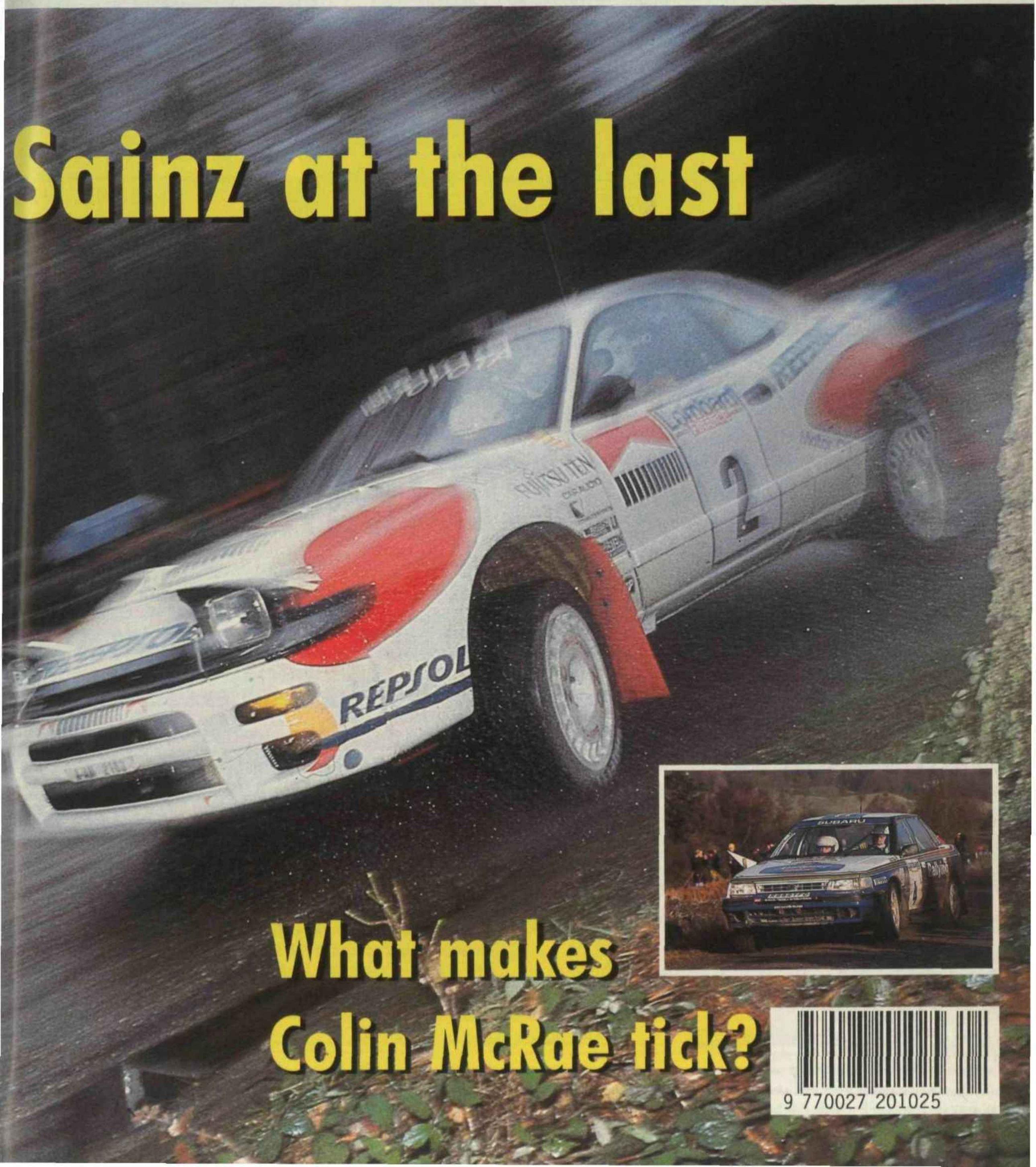
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MOTOR SPORT

Sainz at the last



What makes Colin McRae tick?

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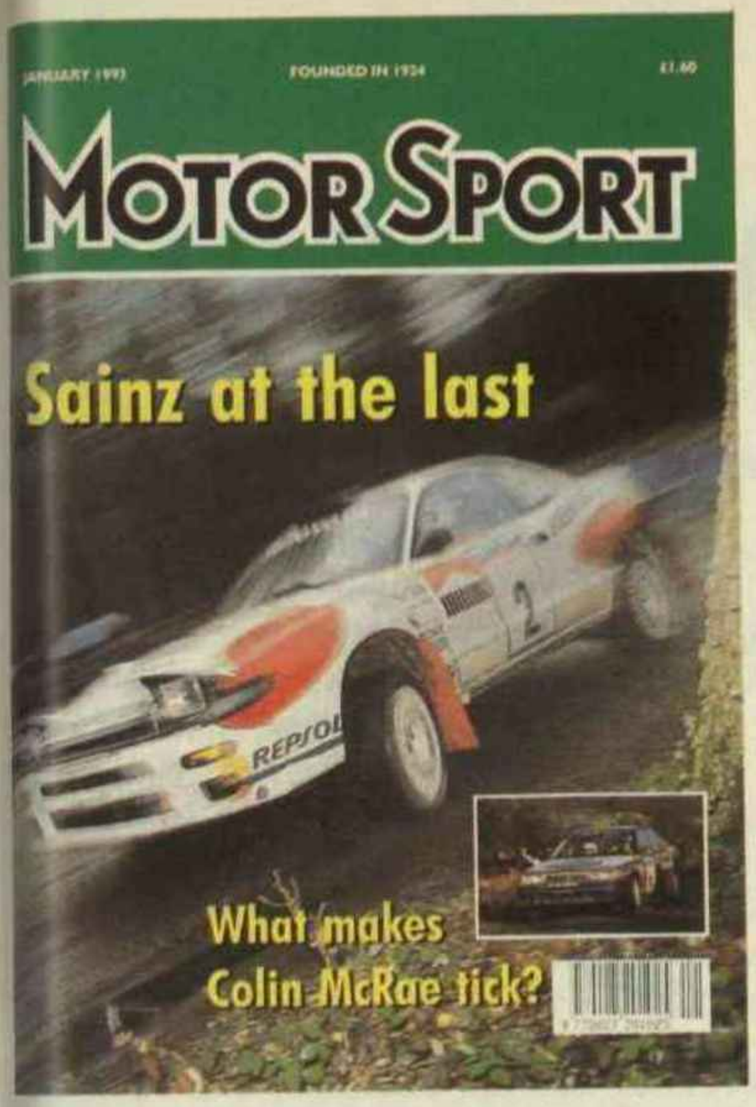
Thursday 11th Feb	Press & Trade only	10.00am-6.00pm
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Motoring News

MOTOR SPORT

The Daily Express
Motor Racing Show
11th-14th February 1993



Carlos Sainz (main picture) clinched the WRC title as the series reached a thrilling conclusion. The UK media spotlight fell on Colin McRae, however (inset).

MOTOR SPORT

INCORPORATING *SPEED* AND THE *BROOKLANDS GAZETTE*

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Next issue out January 29

The month in MOTOR SPORT

NOVEMBER

17: IMSA effectively axes its GTP class with the announcement of a new, open-top, two-seater category to be known as 'World Sports Cars'. Existing GTP cars will be allowed to run alongside the new class, albeit in detuned form, until the end of the '94 season. IMSA plans a single-class structure for 1995 (see *Cotton On*).

18: Mauricio Gugelmin completes two days of testing with the interim Jordan-Hart F1 car. Although lap times are rendered meaningless by inclement weather, the Brazilian is impressed by the new V10.

19: Escuderia Bravo F1 España, launched only 10 days beforehand, suffers a major blow when prime instigator Jean-François Mosnier succumbs suddenly to cancer at the age of 46. Bravo announces that it intends to press on with its plans, despite the shock.

19: At the launch of a new powerboat which bears his name, Ayrton Senna discloses that it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that he will drive an Indycar in 1993.

19: Lola successfully runs in its new transverse, sequential shift F3000 gearbox, a version of which will also feature on the forthcoming T93/30 F1 car.

20: Donington Park gets a Grand Prix! Tom Wheatcroft's long-held dream finally becomes reality as FISA grants Donington the 1993 European Grand Prix to replace the cancelled Asian GP at Autopolis. At the same time, the governing body also puts back the start of the season by a couple of weeks. The South African GP at Kyalami is rescheduled for March 14, in place of February 28.

20: It isn't Alan Randall's year. After his fruitless attempt to run a fistful of Jaguars in the SWC came to naught, he quits the reformed Brabham F1 team. Dave Prewitt takes control.

21: After 38 years' service, Aldershot Stadium closes down. Tim Langrish wins the final race, a destruction derby.

22: Scuderia Italia's new F1 recruit Luca Badoer (below) suffers a broken right shoulder after an accident in a demonstration karting event, featuring the cream of Italy's single-seater racing talent. Badoer is ordered not to drive for a month.



22: Rickard Rydell takes aggregate victory in the Macau GP. Pedro Lamy and Jacques Villeneuve complete the top three. Best of the regular British F3 runners is champion Gil de Ferran, sixth overall despite being caught in a pile-up that caused the first heat to be red-flagged. Emanuele Pirro (BMW M3) wins the supporting touring car race.

22: Monty Karlan and Ake Gustavsson (Porsche 911) win the Rally Britannia, the historic event which follows the opening day of the RAC Rally.

23: Brabham BT60Bs are seen at Galmer Engineering's workshops, leading to speculation that these cars will be modified by Galmer for the start of the 1993 season and that, further ahead, Galmer will pen an all-new car for the team that is battling to re-establish itself.

23: Bridgestone, known for a long time to be considering F1 involvement, is said to be gearing up for a Grand Prix effort in 1994.

23: McLaren's F1 deal with Ford is thought to be all but signed.

23: Julian Bailey (below) signs for the TOM'S Toyota BTCC team, as partner to Will Hoy. Meanwhile, Ian Flux signs to drive a semi-works Peugeot 405 and an intriguing rumour links Martin Donnelly with Dave Price Racing and an unofficial Mercedes-Benz project.



23: Colin McRae surges into the lead of the RAC Rally. The Scot is set to contest a full WRC programme in 1993, including the Safari Rally, which he will tackle in a Subaru Vivio microcar. Subaru's main tool for 1993 will be the Impreza.

23: Frustrated would-be RAC Rally entrant Bob Green's Ford Sierra Cosworth is found, relatively undamaged, in Liverpool. The car had been stolen on the eve of the RAC Rally, and was subsequently used in a ram-raid on a Milletts store in Wigan . . .

24: Colin McRae's RAC Rally hopes are dashed when he is involved in a collision with a non-competing car on his way to the start. Carlos Sainz is quick to seize the initiative.

24: Guy Ligier confirms that he has sold his F1 team to French businessman Cyril de Rouvre.

25: Carlos Sainz is first back to Chester. The Spaniard's victory on the RAC gives him a second world crown. His two title challengers Juha Kankkunen and Didier Auriol finish up third and stranded in a forest respectively. The Frenchman, for so long the hot championship favourite, succumbs to ignition failure while lying second. Two Brits make the top 10: the inevitable McRae (sixth) and Malcolm Wilson (ninth). Colin's brother Alister, 14th overall, wins Group N.

25: Reynard shakes down its 93D F3000 chassis at Snetterton. Heinz-Harald Frentzen is entrusted with driving duties.

25: Paul Belmondo tests for Larrousse at Paul Ricard. The Frenchman, who hopes to return to F1, is in the frame for a seat with the team, as is Jean-Marc Gounon, who will test the car in late December. More pressing concerns for Larrousse include the suicide of former partner Klaus Walz, who shot himself whilst evading police, who wanted to question him about four murders and the trafficking of stolen cars.

25: Rabid anti-smoking proposals in France threaten the future of the French GP (b 1906), the longest-running event of its kind. There are fears that the 1993 race at Magny-Cours could be threatened.

26: Rubens Barrichello, third in the European F3000 Championship, signs for Jordan. In damp conditions at Silverstone, he completes half a dozen laps in the interim Hart-engined 192 chassis.

26: The latest Williams-Renault rumour is that Damon Hill and Nigel Mansell will share the seat alongside Alain Prost, Mansell contesting as many GPs as his American commitments allow. The team quickly denies it.

26: F1 teams receive a document proposing that weight penalties be applied to successful cars. The idea, similar to that employed in the German Touring Car Championship, is designed to reduce any performance advantage that certain teams might enjoy. The initial

suggestion is for a half-kilo penalty per championship point scored.

27: Lola unveils its T93/50 F3000 challenger.

29: Roberto Colciago beats team-mate Max Angelelli in the Fuji International F3 race. Pedro Lamy completes an Opel-engined 1-2-3.

30: Mitsubishi is tipped to be investigating possible involvement in F1. A suitable V12 engine is said already to exist . . .

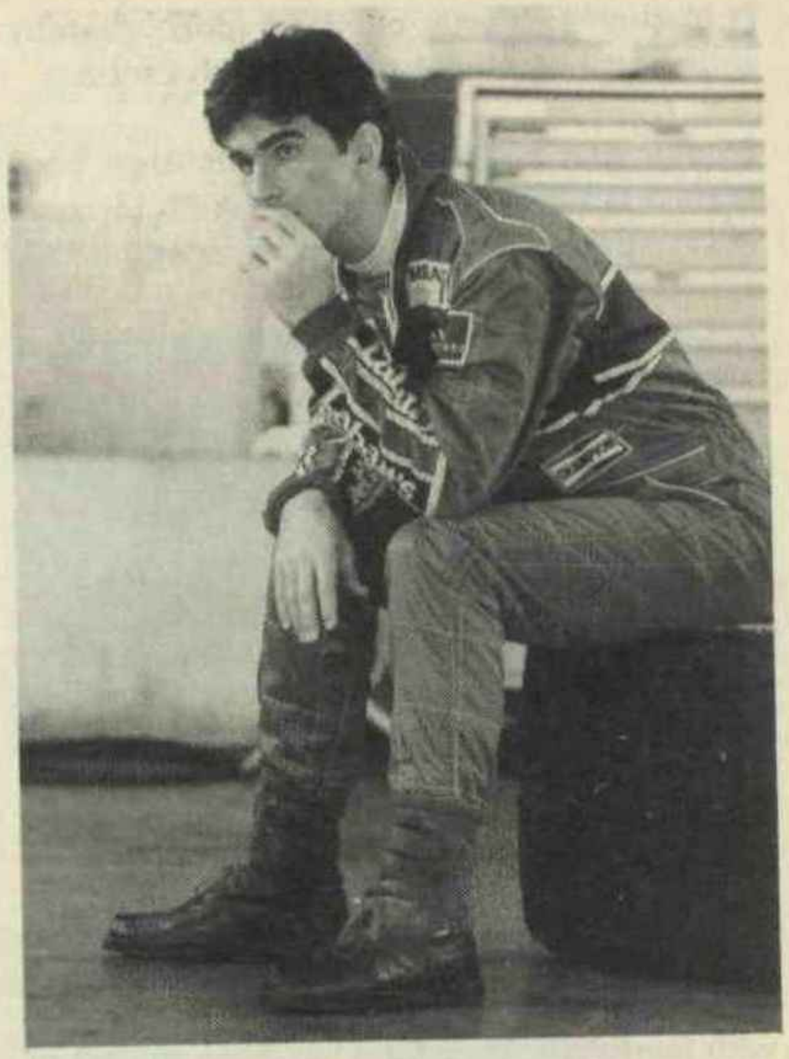
30: Opel becomes the latest manufacturer to withdraw from the GTCC. BMW, meanwhile, reports that it will build racing versions of its new M3, for PR purposes . . . Apparently, the cars will not race.

30: Ford starts final preparations for the 1993 Monte Carlo Rally. François Delecour demonstrates the latest Escort Cosworth at Boreham (below).

2: Within days of clinching the world rally title, Carlos Sainz hops ships. The Spaniard leaves Toyota to drive for Lancia; Juha Kankkunen, meanwhile, does exactly the opposite.

2: Reynard's new 933 F3 car rolls out of the factory. It will be shaken down by West Surrey Racing.

3: F1 testing at Estoril concludes. Damon Hill (right) is fastest for Williams-Renault, lapping marginally faster than Alain Prost. The promising Saubers of JJ Lehto (below, right) and Karl Wendlinger prove quicker than the Benettons of Schumacher, Zanardi and Patrese, the latter (below, centre) having his first drive for his new team. Hill remains optimistic that he will land the coveted Williams seat alongside Prost; with his experience of the Renault engine, Ligier is also known to be interested in his services. Meanwhile, Lotus contractee Mika Hakkinen's name continues to be connected with Williams.



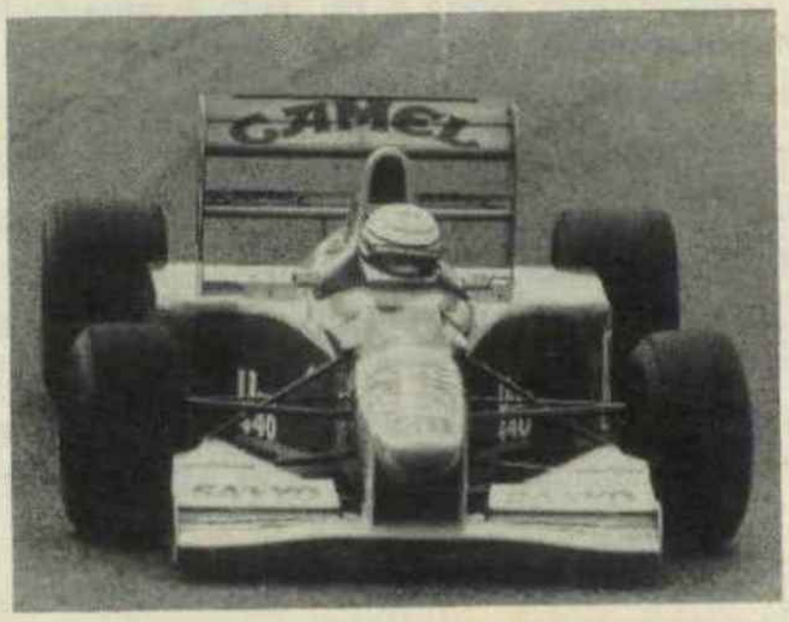


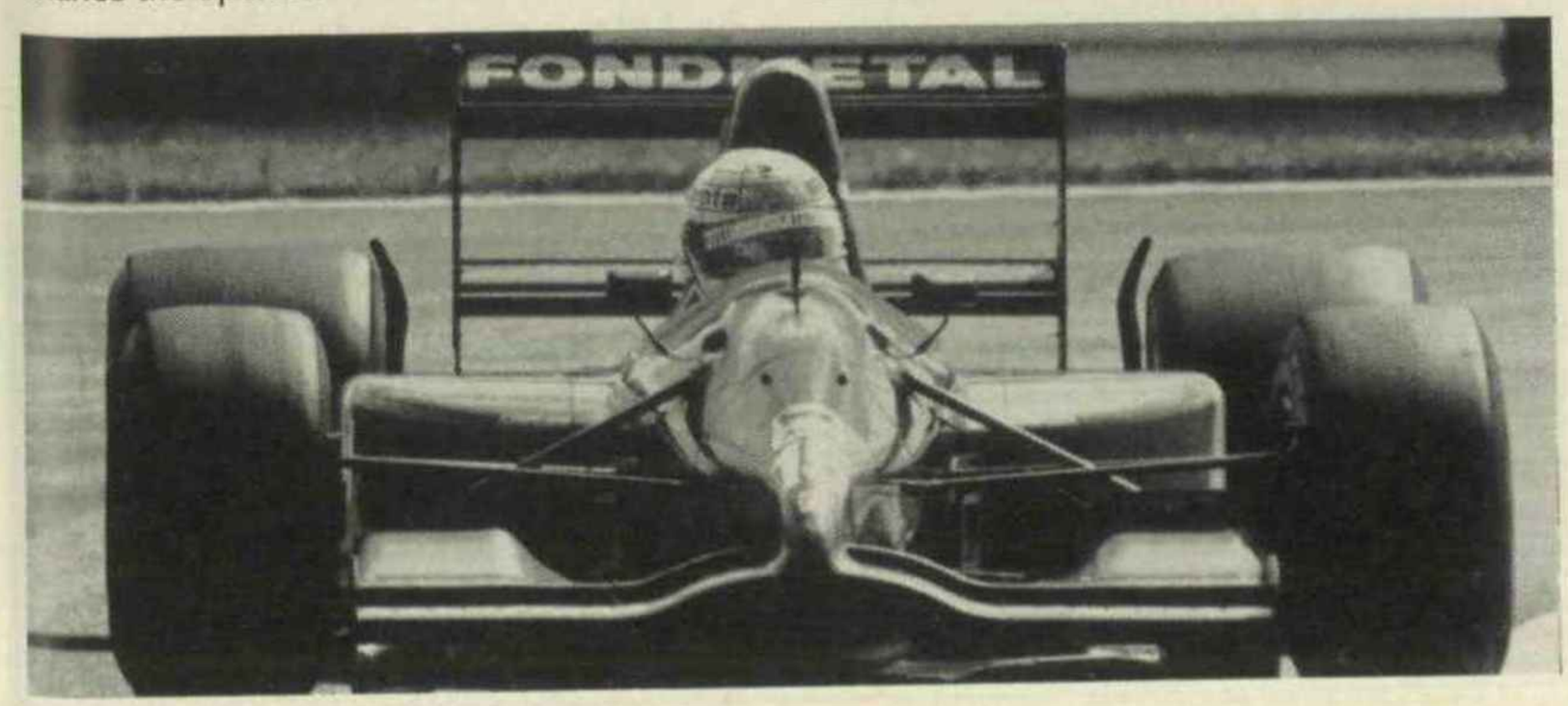


30: Historic racer Richard Arnold announces ambitious plans to run a pair of Dallaras in the 1993 British F3 series. It will be the Italian constructor's first serious venture in the UK.

DECEMBER

1: Fondmetal (below) announces that its has shelved plans to return to F1 in 1993. Although he had missed the final three Grands Prix of the '92 season, team patron Gabriele Rumi had been hoping to find a new partner to help finance the operation.





4: Michael Andretti and Mark Blundell test for McLaren at Barcelona. The latest rumour is that the Woking team may have Lamborghini V12 power in 1993.

4: Jos Verstappen, widely reckoned to be the best Dutch racing prospect for many a year, signs for German F3 team WTS.

6: Will Gollop wins the British Rallycross Grand Prix at Brands Hatch.

6: Bertie Fisher/Rory Kennedy (Subaru Legacy) wins the Rally of the Lakes.

6: Richard Dean wins the eighth annual Playscape Charity Kart Challenge, during the course of which £8000 is raised for Turning Point.

7: Jaguar announces that it plans to run a revised XJR-12 at Le Mans in 1993. It will not, however, be running XJ220s in the Daytona 24 Hours.

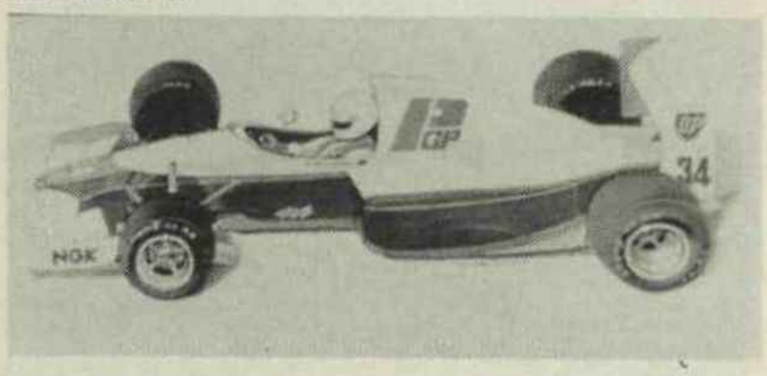
7: More manoeuvres in the BTCC. Andy Rouse now looks certain to run the new Ford Mondeo; former F1 racer Ian Ashley will drive a private Vauxhall Cavalier; Win Percy signs for Nissan, as Kieth O'dor's team-mate.

DIARY

7: Martini pulls out of motorsport, thereby ending an 11-year relationship with Lancia.

8: Informed speculation suggests that both TOM'S GB and Peter Thompson Motorsport will run European F3000 programmes in 1993.

9: David Coulthard tests a Benetton B192 at Silverstone.



9: At the Tokyo Motor Show, Pacific Grand Prix reveals further details of its F1 programme (above). These include an engine deal with Ilmor, and recruitment of German F3000 driver Michael Bartels – whose relationship with tennis star Steffi Graf has been subject of much national media speculation.

MATTERS OF MOMENT

It's OK to smile . . .

As we greet the arrival of 1993, our enthusiasm for the forthcoming sporting year is marked with a degree of caution.

The past 12 months will be remembered as much for the unhappy contractual machinations which went on behind the scenes in F1 as they will for Nigel Mansell's domination of Grand Prix racing, which gave Britain its first world title for 16 years.

Compare the petty disagreements in F1 with the atmosphere at the RAC Rally, where three drivers chased the ultimate prize in their own branch of the sport in civilised and honourable fashion. Or look at the present co-operation between F3000 manufacturers, which shows that self-interest can be cast aside for the long-term good of the formula.

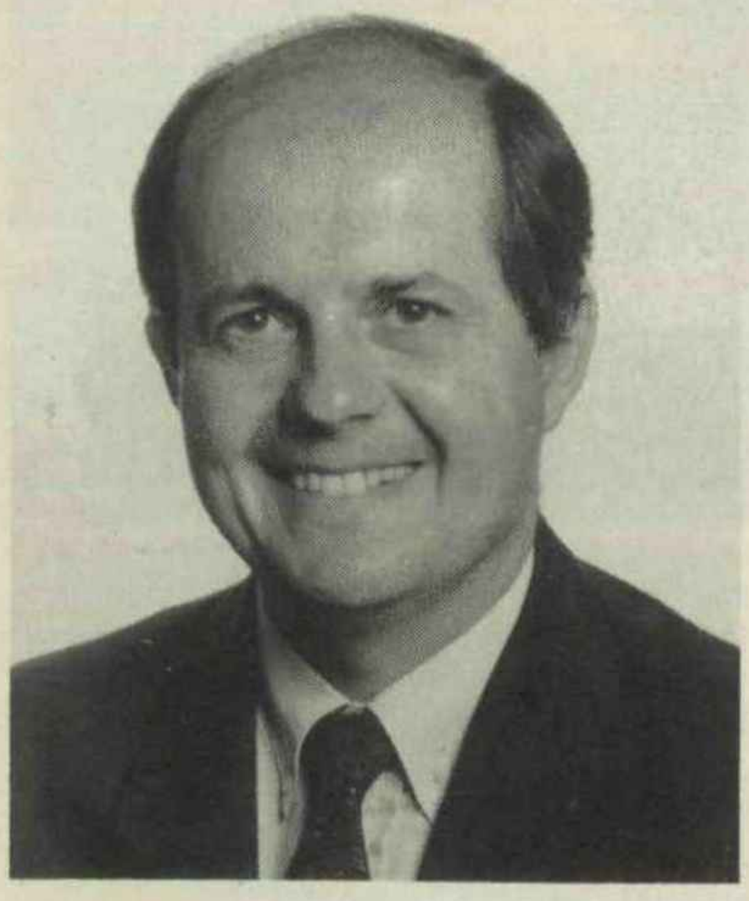
There will always be a degree of bickering in any competitive sport: that's why a handful of footballers will be sent off every Saturday, and boxers, immersed in their own hype, sometimes come close to blows before they get anywhere near the ring. Certainly, F1 was by no means alone as a den of recrimination in 1992: the British Touring Car Championship had its fair share of arguments, both on and off the circuit.

Aggression is an essential part of any racing driver's make-up, which is all very well when it's tempered by common-sense. The RAC Rally proved that motorsport can be simultaneously competitive and cordial, and as we wish all our readers, advertisers and friends within the industry a happy and prosperous new year, we sincerely hope that this lesson will be taken on board throughout the sport.

S A

OBITUARIES

Jean-François Mosnier



One image of Jean-François Mosnier will always stick in my mind. It was April 1989, at Silverstone, the opening round of the European F3000 Championship. Mosnier's Lola Motorsport team had suffered a torrid winter. Indeed, it was no longer the works Lola team, but that didn't matter to Mosnier. The team was his, irrespective of its name, and the fact that Lola Motorsport had entered a pair of year-old Marches didn't strike him as particularly odd. During qualifying, on Saturday, the team only had one car ready for its two drivers to share. It didn't help when Enrico Bertaggia damaged it. As the remains were carted back to the pits, there was 'Mos', electric fret saw at the ready, leading by example as he hacked out a new floor for the stricken racer. Inspired by their leader's frenetic enthusiasm, the team had the car ready in time for Mauro Martini to qualify it a somewhat remarkable, in the circumstances, 11th.

No amount of sustained determination can ever substitute for cash in motor racing, however, and that Silverstone meeting was to mark Lola Motorsport's final F3000 event.

It had always been Jean's desire to mould the team into an F1 outfit, and in recent years he had worked tirelessly to put that unrequited ambition to rights. Ironically, at the time of his death from cancer, on November 19 aged 46, he was on the verge of realising that particular dream. He was the motivating force behind the Escuderia Bravo F1 España project, launched in Adelaide during the Australian GP weekend.

It is bitterly ironic that this likeable, energetic Franco-Briton, who cut his teeth as an engineer with Cooper, Guy Ligier and Ford in the 1960s, and later enjoyed success in the tyre business with Firestone and IRTS, will not be around to see the fruits of his labours.

He is survived by Nicola and their three children Alexander, Florence and Scarlett. We extend our deepest sympathies to them and to Jean's many friends in the sport at this sad time. We count ourselves amongst those who will miss his unfailing sense of optimism. **S A**

Howard Lees

The death, on November 17, of journalistic colleague Howard Lees came as a great shock to everybody in the car and motorcycle industry. Howard succumbed to serious head injuries, sustained when the stunt 'plane, in which he was a passenger, was forced to make a crash-landing. He was 35.

Howard made his name writing about 'bikes, and he excelled as an endurance racer on two wheels. He was also an enthusiastic competitor on four, whenever he got the chance. A former staff writer on *Autocar & Motor* and *Performance Car*, he had more recently expended his energy as a prolific freelance, turning his hand to the technicalities of cars and 'bikes with equal fluency.

A valued companion, we will miss the sense of fun and adventurous personality that nestled behind an often quiet and thoughtful exterior.

Our thoughts are with his wife Hilkka and their two sons Mikael, 6, and Patrick, 4. **S A**

● We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of former BTCC Mini racer Tom Pitcher who has died, aged 53, and Denis Flather, one of the founder members of the BTRDA, who passed away at his home in Sheffield recently, at the age of 81.

● Formula Ford racer Peter Brown has succumbed to a stroke, aged just 24. An enthusiastic regular at Brands Hatch, he most recently campaigned the latest Elden. Our condolences to his family and friends.

JANUARY FIXTURES

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

Date	*Venue*	*Event*	*Type*
Jan 1/16	Paris/various	Paris-Dakar Rally	INT
Jan 7/10	Birmingham NEC	Auto Sports International Show	–
Jan 9	Llandrindod Wells	Mewla Stages Rally	N
Jan 15/17	Brescia	Winter Marathon	INT
Jan 21/28	**Monaco**	**Monte Carlo Rally**	**INT**
Jan 30	Bournemouth	Mazda Car-Line Winter Rally	N

OLYMPIA

A SALE
OF IMPORTANT MOTOR CARS AT OLYMPIA,
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Brooks commences a busy new year of sales in February 1993 at Olympia 2, London. The scene for the sale has already been set by this powerful 4398 cc four-cylinder Renault. With its midship-mounted radiator and coal-scuttle bonnet, the car represents Edwardian elegance at its best. An unusual feature of its three-quarter landaulette coachwork by Starey's & Wolley's Ltd of Nottingham is the ease with which it can be converted to an open tourer by removing the chauffeur's compartment roof.This heads what promises to be an exciting sale to start the year. Further entries are now being accepted.

A sale of unrestored cars at the Classic Mobil Exhibition Munich, March 27th 1993

After our February event, the scene shifts to Germany for a Munich sale of unrestored cars, including models of all types and periods. With considerable interest in post-war British sports cars, the sale offers opportunity for European vendors of particularly left-hand drive MGs, TRs, Austin-Healeys, Morgans and similar marques. Special Brooks transport terms to Germany are available.

For further information on either of the above sales, on the Monaco sale in May, or to order a catalogue in advance please call James Knight, Mark Beattie or Robert Brooks.

BROOKS

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Is there a brake on F1 talent?

Is money the overriding factor which influences driver choice, graduation and progression?

It's still there, on my notebook for the 1989 Brazilian GP at Rio. A long, inky stroke across the lap chart. The legacy of a nudge from a hyper-excited Mike Kranefuss as he had drawn to my attention the progress of Benetton driver Johnny Herbert. It was not as if I hadn't been following him throughout, even pointing out his performance to Ford's Director of Motorsport, but Mike hadn't been listening until his boy moved into the points. Then it was different. Mike wanted to tell the world.

Herbert was still a bruised, sore and stiff shadow of his former self. Sunken eyes bore brutal testament to the violence of the F3000 shunt seven months earlier which had threatened to wreck a glittering career, but he went on to finish fourth in that race, his first Grand Prix. By any account, let alone considering the agony he had been through just to get on to that grid, it was a terrific performance, one of the best by any F1 newcomer. Overnight some began to claim him as the next Jim Clark.

Less than four months later I listened to Kranefuss vehemently denying that Herbert was to be rested, and spat out a few well deserved poisoned words in print when it was confirmed the next day. Benetton boss Flavio Briatore and Kranefuss had decided the kid 'needed time', that he would be stood down until he was fully fit. He'd come back too soon. *Rio, it seemed, hadn't really happened.*

F1 is a cruel world. Nowadays excellence is expected from any rookie, the big impression is everything. Time was, a driver at least had a season to prove himself, but 1989 set new records for driver changes. Herbert wasn't up to it, they said, even though he'd also slogged home to finish a gutsy fifth in Phoenix, and he was out. Though supposedly only 'rested', not sacked, he never was recalled to the Benetton seat.

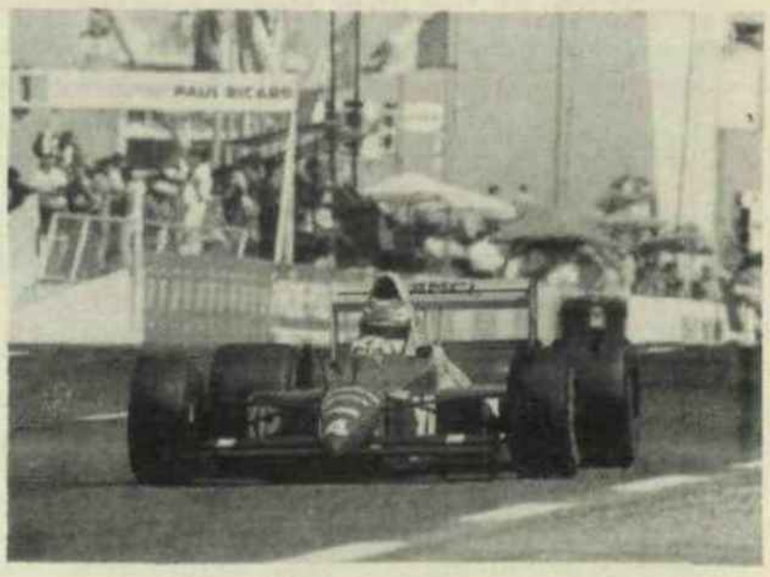
In the very French GP that Herbert thus missed, Jean Alesi made his Grand Prix début. That was the year the Frenchman was rebuilding his career with Eddie Jordan's F3000 team after being written off as a psychological wreck following a tough maiden 3000 year with Oreca. He'd agonised about testing a Larrousse in the pre-British GP tests, then had suddenly been offered the Tyrrell when Michele Alboreto defected to . . . Larrousse. Jean had, quite literally, come to F1 by chance.

That day Alesi set himself on the road to Ferrari with a scintillating performance that saw him running second at one stage and suddenly made the Tyrrell a car in which everyone took interest. Like Herbert, he too was fourth in his first F1 race. Uncle Ken was temporarily back on the crest of a wave that so nearly broke all over McLaren in Phoenix and Monaco the following year. Alesi had arrived.

In 1991 a young German had made his GP début at Spa. He wasn't exactly the last choice for the second Jordan seat after Bertrand Gachot had been jailed, but he wasn't the first, either. Only seasoned sportscar observers, and those who would listen to them, paid much serious attention to Michael Schumacher before he began electrifying Belgian qualifying, because it now seems the way of F1 that nobody takes any notice of such things until they are stuck right under their noses. Suddenly, from non-rated, Schumacher was the man everyone wanted. Benetton wanted him more than anyone else and got him, despite Jordan's protests and apparently tight legal case. There were loopholes, and Schumacher disappeared through them. he never looked back. There were now two new boys in star seats.

If there is a moral to these tales it is that Herbert was probably the first F1 graduate – certainly the first British F1 graduate – since Jackie Stewart joined BRM in 1965, to move up with a top team. Even Senna moved in with Toleman and then struggled with Lotus before finding nirvana at McLaren. It's easy to look at Alesi and Schumacher now, as the young pretenders, and say they were always going to make it. But both came into F1 by peculiar chance rather than deliberate design. Before they got in few fully appreciated their potential. Both were lucky to find competitive machinery from the outset. Had Alesi come to Tyrrell a year earlier, with the unloved 017, it might all *have been very different . . .*

Time was when F1 team managers used to hang over the pit wall at Monaco and watch the new talent in the F3 race. Remember how quickly Alan Rees of Shadow snapped up Tom Pryce after his brilliant 1974 victory? Now you scarcely know what to tell upcoming drivers as they fondly delude themselves that the F1 world is watching their every move.



Jean Alesi's emergence with Tyrrell in the 1989 French GP was a result of chance circumstances.

THE LOG-JAM FOR F1 HOPEFULS





Main picture (opposite page): Jackie Stewart on his way to second place in the 1965 French GP at Clermont-Ferrand in 1965. The Scot spent his first F1 season with BRM; it would be 24 years before another Briton graduated to F1 with a leading team . . .

Tom Pryce's superb F3 victory at Monaco in '74 (top) earned him an F1 chance with Shadow. Team Lotus' Peter Collins places faith in a driver's ability rather than the size of his wallet. That's why he's stuck by Johnny Herbert, with whom he's conferring above.

An exception is Peter Collins, the man who along with former journalist Peter Windsor had the foresight to appreciate Nigel Mansell's driving ability. It is directly thanks to him that Herbert remains where he belongs, in a competitive F1 car. Also, that Mika Hakkinen graduated directly from F3 to a Lotus seat in 1991.

At a time when one can be forgiven for thinking there is a brake on F1 talent, Collins is one of the few who is prepared not only to maintain belief in meritocracy, but also to act on it. God knows, it must have been tempting for the revitalised but financially precarious Team Lotus to go for a couple of quick pay drivers, but he hung tough to keep his two chargers. What sort of factors does he consider when choosing such hotshoes?

"At Lotus in the past two years we could take risks, but it's quite a question what we do next. We too are now subject to sponsor pressure. But you have to remember that experience is not quick necessarily. You could sit an experienced guy in your car for the whole season and the team knows straight away he's slower than the other guy. And they know that all year. Not good.

"I always believe you should get the fastest guy you can into the car; you minimise the risk by how quickly he can learn. And you can assess that. You can't teach a slow guy to be quick. The latent talent must be there.

"The majority of teams go for experience before speed. If you can balance speed and experience and speed and inexperience then you've got a good team. Effectively that's what we had with Johnny and Mika in 1991. You look first for natural speed and ability and, the other point which isn't widely understood, the psychological make-up of the driver. Whether my own criteria are right or not, on average we've had success over the last 10 years. You can apply specific criteria to driver selection and actually analyse it; I think far too many people in F1 just judge drivers by what they see on the video monitor."

Hakkinen is an interesting case in point, for he long figured in the Williams second seat equations after a flurry of exciting performances for Lotus this year. Yet somehow *he* didn't quite seem to be able to make the final push that could secure himself the seat despite having Keke Rosberg as his manager. Against an old stager such as Frank Williams there is no way a young star can push himself further through the door, even if it is ajar. The matter does not rest in his hands. Patience remains a virtue F1 drivers need.

Damon Hill was likewise poised agonisingly at Williams, his situation perhaps even tougher to endure. Last year he made his GP début at last for Brabham at Silverstone, drawing on every scrap of experience he had garnered as Williams' test driver. Going from the best car in the game to one of the worst was difficult enough, but this winter he has faced the situation wherein he could win everything, or lose it all as he awaited Williams' decision on Alain Prost's partner. "It does not," he stressed, "do to keep agonising over things, but you often find you can't help doing exactly that. I know I have to keep close to Frank, that I have to try and keep any other potential situation on a backburner without losing it altogether, and I know that at the end of the day I could end up without any kind of drive."

He does have one major advantage, and that is that he can still test for the team. Throughout 1991 and '92 he impressed whenever he did that, to the point where Mansell once exorted Frank to give Damon his job when he decided to concentrate on Indycars. The Fleet Street press loved that, but it was a point Mansell made sincerely.

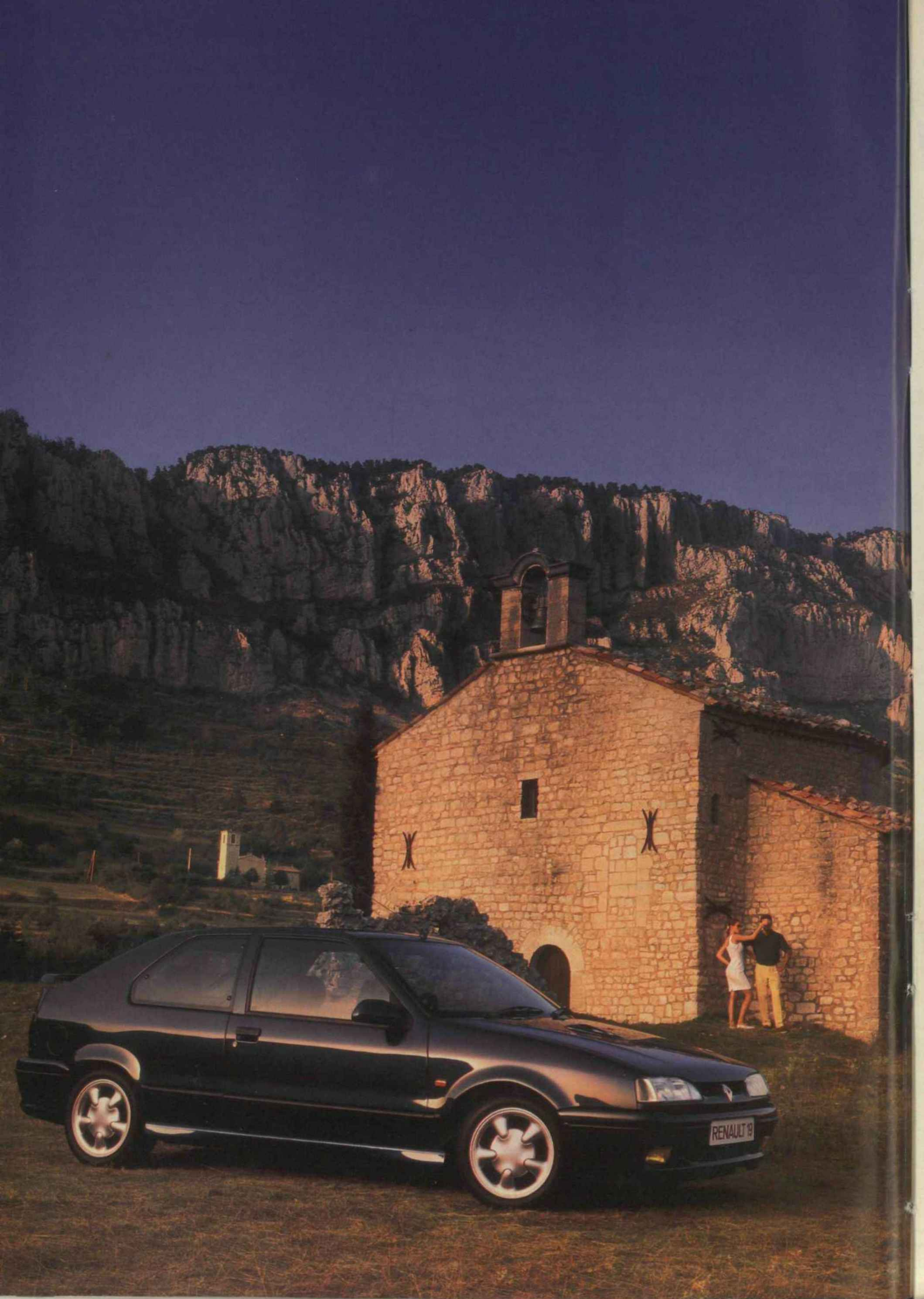
The issue, you begin to appreciate, is nothing like as clear cut as it seems. Collins, on the one hand, has been in a position where everything he aspires to achieve for Lotus requires serious gambling (although, as he admits, the bigger Lotus gets the less easy it is to do that). Other team owners, such as Ken Tyrrell or Eddie Jordan, require at least one driver who can bring funding. That is the way of F1 life.

Jordan, like Collins, has a reputation as a talent spotter. He too recognised Herbert's abilities early, likewise those of Martins Brundle and Donnelly, and Alesi, although even he failed to coax anything special out of Stefano Modena this year. "Most teams tend to go for experience," he agrees. "That's down to the cost of the machines. But when you're like us and you can't afford Nigel Mansell, the best thing is to try and find one. In F3000 we could pick and choose, now it's not so clear-cut because of financial implications.

"We look for a stable, consistent background. I need to be very clear in my mind and insist on several meetings. We need to eradicate risk in a driver's mental approach." Modena's name hangs like a spectre during the conversation.

"I have strong ideas on drivers. They are better younger; you may pay for that for the first half of a year as they learn, but then they begin to repay. If you can continue a relationship for a number of years, that's the ideal position. I would dearly have loved to have been able to continue our F3000 relationship with Jean, but his F1 opportunity came too early for us. Drivers who grow with you don't come to F1 with preconceived ideas, but the flipside is that teams such as Jordan Grand Prix are training grounds for the big teams. You develop a good guy and everyone tries to poach him!

"Today though money helps. Of course it does. With technology the way it is, it's sometimes better to take a less dramatic driver who has money, because with that you can


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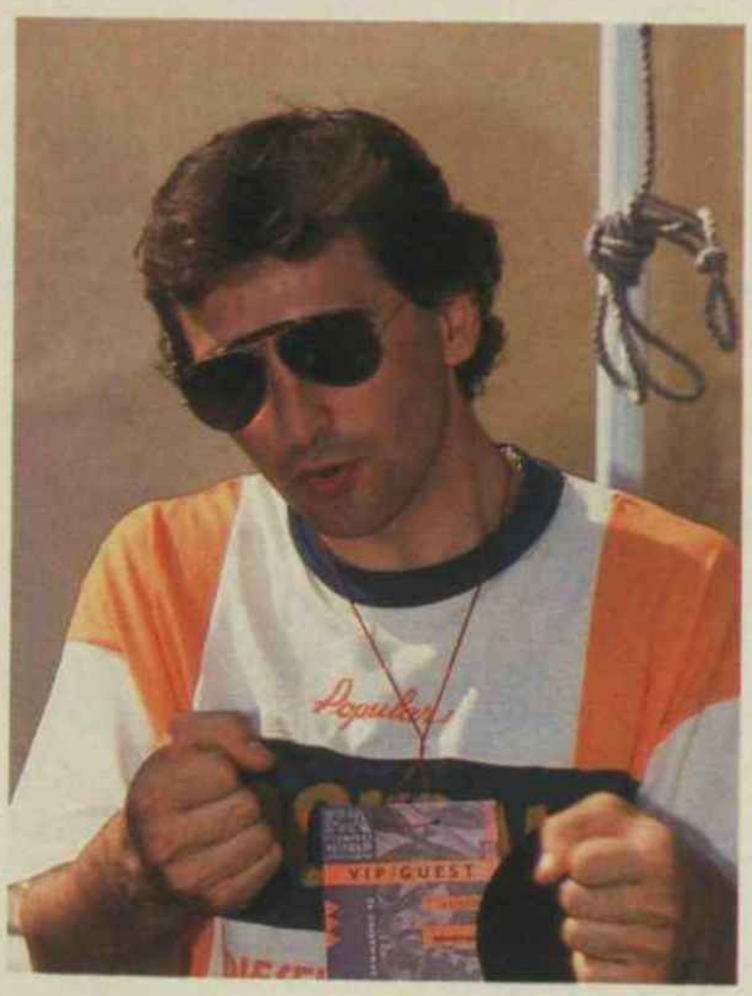
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THE LOG-JAM FOR F1 HOPEFULS





F1 testees Mark Blundell and Damon Hill (above) have oodles of F1 mileage under their belts, most of it accrued away from the public gaze rather than in the heat of a Grand Prix weekend. Alessandro Zanardi (left), one of many talented youngsters on the fringe of F1, practises the art of steering, just in case . . . Below, Eddie Jordan has earned a justified reputation for bringing on young drivers. He's played a key part in the development of Herbert and Alesi, and gave Michael Schumacher his F1 break.



continue to do new things. F1 at present has two divisions. To get from the second to the first you need to keep pushing."

The problem is that some teams choose to take pay drivers, but then allocate their money elsewhere.

Teams such as Jordan are seeking that fresh spark of success. For Williams, after a hyper-successful 1992 season, it is a different ball-game. Success is no longer hoped for, but expected. Expected above all by Frank himself, and partner Patrick Head, but also by Renault, Elf and myriad sponsors. Big business has less leeway for quixotic gestures.

But why has Williams been prevaricating, why didn't he sign Hill or Hakkinen without delaying? Ask the man himself those questions and it's interesting to see that after all the considerations and factors that present themselves aren't altogether different.

"We can't allow commercial considerations to decide our choice," he states firmly. "The decision has to be based on speed, and therefore talent. Some experience, too, because we have to be encouraged to believe the guy will score points regularly if the car is reliable and competitive. It's possible that 1993 will see us run someone who appears to abrogate those rules – Damon. But there are unusual circumstances there, because he's done over 20 or 30,000 kilometres in the car. Essentially though, we are looking for speed and sufficient commonsense and intelligence to finish races.

"Sure, Renault might say 'We'd love to have Alain Prost in the car', but there is never any pressure. Camel might say it would prefer to have a Frenchman or a German, because those are its best markets, but the truth is that the word pressure doesn't apply. They might instead indicate *preference*.

"Honda never put pressure on us, but after the thing was dead it did approach us to see if we would consider taking Nakajima as a means of reviving things.

"At the end of it all, the guy's gotta be quick. He's got to be blindingly quick. That's what counts."

What's taken the time at Williams is not just deciding who is quick, but also waiting for political situations within F1 to rationalise themselves so that it becomes fully clear just which drivers *are* available.

Meanwhile, down the road at Woking, Ron Dennis has been obliged to face some new situations chez McLaren, facing the lack of a topline performer for the first time since he steered the old McLaren organisation back to respectability. Senna seems gone, his love affair with the team over; Berger appears to have been seduced by Ferrari's plentiful lire. Michael Andretti is undoubtedly a very quick driver with a wide range of skills, and anyone who has seen him in Indycar action has little doubt that he is as aggressive, especially in traffic, as Senna. "But the fact remains that he has taken a gamble," insists Jordan. "The circuits, the technology and the racing will all be new to him, and even if he's a quick learner he's going to have a lot of fresh information coming at him every race. I think Ron took a brave decision."

Again, though, it's an indication of the Collins theory in action. Get the fastest guy you can in the car, and then let him learn. Watching Michael's progress will be one of the fascinating aspects of 1993. After all, Schumacher has shown that it can be done, for a rookie to burst aggressively on to the scene and win, and his performances have indeed proved at a stroke just what a difference a totally committed racer can make to a team. It's proof that there is always room at the top.

In any pyramid there will by definition be a greater number of objects at the bottom than at the top, but improvements in safety have prolonged careers, as has the conservatism wrought by the fresh accent on technology. It is staggering nonetheless how many good drivers there are still currently outside F1 for 1993: Alessandro Zanardi, Perry McCarthy, Mark Blundell, Eric Bernard, Ivan Capelli, Roberto Moreno, Andrea Montermini, Jean-Marc Gounon etc. The indications remain, however, that as long as commercial interests dictate driver choice, the next generation of stars will more than likely continue to be held back unless they can fund themselves into reasonable seats. Sponsors know about putting up funding and should stick to exploiting their investment in the marketplace. With few exceptions, they have precious little real idea about assessing levels of driver ability. Something so critical should be left in the hands of those who run the teams and the cars and have a more realistic appreciation of what's required. The sad thing is that they themselves are few and far between.

So, getting into an F1 seat generally requires money; getting into a really good one requires a blend of speed, experience and perceived charisma. And luck. Stick around long enough and it should happen for you, although poor old Martin Brundle proves an exception to that rule. None of the topline stars – Senna, Prost, Berger, Mansell, Patrese, Alesi or Schumacher bought their way in or paid their way to decent drives, but certainly the latter two got where they are despite rather than because of the system. But here's a thought: smooth-talking, sponsor-pleasing, guest-handshaking public relations men who race are all very well when it comes to off-track activities, but at the end of the day you still need *racers* to win. There aren't too many of them, and neither are there too many people in F1 who seem able to recognise them, but few of the top teams have room for passengers.

DJT

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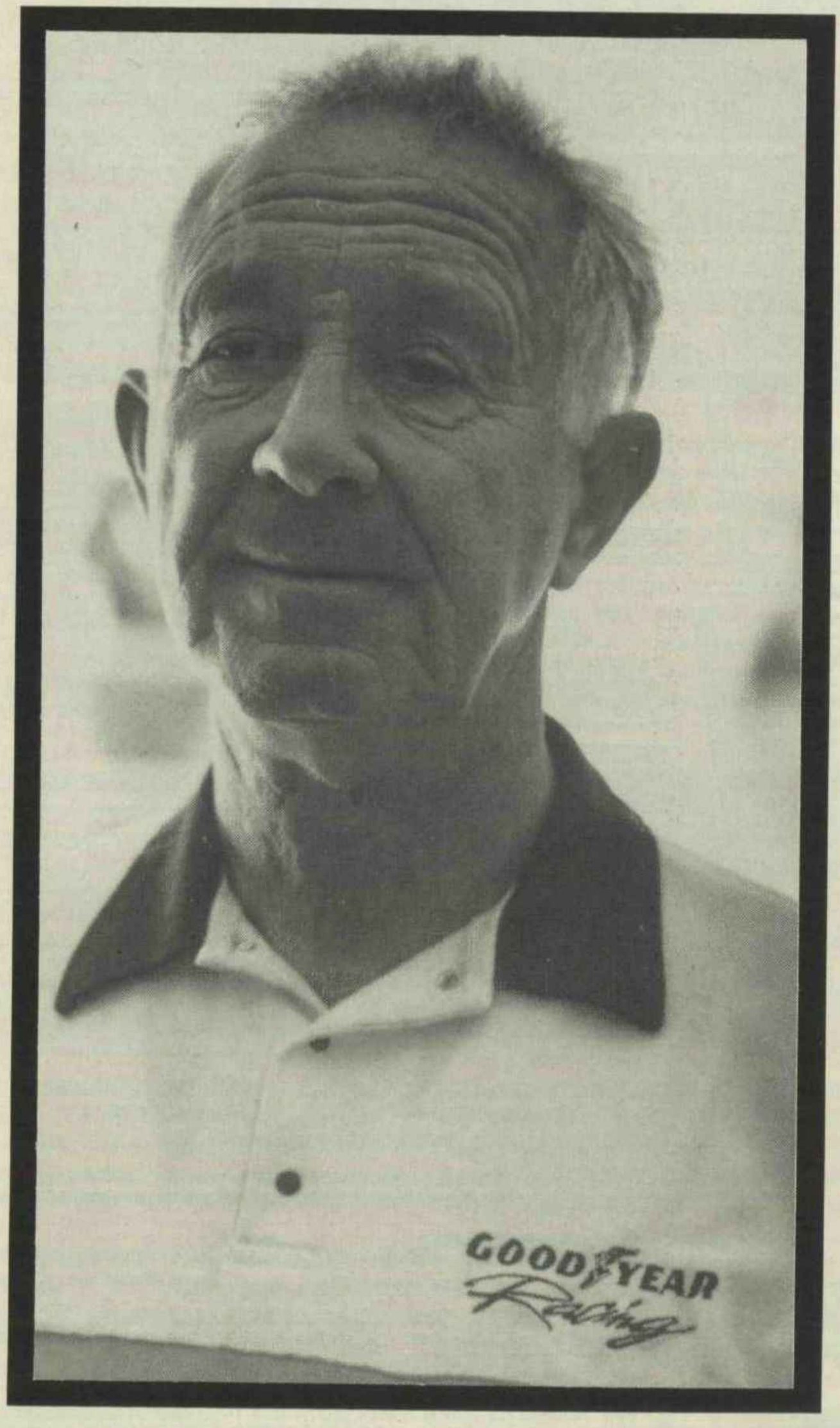
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Farewell



to a straight shooter

When it comes to telling things as they are, F1 can ill afford to lose men of the calibre of Goodyear's Lee Gaug

"A lot of them are spoiled, overpaid kids who are not responsible. They're good, but as people they're not as good as they ought to be. They don't appreciate where their pay cheques come from."

You could never accuse Lee Gaug of being bird-mouthed. He has always remained faithful to his creed of speaking his mind. As he headed for retirement from F1 in Adelaide the man who has overseen Goodyear's day-to-day involvement in the highest echelon of the sport for the past 12 years, and who has been with the company for 23, was not afraid to stand up for counting.

In the old days, I am told, Formula One was a regular round of weekend social gatherings in foreign fields between individuals from all walks of Grand Prix life. Meandering through the files of our photographic archives at LAT, I often come across the evidence that such gatherings really did happen; Dan Gurney wearing a top hat and Jimmy Clark a party topper during New Year celebrations at Kyalami, that sort of thing. Today they are virtually unheard of, as vested interest and the isolationist approach erects a barrier against fraternisation.

It is indication, therefore, of the esteem in which Lee is held in F1 circles, that Marlboro managed to organise an old-fashioned get together in Adelaide as we bade farewell to the Akron tyre manufacturer's manager of international motorsport.

We all crowded into a seafood restaurant, and while the cynics might say that you will always get a good media turnout to a free feed, it was heartening from our side of the fence to see just how many drivers came too. Came, and stayed all night. Only Nigel Mansell had to go before we ate, and that because of a prior appointment. Thus, to honour his 'retirement', Lee had the pleasure of the company of luminaries such as Ayrton Senna, Gerhard Berger, Riccardo Patrese, Thierry Boutsen and Michele Alboreto, while Frank Williams, Ron Dennis, Jack Oliver, Peter Warr, Prof Watkins and the like came too. None of them was there out of a sense of duty or obligation; in their own way each had come to show their appreciation of Gaug's unique character.

The first time I ever spoke to him, as an F1 greenhorn at a Spanish test session, he had all the time in the world and told me exactly what I wanted to know, puffing contentedly on the pipe that was never unlit for long and which reminded me irresistibly of Popeye. It was always the same with a man who stood as the epitome of integrity in an F1 paddock. Liars abound, but with Lee you always knew that you would get straight goods. Very often they were accompanied by a request to keep one of his straight shootin' responses off the record, but there was never any attempt at subterfuge. What you saw was what you got, and when you found the time a talk with Gaug was never dull. Frequently it was uproariously funny, as he trotted out his acerbic one liners, reducing the pompous at a stroke.

His record of 22 years as a fighter pilot with the US Marines undoubtedly went a long way to forming Lee's disdain for 'bullshit', and in his own way he did in his Grumman F7s and F86 Sabres what racing drivers do in their cars,

except that the latter operate without the threat that somebody up there is also trying to kill them. Having seen real life – and death – Gaug had no time for the shallowness that is such a feature of some F1 personalities. Once, flying over the Bermuda Triangle, his squadron came close to following an artificial compass reading until it disappeared into the Atlantic Ocean, but just in time somebody worked out that the ambient temperature was playing tricks with the readings. Gaug would dismiss such escapades in later life but there was no escaping the fact that he had Been There, and he had seen a downside of life that is well beyond the imagination – let alone experience – of many of today's stars.

"Much of the blame rests with the team owners who bid the prices up," he continued as he considered the role played by the drivers. "The Formula One system changes people. Success makes it hard for them to keep their heads straight."

It was the sort of deviation that it produces that led him to quit. For a long time the travel had been getting to him as he headed back to Akron after each GP – he always said that he earned so many free air miles that his family never paid for a flight – but the final straw was the manner in which FISA so cold-bloodedly dealt with the question of tyre regulations for 1993.

Gaug has never denied that there are two sides to every argument, and while there is a strong case for narrower rubber, he would have been happier to see the 18 inch rears continue. It was not so much the change, though, as the manner in which it was effected, that made up his mind to quit. Ask him his views on the way Formula One is headed, and he responds without pause.

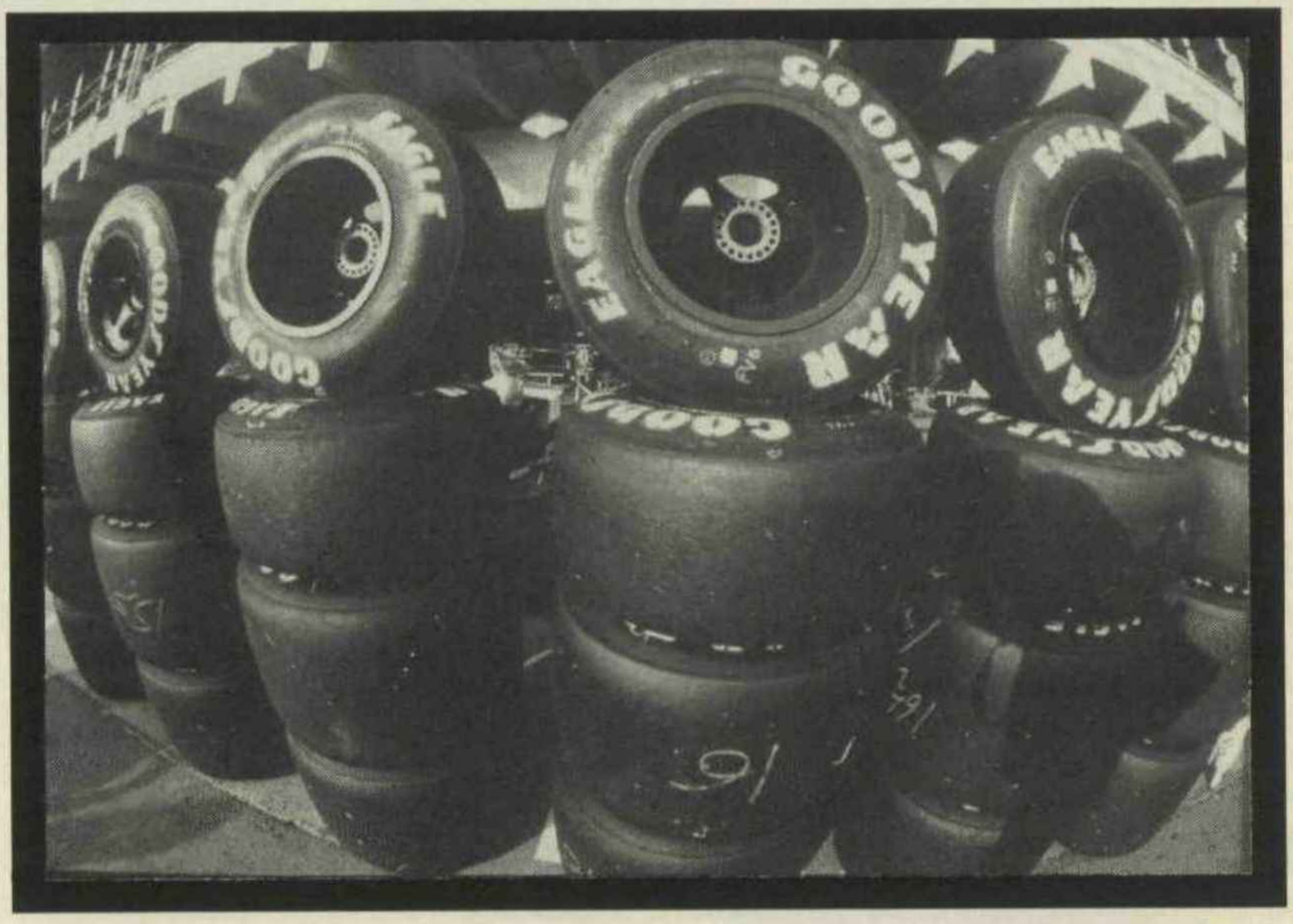
"I get very upset when I look at it. Decisions are being made by Bernie Ecclestone and a handful of other people. But they are the 'haves'. The 'have-nots', as well as the sponsors or suppliers such as Goodyear, are not involved in this process. My feeling is that they're trying to improve Formula One but are talking to the wrong people."

Given what Goodyear has done over the years – including 'saving' F1 during the 1987 crisis, his viewpoint is not hard to appreciate.

"Bernie has made Formula One viable, sure," he concedes, "but the more powerful a man becomes the less he listens. Maybe he's right. But nobody else has had a chance to provide any input into decisions which affect us all.

"To make a show of racing – and it should be entertaining – you have to do something technically to make the cars more evenly competitive. This way of making technology unlimited could well kill Formula One."

Insiders say that deciding to quit now was Lee's way of dealing with a situation whose integrity he questioned and was no longer prepared to countenance. From the journalists' point of view, 1992 has plumbed new depths. You spend a weekend minutely investigating a story such as the Mansell/Williams saga ready to write what you hope will be the definitive story for Monday's *Motoring News* deadline, only to read a different interpretation of the known facts in a daily newspaper on Thursday. Thus you prepare to concede that the story might have changed in the intervening days, check it out all over again, and satisfy yourself that you were right first time round. A week later the individuals at the heart of the story change everything round, and so it begins again. A month later the story swings back to square one. Uncertainty, prevarication, half-truths, zero-truths, commercial interest, day-to-day expediency and a smattering of real fact combine in a heady cocktail. Sometimes you feel you would believe anyone who told you that Nigel Mansell hadn't really won the 1992 World Championship.



The situation can have been no sweeter for an insider like Gaug, as the company whose interests he had so honorably represented was effectively blackmailed into acquiescence in a manner that suggested that all its past straight dealing and magnanimity to the sport counted for nothing in the eyes of F1's rulers.

The saddest part of Lee Gaug's farewell lay in the bronchitis that struck him down and prevented him appearing at the circuit after his Friday night party. That, and the figure he cut as, tired and unwell, he left Adelaide's airport on the Monday morning on his final homeward journey. When he finally arrived home, he had double pneumonia for company.

Was he going to carry on with Goodyear back home? I asked him. "Nope. I'm not gonna do anything. It's all finished," he replied. "I've given time twice now and I'm gonna concentrate on family matters and getting well again. I gave once to the Air Force and once to Goodyear. That's enough."

A lot of fuss has been made about Nigel Mansell leaving F1 and going to the Indycar series. Lee plans to do a few CART races himself: "I guess I might get to those around the Mid-Ohio and mid-West areas..." I which wonder of them F1 will really miss more. I'd like to feel that everyone who went to that party in Adelaide feels a sense of loss now that an immensely likable, straight shooter has walked off the stage. And it would be nice to feel that the powers-that-be acknowledge it to themselves, too. It's fashionable when somebody retires to say how much they'll be missed. In Lee Gaug's case, that's nothing less than the truth. **DJT**

Special builders



Dear reader,

You cannot really define a special builder, even though we probably all know one when we meet him, and like me you have probably got friends who are natural special builders. I know people who will rebuild or restore a vehicle so that when it is finished it is as near to the way it left its parent factory as makes no odds. A worthy job of work and very satisfying for the worker, but not very interesting to look at as far as I am concerned. If you are in the category of "the man in the flat 'at with the pipe" then such a rebuild or restoration will interest you enormously. This well-known phenomenon abounds everywhere, and just when someone has finished a long rebuild or restoration, he appears and taking his pipe out of his mouth he pronounces to all and sundry, "Very nice, but that gold line there should have been 7/16ths of an inch wide, not half an inch," or, worse, "That screw holding the cover on was only quarter-inch BSI on the Mark 1 model, this is a Mark 2 and it should be 5/16ths of an inch." His knowledge is unbounded, and he is invariably correct.

Now, a born special builder defeats "the man with the pipe" at every turn because his finished work bears no relation to anything that might have come out of a factory. It is the way he made it, or rebuilt it, and the nice thing is that the finished article probably reflects more about the worker's character than any part of the vehicle. At one club gathering there was a newly-finished project of a vehicle containing all the bits from the same manufacturer and on it was a notice which read: "This vehicle has not been restored, it is not pretending to be something it isn't, and is the way it is because I built it myself and it is the way I wanted it." The man with the pipe didn't say a word, but the bowl of his pipe glowed merrily as he sucked on it in silence.

Probably the best special builder most of us have known, or known about, was Colin Chapman, who was described, to use modern jargon, as a conceptualiser. Chapman's first car, built in a lock-up garage, was a special, just as his last Grand Prix car was, and you only have to look through his list of racing cars to appreciate the work of a born special builder. Even today's Formula One World Championship car (pictured above) is, by loose definition, a special, with chassis by Williams Engineering and engine by Renault Sport and almost every component benefiting from the engineering input of numerous firms in the outside industry. A one-off pure racing vehicle must surely represent the ultimate in the art of special building, at the pinnacle of sophistication and technical expertise and to be in charge of the whole engineering department of a successful racing team must be every special builder's dream.

Special builders are usually technical and engineering people who are audacious in their thinking. Among the most audacious were Enzo Ferrari and the numerous engineers who came under his influence. The recent appearance of Tom Wheatcroft's reconstruction of a Bi-motore Alfa Romeo makes you realise that, in 1935, when Luigi Bazzi created the two cars for Enzo Ferrari, they were examples of the special builder's aptitude – ie imagination and audacity.

At the time a Grand Prix car with a supercharged straight-eight engine ahead of the driver was fairly orthodox, but to produce a single-seater with a longer wheelbase and an engine behind the driver in addition to the one in front must be a classic example of special builder's audacity. With the proliferation of racing in the 1950s the demand for cars prompted a lot of natural special builders to go into business. They put into small production the products of their ingenuity and inventiveness. John Cooper, Colin Chapman and Eric Broadley were the three most successful leaders in this new motor racing era. Today competition is so prolific that no matter what form it takes there is a specialist firm providing a ready-made racing car. Ingenuity and audaciousness are left to the tuners who work on improving the standard product, in categories where it is allowed, and also in some where it is specifically forbidden!

In the days before competition cars were so readily available, a lot of special one-off cars were made, using production components, and a lot of these examples of the special builder's art still exist and are in constant use in VSCC events. Some have been 'improved' and others are still almost original, but all are in the fascinating realm of special builder. I find these are the ones that automatically attract me when I wander through a VSCC paddock at Silverstone. In addition to these pure specials, made from bits of this and that, almost every marque produces special versions of what were standard production cars. Bentley, Lagonda, Rapier, Riley, MG, Frazer Nash, Alvis, Alfa Romeo, Singer and others have all produced specials of the pre-classic period of motoring. Some are beautiful, some are horrendous, but good or bad, they show that the special builder is still with us and enjoying his self-chosen art. At the moment I would put the MG enthusiast at the head of this very active and enjoyable pastime, some of the results looking as if they had been conceived in 1933/34 at the heyday of MG racing. Some marques are not best suited to converting a tired old saloon model into a single-seat vintage racer, but nonetheless there is always someone who will give it a go. I love chatting with all those intrepid souls, for their enthusiasm is unquenchable. Some will say "looks awful, doesn't it, but it's the best I could do out in the shed", others will say "I didn't mean it to come out looking like it does. Somewhere along the line I lost my way" or "it doesn't look funny to me" and "you might think it looks horrendous, but I think it looks beautiful. After all, I made it." Like the man at the beginning of this story, they all made their car themselves and that's the way they made it. Good luck to them, I say.

One rather nice special was made from a production Alfa Romeo, many years ago. Not only was it nice looking but it was very successful. Recently it has undergone a restoration and it now looks just the way it did when it left the Alfa Romeo factory. From being an interesting special, and a successful one, it is now just an Alfa Romeo like any other Alfa Romeo, except that a lot of it is brand new, and it is not particularly successful. A good example of the work of the anti-special building faction in our midst. Very boring people, some of them.

My request for readers to let me know the occasion they first saw, heard and smelt, a racing car in action, not on film or TV but in the metal so-to-speak, is gathering momentum coming from readers from 18 to 80, all being bitten by the same bug. For the moment we are still on Memorable Moments, and this month's come from Michael Dennis in Hertfordshire, with an interesting alternative, namely three Memorable Moments he did not see, but would love to have seen:

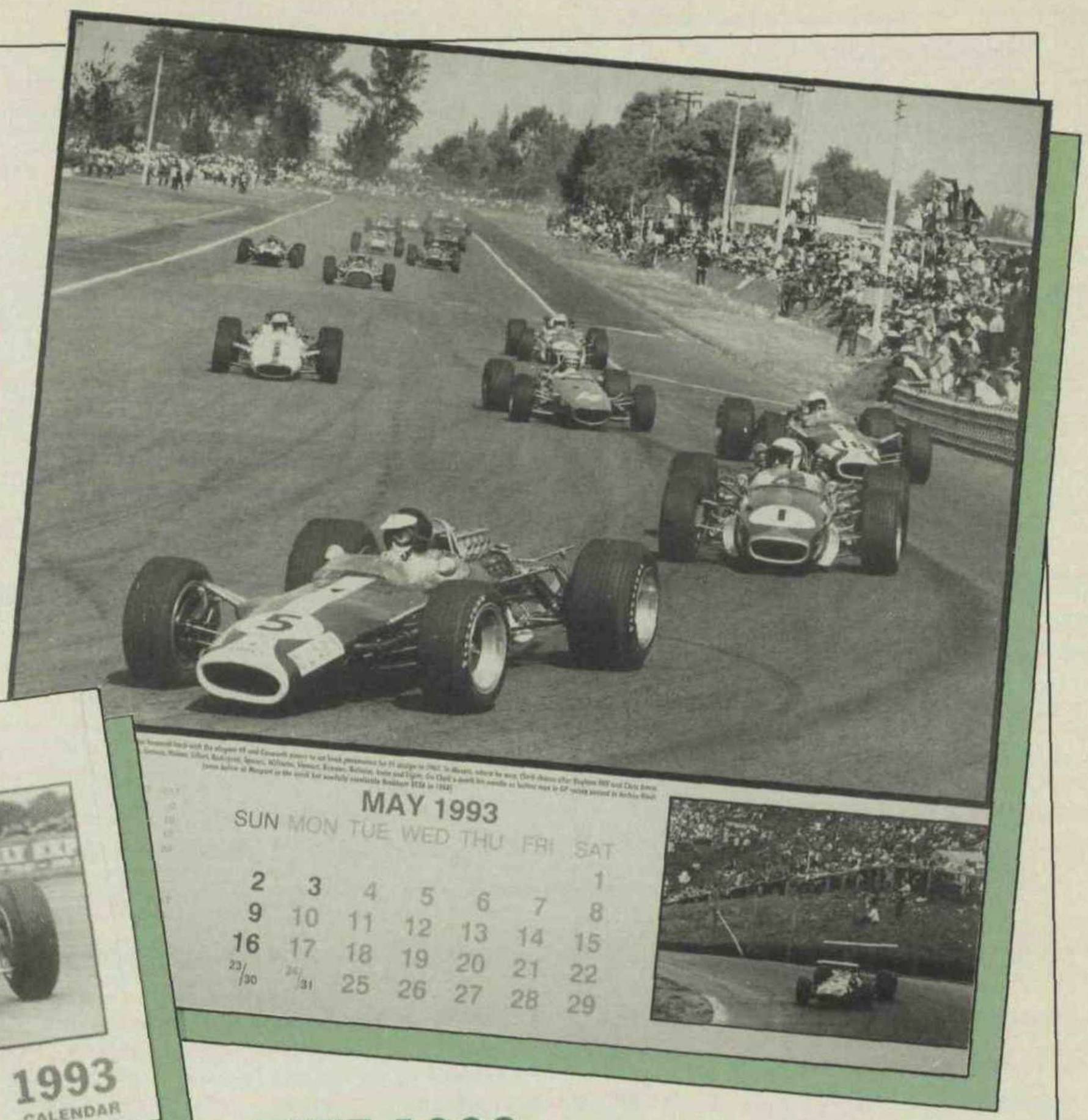
1. French GP 1979 at Dijon-Prenois to see René Arnoux and Gilles Villeneuve fighting wheel-to-wheel for second place.
2. Belgian GP 1970 when Chris Amon nearly scored a well-deserved victory at Spa-Francorchamps. The consolation was that a BRM actually won!
3. The Spa-Francorchamps 1000 km race in 1970 with Joseph Siffert and Pedro Rodriguez in those wonderful Porsche 917 cars, fighting for the lead right from the start of a 1000 km race. (Ooh! Yes, see December 1992 MOTOR SPORT page 1139 — DSJ.) Happy New Year to you all, and here's to another season of Memorable Moments.

Yours, DSJ

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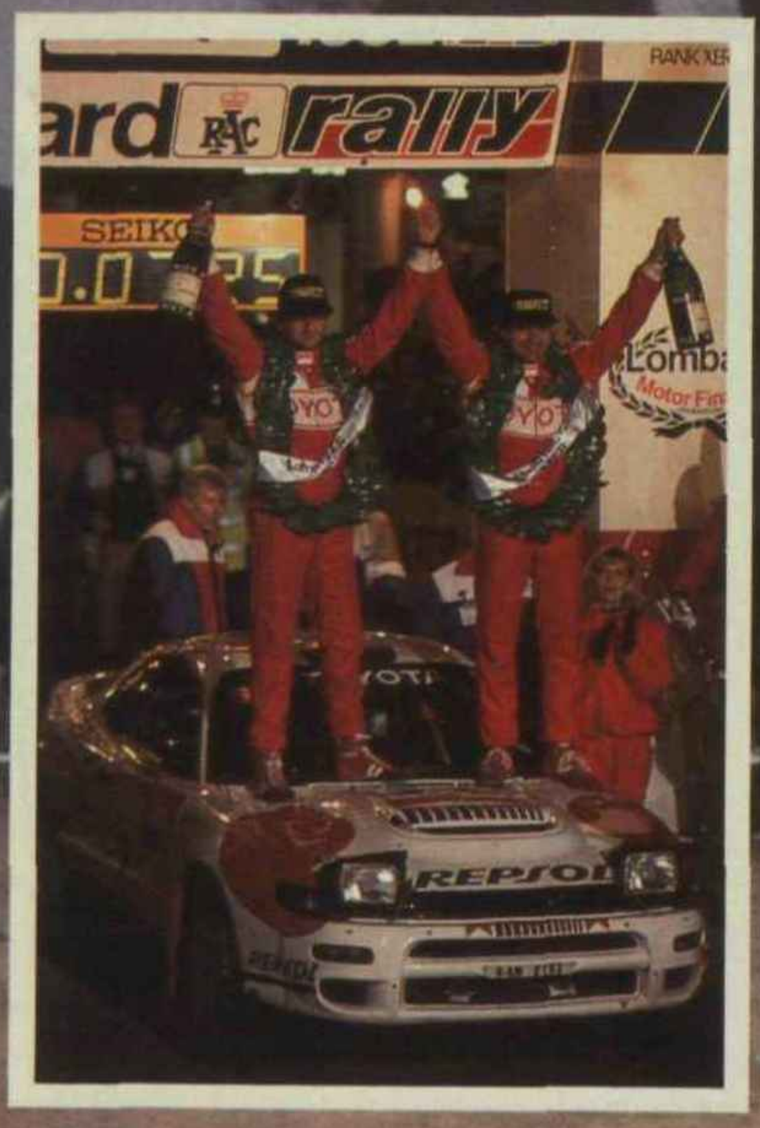
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Carlos Sainz's brace of victories in Spain and Britain (above) brouhgt him a second, and somewhat unexpected, world title.

Carlos'

The battle for the 1992 World Rally Championship became incredibly intense during the final two rounds. Against the odds, Carlos Sainz emerged from the British mud to claim a second world crown

fandango

CATALUÑA RALLY

Mohammed Bin Sulayem's Group N victory in Spain (below) was the first World Championship success for an Arabian driver. Local man Jesus Puras (right) fared well on home soil, taking his Lancia to sixth overall.





Had anyone been giving odds, after September's Australia Rally, that 1992 would not be the year that Didier Auriol would become the first Frenchman to win the World Rally Championship, he would not have had many takers. With six outright wins to his credit, Auriol was the favourite even though Carlos Sainz and Juha Kankkunen were not far behind on points.

Then came the disaster of the Sanremo Rally in October, when a wheel came off his Lancia on the first stage and he flew off the road and out of the rally. Nevertheless, he still led the series. Each of the three contenders gave the Bandama Rally a miss, but they were all in Spain in early November for the Cataluña Rally.

It was not a qualifier for the makes' section of the World Championship, but drivers' points were at stake and all eyes were on the tussle between the three contenders for the title. All six men in the three crews are good friends off duty but resolute rivals in competition, and in this particular event no holds were barred. It was a flat-out contest from the start, each of them going for outright victory rather than second or third.

Alas, it became just a two-way fight after the first stage of the second day, for Auriol suffered another component failure when a broken power steering hydraulic hose resulted in his Lancia going off the road and out of contention.

Martini Racing had Lancia Delta integrales for Auriol/Occelli, Kankkunen/Piironen and Andrea Aghini/Sauro Farnocchia. Alessandro Fiorio/Vittorio Brambilla drove a similar car of the Astra team, whilst others in Lancias were Gustavo Trelles from Uruguay and Spanish drivers Pedro Diego and Jesus Puras. A Group N Lancia was driven by Carlos Menem Jnr from Argentina.

Unlike Lancia, Toyota had been testing considerably in Spain prior to the event, and test driver Armin Schwarz, who won the rally in 1991, drove one of the two Celicas in the event, with Arne Hertz. The other was driven by Sainz, partnered as usual by Luis Moya.

Various changes had been made to the Celicas, notably to their suspensions and transmissions, but Toyota people were reluctant to talk about them. Sainz was the man the team wanted to win, but Schwarz had done all the testing and it was rather odd (but not the first time) that the two cars were different. For instance, Sainz had a viscous coupling (FF Developments) centre differential on his car whilst Schwarz used an electro-hydraulic (Xtrac) unit.

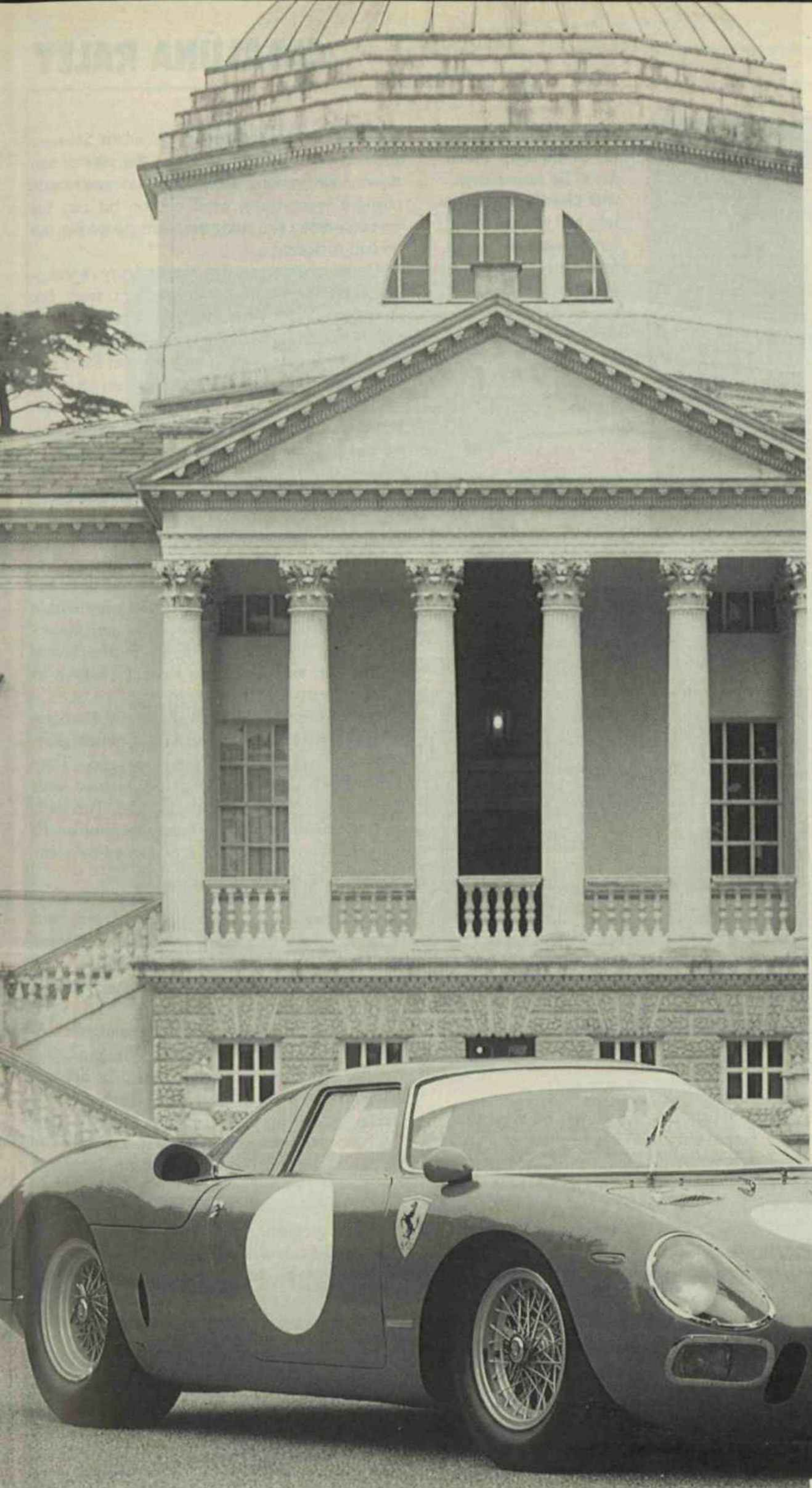
Ford's Spanish driver, Josep-Maria Bardolet, has been using a prototype Escort Cosworth 4x4 in the Spanish Rally Championship (dirt roads) throughout 1992, largely for testing prior to full use of the car after its January ratification. It was natural, therefore, that he should have a car for his country's premier event. He and Josep Autet drove a works Sierra Cosworth 4x4, as did the team's French pair, François Delecour/Daniel Grataloup.

There were two notable Group N versions of the Sierra Cosworth, both prepared in Great Britain. Fernando Capdevila/Alfredo Rodriguez drove a car built by Mike Taylor and Mohammed Bin Sulayem/Ronan Morgan one from the Mike Little workshop.

Having been shortened from four to three days in order to demonstrate readiness to comply with FISA's World Championship requirements for 1993, the rally ran through 28 special stages. Having tarmac and dirt roads in the same event is not popular since it increases both work load and cost, but at least they were well separated in Spain. All 11 of those on the first day were on tarmac and those of the next two days were on dirt roads.

Start, finish and both night stops were at Lloret de Mar, and there was a short regrouping stop at Cardona during each of the first two days.

Two significant things happened on the first stage on the Monday morning, a 10-miler on tarmac. Firstly, Menem went off the road and out of the rally, disposing of his Group N chances. Secondly, Sainz was fastest, followed by Schwarz, the Spaniard beating Aghini, the



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CATALÛNA RALLY



Fortunes were mixed in the Lancia camp. Didier Auriol (in conversation with Claudio Bortoletto, left) had to drive like fury to make the top 10. Juha Kankkunen (below) was a more relaxed second. Deltas took seven of the top 10 places.



fastest Lancia driver, by 14s.

The Lancia people could hardly believe that Sainz had been so much faster than their cars, even on tarmac, and some of them began to question the timing. But there had been no mistake, although at one stage the next day some apparent errors did show up.

As the day progressed, so the fight intensified, but Sainz steadily increased his lead until it had reached 1m 41s that evening. He had been off the road on one occasion during the day but had hit nothing and lost only a handful of seconds. Team-mate Schwarz was finding the handling of his car not to his liking, and was even without his advance note-making crew for the second part of the day – their car had blown its turbocharger – but he was still in the leading bunch immediately behind Sainz.

Meanwhile, Bardolet had been losing both power and time and was on his third turbocharger by the time the day was out. Ford hopes diminished even further when Delecour lost grip and rolled off the road, tearing the front right suspension off the car. He struggled to the end, had the suspension replaced and continued, albeit with his brakes not working properly, but by the time he had got to the next stage he had lost so much time that it would have been pointless to continue.

Fiorio lost a little time when his steering lost its power-assistance, and earlier he was given quite a scare when his seat broke loose on a special stage.

Behind Sainz at the end of the leg, only eight seconds separated Aghini, Schwarz and Auriol, in that order, whilst Kankkunen was another 35s behind.

On the first of the next day's stages Bardolet, his turbocharger then providing full power, demonstrated his experience of Spanish dirt roads by making best time in his Sierra. Although Aghini was only two seconds behind, it was certainly not an encouraging opener for the Martini team. Kankkunen lost time by first having a puncture and later going off the road and stalling his engine. But that was not all. Auriol had a power steering hydraulic pipe come off and, when a tricky road situation came up, he couldn't turn the wheel fast enough and went off the road, getting stuck on some soft earth. He eventually got away but lost something like half an hour and dropped to 33rd place.

To make up for his time loss on the first dirt stage, Kankkunen pulled out the stops and after three more stages he was up to third place, just 3s behind Aghini. Meanwhile, Auriol was having a struggle fighting his way past slower cars. In the Toyota camp, Sainz was happier after he had been given harder shock absorbers left over from 1991, whilst Schwarz seemed to have again assumed the role of test driver, for various electronic and suspension changes were being tried out on his car. He certainly didn't like being the team guinea pig, but he had to accept it.

On the third stage after the mid-day regrouping stop, Kankkunen was given a time five seconds greater than that on Piironen's stopwatch, whilst a Lancia man at the stage finish reported that his watch indicated that Sainz had been given a time eight seconds less than his actual time taken. The Martini team manager had been so suspicious of Sainz' times on tarmac that he had positioned a man at each stage finish to record all the leaders' times.

A complaint was later lodged and, that evening, it seems that the organisers referred to a 'back-up' watch and amended Kankkunen's time for this stage (SS21) to 7m 28s, which was neither the disputed given time nor the claimed time, but between them. It seemed more like a settlement of convenience than anything else and undermined the absolute confidence in the timing system that everyone must have if a rally is to work properly and fairly.

On the last stage but one of the day, Bardolet stopped when his propshaft broke, almost punching its way through the floor pan. They removed the broken part and continued with fwd only, but having lost much time. The shaft was then replaced, but Bardolet was over his 15 min maximum lateness at the start of the next stage and he was out.

Bin Sulayem had both battery and alternator changed after the latter stopped charging, and later had a broken front differential replaced. Fiorio's windscreen wipers stopped on one stage, which was particularly disconcerting as it had many muddy puddles.

That evening, Sainz still held the lead, but this time it was Kankkunen behind him, the gap being 1m 3s. Aghini was another 1m 10s behind, followed after another 1m 40s by Schwarz. Auriol had faught his way up to 14th place.

Chances of a change in the five special stages of the final day were pretty small. Both Sainz and Kankkunen seemed to slow fractionally, neither wishing to risk losing a place, but each keen to be ready to pounce should the other make a mistake. The man with absolutely nothing to lose, of course, was Auriol and he continued at unabated speed, making best time on each of the five stages and getting up to 10th place, thereby scoring one championship point.

Schwarz dropped a place to Fiorio after first his turbocharger then his centre differential failed, the latter stoppage sometimes causing his rear wheels to lock. Capdevila was delayed when much time was spent replacing various components in order to locate a mysterious electrical fault, eventually traced to a tiny electronic sensor. This handed the Group N victory to Bin Sulayem who became the first Arab driver to score a category win on a World Championship round.

Back at Lloret de Mar, the 1-2-10 of the three championship chasers made no difference to the general situation. Sainz had regained the lead, but Kankkunen was only two points behind and Auriol another one, which meant that the laurels were still up for grabs by the three contenders who would be fighting out on the Lombard RAC Rally, the closest last-round contest the series has seen.

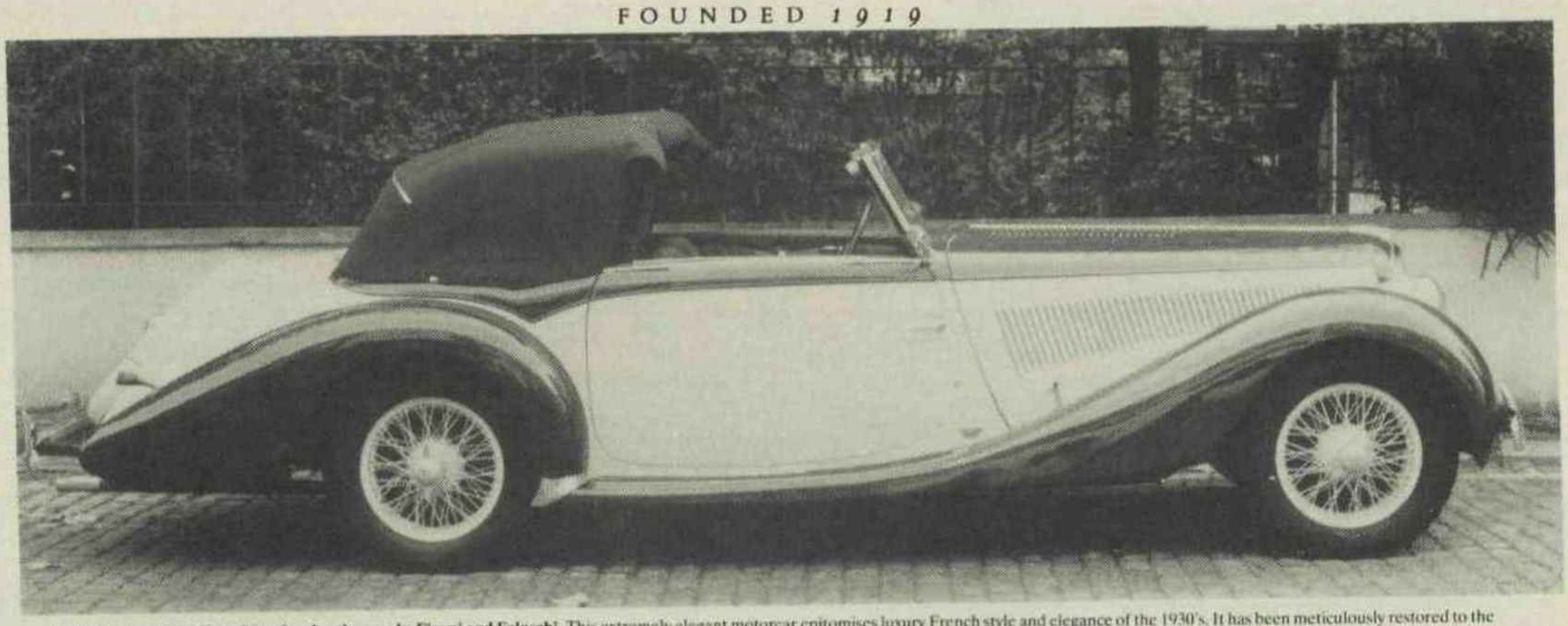
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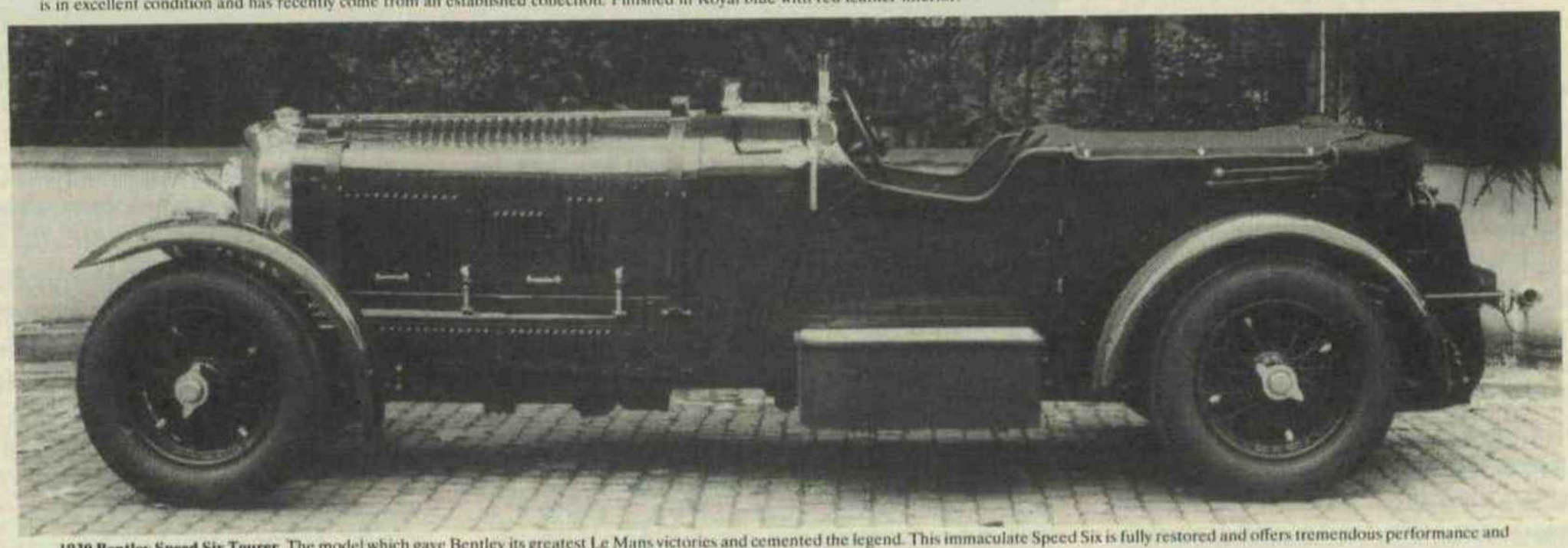
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Didier Auriol remained in the title hunt until his engine failed on Tuesday morning.

Second only to McRae in terms of media coverage? The Trabant 601R of Michael Kahlfuss and Gunter Friedmann guaranteed that many spectators would stay put long after the leading runners had passed through. The German crew eventually finished 98th overall.



At the end of November, when the Lombard RAC Rally signs were taken down in Chester, it marked the end of an era. Lombard North Central has been the primary sponsor of Britain's biggest sporting event for no less than 19 years, but 1992's rally was the final event under the association, not due to any breakdown of relationships but simply because Lombard felt that both sponsor and rally should seek new ties. It was by no means a snap decision, for it was declared even before the 1991 event.

Lest it be overlooked, we should point out that Lombard's link with the RAC Rally began not in 1974 but many years before that. Lombank Limited, as the company was then called, used to finance roadbook production, for instance, and present it to competitors in a latch-fastened plastic folder complete with many variously sized pockets to accept other documents. I still have such a roadbook, in its Lombank folder, from the 1962 event, which started in Blackpool, finished in Bournemouth and visited a whole string of the forests which Jack Kemsley had, two years before, introduced to the event.

Another Lombank feature was the holdall, and I do believe that the RAC Rally was the first event in the world to provide competitors with bags in which to carry their various bits and pieces. The black Lombank Bags became treasured, prestigious possessions, instantly recognised wherever rally people travelled. They were simple, inexpensive affairs, but merely carrying one immediately set its carrier apart from the crowd. Whether in Africa, Lapland, Greece or even on the Cols of the Monte Carlo Rally, possession of a Lombank bag drew immediate respect.

Having thus justifiably dwelt on the Lombard connection with the RAC Rally, without which the event might not have survived, let's move on to the 1992 event itself.

Not everyone agrees with it, but it has become the 'enforced' custom in World Championship rallying to compete by day and rest by night. The RAC followed this pattern, the event spanning four days separated by three night stops. Two of these were at Chester, where the rally started and finished, and one was at Carlisle.

The first leg, on the Sunday, visited parks and circuits in a tour of the Midlands, the second ran through North Wales, the third went through the Lake District and Kielder and the fourth, after the Carlisle night stop, into south-west Scotland. None of the Yorkshire forests was visited this year. The 34 special stages (one of which was cancelled) accounted for 352 miles in the total distance of just over 1550.

Reconnaissance of all the special stages, forests included, has been allowed since 1990, and this was the case this year. Timetables and strictly controlled speed limits had to be followed and the many checks on the latter resulted in 28 drivers being warned for exceeding the limit, two of them being fined £50 each for second offences. Of the 157 crews listed to start, 76 made recces of the whole route and another 35 parts of it.

One competitor, Bob Green from Burton-in-Kendal, failed to make the start as his Group N Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4 was stolen from behind a Chester guest house after it had



Despite a time-consuming shunt on day one at Donington, Tommi Mäkinen pressed on regardless to take an eventual eighth place.



Markku Alén was unable to keep pace with his title-chasing team-mate, but brought his Toyota home safely in fourth.

passed the scutiny procedure on the Saturday. It was later found abandoned in Liverpool after having been used in a ram-raid in Wigan.

Even though many service crews did not go to Chester until after the first leg, preferring to get into their first day positions, the city was nevertheless packed with rally people, and those who found hotels with car parks were indeed fortunate, especially if they were within walking distance of rally headquarters in the city centre International Hotel.

The rally attracted a splendid field of starters, among them no less than 15 A-seeded drivers representing six factory teams. Martini Racing brought three Lancia Delta integrales for Kankkunen/Piironen, Auriol/Occelli and Aghini/Farnocchia.

Toyota had also entered three cars, but the intention was to bring just two, their crews depending on the result of the Cataluña Rally. The actual crews were Sainz/Moya and Alén/Kivimäki, but had Sainz not scored enough points in Spain to keep him in contention for the world title, his place in the RAC would have been taken by Mats Jonsson, for whom an entry had been made, though this was subsequently not taken up.

Ford gave its French crew a rest for this event and took two Sierra Cosworth 4x4s to Chester for Biasion/Siviero and Wilson/Thomas. It was the Sierra's last factory appearance before being replaced by the Escort Cosworth 4x4 in January. A third car, entered privately, was driven by Evans/Davies, whilst Group N Cosworth 4x4s were driven by Capdevila/Rodriguez and McRae/Senior, this particular McRae being Alister, son of Jimmy and brother of Colin.

Another Group A Sierra Cosworth was driven by Finnish girl Eija Jurvanen who, with Marjo Berglund, only needed to start the event to secure the World Championship Ladies' Cup. RAC veterans Brookes/Wilson were in another Sierra Cosworth, down at number 67!

Subaru's main hopes were pinned on Colin McRae who, with Ford's Malcolm Wilson, were the two most likely drivers to be bidding for the special, end-of-sponsorship-term award of £100,000 put up by Lombard for the winner, provided he/she was British. Two Legacies were entered, for McRae/Ringer and Vatanen/Berglund. Eklund/Johansson brought another Legacy from Sweden, entered by Clarion.

The RAC was Nissan's last event, at least for the time being. Two Sunny GTI-Rs were entered for Mäkinen/Harjanne and Blomqvist/Mellander. Nissan Belgium sent a Group N version for de Mevius/Lux, contenders for the world Group N title.

There were two Mitsubishi Galant VR-4s for Eriksson/Parmander and Lampi/Kuukkala, and another from Finland for Group N exponents Kytölehto/Silander. Skoda had two Favorits for Sibera/Gross and Berger/Miroslav, whilst others in two-wheel-drive cars were Metcalfe/Grindrod (Vauxhall Astra) and Burns/Reid (Peugeot 309 GTi). Right at the end of the field, at number 167, came a Trabant 601R driven by German crew Kahlfuss/Friedmann.

Sunday dawned even wetter than the Saturday, and the prospect was for decidedly slippery stages on the mixed tarmac and dirt surfaces of the parks and circuits. These totalled just 36 miles, so that very little could be gained by driving flat out. On the other hand, a little mistake could cost a lot, so most people drove cautiously on the opening day.

Oulton Park was used twice (first and ninth) and by the time the runners returned for the final stage there was much mud and rubble even on the tarmac sections of the stage. Evans spent two minutes in a ditch at Weston Park, Kankkunen hit a post in Sutton Park, whilst at Donington, where two stages were held, Mäkinen hit a wall backwards, breaking the left rear suspension and smashing rear and left windows. Alén was slowed by a broken gearbox linkage which left him with only fourth.

Many people were losing odd seconds by spinning, but McRae lost a dozen when he hit straw bales on the first of two Clumber stages. At Clumber, like Donington, the stage was used twice in quick succession, cars starting their second runs between cars starting their first. This was not very popular, Kankkunen, Eriksson and others, whilst on their second runs, catching up with slower cars still on their first runs.

At Chatsworth, narrow and decidedly tricky, de Mevius lost 20 seconds when his engine stopped after the watersplash, whilst Vatanen emerged noisily after his exhaust pipe broke.

At the end of the day, just 40 seconds divided the first and seventh, Sainz leading Biasion by 20 seconds. Colin McRae was another 5s behind, followed closely by Kankkunen, Wilson, Alén and Auriol.

That was the order of restart for the second day because the first day's stage distance was more than 10 per cent of the total stage distance which, under FISA rules, allowed the organisers to restart in order of classification, not in numerical order.

On an equally wet and murky Monday, 145 cars left Chester from 5am onwards, heading for North Wales where the forest tracks were muddy and often covered by pools of water. This was the start of the real rally as far as competitors were concerned, but many of them had not expected conditions to be as slippery as they were.

In Dyfnant, Wilson lost some three minutes when a front halfshaft broke, the flailing piece damaging both the turbocharger and the centre differential. He dropped from fifth to 14th as a result. On the same stage, Metcalfe rolled his Astra but continued after being righted by spectators.

Mäkinen collected a left rear puncture in Myherin Forest, as he had in Dyfnant, and Kytölehto's rally came to an end in Myherin when his suspension collapsed. De Mevius damaged his left rear bodywork against a wall and Alister McRae lost his rear bumper.

Biasion lost time in Hafren Forest when his turbocharger stopped working, whilst Vatanen also needed a replacement turbo.

After the usual service stop in a crowded Machynlleth came stages in Pantperthog, Dyfi and Gartheiniog, which is where Colin McRae moved up to take the lead. Later he clipped a rock which made his steering stiff but this was no great worry and he still held the lead back at Chester, albeit by just two seconds from Sainz.

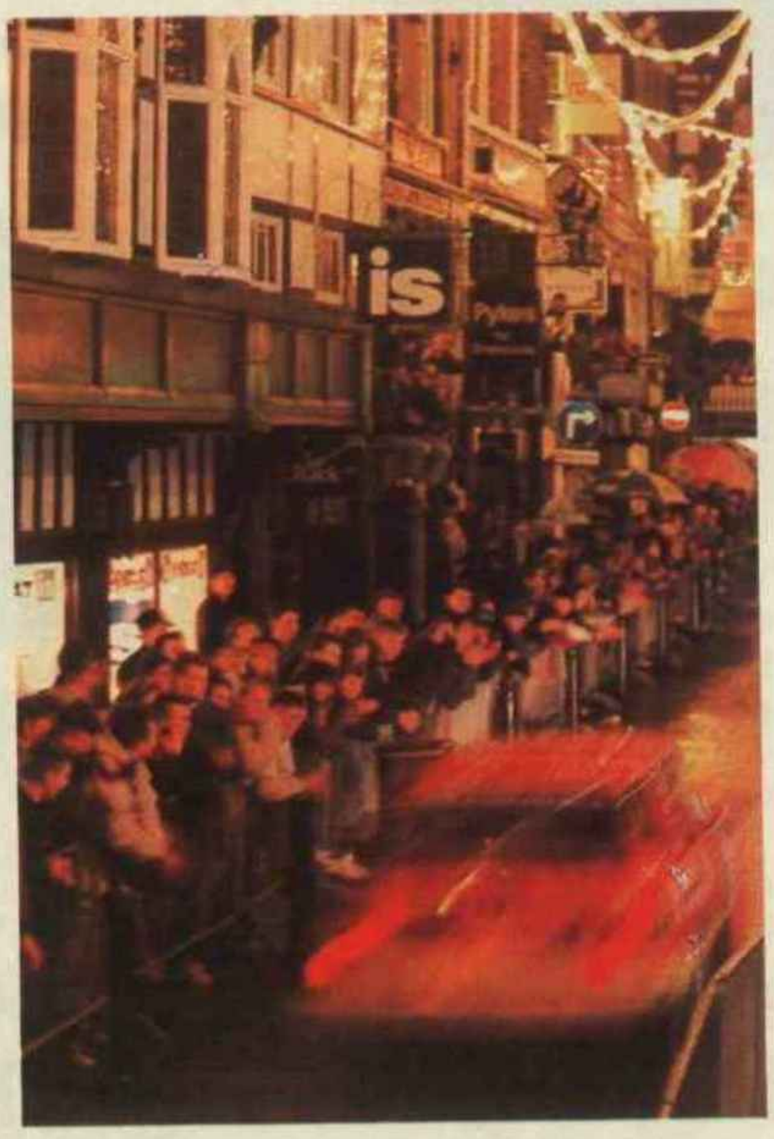
Alén had twice needed a new pedal box, Blomqvist lost his power steering pump drive belt, and Wilson lost some 20 seconds when he overshot a junction. Evans, having succeeded



Miki Biasion (right) was eventually the best Ford representative on the overall leader board, the Italian finishing fifth.



Alister McRae (left) returned to Chester in 14th spot, as a comfortable Group N winner.



Kenneth Eriksson (main picture, far left) preserves his tyres as he heads for seventh place.

Malcolm Wilson (right) set more fastest times than anyone bar McRae, though various problems dropped him to ninth.



this time in passing literally by his front door near Machynlleth, had the misfortune in Clocaenog, the last stage of the day, to hit a rock very hard, causing serious frontal damage. He struggled to the end of the stage but gave up trying to go further and retired.

Throughout the day there had been huge traffic queues but these were only to be expected, for bad weather has never deterred spectators in Wales. Some of the stages had been so wet that driver after driver had to dry their electrical systems before being able to restart their engines. Better waterproofing might have avoided this. Long radio antennae were also giving trouble by flicking back and smashing rear screens. One car twice needed a replacement rear window for this reason. The use of shorter, quarter-wave antennae would solve the problem.

Behind McRae and Sainz, Auriol had moved up to third, followed by Kankkunen, but both had been finding it very difficult to make any impression on Sainz. The latter was not concerned about McRae, and would have been happy for him to win Lombard's £100,000. His main concern was to be ahead of Auriol and Kankkunen to win the world title. Alén was fifth, followed by Vatanen, Biasion and Wilson. After this second day the gaps were generally bigger and more than four minutes separated first from eighth.

The third day took the 126 remaining cars first to Grizedale where McRae had his hopes of a home win shattered. On a road section leading to the first stage his car was hit by a non-competing car overtaking towards him. The damage seemed little at the time, but once into the two adjacent Grizedale stages, between which no service was allowed, he collected a puncture, lost his front brakes and experienced transmission trouble. He lost nearly four minutes and dropped to seventh.

Another to drop out here was Capdevila, who stopped with a seized differential. Alister McRae still led Group N, but de Mevius now stood a good chance of taking the world title in that category.

Among the two-wheel-drive contingent, Burns' Peugeot lost a front wheel when its studs broke off. He drove out on three wheels and had everything replaced but, amazingly, the very same thing happened in Pundershaw towards the end of the day. This time, there was no carrying on and Metcalfe found himself virtually unchallenged among the non-4wd drivers.

A delay at Kershope due to an ambulance having to go in to take out a spectator who had collapsed resulted in a queue of cars lined up at the start. As it got later and the light began to fade, many of the drivers became concerned because they didn't have their auxiliary lights fitted. Contact was made with Rally HQ and, for reasons of safety, the stage was cancelled. Many of the disappointed and angry spectators travelled to Shepherdshield where they blocked the road, but when officials explained that this would only result in another cancellation, they dispersed.

Incidentally, anyone sending a Kershope car park receipt to the RAC MSA will have the parking fee refunded.

RAC RALLY



Partnered by father Francis, himself a noted Beetle exponent, young Richard Tuthill just pipped the Trabant in his VW Fusca, as the Brazilian-built antiques are known.

At the Newcastleton regrouping stop, Auriol had his turbocharger changed, but on the Wauchope stage which followed he felt that his engine was still not performing as it should. One stage later, Broomylinn, the Lancia's engine gave up completely and the man who won six World Championship events in 1992 lost all his chances of being the first Frenchman to take the crown.

In Pundershaw, Blomqvist went off the road, crashed into a tree and retired, whilst Biasion damaged his rear suspension. Wilson also lost a chunk of time when he went off the road and caused severe left frontal damage, later getting to the finish on three wheels. A comprehensive service operation followed, but it had all amounted to the loss of nearly seven minutes.

Ironically, his two-wheel-drive rival having retired following the loss of a wheel, Metcalfe stopped in Pundershaw for the same reason. There was very little room to pass and, although de Mevius managed to squeeze by, Eklund didn't make it and put his Subaru into a ditch, thereby blocking the whole road for a while.

Eventually, Metcalfe managed to struggle on and indeed got into Carlisle, but did not restart the next day, leaving the honour of leading the two-wheel-drive cars to Sibera in his Skoda.

At Carlisle, Sainz only had Kankkunen challenging him for the title, and the gap between them was just 1m 16s, certainly not enough to feel secure. In the morning, the fight would no doubt resume.

Behind Kankkunen, Vatanen was another 1m 35s behind, followed after another 1m 6s by Alén. Biasion was just six more seconds behind, in fifth place, but concerned lest he be overhauled by Colin McRae who had closed to just six seconds behind him. In seventh place was Eriksson, the best part of six more minutes behind.

Up in Scotland the best show among the 103 survivors was expected to be made by Sainz and Kankkunen, but it did not last long. At Dalbeattie, the day's first stage, Kankkunen hit an unexpected mud hole and his windscreen was immediately obscured. Before the wash-wipe switch could be hit, the car left the road and hit a rock, badly damaging the front right suspension. By the time the Finn could get off the stage, three minutes had been lost, leaving Sainz with such a margin that he could then afford to ease off fractionally to avoid risks. That was really the end of the battle for the lead.

Biasion lost time with a broken suspension, but Colin McRae could not take advantage of this because he too damaged his front suspension by going off into a ditch and losing nearly five minutes.

Punctures seemed to be more prevalent in Scotland than anywhere, even Kielder, and Mäkinen's already considerable tally of flat tyres increased by three that we know of, the first occurring in Glengap. It was here that Wilson's alternator stopped charging and had to be changed. One stage later, near Loch Derry, he hit a rock, puncturing the right rear tyre and breaking the damper. His misfortunes were not over, because later he had a spot of turbocharger trouble.

Lampi's intercom stopped working and Alister McRae joined the long list of those who had collected punctures.

At Newton Stewart, where there was a 30-minute regrouping stop, Vatanen caused some amusement by going into a hotel near the control, consulting his watch and politely asking the desk clerk, "May I have a room for seventeen minutes, please?"

That was about the end of it. The last stage was in the Forest of Ae, where the route went past Gubhill Farm but not around the famous wall-lined hairpin which attracted so many photographers in the past. After that, it was a long motorway drive back to Chester for the celebrations.

Toyota had two reasons to celebrate, for Sainz had recovered from an indifferent start to the season to pip Auriol at the post for the title. The Frenchman, who joins Toyota for 1993, must have felt pretty dejected, whilst Lancia didn't have much to smile about either, for Kankkunen had lost his second place to Vatanen.

Whilst the Prodrive and Subaru people were disappointed by McRae's mishap, they were delighted at his performance when things were going well and have high hopes for his future. Vatanen's second place did much to keep the team faces smiling. In the Nissan camp, Mäkinen would undoubtedly have been higher than his eighth place were it not for punctures, but everyone was delighted by de Mevius' clinching the world Group N title. **GP**

Cataluña Rally of Spain – 9 - 11 November, 1992

Results

1.	Carlos Sainz (E) / Luis Moya (E)	Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4, Gp A	6h 21m 13s.
2.	Juha Kankkunen (SF) / Juha Piironen (SF)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 21m 49s.
3.	Andrea Aghini (I) / Sauro Farnocchia (I)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 22m 45s.
4.	Alessandro Fiorio (I) / Vittorio Brambilla (I)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 27m 39s.
5.	Armin Schwarz (D) / Arne Hertz (S)	Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4, Gp A	6h 29m 43s.
6.	Jesus Puras (E) / Alex Romani (E)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 29m 43s.
7.	Gustavo Trelles (U) / Jorge del Buono (U)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 31m 30s.
8.	Pedro Diego (E) / Iciar Muguerza (E)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 43m 30s.
9.	Mohammed Bin Sulayem (UAE) / Ronan Morgan (EIR)	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4, Gp N	7h 02m 13s.
10.	Didier Auriol (F) / Bernard Occelli (F)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	7h 12m 12s.

74 starters; 31 finishers

Lombard RAC Rally of Great Britain – 22 - 25 November, 1992

Results

1.	Carlos Sainz (E) / Luis Moya (E)	Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4, Gp A	5h 23m 06s.
2.	Ari Vatanen (SF) / Bruno Berglund (S)	Subaru Legacy 4wd, Gp A	5h 25m 22s.
3.	Juha Kankkunen (SF) / Juha Piironen (SF)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	5h 25m 51s.
4.	Markku Alén (SF) / Ilkka Kivimäki (SF)	Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4, Gp A	5h 26m 35s.
5.	Massimo Biasion (I) / Tiziano Siviero (I)	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4, Gp A	5h 26m 47s.
6.	Colin McRae (GB) / Derek Ringer (GB)	Subaru Legacy 4wd, Gp A	5h 31m 14s.
7.	Kenneth Eriksson (S) / Staffan Parmander (S)	Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, Gp A	5h 33m 26s.
8.	Tommi Mäkinen (SF) / Seppo Harjanne (SF)	Nissan Sunny GTi-R, Gp A	5h 35m 07s.
9.	Malcolm Wilson (GB) / Bryan Thomas (GB)	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4, Gp A	5h 35m 26s.
10.	Andrea Aghini (I) / Sauro Farnocchia (I)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	5h 37m 58s.

157 starters; 101 finishers.

1992 World Rally Championship Result

Drivers (After all 14 rounds)

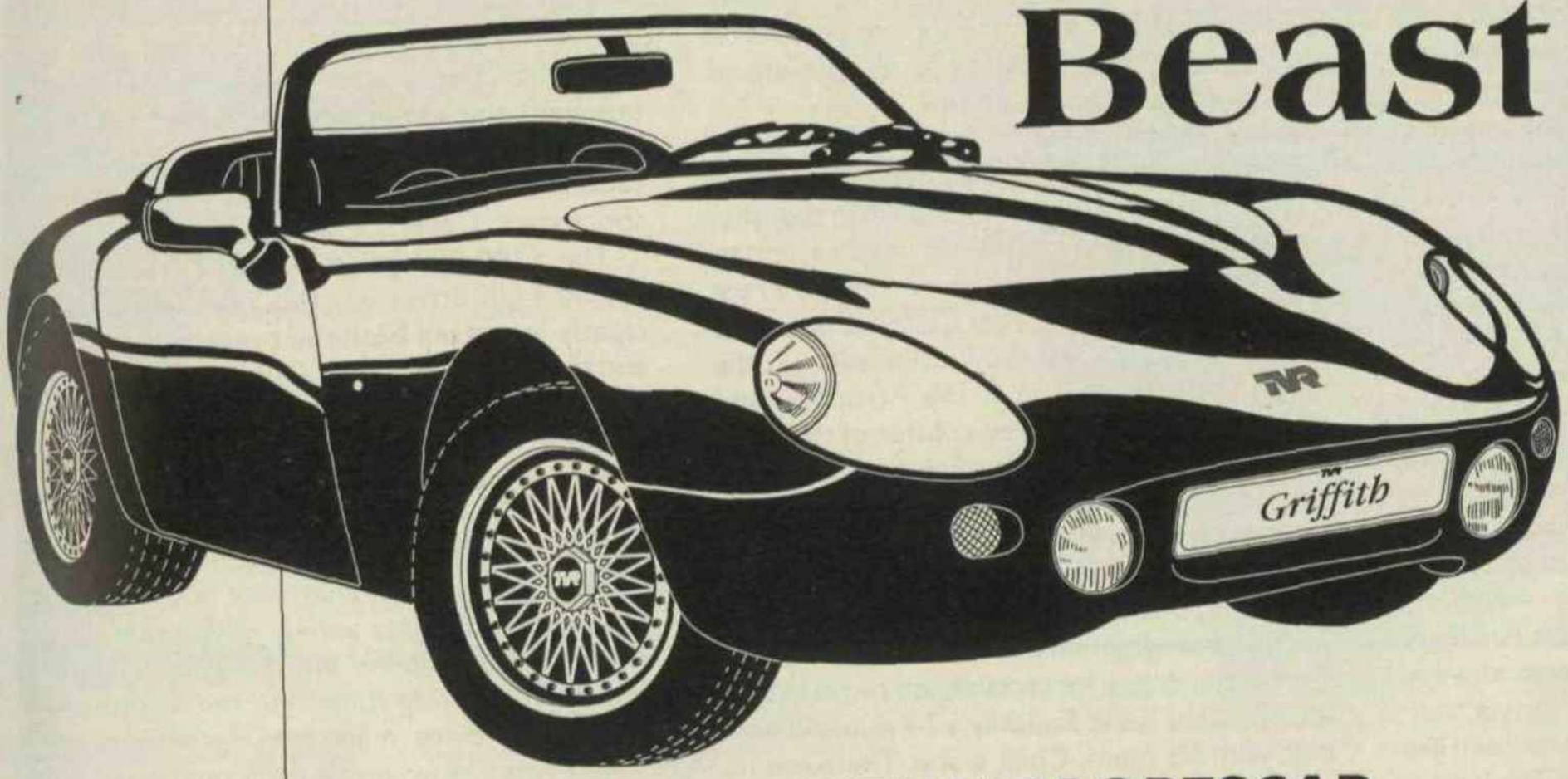
Carlos Sainz (E)	144 pts.	Andrea Aghini (I)	39 pts.
Juha Kankkunen (SF)	134 pts.	Colin McRae (GB)	34 pts.
Didier Auriol (F)	121 pts.	Alessandro Fiorio (I)	32 pts.
Massimo Biasion (I)	60 pts.	Jorge Recalde (RA)	28 pts.
Markku Alén (SF)	50 pts.	Ari Vatanen (SF)	25 pts.
François Delecour (F)	45 pts.	76 drivers have scored points.	

Makes (After all 10 rounds)

Lancia	140 pts.	Nissan	37 pts.
Toyota	116 pts.	Audi	10 pts.
Ford	94 pts.	Renault	9 pts.
Subaru	60 pts.	Opel	2 pts.
Mitsubishi	44 pts.		

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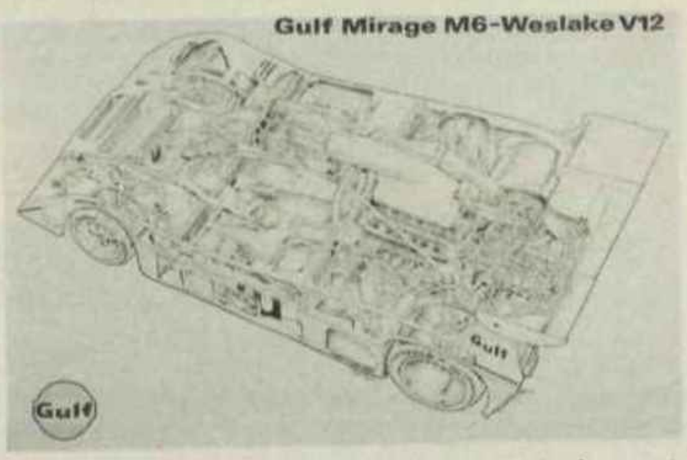
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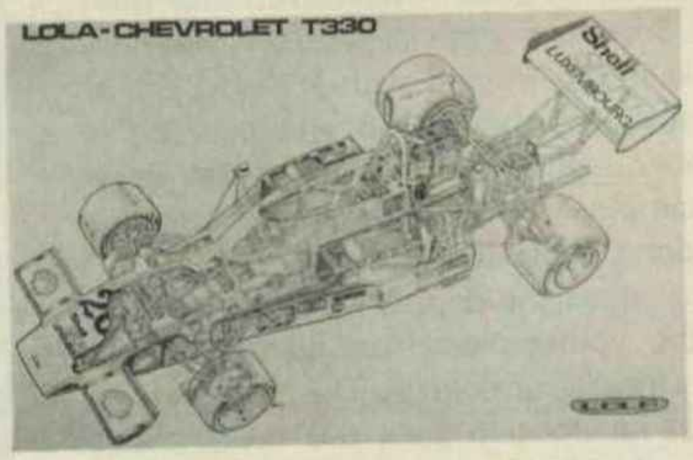
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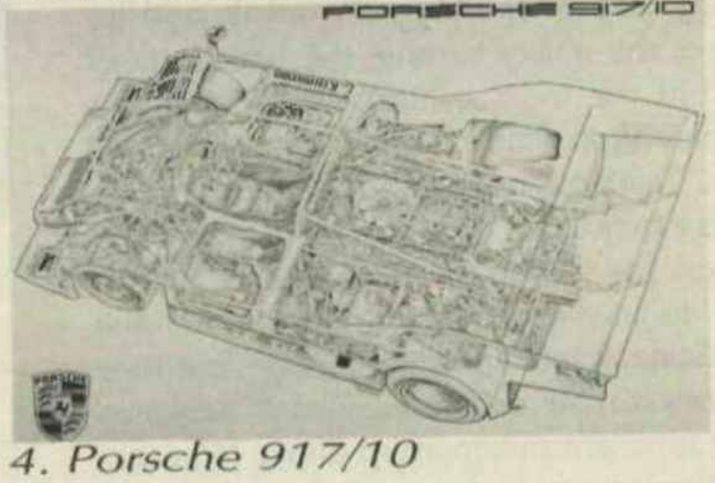
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Who *is* Colin McRae?

Colin McRae is a phenomenon. A purveyor of stunning stage times and spectacular accidents. A winner with a winner's confidence. At the ripe old age of 24 he has stamped his mark indelibly on the world rallying scene, in a sport where you are not considered to be at your peak until pushing 30.

After Colin's second place on this year's Swedish Rally, Stig Blomqvist, a contemporary of Roger Clark, reckoned the Scot to be the best rally driver this country has ever produced. On the Acropolis Rally Armin Schwarz raved about the tyre tracks Colin was leaving behind, the German Toyota driver expecting to discover a very battered Subaru Legacy around every corner. He was to be disappointed for Colin finished fourth to match his father's performance of 1989. The Finns are not renowned for cheering foreign drivers, especially now they have started to win their beloved 1000 Lakes, yet they took to Colin like a long lost son. Toivonen returned? The Italians lapped him up even though he put Lancia's nose out of joint by winning the 1991 Bettega Memorial Rally in its own backyard. A man with the Midas Touch.

A man totally unfazed by big accidents, too. Two years ago he arrived in Harrogate at the end of the RAC Rally with his RED-prepared Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4 looking as though it had been in a demolition derby. One of its rear doors was held closed by a latch from a farm gate, no corner had escaped unscathed, and yet he was sixth after setting a string of fastest times on his home Scottish stages.

Enter Dave Richards, a man whose life has been a series of goals – perceived and then attained. Sure, everyone knew Colin was fast, but could he be trusted with a works drive? Clearly Richards thought so and now he is confident enough to tip his young charge to be world champion in 1994. When Richards makes a prediction people listen.

So what does the dapper boss of Prodrive see in the young man from Lanark? Colin possesses innate car control. The impression is given that he doesn't think too much about what he is doing, that he just gets in and goes. Watching him on the stages is a joy, and he possesses the ability to take the breath away even from the most cynical hack. Prodrive's mechanics often allude to how their man loves to drive. Testing is not a chore with Colin, belt him into a rally car and he is in his element. On the loose the Subaru is flung round like an Escort. His lines are more flamboyant than the likes of Sainz, Kankkunen and Biasion, but they are usually totally accurate. This is achieved with an apparent minimum of effort. Whereas Auriol, Biasion and Delecour sit hunched over the wheel, urging their mounts on, Colin adopts a very relaxed stance at the controls. He is helped in this by the Subaru, which is regarded as the best chassis in the pack, its turn-in visibly better than the rest. In-car camera work gives credence to the belief that the car's speed is indirectly proportional to Colin's input; the use of the semi-automatic gearbox, which is operated by two buttons on the steering wheel, increases the feeling of Colin's laid-back, total control.

Only Auriol of his contemporaries has a similar ability to pull mind-numbing stage times out of the bag. Today's World Championship rallies are won by seconds not minutes, and to pull out 10 seconds over a single stage is a rare occurrence nowadays – yet Colin has done it at home, on the ice and snow of Sweden, in the rough and tumble that is the Acropolis, and over the high speed roller-coaster of the 1000 Lakes. Furthermore a dazzling time is usually recorded immediately after a problem, often a roll, as on the 1991 RAC Rally following his much publicised off in Grizedale. In terms of sheer speed only Auriol can match him.

The photographer's dream he may be, the journalist's dream he certainly isn't – no king of the one-liner here. Basically a 24 year-old who lives with his mum, Colin is shy. There are no sides to him, however, and approaches at service halts are generally met with an affable response. Naturally, he has come under glare of the national press, and the Fleet Street hacks have been impressed by the way in which he has dealt with the pressures heaped upon him; not by a flurry of glib throwaway quotes, with which they love to pepper their articles, but with the underlying self-belief he possesses without any of the prima donna affectations often present in such precocious sport stars. Colin is a nice guy.

The £100,000 prize put up by Lombard should a UK driver win this year's RAC Rally clearly increased both the pressure on Colin and the media coverage. Outwardly he maintained his "what will be, will be" approach. He took the lead with a series of stupefying times through Wales and the jackpot loomed. Then Grizedale and disaster. TV pictures of Colin sitting disconsolately in a service van, hand on chin, may not have had quite the same mass appeal of Gazza kissing his country's emblem after England's semi-final defeat during *Italia '90*, but it showed that he is no ice man. Missing out on the money was a blow, missing out on the victory provided the heartache.

Thirty six hours later he was thrilling the Chester crowds with a series of spectacular power-on do-nuts. Handbrake turns into controls – a kid in a sweetshop. A talented kid.

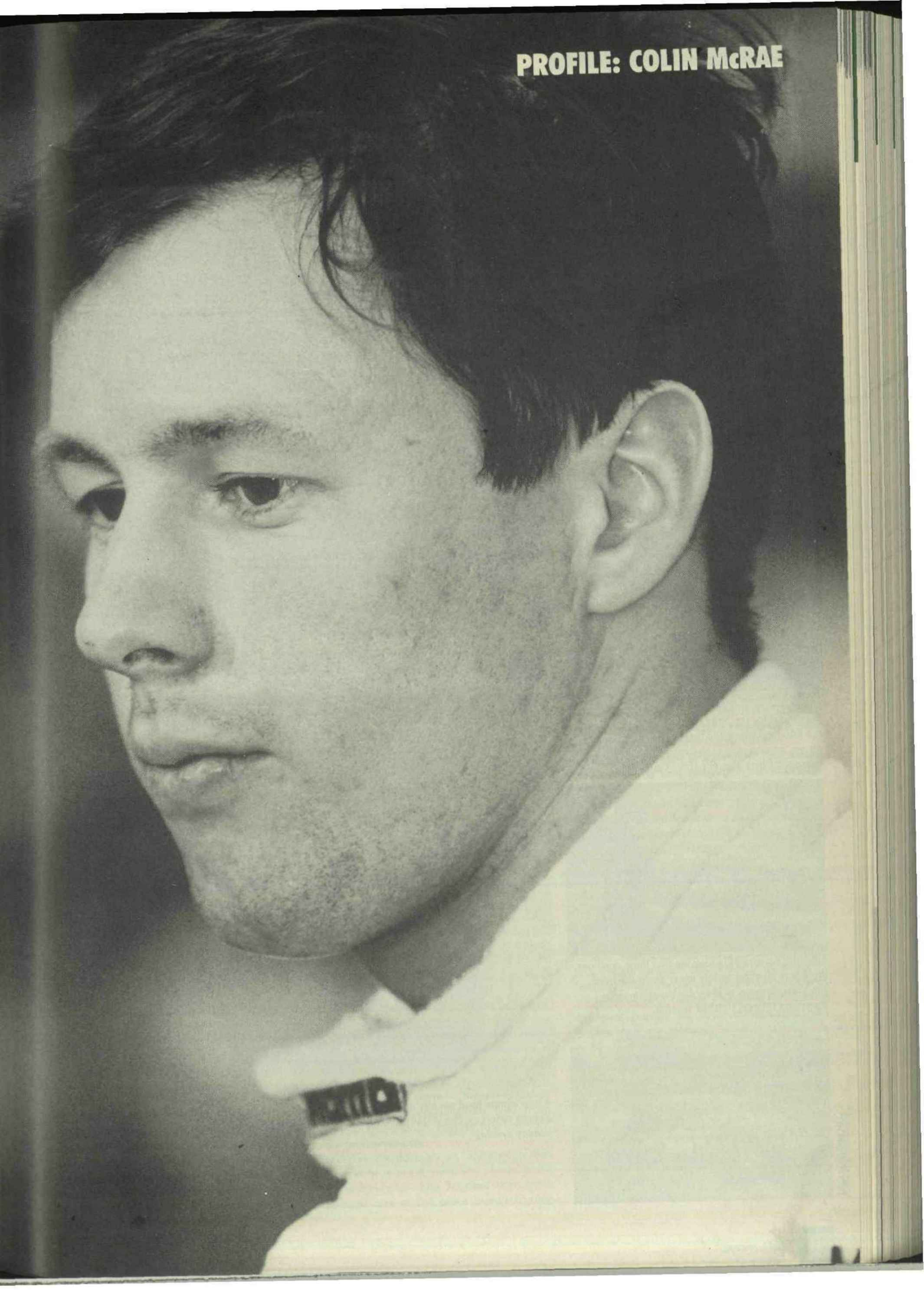
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Colin McRae earned the publicity he received prior to the RAC Rally the hard way. He won the last two British Rally Championships (this is the 1991 Circuit of Ireland, right), and has put in some stunning drives in the WRC. In 1992, he finished second in Sweden and fourth in Greece (above).

PROFILE: COLIN McRAE



Monty's flying circus



Conditions for the Rally Britannia, which trailed the RAC throughout the first day, were abysmal. Above, an assembly of drowned rats observes the passage of Nick Mason's Lotus Cortina.



Although Porsche 911s took the first three positions, there was plentiful variety lower down the field. The Volvo Amazon of Mats Adolfsson/Torbjorn Henrysson (above) finished seventh.



A one minute road penalty dropped Rick and Jane Bourne's Morgan Plus 4 (left) to sixth place by Sunday evening.



Swedish success: Monty Karlan (above) had an early road penalty discounted, and duly profited to win by almost a minute.



Will Hoy chases champion Tim Harvey across the line at Brands in August. Harvey's late-season run was impressive — and telling.

Full team ahead

Harvey triumphs in three-way title fight as British touring car regs point the way for the rest of the world

Such was the success of the Esso British Touring Car Championship in '92 that the two-litre rev limited formula has now been adopted by FISA as an official international touring car category. For 1993 Italy has already confirmed that its domestic touring car series will run to this formula and the likelihood is that France and Japan will be joining them. In Europe only Germany has bucked the trend with its expensive 2.5-litre formula but there are now severe doubts over whether this will go ahead in light of withdrawals from BMW and Audi.

While the rest of the world cottons on to the suitability of the two-litre concept, the BTCC has just completed its second season as a one-class series for such cars and, like '91, the title battle developed into a final round thriller. This time, however, there were three title contenders from three manufacturers in with a shout. The pattern of the season, in fact, can be split conveniently into three stages belonging in turn to Vauxhall, Toyota and, latterly, BMW.

Vauxhall's John Cleland dominated the opening two rounds of the season, his works Cavalier GSi enjoying Yokohama tyres for the first time after switching from Dunlops and emphasising, more than anything, just what a walkover year he could have enjoyed in '91 had the change been made earlier.

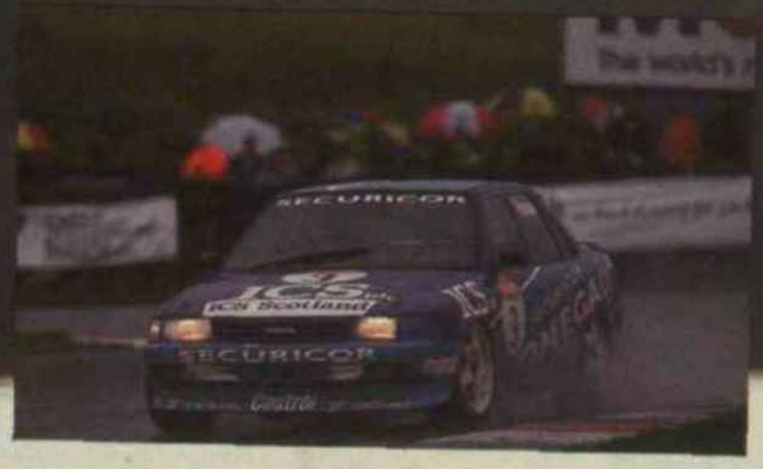
But the rest were catching up. By round three at Oulton Park the Toyota Carinas of Will Hoy and Andy Rouse battled for the lead throughout, the race apparently going Will's way until an electrical problem intervened to give victory to team boss Rouse. This was the second year of the Rouse/Toyota collaboration, building upon a strong development '91 season. The extra cutting edge of '91 champion Hoy – who had transferred over from the VLM BMW team – helped establish the Toyotas as the class of the field from Oulton until mid-season, Hoy setting five consecutive pole positions.

Hoy won comfortably at Snetterton but Brands next time out proved the pivotal point of the championship. The Toyotas were again the quickest cars in the place but in arguing over exactly *which* one was quickest, Hoy and Rouse tripped over each other, ending their races in the Westfield banking with heavily damaged cars. Cleland – who moments before the shunt had taken advantage of the Toyotas' squabbling to take the lead – thus took a third win for Vauxhall, against the run of play.

Were it not for the Brands shunt Hoy would have taken the title reasonably comfortably, even allowing for the later season form of the VLM BMW 318is Coupés. It had been a nightmarish start for the VLM and Prodrive teams as they each struggled to sort the new car, the latter outfit further hampered by not enjoying the benefits of Yokohamas. This was the Coupé's first season of competition anywhere, replacing the classic M3 which – in destroked two-litre form – provided the basis of the new car, sharing engine, gearbox and very similar front suspension. However, the 'Z-axle' rear suspension was completely new and initially proved the bugbear of the car, hellishly difficult to set up and giving the drivers a frightening ride, the car's handling particularly evil over bumps, its new sophisticated ABS brakes scant consolation.

By the time of the first double-header meeting of the season at Donington, the Vic Lee team had got to the bottom of the Coupé's problems and from this race on Tim Harvey and Steve Soper had a super-competitive car at their disposal. Hoy won the first heat but Harvey caught and passed the Toyota in the next one to give the 318 its first win. Although the BMWs were on the pace at the Silverstone GP support race, Harvey found that in a race situation the weight penalty of the rear-drive

Andy Rouse's Toyota Carina (right) won twice, whilst James Kaye (main picture) occasionally got his Park Lane example among the works machines on his way to winning the TOCA Privateer Award.



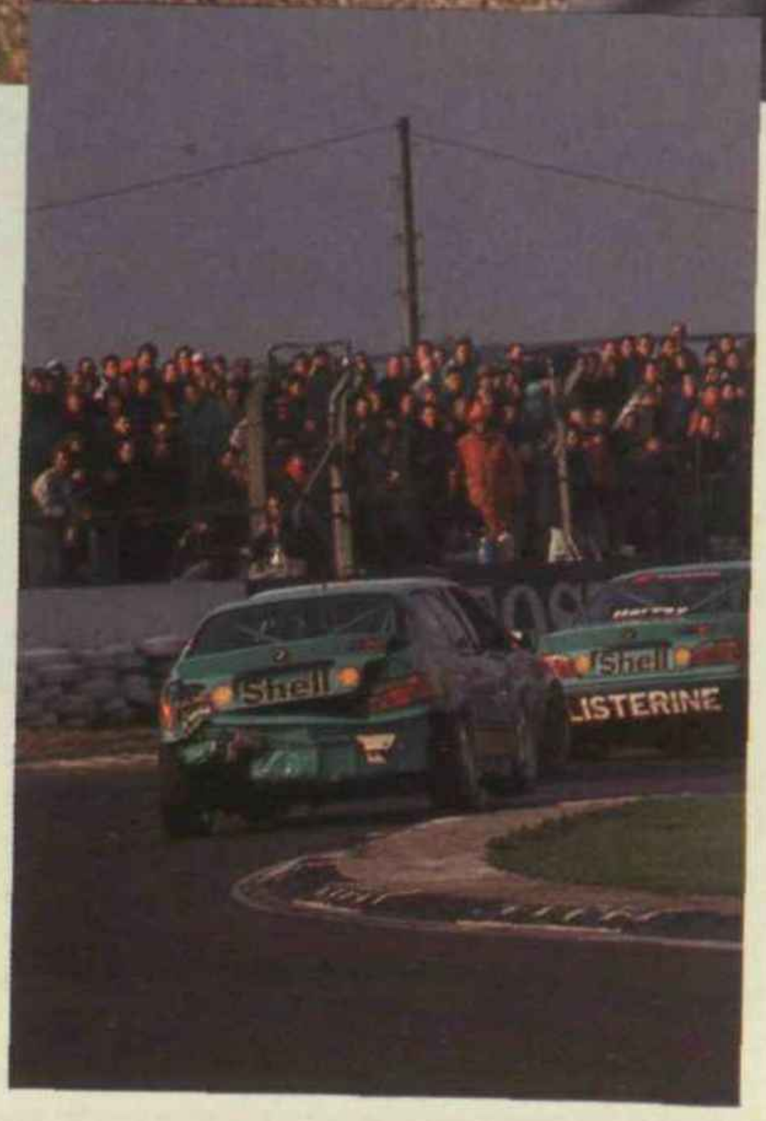


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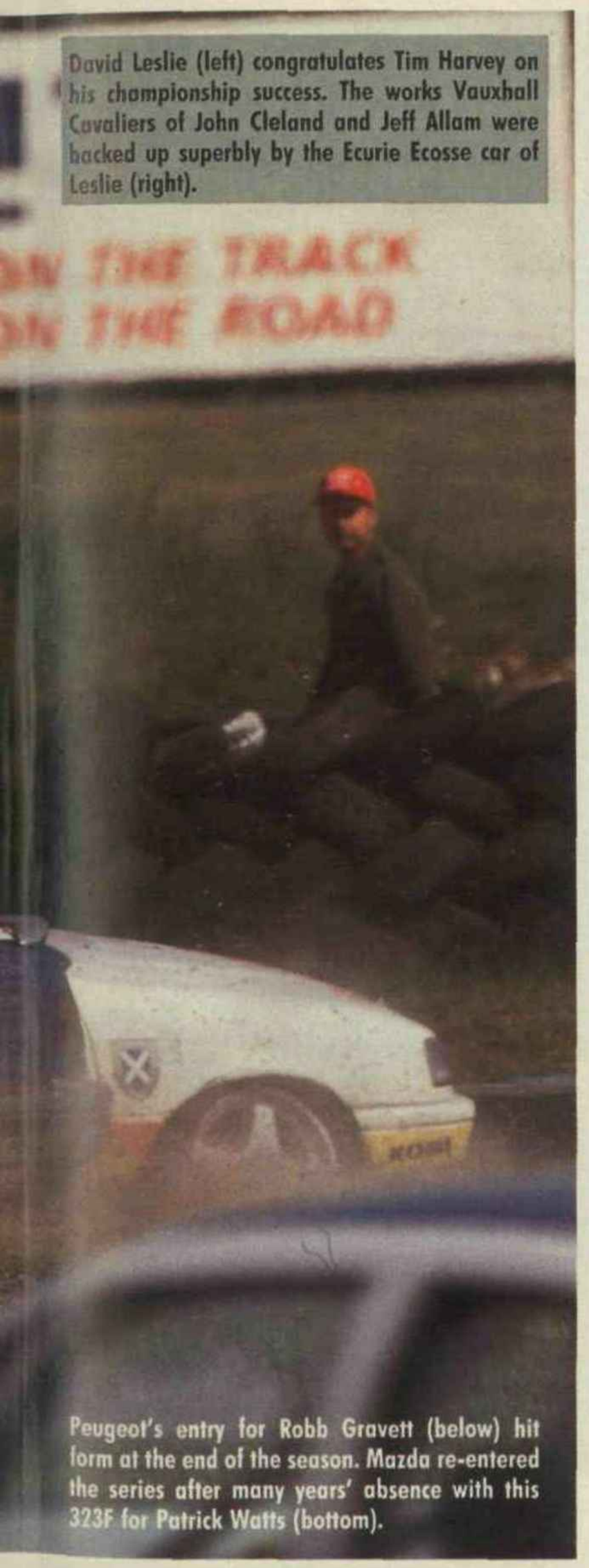
Nissan (below left) did not have the season hoped for, though its Primera was well up at the start of the year. Tim Harvey and Steve Soper (here showing evidence of a first lap incident) proved a formidable line-up in the Shell BMW 318is'.







David Leslie (left) congratulates Tim Harvey on his championship success. The works Vauxhall Cavaliers of John Cleland and Jeff Allam were backed up superbly by the Ecurie Ecosse car of Leslie (right).



Peugeot's entry for Robb Gravett (below) hit form at the end of the season. Mazda re-entered the series after many years' absence with this 323F for Patrick Watts (bottom).





318 and its consequent lack of straightline speed made it very difficult to race against the front-drive Vauxhalls and Toyotas. Jeff Allam won the race, his first for Vauxhall Sport in a season in which he increasingly came out of Cleland's shadow. Immediately after, 25 kg of the BMW's regulation 100 kg rear-wheel-drive weight penalty was dropped.

The timing of this was perhaps unfortunate, for after Allam again won in the first heat of the Knockhill double header that followed the GP, Harvey took the first of five consecutive victories. From nowhere in the title hunt, Tim's wins at Knockhill, Pembrey, Brands Hatch (twice) and Donington brought him right into play. He was aided in his cause after Pembrey by superb back-up from Soper who had appeared only when his German Touring Car committments allowed but whose BTCC season was characertised by early lap incidents and stunning comeback drives.

After such a superb and dramatic lead-up the title was actually decided in a somewhat unsatisfactory way. A single rained-out qualifying session left all three contenders away from the front of the grid. While Rouse, Allam and David Leslie's Ecosse Vauxhall fought it out at the front, Hoy quickly fell out of contention with a down-on-power engine. Initially Cleland ran on-course for the crown, but soon came under big pressure from the BMWs, Harvey coming through from his troubled qualifying position, Soper recovering after his customary incident-packed opening lap had left him at the back. With just over a lap to go Harvey passed Cleland, but the Vauxhall driver needed to be demoted another place to lose the title. Soper passed but immediately the Scot retaliated, the two rounding Brooklands side-by-side . . . and with Cleland on two wheels. Neither made it round the following corner, ending their races in the gravel trap and the arguments over whose fault this was have raged ever since. Harvey was the champion.

A strong case could have been made for any of the three – Harvey, Hoy or Cleland – as worthy champions. Harvey had come from behind against seemingly impossible odds - including the B-movie type script of the team owner being arrested for alleged drug smuggling – and had held his own against a team-mate many reckon to be the world's number one saloon ace. As far as Hoy was concerned, there shouldn't have been the need for a finalé shoot-out, had his team-mate behaved more like a team-mate. Cleland, aside from his usual incredible determination and car control, had injured himself in a testing accident before the penultimate race and, at a time when he should have been lying down in a hospital bed, was finishing a heroic third at Donington. His upper body was still heavily strapped-up at Silverstone.

Behind the three-marque dominance, there was much promise of future front-runners. The Ecurie Ecosse team did a superb job in consistently having David Leslie running near the front in the latter half of the season in an ex-works Vauxhall running on Dunlops. The Janspeed Nissan team regularly demonstrated the excellence of the Primera's chassis in Kieth O'dor's hands, but lacked in the torque department. The Shell Mazda 323F's competitiveness improved in its first year of competition, the spectacular Patrick Watts at the wheel. The Peugeot 405 Mi16 of Robb Gravett struggled for most of the year, but in the last two races with new lowline chassis and much improved engine had the car looking like a match for the Cavalier.

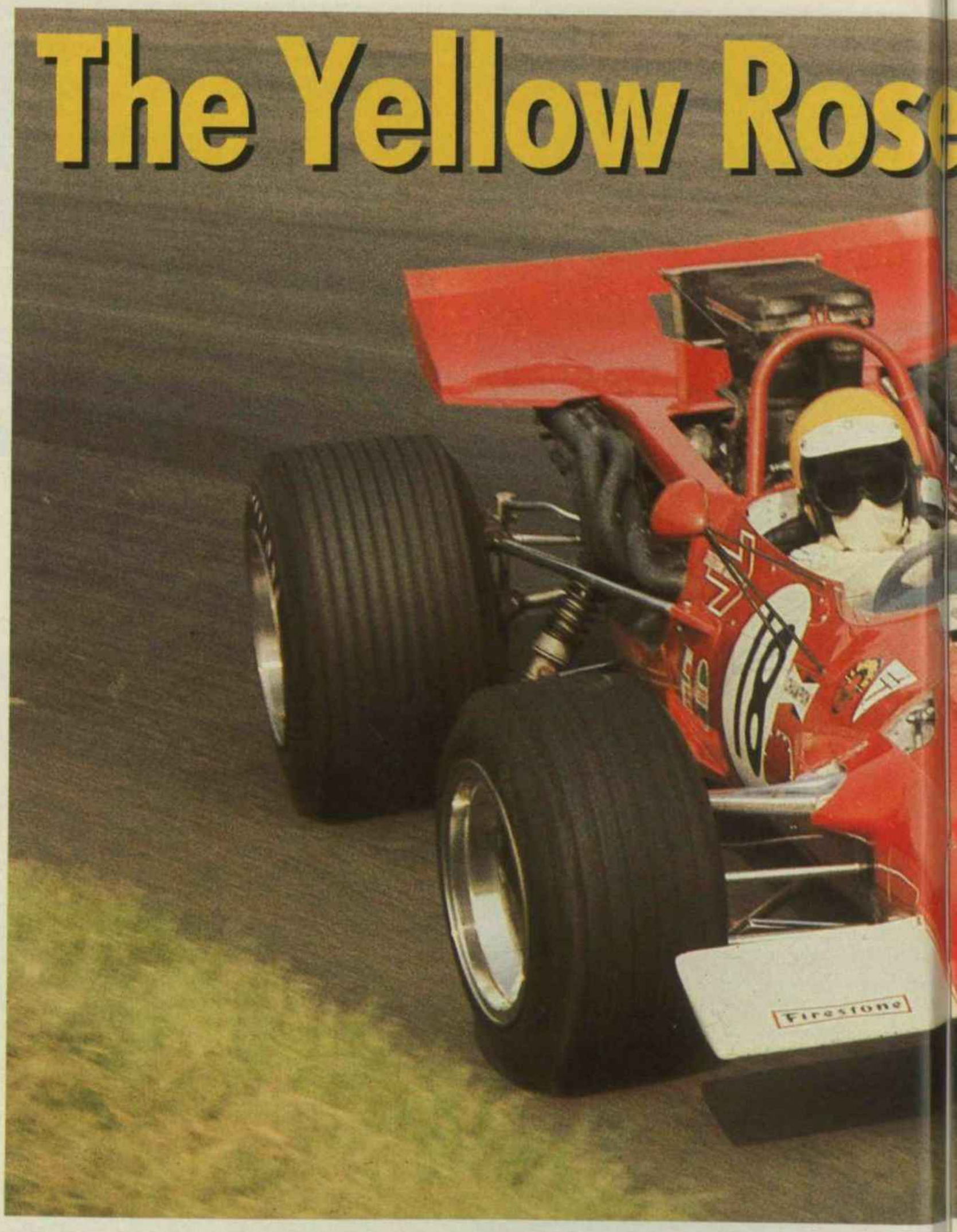
The TOCA Privateer Award was won by the impressive James Kaye in Park Lane's ex-works Toyota Carina, just seeing-off the BMWs of Matthew Neal and Sean Walker.

At a time when the recession is hitting racing hard, there is now unprecedented interest in the BTCC. Now under the aegis of TOCA Ltd – a company comprised of key team owners – rather than the RAC, the razzamatazz is now increasingly apparent as the series makes a concerted effort to capitalise fully on its regular TV slots. 1992 saw it establish itself without a doubt as the country's premier racing series – with crowds of over 20,000 commonplace – and now the formula looks set to catch on worldwide.

But it will be to Britain that the touring car world will be looking in 1993. Aside from the confirmed works entries from Toyota, Vauxhall, Peugeot, Nissan, Mazda and Renault (new for '93, and with Michelin tyres to challenge the previously dominant Yokohamas), BMW will almost certainly be represented in some form (probably through the crack German Schnitzer team, with Soper and Roberto Ravaglia behind the wheels) and rumours continue to circulate about Ford, Alfa Romeo, Hyundai and, possibly, even Mercedes-Benz.

That might *just* be sensational. **MPH**

The Yellow Rose



30 years on Trevor Taylor reflects contentedly on his life in Jim Clark's shadow

"Even on the road, I don't drive quickly, me. I live in Yorkshire and used to pop down to Ledbury to see John Thornburn. John could do it in an hour and half; I did it in two and a half hours. I'd get up early in the morning to miss the traffic and the maximum I do is 60, 65mph. I don't know why! But I used to be a mad devil..."

The voice hasn't changed a bit since the sixties, even if the driving style has. Then, Trevor Taylor had a reputation as a flier who was unlucky. Jim Clark's team-mate. The man whose Lotus always seemed to be the one that went wrong, or to whom the big accidents seemed to happen.

Now, with two grown-up children Dean and Lesley from his first marriage to Audrey, and two more, James (Blue) and Nicky from his second, to Liz, he is happy to reflect on a hectic past while clearly relishing fatherhood second time around. "My eldest's 34 and my daughter's 32, but the ones I've got now from my second marriage are 11 and eight." You take an instant liking to Taylor; nothing else is possible. He's an individual at peace with himself and his racing achievements. An open man, rather like an older version of Russell Spence, a hellraiser now tamed. Talk about his children to him, and his whole face softens immediately. "It makes you think, you know, when they're in the back of the car. Or if they fall, it's me who feels it. I've always got on with kids, I'm a bit of a trickster with them, you know, we have a laugh and a joke." He pauses suddenly, frowns. "Is it all right me talking like this?

"The older one is very clever, because my wife's a school teacher, but the younger one, he's a real character, very streetwise. When he gets his clothes dirty and she tells him off, he says (and he speaks with his hands): 'Mummy, what can I do? I'll have to get my act together!' Well! I walked out; I couldn't stop laughing. I see that side of life, me."

Taylor, the man who is lucky still to be able to see any kind of life at all, walked away from some mighty accidents in his heyday. At the time of our interview, at the Portuguese GP, he nodded towards practising Grand Prix cars, his tone one of open admiration as he asserted: "These lads, they're brave. I couldn't do what they do today."

He sells himself short, of course, because in his day Trevor Taylor did precisely that. He had his moments up on the high wire. Suggest that to him, though, and he is quick to play things down further.

"It worked differently. I was Formula 500 champion, okay? You know, the old Norton engine, double knocker and all. And it sort of worked up from there to where we had a bit of a do in the Formula Junior club and then we went down to the Racing Car Show and Chapman said: 'Why not come and try one at Goodwood?' Well, that particular year, 1960, in Formula Junior we paid for the car but had works backing. Jimmy Clark was the official Team Lotus Formula Junior driver. To start with Jimmy had the five-speed gearbox and we only had the four-speed VW unit so he won quite a few races. The first time we had the five-speeder was at Aintree and it made one hell of a lot of difference. I think on the first lap I were four tenths in front, even with Jimmy! If you've got the equipment you can do it, and it's the same today. Exactly the same."

Not surprisingly, Taylor remembers the Scot with fondness after their time together at Lotus. It doesn't rankle at all that many remember him as 'Jim Clark's team-mate'.

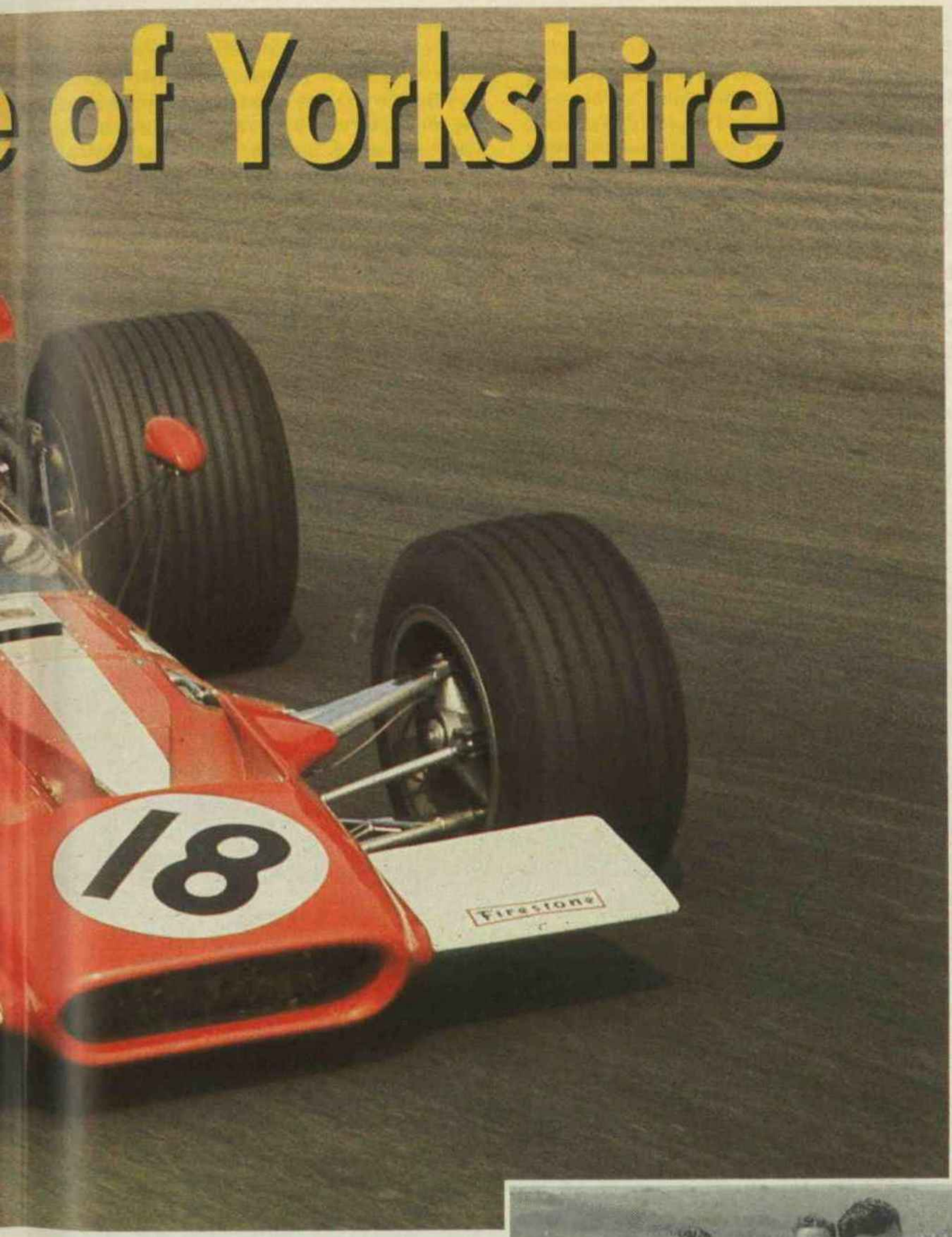
"He didn't have to talk loud or behave like that, because he was such a natural driver. He didn't have to work like I did. Everything I did, I had to work at. Either you're born with it, or you have to work at it. I couldn't compete with him at all.

"At that particular age you had no fear, really. You *had* fear, but not to the extent when you thought you were really going to chicken out. It wasn't until Formula One, when a lot of things broke on my car – gearboxes jammed and suspension broke – that I started to think 'I might not finish this bloody season out.'"

Trevor stayed lucky, but often only by the grace of God. Nothing illustrates that better than his good fortune at Spa in 1962, when he and Willy Mairesse collided at speed. History frequently paints the erratic Belgian as a wild man other drivers sought to avoid, but Taylor is generous concerning his rival.

"He was a chap that you couldn't really get close to. He lived in his own sort of world, do or die. He was a good driver, but he wanted to be a champion too quick. That particular race it started off in first practice. I think I was in pole position then, and after second practice I was on the front row, but I was third fastest. It was my first visit at Spa. I liked fast circuits, and after Graham Hill led I passed him and led for about four laps. I was, it might have been, four or five seconds in front and I thought, 'If I could just maintain this...' When I went by the pits I saw that they'd gained on me slightly, so next time I was coming into the hairpin and I thought it's the only place where I can get anything. From the pits, all round the rest of the lap we were in

e of Yorkshire



top gear, flat everywhere. I know it sounds silly, but we were. We never changed gear. Other people did, but we didn't. The Lotus was a good handling car, and we had a five-speed box. From the pits we changed into top just after the esses, all the way up the hill, all along the straight – and this was the old circuit, remember – through the chicane in top, round Stavelot in top. Every time you touched the gear lever you lost point something of a second and it acted as a brake anyway. All the way up to the hairpin. And that's where I thought, 'The only way I can maintain this time, is to brake a little bit later.' Well, that's what did me. I had too much brake on the rear, locked the rear brakes and I spun going in. Jimmy went by me and Mairesse caught me. I couldn't shake Mairesse. Once he got behind me in that Ferrari, I was pulling him everywhere round the circuit. It was a bit of a ding-dong.

"We were coming up from Stavelot, climbing all the way up the hill. The gearchange on the Lotus came out through the back and he came up with the snout and touched that. I was into neutral and round I went. But he saved my life, as true as I'm standing here. I would never have overtaken anybody on the inside, who's spinning, because they spin like that and you're into him. I'd always followed the spin. But he did come through on the inside and he knocked my front end, knocked me straight, into a ditch. And he catapulted and knocked a telegraph pole down. Course, he were damaged. I was alright.

"Funnily enough, I sort of came to a standstill and thought, 'God, I'm blind!' 'Cause I had a dark visor, and I'd gone into a ditch full of mud and water. Until I got my goggles down, I thought I'd done my eyes..."

1962, of course, was the year of the Lotus 25, with its monocoque chassis. Initially Taylor hated the car, and particularly the driving position.

"It was so rigid and stiff. You just thought to yourself, 'There's something wrong here.' The chassis was just so rigid in comparison with the old spaceframes we had been brought up with. We actually went softer with the springs on the new car, to take some of the shocks out of it. From the 24 to the 25 the difference was unbelievable. I thought, 'Well, I'll never bloody drive this thing. Everything's wrong with it.' And there was the angle you were laid at. You were really laid down in the Lotus. The more upright you are, you feel better. The brain is more central to the body. That car did my back, I believe. And another thing that did was at Enna when I had a huge accident with Bandini..."

He pauses and smiles, arms spread wide. "If we'd have been strapped in that car, I wouldn't have been here. You remember Bill Gavin? The writer? Well, he was my pal and we used to travel all over the place together. It was in the

At South Africa in 1962 (left to right, below) Taylor, Salvadori, Brabham and Surtees walk to the startline. Seven years later, the Yorkshireman would drive Surtees' TS5 with aplomb (left) in F5000 as he battled for the 1969 Guards Championship.



flat-out corner on to the pit straight and they'd just introduced some of the Armco then. Surtees was leading, and me and Bandini were having a bit of a ding-dong, a fair race. Bandini came on the inside of me in the corner. He went past, taking a tighter line and as he slipped out a bit further he caught his rear wheels on a bit of a shingle thing. His wheels sprayed all this stuff over me. I had a stone in my mouth, one in my goggles which caught me on the nose, here. One jammed up in my helmet. It knocked me completely out. Luckily it did, because I must just have been relaxed. The car spun, hit the Armco, shot in the air and I was ejected. It burst into flames and I went down the track head over heels, but I was relaxed. Just like a rag doll, Bill Gavin said. I had friction burns. The biggest scab you've ever seen on my back!

"I woke up, actually, in an ambulance, and I could see this shimmer. It was the sun on the lake. I'm looking, thinking 'Where am I?' I couldn't work out where I were. Bill was there and said 'Are you all right, Trev?' And I said, 'Hello Bill, what are you doing here?' He told me we were at Enna track, and I thought, 'Where the bloody hell's Enna?' It was shock. It was two or three hours later when I sort of thought, 'Oh yeah, I was racing Bandini...'

Hospital treatment was never in the top echelon at Enna. A few years later Pedro Rodriguez would also be thrown out, of his wooden Protos, and go skating down the road. The unfortunate Mexican had to have his ankle set without the benefit of anaesthetic...

"I said to Bill, get me out of here. I've got to get out. They wanted me overnight, at least a week. The doctor said he washed his hands of me, but what he did, he came to the hotel and gave me some injections, and the next morning Brabham flew me back to Luton. Back home I went straight into hospital and was there a fortnight. It took a long time to heal, to be honest."

Chapman was patient, certainly aware that most of the shunts could be traced to machinery shortcomings even if he wouldn't acknowledge it. They got on well together. "I did a lot of the testing, and Chapman taught me a lot about camber angles, toe-in, castors, that sort of thing. It really got me interested, which is what I love about these cars here." He nodded affectionately at the Opel Lotus car he was running that weekend. "At that particular time our problem was jamming gearboxes, because you could pull one gear out of engagement but it would stay in, but you could get the lever through the selector gate, which you shouldn't have been able to, and get another gear. Once you got two gears at once you locked the gearbox! But we couldn't trace this. It was a ZF, a super gearbox apart from that! Eventually it was Mike Costin, who used to work with Lotus Developments, and Chapman, who solved it. What they found was that the selector shafts themselves still had very fine particles of swarf which jammed them. I couldn't understand how you could still get the lever through the selector gate. You shouldn't have been able to do it, but there was just enough room under stress.

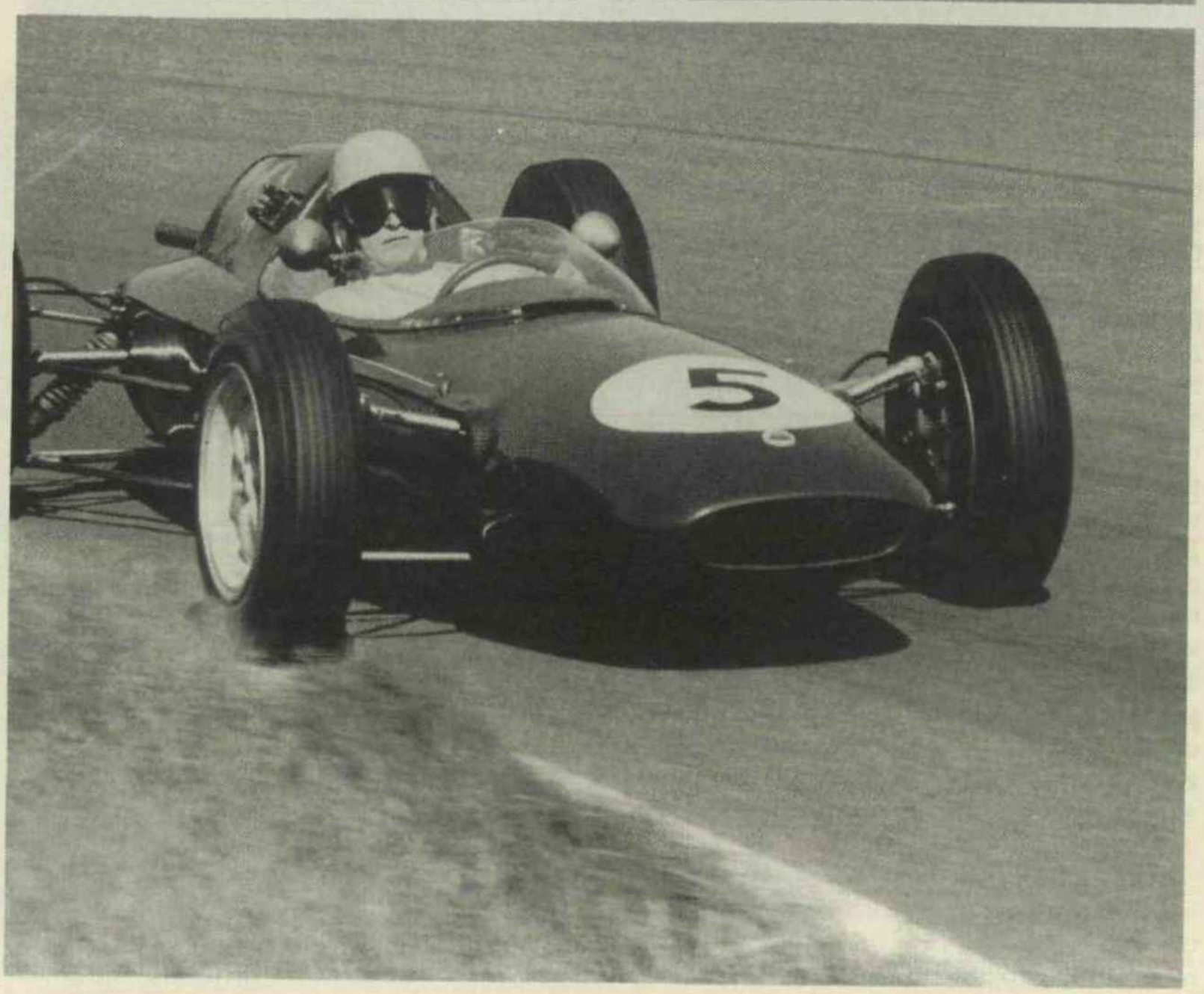
"It was a long time into the Formula One programme before Mike actually found that. For instance, at Spa in '62, there was about five minutes of practice to go and as I went up through the gears I sensed it was going to jam. I went all the way round in the same gear and pulled into the pits, and Chapman was telling me to get back out there and I refused, telling him what was going to happen. He were a bit annoyed, excited. He said to Jimmy, 'Take that car back to the garage,' which were at Stavelot in those days, and Jimmy went out of the pits, up to the ess bend and it jammed and he went straight into one of the hoardings.

"I thought about that, and how I would have been in another shunt. And that sort of thing destroys you. Although I liked what I was doing, mentally it started to shake me. I started to change gear a bit sooner, that sort of thing. At the end of the day you think, 'If I have another crash, it might be my last!'"

Eventually Chapman offered to rest him from F1 to let him recover, but Trevor wanted to continue and they went their separate ways. He moved on to BRP for '64, had a brief outing with the awful Shannon Climax at the '66 British GP, then almost retired as his back troubles persisted, but the perceptive John Webb brought him back for the inaugural season of F5000. He would prove a complete star. The winning wasn't over after all, but neither were the big shunts...

He drove a Surtees TS5 for Team Elite, and it all clicked again. "I was a winner straight away! That was a good form of racing. You





could get wheelspin in top gear! I thought, 'Well, you can still do it!' It was the confidence thing. The TS5 was a really, really good car." He and Peter Gethin vied for the championship all season, and he needed to win the final race at Brands to clinch the title. "Gethin was ahead on points, but I was leading the race. We were coming up to lap Chris Warwick-Drake's Cooper at the corner back from Dingle Dell. It weren't his fault, it was just sheer fright, I think. I took him on the inside, where he'd waved me through. But Gethin at the same time went round the outside. He saw Gethin, knew I was there, but pulled my way and our wheels touched. I knocked him into Gethin and I went straight up the bank and had a lot of damage on the car and was out. Gethin restarted, but on the startline I'd seen him leaking water and knew he'd done a head gasket. All I had to do really was finish. It was just unfortunate...

The following season he had the grandmother and grandfather of all shunts at Salzburgring, when a front tyre blew at 160mph. That time he really was lucky to walk away. "I saw a white puff from the tyre, which I couldn't understand. I thought it was water. Later, I realised that Goodyear used charcoal to put the tyres on at that particular time, and it was the powder blowing out when a bolt went through the tyre. I hit the Armco and if the car had rolled end to end I wouldn't have been here. There were no wheels on the car and I went out over the Armco, afraid someone'd hit me. The marshal couldn't believe where the driver was! 'Driver, he disappeared,' he kept saying. That was a tremendous shunt...

"What happened was that an hour later my throat came out here, my neck too. I couldn't swallow. The doc told me I'd probably swallowed my tongue but brought it back up when the car hit the bank. He told me I was a very, very lucky man. I was on liquids for three or four days."

In 1971 at Oulton Park he had another nasty one at Knickerbrook in Malaya Garage's Leda. "Frank Gardner had warned me about it, but in my next to last race with it, a front tyre went down and sent me straight into the bank. Fortunately I went in at an angle, which knocked the offside front wheel off. It hit me on the head and knocked me out again, but it split the tank and I was trapped in the car because my left ankle was caught between the clutch pedal and the monocoque. And I was really scared, when I came to! I kept trying to pull my leg free and did a lot of damage. But if that thing had gone up I would have left my ankle in there, I tell you. I pulled and shoved and pulled and shoved and eventually got out, but the dash had come off and gone straight into my leg, you could see the bone... Even now, I feel it when the weather's cold..."

He had similar adventures when he returned briefly to F1 to test the Cosworth 4WD in 1969. "I nearly wrote that off so many times! A brake shaft snapped when I was coming into Woodcote and I spun so many times that I couldn't work out which way the car was facing when it finally stopped. I nearly went over the bank at Becketts when a wheel stud pulled out. And, to cap it all, the fire extinguisher blew up in my face when I was braking for Stowe. You just can't imagine what that was like, trying to stand up and stop the car at once – that thing was so big you could stroll round the cockpit anyway!"

He loves golf, but knows he has to be careful what he does to avoid slipping the discs that used to pop out all too easily. "I could turn round like this to put the television on, and out would go a disc. But at the moment I'm getting gristle round the bone, which keeps them in place. I've been to physio, an osteopath, what can you do? I'm 56 years old. Nobody wants to, but you have to accept your body as it is!"

He has a Yorkshire sense of humour, outgoing but not reliant on the misfortunes of others. "I'll tell you a story. It was when we were racing the 500, up at Snetterton with the double-knocker Norton. At the end of the straight I found I could brake later than about 200 yards. There was no marker board but there was a little white stone at that point. Well after practice we were all talking, 'Where are you braking?' that sort of thing. Turned out we were all braking at that stone. So that night I went out and moved it further from the corner, nothing dangerous though, you understand. On the first lap everyone braked on it but me, and I went through in the lead..."

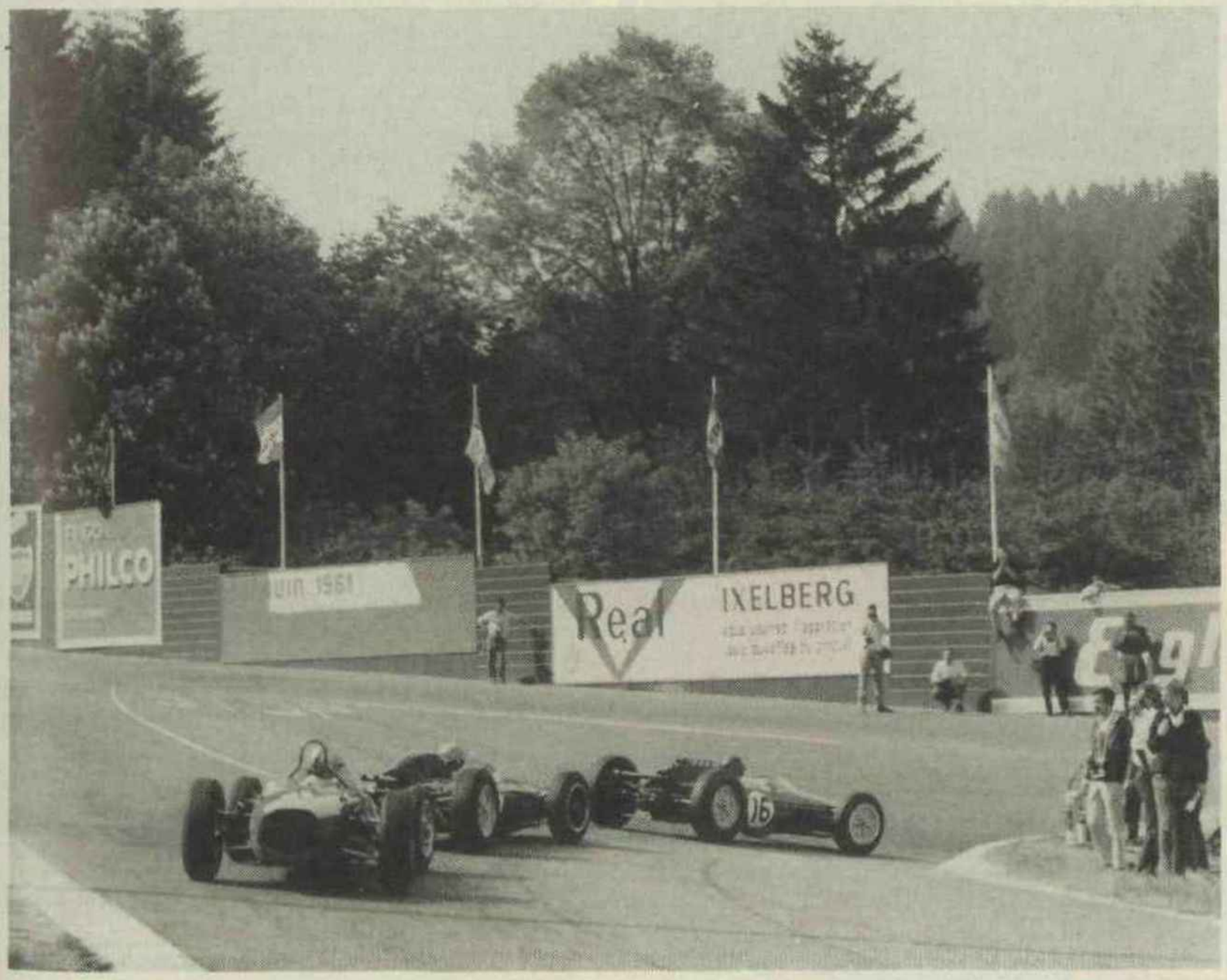
Trevor Taylor is the kind of man who is genuinely interested to ask his interviewer questions about themselves and their feelings, as keen to learn what you can tell him about modern F1 as he can tell you about the sixties. A racer who made a yellow helmet (and matching overalls) something special long before a Brazilian would burst on to the scene. On his day, such as Spa '62, he could run with the best.

He and his brother sold out the last of their garage business in 1986, and shortly afterwards he lost a lot when the Stock Market crashed just after he'd been advised to make investments. But there's no trace of bitterness when he talks about his recent fortunes. At the time we talked he had high hopes of setting up his own Vauxhall Lotus team, which he still plans for the 1994 European season. Despite that, he remains content, untouched by any regrets how his career turned out. Without doubt he was better than his results suggest, and was one of those who haplessly forged the reputation number two drivers 'enjoyed' at Lotus in the sixties. Love of the sport has overridden personal feelings.

"The one thing I have, is this dream, that I return to racing all dressed in black and nobody knows who I am and I win everything...

"People say I was unlucky," he smiles cheerfully. "I was *not* unlucky. I walked away from a lot of accidents, and I'm still here to tell the tale. And I always loved what I was doing."

DJT



At Spa in 1962 Taylor leads Mairesse, Hill, McLaren and Clark (above left) prior to the spin at La Source which would drop him behind his team leader and let the Belgian get into his tow (above). The scene was set for another of his phenomenal escapes.

Initially he far preferred the feel of the spaceframe Lotus 24, with which he is seen here on his way to his best GP placing at Zandvoort that same year where he was second to Graham Hill (left). The rigidity of the monocoque 25 took a lot of getting used to.

Suspended animation



Courtesy of the private enterprise company Rare Imports we can bring you the class confrontation amongst Japanese micro sports cars this month; Honda Beat versus Suzuki Cappuccino.

In fact we could bring you the tale of almost any other non-imported Japanese car, for that is the Rare Imports speciality, and it is proving extremely popular in Britain with over 20 of the £35,000 to £60,000 (depends on specification, whether new or secondhand) Lexus (Toyota) Coupés sold in Britain during August 1992. The Berkshire-based company also serves European markets, where there is also a demand for the enormous variety of models the Japanese do not sent to us.

At prices from £11,300 (but more commonly delivered at closer to £12,500 with alloy wheels and optional stereo installed) the Honda Beat was the most popular Rare Import offering when we tried it. Since then news has filtered through from Japan that the Suzuki Cappuccino and the Oriental version of recession have forced Honda to "suspend" Beat production. There is still plenty of stock in Japan of the innovative mid-engine miniature, but the announcement that Suzuki G B Cars are to sell the turbocharged Cappuccino in the UK (predicted 1993 price on the 1992 Motor Show stand: "around £13,000 complete with ABS and air conditioning") has brought new impetus to Rare Imports' immediate availability of Cappuccinos at "prices from £15,500."

Before we slide behind the wheel of the original Sprite-sized tiny technocrats, let us just establish who Rare Imports are, for those (like us) who like to know who they are dealing with when bypassing official importers. The company is the brainchild of Clive de Carle. In its 20 months of trading eager buyers have forced them to employ seven staff, including full-time sales assistants in the UK and one Japanese resident to conquer the mountain of official export paperwork. The incoming stock journeys from Japan to Holland to await owners who want "the unavailable to be available" in the words of the appropriate slogan. De Carle is secretive about many areas of his business, especially the number of cars he brings into Britain. Yet there is no doubt he has a lot of experience in the tricky business of trading across barriers — De Carle was one of those enterpreneurs who defied Arab embargos on British Leyland (imposed for trading with Israel) and supplied Land and Range Rovers to the Middle East.

Rare Imports is far from the only concern in the UK serving the pent-up demand for models that are not officially sold outside the Japanese domestic market. But it has established such a solid niche in the UK that even the official Honda network has some dealers buying their Beats from Rare Imports. We even found a





Production of Honda's Beat (left) has been suspended on account of the recession, which is making itself felt in Japan. There are still stocks available, however. Suzuki will shortly be importing the Cappuccino (above and right) via its own UK network.



Nissan dealer buying used Honda stock locally. Rare Imports backs its service with a one year warranty of its own, insurance and service advice plus an air freight service for unobtainable parts.

There are problems to owning a Personally Imported Car, particularly if it is involved in an accident or an item of high technology fails. However, if you are a determined customer in any European market Rare Imports is probably the place to enquire. De Carle Associates act as UK agents for the Jersey-registered Rare Imports Ltd. They can be contacted in Britain under the phone number 0734 713244 (Fax 0734 712794). Or write to them (appointments are necessary to view) at: The Little Lodge, The Avenue, Bucklebury, Berkshire, RC7 6NT.

Leafy lanes unfurled obediently, leading to the heart of the Berkshire countryside and the HQ of the Rare Imports organisation. Journey's end is a picturesque wooden lodge the local tourist board would kill for, if it could acquire exclusive photographic rights. The secluded gravel drive is full of the cars that the Japanese (mostly) do not send to Europe. Honda's intriguing micro sports car (the 3-cylinder Beat) dozed alongside the luxurious Lexus Toyota V8 Coupé. Toyota's astonishing cheap gullwing door coupé, Sera, was another of many new and used Japanese cars now being offered to Europeans at prices from £7000 and £60,000. Subsequent visits revealed ever more intriguing Japanese stock including the Suzuki Cappuccino, a more adult and practical, front engine/rear drive, version of the two-seater theme than the mid-motor Beat.

The Suzuki has an extremely comprehensive equipment list including air conditioning, but ABS and an air bag are reserved for a more expensive model, which also has a traction control device! You can see the main technical features of the smallest Japanese sports cars compared below, but it is worth emphasising that the first impressions of both put the Suzuki in the different class that you would expect from the prices. Superb metallic paint, finely detailed cowled headlamps and a neatly engineered multiple option hard top, sit well with an interior that looks like pure leather, but is actually composed of high grade plastics.

FACT FILE	HONDA BEAT	SUZUKI CAPPUCCINO
ENGINE	in-line triple, transverse mid-mounted, 12 valves, sohc	in-line triple, longitudinal, 12-valve dohc, intercooled, fuel injection
Bore x stroke	66 x 64mm	65 x 66mm
Capacity	656cc	657cc
Power	64 bhp at 8100rpm †	64bhp at 6500 rpm
Torque	44lb ft at 7000rpm	63lb ft at 4000rpm
Kerb weight	1672 lb	1543 lb
Performance	82mph (limited)*	82mph*
Drive	five-speed, rear drive	five-speed, rear-drive
Fuel, mpg range	25 to 56.5mpg	31.3 to 56.5
Equipment	Folding roof, catalyst	Hard top has four positions, A/C, alloy wheels
Options	Alloy wheels, stereo	ABS, airbag, TCS
Price (£/ECU)	from £11,300	From £15,500

* The standard Japanese limiter was bypassed on test cars to allow 90mph to be exceeded. No reliable acceleration figures were available. † In competitive use at a regular 8500rpm.



The Beat: breezy, but impractical.



Beat dash is simple; stripey seats unsupportive.

The Honda was appraised in the summer, the Cappuccino taken in autumn, but both were days of strong sunshine and memorable pleasure. At a base of £11,300 for a low-mileage used example or a basic new one, the Honda Beat in red came across as an affordable and breezy sportscar. The main drawback is predictable: the mid-engine allows absolutely no boot space. Just stowing the camera gear was a major enterprise. I could not get a Honda-supplied alloy briefcase in, never mind weekend luggage. There are no door pockets to compensate for the cramped accommodation; the Beat is obviously intended for local buzz-bomb duties in Japan, not European leisure breaks.

The simple dashboard with its motorcycle-style 10,000 rpm tachometer (red-lined at a dizzy 8500 revs) foretells long spells of fun motoring ahead, and so it proved. The zebra-stipe seats are not particularly supportive as you instinctively fling the Beat from corner to corner at minimalist speeds and maximum fun quotient, but the steering is as light and direct as I remember from the Spridget era, though it lacks both the dimple-by-dimple feedback and kickbacks of the Sixties British breed. To my surprise I found the Beat has both power assistance and four-wheel discs; the braking is as prompt as you would hope in such a flyweight, and I would have thought they could have done without the servo-assist. The ride is no better than you'd expect from a wheelbase of under 90 in, but the startling grip plus a playtime engine with co-operative flick-switch gearchange ensure you do not remember the ride for long. It can feel vulnerable in this 10 ft 7 in long device, but the grip from the Bridgestone RE87 tyres defies their modest 165/65-14 dimensions. Yet there is so much fun to be had that you forget you are far too old to be having such enjoyment.

It does not matter that the Honda actually costs £12,500 with options, for its triple-cylinder engine offers scaled down sporting thrills that the owner of the substantially more expensive (and available) 2-seater Honda CRX would not appreciate. I know — I have owned two of the Honda CRX breed. Their compact charms are those of a small coupé, not an open sports car of the Beat's carefree character.

As I have said the Suzuki immediately struck one as the more "grown up" sports option. One magazine summarised it perfectly when they said it had the looks of a shrunken TVR Griffith. This is extremely apt, especially in the lines of the rear hard top section (which can be left self-standing), until you take pictures of the back, when the tail lights seem bigger than the diminutive rump. A trio of crescent-shaped dials, including an unnecessary 12,000rpm tachometer in black and white, sit in the finely finished Cappuccino cabin.

Our example was kindly loaned by owner, Elizabeth Gray. The Suzuki had covered over 8000 miles and felt in the best of health, the mid-range power in a completely different league to the sky-high, change gear NOW, abilities of the Honda. Maximum torque is thrummily present by 4000 revs and "only" 6500, halfway up the grandiose scale, is required to release maximum power. However, it is obviously a Japanese tradition that these small sports cars (the Cappuccino is under 11 ft long and some 4½ ft wide) carry an 8500rpm limit, even when they have such magnificent small-capacity pulling power available. Again Bridgestone 165/65-14 covers adorned light alloy wheels, but this time they were branded RE 76 and could not contain wheelspin, if the throttle was fully depressed to exit a junction.

The handling has much in common with the Honda, or an MX-5 Mazda, with just a hint of wheelspin available in the lower gears. Ride quality on a short wheelbase was not in the Mazda class, nor was the gear change, which, though mostly effortless, could balk at reverse from rest. The Honda is slightly superior in this department. The Suzuki has considerable motorway cruising ability, beyond that of the Honda. At 8500 it scuttles to little over 50mph in second, exceeds 80mph in third and settles to the 140km/h (87mph) mandatory maximum marking on the speedometer at a busy but sustainable 5500rpm. The Honda needs 6000 to sustain the equivalent of 70mph, but the writer preferred the "micro 911" engine note to that of the slightly more mundane Suzuki. After a week of trips exceeding 50 miles in length, however, the Suzuki could emerge as the more serious sports car. It simply is that bit more civilised, remaining an outstanding choice for any kind of urban traffic work (especially with the hard top retracted) when its performance and modest dimensions make it the nearest rival for a motorcycle that you will find on four wheels. Out of town, the extra performance of a machine like the Caterham Seven would be superior, but anywhere near city limits the Suzuki (and the Honda) slip through two way traffic with exhilarating ease.

As the strongest possible contrast, and a relaxation from the frenetic performance of the baby Honda and Suzuki, Rare Imports pressed us into driving the Lexus V8. It was a wise decision. At the other end of the Japanese spectrum, the silken 4-litre Lexus SC400 Coupé is nearly 16 feet of suave design packed with every technical marvel including satellite TV screen navigation. Toyota insist we call these V8 saloons and coupés by the Lexus name, and they are fine cars worthy of that profitably separate identity. Driving the Lexus Coupé upstaged the cream of European coupés that I have experienced in the past 12 months. These included the Mercedes SL range (which I admire), the Jaguar XJ-S (a religion requiring increasing faith in old icons) and the BMW 850i. I should say that both BMW and Mercedes have expanded their premier coupé lines recently, and I have not experienced either V12 Mercedes or the 5.6-litre V12 BMW 850i, as developed by BMW Motorsport. However it still seems unlikely that these would overcome the utter civilisation at speed of the Japanese coupé; we only wish it was a new Jaguar.

Toyota officials told us, "it is unlikely that the rarities such as you drove will come in. There simply isn't a European version of the Lexus Coupé, for example. We'd love to bring it in, it's obviously a very fine car that would challenge the BMW 850i and Jaguar XJS, but there is no plan to do this". Predictably, the official British importers of Japanese cars do not bubble with enthusiasm for the unofficial import activities of concerns such as Rare Imports. However there are signs the UK importers are waking up; the Cappuccino's official UK debut is expected in 1993, along with examples of the Daihatsu MIRA micro car. We saw a front-drive example of this enormous range at Rare Imports. Complete with searing red body kit and "acceleration like an Astra GTE", the 660cc triple with intercooling and turbocharging was available in the UK for "about £11,500." Honda, Suzuki and Toyota, all were deeply impressive examples of the sheer breadth of Japanese automotive ability today.

J W



Cappuccino: the more civilised option.



Suzuki cabin is well finished.

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Into the tight right-hander at Lodge Corner. There's room for a Rover Metro and a couple of inches of daylight down the inside. Wait for his brake lights to come on. Count to three, grit teeth and go for it . . . *now!* You're through the corner as one, but the tighter line confers a couple of inches' advantage as you aim slightly left up the hill at Deer Leap. Perhaps you're too busy concentrating on your adversary's whereabouts, but that funny rattling noise you can hear is the rev limiter protesting at your unintentional demand for more than the available 6700 rpm. Before you can say 'valve bounce', that minuscule advantage has become a similarly tiny deficit.

Still, you've got the inside line for Old Hall, a third gear right-hander. Previously undiscovered fact: it's wide enough for two Metros, without either having to use the grass. Out of the corner, you're still together, and the little white GTi to your left, a clone of the one you're in bar a handful of sponsorship decals, is better-placed for Cascades, the downhill left-hander beyond the next brow. D'you stay on the outside? More gritting of teeth. This . . . looks . . . a . . . trifle . . . dodgy – but it proves to be within the laws of physics.

You're *still* door-to-door on the exit, and there's nothing to be gained down the Lakeside straight. There's plenty to be lost at Island though. Given a clear track, it's flat in fourth. Given that another car is about two inches to your left, and that you'll miss the clipping point by at least the width of a Metro, you finally accept that you're going to have to concede. A brief lift on the approach to the corner and your rival sweeps back ahead. But he's left room on the inside at Shell, the banked, second-gear hairpin. It's Lodge revisited. He brakes. You delay for a couple of seconds, and hope that the air molecules remain unmolested by Mr Rover's finest steel panels. They do, and you find yourself parallel once more. On the exit, you glance across, trying to be casual, wondering what's occupying the thoughts of the bloke next door.

And Jonathan Williams is waving. He's giving you the thumbs-up. It seems that he's quite enjoying his afternoon's sport.

Into the chicane, and this time you have just enough momentum to scramble ahead. There's strictly room for one only here. It's Williams' turn to concede. For him, it's a question of sound home economics and common-sense. He pays for his racing and rallying out of his own pocket. More to the point, he has to drive the car home to Brecon afterwards, a task rendered much easier if there's still a wheel at each corner.

Racing *and* rallying? Yes, because the Dunlop Metro GTi Challenge is primarily for those who would rather crash into ditches and/or trees than guardrails. Seven of the 10 rounds are tarmac rallies, at diverse locations including Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Ireland, Northumberland and Belgium (twice). Oulton Park is the first of three races; Knockhill and Silverstone follow later in the year.

The gesticulating Mr Williams is the epitome of what the series is all about: uncomplicated fun for the clubman. "I really enjoyed that," he beams, when you introduce yourself afterwards. "I thought I'd try and cheer you up a bit."



Photographs: Paul Kearney/John Colley Photography

Before the fall . . . SA heads the infernal Jonathan Williams, Geoff Jones, Richard Bigg and the rest through Old Hall. Moments later, he was testing the Metro's suspension articulation on the Cascades grass.

Actually, I was smirking from ear to ear; it's just that full-face helmets tend to mask one's emotions.

"This series suits me down to the ground," continues Williams, one of the happy band who can compete and smile simultaneously. "It's a road car which you can race at weekends." As for most of the others in the series, the greatest pleasure is in taking part. Success, if it happens, is a bonus.

The recipe for the series is utterly straightforward. Take one Rover Metro 1.4 GTi, add the mandatory Rover Sport kit and simmer lightly for a couple of days. The Rover pack comprises nothing more exciting than an an exhaust system; the remaining bits are all safety-related. Scope for ingenuity is thus strictly limited. Chucking away the carpets, door pockets and radio/cassette might improve the power-to-weight ratio by a fraction, but it's

Teeming Metropolis

hardly a hi-tech performance gain. You are required to render the steering lock inoperative and to disable the central locking (further weight saved: this involves chucking a fuse in the skip . . .). Engine, gearbox, brakes and wheels are all just as you would find them in the showroom, and the series sponsor provides a control treaded tyre for all events. You are not permitted to carve extra grooves, either.

In short, this really is a *production* race and/or rally car, with all its inherent circuit limitations: not much power (102 bhp), no brakes, not much grip. That's not to say it's no good, however. Scribbling colleague David Williams, rallies editor of *Motoring News*, is a registered competitor in the Dunlop Challenge, and contests as many rounds as his reporting commitments allow. This year, he ran his Metro in the Circuit of Ireland, winning his class and finishing an honourable 11th overall. Don't let the car's small size and simplicity fool you. It's versatile and, in the right hands, effective.

'Our' car has been supplied by Rover Sport. Along with half a dozen other entries, it has arrived under its own steam, though the team has access to a trailer, should it be required later. The time saved loading and unloading is spent, instead, wrestling to apply mandatory

championship decals to awkwardly contoured surfaces. This takes an age, most of the time being taken up perforating zillions of air bubbles with a scalpel. Eventually, after much meticulous effort, it looks less like the surface of the moon and more like a racing car. Or leastways a road car with a few stickers on it.

To complete the package, Rover Sport proffers a set of its own overalls. There's a whole pile of them to choose from, as worn by various ne'er-do-wells over the past couple of seasons. The pair which come closest to a good fit bear the hand-stitched legend 'Eddie Jordan' on the waistband. Doesn't say much for his physique.

Although a degree of aggression is essential in any one-make formula, smoothness is advised if you want to get the best from the Metro. It is all too easy to scrub off speed by over-driving. Furthermore, its short wheelbase makes it quite nervous. Thus it's best to temper your animal instincts. This lesson was learned quite early on in a brief, five-lap trial run at Silverstone several months before the race. Hopping out of a Rover 216 Challenge car and into the Metro, you swiftly discovered (on the first flying lap, actually) that the braking point for the latter at Copse was not quite the same as that for the former. As the slick-shod 216 that you had followed into the corner glided serenely on it towards Becketts, you are left trying to peep out through a dense white fug of tyre smoke that is mildly obliterating your view of the direction from which you had approached . . . Hadn't really intended to establish the car's limits quite so early, but at least it was a useful, and non-damaging, reference.

At Oulton, the 15-strong field is broken up into closely-matched, and energetic, little groups. Poleman Don Kettleborough is quickest by an unfeasibly large margin. Then there's a second covering the next quartet, a small gap, then another second across the next handful of cars. We're ninth, and it's a nightmare scenario for the aforementioned Williams D. He has lent his pride and joy to brother Richard, a former Formula Ford racer who has come out of hibernation for a bit of fun. Sensing impending rivalry, the absent rally hack had kept fingers crossed that his car and 'mine' would be at opposite ends of the grid, and not – as it transpired – sharing the fourth row . . .

The free-revving Metro needs only a tickle to get it off the line, as both fourth row occupants discover as they sit there spinning their wheels at between 5000-5500 rpm. Apparently, 3000 is quite sufficient.

Still, the first couple of laps are quite productive, thanks partly to Andy Dawe flying off the track at Island and rejoining, at right angles, smack in the middle of the pack. Everyone misses him, and he finishes up in the tyres on the left. He'd selected first and restarted almost before the yellow flags were shown.

By the end of the second lap, having passed Jonathan Williams for the first of several times, we're up to sixth. The leading quintet, scrapping furiously (Adam Crowton eventually beat Kettleborough by the depth of a championship decal), have pulled away. Temporarily finding yourself with nothing to chase, concentration lapses by Cascades on lap three. Plunging down the hill, you're acutely aware that the exit kerb which you've used as a target for the past couple of laps has moved. Either that, or you've turned in too fast and too . . . screeching of rubber stops ominously . . . late. You're not the first person to try the grassy approach to Island, nor will you be the last. The effect on lap times is not good, though you only lose one place. Trying to recoup it at the fiddly new Knickerbrook chicane is a tactical faux pas, which sends you sprawling across the kerbs. Another two places are lost. The brother you had been instructed not to hit is one of those who sails past at this point. The other is the increasingly familiar Jonathan Williams.

After a couple of laps settling down, training the mind to accept that this is essentially a rally car but that this is not, despite lap three, a rally stage, the battle with Williams J for what was, eventually, eighth place unfolds. Which is about where we came in.

How much does it cost to have this much fun? Depends how mechanically gifted you are. The Rover Sport kit costs £2500. That can be fitted to anything from a crash repairable to £9599's worth of K-registered showroom stock. "The rally crowd tend to be quite happy building up a car from a pile of bits," reckons series co-ordinator Rick Smith. "So long as you fit the kit to a standard 16-valve Metro with multi-point injection, the car's origins are unimportant. The fact that it is homologated in Groups A and N is a bonus, too, because it means drivers can use the car in lots of events outside the Metro Challenge."

For 1993, the series will retain its mixed race and rally format, although there may be fewer races. If you fancy having a go, give Jonathan Williams a wave from me when you see him.

S A



On a warm day, the Metro can double-up as a tumble dryer for fire-resistant undies (right). This must be a practice shot (below), as Jonathan Williams is nowhere to be seen . . .



IMSA in a pickle



Allard's J2X: a frustrated 'nearly' racer.

It was an *annus horribilis* for sports car racing too. Following the predictable collapse of the Sportscar World Championship, the 10-car All-Japan Sports-Prototype Championship underwent drastic surgery in November and then – much less predictably – the IMSA organisation immersed itself in a political imbroglio and bobbed, leaderless, into the void that leads up to Christmas.

Those closest to the IMSA scene had been predicting trouble for months. Camel showed signs of wanting to withdraw from the sponsorship deal which has flourished since 1971, and IMSA chairman Mike Cone prepared his members for a smoke-free zone in 1994.

President Mark Raffauf, meanwhile, emphasised for the hundredth time that the IMSA organisation was not for sale, and neither would it merge with, or be taken over by the SCCA (a rumour that always amuses SCCA president Nick Craw!).

The real endurance races, Daytona and Sebring, enjoy full grids because of the presence of GTO 'production' cars which are, in reality, 200 mph space-frame lookalikes. Nothing wrong with that, though, the Jack Roush Ford Mustangs would grace any grid in Europe.

The real problem now is paper-thin grids in prospect for the sprint races, the main body of the championship, starting with the prestige event at Miami on February 21.

In America, as in Europe and in Japan, comes the realisation that you can't have endurance racing without Porsches, or another such turn-key car.

Grids for the sprint races have dropped below 20. The races were shorter, designed for one driver; this was meant to cut down on costs, but the effect was to bar the wealthy amateurs who like to buy second drives, and to freeze out the professionals whose wages are often paid indirectly by these wealthy amateurs.

Smaller grids, smaller crowds, shorter races, less television, dissatisfied sponsors, unhappy team owners. It's a familiar story, but not one that IMSA had confronted before. At Del Mar Mike Huling, formerly IMSA's marketing director, called a breakaway breakfast meeting for team owners, but it became an inconclusive exchange of views.

The meeting did prompt IMSA to have its own emergency session, at Tampa in November. Cone didn't call it a crisis meeting, of course, but invited competitors to air their views, to solve problems, "especially those that affect you as a competitor and your ongoing commitment to the Camel GT series . . . you will not find deaf ears or defensiveness from us," he assured the team-owners in his closing paragraph.

It wasn't just the general level of dissatisfaction that Cone had to face. Mazda announced its withdrawal from international sports car racing on October 26, and within 24 hours the American Mazda organisation pulled its quad-rotor RX-792P out of the Camel GT Championship.

On November 10, four days after Cone's letter was posted, Nissan announced its withdrawal from the Camel GT series, to prepare for Indycar racing in '94. At around this time Tony Dowe informed IMSA that Jaguar wouldn't have a '93 programme either. The XJR-14 was just too heavily weight-handicapped.

No Porsches, no Nissans, no Jaguars, no Mazdas! This was IMSA's worst scenario, and they couldn't be sure that Dan Gurney would manage to keep Toyota in the series, to defend the well-earned 1992 title.

The terms of the emergent regulations, writing out the top cars after one more season, have deterred Acura (Honda) from moving up to the GTP class. The BF Goodrich-supported Comptech Acura team, equipped with Spices, won the Camel Lights titles for two years in succession and had virtually decided to go into GTP with the Allard J2X, designed and built in Basingstoke.

It now appears that the Allard passed its sell-by date before it ever reached a starting grid.

When the entrants arrived in Tampa on November 17 for the IMSA meeting, they were handed a press statement that had already been issued. IMSA announced that morning "a new World Sports Car concept which will make open-cockpit cars, with production-based engines, the basic car of the Camel GT series, destined to replace the highly technical, complex prototypes that compete today."

So much for the open debate! IMSA may well have reached the right conclusion, but handled the matter with uncharacteristic abruptness that alienated the members. The release was very unspecific about construction, power units, engine capacities, costs and so on, and didn't even say when these cars would be introduced.

"World Sports Cars . . . you'd might as well call your new car Edsel," says commentator Forrest Bond. The term has unfortunate connotations nowadays, but seems to infer a worldly status which errs on the side of optimism. The outline, certainly, has little in common with the ACO's 'Le Mans Prototypes' – single seaters, for heaven's sake! – which might become the standard-bearers.

On November 18 Cone and Raffauf fleshed out the concept a little, saying that the World Sports Cars would be introduced in 1994. "Camel GTP and Camel Lights will be eligible for competition alongside the World Sports Cars in 1994, but with a drastic reduction in their performance level. It is IMSA's goal to have a full field, comprised only one class of World Sports Cars, for 1995."

That didn't please many people either. Spectators want to see close and exciting racing, involving top drivers in powerful, colourful cars. IMSA envisages cutting the performances savagely, and pruning the price of top cars from today's $750,000 to something nearer to $150,000, but that may not be enough to impress the spectators or the television moguls.

Nor was Raffauf thrilled to learn that Cone intended to install "one of international racing's most respected figures as chief executive officer." Raffauf set off on an extended vacation in Borneo, expecting to return a few days before Christmas to take orders from a new boss.

Unfortunately the person concerned didn't actually accept the job. He is indeed highly respected, but he is not installed at IMSA's headquarters in Tampa and the post remained vacant.

The plan to introduce a standardised fuel was abandoned, along with another to favour the privately run teams with lower car weights; no one could be sure how to define a private team!

Within the vacuum, nobody at IMSA could be sure which rules will stick and which proposals will be quietly abandoned. There will be an awful lot of cracks to paper over when the competitors next meet in Florida at the end of January.

Stalled GTs?

The proposed FISA GT series is in a stall, suffering from a dire lack of management. President Max Mosley says that Bernie Ecclestone is dealing with the calendar, while in Paris Gerald Richard, the supposed co-ordinator, says dreamily that FISA is waiting for the ASNs (national authorities) to apply for dates.

"Perhaps the series will be discussed by the Plenary Commission on December 11," says Richard. The fact is, no sign of direction or co-ordination is visible for this series, and a number of potential entrants are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the whole affair.

"There are people out there who want to run Porsches, Morgans, Ferraris, Lotuses, all sorts of things," says one would-be entrant. "We want to prepare the cars, talk to sponsors and make a programme, but it's almost impossible to get sense out of anyone."

Maybe the BRDC will run a mini-series of GT races in 1993, possibly to the FISA regulations, and perhaps one of them will be part of an international series.

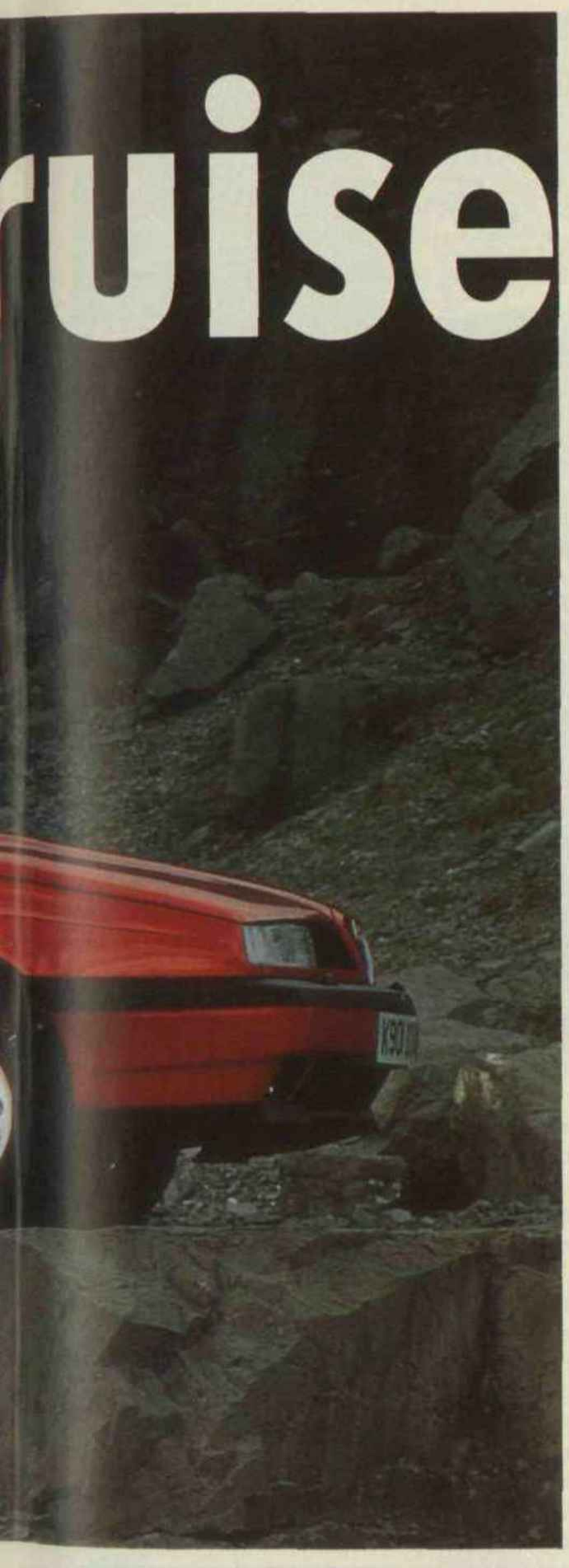
So much for sports car racing in 1993!

MLC




K901 DCY

ruise control





Introduced to Britain in the summer of 1992, the front-drive Alfa Romeo 155 range was designed to replace the cranky 75 line. Recalling the reliability habits of the 75 (the writer had a 2.5-litre V6 version for 12 months) and its ridiculous cabin ergonomics (you can still silence a room full of Alfa enthusiasts with a cheerful "Remember the U-bend handbrake of the 75?"), one might have thought any Alfa inititative to replace the 75 would have been greeted warmly.

Not so. British press reaction since July 1992 has been apathetic. Criticism has centred on its honestly declared links with the Fiat Tipo and particular dislike of its handling. Although the majority of the price opposition in the UK is now front-wheel drive (the exception is the car all the others aim for, BMW's 325i), the Alfa was singled out as being "inert" and "unrewarding" to drive.

There are still some of us at Standard House who have a soft spot for Alfa Romeo (although we no longer operate any of their current cars), and the melodious V6 exhaust note continues to appeal. In addition, you can save over £2000 on the price of a 325i, and further price cuts should have been made by the time this appears in print, yet the standard equipment list was considerably more generous: air conditioning is a particular plus.

When the opportunity to drive the 155 GTA Italian Touring Car Championship winner arrived (see last month's MOTOR SPORT), we elected to drive to the Varano test track and back in a 155, rather than hop on an aeroplane. We undertook a 2558-mile marathon through France and Italy.

A faultless fortnight of Alfa motoring, during which we returned just over 23 mpg, was followed by our usual full performance session. This revealed a maximum of more than 133 mph, and 0-60 mph in a tad over 8s.

UK range

In the '60s and '70s, one would automatically compare BMW and Alfa Romeo models. This rivalry was also waged in European Touring Car events. Initially BMW took some inspiration from Alfa, particularly in the development of higher performance, compact, four-cylinder saloons. Nowadays, BMW sets the pace, and was expected to overhaul even arch-rival Mercedes-Benz's manufacturing output of cars in 1992. Alfas seek to match some of that BMW profitability magic via offerings that have sharply increased content from '80s proprietor Fiat. BMW had just announced its 1993 prices when this was written and we could see the effect of the chancellor's abolition of car tax (previously levied at 5 per cent), when pitted against a 3.9 per cent average increase that was justified by the pound's slump against the deutschmark.

The cheapest current (you can still buy the old-style Touring and Convertible) 3-series BMW thus became the 100 bhp 316i at £15,100. The entry-level 155 (a 1.8-litre, 129 bhp Twin Spark) is £1,948 cheaper and comes complete with goodies such as an electric sunroof.

Further up, Alfa Romeo (GB) offers a choice of two-litre, four-cylinder 155 Twin Sparks. Both generate 143 bhp (down a little in these catalysed days) and are priced in the £15-17,000 bracket. The more expensive Lusso has, as standard, electronic ABS, air conditioning, alloy wheels, electrically heated front seats and electric operation of the rear side glass. Our test machine is the practical rhd range leader, for the 4wd Q4 turbocharged model is currently imported only in lhd. For £18,288 (our test car had the uneccessary, but glittering, option of metallic paint) one gets the emotive V6 and all those items mentioned for the two-litre Lusso.



Technical analysis

The technical feature that drags this four-door saloon from the ranks of the mundane majority into a serious contender for our shopping list is that engine. It looks wonderful, even when straddling across the engine bay to drive the front wheels. With its polished inlet tracts atop a welter of cast aluminium, it is hewn to provoke automotive desire. It is not a particularly powerful design at 69 bhp-per-litre in catalysed form, but it has advanced considerably since the days of its unnatural appetite for head gaskets. It performed faultlessly for this test, and was particularly good at providing prompt, hot restarts in high ambient temperatures. Considering the short stroke (20mm less than the bore), the 6500 rpm redline is not unduly remarkable, but the way the engine is geared to respond happily to everyday demands for high-gear acceleration does impress. Since the engine is so smooth and stimulating, the fact that you need approximately 3200 rpm to maintain 70 mph, or more than 4000 for 90 mph, is an attraction, rather than an handicap. The chassis, with MacPherson struts, IRS (independent rear suspension) and Tipo-derived floorpan, is not a technicality we deplore. It breaks no new ground, but Alfa Romeo knows enough about front-wheel drive handling for us to query only whether it installed the right powertrain to lead the range.

For now Alfa can call on a 24-valve cylinder head design (presently confined to the new 164s, available in Britain May 1993) that could certainly generate 200 bhp. This may be a better marketing move, if plans to race the V6 in normally-aspirated form in the German Touring Car Championship ever materialise, in the shuddering wake of BMW's withdrawal and Audi's sulks. Even without that racing link, a more powerful V6 (preferably in association with the Q4's all-wheel drive) would bring the Milanese closer to the silky 192 bhp offered by BMW.

Action

I drove two rhd examples of the V6 and one Q4, covering 2800 miles and forming the opinion that the 155 has been grossly slandered. The two engines and transmissions allow completely differing characters, but both are well worth driving hard and far to discover a basic stability that far outweighs the better appreciated BMWs.

Since the Q4 is confined to lhd, we will simply say that it has ample potential to fulfil the role of a sleeker successor to the Lancia Delta integrale (from which it draws so much running gear). If it was available as a right-hooker, I would prefer such an Alfa to Audi's V6 quattros and the similarly non-turbocharged 4x4 Fords. Like the Q4, and so many Alfas before it, the 155 V6 makes few friends on first acquaintance. The external paint and internal fits and finishes on the rhd examples were better than has been reported elsewhere, but the cockpit lacks any distinction beyond any other 'Eurobox'. The omnipresent plastics are not particularly awful, but they are unsuitable accompaniment to the glorious history behind that steering wheel badge. Only the efficiency of the climate control in recorded temperatures up to 37 centigrade prevented a lot of our criticisms centring on the sweaty characteristics of such unnatural materials in hot climates.

A binnacle of myriad warning lights and six dials is frequently shrouded by the vertical adjustment needed to make yourself comfortable behind that steering wheel.

Although the cloth trim in grey tweeds with splashes of red is tastefully handled, and the driver's seat has two planes of electrical adjustment that should compliment the steering wheel, it took a lot of shuffling about to get comfortable. And then the comfort lasted only onto the first of many motorway miles: as soon as you back off to a cruising speed, you are struck by 'Alfa ankle'. This slow torture is inflicted with the voraciousness of a marauding terrier, pain gradually numbing out the entire foot. The only answer we discovered, officer, was to go a bit quicker. Thus stretching the artificially constricted limb and easing the pain until the next light throttle, top gear, stint.

The other obvious dynamic cabin failing was the deliberately long travel of the brakes. This is a Fiat Group affectation that we find mystifying, but regular inquiries have elicited the response that Fiat thinks it dangerous for brakes to bite instantly! This writer thinks it is a lot more hazardous if the brake pedal has to sink with tales of impending doom over a couple of inches' slop before any action occurs, never mind prompting the ABS. This and the contrasting height of the throttle pedal were the worst cabin features; the accelerator pedal could have been improved by strong arm

ALFA ROMEO 155 2.5 V6

ENGINE

Location	transversely front-mounted
Cylinders	V6
Bore × stroke	88 × 68.3 mm
Capacity	2492 cc
Compression ratio	10:1
Valve gear	sohc, two valves per cylinder
Power	166 bhp/5800 rpm
Torque	159 lb ft/4500 rpm
Fuel	unleaded, 95 RON

TRANSMISSION

Type ..... five-speed manual, front-wheel drive

GEARBOX

Gear	ratio	mph/1000 rpm
First	3.500:1	5.5
Second	2.176:1	8.1
Third	1.524:1	12.7
Fourth	1.156:1	16.7
Fifth	0.917:1	21.1
Final drive	3.4:1	

SUSPENSION

Front ..... MacPherson struts, transverse lower wishbones, hydraulic damping, coil springs, anti-roll bar

Rear ..... independent via trailing arms, coil springs, hydraulic dampers, anti-roll bar

Wheels ..... alloy, 6J × 15

Tyres ..... Pirelli P700 205/50 ZR15

BRAKES

Front/Rear ..... ventilated discs/discs

STEERING

Type ..... rack and pinion, power assisted

Turns, lock to lock 2.97

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	100 in
Front/Rear track	58.0/55.0 in
Overall length	175.0 in
Overall width	67.0 in
Overall height	55.0 in
Kerb weight	2838 lb
Fuel tank	14.0 gallons

PERFORMANCE

0-30 mph	2.92s	0-80 mph	13.20s
0-40 mph	4.44s	0-90 mph	16.93s
0-50 mph	5.92s	0-100 mph	21.24s
0-60 mph	8.16s	0-110 mph	28.37s
0-70 mph	10.46s		

50-70 mph in third/fourth/fifth gears .. 4.96/6.93/9.66s

Maximum speed ..... 133.29 mph

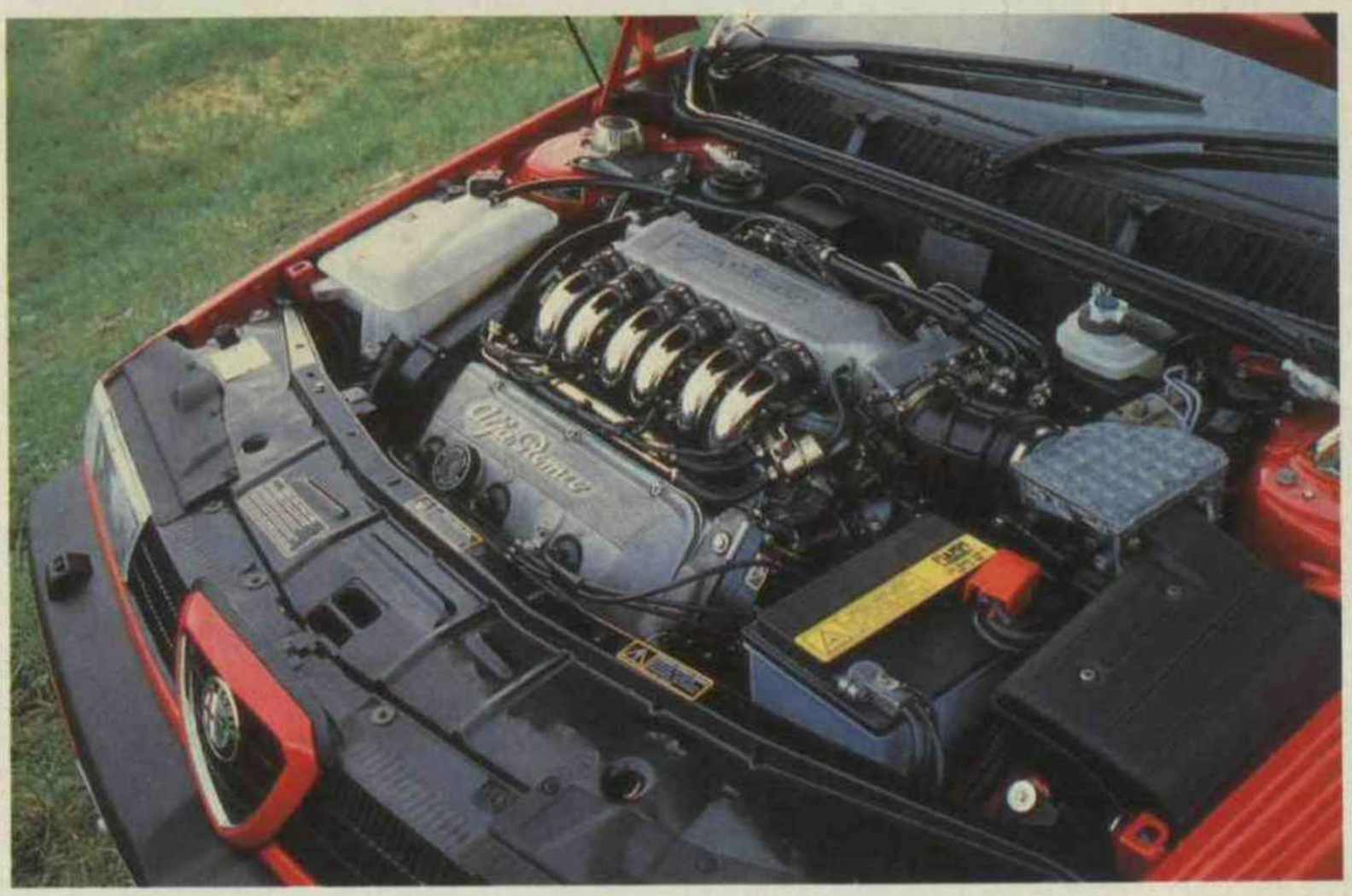
FUEL CONSUMPTION

Average for test ..... 23.17 mpg

Government figures:

Urban	23.5
56 mph	38.7
75 mph	30.4

LIST PRICE £18,288



It is difficult for a driver to make him- or herself fully comfortable in the cabin (left), though you can forgive the Alfa almost any foible once the lusty but smooth V6 (above) is given full rein.

butchery, but the action of the brakes was poor on both test cars, and by the time the harsh 2500 miles of one example had been exceeded, pedal travel was excessive by any standard. Served by Pirellis on both V6s, we found large differences in ride quality were apparent. Had we just driven the Alfa in Britain we would have criticised the ride as restless.

The other V6 covered the bulk of continental mileage, swallowing adult passengers (up to three) and an unreasonable amount of luggage, racing and photographic gear. Under such circumstances, the ride appeared marvellous, particularly good at soaking up bumpier French by-ways on a cross-country route from Monaco to Lyon. The steering is more suitably geared for performance driving than most opposition (effectively, just three turns from lock-to-lock are required). The feedback is not inspiring initially, but as the miles pile up you find that the rack and pinion does communicate changes in road surface just as informatively as it tells you when the front tyres start to lose adhesion under the influence of low gear power and tight corners.

Swinging smartly through the French countryside, the Alfa sounded marvellous, supplied reassuring grip over unknown terrain and returned some amazing average speeds. It is not particularly fast by current test track class standards, almost 10 mph down on a BMW 325i and measurably slower than a VW VR6 at the top end. However, the consistently able handling and an engine with a power band that ensures this 166 bhp V6 can outperform the 325i (before the onset of variable valve timing) in the 50-70 mph top gear band enable you to cover ground rapidly and enjoyably. Especially relaxing is the ability of the 2.5-litre V6 to growl from 2000 rpm with genuine pulling power. This means the need to change gear diminishes, as does high rpm engine noise. Fatigue for both drivers and passengers is commensurately reduced. Surprisingly, considering the autobahn heritage that is emphasised in every German performance saloon, I would prefer the Alfa to the BMW for motorway mileage, because its crosswind stability is so exceptional. We even survived a brief taste of the storms that rocked the Savona region and caused widespread flooding, all without drama. It splashed along the streaming autostrada with the kind of aplomb that was distinctly absent in comparatively calm conditions from the 325s we have experienced.

Verdict

Saving thousands over the equivalent BMW 325i is an attractive proposition, but (unfortunately, in my view) few buyers see Ala Romeo in this role.

Despite what we proved in this endurance marathon, most will not see past previous reputation for rust and unreliability. Those that are prepared to put aside such predjudices may then be beached on the old front- versus rear-drive clichés.

We can only say that – noted cabin snags aside – we thought this 2.5-litre V6 superior in many ways to the Audi/BMW/Mercedes German establishment in this class. As such, it is outstanding value and well worth at least 30 minutes of your time for a test drive before you merge with the executive masses. **JW**





Photo: Mike Valente

Worth the weight?

Behind the reborn BMW performance flagship lie at least four years' development graft and 50 prototypes. Replacing the familiar old four-cylinder warrior is a very much smoother six-cylinder M3, but the 155 mph newcomer is a very much heavier, plusher machine. It is more akin to a replacement for BMW's old six-cylinder CSi coupé. This time, British customers *will* be offered rhd from May 1993 at predicted prices in the £33-34,000 band, depending on the exchange rate and what items from the considerable options list are incorporated as part of standard UK specification.

No agreement has yet been signed to import the M3 to North America, where predicted prices look uncomfortable in a Japanese-dominated market.

Nothing but the badge and its origins in BMW Motorsport really link the new M3 to its predecessor. The 0.32 Cd body is based on that of the current 3-series coupé and much of the running gear has been developed from the 24-valve, dohc 325i.

Furthest from its 325i base is the engine. A new iron block and two-part alloy cylinder head are, statistically, very different. The 24v dohc principles are substantially modified by a variable valve timing system (VACC for English speakers, VANOS is the acronym used by Germans) that works on the inlet camshaft only. Its electro-hydraulic actuation modifies camshaft action between 80 and 120 crankshaft degrees and allows exceptional torque to accompany the generation of 286 bhp at 7000 rpm.

BMW credits its latest M50-coded three-litre (it's actually 2990 cc, 86 × 85.8 mm) with a world record in bhp per litre (95.6) at this capacity, though Honda might like to query that. The Civic VTEC manages 98.8 . . . BMW has, however, overcome Porsche's previous benchmark for torque in the normally-aspirated, three-litre class. The M3 pumps out 236 lb/ft at 3600 rpm. The most remarkable facet to that torque capability is that the peak figure is sustained all the way to 5800 rpm. Furthermore, the engine remains remarkably suave at either end of its 7280 rpm range, be it 700 or 7000.

The unit is mated to a 525i ZF five-speed, a sextet of ratios being ruled out by Germany's target price ceiling. The bulky motor is installed with at least two of its in-line cylinders forward of the axle line, and one can see why BMW and the organisers of the German Touring Car Championship came into such bitter dispute over the engine location. The company claims that 50-50 weight distribution is retained on the road, but it does not look like that in the flesh; before withdrawing from further GTCC involvement, BMW Motorsport wanted to run a lowered and relocated (moved back by 15 cm) version of the motor.

For road customers the 325i chassis has been substantially overhauled, but the principles of MacPherson strut front and Z1-derived multiple-link back axle remain, albeit with typical detail reinforcements. These centre on a 1.22 in reduction in ride height after the adoption of replacement gas-filled damping, shorter and stiffer coil springs, thicker front anti-roll bar, stiffened suspension mounting joints and a ZF limited slip differential operating a 25 per cent torque preloading. The steering features a variable ratio that is not offered elsewhere in the 3-series range. The back trailing arms are physically strengthened and 850i Coupé wheel bearings are adopted, all to resist the ravages of cornering forces up that have been measured at up to 1.2G.

The biggest handling advantages come from more obvious modifications: 17 in wheel diameters are adopted with 7.5 in rims (8.5 in is a forged alloy option) and 235/40 ZR covers from the Michelin MXX3 range are prominent. Behind such large diameter wheels lurk equally impressive vented discs, effectively monitored by Teves ABS.

BMW makes much of the new M3's stopping abilities. It claims that it takes just 8.8s to go from rest to 62 mph and back again; six of those seconds are spent gathering velocity, and just 2.8 scrubbing it off.

The body has none of the old car's extended wheelarch character; even a rear spoiler is only allowed as an option. The most notable M3 panel is an extended front spoiler with under-bumper grille, but detail modifications also abound, such as prominent side sills and an extended, stylised rear apron, which wraps around stubby twin exhausts. BMW Motorsport sales personnel did feel that more M3 identity was needed, and the 'racing' mirrors, badges on each door and the kickplates reflect that lack of confidence. Originally they were going to put an M3 badge within the sacred kidney grille, but corporate defenders of the faith vetoed that intrusion, leaving the bootlid as the only place to put such a motif.

The interior is not inspired, but it does carry an individual Motorsport trim alongside the ponderous air bag steering wheel (intricately hand-stitched in bright threads around the inside circumference of the rim) and an oil temperature gauge continues to replace the econometer of the usual 3-series. Red needles record 7300 as the limit on the 8000 rpm scale and 270 km/h (168 mph) as the maximum indicated speed, but, as with all current high-performance BMWs, an electronic device interferes at 155 mph.

The engine has all the hallmarks of BMW breeding, whirring along at low rpm, where there is plentiful torque available, and gradually taking on the note that encourages lazy colleagues to recall the "turbine smoothness" of a BMW straight six.

Whether humming along melodically at 87 mph (less than 4000 rpm in top), or sprinting between second gear curves at 7000 rpm, the seductive engine is reason enough to buy. BMW engineering legend Paul Rosche told journalists: "I know of no better engine." We would endorse that for the combination of civilisation and accessible power.

Other M3 abilities that set new benchmarks are those enormous brakes and a beautifully absorbent ride, especially when you consider the 40 per cent aspect ratio tyres.

What we were not so impressed by was the communication between car and driver over roads with differing degrees of adhesion. On dry surfaces there is enormous grip, and the Michelins awaken the steering from its apparently well damped torpor to tell you that initial understeer has been traded for old fashioned power oversteer. When, as for our trip, surfaces go from dry to damp to wet and back to dry, the M3 is far from convincing. The driver – despite adjustable shoulder and headrest sections to the unique seats – is not made to feel at one with the car. The steering fails to relay either the drop in bite being achieved by the front wheels, or the disquieting speed with which the rears will now want to overtake their forward comrades. It was not the kind of hair-raising experience, or general unease, that 911s and Skodas used to generate in their original formats, but the new M3 is hard to balance in its new, heavyweight guise.

I am not advocating a traction control device, which Motorsport eschewed but is now working on again for this model, but the kind of alert feedback that characterised its 527 lb lighter four-cylinder progenitor. The new M3 can't match the old when it comes to seeking pleasure on a twisty road. It was a similar story when the 3.8-litre M5 supplanted the original.

The truth may be that journalists and purists enjoy these original Motorsport devices, but the buying public always want further equipment. Such bulk soon ruins handling pleasure, as well as putting a dent in acceleration curves and making affordable fuel consumption a challenge. In the latter respect, BMW points to a likely overall average of 31 mpg; we recorded a best of 18.7 and the most probable UK averages will be close to the urban quote 21.7. It runs on 98 RON super unleaded.

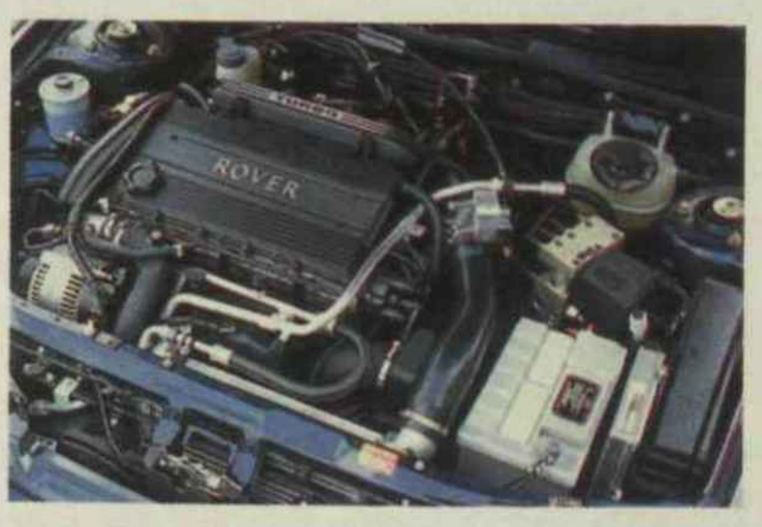
I would put the new M3 on my personal wanted list, but I wonder how many others amongst the 17,000-plus buyers of the first M3 will be amongst the 24,000 anticipated customers (over the next five or six years) for the new one? I suspect many more old 6-series clients are going to be interested, in which case the machine could have been most accurately described as a 3.0 CSi.

That would prevent purchasers gaining the false impression that the new M3 is as raunchy a driving machine as the original. **JW**

Rover athletic







Without spoilers, the 216 Coupé (top) lacks the potent 220 Turbo's aggressive presence (below).

Cabin is impressive (above left). The heart of Rover's fastest ever production car (above).



Rover is to make a determined challenge in the small, but lucrative, coupé market. A three-model range is now available, priced from £14,495, if you opt for the familiar Honda 1.6-litre sohc powertrain, to £18,315 for the 220 Turbo that we tried in Yorkshire recently.

This lavishly equipped Rover has no Honda equivalent and is said to be the marque's fastest ever product, with a claimed top speed of 150 mph and the ability to sprint from 0-60 mph in 6.2s. It is aggressively styled, effectively engineered and modestly innovative.

Externally the appearance is very much in the Japanese mould, although the lack of spoilers on the 216 allows a more European (Calibra-style) effect. The twin glass sunroof panels are an easily detachable standard feature that give the Rover a unique semi-Targa feeling, courtesy of an Italian supplier. MOTOR SPORThas previously tested the boosted two-litre T-series engine in the current Vitesse, but the version for the smaller and lighter coupé is the result of a 14-month co-operation between Rover and Garrett AiResearch engineers. The T25 turbo is the same, but the intercooler has been replaced, primarily for packaging reasons. Power has been increased from the Vitesse's 185 bhp to 200 bhp at 6000 rpm. Torque is also revised, to 174 lb/ft at a modest 2100 rpm.

To achieve these figures, Rover Powertrain Programmes at Longbridge changed exhaust camshaft duration from 260 deg to 240 and reprogrammed the Rover MEMS electronics to allow 12 psi boost pressure rather than the 800's 10 psi peak. The use of thinwall techniques within the catalytic converter and an increased exhaust bore have helped to speed up flow rates.

To complement the increased power there had to be a rapid search to find a suitable transmission, all-wheel drive systems having been ruled out on grounds of cost and engineering time. After a look at the kind of electronic traction controls that VW uses upon the VR6 and the viscous coupling employed by Ford on older Escort RS turbos, Rover opted to enter negotiations with Torsen, now under Japanese ownership. Rover engineers enjoyed excellent co-operation with American engineers and Belgian production facilities to bring the Torsen front-drive differential to the Longbridge production line.

We covered just over 70 miles, most of them in a torrent, to assess the low-riding sports suspension (nicknamed 'Tomcat', though this surely can't be *another* TWR project?) and modified powertrain. These were the most demanding conditions for a powerful, front-drive car. With the reservation that front wheel location is not sufficient to prevent pronounced wheel hop in a wet weather standing start, we liked the turbocharged small Rover a lot. The exterior style is such that you expect something of a hooligan road racer in the old Escort RS style. What you get is one of the most refined and capable members of the current turbocharged, four-cylinder generation. It will run from 1000-6400 rpm without any sudden hummocks in the power curve.

The K-series model? That has a power unit to establish Rover as a serious source of civilised horsepower.

The Torsen differential does its job well, allowing the driver to select power and line in a manner that VW's system would never permit. It does not provide the security (or customer expense) of a full four-wheel drive system, but it does work well in association with usual Rover flair for balancing ride and handling qualities.

The cabin of the new Rover coupé was finely finished in dark hues (leather and air conditioning are options), and the coupé promises to satisfy a planned 7000 new owners per year in the UK, with an estimated 5000 valuable sales overseas.

On this brief acquaintance I would be unlikely to pick the Rover over the VW Corrado (I thought both 16v and G60 versions worthwhile, and hear nothing but praise for the new 190 bhp VR6 range leader). However, thousands of Rover customers will place value for money and strong style ahead of the less unobtrusive Volkswagen's qualities. This will make the latest Rover coupé a deserved commercial success.

J W

MISGUIDED MISSILE



It was the small car Ferrari never made. It was always known as "Ferrarina", but neither the prancing horse nor the name appeared on it. Instead it bore a triangular badge with the letters ASA, symbol of an undertaking fuelled by enthusiasm but ultimately misguided.

It was Ferrari who presented a tiny 850cc four-cylinder engine to the press in 1959, but claimed that it was merely a technical exercise and that the company was not interested in selling cars in this class. Interestingly, in the same year Fiat concluded an agreement with OSCA to supply twin-cam engines for a new 1600S Coupé by Pinin Farina, while Ferrari's 850cc unit was later seen being tested in a Fiat 1100 "mule" chassis clothed in a Pinin Farina coupé body. Whether this was the deal Ferrari had wanted for his new SEFAC company (both engines were in-line fours of around 100bhp) is not clear, but it might explain why Ferrari should be devoting development resources to a project he repeatedly avowed he had no intention of marketing. He apparently thought well of the result, because he was using the Pinin Farina coupé as everyday transport around Modena and Maranello as late as 1961.

Initial engine development began in 1958 with an 850cc unit running downdraught carbs which was squeezing out 86bhp by 1959. Perhaps in an effort to reduce the strain it was expanded to 950cc and a more relaxed 80bhp, though still at 7000rpm, before settling on the production 1032cc by 1960. At the same time the breathing changed to two twin sidedraught 38 DCOA Webers. Horsepower claims for this version range from an unlikely 100 down to 91; given the larger (40mm) carburetters on later cars, around 95bhp seems a reasonable assessment, equating to a very high specific output for the period.

It was a straightforward design, using a single chain-driven cam, with inclined valves in hemispherical heads. Its unusual power came more from a high compression ratio of 9.0:1 and free-flowing crossflow head than technical innovation. But Ferrari was proud of the high output of the little four, and it seemed a shame for it to languish. Project 854, as it was known in house, reappeared on the Bertone stand at the 1961 Turin Show, but this time in a brand new coupé body carrying only the name *Mille*, with no references to Ferrari anywhere nor any suggestions about its future.

Enter the de Noras, wealthy industrialists owning important chemical plants in Milan. Oronzio de Nora was a good friend of Enzo, and his son Niccolo, an enthusiastic Ferrari customer, already had commercial automotive interests through SNAP, a small company manufacturing exhaust manifolds. Opinions differ on whether the idea came from Enzo or from the de Noras, but in 1962 Niccolo became the focus of a new company —





Autocostruzione Società per Azioni or ASA. The new outfit would assemble the car in Milan, at premises near the family's chemical plants, bringing together the body/chassis structure from Bertone, power unit from Modena, and gearbox from Britain.

De Nora's new organisation included his two chief colleagues from SNAP: Luciano Masseroni ran production, and former Maserati GP driver Count Gerino Gerini looked after commercial matters. Despite being in its infancy, ASA boasted a strong-looking team, particularly for road-testing: Giorgio Bassi (later to have a single GP outing in a BRM at Monza in 1965) was in charge, with two other Grand Prix drivers, Lorenzo Bandini and Giancarlo Baghetti, helping him.

Technical development was in the hands of Giotto Bizzarrini, also late of Ferrari and working simultaneously on the ATS Formula One project with Carlo Chiti and Romolo Tavoni, who had been racing director at Maranello. The latter were the leading figures of the disaffected group who left Ferrari in 1961 to form the rival (but spectacularly unsuccessful) ATS team, which might have been expected to make for some discomfort in the de Noras' relationships with the *Commendatore*. Yet the close contact between the two concerns continued: Baghetti tested the 1000GT during the week and drove a Ferrari at Grands Prix, Bandini was recruited by Enzo in 1962, and another Ferrari pilot, Ritchie Ginther, had an ASA coupé as his road car. In addition, Ferrari himself recommended to the de Noras that they employ Romolo de Stefani, who consequently left Autobianchi to become ASA's general manager.

By Autumn 1962 the compact GT was ready to be revealed in its definitive form at Turin, complete with ASA badges and the designation 1000GT. Little had changed otherwise, save that the original faired-in plexiglass-covered headlamps had been replaced with conventional protruding lights, without however spoiling the overall harmony of the shape. Again there were no overt references to its parentage, but the twin-opening snout ostentatiously recalled the distinctive nose of the Type 156 GP Ferrari. Already the car had become widely known as "Ferrarina", or little Ferrari, and it was to carry this tag all its short life. It was not the only car to conceal a Ferrari engine beneath another badge — even the Dino did not carry the prancing horse — but the others such as Fiat Dino and Lancia Stratos all had the F-word emblazoned on the power unit. This time only the ASA name was cast into the cam-cover.

1963 was a year of getting the production set-up moving, and of intensive road-testing. Bassi, in charge of the test programme, had a daily route from Modena to Rome, while Baghetti, alternating with Giampiero Biscaldi from the Scuderia S Ambroeus, pounded from Milan to Rome and back day after day. He would check top speeds on the *autostrada* between Milan and Bologna, and then throw the tiny machine through the demanding bends of the Futa Pass, where the handling was honed until the ASA became what Baghetti described as "a perfect car". In the language of the day, he meant one which oversteered easily on the exit from a turn, but contemporary reports do agree on the predictability of the chassis and the delicacy of the steering.

To match its sporting handling, the diminutive engine responded best to hard use: the power topped out at the 7000 maximum, while the torque peak was only 1000rpm below this, and only made 79lb ft. To keep the unit singing the driver could work his way through six ratios, thanks to a four-speed Sunbeam Rapier gearbox with a Laycock-de Normanville overdrive on third and fourth. 0-60 occupied about 14 sec.

Suspension was pretty much what Modena was offering at the time: double coil-sprung wishbones to the front, and a live rear axle with radius arms, though the ASA used coils where half-elliptics were still to be found on Ferraris. Gaining especial praise were the brakes: all-round servo-assisted Dunlop discs, and heartily-sized, too — 9.4in at the front. They could pull the far-from-flyweight little car up impressively from speed without locking, an example of the principle that more weight can sometimes give better braking through increased bite.

Contributing to the "Mille"s stocky build, its tubular steel chassis was generously sized and followed the twin-rail-plus-triangulation pattern of the 250-series Ferraris Bizzarrini had worked on. This was clad with steel panels which were heavily sound-proofed to help with the refinement De Nora wanted in his tiny tourer. Interior appointments were good for the time without being lavish — comprehensive instruments, Momo wood-rimmed steering wheel, simple pleated leather seats with carpeted luggage space behind — and the control layout was praised, with the usual reservations from the British press about the Italian driving position.

Steel Borrani knock-off wheels with Michelin X or Pirelli Cinturato 145 tyres, the normal hot wear at the time, kept up the competition image, and gave the car the grip to complement its well-balanced handling.

To keep public interest high until the first cars were available, ASA showed a GRP-bodied spider at Geneva in March 1963. By the Turin Show in the autumn several production coupés were running, and potential customers could experience them on a closed circuit provided for exhibitors. ASA's three Bs took turns as chauffeurs, and Baghetti proudly claimed the lap record ahead of larger-engined machines.

It was only in 1964 that cars began to reach customers in small quantities, and numbers barely improved in the year following. Like many small car manufacturers wobbling into production, ASA hinted at generous figures, but the reality was not encouraging. As so often, the U S market was the critical one, and American distribution was handled by Luigi Chinetti, the official Ferrari importer. But

American buyers could not see anything very special about a car which was both small and more expensive than home-grown muscle-cars; a total of 30-40 were sold in the USA.

De Nora and his loyal and enthusiastic team ploughed on, tackling the power to weight deficit with a revised and lightened version for 1965, the 411 coupé, which had an alloy body and an 1100cc engine. They also attempted some racing, entering a pair of 1000GT coupés in the 1965 Targa Florio, still in the Prototype class due to their meagre production rate. In fact *Motoring News* described them in its report of the event as "appearing at motor-shows for several years now without seeming to get beyond this chrysalis stage". Pianta, ASA's chief tester, shared one entry with Bassi; Kim/Babbini formed the second crew, while Baghetti and Bandini were both there too, but in serious cars — P2 Ferraris. Both ASAs finished, third and fourth in the under-1600 Prototype class; in other words, nowhere. But they did finish, which, ironically, was more than Baghetti did in his Ferrari. After lying second to his other ASA colleague Bandini, who eventually won sharing with Nino Vacarella, the battery went flat and left Baghetti to walk in. The ASA's performance seemed to sum up the car: predictable but uninspiring, compared to the superlight racers from Abarth which showed the way in the small-capacity class.

Abarth, of course, built race cars in handfuls or single units, and charged his customers the actual build cost; no question here of economies of scale. ASA, on the other hand, had contract quotas to fulfil with both Ferrari on engines and Bertone on frames. Cars were essentially hand-built to high quality levels, yet its survival depended on quantity production to reduce unit cost — a figure of 100 cars a week was mentioned at one time to make the company viable. Obviously it would be impossible to get rid of that many sportcars, so the company would have needed a volume model to support it — the whole thing seems now an unrealistic spiral. The first rumours of financial problems surfaced in 1966.

As if in realisation that the small capacity was a pointless restriction, there were two more engine developments. The first was a 1.3-litre six-cylinder based on the original 850cc dimensions and offered only in Italy; the other was an export-only 1754cc four giving a hearty 140bhp. Geneva in 1966 provided the last flicker of publicity for ASA with the "Rollbar" spyder, equipped with the 1300cc engine. The company ceased production in 1967. As always for small ventures, production figures are vague, but seems to have reached a total of around 70 coupés, plus seven spyders. Which makes it all the more surprising to meet a man who owns two open-topped ASAs, and in this country, too.

Gehan de Silva uses one of his scarlet convertibles fairly regularly. Although the other one is potentially the better of the pair, after it has received some attention, the one we inspected looked very straight and original, with all its details seemingly complete. Its fibreglass body is substantial and solid, with tidy panel fits, going against the story that the Italians couldn't handle this novel material in the Sixties. Within the sleek chopped tail, the boot is surprisingly large, unaffected by the hood which folds away fairly neatly into the luggage space behind the seats. It's a neat design, too, needing little effort to swing it over and lock it down, and complementing the attractive lines in either position. Close to, the car looks tiny — it measures only 12ft 9in long and 4ft 9in wide — but with its wide doors and tall screen it manages to feel quite roomy inside. Once settled inside the feeling is a sporty one, as your bottom is flat on the floor with feet stretched out, and the large slender wheel is at arms' length.

Tiny cylinders crack promptly into life, accompanied by the typical sidedraught snort of two twin-choke Webers. It accelerates with a tailpipe rasp and obvious willingness; the pulling power may be best at high revs, but it's not nearly as peaky as you would imagine, which makes the double overdrive an advantage, not a neccessity.

Most impressive of all is the ride quality: the thick chassis tubes only have to bridge a 7ft 2in wheelbase, so there is little flex, and the springing is gentle. Wind intrusion is not pronounced, while the plain semi-bucket seats hold you well. Long journeys suddenly look enticing rather than endurable. Yes, it rolls a bit (the track is only 4ft), but that gives plenty of feel about how the skinny tyres are coping. And the brakes lives up to their contemporary reputation — a relief given the impossibility of finding parts.

Its sporting heritage shows in the engine's eagerness to keep the big tach needle cranked over towards the high figures, though it will equally burble along on light throttle openings. Somehow there's an impression of being cleverly fooled. It feels bigger than it is, it rides better than it should, and it goes faster than you thought. For de Silva, it's a pleasant alternative to the lovely 246 Dino which rests outside his house for when he wants an electrifying drive. If it were your only toy, I have a feeling you would always be thinking wistfully of the extra guts of the six-cylinder or the big four which surfaced at the end of this motoring adventure.

It wasn't that these more powerful models were too late, for in a sense it was always too late for the ASA. It was a pretty car, it was rare, it was efficient for its size; but sportscar buyers are rarely concerned with efficiency, and a good all-rounder, which it was, needs to be stunning to look at, or relatively cheap, or based on simple, reliable parts to pull in volume sales — and preferably all three. The ASA was a hand-built car with a small highly stressed engine of conventional layout, not staggeringly fast; as rare as a Ferrari but with only reflections of the glamour, and as dear to buy as a Porsche but lacking the tuning and competition potential of the German product. You can't help asking yourself what it was all about; why they didn't make it a bit larger and give it more poke. It could have been — well, it could have been a Ferrari. **GC**



Opposite page; Bertone's smooth shape belied the car's compact size, and was advanced for 1961, particularly the Elan-like tail. Due to its slow sales, the ASA had to run in the Prototype class in the 1965 Targa, against fly-weight Abarths (above).



Cabin, abounded with dials and exuded the right sporting note.



Compact 1-litre single-cam engine displayed quality engineering.

Serious Stuff



Rileys high on the Brooklands banking — which got Freddie Dixon into trouble.

I was looking at *RAC MSA News* the other day, and it reminded me of how very intense all forms of motor sports have become, in the world of big business in which such are now included. It is absolutely right and proper that events in which danger lurks and the results of which mean a very great deal to quite a lot of the drivers, to some of whom even the smaller events constitute part of their living, should be properly marshalled and conducted, with cheating and other evasions quickly stamped out.

Yet looking at today's saloon-car contests, with the close racing, continual needling, and the takings-off the circuit that have become the norm, to the delight of the average on-looker and the Beeb, of course, one wonders whether such behaviour can be entirely erradicated? Years ago, if you fancied seeing racing of this kind, you took yourself off to the local "banger oval", where, to win, a driver had to be very adept at dodging the spinning traffic and/or a master of shunting the opposition off. The nearest "banger races" for me and DSJ after the war were run at Aldershot Stadium. The cars were mostly ready for the scrapyard, although they would now be regarded as Classics, I suppose; but occasionally an exotic car would have been adapted for sacrifice on the alter of all this shunting and spinning. It must all have been outside RAC jurisdiction. Astonishingly after the racing the public could *have a go round in their own cars. . . .*

How things have changed! I note from *RAC MSA News* that at five Judicial Proceedings those hauled-up were required to pay £250 in fines and £1650 in costs, the latter sometimes having to be paid by the club organising the racing, although in a few instances these were refunded after appeal. I do not cite this as a criticism of the RAC MSA, but simply to emphasise how complex and "official" motor sport has become. But I do wonder whether bad language and fisticuffs need be the subject of action at top level? And in my innocence I was under the impression, clearly false, that only judges, magistrates and similar legal luminaries can inflict fines. I am wrong, however, because I now recall that at Brooklands long ago small fines were sometimes demanded after transgressions of the regulations. Today, they can be of up to £26,250.

Motoring sport has become very expensive! I note that the annual insurance premium for the Birmingham Super Prix was around £250,000, and that these days a competition licence can cost a driver up to £450. A track licence costs up to £2,025 and the aforesaid Judicial fees as much as £315, or £1,155 if an appeal to the RAC is involved. I wonder what dear old Dean Delamont would think of how what he saw as necessary a long time ago has since evolved? And how fortunate that it wasn't in 1992 that tough Freddie Dixon was brought before the Stewards (as he was at Brooklands) for driving too high on the banking; Fred told them that his fast 2-litre Riley was in the Paddock, still warm, with his chap there to push it off, and asked which of them (they were a bunch of aged, smartly garbed gentlemen) would go out and show him how the car should be driven. . . How would the RAC/MSA judicary respond to that?

I hear that the Secretary of State for Transport has become associated with the auction sales scene, having directed Christie's to auction registration numbers at S Kensington on December 11.

Ford proficiency

I had intended to tell you how the editorial Ford 2-litre twin-cam Sierra 4x4 EFi has been fareing. But so good is Ford reliability that there is very little to tell. The mileage is now 31,895 and the car just goes on and on. Since it was savaged by a lady who flicked her FSO out of a lay-by into its near-side, when an approaching car made full avoiding action impossible, necessitating replacement of two doors, I have been without the radio/cassette-player for more than six months, because the code-number has defeated two garages. The excuse is that I was supplied with an incorrect code. *As it came with the car this seems* unlikely, but for security reasons, Ford supply the code only to a Ford dealer. . . (What an age this is!)

So I was not to have music while I drove and I am still waiting for it to be sorted out. Otherwise, no problems. Since the aforesaid repairs the fascia read-out shows the driver's door not closed, when in fact, it is. A minor irritation. One Pirelli P600 picked up a nail, but did not fully deflate before the local NTS did a quick repair. It cost over £7, whereas I can recall punctures setting me back but a few shillings. The 30,000-mile interim service cost £58.13, which included oil, screenwash, oil-filter, brake-cleaner and (at last!) new wiper-blades. But the car wasn't washed as it had been at the 24,000 mile service, nor was the digital clock re-set for winter time.

Between servicings, no oil is needed, prompt starts occur every time, and no failures have been experienced, not so much as a blown bulb. I do not regard this Ford as a very quiet or refined car but can forgive this for its sure-footedness of 4WD and anti-lock braking. Performance is adequate, with plenty of poke for overtaking if you use the gears, even though the engine has but eight valves, not the sixteen of the new Escorts — and never mind the Joe Soaps who flash at you as you regain your side of the road with ample space to spare. . . All told, this Ford Sierra suits me very well. They *would seem to be worth investigating by those* looking for practical used-car bargains, in the present economic climate, taking into account the good "green" petrol economy, the 100% dependability and endowment with most mod-cons: sunroof, central locking, thief alarm, remote boot and fuel-flap locks, digital clock, digital display, heated windscreen with inbuilt aerial, spacious interior and boot, and plenty of fascia stowages.

The things they say . . .

Did you know that George Formby, the entertainer "loved fast cars and, in 1939, was the first person to drive round Brooklands at 100mph"? That is what the *Radio Times* says. It's news to me! **W B**

AN OLD FRIEND



The accompanying picture of a smart Sunbeam Sixteen tourer owned by Bernard Burgess reminds me that this is an old friend. It started life as a 1930 fabric saloon, at one time run by Dr Dawson, who used it for towing a caravan on Alpine holidays. When the body disintegrated he had an estate-car body made to replace it. Bodies of this kind had got a bad reputation during the war years because they were apt to be crudely run-up to evade the "red petrol" laws. Not Dr Dawson's. It was constructed by a skilled boat-builder, with aluminium panels over a wooden frame.

Dr Dawson, like Mr Burgess, was an early member of the Sunbeam STD Register. The doctor had bought his Sunbeam after it had run 52,000 miles and by 1953 he had covered another 40,000 miles in it, trouble-free apart from a jammed starter.

Having been impressed by the 1927 Sunbeam Sixteen tourer which my wife had acquired in 1952 and with which I had had fun in a few trials and on journeys to Wolverhampton and Sandhurst etc when she was organising STD rallies, and wanting another vintage car, I persuaded DSJ to go half-shares with me in the Dawson car, in its shooting brake form, when the good doctor was moving on to an Austin, of later date, but pre-war. We discovered that he knew the Sunbeam intimately — "You shouldn't have any trouble," he told us, "but listen for a tap from the little ends, at. . .", and here he quoted the actual mileage at which this would happen. (In fact, over very many years, the engine never had to be taken down.) After the deal had been very amicably concluded, "Have you got a van?", he asked. "No, we are going to drive the car home," we replied. "Ah," continued the doctor, "but there are lots of spares that go with it and you will need a van to collect them."

No extra charge was asked for this collection of parts and the special tools Dr Dawson had made for the car, which we duly collected, with a borrowed van. That was some time in the 1960s and the Sunbeam proved very dependable. The body was 100% rainproof in heavy downpours and retained the comfortable original leather seats. It had been given Sunbeam hydraulic brakes from a 1931 Sixteen which were as good, or better, than those of the most modern cars. At its first MoT test the tester put his Tapley meter on the floor, told me to get up to 30mph, and he would shout "Stop!" On the command I braked and the Tapley thing shot across the floor and he into the windscreen. On the road you could apply these brakes going down a steep hill and the Sunbeam just stopped.

Its only snag was that it didn't care to be hurried. The gearchange was pleasant but likewise not to be hurried and the cruising pace was normally around 35 to 40mph. I never discovered why this was. But I do recall leading a long line of vintage light cars on a VSCC Welsh rally and thinking it would be nice to show their occupants the rather interesting and scenic road from Ryahader to Abbey-cumhir. But as the gradient increased, the Sunbeam got slower and slower. The low bottom gear saved it from total disgrace, but I was reminded of the late Cecil Clutton's comment about the Sunbeam Sixteen in *The Vintage Motor Car* (Batsford, 1954): "This engine produced the remarkably low output of 44bhp at 4000rpm, despite the quite high c r of 5.7 to 1. One would have thought it quite difficult for such an engine, at this date, to have produced less than 56bhp." Which is no doubt why Coatalen put in a 2193cc six-cylinder engine, in place of the 2040cc one, for 1931. Perhaps the weight of the estate body, although alloy-panelled, was responsible, but our journeys were stately rather than hectic, not necessarily from choice.

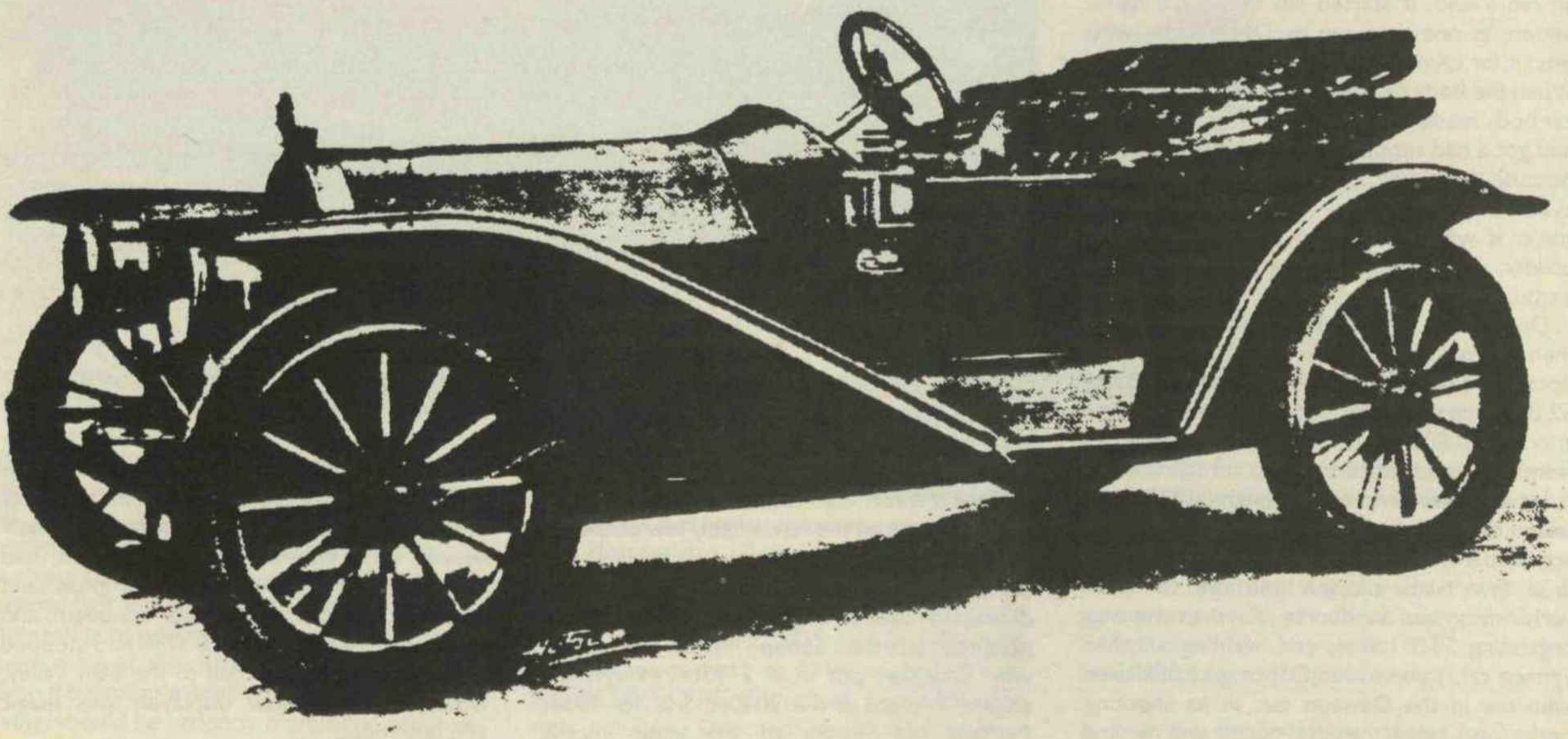
In this reliable and comfortable car with the wonderful steering I drove for more than 2800 miles in 1966/67, for instance, when most of my time was occupied with testing moderns for MOTOR SPORT. Then, DSJ, who used to service it anyway, decided it would be useful for taking his racing motorcycles to meetings. On the delivery run there was an amusing episode. The exhaust pipe came adrift and, deeming the noise too great for venturing into London, I stopped at friendly Parkway Garage run by the Gittings brothers, just outside Ledbury, and sought help. They put the car up on the hoist and did a fine welding job, of which even DSJ approved. But they had not realised that my wife, children and the dog were in the car, so there they remained, trapped, until the hoist came down again. . . Prior to this, the "Glass-house", as it was affectionately known, had been used to attend Wolverhampton and other STD rallies like the older Sunbeam, and by the summer of 1970 my wife had stopped and toasted it on the road to the Elan Valley, when the odometer displayed the magic 100,000 miles.

By the 1980s the rot had set in and the old car appeared unrecoverable. But not to Roger Carter, who is "Mr Sunbeam" to so many grateful STD Register members. When Bernard Burgess of St Albans decided it should have a new lease of life Roger set about the mechanicals, Mick Collis built the new tumble-home touring body, which was painted by Roger's son, and this was splendidly trimmed and the original seats re-upholstered in leather by Stephen Bowles of Bridport. Which shows what can be done, no matter how impossible a restoration job may appear. And I am told that, contrary to my experience, this 1930 Sunbeam now has a reasonable turn in speed. **W B**

Brighton Revisited

To complete last month's report on the Veteran Car Run to Brighton, those who failed to start (no doubt to the relief of the 51 reserve entries) numbered 65, and those who did start but who failed to arrive at the Pylons by 4pm were: W Fuchs (1893 Benz), von Pein (1893 Benz), P Briggs (1895 Peugeot), Miss Arnold (1896 Arnold), S Langton (1897 Peugeot), J Sanders (1897 Roberts), D Herrmann (1989 Benz), R Brooks (1989 Mors), K Foulkes-Halbard (1989 Orient Express), I Brooks (1899 Decauville), S Watson (1899 Peugeot), M Bryant (1899 Wolseley), R Horsfield (1900 De Dion), R Fowler (1900 Georges-Richard), H Crowther (1900 SFA), T Curry (1901 Locomobile), L Brown (1901 Locomobile) M Radford (1902 Arrol-Johnston), J Pile (1902 Clement-Panhard), N Macdonald (1902 Darracq), J Shute (1902 De Dion), J Hass (1902 De Dion), T Dickson (1902 Delahaye), J Williams (1902 Hayes-Apperson), R Carr (1902 Northern), Mrs Jensen (1902 Oldsmobile), HRH Prince Michael of Kent (1902 Panhard), de Vere Green (1902 Scania), G Phillips (1902 Siddeley), Michael Ware (1903 De Dietrich), D McNeill (1903 De Dion), J Waind (1903 De Dion), M Kampmann (1903 De Dion), C Smith (1903 Humberette), S Knight (1903 Humberette), M Tidy (1903 Panhard), Mrs Banner (1903 Peugeot), T Davies (1903 Sunbeam), P Moffat (1904 Darracq), P Norfolk (1904 De Dion), A Jowsey (1904 De Dion), J West (1904 Ford), D Holyoake (1904 Franklin), Mrs Ayley (1904 Franklin), B Lally (1904 Lanchester), D Pittuck (1904 Napier), D Rogers (Orient Buckboard), R Sharpe (1904 Pope Tribune), R Mills (1904 Renault) and T Henley (1904 Turner-Miesse).

The Seabrook RMC

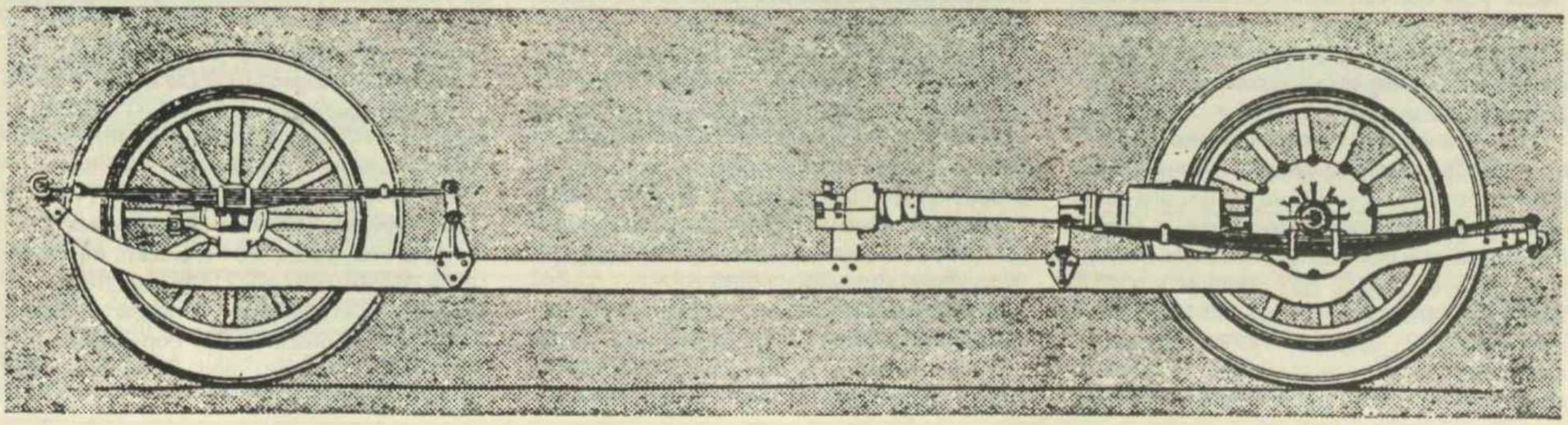


At a time when the First World War was fast approaching, and American cars looked outwardly, to European eyes, mostly all the same, with unpretentious outlines and rounded radiators and bonnets later associated with the low-priced Chevrolet and similar makes, one import from the USA stood out significantly. It was the Regal, made in Detroit, by the Regal Motor Car Company of Michigan, which had commenced operations in 1907.

In that first year of production, so the story goes, 50 cars were sold, to be recalled a year later and all of them replaced free by new 1908 models. Had he been about then, this would surely have caused Sir John Harvey-Jones, the TV industrial trouble-shooter, to have leapt up and down even more vigorously than when he visited the Morgan Motor Company at Malvern Link! What was wrong with this early batch of Regals I do not know, but there was some compensation, perhaps, when the makers lost little time in following up their subsequent conventional four-cylinder automobiles with an unusual low-hung version, powered with a 3.2-litre engine and known as the 18/20hp Regal Underslung. The American Underslung had appeared in Indianapolis at roughly the same time, but it seems that this was coincidental.

The chassis layout of the Regal Underslung was so unusual that the technical writers were soon at some pains to explain that this name did not imply just putting the road springs beneath the front and back axles, but that, in fact, the chassis side-members were under both axles. The manufacturers of the car claimed that, apart from the obvious advantage of a low centre of gravity, the riding comfort was improved. This assumption was based on the fact that the Regal Underslung, by reason of its unusual chassis, was able to use flat front leaf-springs (mounted above the axle, in fact) which would not be easy with a conventional frame, unless the dumb-irons were unduly deep and the shackles very long. The back half-elliptic springs had a considerable camber, which was reversed, however, at the rear end of each spring, to enable the shocks from the road to be taken, to some extent, horizontally as well as vertically. These rear springs were shackled at both ends and to give the necessary height to meet the shackles, they were mounted below the back axle. In addition, the axles were mounted slightly off mid-centre on the springs, the claim being that this, introducing different rates of oscillation, damped out vibrations.

That was the way in which the Regal Company sought to introduce drivers to better road-holding on the American roads of those days. Otherwise, the Regal Underslung followed the conventional pattern. The engine, an *en bloc* four-cylinder, had separate barrels, with a bore and stroke of 95 x 114mm. It was a non-crossflow unit, the inlet and the exhaust manifolds on the near-side, the low-set carburettor feeding through a Y-manifold, with the water inlet-pipe on the opposite side. The cast-iron crankcase was of barrel-shape and the two-bearing crankshaft was of 2¼in diameter. Lubrication was by splash, from a pump-fed oil level in the pick-up chamber. On this side-valve power-unit the h t magneto was driven off the front of the camshaft, supplying



current to sparking-plugs in the inlet valve-caps, as was then common, the exhaust valve-caps being equipped with compression-taps. Cooling was thermo-syphon, with a six-bladed fan, its belt-drive from the camshaft adjustable.

The drive was taken through a leather-lined cone clutch and the final drive to the rear-axle three-speed and reverse gearbox, which had a right-hand gate change, was by torque-tube. The gearbox had needle-roller bearings for its spigot-shaft, with balls to take the end thrust, a refinement found usually only on cars of the Napier and Lanchester calibre. Apart from its underslung layout, the chassis was of normal form, with pressed-steel channel-section side members and cross-members of the same kind, with two steel tubes supporting the engine. The front axle was of H-section. The wheelbase was 8ft 4in, the track 4ft 8in and the wheels, with detachable rims, ran on 32in x 3½in tyres.

This unusual car began to arouse interest here and the two Seabrook brothers set about importing it. They had premises at 57 Great Eastern Street, London EC, and showrooms in Cambridge Circus WC. At first they brought in only three cars. To publicise the RMC they entered for competition events, including hill-climbs. In this they and others had some success. For instance, at an Essex County AC hillclimb in the summer of 1911, two firsts and a second-class award were won by these cars (LA 3955, the demonstration car, and LA 6900). At the same time Sir Francis Samuelson, Bt, having found his 1909 8.9hp Sizaire-Naudin very unreliable and its brakes unpredictable, changed it for a 22.5hp Regal Underslung in the standard dark blue livery. One can understand Sir Francis's attention being drawn to the car, with its large engine in a comparatively light chassis which offered the prospect of good road-holding, and which in two-seater form looked quite sporting, for an American car. Indeed, he raced it at Brooklands, clad in pale blue coat and sleeves, and pink cap, for recognition purposes, at the 1911 Whitsun Meeting, lapping at 58.52mph in the Private Competitors' Handicap, but at only 48.78mph at the Summer Meeting. In fact, Sir Francis was plagued by magneto trouble, until he changed the American unit for a Bosch, and the carburettor for a Zenith. He also put on larger back wheels, made by the Pimlico Wheel Works, as he thought the car under-geared, although he got the speed up to about 70mph at the Track. The car was still very unreliable and he changed it for a SAVA, for which E Maule & Son of Stockton-on-Tees made a two-seater body to his design.

That apart, the RMC was creating quite a lot of attention in Britain, where the importers sold it as a Seabrook-RMC to avoid confusion with the French Régal. A press road-test of the 1911 18/20hp Underslung RMC reported that it was quite steady on greasy roads, in spite of the car being on plain tyres. The top-gear performance was praised, second speed being required only for starting, or for the ascent of a steep hill near Warminster, on a run from London to that town and back, when a casual check showed petrol consumption to be around 24mpg. It was also said that the engine would accelerate from below five mph, the carburettor making no complaints — a sop, maybe, to those owners who had reported otherwise.

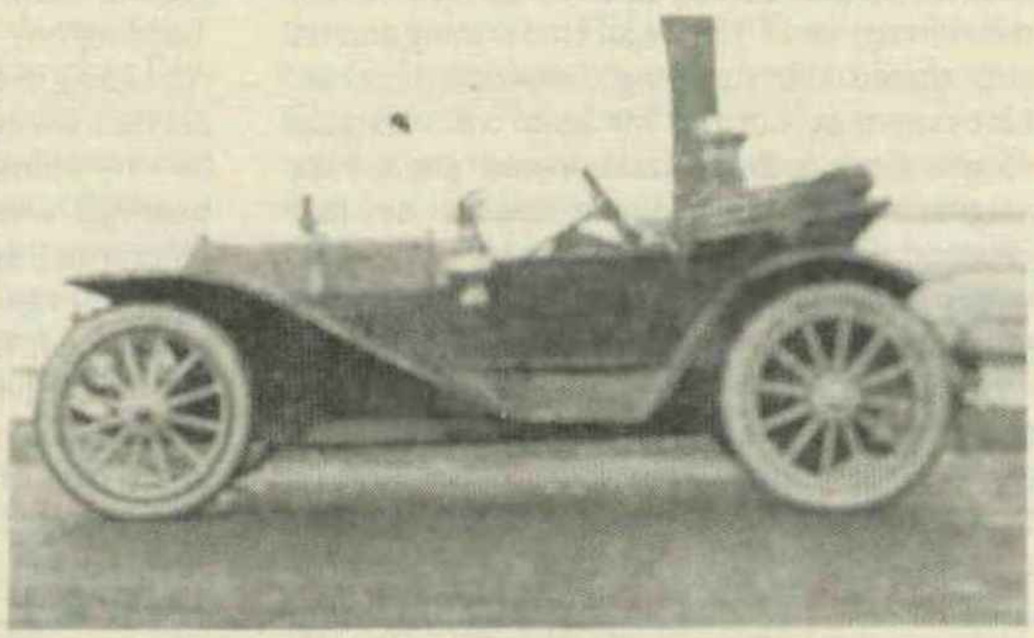
Potential customers sought advice from one another, which produced the comment from the owner of a 1913 model (LA 8201) that after 18,000 miles replacements had cost only £3, eight Michelin non-skid tyres had averaged 6930 miles, and that 25mpg and 500 to 600mpg of Vacuum-A oil had been obtained. It was emphasised that the carburettor was easily adjusted, even with the engine running. Decarbonising was done by the oxygen system every 4000 to 5000 miles and the car had gone twice to Scotland, climbing Cairn-o-Mount quite easily four-up and doing London-Carlisle in 14 hours, including the usual stops. London's Netherhall Gardens hill, then a favourite test, could be climbed on the second speed. The underhung chassis enabled the car to be used all winter without steel-studded tyres and it did not skid. . . A Mr R Lord, who had run a 1912 RMC for 6000 miles, said much the same and added that there was no need to try other carburettors, as the original one was so simple and economical. Another owner said that in 20,000 miles the only trouble had been the magneto distributor-cover unscrewing; he had tried Claudel Hobson and Zenith carburettors with good results but preferred the original Schebler. Tyres averaged 7,500 miles, petrol 24mpg, oil 400mpg.

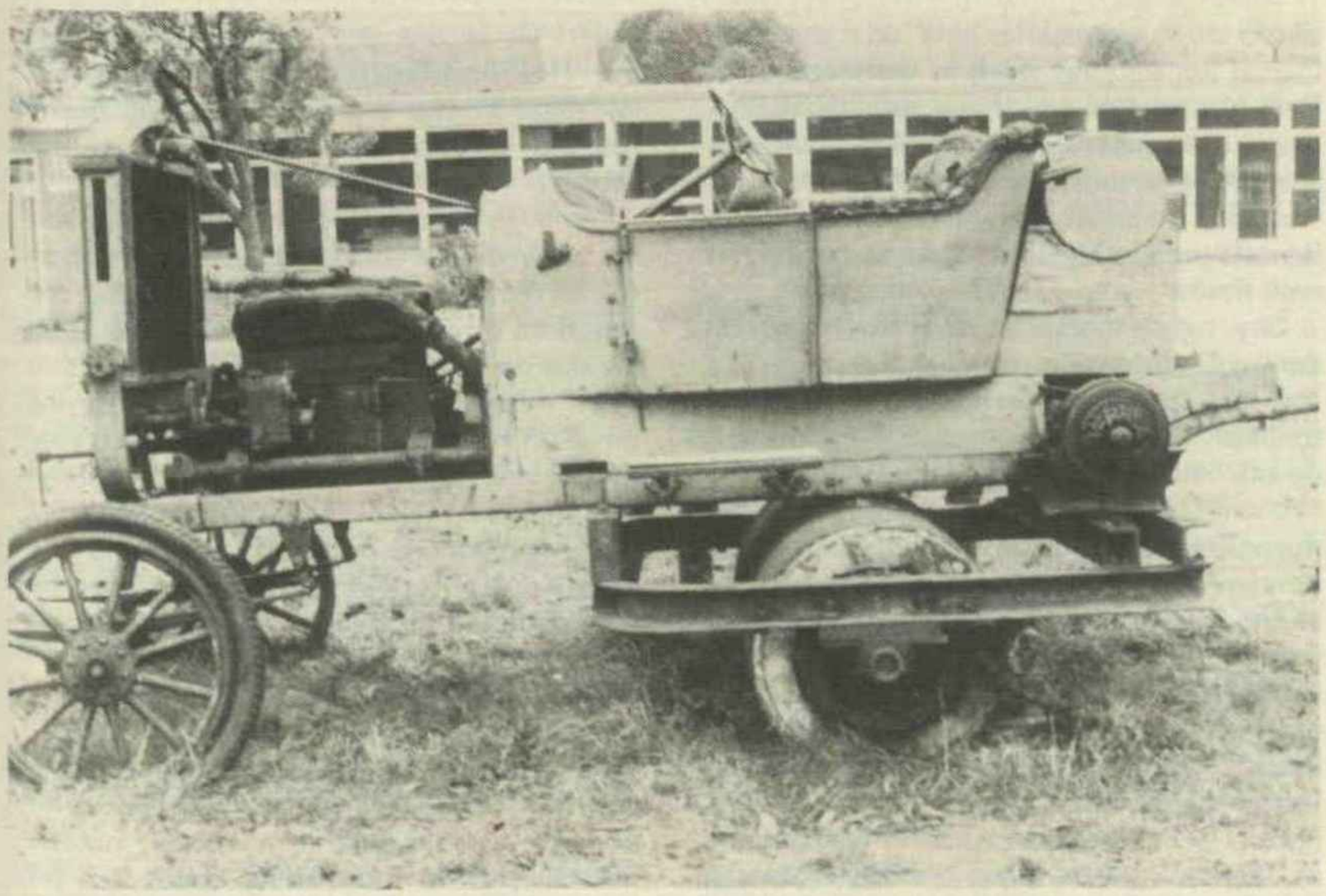
The agents were good to deal with and by 1913 a pointed-radiator sporting two-seater was available, with quickly detachable mud-guards and the petrol tank in the front of the luggage locker. The standard model cost £225 in this country, which increased by £50 in 1914, and was unavailable after 1915. It would be unkind, I suppose, to suggest that the under-slung chassis failed to help the driver of a 1913 RMC two-seater (LH 3300) when he mistook the entrance to The Swan, by the bridge over the Lambourne stream a mile out of Newbury, for the main Bath Road, and crashed heavily. . . The war caused this interesting car to cease to be imported and afterwards the Seabrook re-emerged as a light car, at first of very advanced specification, as I have described in an earlier article in this series. But in its time here the Underslung RMC seems to have been fairly popular. The Seabrooks had improved it by replacing the American carburettor with a Zenith, the Michigan magneto-and-coil unit with a German Mea magneto and by making other modifications. These included a clutch-stop and a foot-operated exhaust cut-out, no doubt with speed events in mind. They also supplied a set of Riley detachable wire wheels for £25 extra, including fitting.

That ends our story of the Seabrook-RMC. But I can round it out nicely with the remarkable story of the one (LA 6900) that came into

Opposite page, above; The Regal/ Seabrook-RMC in two-seater sporting form and below, the layout of the Regal underslung chassis.

Sir Francis Samuelson, Bt. in the two-seater RMC Seabrook which he raced at Brooklands, right. Note the lager rear wheels to raise the gear ratio. Below, Mike Holt's Seabrook-RMC, as found by Chris Felstead in 1967 when it had been converted to a motor-roller.







Mike Holt's Seabrook-RMC as it now is, ready for 1993 VCC and VSCC events.

the possession of VSCC member and 1918 Stutz and 1930 Model-A Ford owner Mike Holt who exchanged his 1902 6hp single-cylinder Neustadt-Perry for it a day after a successful 1992 Brighton Run with V F Smith who had also done the Brighton Run on his son's 1902 7hp Panhard-Levassor. Mr Holt expects to use it in Edwardian events in 1993.

This Seabrook-RMC was discovered by Chris Felstead when his journey to work took him past a school playing-field near Maidstone. In this field there stood a derelict motor-roller. Chris eventually asked the headmaster about it and was told that, if he could provide a replacement play-unit for the pupils, he could have it. A Ford van which was a runner but had failed to pass its Ten-Year-Test (as the MoT test was then called) was offered, consolidated with two large jars of sweets — to the surprise of the local sweetshop lady, who normally only sold them by the penny-worth.

That was in March 1967 and Chris organised the local gypsies into getting the roller to his home in one of their lorries, their fee being £2. So the roller represented £22, the value of the Ford and the price of delivery; plus, of course, the cost of the sweets. . . The next problem was to identify the machine. Much detective work enabled Felstead to discover that he had the remains of a 1910 Regal Underslung and he also traced the surviving Seabrook brother. Not only that, but this Mr Seabrook was able to give Chris a Zenith carburettor and a Mea magneto from among the spares he had retained from pre-1914 days. He was also, when shown a dashboard plaque commemorating the car's win in the Essex MC's 1911Bottledown hillclimb, able to confirm that this Regal was one of the first three imported, and the car afterwards sold to Sir Francis Samuelson. After doing some preliminary work on the car, Chris Felstead sold it in 1969 to Mr T D Larner of South Harrow, who did a lot more restoration, particularly the making of new machined parts. After this the Regal changed hands again, in October 1975, to Mr David Hamilton, a former private secretary to the Governor General of the West Indies, who had held a high position with the Greater London Council and of whom it had been suggested that he might make a possible assistant to HRH The Prince of Wales.

Following this gentleman's untimely death, his clergyman brother sold the unassembled Regal at a Sotheby's auction-sale in December 1987, the mileage on the speedometer reading 03443. This seems genuine, because Sir Francis had given the car to the War Office in 1914, but a sporting two-seater being of no use to them, they passed it on to the Parks Department, who did the roller-conversion. After that, the vehicle was not used again on the road; Kent CC employed it as a cricket pitch roller, until it was given to the Maidstone school as a play-ground item. The purchaser was Mr Smith of Teddington, who did much good work in rebuilding the car and who retained a set of the correct wire wheels for it, probably made up by Mr Hamilton. Two 1910-type roller-bearings were later found, needed for the differential, and a new radiator and two replica back springs were made to pattern. Work proceeded, and the engine was run again by the end of July 1988.

Now this rare and historic Seabrook-RMC is in the care of the enthusiastic Mike Holt, and I look forward to seeing it in action during the 1993 season. **W B**

Loose Ends

Having just read Guy Edwards' book on motor-racing sponsorship (to be reviewed shortly) I feel there are a few minor loose ends to be tied up. Quite when racing sponsorship began is a nice one for historians to ponder over. The RAC did not sanction advertising decals on top-rank racing cars until 1968. Today, as Edwards so ably explains, sponsorship is very big business indeed! Not only the cars but the advertising round the circuits and the labels on the drivers' overalls make this blatantly evident. You cannot baulk progress, and motor sports now lean heavily on such publicity, although one shudders that it may spread further, to classic and vintage racing, which would spoil the idea of trying to recapture the past, of reliving the history of these cars and how they were raced originally. If you don't want to participate in that, why race such cars?

The last part of Guy Edwards' book touches briefly on motor racing history and, incidentally, he drops a clanger. (I hear mine ring all too loudly, sometimes.) He has it that after Marcel Renault was killed in the tragic 1903 Paris-Madrid race which was stopped at Bordeaux the winner was his brother Louis. But after a courageous drive, Gabriel in the Mors was first home in that fateful event. Louis Renault won the Light Car Class, and was three mph slower.

Guy rightly points to the advertising on Barney Oldfield's Christie racer as early as 1910 and says sponsorship erupted at Indianapolis by 1929. That was when names were painted on the Millers, like "Simplex Piston Ring" and "Marchese Special", etc. In England this was not permitted in those pre-war days. Indeed, it now seems rather droll that in the mid-1920s all the cars in the JCC 200-Mile Races were required to be entered as "Specials", in case it was misconstrued that they were production cars, which must have seemed quaint to the entrants of a pretty standard Fiat 509, the sports-based A7s, and some others. . . The book refers to the Hitler and Mussolini support of GP cars from Germany and Italy in Grands Prix immediately prior to WW2, although I am not certain whether Nazi Party sponsorship was actually financial help or was in the guise of orders for aero-engines and military vehicles for the forthcoming war. A government investigation into the German racing teams resulted in a published document on the subject.

Although visual advertising on the cars was not allowed here until 1968, one of the first to run his motor racing on business lines was the American driver Whitney Straight, who hired his cars to others. He left Cambridge and in 1933 formed Whitney Straight Ltd, buying three GP Maseratis, and three transporters for them, opening a workshop in Milan, and employing several mechanics under the famed Giulio Ramponi. Dick Seaman gained his first experience of serious motor racing when he entered into a contract with Straight to drive an MG Magnette. Later Seaman ran his own racing on business lines. After falling out with ERA and letting Ramponi prepare the 10-year-old 1½-litre GP Delage for his future racing, Dick not only obtained free as many components and supplies as he could, but he offered paid-for advertising space on his Dodge van. It could be said that sponsorship is almost, but not quite, as old as motor racing itself. **W B**

Halcyon Days



Moth Major belonging to Midland Aero Club: "a nice aeroplane, but 40mph slower than a Leopard".
Photo: Aeroplane Monthly.

Having ventured to re-introduce a modicum of aviation interest into these pages, without so far as I am aware, any complaints, I am encouraged to recall an aspect of private flying I encountered before the war. The British ex-Indian Army pilot with whom I was associated, and who gave me my first flight from Brooklands in DH Gipsy Moth I in 1933, used light aeroplanes to attend steeplechase and point-to-point race meetings at which he or friends were riding.

How carefree such things then were is illustrated by an occasion the following year, when a friend was to ride in the Newton Abbott steeplechases. A DH Leopard Moth was booked from Wrighton Air Hire Ltd of Heston for £3 a day inclusive of insurance, which may raise an eyebrow or two among those who still hire aeroplanes for the purpose of retaining their licences or for business or pleasure journeys. The pilot arrived at Heston at 10am the next morning, was asked to do a trial circuit and landing as he was unknown to the hirers, and then he, his amateur jockey friend, and the latter's dog, set off for Haldon in Devon. The aeroplane proved very easy to handle in bumpy conditions and cruised at 120mph at 2000rpm. The dog looked out of the window, no doubt counting the rabbits on Salisbury Plain.

A NW wind made landing at Haldon none too easy, so this sensibly cautious pilot first did a couple of circuits, then came in fast, at 70mph, air-brakes off, and might have got in, but prudently went round again when he could have got in, air-brakes still off, at 60mph, but once more caution prevailed and the Leopard Moth was taken round again, after which a "quite nice" landing was accomplished, air brake in use, although the wheel brakes were needed to stop in time. The aeroplane was pegged down and the three aerial travellers taken in a 1925 Model-T Ford to the races. The jockey rode an excellent round, winning his event, after which all returned to Heston in hot sunshine, coats and hats discarded, with an enjoyable view of the Isle of Wight, the Bristol Channel, Portland Bill and five counties as they approached Salisbury. The 147 miles were flown in one hour. Thanks to a company that hired Leopard and Puss Moths, Moth Majors and Klemms and Miles Hawks from £4.10/- (450p) an hour.

Another flight made by my pilot-friend at that time was to Holland in Theo van Markham's Tiger Moth, to bring back to England a Gipsy Moth. The outward trip was very pleasant but on the return they were down to 50 feet in a hail-storm and it took 45 minutes to cross the Channel, at 400 feet in a 60mph gale. Later in 1934 the same pilot was asked to fly a rider to the Tenby Chases. He again used Wrighton's and as their Leopard Moth had not returned by the 10am scheduled time, a Moth Major, ("a nice aeroplane, but 40mph slower than a Leopard") was hired instead, after helmet, goggles and gloves had been borrowed from Capt Shaw, who was off to Lympne in the Miles Hawk in which Tommy Rose had come in second in the King's Cup race, the Hawk having a warmer cockpit.

A strong headwind was blowing, as they flew as low as possible among the Welsh mountains, a car overtaking the aeroplane as it was proceeding along the Resolven Valley at 90mph air-speed. Although people could be seen bathing from Pendine Sands, where two cars were having an impromtu race round a course laid out with towels, Tenby was shrouded in heavy rain. However, the AA Scouts on the race-course were spotted by their yellow oilskins and white-topped hats and they signalled the best way to land. After the meeting, where they won the first race and were second in the third, the AA refuelled and swung the Moth and it set off for Cardiff, still in pouring rain, watched by the intrigued crowd. (I once asked the pilot how he managed when landing away from an approved aerodrome, for such horse-riding happenings. "Oh," he said, "you open an engine-cowling when you see the inevitable policeman on his bicycle approaching, tell him you have had a spot of magneto trouble, and ask him to guard the machine while you go off to get it fixed. When you return, although he may look a bit askance at your racing silks, he will be useful in keeping the crowd back for your take-off, after you have remembered to tinker with the engine for a while, pretending to put it right. . .").

The rain persisted, so they flew up the Bristol Channel *en route* to Gloucester and Sywell, where presumably the passenger had to be dropped. Then, attempting to return to Heston, the rain became heavier and by 9pm it was almost dark. Low flying over Whipsnade in an endeavour to skirt the storm showed that conditions had become impossible. A retreat was made to the lower ground around Dunstable and after circling the village of Standbridge, near Leighton Buzzard, for some minutes a suitable field was seen and a safe landing made. Soon what seemed like the whole village arrived *en masse*, led by the son of the lady who owned the field. After helping to tie the Moth to a tree and peg its tail down the pilot was taken to the farm, given supper, lent pyjamas, and spent the night in a comfortable bed. Meanwhile, he had telephoned his wife, to explain his absence. I was in his Knightsbridge office the next morning and recall how he arrived with wringing wet maps, which I was instructed to dry out carefully over the gas-fire. He had photographed (this was the age of the first miniature Contax cameras) the field and farmhouse after taking-off that morning and he sent an enlargement to the farmer; I recall that it showed very little space between the hedge and the corn storks where the landing had been made.

Some time after this the same careful pilot got lost coming from a French GP and landed at an aerodrome to check on his route. Unfortunately it proved to be a forbidden military zone, war was approaching, and the French authorities interned both camera and the aeroplane, which was one of R O Shuttleworth's Desoutters. From the aforesaid office I had to parry calls from the famous racing driver, asking what had become of his aeroplane! But that, and the experiences of going to continental motor races for MOTOR SPORT in chartered aeroplanes (one of which was flown by the same pilot) are other stories.

W B

MERLIN-ROYCE



It was pure co-incidence that, having a book on aero-engined cars in the publishing pipeline, I was able to close the year by experiencing such a hybrid — the most powerful and intriguing motor car I have ever been out in. I refer to the Merlin-powered Rolls-Royce Phantom II built as a fun-car and to prove the versatility of the Merlin aero-engine, by the Jameson brothers, whose father designed and constructed many engines of his own. One recalls his Jameson Special racing cars, with which MOTOR SPORT has dealt recently, a 500cc racing Jameson, a supercharged sleeve-valve power-unit and a flat-four aero-engine. . .

In the Ford Sierra 4x4 workhorse I went to see this Merlin-Royce his sons Robert and Paul started making back in 1976. What a truly impressive piece of work it is! It started out as a normal 1933 12ft 6in wheelbase PII saloon, which now has a wood-planked two-seater body and in which a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine fits snugly beneath the bonnet — extended to some 5ft 6in to conceal it. I have seen some bonnetfuls of machinery in my time, but this beats them all! The engine is, in fact, a 1945 Merlin series 114, as flown in DH Mosquitos, with the supercharger removed and what was the propeller-end driving the car's transmission. In lieu of the supercharger, an inlet manifold was made up and a Holley carburetter installed. The drive goes via a Jameson transfer-box which steps up crankshaft speed 2½ times and through a racing Jaguar clutch to the Jaguar gearbox. The back axle is standard and the gearing is now such that 1000rpm in top gear is equivalent to 80mph. Outwardly the car looks like a normal vintage-period Rolls-Royce, until, on closer inspection, it is seen that the radiator has a one inch deeper core, with smaller tubes forming the honeycomb, which increase the cooling area by 60%. There are 1500 of these tiny tubes; this special core was made by a Warwickshire craftsman, by immersing the entire structure in a bath of flux. A cooling fan is belt-driven from the front of the off-side camshaft, and the alternator from the step-up gearbox.

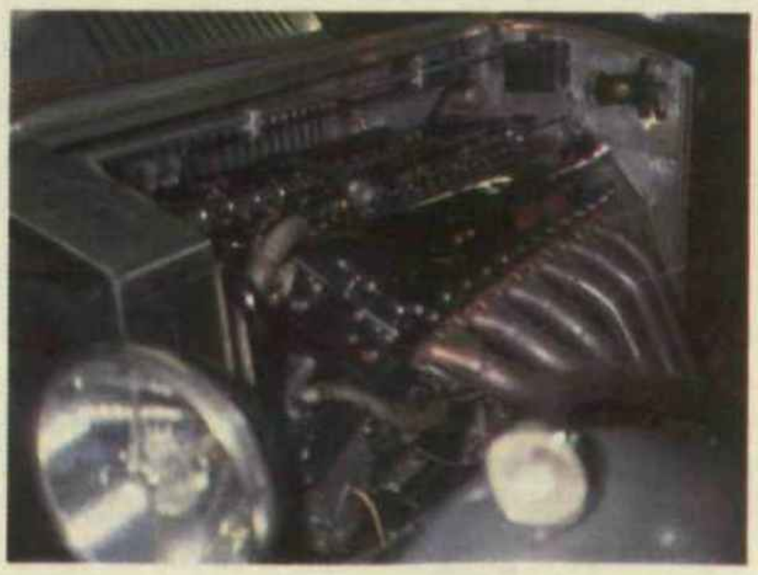
To tame this powerful 27-litre Royce, 16in disc brakes have been adapted to the front and back axles, using Aston Martin calipers at the front, Jaguar calipers at the back. You need to see them to appreciate the work involved. The engine, which must develop some 800–1000bhp, is served by two leather-clad tanks behind the seats, each with a quick-action filler cap, the near-side one holding 25 gallons of oil, the off-side one 50 gallons of petrol, a space between them ensuring that heat from the lubricant is not transferred to the fuel. In practice the oil runs very cool and an oil-cooler once fitted between the front dumb-irons is not at present in use. Leaded four-star petrol is the Merlin's normal diet. The usual 7.00 x 21in tyres on centre-lock wire wheels are retained, and the registration number is AXU 700. The Marchal headlamps could be changed for the correct Lucas P100s if anyone should respond.

The starting-up procedure is as impressive as the car itself. A large foam fire-extinguisher such as is to be found at most aerodromes is placed at the ready. There intrudes a piercing shriek from the boot-mounted pump that primes the dry-sump Merlin before it is started. The starter is then pressed and from the six-branch external exhaust pipes on each side of the long bonnet, which feed into big cylindrical silencers with the most wicked of short upturned trumpet-like bell-mouths, the most immense crackle bursts out. With a modicum of warming-up, the Merlin-Royce is ready for the road. In action the noise is far from excessive, apart from a howl from the transfer-box, but the performance. . ! Oh that we could have some figures; although standing-start acceleration might probably punish the back-axle unduly. Let me just say that the car accelerated like the wind, in great bursts of power, along the flooded Sussex lanes on that long-to-be-remembered, wet, December afternoon. On the wet roads it was perfectly easy to promote wheelspin as a demonstration of the latent power. Yet it seemed a perfectly practical proposition, the disc brakes bringing it quickly to heel, the bucket seats as comfortable as those of any touring Rolls-Royce, the springs smoothing out the road, with some flexing of the long chassis frame. The view down the great expanse of bonnet, from a stance some ten feet from the radiator, and the breath-taking acceleration, were a satisfying reminder of the enormous power of this unique car. It is not everyday that one takes a trip behind 27 litres of aero-engine urge.

You ask silly questions, like "What's the mpg?". Perhaps three-to-a-gallon, when heavy-footed. "Maximum revs?" 3000, but 3600 was permissable for five minutes in combat, before disaster might set in, and in the car that would represent over 280mph! "Have you any plans for another?" Well, yes, maybe — with 37 litres of R-R Kestrel power.

Back to the present Merlin Royce; the dashboard instruments seem normal, until you again take a closer look. Then, from this impressive fascia, you note the Ki-gas petrol-primer, with a starting magneto below it, which has to be wound furiously for starting-up, a 240kph speedometer calibrated to read in mph, neat small dials for fuel-pressure (electric feed), water-temperature, and two more for oil-pressure for the Merlin's main-bearings, and the camshafts and auxiliaries, a clock, the ammeter, and a typical aircraft tachometer calibrated 10,20,30,40 for rpm per hundred, very easy to read. Add to this pre-start oil-primer control and the starter-button and it is an imposing arrray on a smart dashboard. The advance-and-retard lever is on the driver's side of the body, leaving the four-spoke steering wheel uncluttered by control levers. Oh, and I almost forgot that a half-inch steel plate is normally in place beneath the floor in case the clutch explodes. . . An unusual motor car! Who said motoring has now become lustreless? To investigate it was well worth the 468-mile journey from Wales and back over mainly flooded roads. Now, back to mundane things — I must go and bale out the floor of the Ford, still awash with dirty flood water. . .

W B

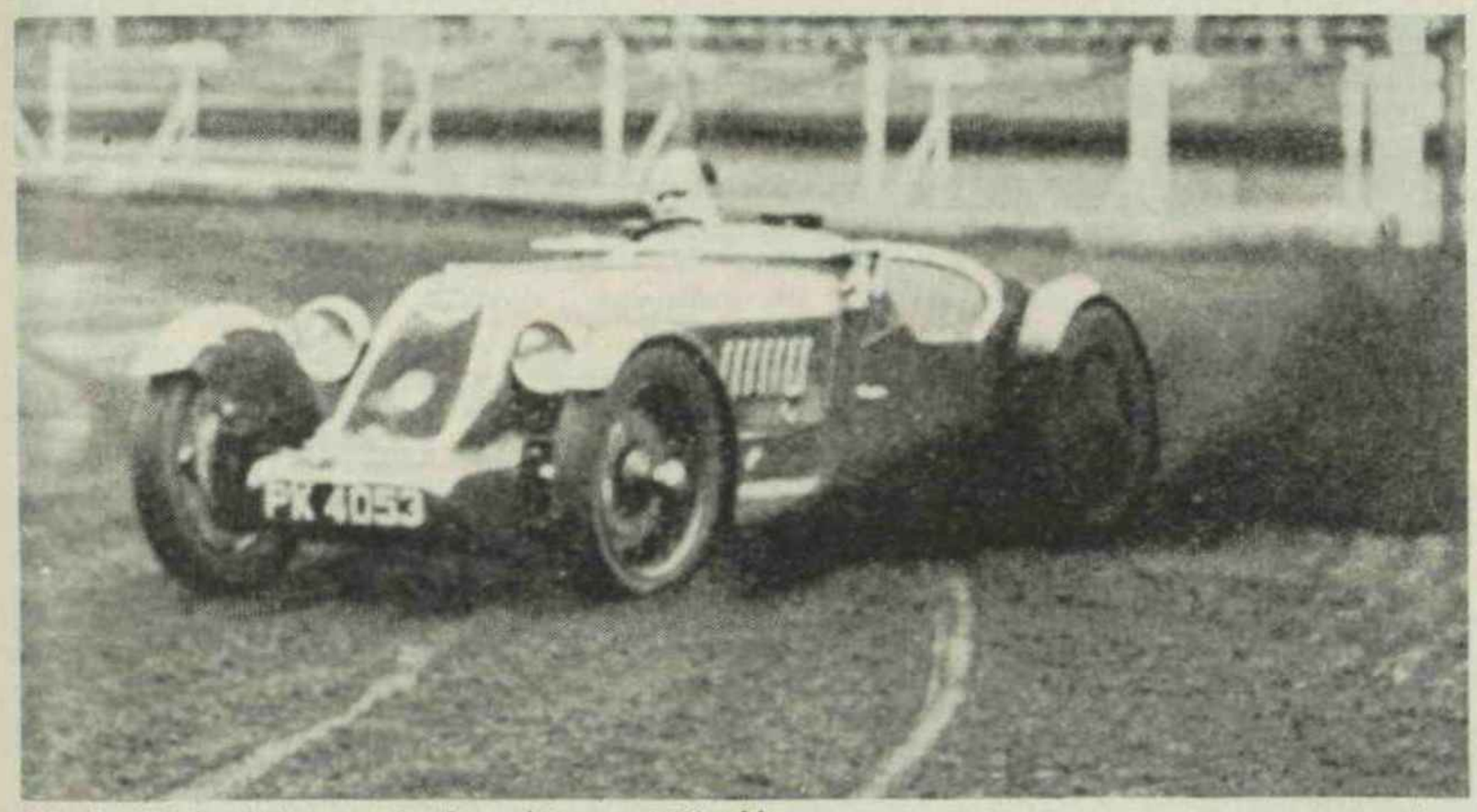


Robert Jameson with the 27-litre two-seater Phantom II, top. Merlin aero-engine (above) must develop over 800 bhp without supercharger.



Packed dashboard includes fuel and oil-pressure gauges and aircraft tachometer.

More cinders



G Taylour's Alta during practice for a dirt race at Wembley.

In using the AFN Archives to find a picture for last month's article on car dirt-track racing my attention was drawn to a further onslaught on the cinders by four-wheelers. I have seen somewhere that car dirt-track probably originated in Manchester. But the purpose of last month's article was to recall the first full-scale car meeting of this kind, which the Junior Car Club organised at the Greenford trotting-track in 1928.

It was not an immediate success and so was not pursued by the JCC, in spite of its ambitious and usually successful endeavours. But by 1931 the cars were back on the cinders, at the Wembley Stadium quarter-mile track. Not for a race-meeting, but making demonstration runs at the conclusion of a normal motorcycle speedway occasion. This sport was by then in full flood, run on football lines, with league matches between teams of riders on specially designed machines.

So it was on an October Thursday evening in 1931 at Wembley, that the home team was to meet Stamford Bridge and Lea Bridge, and it was anticipated that the championship might well go to Wembley. It was an action-packed evening, to which it was reported that 60,000 spectators turned up. Some newspapers billed it as the first time cars had appeared on the cinders, conveniently forgetting the Greenford meeting. The three cars that were to demonstrate were Mrs "Bill" Wisdom's supercharged sports Frazer Nash with which she had broken the ladies' record at Shelsley Walsh, a similar supercharged Frazer Nash which H J Aldington had raced at Brooklands in 1930, hastily prepared for its ordeal in the dirt, and R G J Nash's famous single-seater Frazer Nash Special "The Terror" with a blown side-valve Anzani engine, which held the record for the Craigantlet hillclimb among other successes.

It is reported that the spectators gave the first car a fine reception as Mrs T H Wisdom entered the arena. She skidded her car round successfully, and clocked 24.0 sec on her flying circuit. She was followed by "Aldy". who also slid round in spectacular fashion, avoiding hitting the retaining wall as Mrs Wisdom had done, the 'Nash's tail well out, to record exactly the same time. Dick Nash's "Terror" was thus eagerly awaited. In practice he had done a lap in 20.0 sec and it was to be seen whether he could better that of Wembley's captain, Colin Watson, who held the motorcycle lap record.

Unfortunately, the "Terror's" supercharger seized up. So Dick borrowed Mrs Wisdom's car, taking with him RAFVR man Berry as his passenger. He drove as if in the racing car, which resulted in the 'Nash overturning after a broadside skid. Dick remained in the car and was unhurt; Berry was flung out and suffered a dislocated arm. It was a spectacular end to an exciting evening, at which "Bill" Wisdom and "Aldy" were both presented with large silver cups, as joint holders of the car lap record. Nash's accident had some repercussions. Harold Biggs, who was present and later contributed to MOTOR SPORT, was unhappy with a drawing of the incident by *The Light Car*'s artist, who was defended by the magazine's sports editor "The Blower", and MOTOR SPORT itself indulged in a long discourse about the different forces acting on a car being cornered fast on a cinder track, as distinct to on the road. Later Dick Nash and "The Terror" apparently had another attempt on the Wembley car lap record. Fay Taylour, who raced an Alfa Romeo, etc, at Brooklands, meanwhile had raised the ladies' two-wheeler lap record on her Douglas to 20.8 sec. long before any of this occurred. But enough of the dirt!

W B

V-to-C Miscellany

Despite the recession, clubs are announcing their 1993 plans. The Daimler & Lanchester OC, which enrolled 27 new members in September last, with cars from 1938 to 1981, is to hold its International Rally at the home of the fifth Earl of Lichfield, Shugborough Hall, Milford, near Stafford, in the 900-acre estate there, on June 13. And the National Rally of the long-established Jowett CC is scheduled for the Ramside Hall Hotel in County Durham, from May 28/30, 1993. Incidentally, the front cover of the November issue of *The Driving Member*, magazine of the Daimler & Lanchester OC, was filled with that remarkable photograph of eight Daimler motor coaches (or charabancs) which took lady members of the Widnes Conservatives for their annual outing in 1922. Each coach seated 25 people including the driver, in five rows of five seats, with one person, preferably small, on the driver's right. How on earth did he manage, thus seated, and on solid tyres, with rear brakes and this top-heavy loading? The last two rows of ten passengers were behind the back wheels, too! All the ladies (and two gents) wore hats, three secured by veils tied over them. The coaches seem to have come from Marshall's Garage, with DJ registrations. A happier age?

The former Alvis factory on the 11-acre site in Coventry has become the Alvis Retail Park, a project of Longwood Alvis, opened last October by HRH Princess Margaret.

From the magazine of the Bullnose Morris Club comes news on the motoring archeological front that in Coventry the one-time Hotchkiss engine works still stand, soon to be occupied by an annex of Coventry University, as do the Calcott factory premises in Gosford Street, now part of the long-established Astley firm.

The *Bucks Free Press* carried recently a photograph of an old-time garage in Princes Risborough, with, standing outside, an early two-seater, a motorcycle, and a cowled-radiator racing-car, the last also unidentified, but possibly associated with the near-by Kop speed hillclimb, which dates back to 1911.

At the Invicta OC's AGM the Club's premier award, the Ahern Cup, was presented to Colin Hinks for his efforts on behalf of the post-war Black Prince, and Miss Jo Moss was presented with the trophy awarded originally to A E Mills when the Invicta team at Montlhéry and Monza took many records with a 3-litre Invicta which resulted in Violet Cordery gaining the prestigious Dewar Trophy. Jo has driven extremely well during 1992 with Robbie Pollock's low-chassis S-type 4½-litre Invicta. The 1926 cup she now holds was given to the club by Miss Robina Webber, thanks to the efforts of Invicta historian Douglas Irvine.

W B

VETERAN TO CLASSIC



Congratulations

As one who went to many race meetings at the pre-war Donington Park course, from VSCC events to those two great Donington Park Grands Prix of 1937 and 1938 which attracted really large numbers of spectators to a British motor race for the first time ever, when Rosemeyer won the first, Nuvolari the second, both in Auto-Unions, may I add my congratulations to Tom Wheatcroft on at last getting an F1 GP to the historic circuit he rebuilt so effectively after the war? (Some of my memories of those old races will be found in the Grenville MOTOR SPORT Book of Donington.)

I hope that over the Easter weekend the crowds will flock to the historic venue near Derby for the European Grand Prix and support the enthusiastic Tom Wheatcroft to the full. The Donington facilities are well-suited for hosting such an important race, which should be a foretaste of what the later 1993 British Grand Prix should have to offer.

Donington, in the old Derby & Distric M C days under Fred Craner, was the scene of a great many leading races, such as the original Donington GP won by Dick Shuttleworth's Alfa Romeo in 1935, the *Formula Libre* Donington Park Trophy races which Earl Howe cleaned up in 1933 in his Bugatti, the ERA-dominated Nuffield Trophy contests that ran from 1934 to 1939, the JCC 200-Mile races, the British Empire Trophy series, and long-distance sportscar races like the TT and the 12-Hours, etc.

It was a road-type course quite unique to this country when it was opened in 1933, and its fixtures were a fine mix of club racing and the full-scale stuff. I recall that right at the end of the pre-war period, at the VSCC races, Reg Parnell won two of them in the big BHW, over what was then the "manufacturers'" circuit, and Clive Windsor-Richards was driving well in the Hawthorn 1.8-litre Riley.

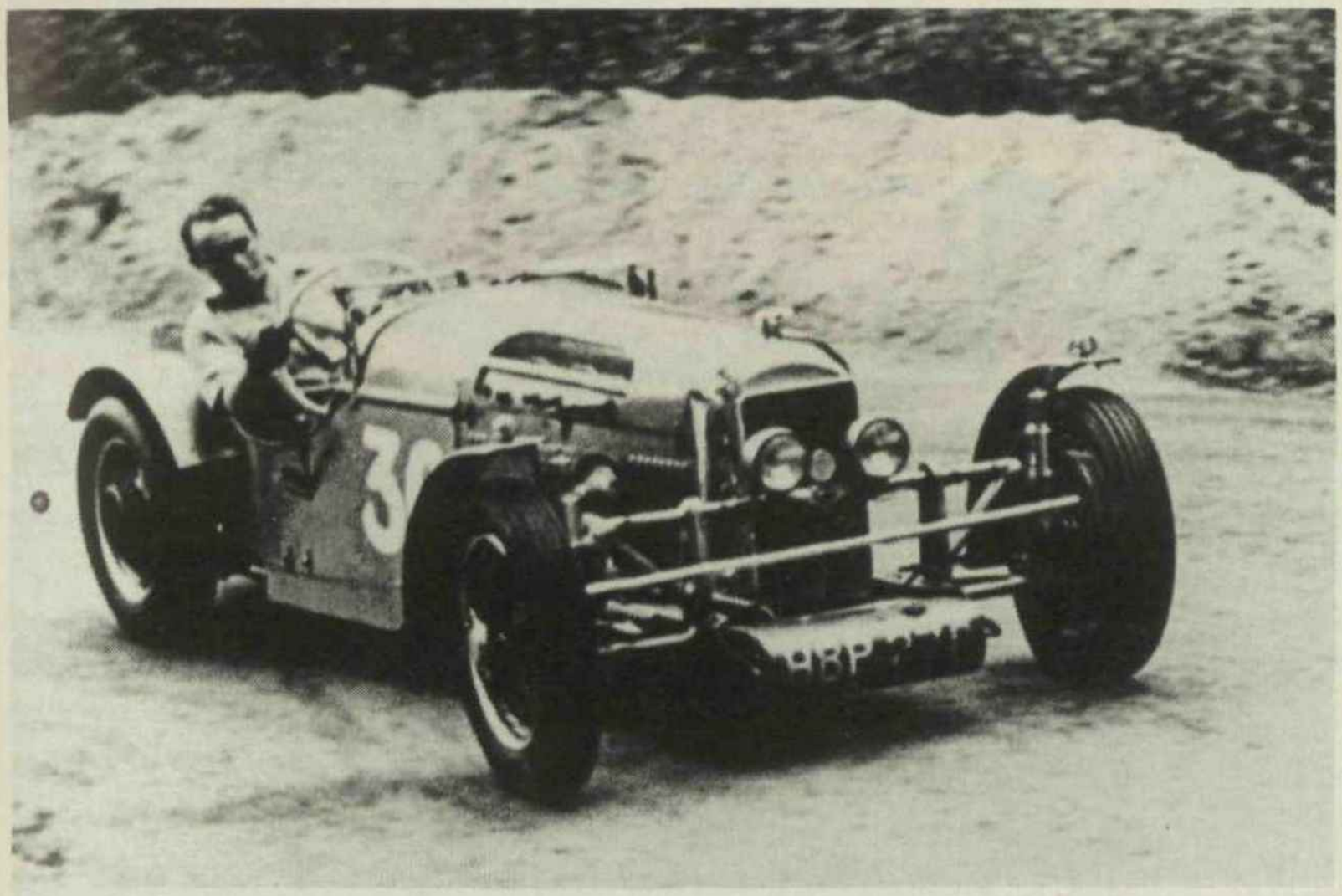
The war ruined it all and left the track untenable — until Tom saved it for further racing. So congratulations, salutations, to Mr Wheatcroft for bringing top-class racing back to Donington. **W B**



Glory days at Donington, 1937: Hasse in charge of an Auto-Union (top).

Earl Howe's ERA trails the Mercedes of von Brauchitsch in the same race.

The present owner of the Beckenham Special, HBP 270 (below), which Keith Salmon used in trials, hillclimbs etc, when it was new, is seeking the pre-war history of the car, which he is restoring. It was well-known in its day and if anyone can help, we can forward letters. The car's last appearance was possibly at the MG Register's 1964 Rally. It is not to be confused with the other Beckenham Special owned by Peter Glover. The address of Salmon's widow and daughter are also sought, to return borrowed photographs.



The Heritage Historic Rally Championship winner was Jon Everard (Healey 3000), from Richard Tyzack (Renault Alpine) and Phil Stroud (Ford Lotus-Cortina). Award presentations will be made at the annual dinner-dance at Moor Hall Hotel, Sutton Coldfield, on January 23, with the HRCR AGM and Monte Carlo Challenge briefing there on the following day.



We are informed from New York of the third win in the 4475-mile American Coast-to-Coast rally for antique and classic cars by Richard Burdick, navigated by Wayne Ball. They used the 1923 3-litre Bentley (above) bought at auction in 1984 and afterwards restored, with extra cooling to cope with desert heat, coil in place of magneto ignition, and raised oil pressure with external filters. Out and home, the mileage totalled 8950. The driver won $50,000. This is the car bought new by Sir Leonard Lyle, MP, with two-seater body by Chalmer and Hoyer and it has its original engine.

ERA Club reunion dinner

One hundred members and guests attended the reunion dinner of the ERA Club on 31 October. (The club now embraces BRM, the other Bourne car.) The club's president, AF Rivers Fletcher, was in charge and Bruce Halford was the guest of honour. Bruce, as well as driving his own 250F Maserati and Lotus F1 cars, also had a spell driving the works P25 BRM in 1959. The "Rivers Fletcher Trophy" for the most successful ERA driver of 1992 went, as last year, to Anthony Mayman for his efforts with R4D the former Raymond Mays car. The "Bob Gerard Trophy", awarded to the driver of a 1½-litre ERA, went this year to John Ure for his performance with Peter Mann's car. Finally, the "Rubery Owen Trophy", presented by the club for achievements other than driving, went to Guy Spollon in recognition of his work as the club's hon secretary for the past 10 years and more. As usual ERA owners and drivers present were called upon to give the assembly their Annual Reports and, as ever, some non-ERA personnel insisted in getting in on the act, to give their excuses for not doing better and beating the ERAs — but wait until 1993, they warned!

The glossy magazine *Quest*, published by Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Ltd, has, in No 22, a long illustrated article about Brooklands, which concludes: "In 1987 the Brooklands Museum Trust was formed and in 1991 the museum opened, based in the Clubhouse which Gallaher had refurbished for the purpose." Not a word about the Brooklands Society, which was formed in 1968 with the same ideals. . .

VSCC Lakeland trial

This is one of the more renowned of VSCC trials, perhaps because it is tougher than some and takes in much beautiful scenery, although it is doubtful whether the latter is immediately apparent to busy navigators and hard-working drivers. This year, on November 7, 83 crews set out to attempt to vanquish such sections as Prickly, Thirlby's Folly, Sale Fell, Darling Howe, Widow Hause, the dreaded Drumhouse and eight others. James Diffey won the Bridge Hotel Award in his 1929 A7, David Bond's 1926 Morris took the Kirkstile Plate, Richard Parker's 1928 A7 the Patterson Trophy, with, of course, First Class awards as well. Others to win First Class Awards were: R Felton (Bugatti), J Baxter (A7), S Baxter (Chrysler), Second Class Awards were won by F Giles (Frazer Nash), S Gordon (A7), Jane Tomlinson (A7), P Evans (A7), R Lowe (A7), B Spollon (30/98), D Marsh (30/98), J Ghosh (30/98), B Collings (Bentley), R Harcourt-Smith (Alvis) and M Holt (Ford). Third Class Awards went to P Longhurst (Riley), G Winder (A7), J Mackinnen (A7), Di Threlfall (Ford), P Tebbett (Riley) and T Jones (30/98). **W B**

VSCC Enstone DTs



Jane Arnold-Forster brought her bright yellow A7 special. J Stammers astride the line in his 1929 Riley 9 (below left). The Harcourt-Smiths shared this 1929 Beetleback Alvis (below right).





It is a signal that Christmas is fast approaching when the VSCC's Enstone driving tests come around, staged on that bleak airfield plateau off the A34. On December 5 it was chilly, but fine, as 96 entrants were due to show their skills and the prowess of their motor cars in 10 difficult tests.

There was a panic half-a-day beforehand, when the insurers of the venue refused to cover the land north of the aerodrome formerly used for the four best tests. (How complex motor sports have become!) However, the co-operation of the Mill and the quick work of the competition chaps at the VSCC saved the day. Enstone has become a busy place, with flying, hang-gliding, buggy-racing and old-car dealings all taking place there. On the day of the VSCC event, there was also a rally school in furious action. The frolics of the vintage cars were tame in comparison, if far more interesting.

However, a lone reporter cannot cover everything at once, as the tests ran concurrently. What follows are therefore random observations.

In the long Test 2, the girl manipulators of the Marsh family's 1926 top-hat A7 had winding-up problems after stalling while in full flight, but completed the run, and Robin Batchelor, wearing a Union Flag dunce's cap, had a similar delay when his 1913 Rollo cyclecar lost motivation; he winds his up from one side. He, too, was eventually able to get to the finish bollards unaided. Ben Collings had arrived alone in the four-carburettor eight-litre Bentley, coping well with both icy roads on the way and the tests themselves: in striking contrast was Winn's smart 1927 3½-litre Dodge tourer, its hood erect, which ably represented American technology with rear-wheel brakes and wooden wheels with detachable rims.

Heale's Alvis Special was treating the tests, as someone said, with the circumspection that its shortened wheelbase probably demanded, but Groome was scuttling about in his little 1904 beehive-radiator Wolseley. Chris Gordon, out for Edwardian points, had borrowed Walker's stripped-for-action Alphonso Hispano-Suiza but it was having dire clutch problems. It reminded me that the example I once ran, and which has recently been the subject of auction bids, had a very smooth cone clutch, the opposite to that on my one-time Gwynne Eight.

Bugattis were represented by Conway's aluminium-wheeled T35, with the explicit registration EB 1926, and the Brescias of Moffatt (muddy) and Marsh (immaculate). There were a lot of non-arrivals, but impressive was a huge Sunbeam 20/60 tourer that did not feature in the entry list. Blake was there with his GN and Bob Wood drove his smart 1928 1500 Alfa Romeo, but slid over the stop-line at the end of Test 2. In contrast, wild swerving and braking *just* anchored young Threlfall's A7 Chummy in time, after which his mother had a go. Newall's A7 Special was notably quick, aided by twin Amals.

Jane Arnold-Forster was conducting a long-bonneted A7 Special dated 1933 and painted yellow . . . to prevent larger cars stepping on it she explained. The Harcourt-Smiths drove their quad-exhaust-piped Alvis Silver Eagle and other interesting cars were Heard's 1923 1½-litre Invicta tourer, Dainty's A7 Chummy (nicknamed 'Eustice II') with cutaway doors, had been bought new in 1927 and has been with the same family ever since, and, among many Riley entries, Stevens' drove a rare two-door 1933 Lynx tourer.

Moreover, the event was graced by a Lagonda Rapier from Belgium. It was nice to see a Lancia Lambda competing, a very clean 1928 car with a non-standard touring body and McDonald Smith was in his first VSCC event in his 1935 Riley Special. Of spectating cars, I noted a fine eight-litre Bentley saloon being used as a perambulating observation platform, a two-seater 14/40 Vauxhall, and a sporting straight-eight Hudson-engined Spikins Special which, the chilly air notwithstanding, was overheating. **W B**

Marquis Car Quiz

Sir,
I believe that the Soryana Pedrosa referred to in Mr Weaver's letter in your November edition was actually a Soriano Pedroso (presumably the licensing office had difficulty with foreign names). It is a Spanish name derived from those of the two founders, the Marquis de San Carlos de Pedroso and Senor Soriano (some sources describe him as another marquis).

The car was actually built in Neuilly, France in the early 1920s. It was a small sporting car with a side-valve 4-cylinder Ballot engine, available in 1131 or 1560cc versions. A special underbored 1094cc version was also available for racing. From the horsepower rating on the tax disc it would seem that Mr Weaver's father-in-law's car had the 1560cc engine. The most remarkable feature of the design was the use of exposed side chains for the final drive. There was apparently one entered for the 1921 200 Mile Race at Brooklands but it did not start. Perhaps WB can tell us more.

A J Wood,
Republic of Panama.

Clement-Talbot's Man

Sir,
In the article relating to Talbot cars in the November issue you refer to Mr F W Shortland. I believe the correct name of the person to whom you refer is "Shorland". Frank Shorland was one of the leading racing cyclists in the early 1890's. He was the first holder of the record from London to Brighton and back when (according to contemporary reports) he was a mere stripling. He subsequently became well-known for his long distance efforts, being the 12-hour champion in 1892, 1893 and 1894. He also won a 24-hour track race in those 3 years for the CUCA Cup, which he won outright, covering over 460 miles at the third attempt. On the way he established national records from 13 hours upwards and distance records from 250 miles onwards. He became a member of this club in December 1908 with the soubriquet of "Slasher". He was President in 1926.

Michael GV Radford,
Pickwick Bicycle Club,
Winchester, Hants.

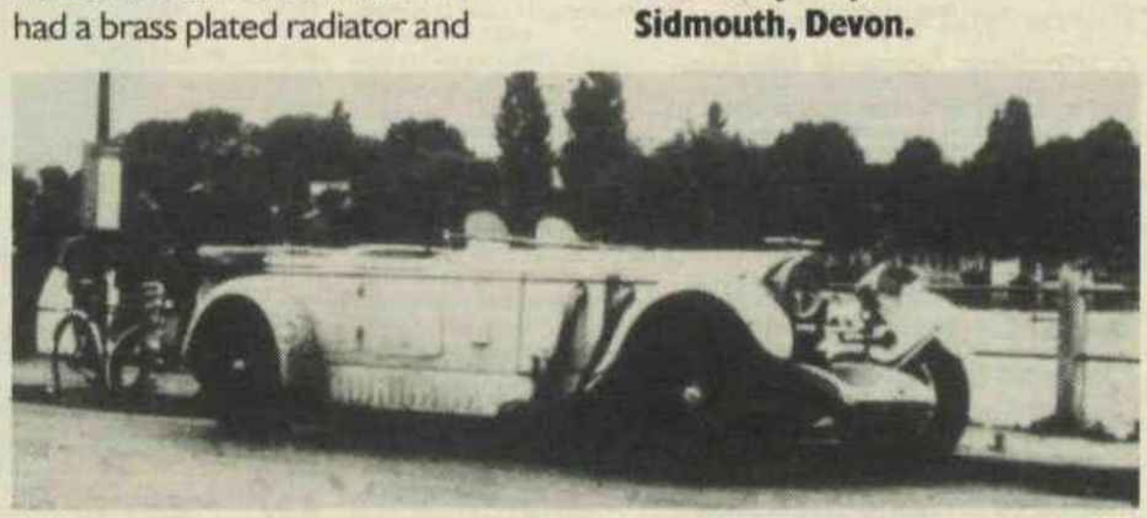
On This and That

Sir,
I am prompted to write to you enclosing the picture of the 38/250 Mercedes Benz. Like your good self in a similar car, I first travelled at 100mph in this car belonging to my father. The date would be 1937, I approaching my early teens. The place was the A303 crossing Salisbury Plain very early a m but daylight. The 38/250 once belonged to Amy Mollison, so I was told. Whilst in her ownership, but not in her charge, was it not involved in an accident in which a pedestrian was fatally injured? The picture shows the car beside The Serpentine. I remember my father telling me he preferred the Mercedes to a 6½-litre Bentley for the way it slowed and felt better braked on a trailing throttle.

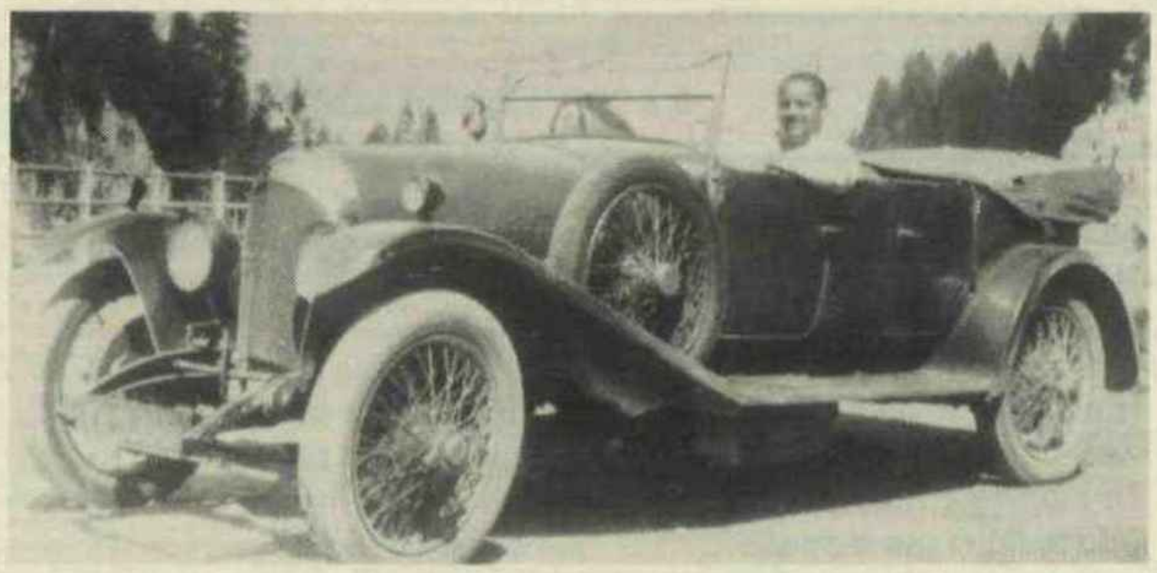
There were two other Bentleys, the first of which, looking very early and basic, is pictured in Switzerland, the other being a short-chassis red label Speed Model, black fabric body and red wheels. I seem to remember it had a brass plated radiator and outside handbrake. I used to be fetched home from school in this car.

There were other cars of course, including Renault (owned about 1930, alligator bonnet); Delage (great over-bodied carriage, suffered big-end failure Telegraph Hill 1931); a 509 Fiat tourer with manually-operated leather-bladed to-and-fro windscreen wiper; a Humber Super Snipe bought in a great hurry in Great Portland St — such a handsome car in black and ivory, red leather interior, picnic tables, side-mounted spare, and rubber beak to the mascot. This car superceded the Mercedes and took us on a six-week motoring holiday as far as Budapest and return through Switzerland. It was a big disappointment to my father beginning with having to be towed from the quayside at Ostend on the way out. It was rated, I believe, at 24hp but according to my father it used hardly less petrol than the Mercedes.

Nicholas Jenny,
Sidmouth, Devon.



The Mercedes 38/250 (above) in which Mr Jenny first experienced "the ton". Below is one of two 3-litre Bentleys on a Swiss tour.



That Talbot

Sir,
I refer to your article "Elusive Talbot". In 1964 the I Mech E arranged a symposium on 'The Design of Small Engines'. In the discussion following the reading of the papers, Roesch took the opportunity, as he often did on these occasions, of relating his pioneering work at Talbot. His contribution, much of which was not strictly relevant to the subject, included a description of his modified 10/23 engine together with the section drawing which you reproduced in your article. Roesch stated that a single 35mm carburettor was fitted but made no mention of the mysterious blower/fan fitted to the nose of the crankshaft. As you imply, a centrifugal device running at crankshaft speed could not possibly produce any useful boost, even if the rotor and casing were correctly shaped which they were clearly not. One can only conclude that it had something to do with the cooling. It is faintly reminiscent of the flywheel fan on the 14/45 Talbot. Roesch gave the maximum speed attained, presumably running light, as 7650rpm. It is surprising that Blight says the engine had a two-bearing crank, when the drawing clearly shows a centre bearing.

I have never really believed the claim of 70bhp for the 1923 200-mile race Alvis, for two reasons. Firstly, because the 1924 engine, which had larger ports and a c r raised from 6.2 to 6.6;1, was said to develop "50 to 60bhp" – vide "The History of Brooklands" p136. Secondly, because 70bhp at 4400rpm represents a bmep of 138lb/sq in, an impossibly high figure for a single carburettor engine with a c r of 6.2;1, bearing in mind also that this is the bmep at peak power and not the peak bmep. For comparison, the bmep of the Roesch engine works out at 113lb/sq in One might add that the speed of Harvey's car compared with that of Joyce's AC did not reflect a power advantage of 15bhp.

A Archdale,
Kings Lynn, Norfolk.

Giveen's suicide

Sir,
Further to WB's piece *Clearing Giveen* in September's issue, the ERA Club published an extract from a proposed follow-up to *Split Seconds*, in which Raymond Mays refers again to Giveen.

Mays received a letter from Giveen in the spring of 1930, in which he said he was facing problems and wanted to see Mays to discuss them.

They met and dined in London's Grosvenor Hotel, and Mays was alarmed at Giveen's state of agitation.

The following morning, on leaving his room, Mays met one of the porters:

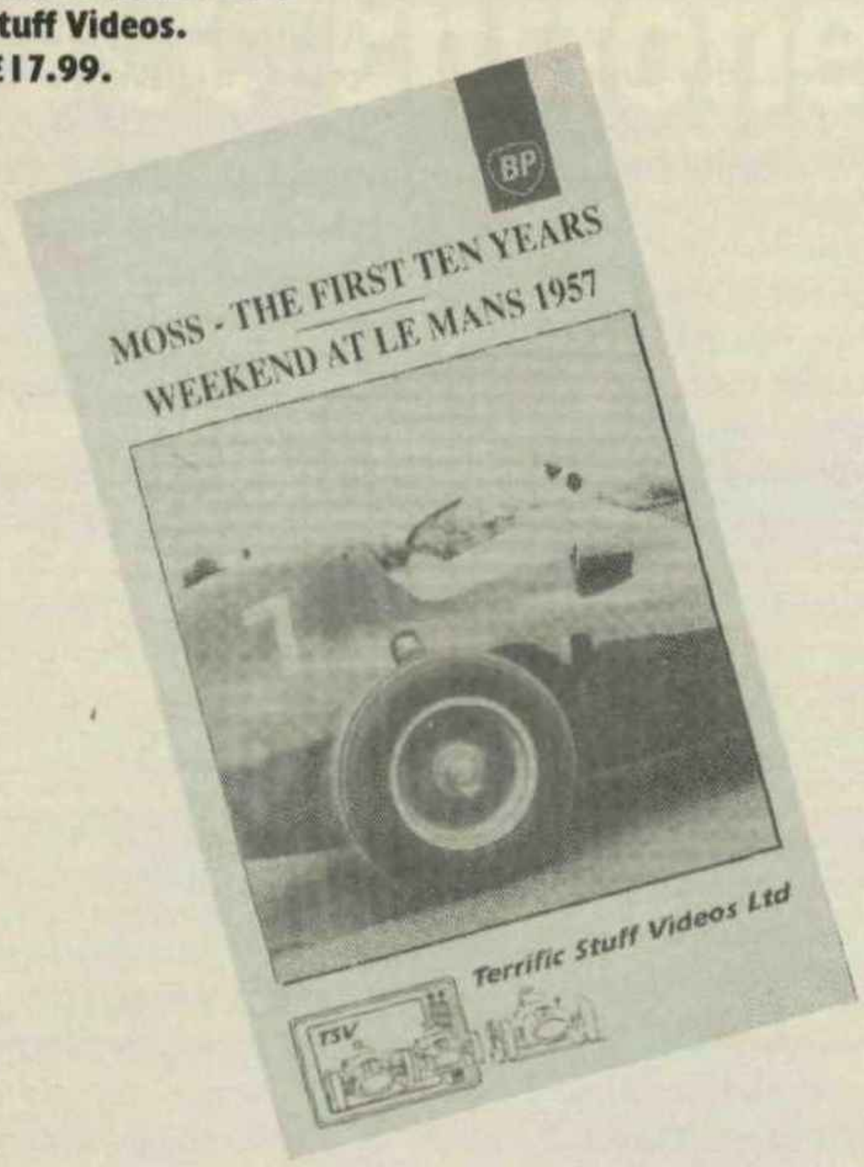
"Have you seen your friend, Mr Giveen, sir? He was walking up and down the corridor outside your room last night, flourishing a revolver."

Two days later, Giveen's body was found on the towpath of the river at Medley Weir, just above Oxford.

He had shot himself.

Martyn H Flower,
Yarm,
Cleveland.

Moss – The First 10 Years/ Weekend at Le Mans 1957, Terrific Stuff Videos. 50 min, £17.99.



For the first half-hour of this video, Chris Nixon and Jock Russell's Terrific Stuff enterprise lives up to its name. Scripted by Peter Garnier and narrated by Raymond Baxter, the Moss documentary is a superficial, but entertaining, glimpse at some of the highlights in the career of Britain's most enduring motor racing icon.

Equal billing is given to Moss's struggle to compete with Europe's finest at the wheel of unsuitable canines such as the ERA G-type and Cooper-Alta.

The Le Mans film is much shorter, and by no means as compelling. Some of the footage, both on the track and in the pits, is quite decent, and the aforementioned Mr Moss is reasonably prominent as he and Harry Schell parade the special Costin-bodied 4½-litre Maserati that proved to be utterly nasty.

However, it's hard to do justice to a round-the-clock race in an 18-minute 'short', all the moreso when a handful of those precious minutes are spent focussing on the famous fairground . . . **S A**

Safari Rally – The First 40 Years, by Roger Barnard. Westholme Publishing, Sheffield S10 1DA. £13.99.

Other than those devoted almost exclusively to photographs, books about rallying fall into three broad categories: narrative, statistical and a combination of both. Books about the Safari Rally – and there have been quite a number – can be similarly slotted. Those of pure statistics I usually check, mark according to accuracy and reliability, then confine to the shelf, ready for reference if required. Narratives, especially those which give opinions based on well-founded experience as well as fact, the two readily distinguishable of course, are for reading rather than referring, and when Roger Barnard's latest volume on the Safari Rally appeared (he was also co-author of *The Flying Sikh*) I just couldn't put it down.

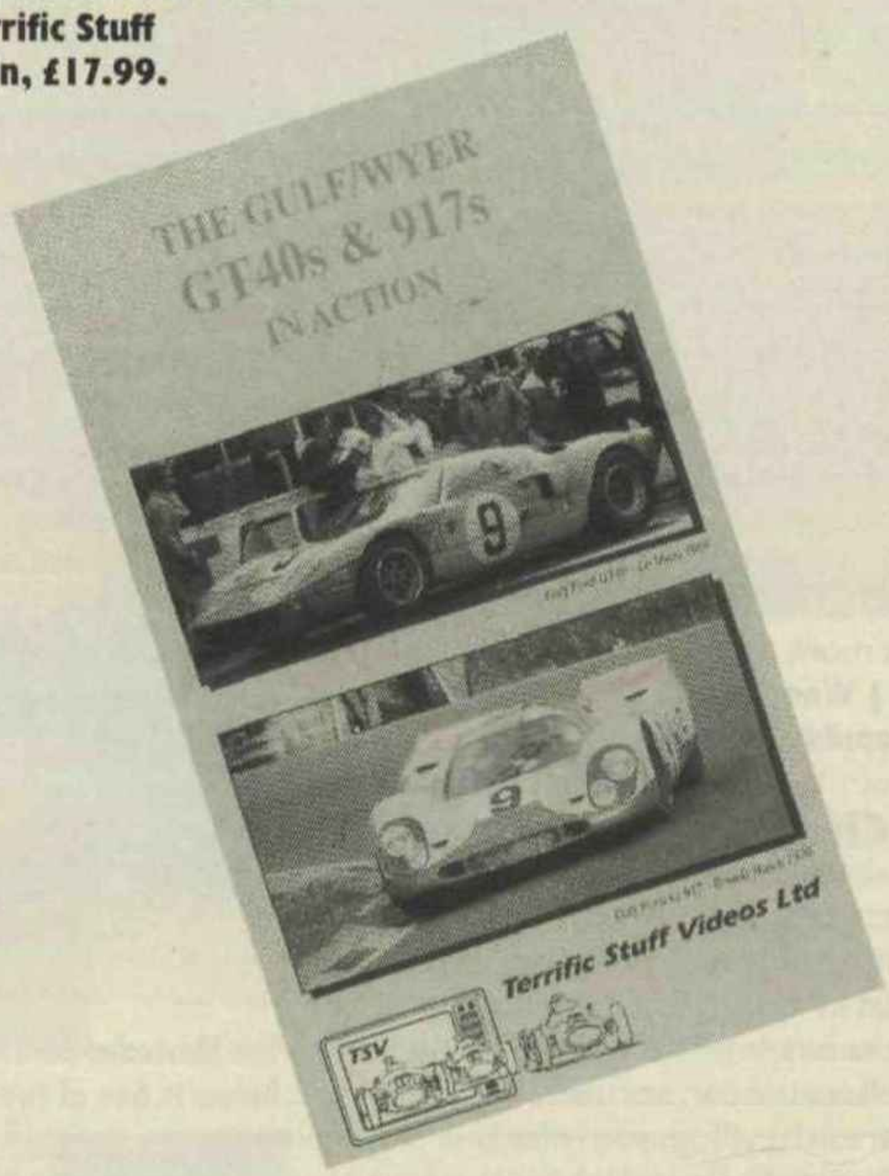
Barnard, a Yorkshireman, lived in Kenya from 1966 to 1984 and was closely involved with the Safari in many roles, including competitor. He has amassed much written and other material concerning the event and it is this, supplemented by memorabilia from renowned Safari stalwarts, which forms the basis of this book.

With 216 A4-size pages, it packs a great deal and Barnard covers the highlights of the event from its beginning in 1953 to the present. It opens with chapters on the Safari's early days and its evolution, whilst later chapters are devoted to Safari regulars, both local and overseas. It is more a story of people than of the event, and there are plenty of black and white photographs, many of them hitherto unpublished. At the end, there is a bibliography, comprehensive results of every Safari to date and an index to names.

As Barnard says in his introduction, no single volume could do justice to all the characters who have played parts in this remarkable rally, but this book does go part of the way and, as a regular visitor to East Africa myself, I like the manner in which it tells of local 'tricks' like roadside engine oil changes immediately after negotiating deep water, filling tyres with grass and scrub after running out of tubes and avoiding thorn bushes when circumnavigating mud holes.

For any rally enthusiast, especially Safari fanatics, this is a book worth having. **G P**

The Gulf/Wyer GT40s and 917s In Action, Terrific Stuff Videos. 65 min, £17.99.



Maybe, in 20 years' time, there will be those who hark back to 1992 and drone on and on about how exciting sports car racing was in "the good old days". Somehow, I doubt it.

After the farce of the 1992 SWC, this recent Terrific Stuff release will be manna to those who know how a good sports car race should be.

It comprises two brief films. The first focuses on the JW Automotive team's ultimately successful Le Mans assault in 1968, the second on the 1970 world championship season (when JWA had switched from Ford's charismatic GT40 to Porsche's equally appealing 917).

Although each was originally made as a promotional film (for Ferodo and Gulf respectively), plugs for the two trade suppliers are reasonably subtle. The accent is firmly on the action, and much of that is absolutely superb.

This is particularly true of part two, *A Year to Remember*, in which John Wyer explains the hits and misses of a successful season. The sight of Siffert and Rodriguez slithering arounds Brands Hatch, or thundering, side by side, into Eau Rouge, makes you wonder how it all went so badly wrong in later years.

The whole thing is set to an appropriate period soundtrack, which would sound ridiculous if broadcast on any radio station nowadays, but which is entirely appropriate here.

It is now possible to order Terrific Stuff's releases via a dedicated credit card hotline, on 0962 856546. In this particular instance, an early 'phone call is recommended. **S A**

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Automobile Year 40.
MRP, £29.95.

For its 40th annual edition, *Automobile Year* has adopted a mildly 'retro' tone, with reflective pieces on dream cars, Formula One, the industrial onslaught of the Japanese and – by the excellent Pete Lyons – the Chevrolet Corvette.

The rest of this handsome, prestige annual contains its usual – and unique in this business – blend of industry and sports coverage. Its greatest failing is that its publication schedule did not permit the thrilling conclusion of the world rally championship to be included, which rather takes the edge off the WRC review.

In one or two places, the captions appear rather stilted. In others, they appear to have been written by Martians . . .

In the main, though, this is a most acceptable summary (its broad scope means that nuts-and-bolts analyses of individual racing series are out of the question) of the past 12 months, with habitually excellent photography and printing standards. **S A**

Les Vingt-Quatre Heures du Mans 1991 and 1992, Sports Seen. 90 min, £10.99 each.



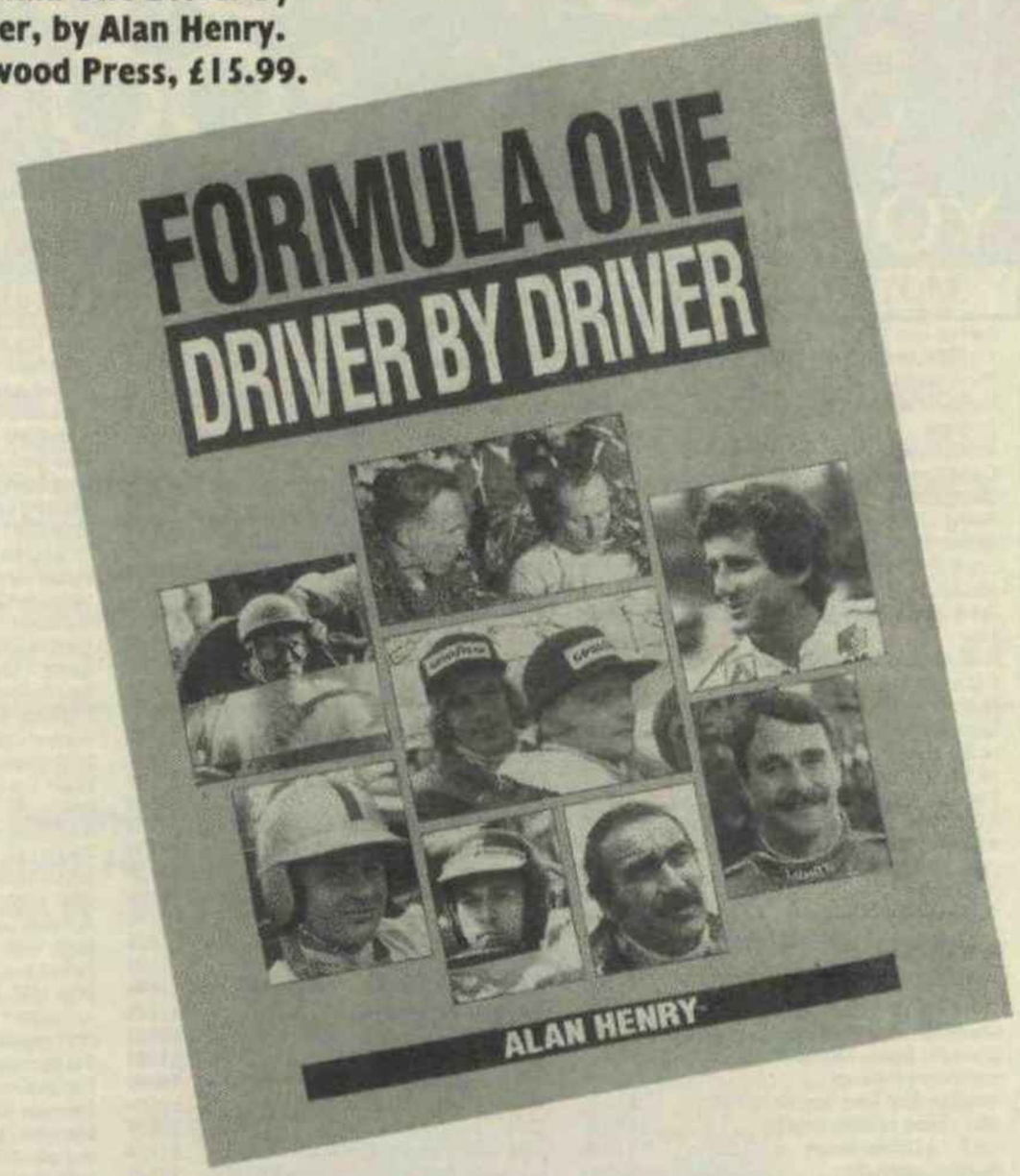
Contractual negotiations delayed the launch of 1991's edition of what used to be known as *Radio Le Mans – The Video*. So much so that it finally reached the shops at the same time as the 1992 version . . .

The recipe under the new name, demanded by those who control the film rights, is much the same as it was under the old. It's a package of highlights from the world's most charismatic sports car race, set to excerpts from the live Radio Le Mans commentary.

The best feature is its immediacy: this doesn't have some banal, scripted, studio voice-over. The use of the Radio Le Mans 'soundtrack', warts and all, gives you a real taste of being there . . . which not many people were for the '92 event. Still, even if there were only just about enough cars to fill the grid at Mallory Park, the last-generation Group C cars were as impressive to watch as they were thin on the ground.

Le Mans is many things to many people. An annual pilgramage. A festival. An excuse to drink beer. Above all else, it's an event, and these well-produced tapes are an appropriate commemoration. **S A**

Formula One Driver by Driver, by Alan Henry.
Crowood Press, £15.99.



Former colleague Henry seems to be averaging about one book per month at the moment.

The latest boils down to a brief summary of everyone who had ever started a World Championship Grand Prix from its inception in 1950 up until the end of the 1991 season.

In many cases, this amounts to no more than a couple of lines. "A Swiss amateur who got a sponsored ride in an uncompetitive Williams in the 1975 Austrian Grand Prix," hardly constitutes Jo Vonlanthen's life story, but you get the idea. There are rather more detailed profiles of past world champions and other selected interesting cases (Laffite and Villeneuve, for instance), and the whole thing adds up to a handy reference manual, even if the facts and figures about contemporary F1 racers had already been overtaken by the time it hit the bookshops.

One or two typographical errors have slipped through undetected, and some of the photographs, in black and white throughout, are disappointing. There are superb, charismatic portraits of drivers from older generations (Marquis de Portago, Paul Frère and Patrick Depailler spring to mind), but there are too many bland promotional shots of more recent stars although, to be fair, the latter are far less accessible to lensmen than their predecessors ever were. **S A**

Nigel Mansell – World Champion.
Simon & Schuster, £3.99.

Anything that contains the line "At last the scream of tortured metal filled the air" smacks of a 1970s motor racing novel for schoolboys. It was taken, however, from this tribute to the current world motor racing champion, culled by the sports staff of the *Daily Express*, under the leadership of Bob McKenzie.

It's superficial in parts, overdramatic in others and the list of runners and riders for the *start* of the 1992 season contains Larini, Naspetti and Lammers, not to mention the little-known Plerluigi (sic) Martini and Enrico Bortaggia. Apparently, however, there were neither Brabhams nor Fondmetals to be seen.

The cover notes claim: "Now, for the first time, the full story of Mansell's triumph has been told." In fact, since August 16, there have been a handful of Mansell books making similar boasts. Despite its shortcomings, this is by no means the worst of them, and its aggressively low price should make it a hit at British Rail concourses and airports everywhere. **S A**

August Reflections, by Arthur Benjamins.

This splendid rendering of Sir Malcolm Campbell's Bluebird K4 is the latest masterpiece from well-known artist Arthur Benjamins. Entitled 'August Reflections', it captures Campbell's 141.74mph water speed record set on a flat Coniston Water on August 19 1939, just before the outbreak of World War Two. Blue Bird Publications is producing 500 prints. 350 unsigned copies will sell for £10.95. 135 have been signed and numbered by the artist and will sell at £29.95, while Sir Malcolm's daughter Jean Wales has co-signed 15 which will retail at £49.95. Post and packaging for all three versions is £1.50. You can contact Benjamins at Blue Bird Publications, 3 Treebourne Road, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent TN16 3QW, 0959 574414.

If you're interested in seeing more of his unsurpassed land and water speed record paintings, not to mention his motor racing work, he's taking a stand at the forthcoming Earl's Court Boat Show. **DJT**



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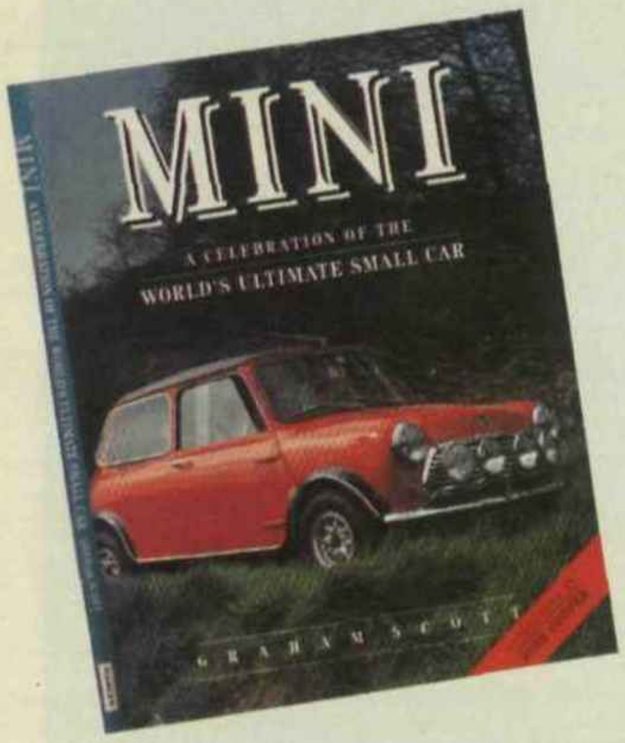
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Mini – A Celebration of the World's Ultimate Small Car, by Graham Scott. Hamlyn, £10.99.



The word 'Celebration' hints at a rose-tinted spectacle affair of no great depth, and so it proves. Large pictures in a total of 80 pages look good but leave little room for much analysis or new research in the text. Written very much through the rear-view mirror of hindsight, all the expected stuff is here – the Swinging Sixties clichés, a still from *The Italian Job* – though a chapter each on racing and rallying do round out the facts somewhat. And amongst the oddities and prototypes shown in the "Mutants" chapter, I had not seen the MG Mini before. Cheerful, rather than scholarly. **G C**

OS Motoring Atlas of Great Britain, 1993 Edition. Ordnance Survey, in conjunction with Hamlyn. £8.99 (spiral binding); £6.99 (perfect binding).

Having rallied in many parts of the world, I reckon I have reasonable knowledge of what maps are available where, and how reliable they are. Right on top of my list of preferences is Ordnance Survey's 1:50,000 Landranger series which replaced the old inch-to-the-mile maps some years ago. I have used these (and still do) for rallying, flying, finding short-cuts and escaping from traffic jams, but if you're travelling a long way you also need something which gives you the overall picture of your route, to supplement the more detailed coverage over several sheets each 25 miles square. Ideal for this purpose is the Ordnance Survey Motoring Atlas of Great Britain, the 1993 edition of which became available last September. Based on completely updated digital mapping, it covers the country in 55 double page spreads, and there are many other pages of town plans plus an index of 20,000 place names.

Central London is given more detailed coverage, whilst the Orkney and Shetland Islands are shown at five-miles-to-the-inch rather than the larger three-miles-to-the-inch used in the bulk of the atlas. Contouring is such that the lines cannot be confused with roads. There is even a guide to the frequencies of national and local radio stations. Although the perfect-bound version is cheaper, my preference is for the spiral-bound version as it is easier to use in the car and can be folded over readily. **G P**

Jaguar XJ Series by Grahame Robson and BMW M-Series, by Alan Henry. Crowood Press, £19.95 each.

Crowood's Autoclassics range is expanded again by these two subjects. Robson's brief is to cover all variants of the long-lived XJ cars, from the original 6 to XJ40 via XJ-S, including V12 and AJ6 engines. On the way he looks at the Broadspeed XJC and TWR XJ-S racing programmes. Alan Henry stretches the M-label a bit to cover not only the cars bearing M-badges, but also most of BMW's sporting activities from before the war, which means he starts with the racing, before tackling the M1 which crystallised the M-philosophy in 1979. His cut-off point is early '91, so the new-shape M3 misses out, but the rest of the tale is all here. I can recall, from his days on MOTOR SPORT, Alan's immense enthusiasm for all BMWs and his passion for the M535i, but he remains detached enough, for example describing the M1's "patchy" race record.

Both books benefit from the Autoclassic style of insert boxes on individuals and technical info, with lots of black-and-white and several blocks of colour photos.

Comprehensive, and good value. **G C**

Pirelli Album of Motor Racing Heros, by John Surtees. Boxtree Ltd, £25.00.

Rather as the BBC has gone into publishing, so has John Surtees become an author; but he has the excuse that he has retired from racing, as an ex-world champion in the car and motorcycle worlds. His new book is full of fine photographs, reproduced as one has come to expect in Pirelli-sponsored publications, of the 20 drivers the book describes, starting with Nuvolari and ending with Ayrton Senna, with a pictorial appreciation of Surtees himself. John gives his views on the drivers he knew well and I would have liked more of this. As it is, the book stands mainly on its excellent picture portrayal of the "greats" of recent times (with four from the pre-1940 scene). Surtees worked with Sydney Higgins on this covetable 160-page book. **W B**

● Patrick Stephens of Yeovil has three new books ready for the Christmas and New Year sales. They comprise: Christopher Hilton's *Grand Prix Showdown*, about the drama of the races which decided each year of the 1950-92 World Championships. Not a full account of every race, just the deciding ones, dealt with in a somewhat 'Fleet Street' style (£16.99). A new edition of Alan Henry's very readable story of *Williams — The Business of Grand Prix Racing*, brought up to date, that is to the end of the 1992 season, with a 1991 Foreword by Nigel Mansell, OBE. If you have not yet done so, get this one (£15.99). With the exciting finish to the international rally season still in mind, Phil Short's *Rally Co-Driving — A Champion's Guide to The Way to The Top* (£17.50) is very well timed. **W B**

● Unfortunately I re-arranged someone's career last month when I described Peter Lewis, author of *Motor Racing in the Fifties*, as *The Guardian*'s motor racing correspondent during those years. In fact, he was writing for *The Observer*. **G C**

Bugatti – the Man and the Marque, by Jonathan Wood. Crowood Press, £50.

It's easy to say "What, another one?" when particular subjects crop up in the motoring press. Bugatti, along with Ferrari, Bentley and Porsche, is one. Of these, all creators of cars bearing their own names, it is surely Bugatti who exerts the most personal fascination, and to rely on a book which gives no picture of the man would be to see only the outlines of the picture.

Jonathan Wood's book supplies this picture in one of the most readable volumes of the year. The artistic background in which Ettore grew up is clearly shown to have affected his engineering philosophy, and the complex and less well chronicled early history of factory and family is laid out with scholarly detail. But Wood's writing remains simple and concise, and the generous illustrations tie in closely with the text. When the unusual Deutz clutch mechanism crops up, for example, you need not look far for a drawing of it.

Wood's admiration is obvious, but does not colour his assessment when Bugatti's more doubtful judgments come up. His perhaps naïve political stance during France's industrial unrest in 1936, and the later conflicts with his more forward-looking son Jean are discussed unsentimentally. He concludes with the new EB110 supercar, but sensibly does not give too much space to this unrelated undertaking.

New pictures and information will make this a desirable purchase for those who already have a Bugatti shelf in their library; for those who don't, writing this one largeish cheque could prove cost-efficient. Can there be anything more to say on this remarkable man? **G C**

● The great Nintendo lap record debate goes on apace. Following Chris Rea's claim of a 37.0s, substantiated with photographic evidence, Sarah Booth of Kidderminster has written in to relate her brother Tom's 36.3s . . . which is a couple of tenths off his mate Kevin's best. We aren't told, however, whether these were achieved in a 'racing' situation, where it is possible to get a tow that adds 20 km/h to straightline speed, or in the 'time trials' mode, where such ploys are not enforceable. Mind you, even with a tow, a low 36s is beyond us . . .

Sport of princes

Sir,
So Princess Diana has bought a pair of karts for the two princes and karting is set to become the sport of kings. How delighted I and doubtless scores of others are to see it. But oh dear, why has RoSPA felt the need, once again, to voice its ill-considered opinions?

I seem to remember a few years ago when Prince Charles had the audacity to take one of the boys on his knees to steer his Aston Martin on private and deserted roads that RoSPA squealed loudly about his 'irresponsible act'. Now once again they are complaining about children being allowed to indulge in minor motoring activities. RoSPA's spokesman was quoted as saying: "Anything can happen to a child racing go-karts at that speed. All they have to do is to hit the wrong pedal while going round a tight bend and it could be a very dangerous situation."

What bloody nonsense.

If they knew the first thing about either karting or children they would know that at the relatively modest speeds (50 mph) that these karts reach, they spin to a halt almost within their own length. Furthermore, children of this age are unlikely to "hit the wrong pedal". Today's children are raised on computer games and as a result have faster reactions and are manually more dexterous than their parents ever were. Rare is the child that cannot manage to remember which out of two pedals is for stop and go.

My son has just finished his first season of Formula 6 kart racing with the Rochester Motor Club, which has given both he and I an enormous amount of enjoyment. He is, of course, like all the children he competes against, loved dearly by his parents and we, like the other parents who allow their children to race karts, would never expose him to "very dangerous situations". Like his fellow competitors he wears purpose-designed overalls and gloves, is equipped with an RAC approved helmet and drives a carefully scrutineered machine.

Indeed, we would much rather he raced karts with the correct equipment, on a track designed for the purpose, than risked falling from up to seven feet in the air from a horse at up to 20 mph, or rode his mountain bike flat-out on main roads with nothing more effective than a polystyrene pudding basin on his head. RoSPA would do well to remember that nothing in life is totally safe and a little excitement is a prime requisite in any child's upbringing. Supervised karting is a great deal safer than many other activities one could mention, including probably climbing trees. But then maybe RoSPA spokesmen don't allow their children to do that either.

Nik Cookson,
Kingston,
Surrey.

Forgotten formula?

Sir,
What has happened to the British Formula 3 Championship? A few years ago, our national F3 series used to share top billing with the BTCC at certain meetings, and the two series appeared to enjoy similar levels of support. Nowadays, the BTCC's profile is huge, while F3 struggles along, churning out the next generation of Grand Prix stars in front of an audience that can be measured in hundreds, rather than the thousands that the BTCC attracts.

I'm convinced that the likes of Gil de Ferran, Warren Hughes, Kelvin Burt and Paul Evans are all worthy competitors, who merit public support. So where is it? We can no longer even be sure that the British F3 champion's name will be on every F3000 team manager's lips, as the strength of the F3 competition in other countries appears to have increased. Germany, Italy and France habitually produce talented crops of young stars nowadays.

In my view, F3 is strong enough in mainland Europe to merit the re-introduction of a European F3 series. OK, it would increase travelling expenses for British-based teams, but if the series was relaunched with control fuel and tyres, testing restrictions and a maximum of 12 races, then surely it could be viable?

At present, it seems that rival F3 series are gaining in strength and popularity while our own stagnates. The best young drivers from countries without a strong motor racing framework no longer plump automatically for Britain. If Britain lost its national F3 series, present public apathy suggests that few people would care, and even fewer would notice. A European F3 series, on the other hand, would be a suitable stage for young drivers to show us just who really is the best.

Steven Farmer,
Tunbridge Wells.

Hill's fleet blues

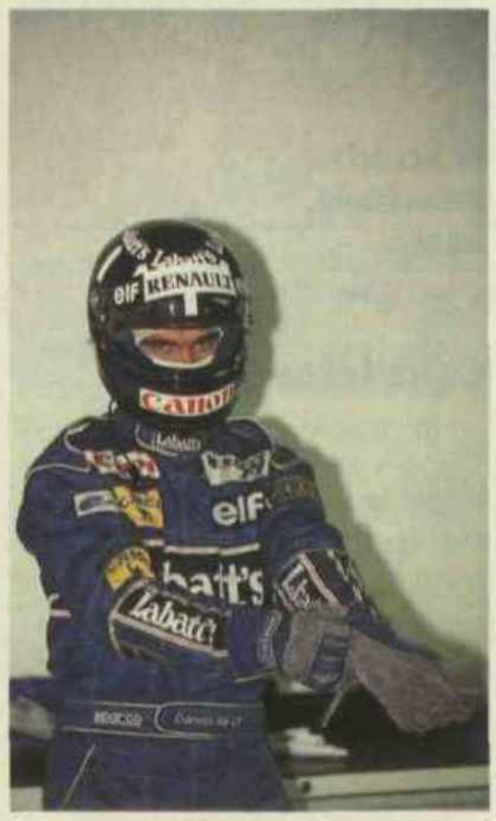
Sir,
I hear of some scheme whereby Williams-Renault will run its second car for two drivers in 1993: Nigel Mansell when his American commitments allow, and Damon Hill at other times.

This is a good plan in all but one respect.

It involves Nigel Mansell.

Why can't Williams simply forget any hifalutin' ideas about having two established top-liners and give a hungry driver a fair chance? Nigel Mansell made it plain in Adelaide that he'd had enough of F1, so why drag him back? He's entertained us royally (leastways on the track) for the past few years; now let somebody else have a chance.

Damon has demonstrated his speed in F3000, and proved both capable and consistent in last season's uncompetitive Brabham. He's also lapped very quickly when carrying out test duties for Williams, and – by all accounts – has Mansell's seal of approval.



It's damned difficult for any driver to break into Grand Prix racing nowadays; what more does Damon Hill have to do to earn his chance?

Brian P Whitcombe,
Epsom Downs,
Surrey.

Missing the point?

Sir,
Having read your review of the European F3000 season last month, and taken on board the problems the formula has trying to make its presence felt and, more importantly, attracting spectators, why doesn't FISA make the formula truly international?

What has happened to the race dates that the Sportscar World Championship used to occupy in far-flung places such as Japan, Mexico and Canada? Would it not profit F3000 to stimulate public interest in such markets, and would not that give aspiring young drivers the greater international appeal that might turn them into a more marketable commodity for F1 sponsors?

Hugh Smith,
Cardiff.

It's not that simple, Mr Smith. FISA tried to spread the formula's wings back in 1986, with two proposed races in South America and one in Curaçao. All failed to take place because the finance couldn't be raised, and races outside Europe have never since appeared on the scheduled calendar. Nowadays, F3000 is looking at a programme of cost containment, which means that the calendar needs to be kept firmly in control. Extra promotion and TV coverage within Europe would be of enormous benefit, and if the manufacturers get the increased number of Grand Prix support races that they desire, greater exposure ought to follow. The formula needs to walk before it runs, and for the past eight seasons it has spent far too long hobbling. Future expansion must be tempered with common-sense caution – Ed.

On yer Pike

Sir,
I found October's article on Pike's Peak very interesting. When in Colorado last year I drove my rented Oldsmobile

Regency sedately to the summit and marvelled at the skill and nerve of those who annually race up this hill with its unprotected edges. I then visited the Pike's Peak Museum where the very first car to ascend the hill, many years before the highway was opened, was exhibited. It was described on an accompanying notice as follows: "First auto to conquer 14,110 ft Pike's Peak was this two cylinder 5½hp 1900 Locomobile Steamer." That climb to the summit took 11½ hours on August 12 1901. The return trip, in three hours, was undertaken mostly in the dark with only dim lamps to light the way. The route was a long-abandoned carriage road so bad that even horse-drawn vehicles could not use it.

My wife found the drive most alarming and expressed the wish that Mr Pike had never discovered it!

Stanley Sedgwick,
Cobham,
Surrey.

Stand up and write

Sir,
It is daily becoming more apparent that it is no longer sufficient for old car enthusiasts to maintain a lobbyist at Brussels, but essential that we join the fight to withdraw every aspect of the EC (other than free trade) and return to government by Westminster alone.

We have all seen the never-ending list of lunatic EC directives: the waste; the incompetence; the fraud; the 48-hour limit on the working week, worked on days specified by a Greek Commissioner. Insane restrictions multiply on every aspect of our lives, from the curvature of cucumbers to our ability to get the job done. Now we are threatened with licences to keep budgies, elimination of mph markings from new British cars from January 1 1993 and, under the Maastricht Treaty, EC commissars will have the power by majority vote to require Britain to drive on the right.

It is inevitably only a matter of time before these idiotic busybodies decree that it is no longer permissible for our 20, 30 or even 90 year-old motor cars to have unrestricted access to our roads. Some EC countries already have such restrictions, and elsewhere we have seen lobbying by car manufacturers and politicians to have cars over 10 or 20 years old compulsorily scrapped. More than most, old car people appreciate the history and tradition of these islands, and have no wish to be submerged in a Federal European state of mind-numbing bureaucratic incompetence.

British enthusiasts have an unrivalled record of achievement in renovation. Preservation of the enjoyment of thousands of amateur restorers, thousands of jobs and the success of hundreds of companies is dependent on freedom to work long hours when necessary, without interference from EC Bureaucrats, secure in their limousines as they waft home at 15.00 on a Friday, dreaming of their pensions.

We must act now if we are to continue to enjoy using our vehicles freely on the road and be free to work whatever hours we choose. I urge every reader to join the fight against the cloud cuckoo-land of the EC, the pious pipedream of politicians who can not read the lessons of history evident in the collapse of the USSR, and in the imminent disintegration of Italy and even Canada.

Join the Campaign for an Independent Britain (081 340 0314), write to your MP and other politicians and make your voice heard. We are the majority and the majority must fight back. Or take up stamp collecting instead.

IR Francis,
Petersfield,
Hants.

Calculators out . . .

Sir,
While leafing idly through a current text-book of psychiatry, I read that disinclination to accept blame, violent criticism of others and a maniacal wish to be first may indicate a schizoid personality disorder.

This may sound familiar to anybody who has watched and listened to the antics of the 1992 Grand Prix drivers.

Turning now to something completely different, could any of your readers enumerate the times that Ayrton Senna has caused an accident on the circuits? Brilliant driver he may be, but for me he has done more to spoil motor racing than any other person . . . if you exclude the powerful figures at the top who are changing a sport into a circus spectacle.

Cecil Gibson,
Norfolk.



Ayrton Senna: brilliant driver, but a disruptive influence?

Closed bodyshop

Sir,
With reference to the high cost of motor insurance mentioned during your road test of the Ford Escort Cosworth (MOTOR SPORT, October), I would like to mention a point of interest.

Most leading insurance companies have retainer schemes and it appears to be standard practice to channel repairs to "approved" workshops, ie those that display their sign and are recommended by a certain motoring organisation. Work on the car can start right away without inspection by the insurance engineer.

I am not suggesting that such places are dishonest, but it is like giving a licence to print money. Any attempt to get the work done by a non-registered repairer results in a go-slow by the insurance company, forcing the motorist to accept the former. This is not only unfair but this closed-shop attitude is bound to lead to higher premiums in my view.

P Butt,
Somerset.



Ford Escort Cosworth: will the cost of insurance match the purchase price?

A dissuaded punter writes

Sir,
If FISA is happy with the degeneration of Formula One racing into a vast, money-consuming advertising campaign, so be it.

We can (and do) spend our time watching more varied racing. What the advertisers themselves might ponder is that for many spectators, the shady dealings (and thoroughly unsportsmanlike behaviour) which punctuated the series in 1992 have backfired on them. Negative associations have indelibly linked two car manufacturers, one petrol supplier, a brewery and a camera manufacturer with products I just won't want to buy.

Like many, I am a typical consumer of all of these. The various company's shareholders may eventually wake up to the fact that they are alienating potential customers, and attempt to bring back order, but there is plenty of research to indicate that a disenchanted punter is one of the

hardest to pull back.

The sad fact is that, as a medium, Formula One racing will not have that ability, and the money will go to other sports.

Is that progress?

John Purser,
Suffolk.

Atom bums?

Sir,
I refer to the coming-together between Ayrton Senna and Nigel Mansell during November's Australian Grand Prix. I suggest only two possible conclusions.

1. It was the inevitable result of a contest between two atom-age driving geniuses on the absolute ragged edge of adhesion and control.

2. It was the result of a contest between an atom-age Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dee in bomb-proof, carbon fibre cocoons.

CK Luton,
Bristol.

Studebaker spec

Sir,
I am in the early stages of preparing a supercharged 1964 Studebaker Avanti for historic racing. This car had a great potential but I am very concerned with keeping the tuning inside the proper limits. The car was homologated in the '60s as: "Form number 87 Studebaker Avanti 47 36/unsupercharged or 6630/supercharged."

I have tried to get the form from several ASNs in Europe and the USA, but have failed. Help in this matter will be of great value to me.

Monica Sandberg,
Granliden 11,
S-667 00 Amal,
Sweden.
Telefax: 010 46 5321 6047.

Manual worker

Sir,
May I, as the largely contented and enthusiastic owner of a 1988 Carrera, invite Porsche GB to answer publicly and truthfully the following question. Why is it that, as a British citizen, presently resident in Germany, I am not permitted to purchase a factory workshop manual for my car, when this privilege is granted to my contemporaries resident in the United States?

To date, my written request to AFN in Isleworth has received no written response. However, the honest man in the parts department said that the official reason was "copyright", but really they just wanted dealers to get all service business. Further written requests to customer services in Ludwigsburg have produced a stream of feeble excuses. Apparently, the car is too powerful and complex to be serviced by untrained personnel. This was quickly withdrawn when I pointed out the range of my workshop facilities and that I cut my teeth preparing Manx Nortons in the 1960s.

In the latest correspondence Porsche claims that it cannot supply a manual directly for legal reasons. I assume this refers to exclusive dealership agreements. Furthermore, they cannot force a dealer to supply manuals or special tools to 'non-authorised' persons. Utter rot, of course, but it sounds plausible to the simple-minded. Anyone with wit will immediately enquire why the dealership agreements contain this delicious Catch 22 situation, for there is no doubt whatever that dealership agreements are drafted by the manufacturer. The only reasonable conclusion is that Porsche wants it this way!

In the USA, Porsche admits that by law it is obliged to provide manuals to its customers, despite reservations. Considering the cost of product liability insurance in the USA, combined with the contingency fee legal system, I find myself wondering why on earth Porsche bother to sell such a dangerous cocktail of performance car and workshop manuals to non-authorised persons.

Presently as we in Europe progress, if that is the word, towards a Federal state, I can only hope that the gains include the rights of the individual as they currently exist in the USA in this particular case. Regrettably I suggest that will not be the case, and that that honest chap in AFN parts department will be proved right.

Perhaps we should apply to be the 51st state!

Terry Melvin,
Cologne,
Germany.

Mountain Morgans

Sir,
I enjoyed reading the history of Pike's Peak in MOTOR SPORT (October 1992). I have been wondering for some time whether Morgan sports-cars (+4 or 4/4) ever attempted this fascinating event in the 1950s and '60s. Could anyone advise me on this, or perhaps suggest who might know? Is there a source of photographs of this event?

Dr Jake Alerson,
Sheffield,
S Yorks.

Rupert Berrington, who supplied many of the excellent pictures which accompanied our article, is an acknowledged authority on Pike's Peak, and is also a respected photo-archivist. He can be contacted at Pro-Motion Ltd, 1411 South Paris Court, Aurora, Colorado 80012, USA – Ed.

Production base

Sir,
It was with dismay, though not surprise, that I heard the World Sports Car Championships was not to be held in 1993. For many years now the cars have stagnated design-wise and the basic shapes have really become too similar. My collection of models shows the shape of the original Porsche 917 is the mother of all today's cars.

May I appeal to Max Mosley and the FIA and particularly to the organisers of the Le Mans 24 Hours please to return to the original idea of racing production sports cars.

Look at the potential field: Jaguar, Ferrari, Bugatti, Aston Martin, Lamborghini, Mercedes Benz, BMW, AC Cobra, Honda, Chevrolet, Pontiac, Ford, Alfa Romeo, Maserati, Alpine Renault, TVR and many more. What a recipe for really meaningful and fascinating motor racing!

Ralph Rossi,
Belfast,
N Ireland.

Oakland alert

Sir,
I am about to start the research which will hopefully lead to a booklet/book on the history of the Oakland Motor Car Company.

I am aware of the history of Oakland in America and its formation out of the Pontiac Buggy Company, its subsequent takeover by General Motors and its sibling Pontiac. All this is fairly well documented, but nothing seems to exist about Oakland's history in the UK. At present, I know that they had an office/showroom at 146 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC1, and I have been informed that at one time they or a previous importer were based in the Hendon area.

If any reader has any information and/or photographs about the company, its location(s), its employees, its locations, models, dealers, road tests, brochures, leaflets or anything at all connected with Oakland, no matter how tenuous or apparently trivial, I would be most grateful to hear from them

Judging by the length of time taken by others more skilled at research than I am, I guess this will become a lifetime labour, albeit one of love, as I have an Oakland myself.

I have have been asked by the chairman of the Pontiac Owners' Club UK to try and form an Oakland Register for cars currently in the UK. If anyone knows of other Oaklands still in existence, I would be pleased to hear from them.

Yours in anticipation of a vast mailbag . . .

David G Jones,
105 Summers Road,
Farncombe,
Godalming,
Surrey GU7 3BE.
☎ 0483 861177.

Jean-François Mosnier

Sir,
We were all deeply shocked when Jean-François died so suddenly from cancer in hospital in Nice. Since that day, I have been touched by all the tributes, flowers, presents and kind letters that we have received from his many friends and colleagues.

We all hope that Escuderia Bravo F1 España will succeed as a tribute to Jean-François.

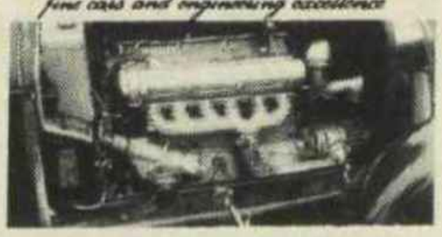
Thank you everybody for your kind thoughts.

Nicola Mosnier,
Nice,
France.



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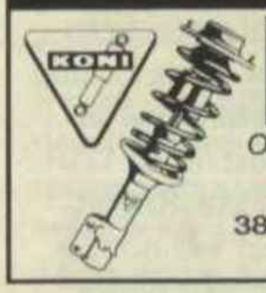
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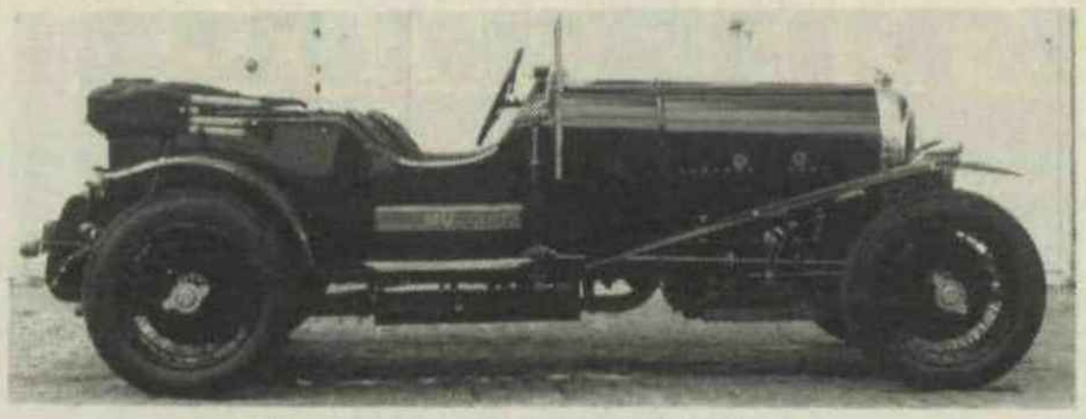
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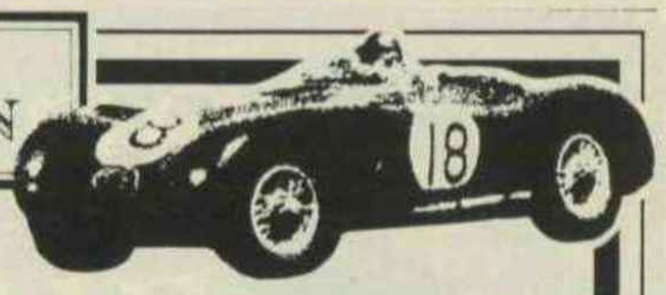


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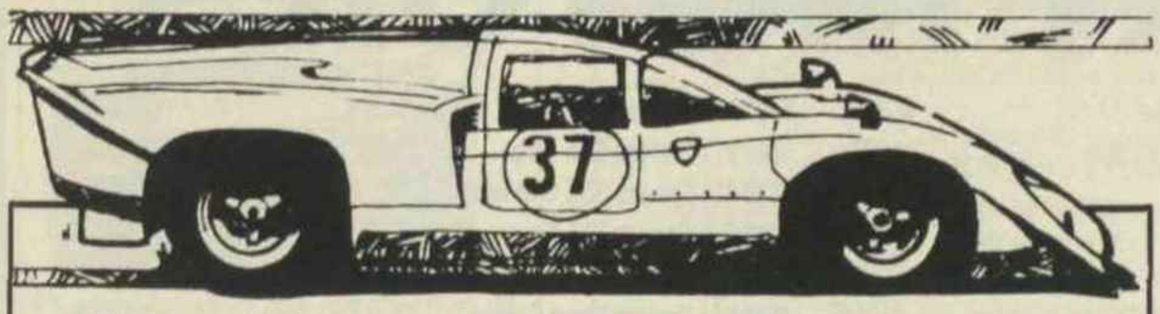
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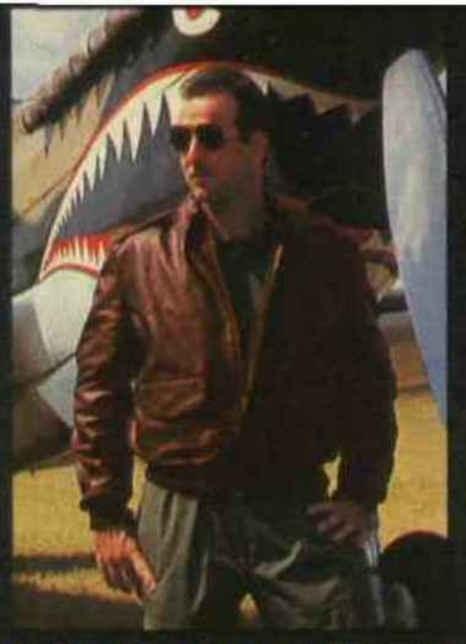




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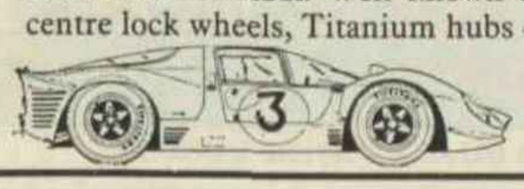
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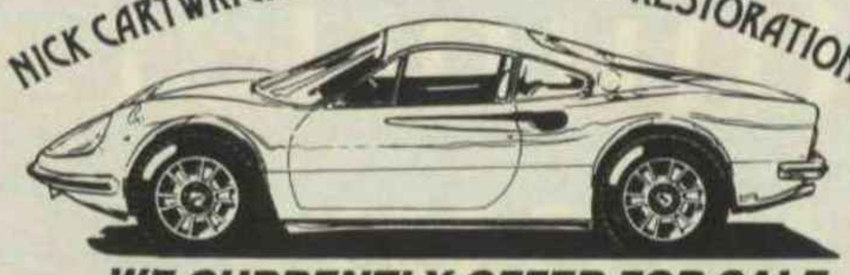
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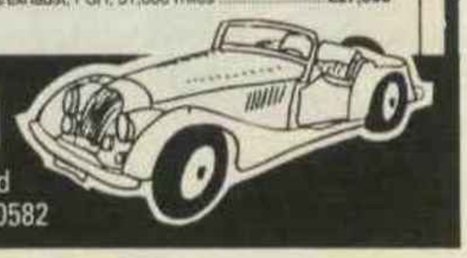
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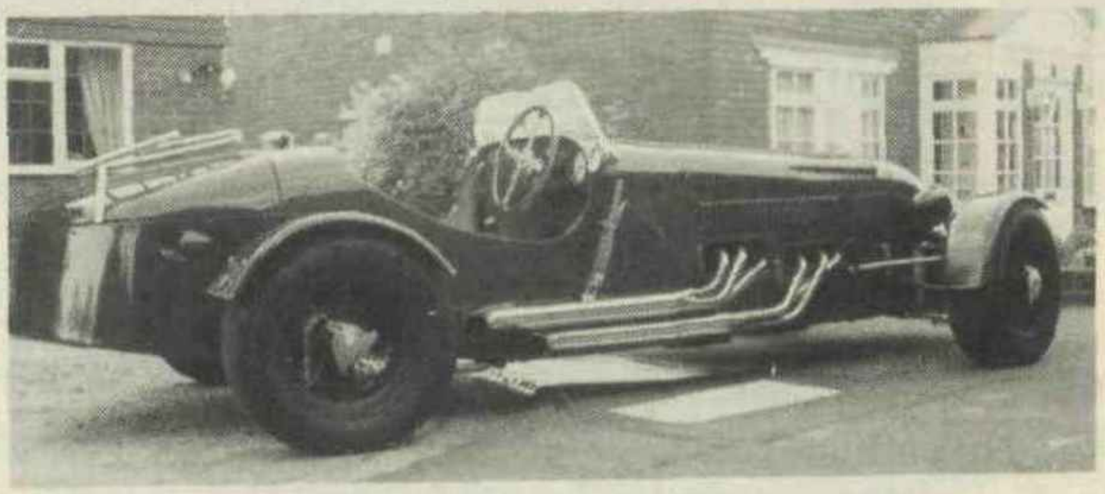
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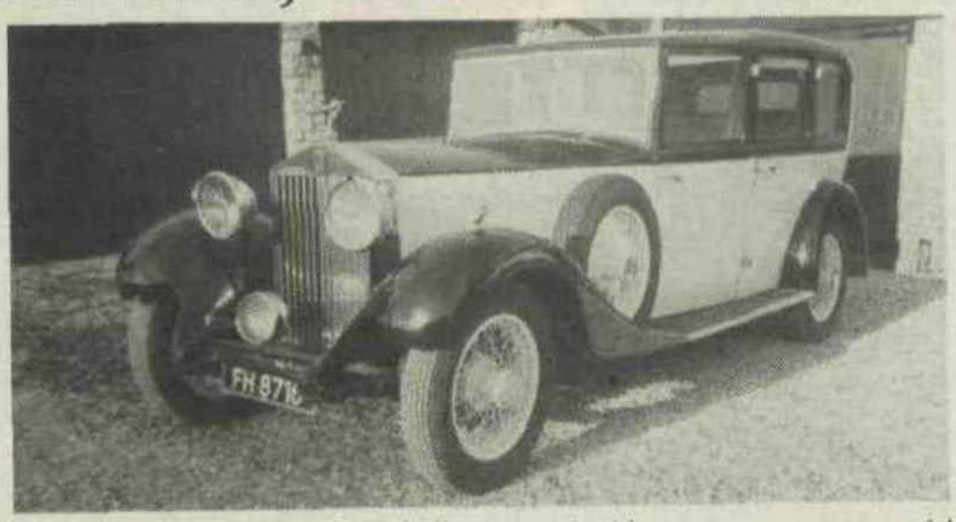
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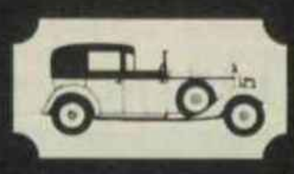
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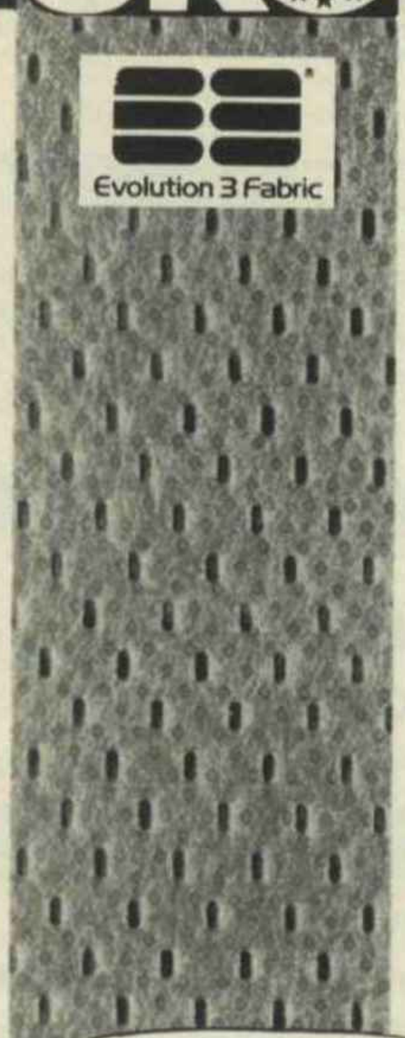
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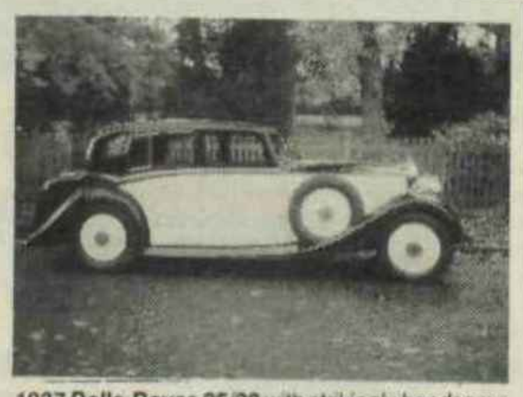
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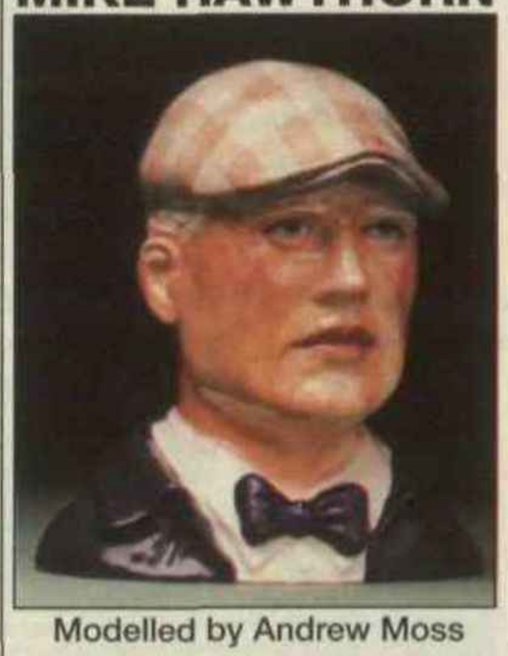
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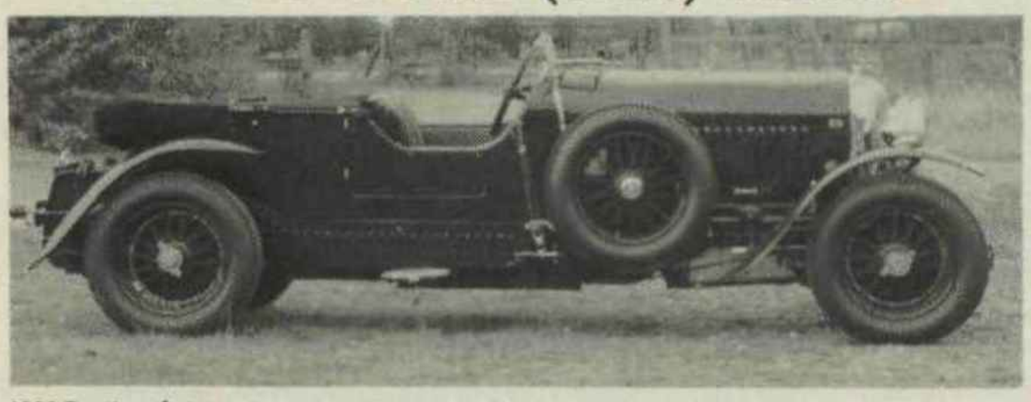
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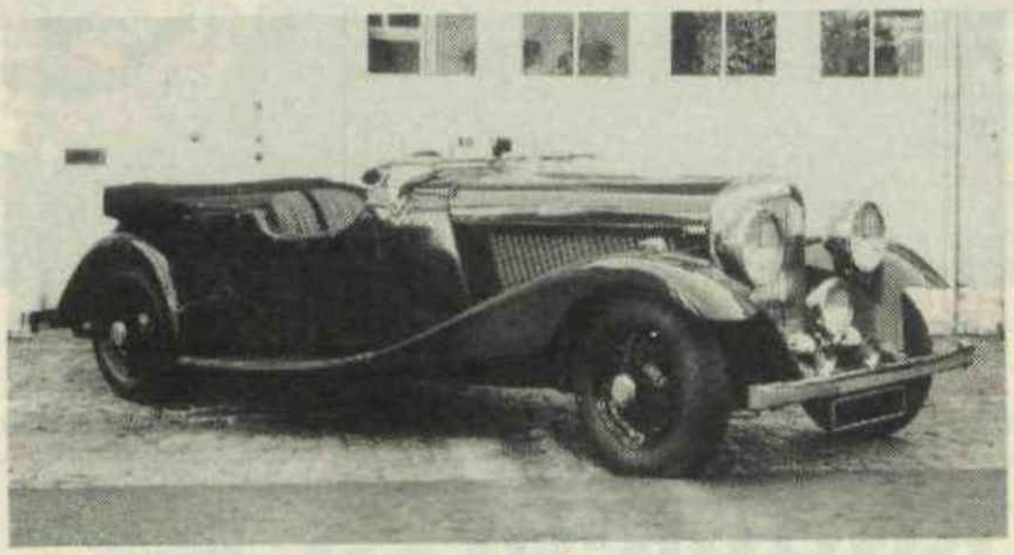
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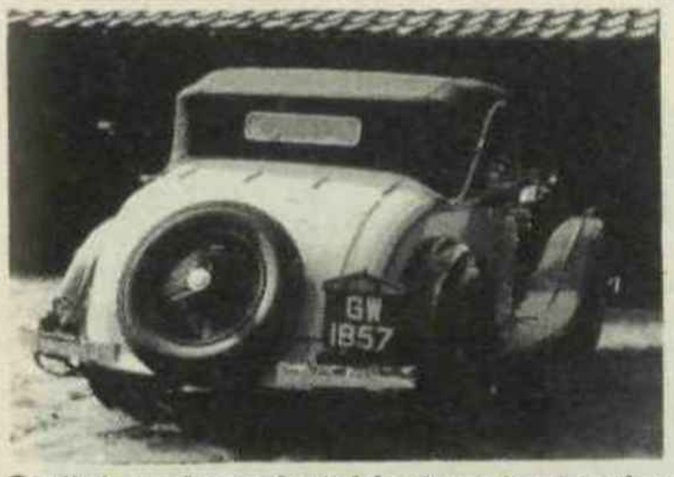
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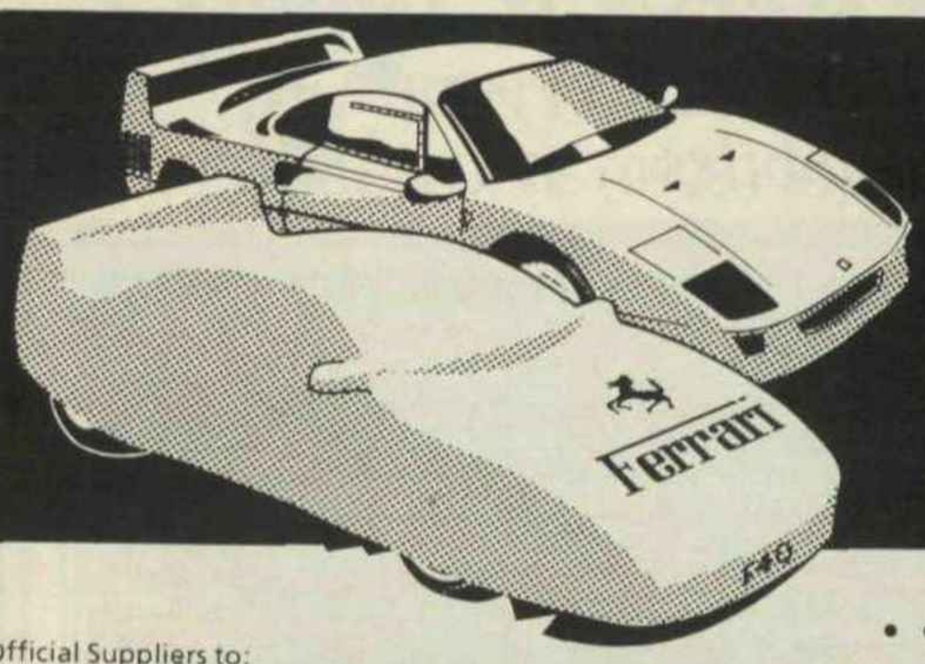


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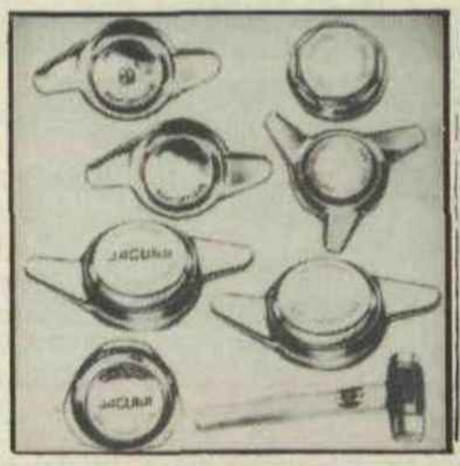
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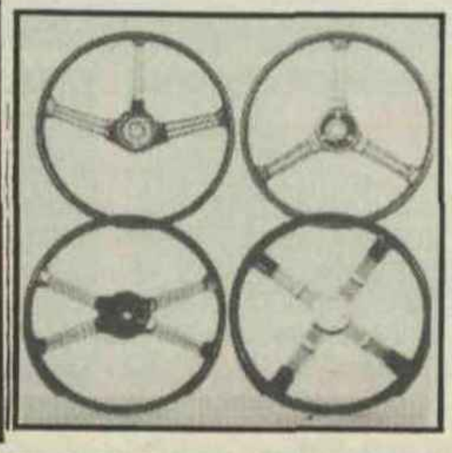
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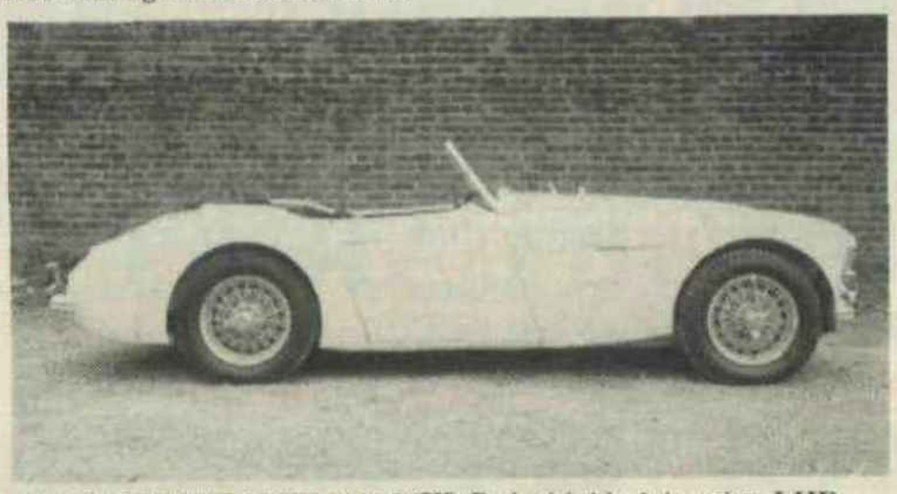
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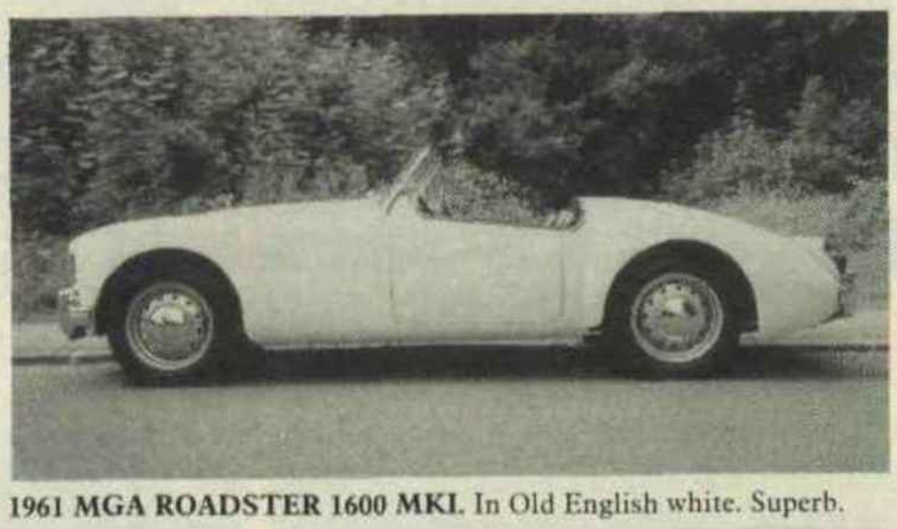
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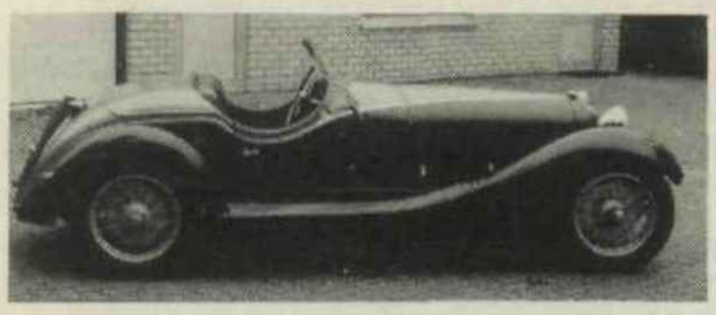
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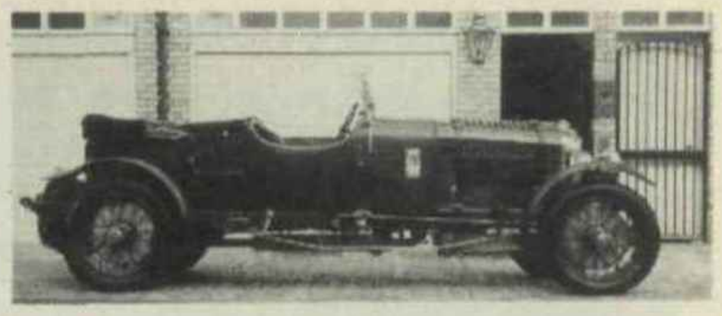
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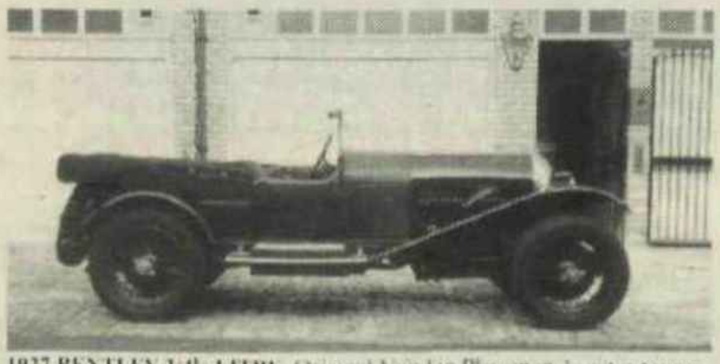
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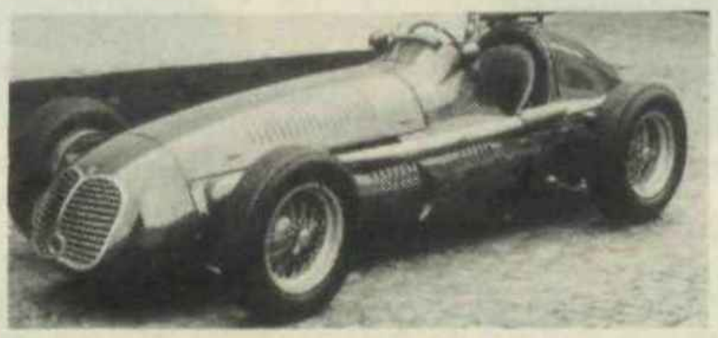
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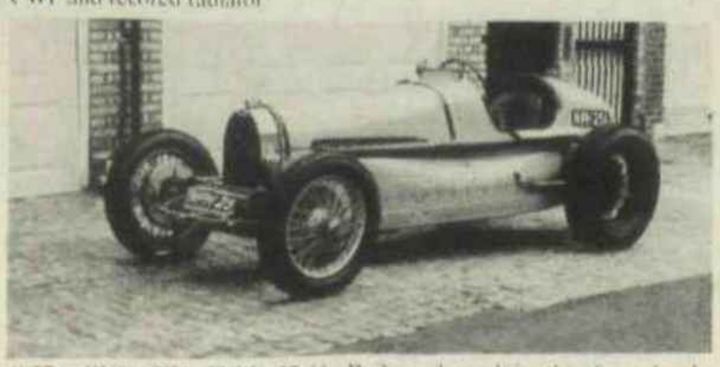
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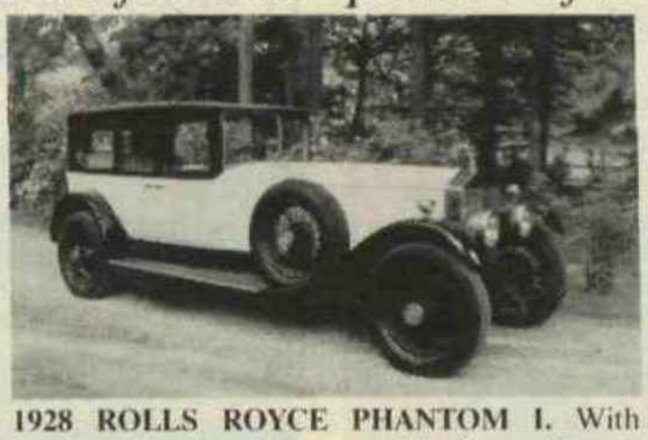
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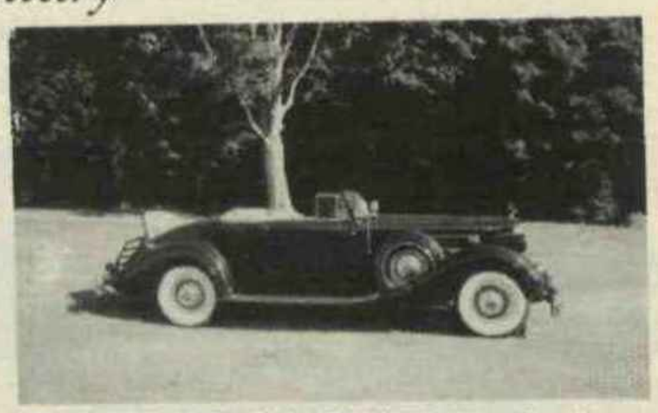
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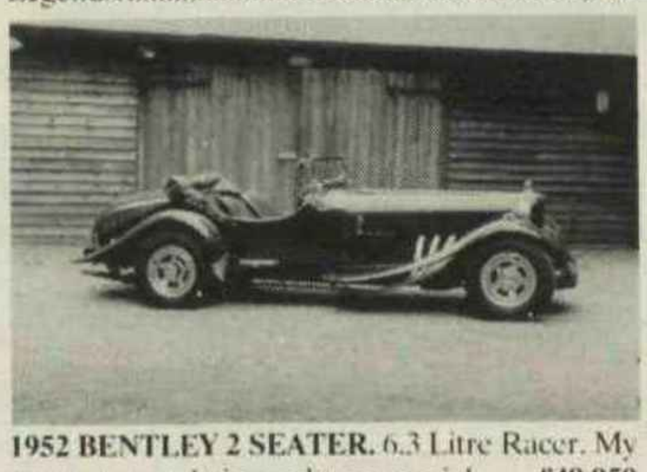
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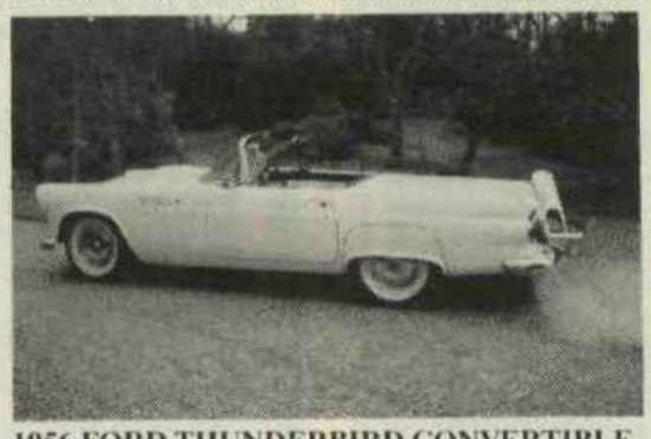
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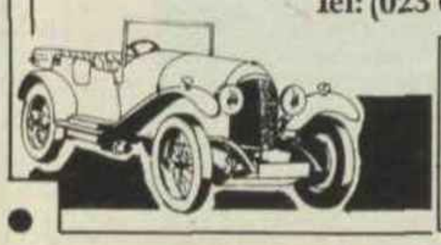
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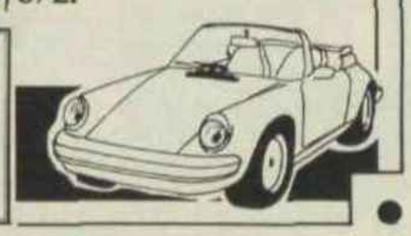
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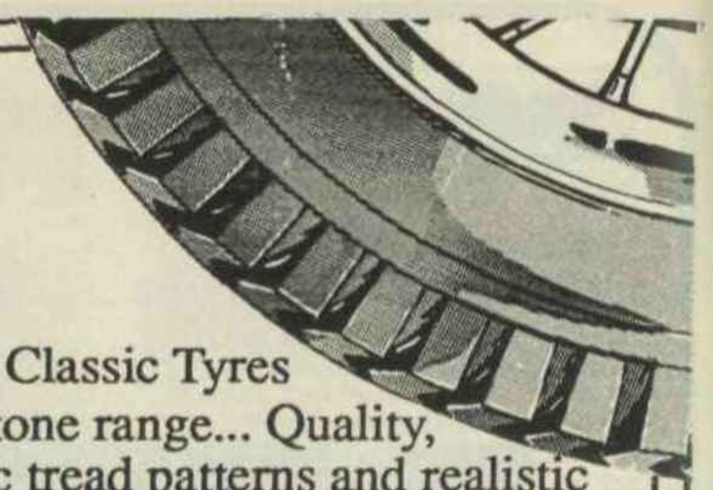
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