Jaguar E-Type Series 1, 4.2 FHC. Willow Green with Beige Interior

CVWW and SS exhaust. Restored late 80's to concours condition and now nicely mellowed. Excellent condition of bodyshell; panel fit as good as we have seen and flawless paintwork. Re-trimmed interior to an exceptional standard and has aged beautifully. All mechanical items rebuilt 12 years ago to such a high standard they look as though they were done last week. A truly mint car which we believe to be one of the very best.



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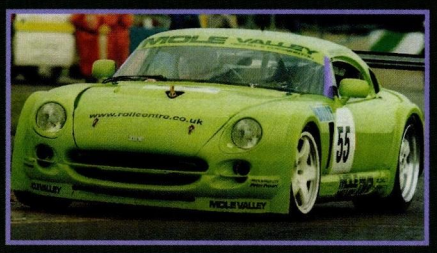
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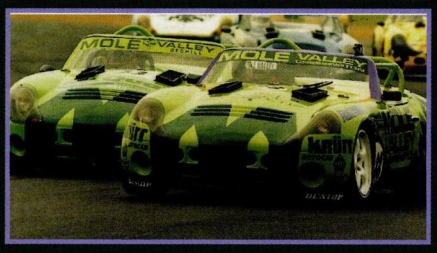
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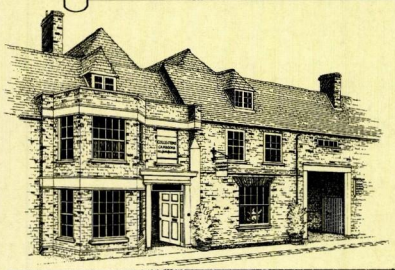




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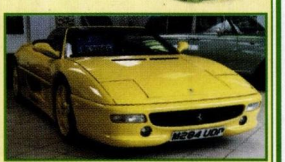
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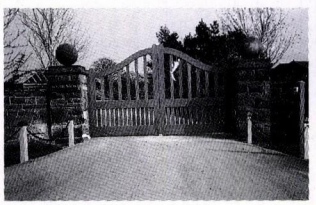


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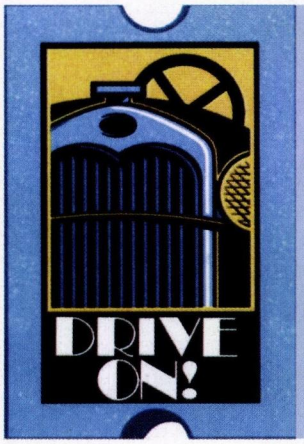
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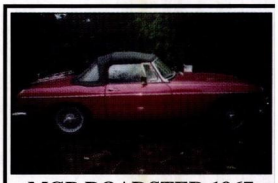
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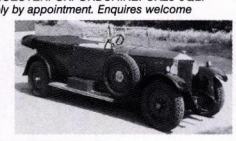
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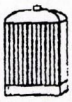
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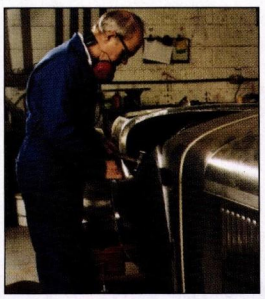
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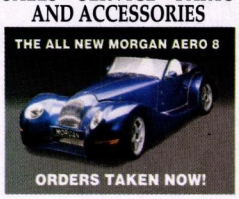
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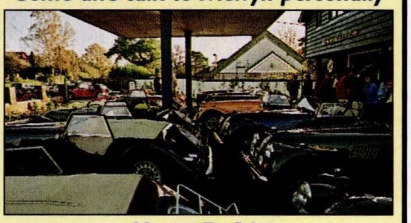
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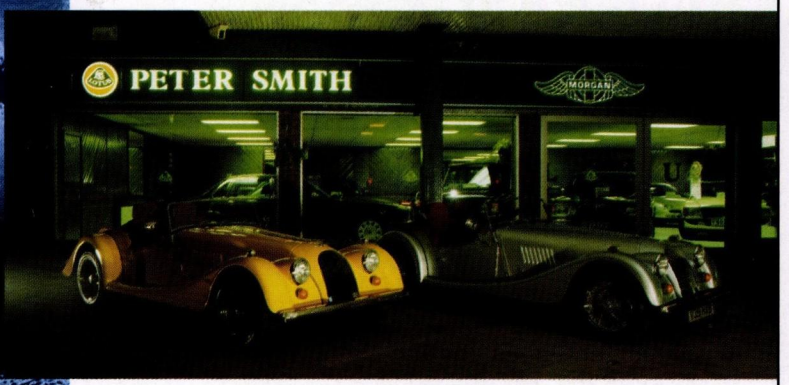
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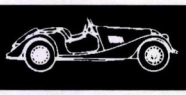
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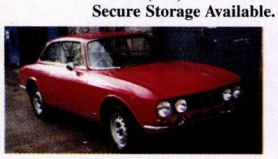
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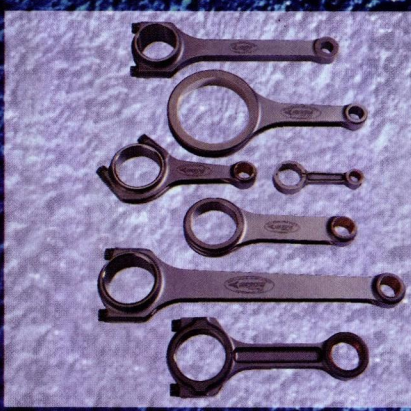


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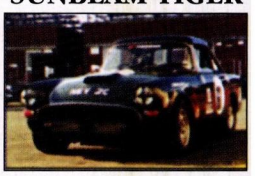
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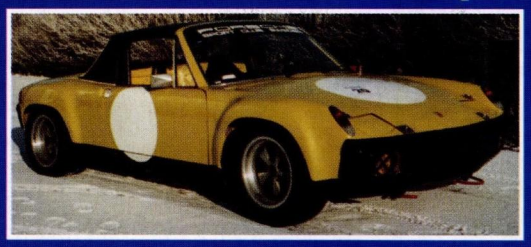
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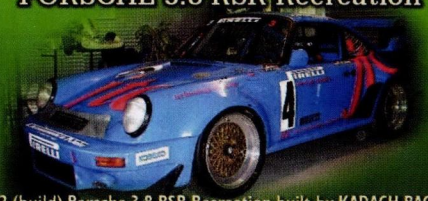
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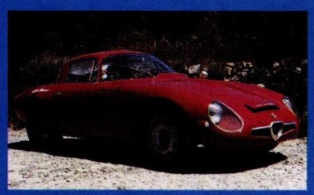


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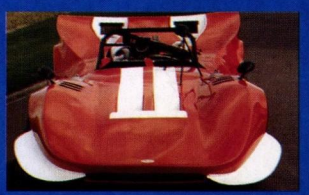
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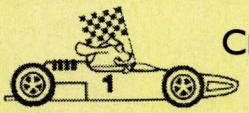
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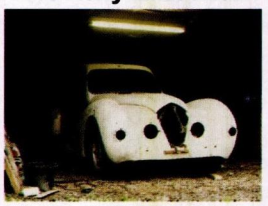


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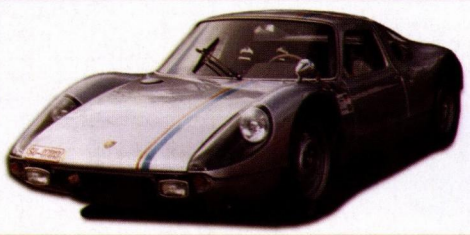
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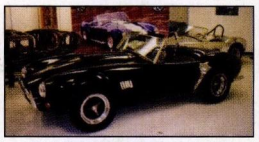
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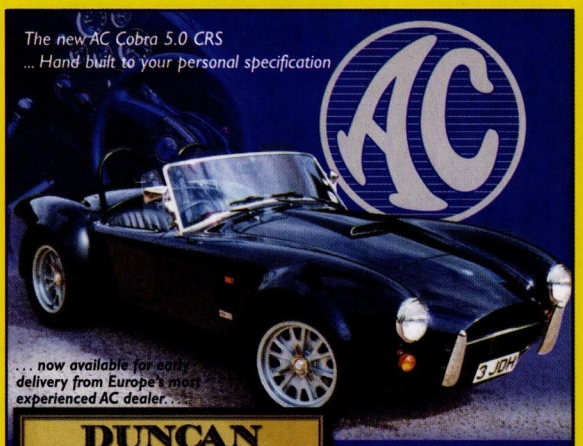


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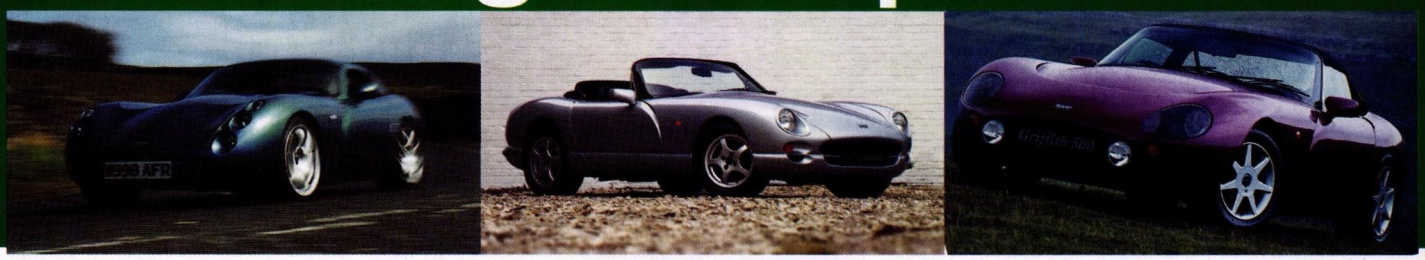
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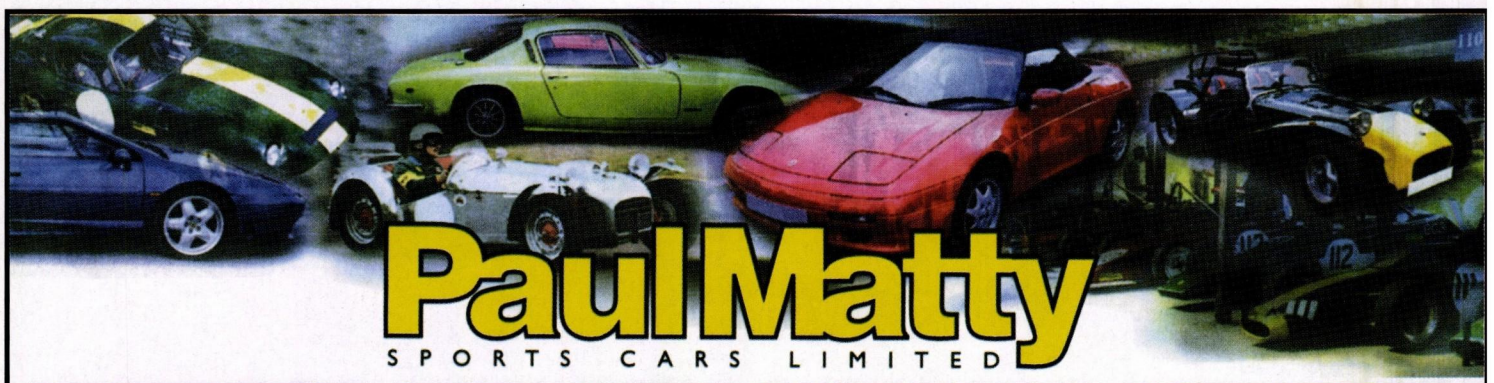
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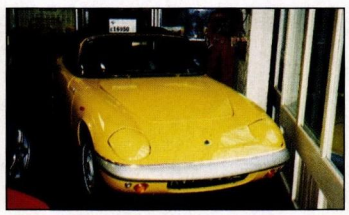




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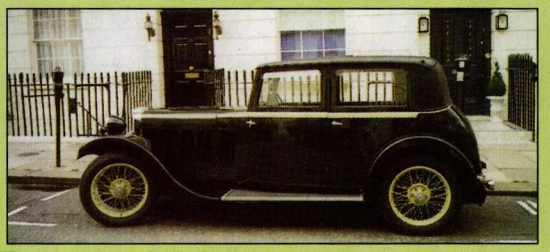
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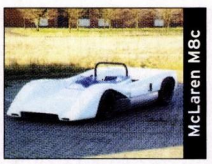
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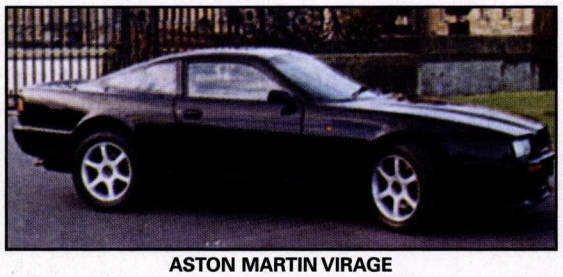
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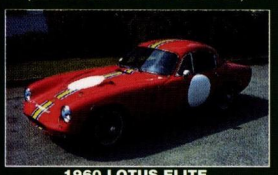
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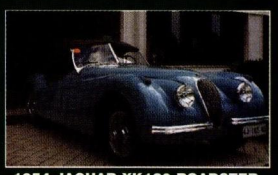
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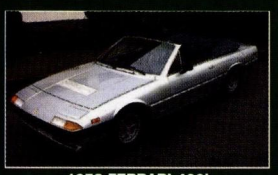
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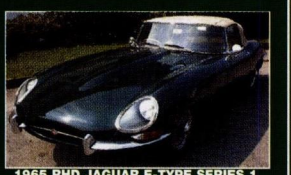
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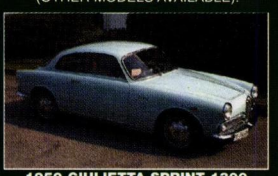
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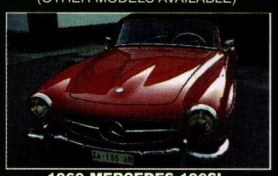
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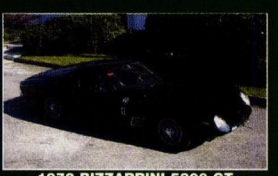
1975 FERRARI 365 GT 2+2.
PERFECT ORIGINAL CONDITION.



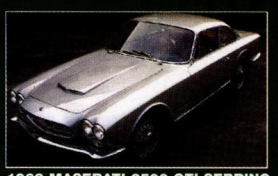
1960 MERCEDES 190SL.
CONCOURS RESTORATION - 5,000KM, AIR CON, HARD TOP, 4 OTHER CARS AVAILABLE.



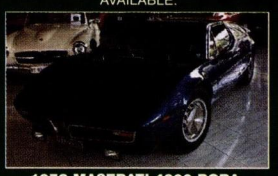
1987 MORGAN PLUS 8
3,500 kms, 2 OWNERS SINCE NEW



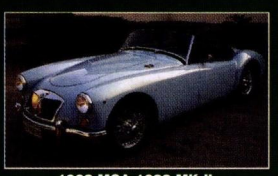
1972 BIZZARRINI 5300 GT STRADA.



1963 MASERATI 3500 GTI SEBRING VIGNALE.
39,000KM SINCE NEW, STUNNING.



1972 MASERATI 4900 BORA.
PERFECT ORIGINAL CONDITION.



1962 MGA 1622 MK II.
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1933 MG J2 SWEPT WING. In black with biscuit trim. A ground up concours restoration carried out in 1993. First owner Viscount Anson, a most extensive and fascinating history. Many period extras including deluxe dash. They don't come any better .....£19,995 - RHD



1965 LOTUS CORTINA MkI, APPENDIX K. The ex-Max Rostron, Gerry Marshall, Paul Haywood-Halfpenny, FIA race car. Outright winner of this years HRSR/HSCC Championship. Lap record holder just about everywhere. Vast amount of spares, wheels & tyres. Recent engine by Dick Langford, gearbox & diffs by Tony Thompson. If you want to win next year this is the car. For sale due to purchase of Lola Mk6. Price negotiable with/without spares package .....£30,000 – RHD



1965 FRUA JAGUAR 3.8 COUPE. The 1966 Geneva Show car in Opalescent Silver Blue with Champagne hide. Equipped with overdrive, PAS, CWW, restored in 1990/95 at a then cost in excess of £100,000 to the highest of standards. A unique styling exercise by Frua never taken up by Jaguar. I know not why, other than maybe the cost of production, as the whole concept is absolutely stunning - 'unrepeatable'..P.O.A. – LHD



1972 LOTUS ELAN S4 SE FHC. Sunburst Red with Black trim. Restored by Vegatune to the highest of standards some years ago and only 7,000 dry miles since. 150 BHP, uprated suspension and cooling system, centre lock wheels, H.R.W. and immobiliser. it would be hard to find a nicer example.....£13,995 - RHD



1959 AUSTIN HEALEY FROG EYE SPRITE. Just undergone a total concours restoration on the most original rust-free shell imaginable. Has been uprated, modified and fitted with hard top, mag. race wheels, built to Sebring spec. The finest example available .....£14,995 – RHD



1966 JAGUAR 3.4 MK2 M.O.D. Warwick Grey with Red hide. Only 28K miles from new with a most comprehensive service history. CWW, period radio, reclining seats, original, unrestored and superb. Hard if not impossible to find in this condition.....£19,995 - RHD



1967 SUNBEAM STILLETTO 1000CC. Modena Green. Built last year with no expense spared by Rally Tech to FIA RAC international rally spec. 110bhp, Chesman engine, twin 40's, C.R. gearbox, plus everything needed for the toughest of international rallying. It would be impossible to replicate this perfect example for less than £25,000 .....£9,495 - RHD



1964 JAGUAR 3.4 S TYPE MOD. In British Racing Green with Biscuit hide, over £35,000 spent on restoration and upgrades. All synchro box, rack & pinion, PAS, unleaded head, uprated suspension, CWW, alarm, reclining seats etc. Incredible value.....£8,995 - RHD



1963 JAGUAR E-TYPE 3.8 FHC. British Racing Green with contrasting Cinnamon hide. This exceptional example has covered only a few miles since being the subject of a £40,000, fully documented and photographed restoration, completed to the highest of standards. Specification includes CWW and an unleaded fuel conversion. Impeccable in all respects.....£29,995 - RHD



1988 (F) BENTLEY MULSANNE S. Finished in Balmoral Green with Parchment hide piped Green. This example is impeccable in every respect and has a complete dealer service history. Hard if not impossible to better .....£19,995 - RHD



1960 AUSTIN HEALEY 3000 BT7 MK1. Colorado Red over Black with Red hide. UK car, equipped with overdrive, wire wheels, heater and motolita steering wheel. Restored from chassis up to perfection and only 2,500 miles since. They don't come any better.....£19,995 – RHD



1973 FERRARI DINO 246 GT. Only 3 owners and a warranted 60K with extensive history. Finished in Rosso Corsa with Biscuit hide. Wide wheels, elec windows and a very appropriate registration number. Recently restored incl. engine & transmission, to an exceptional standard. Little use since, outstanding .....£44,995 - RHD

1967 LANCIA FLAMINIA 2.8 3C. Ivory with black hide. Last owner since 1972 and a warranted 25K. One of only 17 RHD out of a total production of 180. Works hard top, Nardi steering wheel, period radio. This must be the lowest mileage example available £29,995
1962 TRIUMPH TR4 SURREY TOP. Blue with Black top and trim. 415 VC is one of the most important TR4's available, to works spec, stage 2 head, overdrive, wire wheels, twin spot lamps, Kenlowe fan, features in numerous books and magazines incl. The Original TR by Bill Pigot, Classic & Sports Car/ July 95, TR Action. Winner of many concours. A very special car £19,995
1964 TRIUMPH TR4 SURREY TOP. British racing green with tan hide, restored to the highest of standards in 92/97. Second in class at T.R. concours, Malvern 1999. Overdrive, wire wheels, immobiliser, unleaded head etc. An exceptional example £15,995
1973 MGB GT V8 CHROME BUMPER. In Mineral Blue with Tan trim. 4 owners, 98,000 miles with a total history from new. Equipped with O/D, webasto sunroof, original radio. An extremely original example in superb order £6,995

1974 MGB GT JUBILEE. British Racing Green. Restored to the most finite detail with full photographic records. Winner of many major concours. V8 wheels, radio, overdrive etc. A very proper car...£6,995
1984 MERCEDES BENZ 230 CE COUPE. Astral Silver with Blue cloth. 2 local owners, 50k, FSH, elec sunroof/windows/mirrors. Radio/cass, PAS, C/L. Only used in summer as third car. Totally original and unmarked, possibly the finest example in existence £6,995
1975 FIAT X19. Finished in Bright Red with contrasting biscuit and Beige interior. This as new, one owner example has covered approximately 12,500 miles from new and comes with full factory specification including tinted glass and heated rear window. A time warp example, impossible to duplicate £4,995
1947 MGTC. RHD. Red with Biscuit hide and weather equipment. Very well restored with many period extras. A delightful example ready for this summer's rallies and shows.....£17,995
1968 MGC GT AUTO. Black with Black trim. Alloy wheels, webasto sunroof, period radio. Restored in 1991 to a good standard and very usable. Lots of history £3,995

1935 MORRIS 10/4 SPORTS SALOON. Black over Brunswick Green with Green trim. Only 3 owners from new. Professionally restored in 1989 to the highest of standards, over £11,000 spent. Your search is over, this one is superb £5,495
1949 MORRIS Z TYPE GPO VAN. Green with Black wings. Brown rexin trim. Restored at great expense by Ristes Motor Co and used very sparingly for promotion work. A rare opportunity and sensibly priced £3,995

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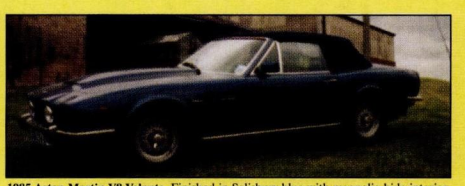
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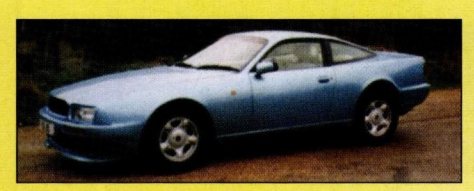
1966 Aston Martin DB7 Volante. Finished in Mendip blue with cream hide piped blue. Fitted with sports exhaust, 17,000 miles only with 5-speed manual gearbox, air conditioning and all usual refinements, full AMSH **£68,950**



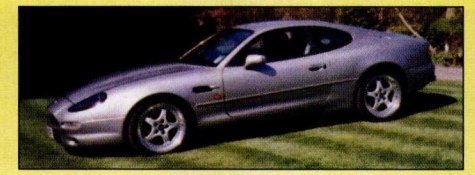
1993 Aston Martin Virage Volante. Finished in Aston green with beige mohair hood, cream hide interior piped green. This is a beautiful example with full Aston Martin service history and has covered only 35,000 miles. Two previous owners including royalty **£57,500**



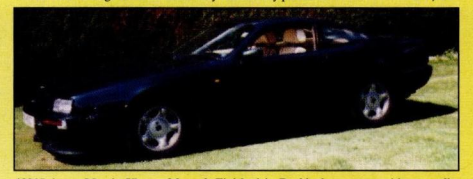
1985 Aston Martin V8 Volante. Finished in Salisbury blue with magnolia hide interior with dark blue mohair hood. This is a very interesting car in that it is fitted with 'Vantage' carburettors and cams with the resulting extra power. The car has covered 62,000 miles and has a comprehensive service history. Also fitted with cross spoke alloy wheels and Vantage front air dam. Very realistically priced at **£49,950**



1992J Aston Martin Virage Automatic. Finished in Winchester blue with cream hide piped dark blue, with cream alcantara head lining and dark blue carpets. This exquisite example has covered only 19,000 miles in the hands of one fastidious owner and has always been serviced at 'Aston works service' **£42,500**



1995N Aston Martin DB7 (similar to the above). Finished in silver with grey hide interior piped black, this is an excellent example. Fitted with automatic transmission and having covered 55,000 with full AM service history. Realistically priced at **£43,950**



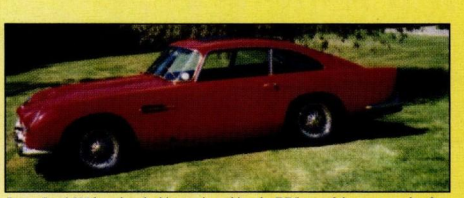
1991J Aston Martin Virage. Manual. Finished in Buckingham green with magnolia hide piped green. This car has a full service history and is in excellent condition. 53,000 miles hence only **£36,950**



This is the year of the **Aston Martin DB2** which has now reached its 50th birthday. Various events have been organised by the AMOC which will make this model 'highly useable' during 2001 and beyond. The above car was refurbished in 1992/3 by a well known restorer in Norfolk and is in splendid condition throughout **£34,950**



1962 Aston Martin DB4 Series IV. This car has just been completely rebuilt by us to the highest standard incorporating many upgrades. It is finished in Zacatto green with black hide interior with neat roll cage trimmed in leather, fitted with 4.0 Vantage engine, Borrani style wheels, stainless exhaust, triple SU's, overdrive, driving lamps, LHD ..... **£Expensive**



James Bond 007 has played a big part in making the DB5 one of the most sought after road going Astons ever built. The car that we are able to offer for sale is a fine example which has been the subject of a total rebuild five years ago by ex Aston Martin employees. A lot of time and care went into the rebuild and ownership of this car would prove rewarding **£59,950**



1959 Aston Martin DB4 Series I. Finished in British racing green with tan hide interior. Fitted with chrome wire wheels and webasto sun roof. This car is in very good condition, the engine was completely rebuilt three years ago by RS Williams and was also repainted at that time.



1961 Aston Martin DB4 Series IV. Finished in Cleveland red with black interior and fitted with chrome wire wheels, uprated brakes and suspension, triple su's and overdrive. It is in excellent condition throughout.



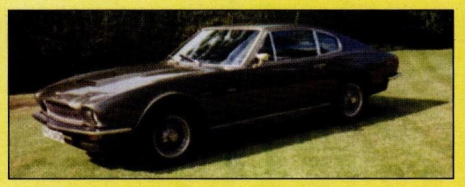
1958 Aston Martin DB MkIII. Finished in navy blue with grey hide interior. This is undoutedly the finest MkIII currently for sale. It has been in the same ownership since 1973 during which time it has covered only 7,000 miles. Fitted with chrome wire wheels, overdrive and Le Mans filler cap ..... **£POA**



1982 Aston Martin V8 Coupe. Stunning example finished in Buckingham green with beige hide piped green. It is in truly remarkable condition having been originally supplied to a collection in Jersey and having covered only 37,000 miles from new. Fitted with automatic transmission and BBS cross spoke alloys **£34,950**



1978 Aston Martin V8 Coupe. Finished in deep blue with tan hide. This is a very well presented SRS 3 with enormous amounts of service history, fitted with all usual refinements including automatic transmission and air conditioning **£17,950**



1972 Aston Martin Vantage. This is a fine example of the very last of the six cylinder vantage engined cars. It has covered only 79,000 miles with the benefit of a detailed service history. Finished in tankard grey with full black hide interior, fitted with new air conditioning, manual 5 speed gearbox and chrome wire wheels, very useable **£16,950**



1958 Jaguar XK150 Coupe. Finished in red with tan hide and black hood. Chrome wire wheels. Body off restoration with photographs. Interior by Suffolk and Turley. Mechanical aspects of the car were overhauled by Colborne Restorations under the guidance of John Markee. The brakes were overhauled and upgraded. The rear axle, suspension and instruments were also overhauled. A new 3.8 litre twin SU engine was fitted. The recent invoice total £40,000. The car has covered approximately 4,000 miles since restoration **£39,950**



1969 Jaguar E-Type Series II 2+2 Automatic. This car is finished in carmen red with black hide. This is a very nice example in daily use with an enormous service history. Sensibly priced at **£16,950**



1974 Jaguar E-Type V12 Roadster. Finished in carmen red with black mohair hood and black hide interior. Fitted with manual transmission and chrome wire wheels. Very nice order throughout **£23,950**

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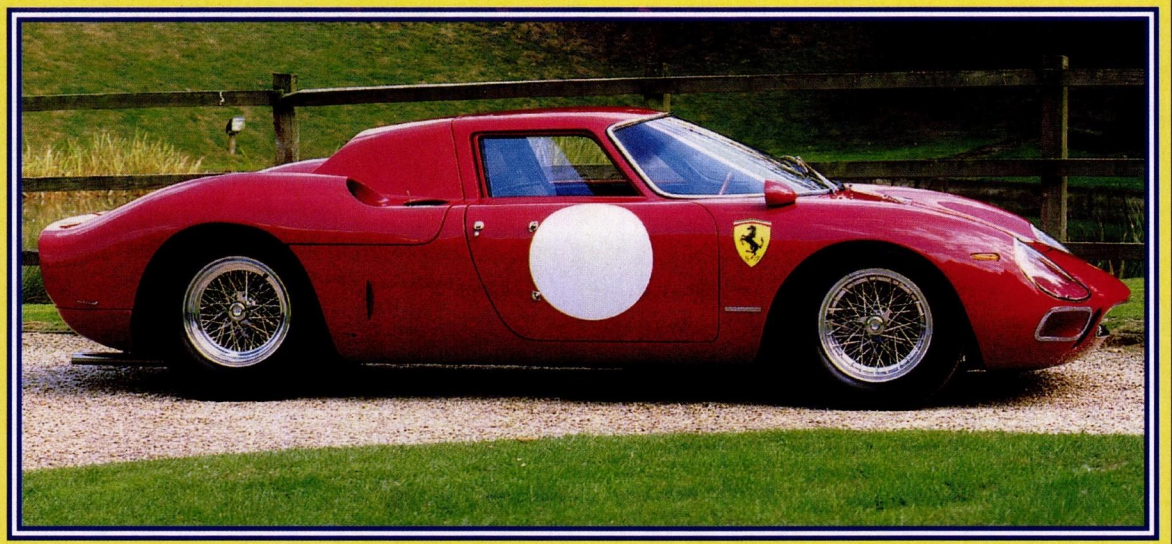
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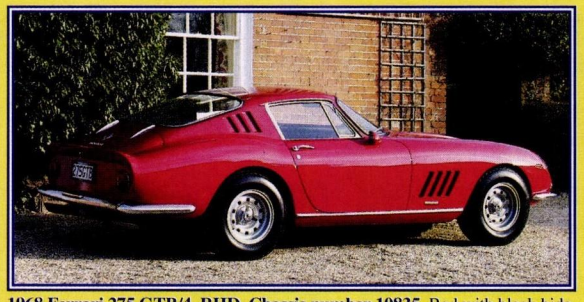
1951 Ferrari 212 Export Berlinetta Le Mans by Touring, Chassis no. 0112E. A very rare and unique Ferrari. Engine size increased by factory to 225 in 1953, prior to competing in the Mille Miglia of the same year and again in 1955. Immensely fast and eligible for every rally, a true investment **POA**



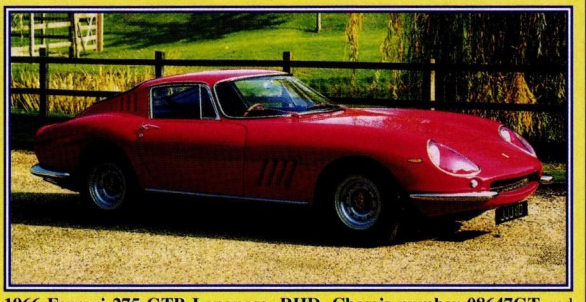
1953 Ferrari 375MM Spyder by Pininfarina. Chassis number 0362AM, a stunning and fully restored car with great provenance and eligible for all events including Mille Miglia. Please enquire for further details. **£ POA**



1964 Ferrari 250 LM, Chassis no. 6023. Surely one of the most beautiful and sophisticated sports racing Ferraris ever built. C/n. 6023 is an ex-Ecurie Francorchamps Team car, with an admirable and highly successful race history, including a number of famous victories. This car is in stunning and fully restored condition. Available immediately **£POA**



1968 Ferrari 275 GTB/4, RHD, Chassis number 10835. Red with black hide. 13,000 miles only. This car has recently arrived from a well known Ferrari collection in New Zealand. Proven history. Outstanding example **£POA**



1966 Ferrari 275 GTB Longnose, RHD, Chassis number 08647GT. red with black hide. this car was the subject of a total restoration costing in excess of £100,000 by Maranello Concessionaires. Stunning in every respect. **£POA**

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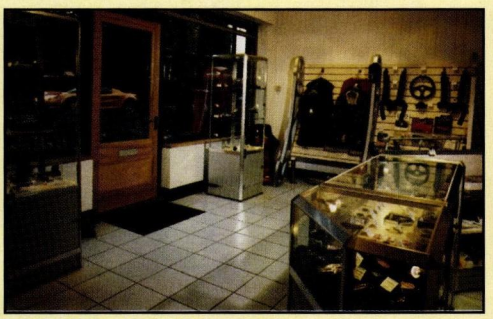
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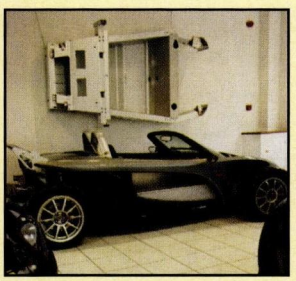
The shop is an Aladdin's Cave of gifts for the Lotus lover, or even the Lotus lover's lover! Drop-in and have an informed chat with Bobby Bell, Martin Colvill or Tom Clark. Whether you are after a new Elise, Lotus clothing, tuning and tweaking goodies, or just a polished window-winder, you will always be welcome.



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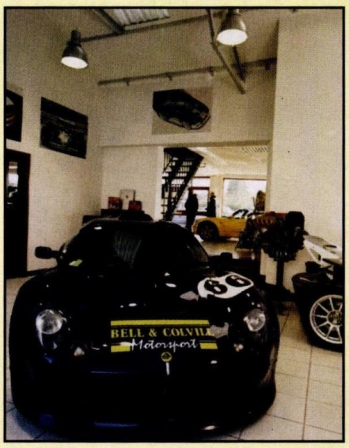
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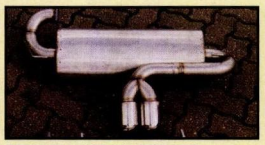
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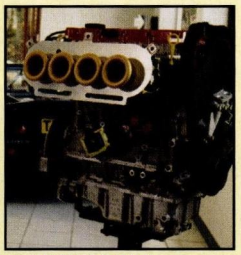
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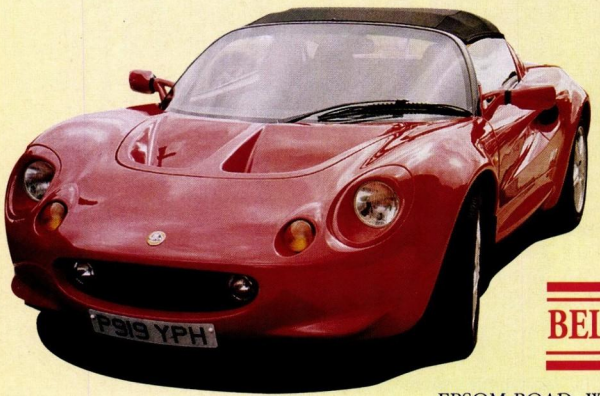
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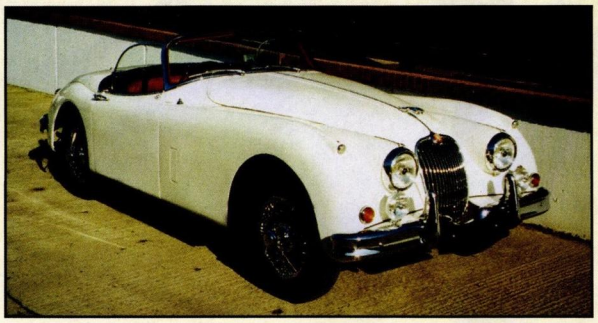
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JAGUAR XK 140 DROPHEAD, RHD – British Racing Green/Black hide and carpets, Black hood, full matching number original right hand drive car, subject of a total chassis off restoration 8 years ago to excellent standards, now nicely mellowed, fine example.

JAGUAR XK 140 ROADSTER RHD – Pastel Blue/Blue hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, 4 wheel disc brake conversion with Servo, subject of a total chassis off restoration to a high standard, an excellent useable example.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.8 LITRE ROADSTER, RHD. – Black/Red hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, original right hand drive, total chassis-off restoration 10 years ago to a very good standard, nicely mellowed useable car. The rarest of all XK Jaguars.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.4 LITRE ROADSTER, RHD. – Dark Blue/Grey hide and Dark Blue carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, matching numbers, subject of a total chassis off restoration 5 years ago to a very high standard, many updates. Stunning.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.4 LITRE ROADSTER, RHD. Red/Black hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, subject of a total chassis off restoration to the highest standards original colour specification, rare example in excellent condition.

JAGUAR XK 150 SE 3.4 LITRE DROPHEAD, RHD. - Primrose Yellow/Black hide and carpets, black hood, 16" chromed wire wheels, subject of a total chassis off restoration, unique colour specification. Excellent example.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.8 LITRE FIXED HEAD COUPÉ, RHD. – Racing Green/Beige hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, full matching numbers and original colour specification, subject of a total chassis off restoration 12 years ago, now nicely mellowed, superb example of this very rare car.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.4 LITRE FIXED HEAD COUPÉ, RHD. British Racing Green/Green hide and carpets, colour coded wire wheels, total original example with a genuine 6,700 miles yes 6,700 miles from new with one owner, stunning originality, may never be repeated.

JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES 3 V12 2+2 MANUAL. Opalescent silver/grey hide piped blue, dark blue carpets, chromed wire wheels, JD Sport engine, Weber carburettors, hand made stainless steel exhaust manifold and system, JD detailed engine bay, etc. Stunning example.

JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES III V12 2+2 MANUAL. Red/beige hide and carpets, chromed wire wheels, subject of a major restoration 2 years ago, recently fitted with JD Sport Brakes and ignition system. Excellent example.

JAGUAR MARK I 3.4 LITRE SALOON SPECIAL EQUIPMENT – Cotswold Blue/Grey hide and carpets, colour coded wire wheels, manual with overdrive, matching numbers, restored by ourselves for our director 5 years ago, purchased by a client 12 months ago who commissioned us to fit J.D. Sport power steering, winner of numerous concours awards, many subtle modifications. Probably the most highly detailed Mark I Saloon you are likely to see. Unique and very traditional.

THE J.D. SPORT MARK II SALOON – Developed over 10 years, and hand-built by J.D. Classics for modern motoring, with a little old-fashioned excitement! Colour specification to your choice, J.D. Classics sports front seats, complete leather interior, including door panels, parcel shelf etc., inertia reel belts to front and rear, our own unique walnut veneered centre dash to match your choice of woodwork, CD/music etc. to your choice. Highest specification, completely rebuilt sports engine, choice of either 3.4 or 3.8 litre, 4.2 litre fuel injection or our latest XJR V.8 Supercharge. 3.4 to 4.2 litre engines are gas flowed, lightened and balanced, unleaded fuel head, electronic ignition, fast road camshafts. 2" stainless steel manifolds and exhaust system, catalytic converter, rack and pinion power steering, remote adjustable sports suspension, competition wire wheels, sports braking system, VR tyres, choice of gearbox, air-conditioning, etc. Our work is carried out to an impeccable finish, and we will build to your individual specification if you wish. The world is blessed with 'look-alike', efficient, luxury vehicles. But are you excited? Boredom can be very expensive! The "J.D. Sport" is exclusive. It is a car that will express your taste, and your individuality. You may even get excited, again...!

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JAGUAR MK II 3.8 LITRE SALOON. Opalescent Silver/Red hide and carpets, competition chromed wire wheels, subject of a total restoration 4 years ago. Recent J.D. Sport updates include, rack and pinion power steering with alternator, suspension to latest specification, handmade stainless steel exhaust manifold and exhaust system, J.D. Sport front seats, modern stereo system with remote control, alloy radiator etc. STUNNING EXAMPLE.

JAGUAR MK II 3.8 LITRE SALOON, 5 SPEED MANUAL – Opalescent Silver/Beige hide and carpets, chromed wire wheels, 5 speed Getrag gearbox, air conditioning, restored 8 years ago (not by J.D. Classics) to a good standard, very useable.

JAGUAR MARK II 3.8 LITRE SALOON, MANUAL WITH OVERDRIVE – Opalescent Blue/Red hide and carpets, chromed wire wheels, subject of a total restoration, updates include rack and pinion power steering with alternator, air conditioning, modern stereo etc. Excellent example.

JAGUAR MARK II 3.4 LITRE SALOON, MANUAL WITH OVERDRIVE – Opalescent Dark Blue/Grey hide and carpets, competition chromed wire wheels, full syncromesh gearbox, J.D. Sport modifications include fast road engine, suspension, exhaust system, brakes, alloy radiator, seats, etc. Alpine stereo system, tinted glass, fully restored by ourselves three years ago. Very low mileage since. Superb detail throughout.

JAGUAR MARK II 3.4 LITRE SALOON, MANUAL WITH OVERDRIVE – Opalescent Dark Green/Beige hide and carpets. Competition chromed wire wheels, J.D. Sport seats, J.D. Sport fast road engine, J.D. Sport stainless steel exhaust system and suspension, louvred bonnet, J.D. Sport braking system, modern stereo system, etc. Restored by ourselves 7 years ago. STUNNING.

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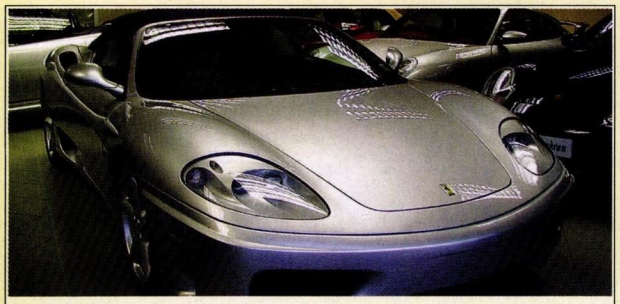
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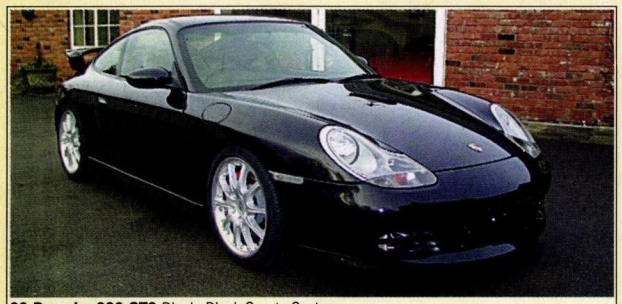
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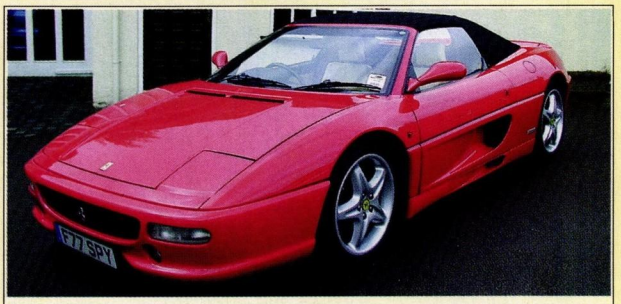
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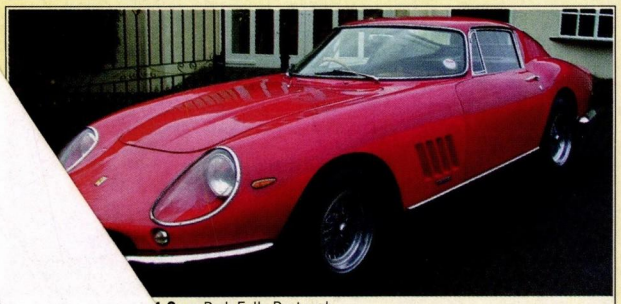
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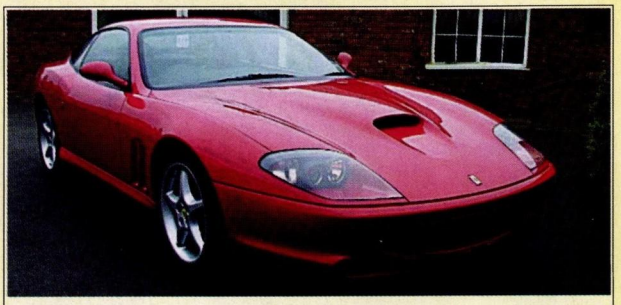
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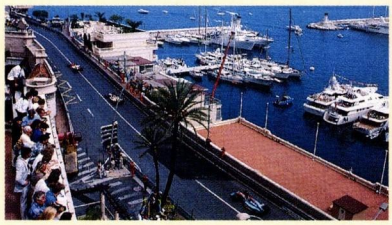
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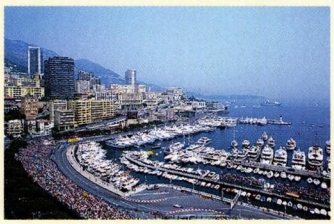
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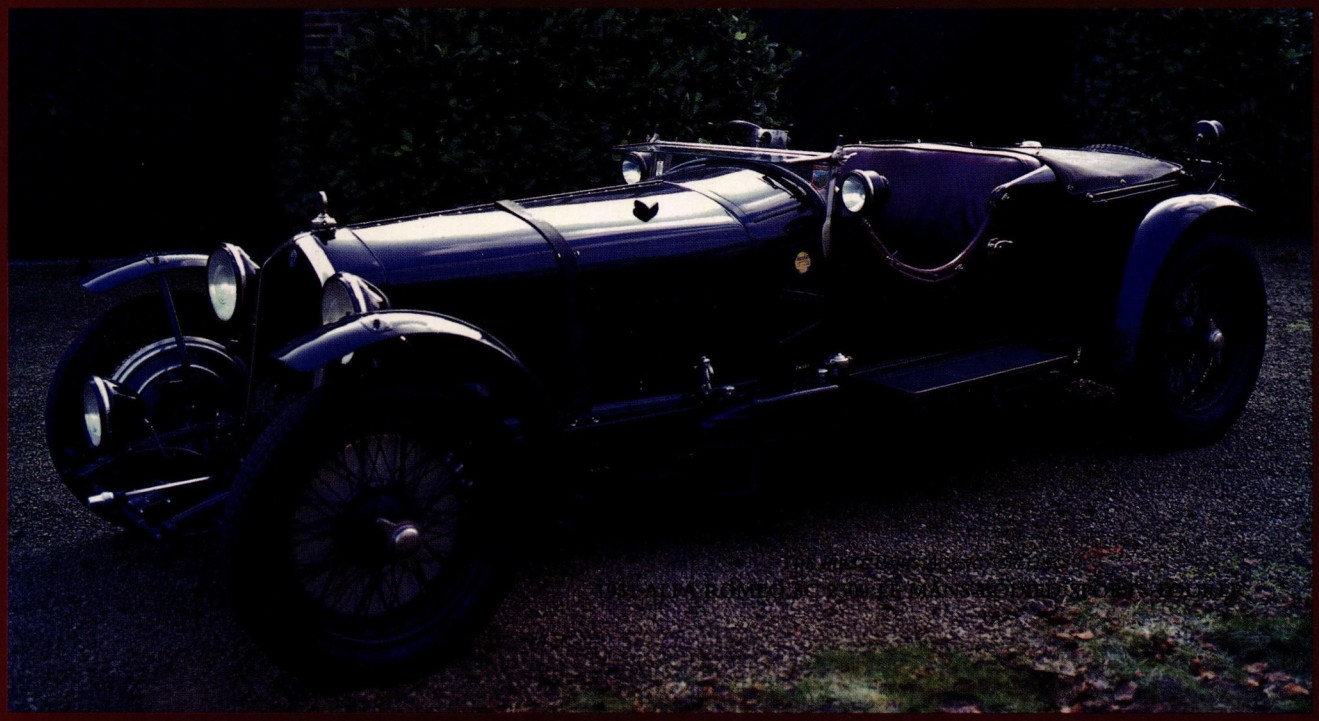
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JAGUAR XK 140 DROPHEAD, RHD – British Racing Green/Black hide and carpets, Black hood, full matching number original right hand drive car, subject of a total chassis off restoration 8 years ago to excellent standards, now nicely mellowed, fine example.

JAGUAR XK 140 ROADSTER RHD – Pastel Blue/Blue hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, 4 wheel disc brake conversion with Servo, subject of a total chassis off restoration to a high standard, an excellent useable example.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.8 LITRE ROADSTER, RHD. – Black/Red hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, original right hand drive, total chassis-off restoration 10 years ago to a very good standard, nicely mellowed useable car. The rarest of all XK Jaguars.

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JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.4 LITRE ROADSTER, RHD. Red/Black hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, subject of a total chassis off restoration to the highest standards original colour specification, rare example in excellent condition.

JAGUAR XK 150 SE 3.4 LITRE DROPHEAD, RHD. - Primrose Yellow/Black hide and carpets, black hood, 16" chromed wire wheels, subject of a total chassis off restoration, unique colour specification. Excellent example.

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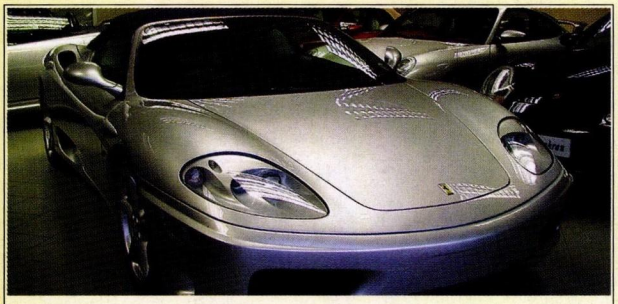
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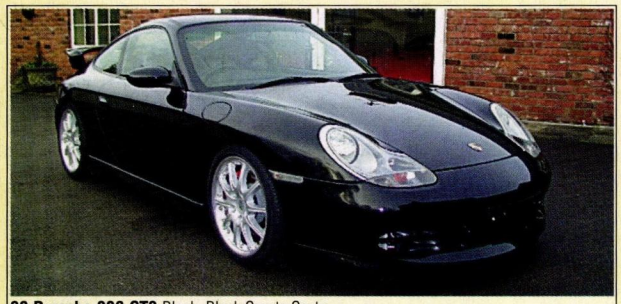
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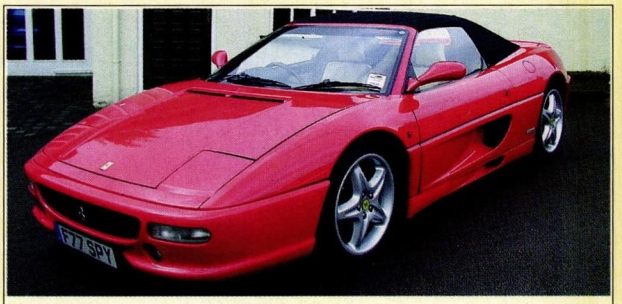
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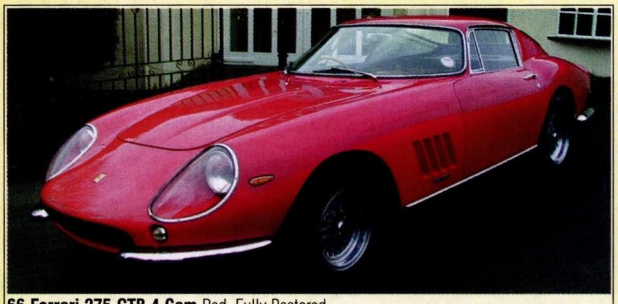
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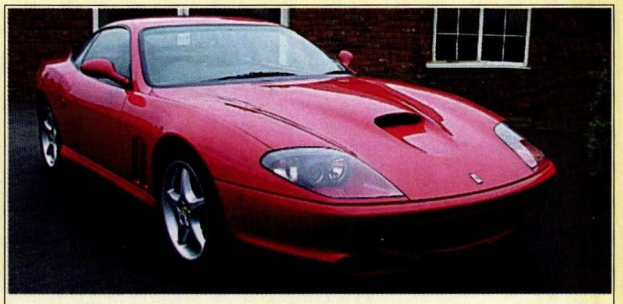
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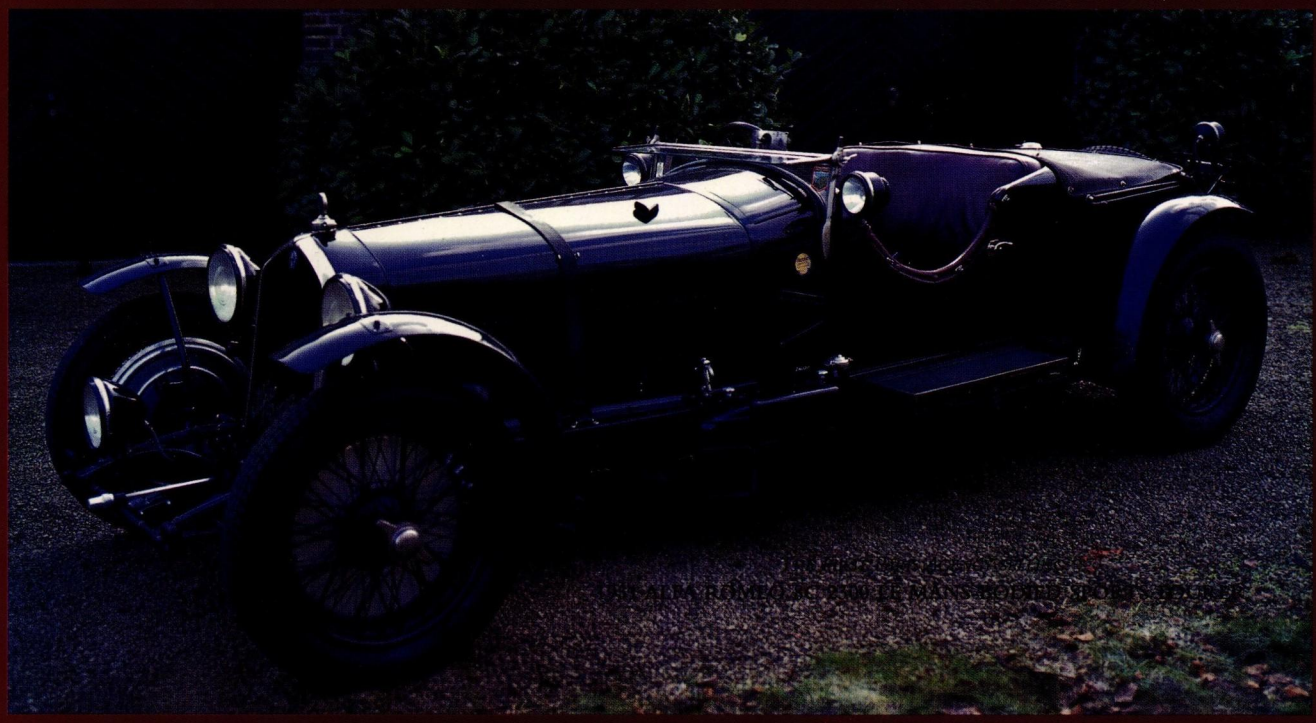
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