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Front cover picture: Ayrton Senna – world champion under a cloud.

MOTOR SPORT

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The Month in MOTOR SPORT

Oct 14: After an accident on the Pharaohs Rally, Jacky Ickx's co-driver Christian Tarin succumbs to his injuries in a Paris burns clinic.

Oct 15: Bertrand Gachot is released from prison following a successful appeal against his 18-month conviction for assault. He flies straight to Suzuka, in an unsuccessful bid to secure a drive in the Japanese GP.

Oct 18: Porsche announces that it is pulling out of motorsport with immediate effect, after its disastrous F1 liaison with Footwork. Porsche's Manfred Jantke stresses that the Stuttgart giant will not be out for long.



Vatanen: Subaru in '92

Oct 18: Subaru confirms that Ari Vatanen will drive for the team in 1992. The association is to start on this year's Lombard RAC Rally.

Oct 18: Didier Auriol's victory on the Sanremo Rally gives Lancia its fifth straight victory in the World Championship for Makes.

Oct 18: Eric Bernard breaks his left leg during free practice prior to the Japanese GP at Suzuka.

Oct 19: Lamborghini confirms that it will supply its V12 F1 engine to Larrousse and Minardi in 1992.

Oct 19: Footwork announces that it will run Mugen's Honda-based V10 for the 1992 season. The cars will be driven by Aguri Suzuki and Michele Alboreto, leaving no place in the team for Alex Caffi.

Oct 19: British F3 champion Rubens Barrichello tests an Il Barone Rampante Reynard at Vallelunga. The Brazilian expects to graduate to the European F3000 Championship with the team in 1992.

Oct 20: Ayrton Senna clinches the World Championship at Suzuka, his title guaranteed when Nigel Mansell spins off on lap 10. Senna generously allows team-mate Gerhard Berger to sweep through to a maiden McLaren victory at the final corner, and then sours the occasion with a tirade of foul language in the post-race press briefing, most of it directed at FISA's deposed President Jean-Marie Balestre. He also admits that he had pushed Prost off at the first corner one year previously . . .

Oct 20: Portugal's Pedro Lamy clinches the GM Lotus Euroseries title at Donington Park.

Oct 20: David Llewellin takes his Nissan GTI-R to victory on the Audi Sport Rally. Third place is enough for Colin McRae the clinch the Open Championship title, the Subaru driver becoming the youngest ever winner at just 23.

Oct 20: The German Touring Car Championship contenders visit Britain. Frank Biela and Steve Soper are the stars of the show, Biela's Audi V8 eventually getting the better of Soper's BMW M3 at Donington Park.

Oct 20: Michael Andretti wins the CART finale at Laguna Seca, and with it the championship title. His only possible rival, Bobby Rahal, is an early retirement.

Oct 22: McLaren and Honda issue press releases in a bid to restrict the damage caused by their world champion's outburst at Suzuka. Apologies are directed towards M Balestre . . .



Van de Poele: signs for Brabham

Oct 22: Eric van de Poele signs for Brabham, where he will partner Akihiko Nakaya in 1992.

Oct 24: Walter Röhrl tries a Porsche 962 at Paul Ricard, in conditions of great secrecy. The car features a four-wheel steering system.

Oct 26: BRM reaffirms its commitment to sportscar racing. It shows a model of its new P351 at Autopolis.

Oct 27: Mercedes scores its first Group C victory of the season at Autopolis, where Teo Fabi clinches the Sportscar World Championship for Drivers by taking his Jaguar to third. Toyota's impressive new TS010 chassis finishes sixth in the hands of Britons Geoff Lees and Andy Wallace.



Goossens: Festival success.

Oct 27: Belgian Marc Goossens wins a thrilling Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch, resisting intense pressure for the 20-lap final. Newcastle's Warren Hughes finishes second, ahead of Finn Tomi Veijalainen.

Oct 29: British F3000 aspirant Richard Dean tests an Indy Lights car at Laguna Seca, and emerges fastest of the 30 drivers present.

Oct 29: In one of the bombshells of the season, Ferrari announces that it has sacked Alain Prost. His place in Adelaide will be taken by erstwhile Minardi racer and Ferrari tester Gianni Morbidelli. Prost says he is a free agent for 1992 . . . Elsewhere in the pre-Adelaide game of musical chairs, Roberto Moreno replaces Morbidelli at Minardi and Bertrand Gachot is signed to substitute for the injured Eric Bernard at Larrousse.

Oct 30: Ford issues its first official picture of the XB CART engine. Newman/Haas Racing and Chip Ganassi Racing will use the unit next year.

Nov 1: Nissan confirms its 1992 rally line-up. With François Chatriot and Tomi Mäkinen on team strength, there is no place for David Llewellin.

Nov 2: Kenjiro Shinozuka (Mitusbishi) becomes the first Japanese driver to win a round of the World Rally Championship, in the poorly supported Ivory Coast (Bandama) Rally.

Nov 3: Ayrton Senna wins the shortest ever F1 World Championship GP. Adelaide is red-flagged on lap 16, with results being declared at the end of lap 14. Nigel Mansell thus claims second, despite hitting a concrete wall.

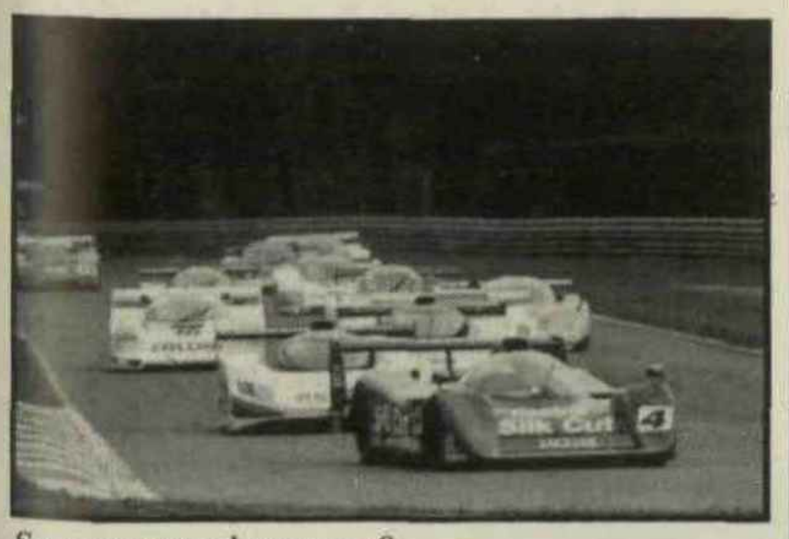
Nov 3: Richard Morgan wins the Formula First winter series race at Brands Hatch, almost two years after losing an arm in a testing accident at Donington.

Nov 7: Pirelli pulls the plug on its F1 programme. Goodyear agrees to supply those teams left in the lurch.

Nov 7: Keke Rosberg has a pasta lunch in Maranello with Ferrari boss Piero Lardi, immediately fuelling speculation that he might replace Alain Prost at the Prancing Horse in 1992.

Nov 9: Vauxhall discloses that Dave Metcalfe will drive its new rally car, a turbocharged, 4wd Calibra.

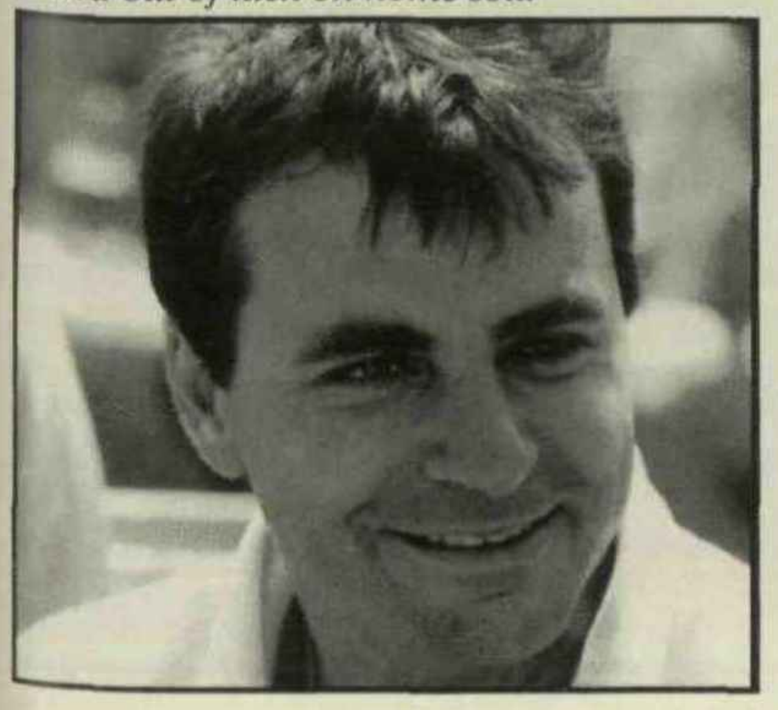
Nov 11: At a crisis meeting to outline the future of sportscar racing, the decision is taken to drop the Sportscar World Championship from the calendar. In its place, a non-championship series of races will take place, the highlight of which will be the Le Mans 24 Hours. Jaguar, Mercedes and Peugeot all withdraw, though the former may turn out at Le Mans. It looks set to be a privateer arena, though works interest from Toyota and Mazda is likely. Support is also promised from BRM, Lola (via Euroracing) and Spice and the Brun, Kremer and Joest Porsche teams. Early applications to host 1000 km races come from Spa, Monza, Suzuka and the Nürburgring. Old turbo cars will be permitted to race against the modern 3.5-litre generation, thereby effectively turning the clock back two seasons.



Sportscars: where now?

Nov 12: Carlos Sainz retires from the Catalonia Rally, ensuring that the battle for the drivers' title will go down to the wire on the RAC Rally.

Sainz: out of luck on home soil.



Never a dull moment

The motoring and motorsporting scene is never dull, which is as well, for this can be libellous word to use these days. But at present the outlook is not bright, either. The RAC is predicting that, very soon, six million cars may be off the road, unable to comply with the new exhaust-emissions legislation. Car sales may benefit, but what a disruption of essential transport! And those who have invested in catalytic converters may find them sensitive to casual usage, ailing engines or incorrect fuel, and expensive to replace.

Friends-of-the-Earth may rejoice in fewer cars to pollute the atmosphere, yet factory chimneys are worse offenders. If those battling for votes in the forthcoming General Election wanted help, we might hear something of reduced taxes on the smaller-engined cars. As it is, none of the warring political parties seems to have anything to offer to the millions of motor-voters.

Even if you get your car through its next MOT test, it seems unlikely that you will be able to enjoy raised speed-limits, with Mr Rifkind referring to motor vehicles as "lethal weapons" and wanting to see them banned from the bigger cities. If you drive too slowly after dark in a built-up area you are in danger of being arrested for sexual crawling. If you speed up a bit, you will be accused of putting children at risk. Even the AA, which used to warn of speed-traps, is now against radar-detectors, on the grounds that speed is dangerous. But no moving vehicle can stop dead – the Highway Code says so – so sadly accidents will continue to happen. Even trains, some of which now run at 100 mph on their fenced-in tracks, indulge in them, in spite of elaborate signalling-equipment, and still shun road users off level-crossings. Teach safe, sensible driving, rather than restrict open-road speed. And let the Government remember that many crashes are the result of our inadequate road-system.

The cost of motoring is ever rising and now your tyres will be illegal unless they have at least 1.6mm of tread left, up from the former 1mm limit. A sensible move. But why not put the figure at 2mm, instead of a clinical 1.6? It's ironic anyway, because we all know that some tyres have better wet-road grip than others. So if safety is at stake, shouldn't the authorities test all makes and types and then legalise only the top tyre? Another car cost-raiser is vehicle theft, which inflates our insurance premiums, as does the "knock-for-knock" settlement the insurance companies make, even if you are not to blame in an accident. And it seems a little unfair to expect manufacturers to take the blame for car-stealing, when most of them are doing their best, as BMW are quick to remind us. However, so-called juvenile "joy-riding" is something else. To help stamp it out or contain it, would it not be possible, in the areas involved, to re-introduce compulsory immobilisation of vehicles, as was done during the war?

However, all is not gloom and doom. Perhaps we may look forward next year to an improvement in the financial recession, and enough sales of £500,000 200 mph plus supercars to keep them in production. Perhaps the time will come when the Greens will be delighted that all cars are consuming unleaded petrol, and owners of older motor-cars finally discover which oils and fuels suit aged engines. Perhaps one day you will be able to have your car railed through The Tunnel, en route for some carefree, and even more costly, motoring in Europe. WB

Whither sportscars?

Just as we were closing for press, we learned that FISA had decided to drop the Sportscar World Championship from its 1992 calendar. In its place, a non-championship series of events will provide an arena for Group C cars, though manufacturer interest is likely to be slim. Much, indeed, as it has been this year.

While the readoption of two year-old regulations reflates the value of the numerous Porsche 962s to have been acquired by amateurs, it can hardly be deemed a progressive step. Certainly the privateers are likely to stand more chance in 1992 than they did this season, but FISA needs to draw up fresh, cost-effective regulations as soon as possible.

There is already too great a bottleneck of racing drivers hovering just outside F1. The release onto the market of the likes of Derek Warwick and Yannick Dalmas exacerbates the situation. In the recent past, the likes of Martin Brundle have had cause to be grateful to Group C, where they have been able to ply their trade in a professional manner while awaiting a fresh F1 opportunity.

Its absence in 1992 will create a void which FISA must act quickly to fill; teams must have plenty of warning about 1993 regulations, so that sportscar racing can resume secure World Championship status before aggrieved would-be entrants have time to find alternative ways of spending a weekend. SA

DECEMBER FIXTURES

24-29 November	**Harrogate**	**Lombard RAC Rally**	**INT**
30 November - 1 December	**Brands Hatch**	**British Rallycross GP**	**INT**
8 December	Brands Hatch	FF1600, F/First, GTs	R

Conduct unbecoming

Senna delivers an abusive tirade unworthy of a World Champion

Immediately after last year's Japanese GP opinions regarding the Senna/Prost first corner shunt could be divided into two roughly equal camps, surprising though even that might seem to those who either witnessed it firsthand or saw the numerous television replays from all angles. After Senna gave a press conference in Adelaide, however, the balance swung dramatically – and unfathomably – in the Brazilian's favour. Intelligent people who should have known better – and the unintelligent who couldn't – spoke of the impossibility of one driver deliberately taking out another, and blamed Prost for attempting to maintain his lead despite the wholly apparent legality of his move. The aforementioned group of people included luminaries such as John Surtees, Alan Jones and James Hunt, none of whom believed Senna had erred.

"In my opinion it was Ayrton's fault. Alain was ahead and had the line," said John Watson during the post-race press conference, yet by Adelaide he too had swung round to the Senna view. Many had succumbed to the Brazilian's oratory powers. We have seen over the years just how strong he can be in stamping his mood on a press gathering; the tears of self-pity in Adelaide in 1989 when he threw himself at the mercy of the press and begged for its help fighting the baddies at FISA; the genuine tears when he spoke of Martin Donnelly's accident at Jerez last year; his wheedling manner in Adelaide shortly afterwards when he spoke loftily of the concepts of fair play and justice.

It may be worth looking up the register at RADA to see if the name Senna has appeared in the last year or so, for it was finally evident in Suzuka this year that it was all nothing more than brilliant acting.

In Suzuka, 12 months after telling the world that it had all been Prost's fault for not opening the door, Senna finally admitted that he had taken the Frenchman out of the race. Some already knew that, had no doubt of it. It will be interesting to see how those who didn't, and were duped, now see their hero.

"The World Championship is for sport, not war," said Prost last year, and they pointed at him and snickered about him being bitter, past it, unable to win. "What he did today was absolutely disgusting. Believe me, I was flat out into that corner, in fifth gear, and he hit me hard enough to break off my rear wing.

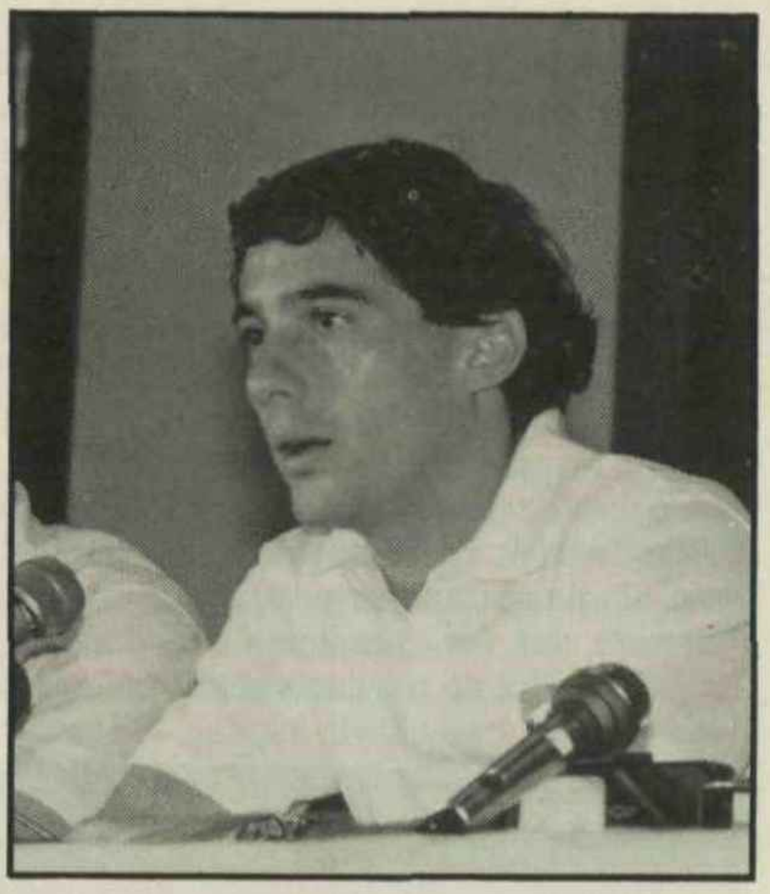
"Apart from anything else, whatever he thinks of me, I can't believe he would risk his own safety on the first lap of a Grand Prix and with the whole field behind us.

"I've said to you before, he tries to represent himself to the world as a man he is not. He has no value."

"I don't give a damn what Prost says," declared Senna, and then he made an extraordinary statement. "It is a great satisfaction for me, and I dedicate this championship to all the people who fought against me last year. It hurt me a lot, but for them it is a demonstration of who the real champion is.

"I won here last year and it was very, very bad to take it away from me," he continued, and most conceded that point. "It is very rewarding to do this. When I walked back from the corner to the pits I left behind me there all the weight and stress from 1990."

"Sure you go for gaps," said Mario Andretti. "The trick is finding one wide



enough for your car."

It transpired in Suzuka this year that Senna never had the slightest intention of seeking a gap. What kind of man draws satisfaction from such behaviour? Certainly not the Clarks, Villeneuves or Ascaris of yesteryear, the true heroes of the game. Ayrton Senna revealed to us the dark side of his character when he exploded into a spiteful attack on Jean-Marie Balestre immediately after clinching his third World Championship. Prost had known the answer for the past year, but now the world would know too, and from Senna's own lips. What follows may well offend those sensitive to references both fornicatory and fecal, but gives a graphic insight into his mental state in Japan.

The smart thing to have done would have been to accept the plaudits for a championship very well won, to bask in the image of the man who was so magnanimous in his day of great triumph that, like Nelson Piquet in South Africa in 1983, he was prepared to let his team-mate win. Instead the bitterness and hate that consume him, and will forever prevent him from being a man at peace, came spewing out of Senna. The tide of passion washed up all the anguish of Suzuka 1989 and 1990, and swept him away in wave after wave of self-justification. His 'message' was broadcast not just to a stunned media, but also to an equally open-mouthed spectator audience at the circuit.

"'89 was an unforgivable situation," said this man whose belief in God does not appear to embrace His teachings about humility and forgiveness. "I still struggle to cope with that. Balestre gave the order that we don't change pole position from the right to the left. I did the right thing when we crashed at the first corner. Prost turned to cut me over, he pushed me out."

This was dangerous stuff. Was he really saying that it was right to crash deliberately because he couldn't have his own way and had lost the start in a race scheduled to last 53 laps? The hole he was so frantically digging himself got deeper. The following italics are mine.

"Balestre gave an order not to change. It was hard but I know the inside system. And this is really shit. I tell myself okay you try and work clean, then you get EXPLETIVE by stupid people. So I said to myself, 'Alright, tomorrow I'll tell you the EXPLETIVE truth, 100 per cent truth.' If Sunday at the start, because I'm in the wrong position, Prost gets the jump and beats me off the line, at the first corner I'll go for it. *And he had better not turn in, because he's not gonna make it.* And it just happened, I guess. I just wish it didn't happen. I really wished that I could have had the start, because then we could go and go. It's unbelievable that it had to happen. He got the jump and he was turning in and I hit him. We were both off and it was a shit end of championship. It was not good for me and not good for Formula One. It was the result of the wrong decisions and partiality from the people inside that make the decisions. I won the championship, so what?"

At no point did it appear to strike him that it was also a badend to the championship for Prost, nor that his red mist, fit of pique, temper tantrum, call it what you will, might not only have endangered the pair of them, but also 24 drivers following them into the corner. Nor did he mention what might have happened later in the race had he led and Prost tried to overtake.

During all this Berger and Patrese shuffled uneasily, perhaps stifling the temptation to get up and place a hand over their colleague's mouth before he could do himself more harm. Gerhard attempted to inject a little humour into the poisonous monologue by remarking: "I think you should hope that Balestre doesn't comeback next year...!" It merely fuelled the egotistical fire, for Senna was now wound up too tight.

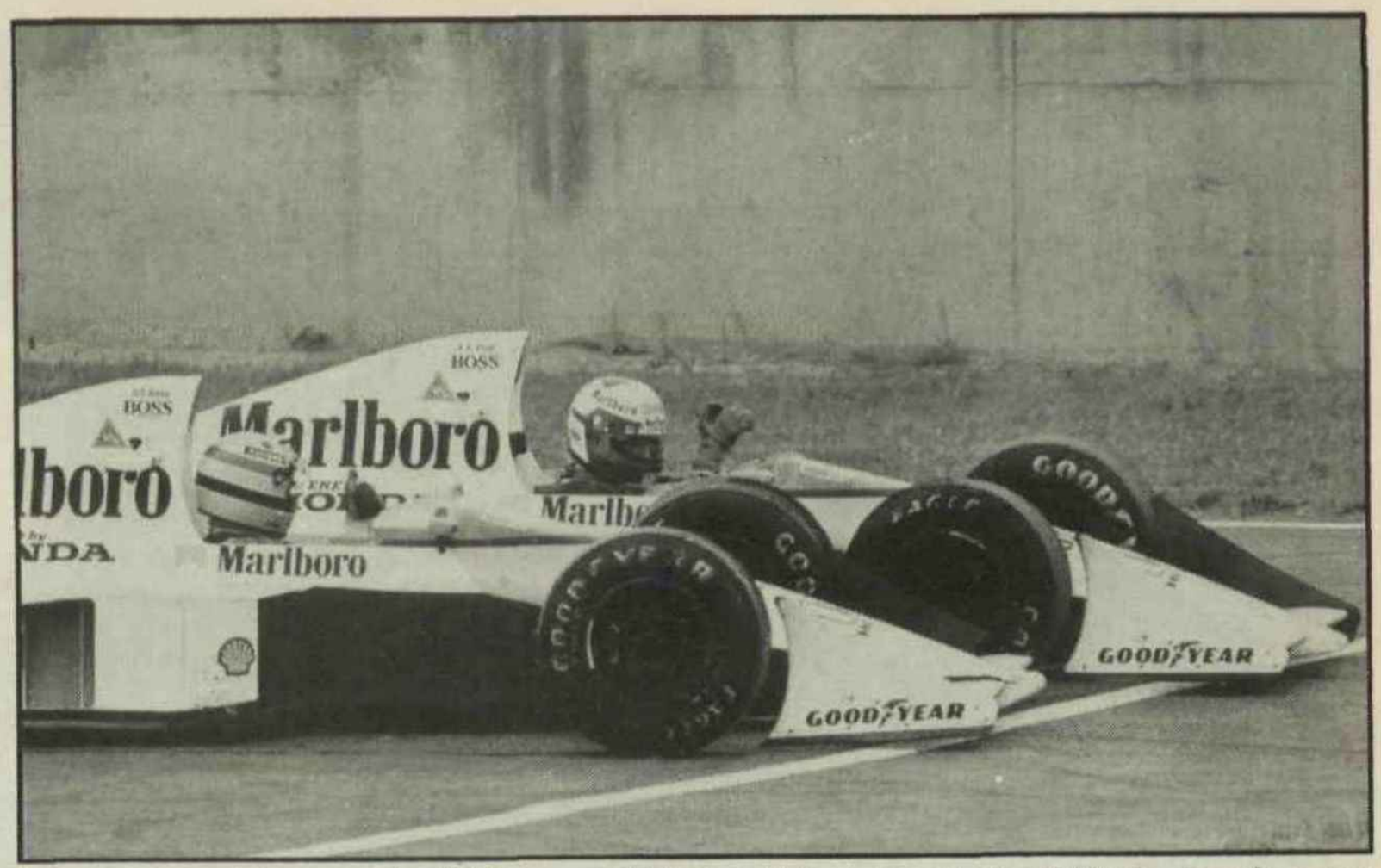
"I don't care. I don't care! I think for once we all must say what we feel is right and

what we feel is wrong. EXPLETIVE rules that you cannot tell your mind, that you cannot speak what you're thinking, you are not allowed to say somebody did a mistake, somebody did something wrong. And nobody was able to say that because we had the shit in '89 and I said what I thought – and you all know that was true – what took place afterwards was a theatre. It was shit that took place.

"Why do people say I caused the accident in 1990? Because if you get EXPLETIVE every single time you're trying to do your job cleanly and properly, by the system, by other people taking advantage of it, what should you do? Stand behind, stay behind and say, 'Thank you. Yes, thank you'? No. You should fight for what you think is right.

"And I was really fighting for something that was correct. Because I was EXPLETIVE from the year before, I was EXPLETIVE in the winter, I was EXPLETIVE in the qualifying procedure here when I got pole and the pole was supposed to have been on the good side. If it had been I would have got a better start and nothing would have happened because I would have got a better start. I would have been first without any problem. But it was again a result of a decision, a bad decision, influenced by Balestre. I know that. We know that from underneath. And we all know why, and the result of it was the first corner. It was not my responsibility. I did contribute to it, yes. But it was not my responsibility."

It was not Ayrton Senna's responsibility that he and Alain Prost crashed? Why, then, did a leading photographer who was at the corner say immediately afterwards, "Prost braked and began to turn in, and there was absolutely no change in the Honda's exhaust note as Senna hit the back of the Ferrari"? Why then did Nelson Piquet concur with that – "Senna just drove straight into the back of Prost, and that's all there is to it." Whose foot was on the throttle which – according to Honda's own telemetry – *was never closed throughout the manoeuvre*?



The moment that started it all. Senna and Prost collide at Suzuka in 1989; the Brazilian was disqualified, the Frenchman became champion.

In America Sam Colt and Messrs Smith & Wesson put their names to guns, but nobody has ever suggested through history that they should be held more responsible for killing people than those who actually pull the triggers. The ultimate responsibility is the user's; it cannot be abdicated. Ayrton Senna's comments and the sentiments behind them are shocking because this man drives racing cars for a living. Because this man so often takes time off to tell others – as he did with Nigel Mansell before the Japanese GP – how they should drive, what tactics are acceptable and what aren't.

What Senna was effectively saying is that nobody is allowed to overtake him or beat him into a corner, and that the price if they do could well be an accident. He threatened as much to Mansell before the Japanese GP. All last year he absolutely denied responsibility for the first corner accident in Suzuka, this man who is always telling us the importance of honesty, yet during the height of his tirade he spluttered, "I was determined to get to the corner first, and I was not prepared to let the guy" – he could not bring himself to name Prost – "turn that corner in front of me. Because, if I was near enough to make that corner, he couldn't turn in front of me. He just had to let me through."

Last year, in his hotel room in Adelaide, he refused pointblank to accept that photographic evidence showed him hitting the rearof the Ferrari and not, as he claimed, it's side. That he was only that close anyway because he had not lifted and thus could not have hoped to make the corner at the speed and on the line on which he was travelling.

"He took a chance," he continued, almost evangelical in his intensity. "It didn't work because I went for it. *I didn't care if we crash.* I went for it. He took a chance and we crashed. He turned and we crashed. But that was a result of '89. That was a result of all the shit that I already told you and you already know. It was built up, it was unavoidable, it had to happen. It was bad. It was bad for me. It was bad for everyone."

He did not need to add that such high-speed tit for tat was bad for the sport. As we left the press room, ears still ringing, the overriding feeling was one of intense disappointment that a man of such outstanding skill – on one of the finest afternoons of his career – should have elected to dig up the past in such an unbecoming manner. Disappointment, and the feeling that Ayrton Senna may well have cause to regret some of his comments in the years to come. DJT

One year on, in the 1990 Japanese GP, Senna became assured of the World Championship after the first-corner collision with Prost.



Nigel Mansell harasses Senna before the dusty demise (inset) which settled the title in Ayrton's favour.

Every silver lining has a cloud

You can't help but feel sorry for the Australians. They put on what is arguably the best organised and most enoyable race of the F1 year, and for the past three seasons the World Championship has all but been settled before the cars have left Japan.

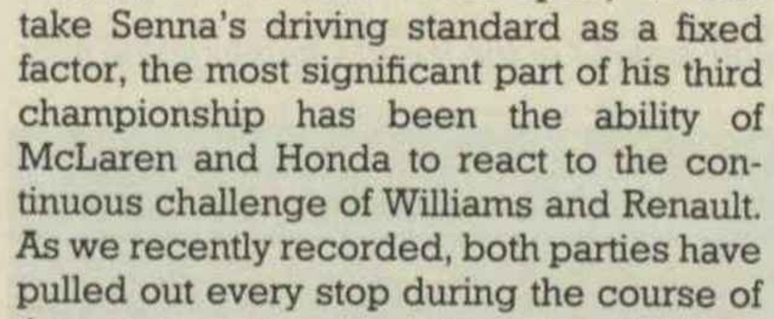
You could, however, come up with some pretty convincing reasons for pitying the Japanese, too. In 1989 there was the incident between Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna in the silly chicane; last year that celebrated first corner shunt.

The 1991 Japanese GP began as the race that could help Nigel Mansell to his first world title; and it ended as the race that sullied Senna's third.

Up until the post-race press conference it had been a relatively dull affair, but one could draw some succour from seeing Gerhard Berger score his first victory for Honda Marlboro McLaren, even if the Austrian personally felt the manner in which his team-mate had handed him the success rendered it something of a dark joke. One could also savour the drama of qualifying, and of Mansell's chase after the two McLarens.

If, the two Iberian races apart, we can take Senna's driving standard as a fixed factor, the most significant part of his third championship has been the ability of McLaren and Honda to react to the continuous challenge of Williams and Renault. As we recently recorded, both parties have pulled out every stop during the course of the season, yet going into the penultimate race McLaren appeared to have the psychological advantage. Where Williams spoke of promising tests, conducted at Estoril on the way back home from Barcelona and mainly aimed at 1992, McLaren and Honda had been pounding round accumulating mileage that would directly affect the MP4/6s at Suzuka. There were further aerodynamic revisions to complement the new undertray used in Spain. Shell had a further altered fuel specification. And Honda had built yet lighter and higher revving versions of its RA121E V12. By the time free practice had begun, it seemed that Williams Renault had lost its vital edge, had stumbled right at the very end. The performance advantage was back with McLaren.

Karl Wendlinger's F1 debut was brief.



Berger, as had been his wont in both Portugal and Spain, tucked up Senna yet again to take pole position, and he looked as confident as any man can after enduring defeats by his team-mate in almost all of his previous McLaren outings. By precious irony, Senna was thus unable to capitalise on the switch of pole position from the right of the grid to the left, where he had wanted it last year only to be denied by FISA and the organisers.

Mansell was very quick in qualifying, once Williams had trimmed down the FW14's wings, and but for a momentary baulking by Alex Caffi in the final corner

before the chicane, the curiously named 130R Bend, he might have worked on to the front row. That much was by now pretty standard; the key would be the McLarens' speed on raceday. In recent races they have been quick in qualifying and slower than the Williams in the race. "This time," said Senna, "we believe that qualifying speed and the improvements that led to it, will still hold good for the race." They did. He was a half second quicker than Mansell in the Sunday morning warm-up, and though there was much talk of the manner in which he had had to switch to the spare MP4/6 to record that time, the alarm bells were ringing in Frank's camp.

The start: oh, was there ever a lot of soul-searching speculation about that! Senna had a dig at Mansell in his Thursday press conference, issuing all kinds of silly threats; and Mansell parried them with an ominous warning that might have reminded the Brazilian of Spa 1987. "I think Ayrton knows that I'm not as benevolent as Alain," he said.

Well, this time the start was very clean. Hail Moses! Sweet relief! Berger went off like a man demented, while Mansell cut right across the very fast-starting Patrese but was too slow to beat Senna into the dreaded first corner. Round one to McLaren.

Behind the scenes Ron Dennis, Senna and Berger had hatched a plot. The guy who led would be the guy who would win, all things being equal. If the McLarens

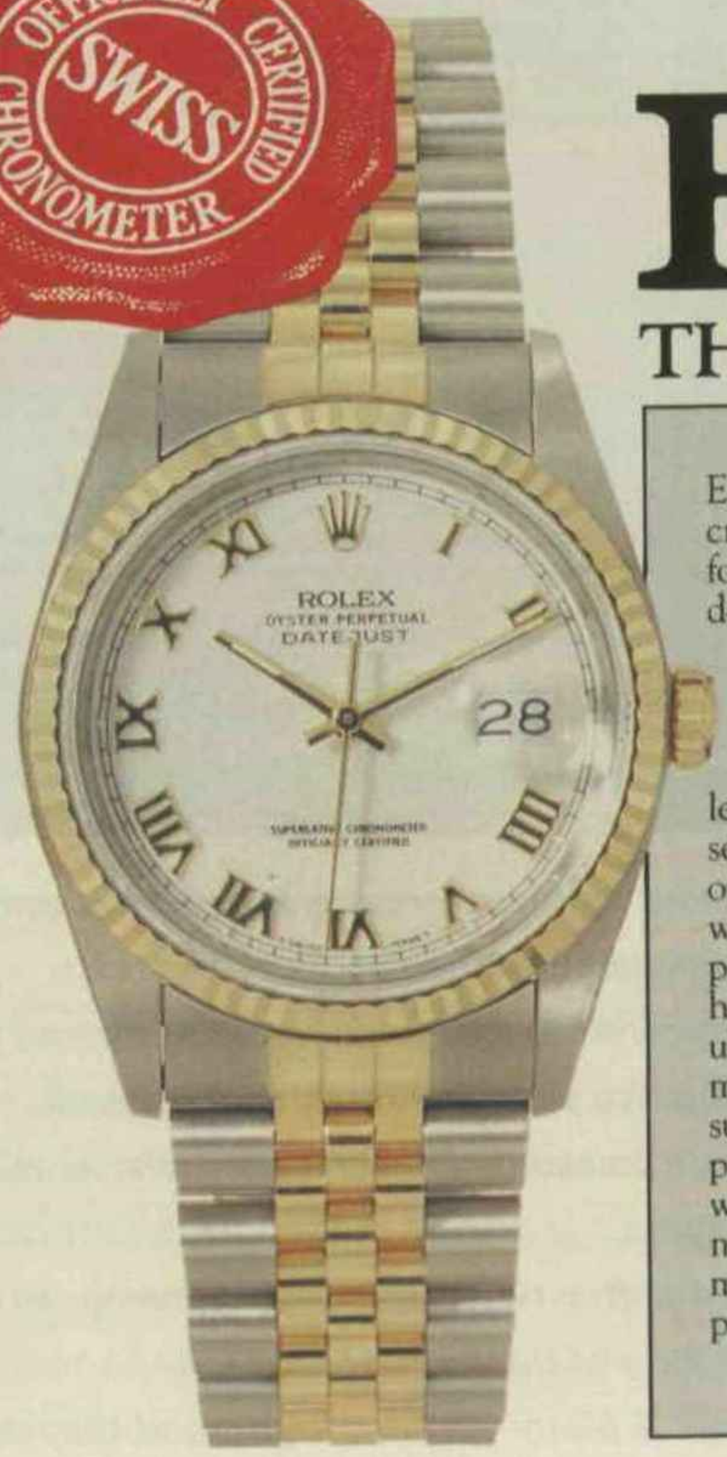


The tension over, Senna takes a champagne shower moments before digging his claws into the deposed FISA president.

NON-QUALIFIERS

No	Driver	Nat	Car/Engine	Tyres	Best Lap	Result
30	Aguri Suzuki	JAP	Lola L91-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	1m 18.393s	DNQ
7	Martin Brundle	GB	Brabham BT60Y-Yamaha V12	P	1m 18.855s	DNQ
35	Eric van de Poele	B	Lambo 291-Lamborghini V12	G	1m 19.000s	DNQ
29	Bertrand Gachot	B	Lola L91-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	1m 19.274s	DNQ
14	Gabriele Tarquini	I	Fomet 1-Cosworth V8 DFR Hart	G	1m 18.184s	DNPQ
31	Naoki Hattori	JAP	Coloni C4-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	1m 22.852s	DNPQ

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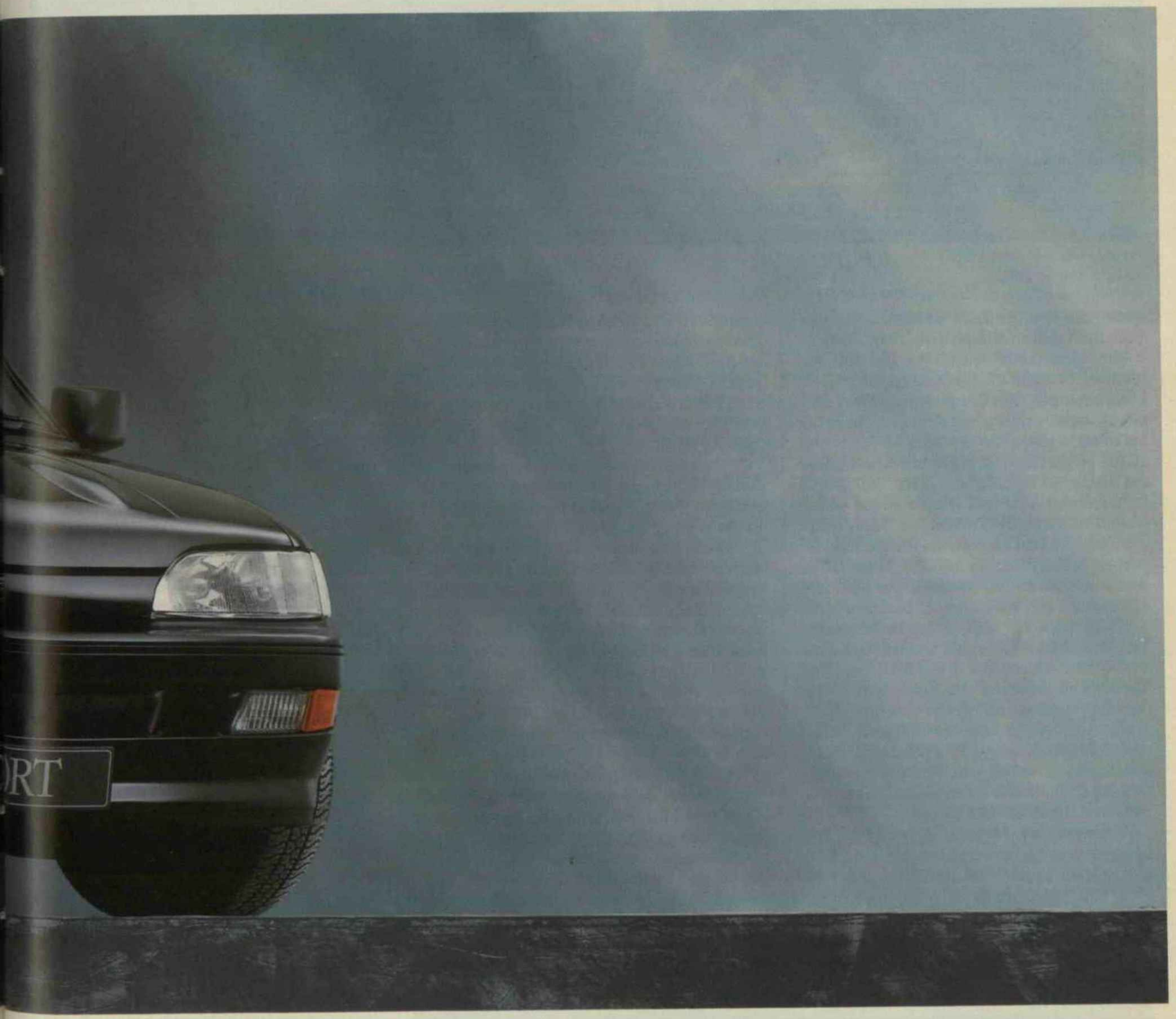
It has a highly tuned sports suspension, so you can expect handling of the highest order.

Autocar & Motor were so impressed they said "the

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RS2000 feels taut and consistent, grips extremely well..."

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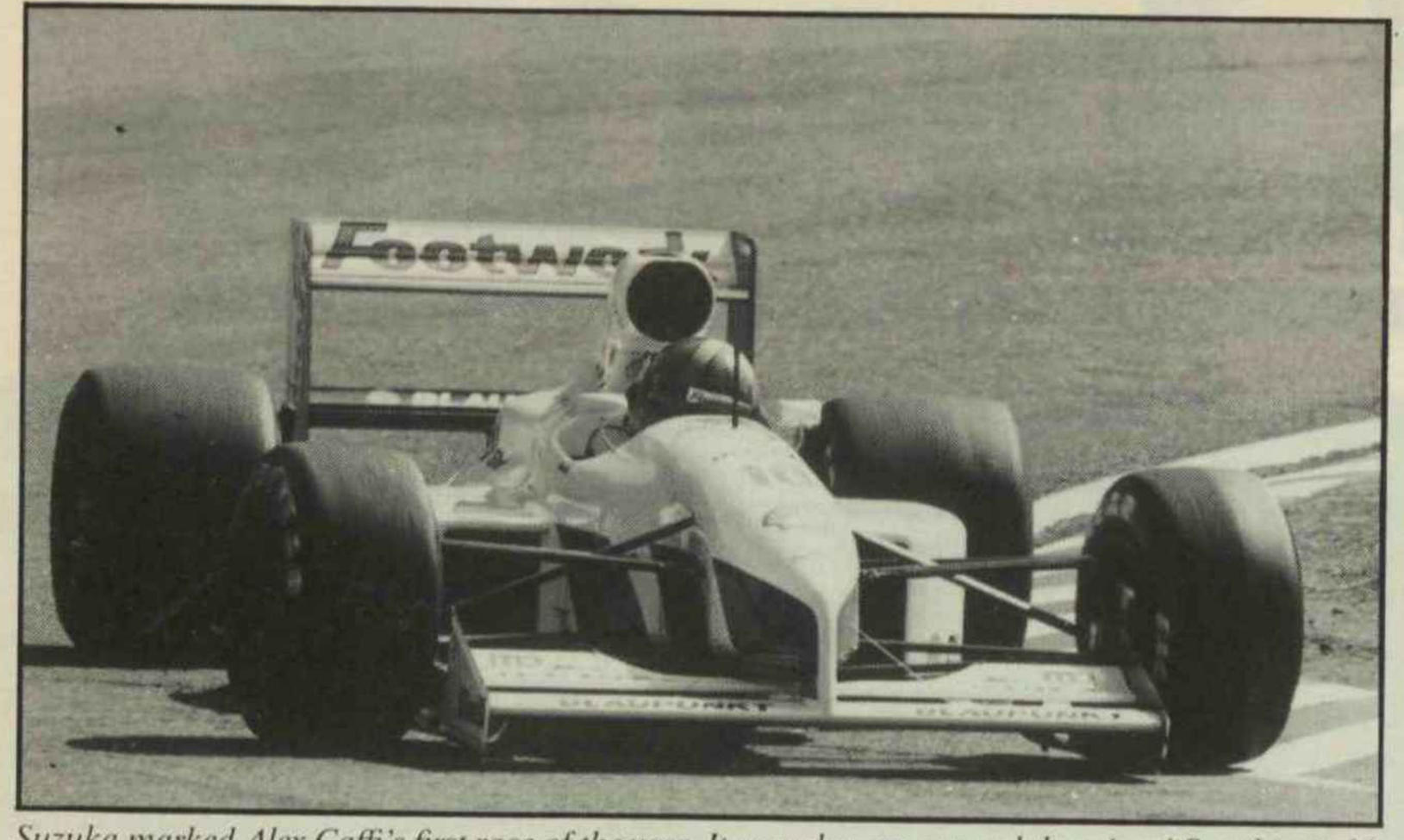
To conclude, Autocar & Motor said of the RS2000 "as for the competition, they should be worried."

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Suzuka marked Alex Caffi's first race of the year. It was also announced that Aguri Suzuki would replace him in 1992.

were one-two, without pressure, it was said, then there would be no overtaking.

There certainly wasn't to be any for Mansell. Stuck in the position he must have dreaded most, with Berger going away and Senna cannily doing just enough to fend off his challenges while conserving his tyres, all he could do was harry the Brazilian in the hope of forcing an error. After the formation laps he had tried running more wing than Riccardo, and stayed that way for the race. He had also opted for the thicker carbon brake discs. In the end, when it did come, the error that decided the title outcome once and for all would be Nigel's.

There was, he said, a brake problem. The Williams' middle pedal went very soft. It had been a problem in the morning, too. Those who watched the helicopter shots into the chicane, during the first nine laps, saw how much ground the Williams made under braking, but the mechanics were satisfied that there had been a genuine problem, which has been associated in the past with those thicker discs.

Whatever, as Mansell dived into the second part of turn one on his 10th lap, closer than ever to the McLaren, the Williams ran wide, got its left-hand wheels on the kerb, and was then launched into a long, long sideways moment across the gravel run-off. The cloud of dust it raised as it bounced and slithered to a backward halt finally choked off any title aspirations that he harboured. Portugal might have been Team Willy's fault, but this one looked suspiciously down to the driver, a victim of the dirty air behind the McLaren and that braking glitch.

"I've seen the same thing happen to Senna, but he got away with it," said one observer. "Nigel had to try and ride it out, and was just plain unlucky."

"When I saw him go off I cannot say I was sorry because I knew he was having one hell of a time in the turbulence behind me," said Senna. Mansell clung to the brake theory, stressing how stable the FW14 had been through the corner and how the long pedal had caught him by surprise. Only he knows what really happened, but his demeanour afterwards certainly did not suggest anger at the mechanical state of his car.

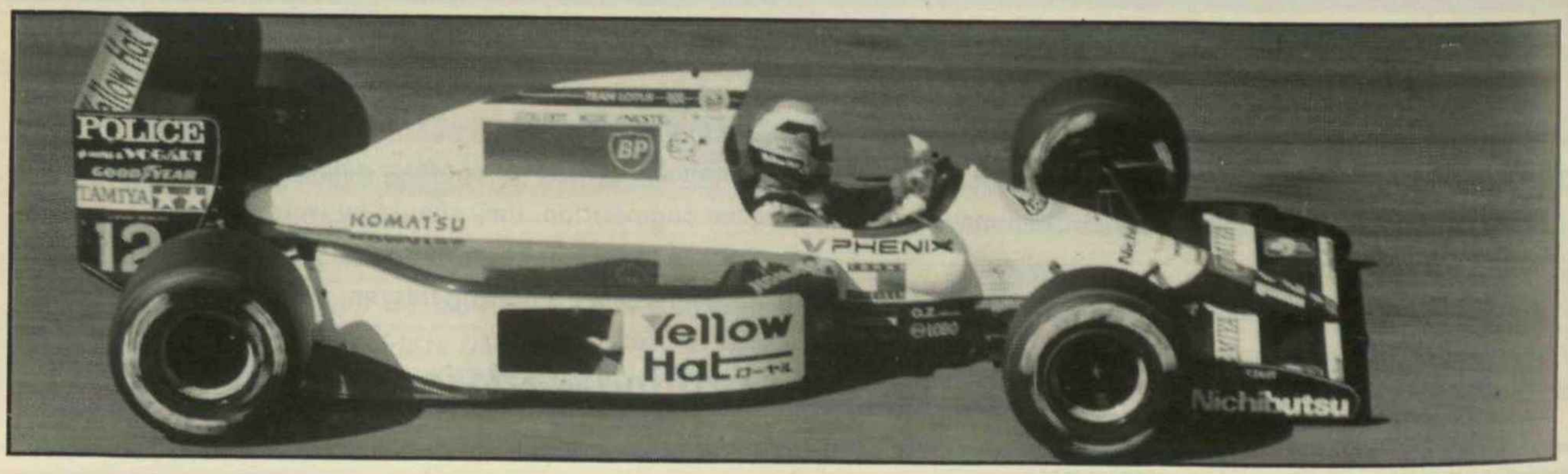
With Mansell gone the Japanese GP should have fallen neatly to Berger. "After Nigel retired it was almost an instant reaction for me to think 'Right, we've got to go for it and we can have some fun,'" said Senna, and go for it he did. The race now simply seemed a matter of which McLaren-Honda driver won. It wasn't quite that simple, however.

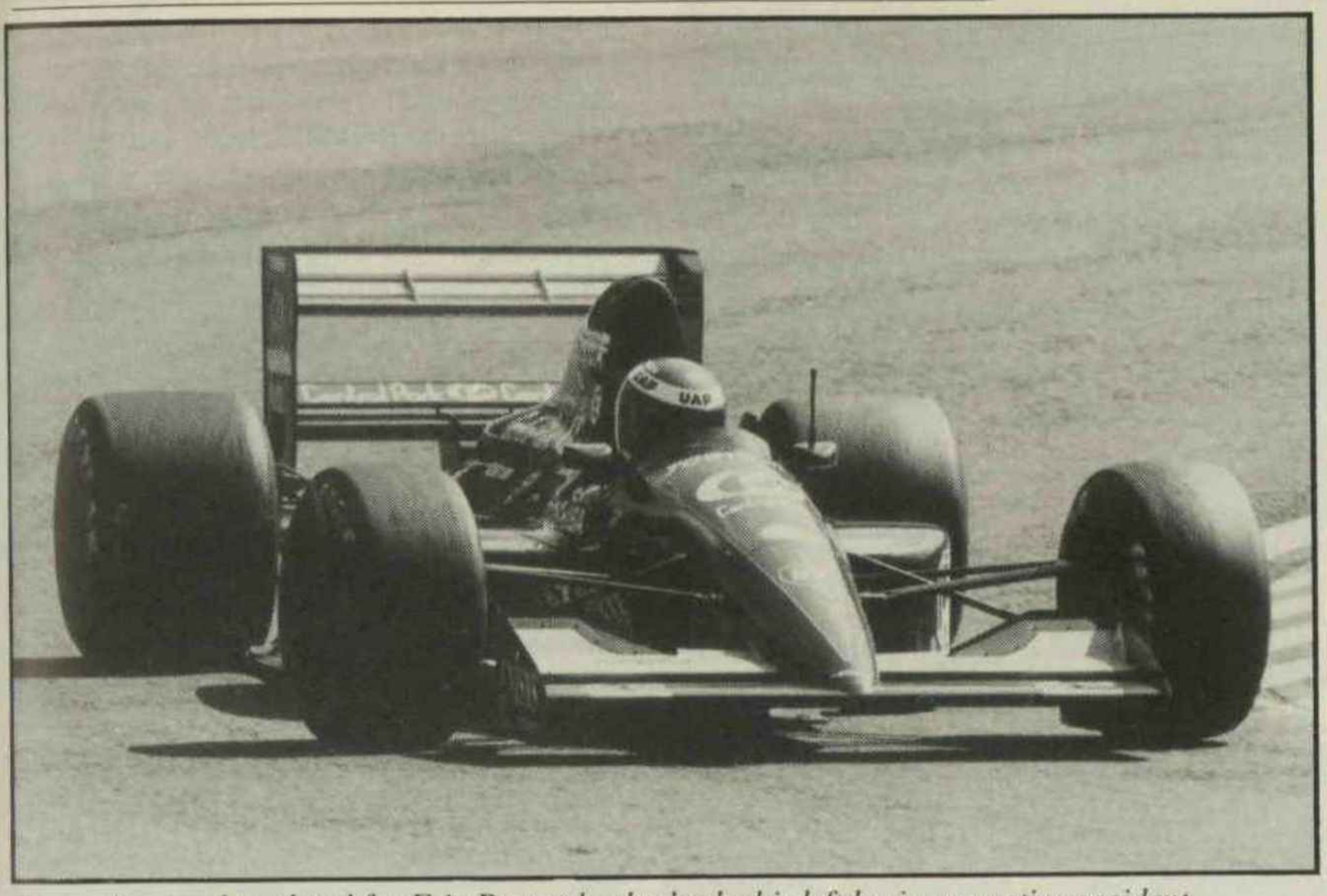
When Mansell went out Berger was

STARTING GRID

2 **BERGER** McLaren MP4/6 1m 37.700s (2) 1m 36.458s (1)	**1** **SENNA** McLaren MP4/6 1m 34.898s (1) 1m 36.490s (2)
5 **MANSELL** Williams FW14 1m 34.922s (2) 1m 36.529s (1)	**27** **PROST** Ferrari 643 1m 36.670s (2) 1m 37.565s (1)
6 **PATRESE** Williams FW14 1m 36.882s (2) 1m 37.874 (1)	**28** **ALESI** Ferrari 643 1m 37.140s (2) 1m 37.718s (1)
23 **MARTINI** Minardi M191 1m 38.154s (2) 1m 40.176s (1)	**24** **MORBIDELLI** Minardi M191 1m 38.248s (2) 1m 41.088s (1)
19 **SCHUMACHER** Benetton B191 1m 38.363s (2) 1m 39.742s (1)	**20** **PIQUET** Benetton B191 1m 38.614s (2) 1m 40.557s (1)
33 **DE CESARIS** Jordan 191 1m 38.842s (2) 1m 40.407s (1)	**22** **LEHTO** Dallara BMS 191 1m 38.911s (2) 1m 40.191s (1)
32 **ZANARDI** Jordan 191 1m 38.923s (2) 1m 39.051s (1)	**4** **MODENA** Tyrrell 020 1m 38.926s (2) 1m 39.245s (1)
3 **NAKAJIMA** Tyrrell 020 1m 39.118s (2) 1m 40.100s (1)	**21** **PIRRO** Dallara BMS 191 1m 39.238s (2) 1m 41.246s (1)
25 **BOUTSEN** Ligier JS35B 1m 39.499s (2) 1m 39.946s (1)	**17** **GUGELMIN** Leyton House CG911 1m 39.518s (2) 1m 40.714s (1)
7 **BRUNDLE** Brabham BT60Y 1m 39.697s (2) 1m 40.867s (1)	**26** **COMAS** Ligier JS35B 1m 39.820s (2) 1m 41.251s (1)
11 **HAKKINEN** Lotus 102B 1m 40.024s (2) 1m 41.485s (1)	**16** **WENDLINGER** Leyton House CG911 1m 40.092s (2) 1m 41.639s (1)
12 **HERBERT** Lotus 102B 1m 40.170s (2) 1m 40.512s (1)	**14** **TARQUINI** Fomet 1 1m 40.184s (2) 1m 42.835s (1)
30 **SUZUKI** Lola L91 1m 40.255s (2) 1m 41.528s (1)	**10** **CAFFI** Footwork A12C 1m 40.402s (2) 1m 40.517s (1)

Johnny Herbert drove beautifully, menacing Piquet's Benetton for much of the race.





It wasn't a good weekend for Eric Bernard, who broke his left leg in a practice accident.

nearly 10s ahead of Senna. "But then I heard from the team what had happened and that I could slow down. They said to take care about the revs. So there was no problem for me to do that. I did, and I was happy to because my tyres weren't too good anymore. But Ayrton was pushing and I was three or four laps slowing down. Then I saw that maybe he wanted to make a nice race today, so I had to start pushing again." Berger had been well hooked up, setting fastest lap four times in the first five laps. Senna came back at him on laps 11 and 16, and that was sufficient to pull him a lot closer. The conservation of his rubber was proving critical, but then Gerhard had been the rabbit sent out at the start either to break Mansell's challenge if it came, or to lure him into an error should he get marooned behind Senna. There was also the fact that Gerhard had backed off, on team advice. The Austrian paid the price for aiding his team-mate on lap 17 as the two MP4/6s went by the pits nose to tail, and within a lap Senna was in the lead. If there was a no overtaking agreement, it had been violated.

Goodyear had warned that the tyre stops would occur around that point, and when Berger came in on lap 19 his was the longer call. Senna's, two laps later, went like clockwork. Riccardo Patrese, quick enough to set a temporary fastest lap on lap 27, was an outrun third until the McLarens stopped, whereby he inherited the lead for two laps until his own tyre change. Senna was looking good.

Berger, however, had other ideas, and began coming back strongly with a flurry of fastest laps, a fresh one per tour from laps 21 to 25 inclusive. Perhaps this wasn't so dull after all! His final shot was 1m 41.689s on lap 37, but Senna's ultimate response was 1m 41.532s two laps later. Then it all began to go wrong for the Austrian, as his engine began to sound very flat on lap 45. The two, sometimes three, second gap that there had been since lap 21 began to open out quite noticeably. Going into the final tour it was 6.98s and the cause looked hopeless, but then there was Senna slowing, slowing. Were they going for a grandstand finish? Or were Dennis' orders finally going to be obeyed?

"I was just getting Ayrton's slipstream," said Gerhard, "but then I got the big engine noise. An exhaust, maybe. I thought, 'That's it.' I wasn't expecting it to make even another half lap, it was that bad. I was so disappointed. I just switched down the revs and changed gears early, yet all the temperatures stayed the same. I just couldn't believe it in the beginning. The engine just kept running. So I decided I'd have a look for second place and take home some points. Of course," he added, remembering the deal that had been discussed, "I was hoping that Ayrton was thinking about me because I was for sure thinking a lot about him!"

Indeed, Senna was thinking of him, but only when he had exited the chicane for the last time. By then Gerhard had been allowed to erode that cushion of almost seven seconds, and as they lined up for the right-hander leading on to the pit straight Senna waved Berger through for the win.

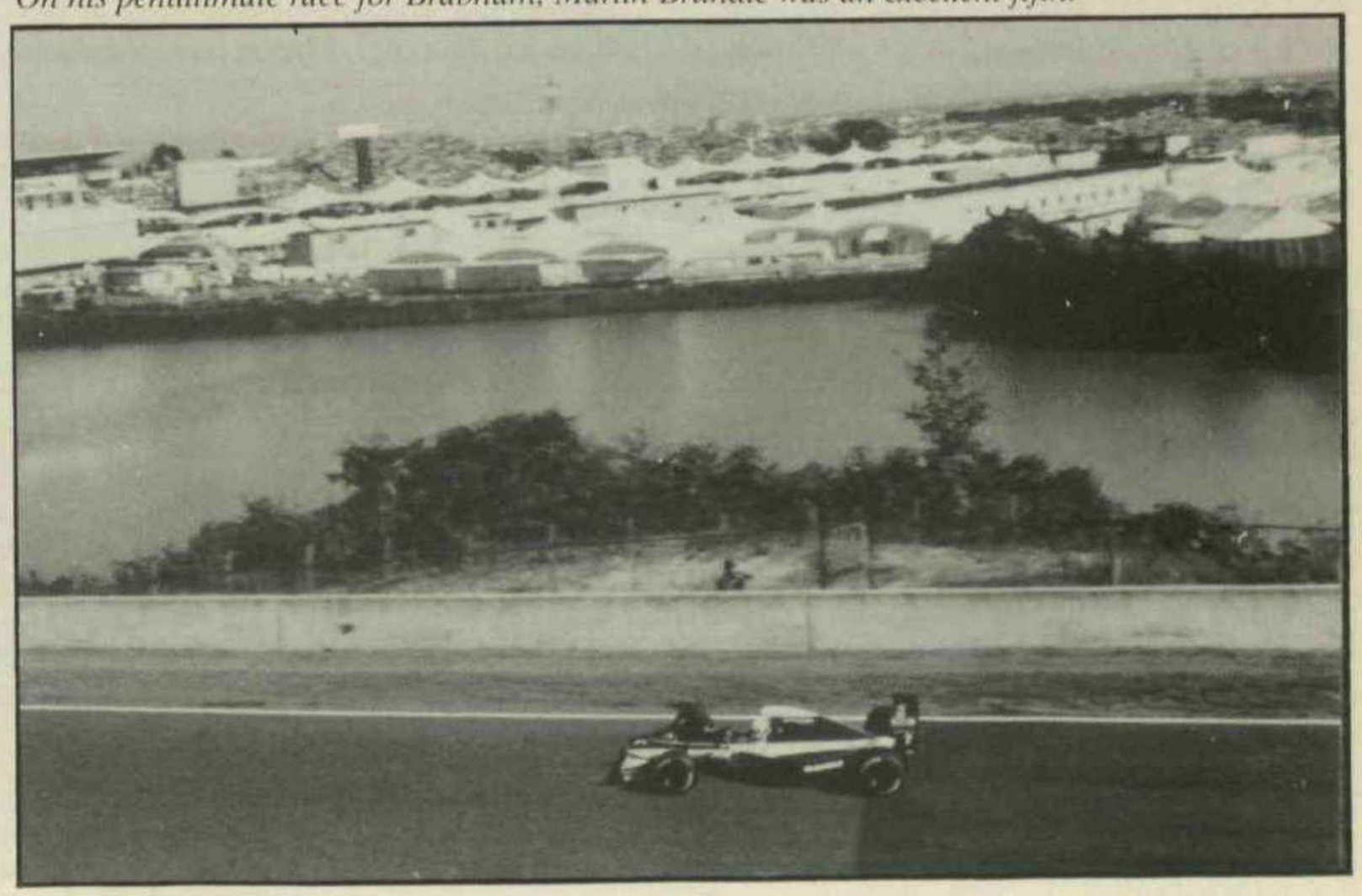
"When Mansell went out Ron immediately called me on the radio and said please remember the constructors' championship," said Senna. "I said 'Shit.' This is racing and you've got to go for it. I'd been waiting for this situation for many races now because I had to play the points situation for the last four or five events. It was always like I was going backwards, being conservative. I don't like that way of driving.

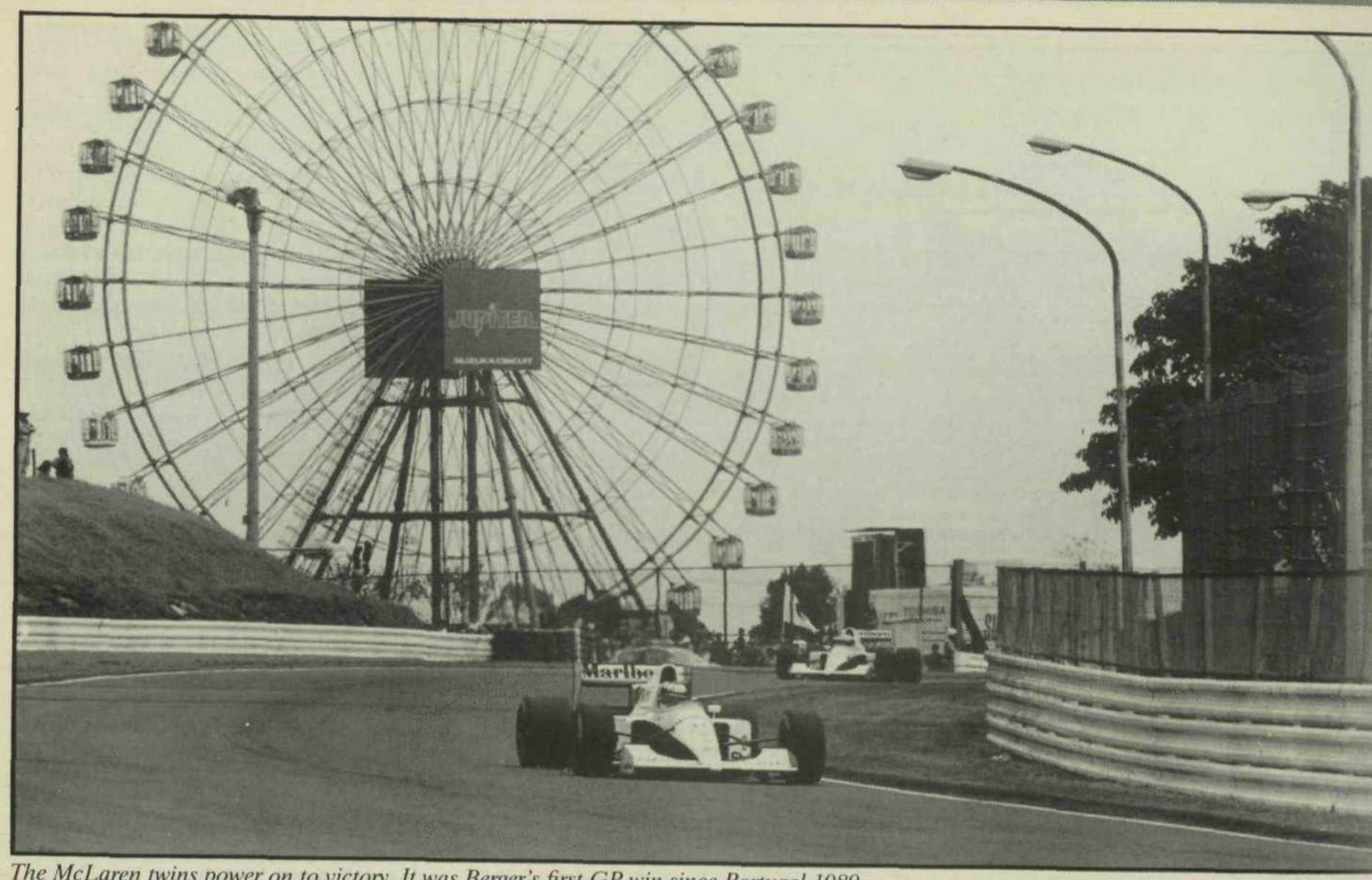
"I knew Gerhard was ahead of me by 10s but he had to push very hard early on and I had been easier, because it was an agreement between us. Whoever would be in the lead, the other would help to go away."

He wanted, he said, to put on a show for the fans. "It was a fantastic race between us, but then I realised he'd backed off. I thought, 'Shit, at the end, if I'm still in the lead – because I did not know, he was really going for it – I did not know if I could hold him to the end. I would have to back off for the first time in my career for a race that I had fought for all weekend and so long'. It really hurt. In the last 10 laps I asked Ron if he wanted to change the plan or not. I did another lap, then another, and another. I kept thinking, 'I have to ask, I have to ask!' Then I got something on the radio, but at first I couldn't understand the message. Finally I backed right off, revs really low, no noise from the engine, and I said to Ron, 'You want to reverse?' and he said, 'Yes, reverse.' Today was my turn to give Gerhard a small help, but it was only small, because he was as fast as I was today. It hurt here," he touched his heart, "but that pain is nothing when compared to the feel I have with the third title."

It was all good stuff, as he and Berger bantered, but the real bombshell was about

On his penultimate race for Brabham, Martin Brundle was an excellent fifth.





The McLaren twins power on to victory. It was Berger's first GP win since Portugal 1989.

to be dropped (see *Delirium Tremens*).

As they joked, Patrese was the first to offer his congratulations. Like Mansell, he had been as quick as the McLarens in race trim, but nowhere near a position to challenge even though at one stage he was catching Berger as Berger caught Senna. Second gear had gone awol quite early on, and without that his Williams was defeated, finishing a distant third on a day when Honda really got its act together in its own backyard.

If Williams was in disarray, Ferrari was plummetting to the depths. It was hard to believe, as Jean Alesi's engine exploded on the first lap and Prost's smoked ominously on the grid, that Ferrari had ever been in such contention for the 1990 title. The 643 felt reasonable at times and at certain parts of the circuit, said Prost, but it was no match for either of its main rivals. Indeed, there had even been much speculation prior to the race that Prost would not be there, and there was as much afterwards that he would skip Adelaide. Ivan Capelli, replaced at Leyton House by Karl Wendlinger (who would do a competent job, but be eliminated along with the Dallaras of Lehto and Pirro at the end of the second lap when de Cesaris got the chicane all wrong and spun in the right-hander leading on to the pit straight, causing chaos behind), was the man who would have taken over, but in the end his presence was not required.

As the two Williams initially chased the McLarens, Pierluigi Martini and Michael Schumacher fought long and hard over a place that was finally destined to go to M Brundle in a revitalised Brabham Yam For Martini and Minardi, it was anc chance to show that, given better finar fortune this year, they *might* have d something really good with the Fe engines that will shortly go to rival Dal and Piero was backed strongly by team-r Gianni Morbidelli until the latter's expired from a fading ninth place wit wheel bearing failure. Martini went a further, fending off the determined Schu cher, but neither made the finish.

The German's performance was all more impressive given a very heavy 150 r shunt in qualifying which had wrec Piquet's Benetton, which he was borrow Despite a stiff back and neck he raced aggressively as ever, and appeared no the slightest put out by the experience. C engine failure, the corollary of a race-l water leak, could stop him on lap 35. F laps later Martini was also gone, the victir an obscure clutch failure which damaged electrics.

If this duo had provided the real ex ement in a dull race, though, both Brun and new boy Alessandro Zanardi also their bit. With team-mate Mark Blunc failing to pre-qualify following an oil le Brundle flew Yamaha's flag brillian making full use of the latest – and glorio sounding – version of the V12 and B latest rocket fuel, and was catching b Schumacher and Martini even though Brabham was puking oil for the first half the race. Irritated by suggestions that German will annihilate him at Benetton n year, he drove like a man with something

After a long drought, Stefano Modena brought Tyrrell back into the points.



prove. Zanardi did too, actually passing Schumacher on lap seven as they went down into the first turn. That in itself is noteworthy, and although second gear refused to disengage almost immediately thereafter, the young Italian made a solid impression in his second F1 outing.

Stefano Modena, Piquet and Gugelmin didn't, but the Italian survived for a sixth place that disappointed after the team felt it had found almost two seconds during testing of suspension modifications at Silverstone prior to the race. Piquet's race was blighted by the need to change a front suspension joint on the grid, a job which, despite the speed of his mechanics, meant he had to start from the back. It was interesting, though, that he killed his tyres in traffic and was never able to escape from Johnny Herbert's beautifully driven Lotus as long as the Briton was running. "I could keep up with him in the corners, but he had more power than me so I just couldn't stay with him on the straights," said Johnny after another underrated performance. After their tyre stops he was again chasing the Brazilian strongly, when the Lotus joined Mika Hakkinen's sister car in retirement. The Finn had simply spun, but Herbert's engine died with earth lead failure.

Neither of the home heroes made it to the flag, Nakajima spinning off and Suzuki suffering engine management system failure, while Erik Comas' brave charge up to seventh place behind Brundle and Modena was thwarted by alternator problems in the tank-like Ligier JS35B. Team-mate Thierry Boutsen, having narrowly avoided involvement in the four-car mêlée at the end of lap two, soldiered his home ninth ahead of Alex Caffi, who was delighted just to qualify his Footwork for his first race since last year's Japanese GP. Gabriele Tarquini, his left knee extremely sore after an 8g impact during a Friday morning shunt, did well to take the final finishing position for Fondmetal.

Not since 1988 has the Japanese GP been devoid of argument, and just when it seemed F1 had escaped it and everyone settled down to unwind now that the tension of the title chase had gone, so Senna exploded into his blistering attack on the deposed and absent Jean-Marie Balestre. The Japanese threw their hands up in horror (Honda's people in particular, one suspects), but across the water the Australians took their heads from their hands and sensed a glimmer of hope. The championship might be over, but for them, at least, the controversy might have a silver lining. Sometimes there is nothing quite like an ongoing grudge match to boost a raceday gate. DJT



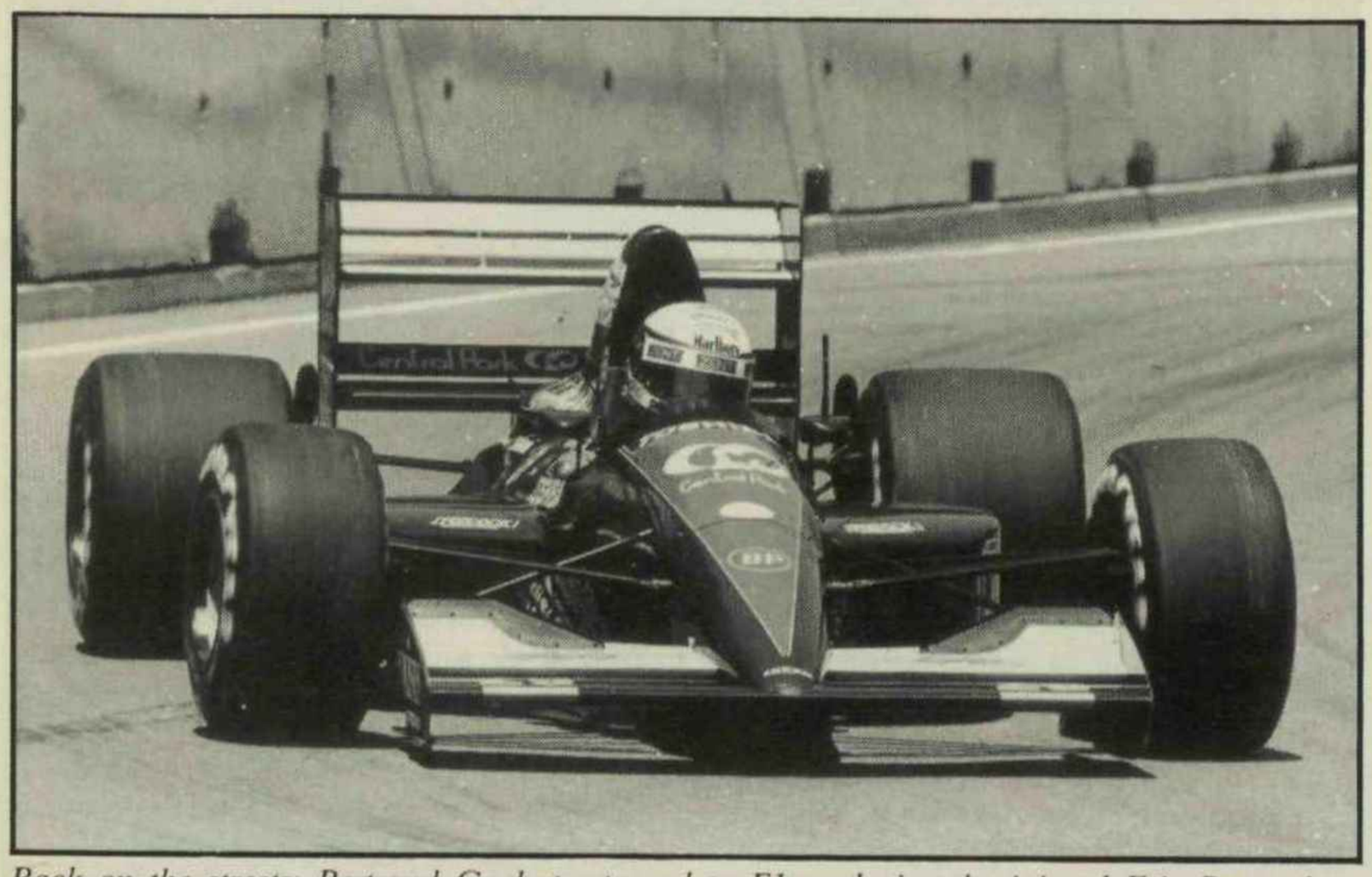
Face of 1992. Martin Brundle joined Benetton for an early photo-call.

JAPANESE GP, Suzuka, October 20
53 laps of 3.66 mile (5.88 km) circuit (193.98 miles; 311.64 km)

Pos	Driver	Nat	Car/Engine	Tyres	Time	Best Race Lap	On Lap
1st	Gerhard Berger	AUT	McLaren MP4/6-Honda V12	G	1h 32m 10.695s	1m 41.572s	40
2nd	Ayrton Senna	BRA	McLaren MP4/6-Honda V12	G	1h 32m 11.039s	1m 41.532s	41
3rd	Riccardo Patrese	I	Williams FW14-Renault V10	G	1h 33m 07.426s	1m 41.804s	27
4th	Alain Prost	F	Ferrari 643-Ferrari V12	G	1h 33m 31.456s	1m 43.712s	36
5th	Martin Brundle	GB	Brabham BT60Y-Yamaha V12	P	1 lap behind	1m 43.959s	32
6th	Stefano Modena	I	Tyrrell 020-Honda V10	P	1 lap behind	1m 43.596s	46
7th	Nelson Piquet	BRA	Benetton B191-Cosworth V8 EXP	P	1 lap behind	1m 43.997s	39
8th	Mauricio Gugelmin	BRA	Leyton House CG911-Ilmor V10	G	1 lap behind	1m 44.344s	29
9th	Thierry Boutsen	B	Ligier JS35B-Lamborghini V12	G	1 lap behind	1m 45.723s	25
10th	Alessandro Caffi	I	Footwork FA12C-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	2 laps behind	1m 45.999s	28
11th	Gabriele Tarquini	I	Fomet 1-Cosworth V8 DFR Hart	G	3 laps behind	1m 46.210s	50
12th	Erik Comas	F	Ligier JS35B-Lamborghini V12	G	retired on lap 42 – alternator	1m 44.204s	34
13th	Pierluigi Martini	I	Minardi M191-Ferrari V12	P	retired on lap 40 – electrics	1m 44.718s	30
14th	Michael Schumacher	D	Benetton B191-Cosworth V8 EXP	P	retired on lap 35 – engine	1m 43.530s	29
15th	Johnny Herbert	GB	Lotus 102B-Judd V8	G	retired on lap 32 – engine	1m 45.853s	30
16th	Satoru Nakajima	J	Tyrrell 020-Honda V10	P	retired on lap 31 – accident	1m 46.351s	18
17th	Aguri Suzuki	J	Lola L91-Cosworth V8 DFR Hart	G	retired on lap 27 – engine	1m 45.107s	21
18th	Gianni Morbidelli	I	Minardi M191-Ferrari V12	P	retired on lap 15 – wheel bearing	1m 47.108s	11
19th	Nigel Mansell	GB	Williams FW14-Renault V10	G	retired on lap 10 – spun off	1m 45.642s	4
20th	Alessandro Zanardi	I	Jordan 191-Cosworth V8 HB	G	retired on lap 8 – gearbox	1m 46.184s	3
21st	Mika Hakkinen	SF	Lotus 102B-Judd V8	G	retired on lap 5 – spun off	1m 48.864s	4
22nd	Andrea de Cesaris	I	Jordan 191-Cosworth V8 HB	G	retired on lap 2 – accident	1m 57.393s	1
23rd	J.J. Lehto	SF	Dallara BMS 191-Judd V10	P	retired on lap 2 – accident	1m 58.100s	1
24th	Emanuele Pirro	I	Dallara BMS 191-Judd V10	P	retired on lap 2 – accident	1m 58.757s	1
25th	Karl Wendlinger	AUT	Leyton House CG911-Ilmor V10	G	retired on lap 2 – accident	2m 02.942s	1
26th	Jean Alesi	F	Ferrari 643-Ferrari V12	G	retired on lap 1 – engine	–	–

Winner's Average Speed: 125.702 mph (202.25 kmh) Conditions: Overcast and Cool
Fastest Lap: Ayrton Senna (McLaren MP4/6-Honda V12) 1m 41.532s on lap 41; 129.195 mph (207.87 kmh)

Still waters run deep



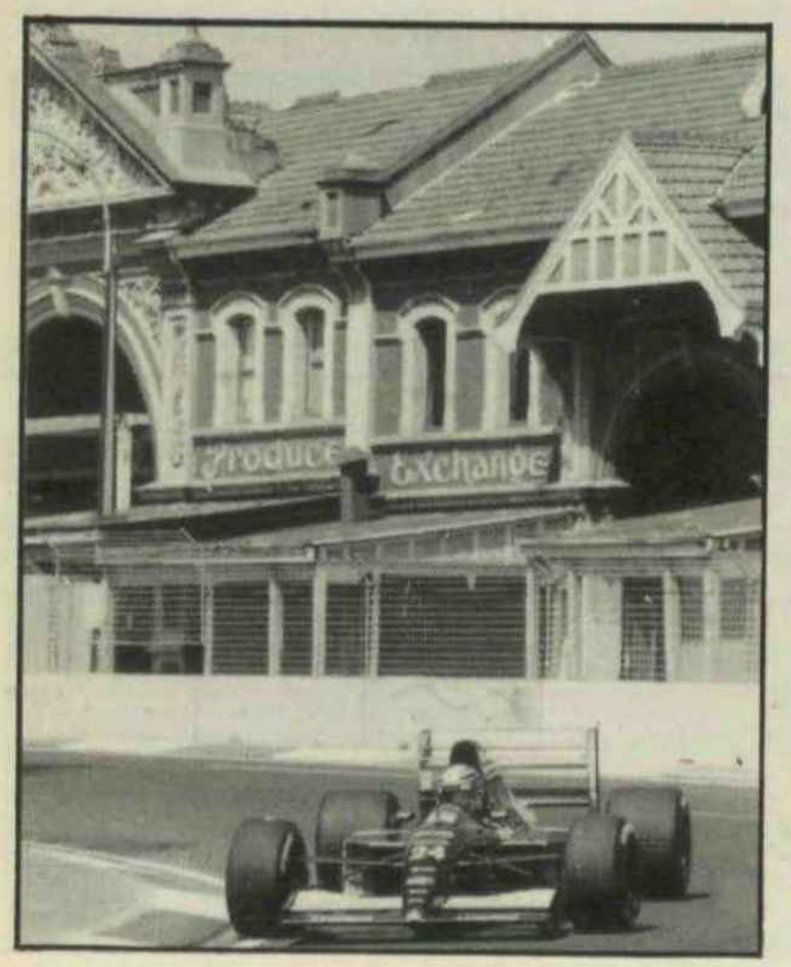
Back on the streets: Bertrand Gachot returned to F1, replacing the injured Eric Bernard at Larrousse. He failed to qualify.

In motor racing, some lessons are never learned. After Roger Williamson's death in 1973, for example, marshalling still continued to be slack in some countries. After Tom Pryce's death four years later, foolish people still ran across tracks.

The 1989 Australian GP should have been sufficient to chill even the least caring into an awareness of the risks presented by racing in the rain on a track with very poor drainage. After all, only sheer good fortune prevented that one being remembered as the race in which two World Champions, Ayrton Senna and Nelson Piquet, had lost their lives in freak accidents.

You would think such lessons could be learned in this enlightened day and age, but the 1991 Australian event simply served to underline how little progress has been made in 24 months. It was a carbon copy, another game of Russian Roulette in which motorsport could count itself lucky that nobody was hurt.

Before the storm: Roberto Moreno acclimatises to the Minardi, his third chassis of the year.



Back in 1989 Alain Prost had been pilloried in some circles for refusing to take the restart. At the time Gerhard Berger and Thierry Boutsen had agreed with him, but been persuaded by circumstance to get back into their cars. Gerhard admitted afterwards he had been a moral coward, while Boutsen changed his mind about the dangers after winning. This time, Prost wasn't even in Adelaide, having been sacked unceremoniously by Ferrari in the week leading up to the race. It had been rumoured that he would turn up to host a press conference, but in the end he was advised not to by his lawyers. Thus, in complete acrimony, ended the Ferrari career of the man who has won more Grands Prix than anyone else. It remained to be seen whether his F1 career was over, however.

Prost's dismissal painted a bleak backdrop for the race even before the first drop of rain fell, but Ayrton Senna's 60th pole position provided some moments to savour. The Brazilian was again in devastating form, back on the high wire after running for points finishes in Portugal and Spain, and though Berger tried as hard as he might, the new World Champion would not be denied. Senna was quickest overnight and, when conditions finally improved in the final third of the second qualifying session, after a rain shower, he was there again with an awesome lap that just failed to break into the 1m 13s barrier.

That burst of speed, and Berger's, which was nevertheless little slower, put the McLarens firmly ahead as Nigel Mansell pushed hard for third spot, more than half a second adrift, and the speed over the start/finish line told the story we had seen in Suzuka: the Renault/Elf combination had been overtaken again by the Honda/Shell partnership in the power stakes.

STARTING GRID

1 **SENNA** McLaren MP4/6 1m 14.041s (2) 1m 14.210s (1)	2 **BERGER** McLaren MP4/6 1m 14.385s (1) 1m 15.563s (2)
5 **MANSELL** Williams FW14 1m 14.822s (1) 1m 14.897s (2)	6 **PATRESE** Williams FW14 1m 15.057s (2) 1m 15.633s (1)
20 **PIQUET** Benetton B191 1m 15.291s (2) 1m 16.552s (1)	19 **SCHUMACHER** Benetton B191 1m 15.508s (2) 1m 15.840s (1)
28 **ALESI** Ferrari 643 1m 15.545s (2) 1m 17.014s (1)	27 **MORBIDELLI** Ferrari 643 1m 16.203s (1) 1m 17.679s (2)
4 **MODENA** Tyrrell 020 1m 16.253s (1) no time (2)	23 **MARTINI** Minardi M191 1m 16.359s (2) 1m 17.614s (1)
22 **LEHTO** Dallara BMS 191 1m 16.871s (2) 1m 17.665s (1)	33 **DE CESARIS** Jordan 191 1m 17.050s (2) 1m 17.073s (1)
21 **PIRRO** Dallara BMS 191 1m 17.342s (1) 1m 18.233s (2)	17 **GUGELMIN** Leyton House CG911 1m 17.344s (1) 1m 17.431s (2)
9 **ALBORETO** Footwork A12C 1m 17.355s (2) 1m 18.214s (1)	32 **ZANARDI** Jordan 191 1m 17.362s (1) 1m 17.723s (2)
8 **BLUNDELL** Brabham BT60Y 1m 17.365s (2) 1m 17.867s (1)	24 **MORENO** Minardi M191 1m 17.639s (2) 1m 19.752s (1)
34 **LARINI** Lambo 2 1m 17.936s (2) 1m 19.076s (1)	25 **BOUTSEN** Ligier JS35B 1m 17.969s (2) 1m 18.992s (1)
12 **HERBERT** Lotus 102B 1m 18.091s (2) 1m 19.177s (1)	26 **COMAS** Ligier JS35B 1m 18.112s (2) 1m 19.678s (1)
10 **CAFFI** Footwork A12C 1m 18.157s (2) 1m 18.783s (1)	3 **NAKAJIMA** Tyrrell 020 1m 18.216s (1) 1m 18.307s (2)
11 **HAKKINEN** Lotus 102B 1m 18.271s (2) 1m 19.199s (1)	16 **WENDLINGER** Leyton House CG911 1m 18.262s (1) no time (2)

The raceday murk threw many practice conclusions into the melting pot, but it was Senna who made the best start as Clerk of the Course Tim Schenken and official starter Roland Bruynseraede decreed conditions safe enough. But where Senna had been keen enough to race come what may back in 1989 when he was still chasing the championship, this time it was a more cautious Brazilian who led the field. "It was a mistake for all of us to start," he admitted when the race was terminated an official 14 laps later. "In fact, I only started because there was a lot at stake and the team has done so much for me over the past four years. The constructors' World Championship was still to be settled, otherwise there was no point to start." Again, Gerhard concurred.

Start they all did, though, and miraculously nobody did anything untoward until Nakajima ran into the back of Boutsen's Ligier on lap three. Two laps later the Japanese spun out of his last GP, unable to repeat his brilliance from the 1989 race, and a lap later Boutsen retired as a result of the nudge. By then, however, the accident everyone had feared had been enacted out on the Brabham Straight.

"There was an unbelievable amount of water there," said Senna. "The car was just floating from left to right." Many drivers were down at least one gear in their efforts to prevent aquaplaning. As Berger chased after Senna and Mansell, who had deposed him on lap three, Nelson Piquet managed

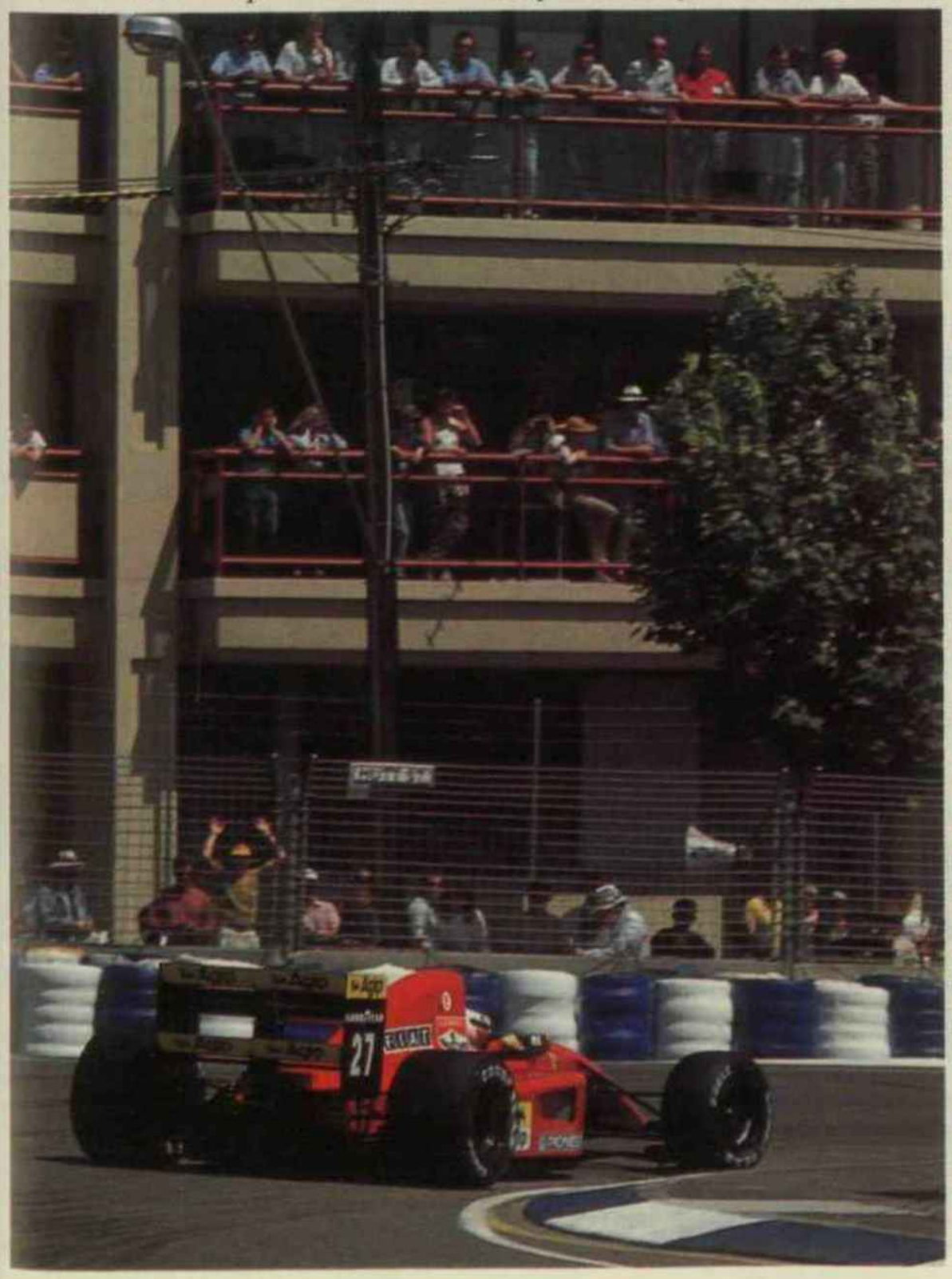


All over? In what may have been his last GP, Nelson Piquet awaits the restart that never happened.

NON-QUALIFIERS

No	Driver	Nat	Car/Engine	Tyres	Best Lap	Result
9	Michele Alboreto	I	Footwork A12C-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	1m 40.844s	DNQ
34	Nicola Larini	I	Lambo 291-Lamborghini V12	G	1m 42.492s	DNQ
35	Eric van de Poele	B	Lambo 291-Lamborghini V12	G	1m 42.724s	DNQ
29	Erik Bernard	F	Lola L91-Cosworth V8 DFR Hart	G	No time accident	DNQ
8	Mark Blundell	GB	Brabham BT60Y-Yamaha V12	P	1m 44.004s	DNPQ
31	Naoki Hatfori	J	Coloni C4-Cosowrth V8 DFR	G	2m 00.035s	DNPQ

Gianni Morbidelli proved to be an able replacement for the sacked Prost.



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Senna, Berger, Piquet and Alesi struggle to see where they're going. Mansell, obscured by spray, is behind the two McLarens.

to recapture fourth place from his upstart team–mate Schumacher, only to loop into a 360 degree spin. The Brazilian, possibly in his last F1 race, recovered the Benetton without losing a place, but as Schumacher closed and tried to pass Nelson closed the door. Behind the German, and pressured by new Prost-replacement team-mate Gianni Morbidelli, Jean Alesi tried to take advantage. The Ferrari tapped the second Benetton into a spin, and then hit Nicola Larini's Lambo, which was also pushed into a rotation which ended its race. As the three drivers clambered out, Larini on the right of the track, Schumacher and Alesi on the left, the straight resembled a battlefield.

Mansell was vocal in his criticism as the wreckage stayed where it was, the situation compounded when a wrecker truck with flashing yellow light was brought down by the Ferrari. "I just can't believe they let the race go on," he said. "It was irresponsible to leave racing cars and a truck on the straight in those conditions." In his chase of Senna, which got him within 0.8s by lap 12, he was reaching 170mph . . .

To the surprise of many the race continued, ostensibly because all of the drivers had abandoned their damaged cars, but Berger was angry that course workers should be subjected to danger. "As drivers it is up to us whether to accept danger to ourselves, but it is not acceptable for those who help to be put at risk." It was a valid point.

In the gloom the racing itself was exciting, if tinged with foreboding. Mansell was well fired up, as he slashed Senna's initial 3.9s advantage won in clear air. Lap by lap he stalked the McLaren, surviving a near brush with Alex Caffi as they lapped the Footwork on the 12th tour. Even then, though, it was clear how careful Senna was being to avoid a repeat of his 1989 collision with Brundle's Brabham, which had just presented itself to him out of the murk. Berger had got back into his rhythm by then, too, and was closing on Mansell, as Patrese fended off the impressive Morbidelli and the equally good Pirro for fifth place behind Piquet, Riccardo's task made all the more difficult by debris trapped beneath his Williams. Further back, de Cesaris and Zanardi were sandwiching Modena's Tyrrell as the two Jordan drivers opted for conservative races. The younger Italian in particular was on his best behaviour after a series of practice accidents had accounted for two Jordan chassis and at one time given rise to serious doubt that the team would have enough left to run both cars in the race. Behind them Mauricio Gugelmin was pushing hard in the Leyton House, while Johnny Herbert had made a dazzling start in his Lotus to go from 23rd on the grid to 19th on the first lap, and 12th place by the 12th. It was a timely reminder of the talent that Benetton stopped him showing when they fired him two years ago.

Welcome to sunny Adelaide.



The penultimate incident came on lap nine as Piero Martini struggled with his Minardi. Already he had dropped from 12th on the opening lap to 15th, separated from Herbert by Lehto and the hard-trying Alboreto in a Footwork that had at last qualified respectably. Then, as he came down Brabham Straight, the M191 simply sheered to the right as it hit a puddle, and slammed hard into the wall. As it bounced back into two 360 degree spins, Caffi had a lucky avoidance, and then the Minardi rolled gently across to join Alesi's Ferrari. The main straight now resembled a breaker's yard, but still the race went on.

Mansell was the real interest as he pushed and pushed after Senna, but Ayrton was taking it canny – "at times I was cruising in second gear" – fully aware that his roostertail would make life very difficult for the Briton. Then it began to rain even

more, and suddenly Mansell was in the wall, the Williams simply aquaplaning off very hard into the unyielding concrete on its 16th lap.

As he sat momentarily dazed in the cockpit, Senna was already gesticulating wildly to the organisers to stop the farce. As he completed the lap, the red flags finally came out. By then, Berger was also missing, after a brace of spins, and it was Piquet who followed Senna over the line, followed by Morbidelli, but the Italian had passed Patrese under a yellow flag. Behind them, the Jordans and Modena then crossed the line, but that was because the likes of Pirro and Herbert (who had passed Modena on lap 15) had incorrectly been directed into the pits. Confusion was rife.

For a long time there was talk of a restart, once the wrecks had been cleared away, but there was strong resistance from the drivers and after a lot of arguing and indecision it was finally agreed to call the race at the 14-lap mark. Thus Mansell, already off to the airport nursing a badly swollen left ankle, and Berger, changing into his civvies, finished second and third, Piquet dropped to fourth and Patrese and Morbidelli to fifth and sixth, all of them being awarded only half points. In the constructors' title, McLaren cemented its fourth consecutive success after a tough season in which its sheer persistence and effort reaped the big reward. The crowd cared little. There were even jeers as Senna and Berger (overalls hastily thrown over his jeans and jumper) finally appeared on the podium.



The Lotus position. The excellent Herbert leads team-mate Hakkinen.

It was a day on which nobody really won, and when drives such as those by Pirro, Herbert and the Jordan duo went unrewarded, but there was no question that stopping the event had been the right thing to do. It was simply the timing that had been so execrable. Just as in 1989, a two-hour delay would have allowed the race to be run in sensible conditions, but again the great god of television had to be satisfied, and once again F1 could count itself lucky that nobody was seriously injured.

There should be racing in the wet, most true F1 fans are agreed on that, but as Prost said all that time ago at Silverstone in 1988, what is the point in risking life and limb when you cannot see? The camber of the Adelaide streets simply doesn't allow water to flow away, and to have held a second race in such appalling conditions was little short of folly. DJT

AUSTRALIAN GP, Adelaide, November 3
14 laps of 2.35 miles (3.78 km) circuit (33.88 miles; 52.91 km)

Pos	Driver	Nat	Car/Engine	Tyres	Time	Best Race Lap	On Lap
1st	Ayrton Senna	BRA	McLaren MP4/6-Honda V12	G	24m 34.899s	1m 42.545s	13
2nd	Nigel Mansell	GB	Williams FW14-Renault V10	G	24m 36.158s	1m 42.908s	13
3rd	Gerhard Berger	AUT	McLaren MP4/6-Honda V12	G	24m 40.019s	1m 41.141s	14
4th	Nelson Piquet	BRA	Benetton B191-Cosworth V8 EXP	P	25m 05.002s	1m 42.616s	5
5th	Riccardo Patrese	I	Williams FW14-Renault V10	G	25m 25.43s	1m 45.297s	9
6th	Gianni Morbidelli	I	Ferrari 643-Ferrari V12	G	25m 25.968s	1m 45.599s	5
7th	Emanuele Pirro	I	Dallara BMS 191-Judd V10	P	25m 27.260s	1m 44.933s	13
8th	Andrea de Cesaris	I	Jordan 191-Cosworth HB V8	G	25m 35.330s	1m 45.264s	14
9th	Alessandro Zanardi	I	Jordan 191-Cosworth HB V8	G	25m 50.466s	1m 43.519s	14
10th	Stefano Modena	I	Tyrrell 020-Honda V10	P	25m 55.269s	1m 45.912s	12
11th	Johnny Herbert	GB	Lotus 102B-Judd V8	G	25m 56.972s	1m 46.437s	12
12th	J.J. Lehto	FIN	Dallara BMS191-Judd V10	P	26m 13.418s	1m 48.018s	11
13th	Michele Alboreto	I	Footwork A12C-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	26m 14.202s	1m 47.030s	12
14th	Mauricio Gugelmin	BRA	Leyton House CG911-Ilmor V10	G	1 lap behind–not running, accident	1m 47.395s	12
15th	Alessandro Caffi	I	Footwork A12C-Cosworth V8 DFR	G	1 lap behind	1m 47.421s	13
16th	Roberto Moreno	BRA	Minardi M191-Ferrari V12	P	1 lap behind	1m 47.000s	13
17th	Mark Blundell	GB	Brabham BT60Y-Yamaha V12	P	1 lap behind	1m 46.821s	13
18th	Erik Comas	F	Ligier JS35B-Lamborghini V12	G	1 lap behind	1m 50.046s	13
19th	Mika Hakkinen	SF	Lotus 102B-Judd V8	G	1 lap behind	1m 50.949s	10
20th	Karl Wendlinger	A	Leyton House CG911-Ilmor V10	G	2 laps behind	1m 48.614s	12
21st	Pierluigi Martini	I	Minardi M191-Ferrari V12	P	retired on lap 9–accident	1m 51.274s	8
22nd	Michael Schumacher	D	Benetton B191-Cosworth V8 EXP	P	retired on lap 6–accident	1m 43.714s	4
23rd	Jean Alesi	F	Ferrari 643-Ferrari V12	G	retired on lap 6–accident	1m 45.738s	5
24th	Nicola Larini	I	Lambo 2-Lamborghini V12	G	retired on lap 6–accident	1m 49.640s	5
25th	Thierry Boutsen	B	Ligier JS35B-Lamborghini V12	G	retired on lap 6–accident damage	1m 52.628s	5
26th	Satoru Nakajima	JAP	Tyrrell 020-Honda V10	P	retired on lap 5–accident	1m 55.073s	4

Winner's Average Speed: 80.262 mph (129.14 kmh) **Conditions: Torrential Rain**

Fastest Lap: Gerhard Berger (McLaren MP4/6-Honda V12), 1m 41.141s on lap 14; 83.602 mph (134.51 kmh)

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Media spotlight

Dear Reader,

I am not certain that I understand the word media, nor that I know where it came from. I think it has replaced the word press, which used to mean anyone who wrote news items or reports of events, as distinct from people who wrote articles and serious papers, who were writers and those who wrote books, who were authors. When the photographer appeared, to take pictures to accompany articles or reports, these people were grouped under the word press. Then came the spread of television coverage replacing the written report, and the video-documentary replacing the written article so presumably they spawned the word media to encompass everything that provides news and reporting.

The change from the word press to the word media was one of those things that must have taken place at dead of night, while we were all asleep. Probably in the same way that the simple old fashioned word lavatory was changed to toilet, wireless to radio, men and women to ladies and gentlemen and queer to gay. You never really know who made the decision to change words in general use, and the change is done without any warning. Even the price of petrol changing gets a publicised warning, or the increase in the price of a stamp. But press became media and that was it.

I occasionally ask some of my colleagues if they can define media, and they say "Well, er . . . you know, it is someone who, er. . ." I then ask "Are we media?" and they reply, "Well, er, I suppose we are". There used to be a demarcation between daily press, sporting press and technical press, but these groups were very difficult to define in any reasonable form. The growth of gifted people who can cope with any branch of the press world, or media as it now is, has meant that one man can write race reports, broadcast live on radio or television, take photographs and write anonymous public relations pamphlets, quite often in two or three languages, and this has made it very difficult to give their activities a collective name, other than media perhaps. What heading do you put a racing driver who does a radio or television commentary on a race? He might still be an active professional racing driver, earning an honest crust on the side, but he is still a racing driver by profession.

Of course, it is not important, but my inquisitive mind needs to know these things. If a new word appears on the scene, used in profusion by the media, I need to know what it means. Seldom can the people using a new word, spoken or written, give me a good answer! And then there are initials instead of words; in motor racing you could have a meaningful (!) conversation using only letters and gross abbreviations, instead of words, all of which would be totally unintelligible to anyone who is not one of the brotherhood, but that is a subject that's too big to deal with here.

I used to put press people into two simple categories, those who were at the Grand Prix because of their love of racing, the written report being an afterthought to justify the fact that someone else had paid for them to be there. In other words they had discovered a good racket to pay for their enjoyment. The other category were serious writers or newshounds, professional union men, who were at the Grand Prix to do a job of work. The previous year they had been the parliamentary correspondent, or the fashion reporter, now they had been promoted to sports coverage and someone had told them that Formula One Grand Prix racing was a sport.

Some years ago when we were at Monza for the Italian Grand Prix it was Saturday afternoon and things were beginning to get exciting, when someone appeared with the news that there had been a bad air crash in a neighbouring country, or somewhere. There were two reactions; one group said



Mansell surrounded by the media, or the press . . . .

"Oh really? Was that last lap a new fastest time?" and the other saw mild panic, with cries of "Where, exactly? Will it be quicker to get there by train than road; perhaps we could hire a helicopter; I must 'phone my Editor; how many dead, did you say?" and so on. Next morning, those of us who were in Italy to watch the motor race and to write about it afterwards, had more than enough room.

We got to discussing the matter of priorities, appreciating that the press men (or media) who had disappeared to find the air disaster were professional reporters; what they reported on was of no great significance. Those of us who were left were motor racing enthusiasts. Someone asked what we would do if there was a nuclear explosion in the middle of a Grand Prix, and we knew we had four seconds to live, and the response was "watch the last four seconds of motor racing, of course. What else would you want to do?" We all agreed that rushing off to try and report the last four seconds of the world would be a pretty pointless exercise, but we felt sure some of the professionals would do that.

This past season of Formula One racing has been feeding the media with all manner of irrelevent matter, some of if very thinly connected with Grand Prix racing, or even with Formula One. A man goes to jail (or should it be gaol?) for doing something totally unconnected with motor racing, but because he had driven racing cars and was planning a future in Formula One it became a media matter that reached absurd proportions, detracting a lot of the interest (for some people) from the one of the best Grand Prix races of the season. Another driver speaks his mind loud and clear, in English, not in his own language, and the English media fell over each other to castigate him. They went on and on, being pious and holier-than-thou, some of them known for their own foul language in public. Had the driver's outburst been in his native tongue few people would have understood and it would have all been glossed over and forgotten.

Then there are those media people who have never worn a crash-helmet in their life, let alone sat on a starting line with the adrenalin flowing and the pulse-rate quickening, who tell us what drivers should do and what they should not do. By all means comment on how well he drives, or how badly, providing you know something about motor racing and high-speed driving, but what he does is up to him. After all, he is driving the car and he is making the decisions. Not many of the "do-gooders" really know what they are talking about. 150mph is a speed bandied about by the media, many of whom have never driven at 100mph, let alone 150mph, or 170mph, or 200mph and have certainly never raced wheel-to-wheel with someone at those sort of speeds. I know I haven't and the mere thought of it makes me go weak at the knees, which is why all top racing drivers, of whatever category, are still gods to me and an important part of my personal religion.

I think I am beginning to get an idea what "media" is all about. I have always fought shy of joining any sort of writers' union and being branded a professional journalist, preferring to stay an incurable motor racing enthusiast, who enjoys writing about it. To be branded a "media person" – ugh!

This month's Three Memorable Moments by MOTOR SPORT readers have been picked out of a growing collection. They come from Herr G von Petersdorf in Germany, who has been able to get to European Grand Prix events a lot more easily than a lot of us.

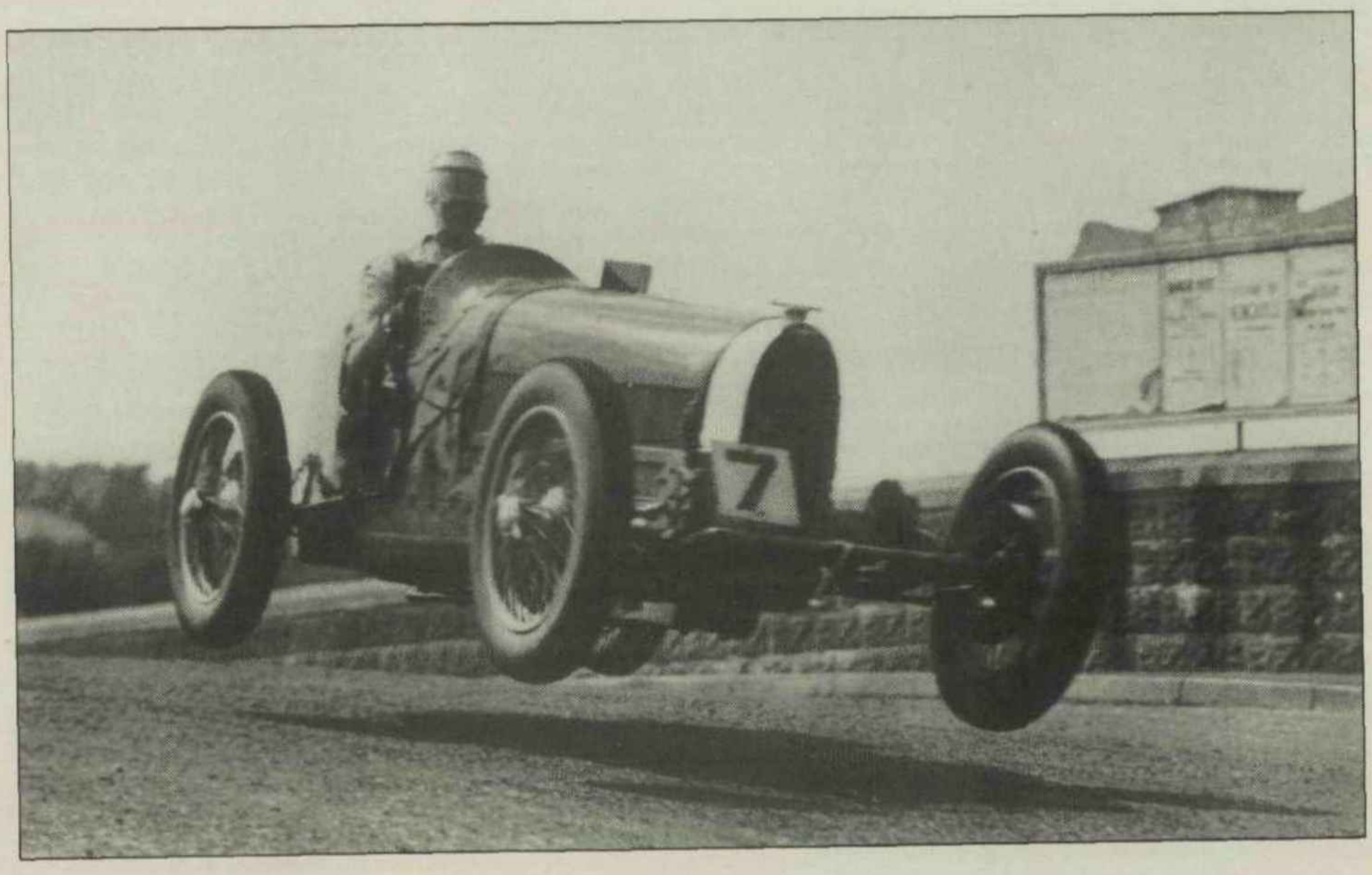
1. Nürburgring 1957: To have actually seen Fangio do that historic drive in the 250F Maserati when he beat Hawthorn and Collins in the Lancia-Ferraris.

2. Monza 1971: That flat-out race, without chicanes, when Peter Gethin driving a BRM won at over 150mph in a photo-finish, with Gethin, Peterson, Cevert and Hailwood covered by less than one-fifth of a second.

3. Monza 1975: A Ferrari 1-2 by Regazzoni and Lauda. Pure madness!

Yours,
DSJ

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A 1926 Bugatti Type 35. Grand Prix two seater.
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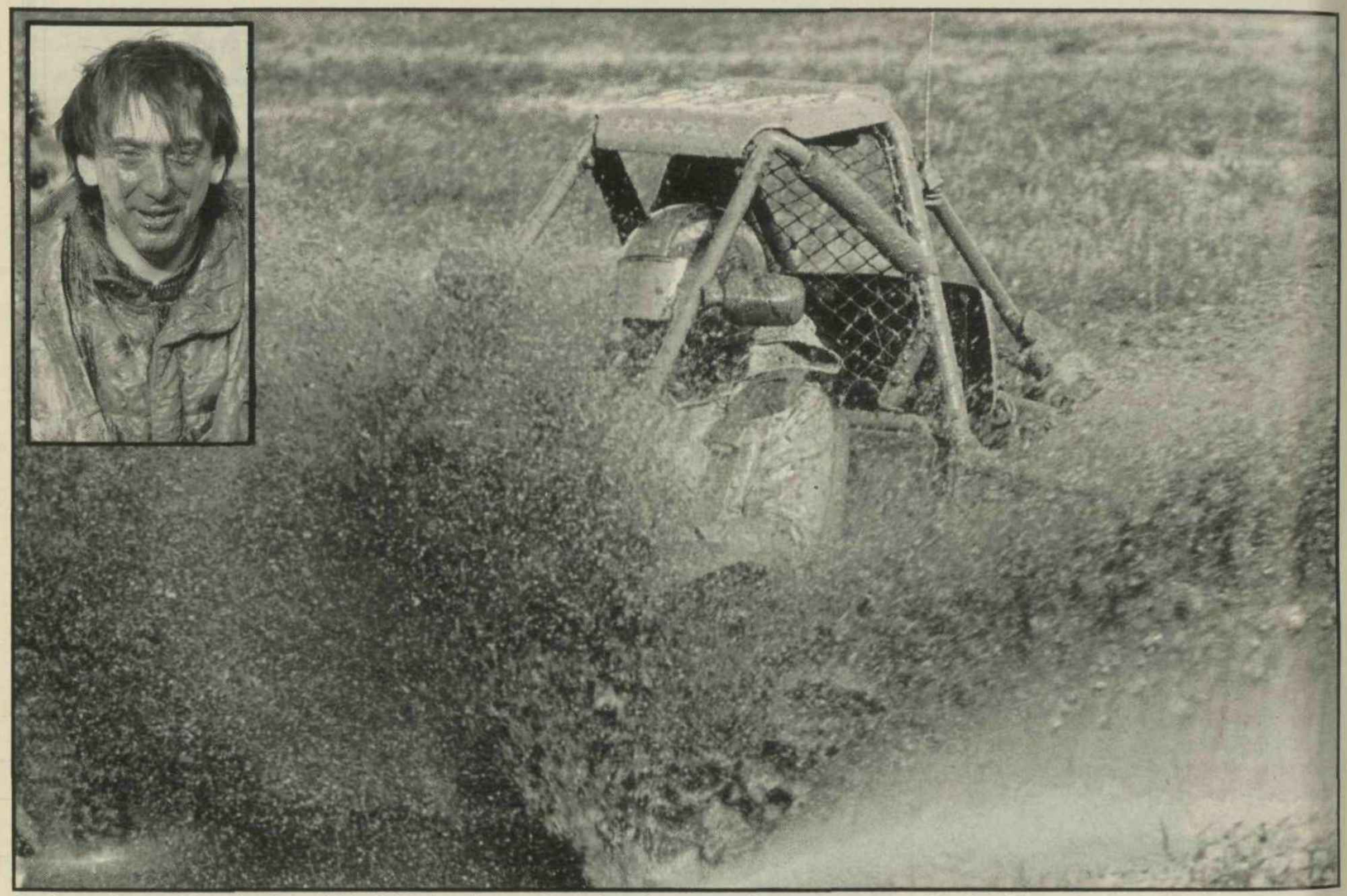
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During and after. Motoring News' *Mark Hughes demonstrates the advantages of an early-morning Honda pilot session...*

A prize worth winning

Congratulations to James Evans of Bristol, who collected our 'Win a Day at Silverstone' prize (MOTOR SPORT, September). The vast majority of a healthy number of respondents got all four questions right. For the record, John Watson's team-mate in 1981 was Andrea de Cesaris; Miki Biasion will drive for Ford in 1992; Graham Hill shared his 1972 Le Mans victory with Henri Pescarolo; David Brabham drove stints in the two Jaguars which finished first and second in this year's Nürburgring 430km. The last question was actually worded slightly ambiguously, and there was no penalty for mentioning Derek Warwick and Teo Fabi in the same breath as Brabham.

Having been drawn first out of the hat (actually, it was a supermarket carrier bag), James joined the MOTOR SPORT team of F3000 racer Damon Hill, Editor Simon Arron and journalist Stewart Williams – signed on loan from our weekly sister *Motoring News* – at Silverstone on November 5, for the multi-discipline Pro-Celebrity Media Challenge organised by the John Watson Performance Driving Centre. The 18 teams had to compete against the clock in (or on) Formula Ford single seaters, Peugeot 309 saloons, karts, quad 'bikes, Honda Pilot buggies and JWPDC skid control cars. Cheating was openly encouraged, but apart from Gerry Marshall fiddling with the rev limiter on the FF1600 car (restricting Ian Flux to just 3000 rpm), competitors' manners were by and large impeccable.

For MOTOR SPORT, Hill set fastest kart time of the day, and Williams did likewise on a Honda Pilot course that was decidedly more benevolent in the afternoon. Those who tackled it first thing in the morning were blinded by chunks of mud the size of your average golf course. Hill also won a swear box for his reaction to learning that the second person to try a skid control car had completed the slalom course three seconds faster than the Williams F1 tester. There is a rather greater likelihood of his having a regular GP drive in 1992 than there is of his becoming a skid control instructor . . .

Those performances and a surprising level of all-round consistency in each of the other events made MOTOR SPORT's quartet the inaugural Pro-Celebrity Media Challenge champions, albeit by the narrowest of margins from the *Street Machine* and BBC Top Gear teams.

The event was voted a tremendous success, and it only took the organisers until the prize-giving to decide that it will be run again in 1992.

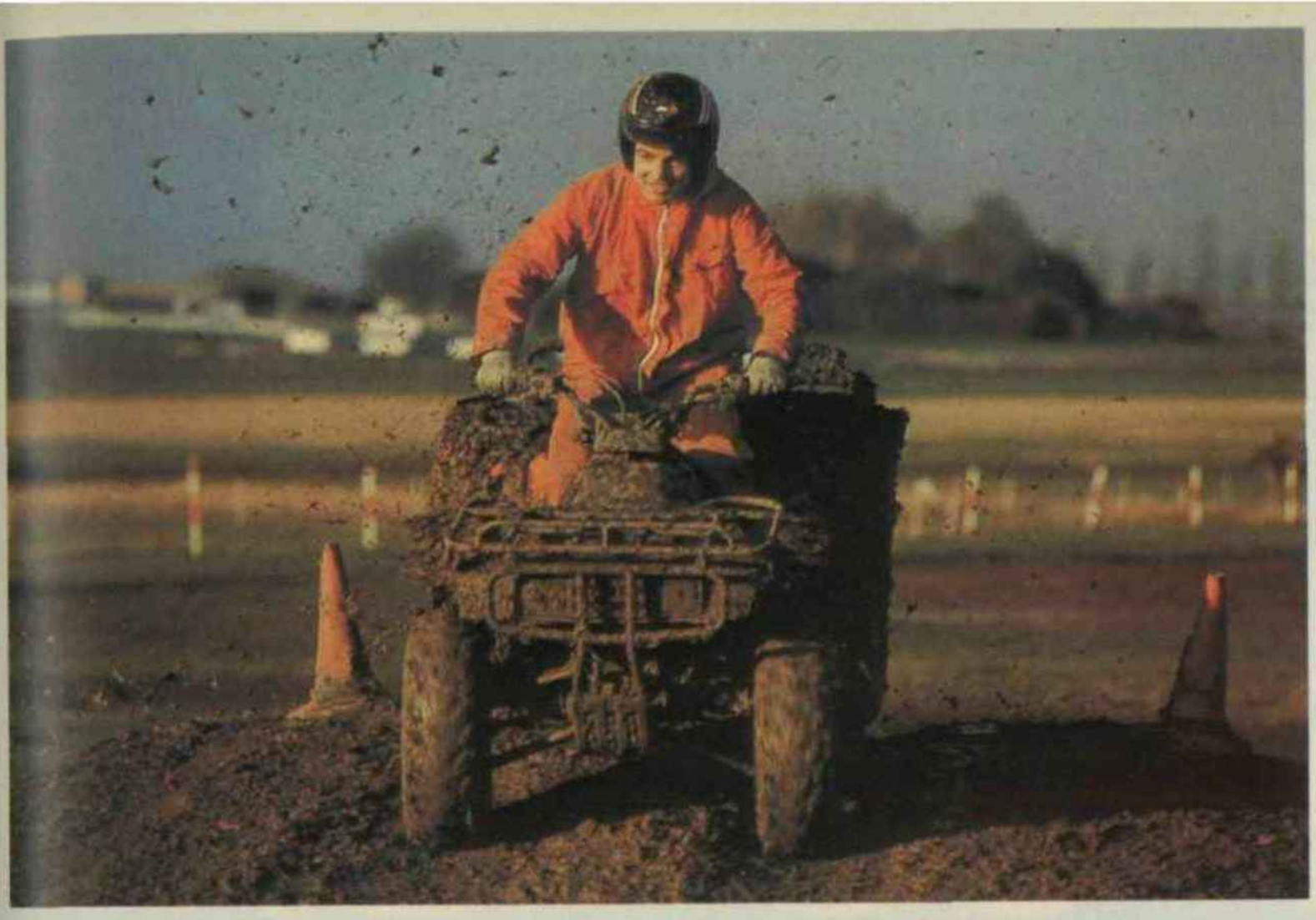
British Touring Car Champion Will Hoy, guesting for *Motoring News*, won the Driver of the Day award, while other honours went to Tiff Needell (skid cars), Mikki Kheng (quad 'bikes), Tim Harvey (FF1600) and rally star David Llewellin (saloons). Other highlights included Gerry Marshall's Formula Ford slalom run, when he stormed off the line in reverse, and the presentation to Tony Dron, Editor of *Classic Cars*, of a section of kart track advertising hoarding, which he had earlier sliced in two. In a similar vein, *Triple C*'s Editor Nigel Fryatt received a mangled remnant of his kart's track rod . . .

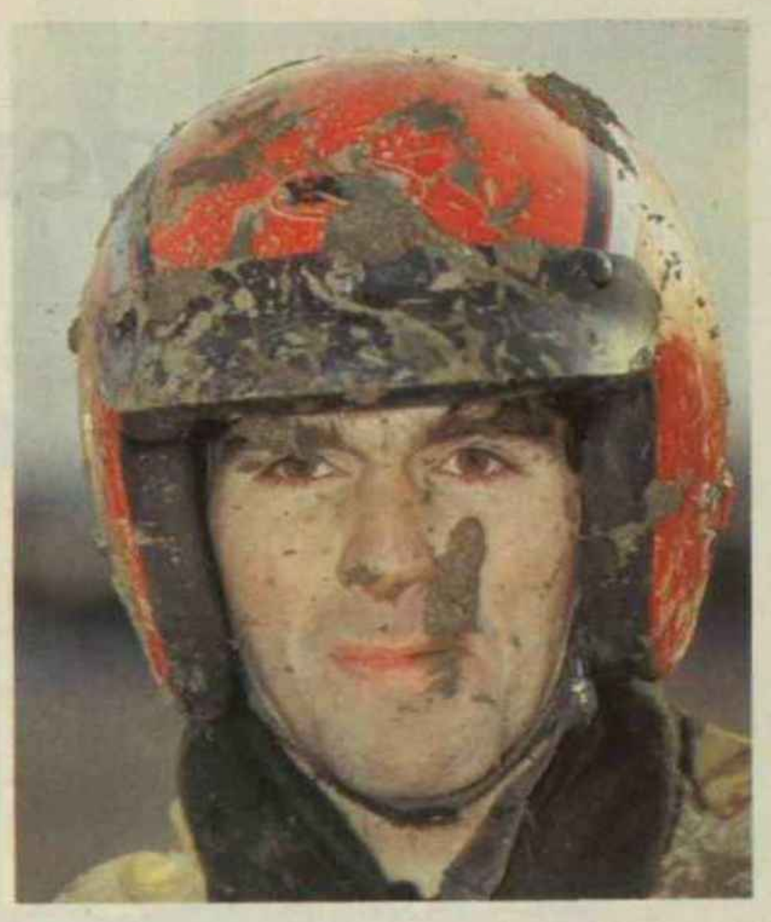
If you enjoy a chuckle and you don't mind a bit of dirt behind your fingernails (the wiser participants had two pairs of shoes and at least one spare set of clothes on hand), we advise you to keep an eye out for next year's competition entry form, which will be published in the autumn.

It was nice to finish first, but we'd have enjoyed ourselves just as much if we'd been 101st . . .

SA

SILVERSTONE





Silverstone highlights and low-lifes, clockwise from top left: Arron tackles the quad 'bike obstacle course, where both Hill and Williams won maps to help them follow the route next time; Damon Hill, post-quad; Williams in the Maestro skid 'control' vehicle; competition winner James Evans sits on pole for an all MOTOR SPORT karting heat; Hill starts the single-seater slalom; the winning team, from left Hill, Evans, Arron and Williams, collect their spoils from John Watson; David Llewellin attacks the Honda Pilot track with gusto; Arron tries to work out his left from his right in the skid control Sapphire.













Manners makyth sportsman

Is there anybody out there who can find a good reason for living in Croydon? Other, that is, than the general availability in the borough of a cable television facility.

For the uninitiated, this means a subscriber can – for around £3 per week – gain access to most of the TV channels that are usually reserved for those with an unsightly satellite dish bolted to their frontage. Cable, as its name suggests, requires only a small hole in the wall, through which passes a filament no more obtrusive than a telephone wire.

The service is generally pretty good, although drawbacks include an appallingly tacky German TV game show, in which the participants gradually remove their clothes while cavorting out of time to a ghastly European disco soundtrack, and we also advise you to steer clear of Italy's RAI Uno, where *It's A Knockout* is still considered a prime time spectacle . . .

On the plus side, leastways from a personal viewpoint, there are three channels dedicated to sport, and all of them are fairly generous in their motor racing and rallying broadcasts. Screensport, for instance, covers a good number of CART, NASCAR and IMSA GTP races live, which offers an interesting perspective on how American racers conduct themselves.

October 20 was a good case in point. Prior to the Japanese Grand Prix, shown live at some unearthly hour by the Beeb, ever alert to the possibility of some new Mansellian tale of woe, there had been the usual swapping of unpleasantries between drivers. Ayrton Senna had more or less threatened Mansell that he'd shove him off the track if the Englishman tried any of his (Sennaesque, it must be said) derring-do during what, as it turned out, would be their World Championship showdown. After the race, where Nigel was one of the first to congratulate his victorious adversary in a rare outbreak of F1 courtesy, there was an unedifying press conference during which Senna confessed, amidst a tirade of abuse against deposed FISA President Balestre, that he'd quite blatantly shoved Prost out of title contention at the start of the 1990 Japanese GP . . .

These, let's not forget, are supposed to be *sports*men.

Later that evening, it was time to become a couch spud once again, to watch the CART PPG Indycar crown settled at Laguna Seca. To overhaul Michael Andretti, Bobby Rahal needed to win with his rival placing outside the top five.

As Andretti held a narrow lead over Emerson Fittipaldi, Rahal hung on in fifth place, watching his rising water temperature gauge with increasing pessimism. When the oil warning light came on just after quarter-distance, the title was Andretti's come what may. On recent evidence, most F1 drivers in Rahal's situation would have stalked off to sulk in their motorhome for a while, before



Bobby Rahal: his conduct after defeat in the CART finale was an example to all.

delivering a shallow, "It wasn't my fault" statement to the press.

Rahal? He hopped out, shook each mechanic's hand in turn for their efforts during the season (it was his last race for Galles/Kraco), walked (still helmeted) to the Newman-Haas pit, where he congratulated each of Michael Andretti's crewmen individually, and finally returned to his own base to be greeted immediately by the microphone of racer-turned-broadcaster Jon Beekhuis. He then proceeded to give an interview, without malice or self-pity, reflecting that it was disappointing, but that racing could be like that sometimes. Michael deserved the crown, so now he was turning his thoughts to redressing the balance in 1992. It was straightforward, polite and – the key word – *dignified*.

It's not that Americans never come to blows. Johnny Rutherford and Gordon Johncock had a celebrated light-heavyweight bout after an Indycar accident a decade ago. It's just that, for the most part, they know how to behave in public.

Imagine for a second that the F1 title had gone down to the wire in Australia. That, with a handful of laps to go, Mansell was leading with Senna a troubled eighth, and the title is almost Nigel's for the taking. He comes up to lap the McLaren. They touch and spin off. Senna is champion. Can you imagine the post-race vitriol such a scenario would inflame?

To the Americans, victory in the Indy 500 is about the best thing a racer can put on his CV. In 1989, with a couple of laps to go, Al Unser Jnr was battling with Fittipaldi. Sensing a gap, Emerson tried an opportunistic manoeuvre which pitched his rival into the wall. The race concluded under yellow flags, with the Brazilian, who continued more or less unimpeded after the incident, declared the winner.

Climbing out of his wrecked Lola, which had impacted with the concrete at the best part of 200 mph, Unser's first act was to give Fittipaldi a gesture; he raised a thumb to let his rival know he was unharmed . . . Any grudges? None. Accidents, realised Unser, can happen in racing, and in Fittipaldi's position he recognised that he'd have tried the same move.

Some Europeans believe that Indycar racing is no more than a glorified national club racing championship. There are more than a few things, however, that it could teach the all-too-often embittered world of F1.

Say it with SEAT

Why are there so few Lamborghini Countachs on the road in Britain? Why was the Maserati Ghibli such a rare sight in the '70s? Is it simply because they cost more than Manchester United's midfield . . . or is it because the average British monoglot couldn't pronounce either cars' name correctly?

The latter is SEAT's explanation for its relatively modest sales performance in Britain, compared to the rest of Europe. It's not because you need forearms with the circumference of Sizewell B to control an Ibiza at parking speeds; it's that Britain as a whole (84 per cent, according to a MORI poll) doesn't know how to pronounce 'Sayat' (for thus it is spake).

SEAT reckons it's all down to idle Britons not bothering to continue with languages taught at school. The most common second language in the UK is French, which SEAT's survey tells us is spoken fluently by only six per cent of the populace.

It's an interesting excuse. Perhaps Lancia should rechristen itself something more complicated in order to explain away its dwindling share of the UK market. Maybe, one day, Peugeot, Rover and Porsche will have to stop identifying its cars numerically, citing the falling standard of mathematics in the UK . . .

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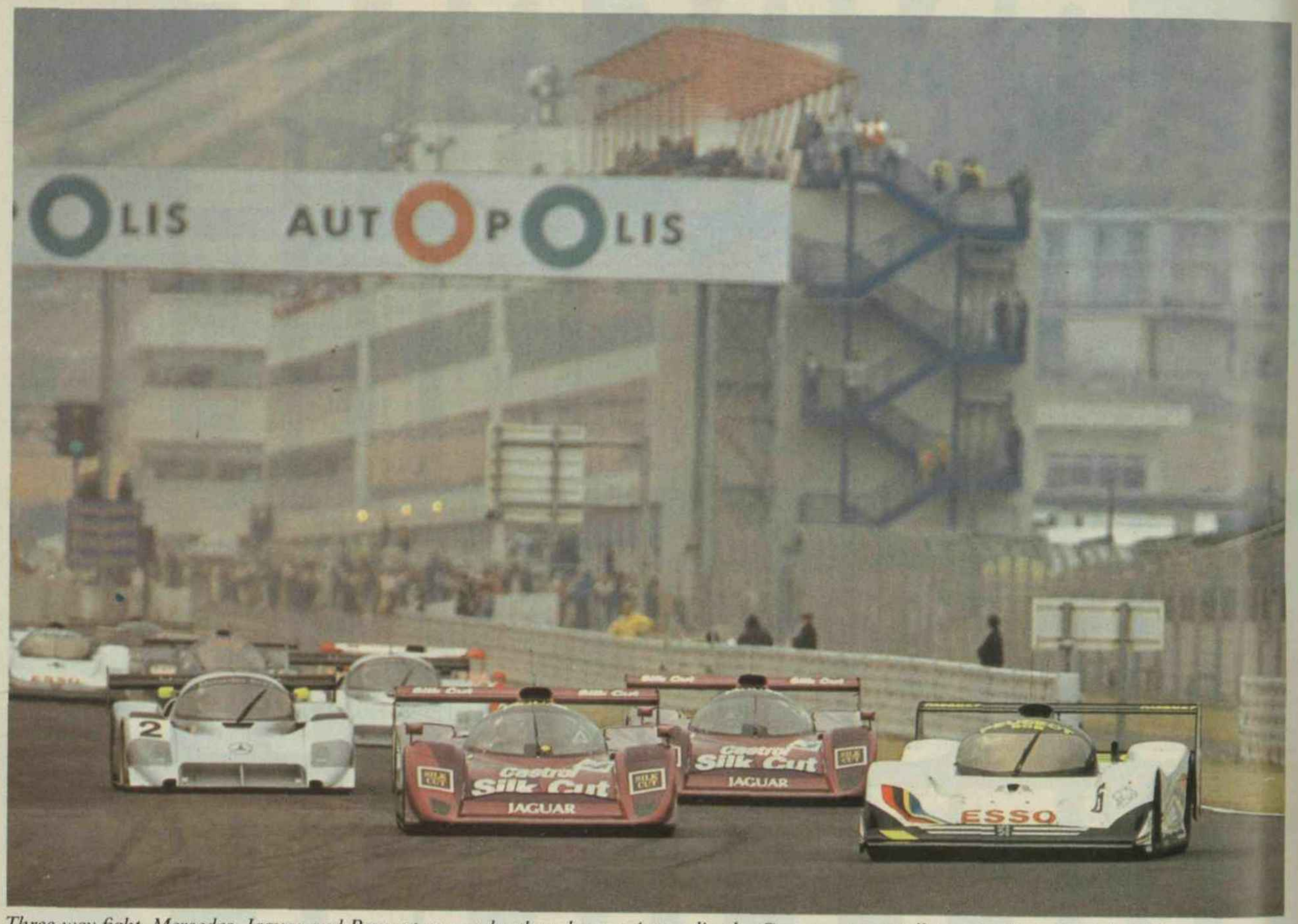
Or the 'Sport' setting for holding focus on moving objects. (Perfect for the affectionate couple on the right). Whatever your needs, with a Mitsubishi CX Camcorder you'll get professional results.

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MITSUBISHI

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Three-way fight. Mercedes, Jaguar and Peugeot ran each other close at Autopolis, the Germans eventually scoring their first win of the season.

Plaudits all round

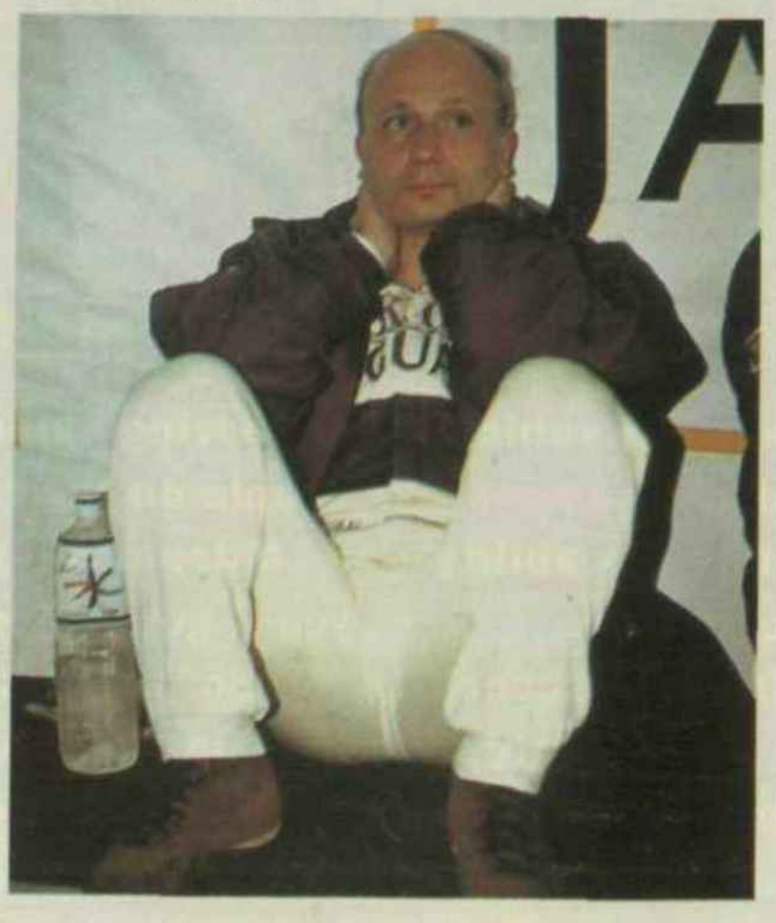
Peter Sauber, nice man that he is, shed a few tears. Dr Hermann Hiereth, the man responsible for Mercedes' racing engines, looked dumbstruck. The virus that had plagued and destroyed the flat-12 engines on an hourly basis since August just cleared up and went away, simple as that!

Michael Schumacher and Karl Wendlinger drove the race that they and the C291 have long deserved and won the Autopolis 430 km event with some ease, pushing the Silk Cut Jaguars back to second and third places overall. Behind them was the Peugeot driven by Mauro Baldi and Philippe Alliot, championship contenders at the start of the race, and in their wake, making the day complete for the Sauber Mercedes team, was the C291 handled by Jean-Louis Schlesser and Jochen Mass.

The Jaguar drivers waited in vain for the demise of the Mercedes, but it didn't make any difference to the drivers' World Championship. Derek Warwick drove a solo race to second place, half a minute behind the Silver Arrow, but Teo Fabi would only lose the title if he finished lower than third. All the Italian needed to do was to stay behind Warwick and keep the Peugeot at bay, which was no trouble at all.

Fabi duly succeeded fellow Italian Mauro Baldi and Schlesser as the World Champion, despite having raced only six times during the season and won only once. He is a good champion, though,

Just champion. For Teo Fabi, a tense weekend ended in smiles.



worthy of the title. "Very un-Italian" is how TWR director Roger Silman describes him, "always extremely quick, precise, and easy on the machinery. Teo is very determined, always a pleasure to work with."

They go back a long way. Silman first met Fabi at the Argentine Formula 3 Temporada in 1978, and managed the Toleman F1 team in 1982 when Fabi and Warwick formed the driver pairing. History had a strange way of repeating itself at Autopolis, when Silman had to be totally even-handed with both men in the Jaguar team, although with a 10-point advantage the odds certainly favoured Fabi.

At the end, Warwick gave Fabi a warm smile and a handshake. The Englishman had felt a lot of pressure in the weeks since his younger brother Paul's death at Oulton Park. He wanted very much to win the World Championship for his sake, for Paul's, and to show the Formula 1 people the talent they'd rejected. He resented being docked his 20 points by FISA at Silverstone, and he wanted to win the title that had eluded him so narrowly in 1986.

It was pressure all the way on Warwick, and sometimes it showed. The outcome

may not have been what he wanted, but it was an ending of the ordeal this season became. Fabi, the un-Italian Italian, smiled a lot, was totally relaxed throughout the season, and drove like a champion... There were pole positions at Monza, the Nürburgring and Autopolis; a flag-to-flag victory at Silverstone; second places at Monza and the Nürburgring, thirds at Le Mans and Autopolis.

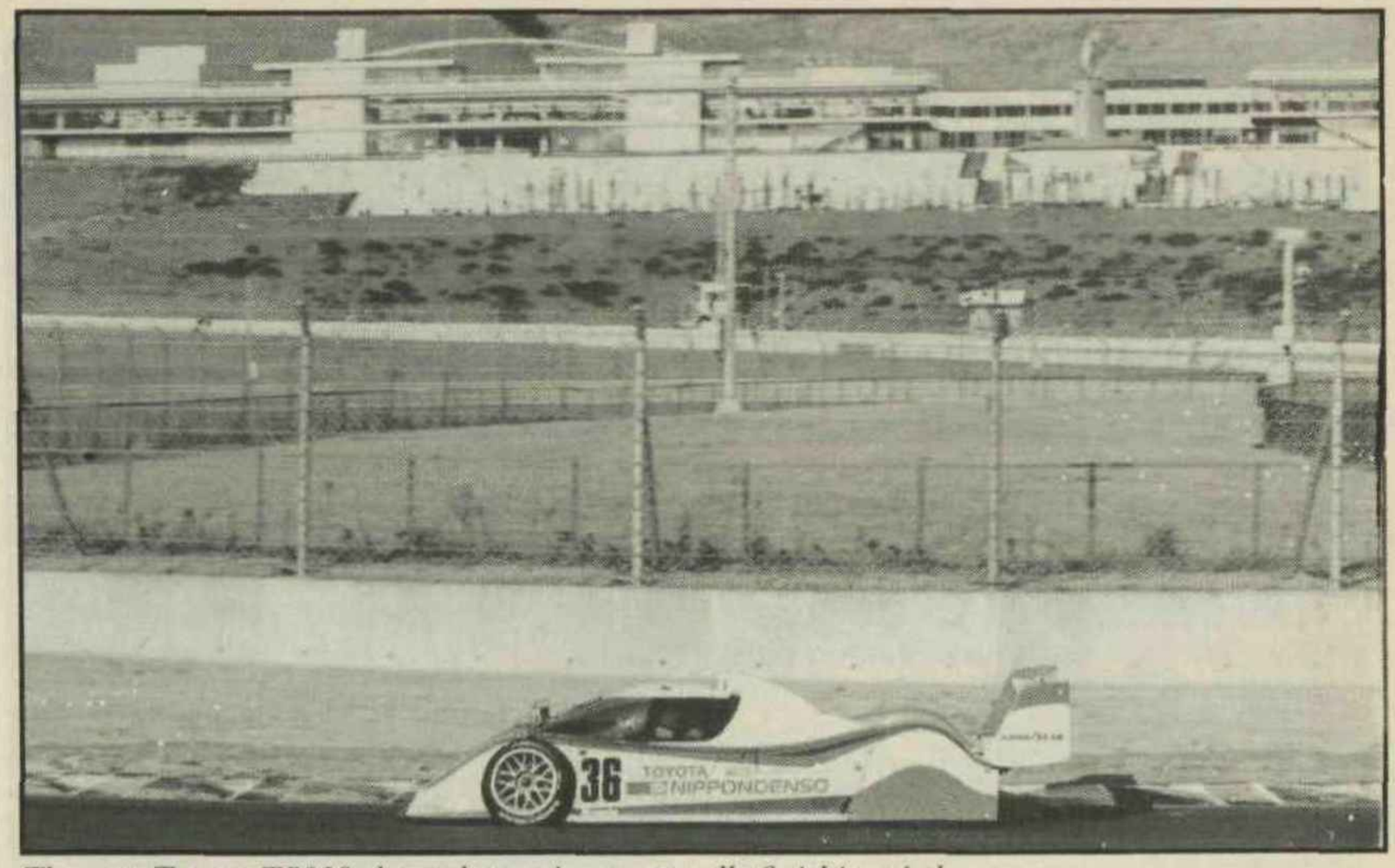
Ruinously expensive though it was for the private teams, most made their way to the new circuit in southern Japan to end the 1991 World Championship. The Italian Veneto Equipe had fallen by the wayside in failing to appear with its Lancia-Ferrari in Mexico, and Louis Descartes was an Autopolis absentee with his ALD.

That was a serious matter for the Frenchman because he certainly intends to compete next year in the FIA Cup series, and might face a $250,000 fine in the meantime for failing to complete this year's calendar. So just 17 cars took the start at Autopolis, one of them the brand-new, V10-powered Toyota TS010.

Designed by Tony Southgate and looking for all the world like a latterday XJR-10, the TS010 finished the race in sixth place driven by Geoff Lees and Andy Wallace. It was a good omen for 1992 when a two-car Toyota team will be operated by TOM'S Toyota GB, namely Glenn Waters and Dave 'Beaky' Sims, at Hingham in Norfolk.

With eight different makes represented in the first (and only) 10 finishers, and a tight battle between Mercedes, Jaguar, Peugeot and Toyota in the top six, it would be nice to think that the Sportscar World Championship has turned the corner. And yet, the feeling became stronger that the board of Daimler-Benz would pull the plug on the SWC effort, enabling the Sauber Mercedes entourage to spend a year preparing for an earth-shaking Formula 1 programme in 1993.

It was said repeatedly at Autopolis that "the board has not yet made its decision" and "we continue to develop the C292 for next year", but the remarks lacked commitment. To lose Mercedes would be to lose a cornerstone of the Sportscar World Championship, and goodness knows it can ill-afford to lose any component parts just now.



The new Toyota TS010 showed promise, eventually finishing sixth.

A lot has been written about the Autopolis circuit, a totally modern complex in the best sense of the phrase. It was built at a reputed cost of £200 million and is 4.674 kilometres of varied turns, climbing and falling, in one place reminiscent of Francorchamps, in another a reminder of the Nürburgring.

Two linked curves at the bottom of the hill, like Les Combes on the former Francorchamps circuit, require total commitment from the driver and are taken flat-in-fifth at 150 mph. They're like the Adenau Bridge, though, in the sense that they are followed by a series of uphill curves and time lost there will never be recovered on that lap.

Fabi called it "a fantastic place, the best race track in the world." But, and it is a huge reservation, Autopolis is in the middle of nowhere! The circuit can be reached only by a mountain road, 20 miles of narrow, hairpinned rally tracks which, apparently, created such havoc at a recent F3000 meeting that the spectators who reached the circuit in time met all the unlucky ones as they set off home in the evening.

European visitors left their hotels in Kumamoto at the 06.30 dawn on Sunday morning to beat the rush. Despite a heavy mist which thickened to cloud near the top of the mountain, they arrived about 70 minutes later and in good time for the warm-up at 08.30.

There were no hold-ups on the way, but already the car parks were near full and many thousands of spectators had taken their places. Nearly 40,000 had arrived throughout the night, presumably to be at the circuit ahead of all the Europeans who would block the roads at dawn.

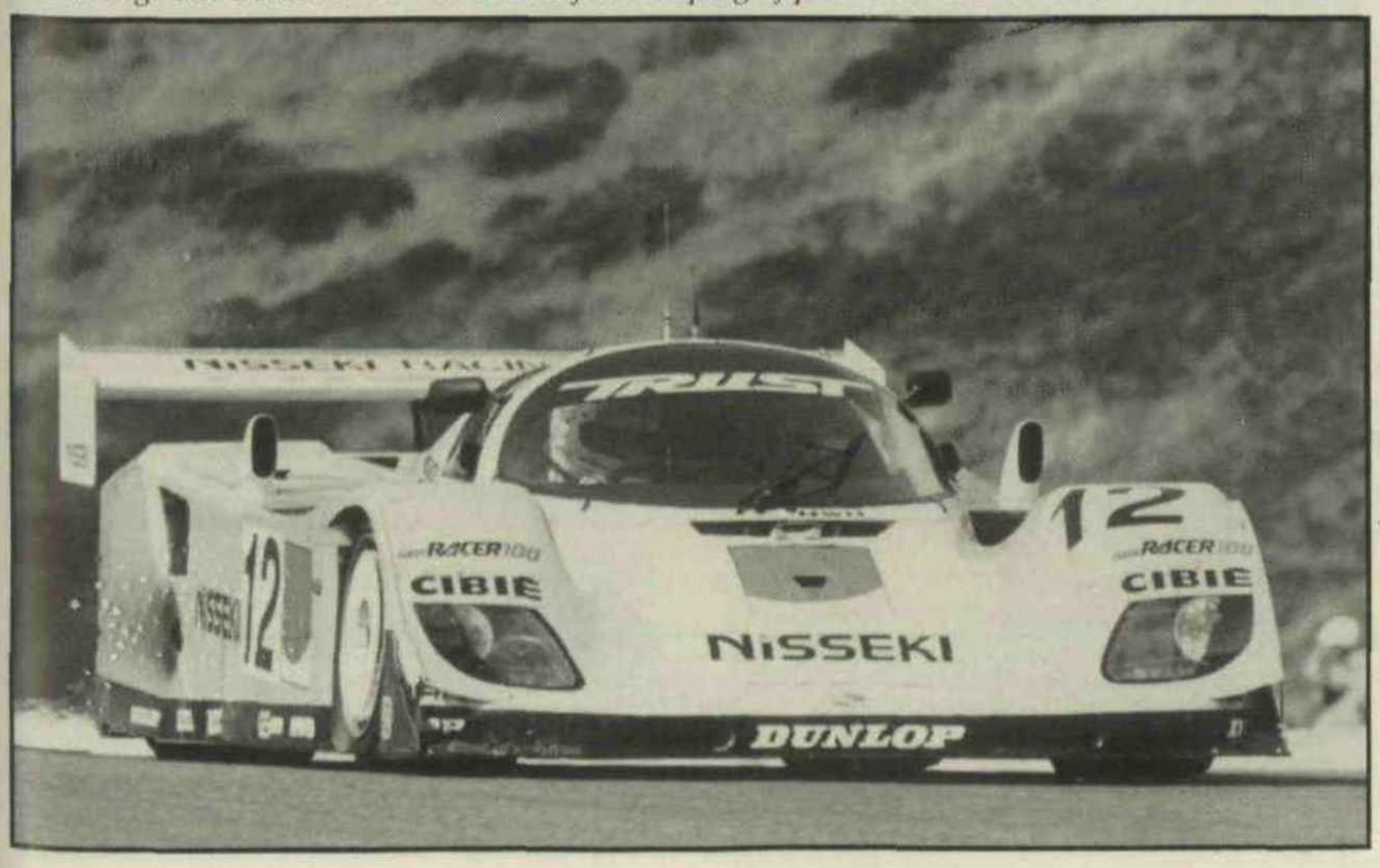
The warm-up actually took place three hours late, since it was impossible to see across the track until the cloud lifted at 11.00. This seems to be another drawback to building the world's finest modern track on top of a mountain, something that all the money in the world could not cure.

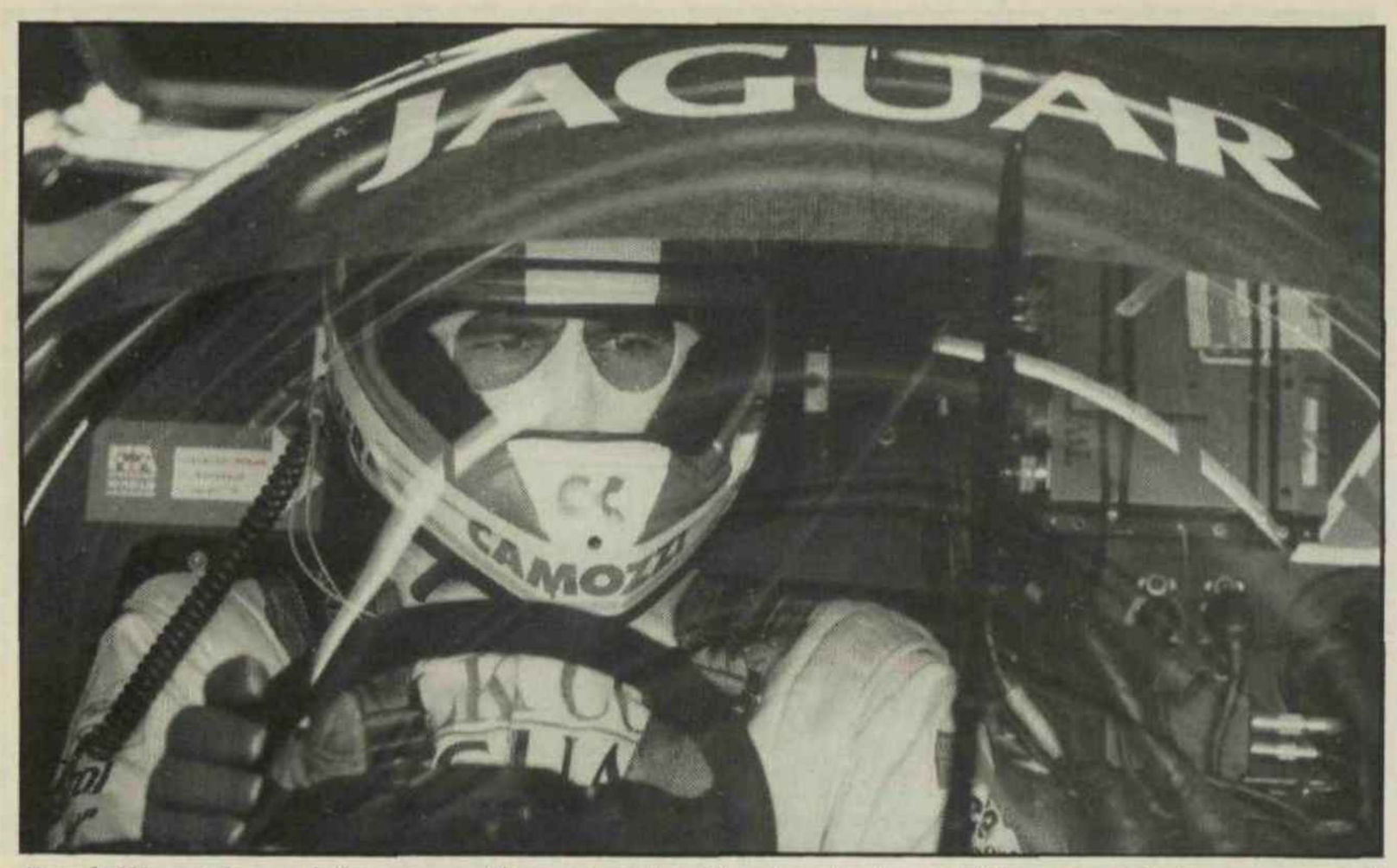
Pole position man Fabi was perfectly happy, but Warwick was forced into Jaguar's spare car when his intended race chassis sprang a leak in the fuel tank; Baldi's Peugeot developed a serious oil leak and Schlesser's Mercedes brunched its third engine of the weekend, so both the outgoing champions were forced to start in spare cars.

Fabi's pole position advantage lasted all of 20 metres as he deftly changed from second gear to fifth, and watched impotently as Yannick Dalmas powered his front-row Peugeot into the first corner with a useful lead. Warwick thought he was third into the turn but reckoned without Schumacher, who late-braked his Mercedes on the inside with a determination that belies his innocent looks.

At first Fabi closed on Dalmas, was then delayed while lapping David Kennedy who spun his Mazda, and came under con-

Swansong. The Porsche 962 collected a final helping of points thanks to Andskar and Fouche.





Derek Warwick was left to count the cost of the 20 points he lost at Silverstone. In Japan, second place was not enough to take the title.

siderable pressure from Schumacher. We had a Peugeot, a Jaguar and a Mercedes vying for the lead and suddenly the meaning of this championship became clear. It was all about Porsche between 1982 and 1986, all about Jaguar in 1987 and 1988, and all about Mercedes in 1989 and 1990. A three-way contest was something quite new!

Everything happened on the 21st lap. Fabi missed a shift into fifth, not for the first time, and decided to forfeit the race and go for the championship. He braked early at the end of the straight, moving across to give Schumacher a clear passage. Two corners later they saw Dalmas stopping his Peugeot with a blown engine.

Schumacher led, the first time this year that a 12-cylinder C291 has been ahead, and Fabi yielded two or three seconds a lap as he knocked off 1,000 rpm. Soon Warwick was into second place on his solo drive, and saw the lead briefly during the first and second refuelling stops.

The Mercedes was too good for the Jaguars that day, the Jaguars too good for the Peugeot team which had dominated the previous two rounds. All three were a bit too good for the Toyota, but that was to be expected on its first outing. "This is where our lack of six months' experience shows," said designer Southgate on Saturday, when Lees complained of poor braking.

The problem hadn't been noted throughout weeks of testing, but in the heat of competition all the little shortcomings become major problems. Nothing wrong with the Brembos, in fact, but the pads were knocking-off, perhaps due to flexing of the uprights, and there was too much braking at the rear.

Early in the race Lees lunged at Schlesser's Mercedes, vying for sixth place, and spun luridly, so after that it was a case of the Toyota men keeping out of trouble and going for a finish. The V10 engine was powerful enough and ran beautifully all weekend, and the team accumulated a great deal of experience which will stand it in good stead next year.

Schumacher built up a 20-second lead over Warwick in the first stint, and although Karl Wendlinger lost some of that in the middle shift, badly delayed while lapping Andy Wallace, Schumacher built it up again in the third session. They were not seriously under pressure at any time, and no matter how many times they checked their mirrors the cloud of smoke was never seen!

Rather disappointed by this, Warwick claimed second place and David Brabham took Fabi's car to third. Schumacher followed him in the closing laps, allowing Brabham to complete the full distance, but all the Jaguar driver was interested in doing was finishing safely ahead of the Peugeot.

It was back to the bad old days for Baldi and Alliot. Understeer, oversteer, no grip, we'd heard it all before, but it was the spare – which they liked less than their proper race car. Mass, fifth, was delayed in the pits by an extra 35 seconds when the left-side belt was trapped by the seat, but he and Schlesser finished 44 seconds behind the Peugeot so it made no significant difference.

It was the spare car, we knew, but the fortysomethings were consistently two seconds a lap slower than the 22-year-olds. Still, Jochen Mass was himself one of Jochen Neerpasch's drivers, when he drove a works Ford Capri in the early 1970s, and all credit to Neerpasch for consistently bringing young drivers to the fore. Without him, it's unlikely that Michael Schumacher would have reached the top echelon of Grand Prix racing with Senna-like impetus.

Miracles do happen sometimes, and the reliability of the two race engines in the Mercedes was one of them. A recognised manufacturing fault has spoiled all 30 engines available to the team, and Dr Hiereth beamed that he couldn't have dreamed of this result. Certainly the best two engines of the batch were kept for the race, he said, but one of them broke during the warm-up and he had little confidence in the others.

Porsche, winner of 42 World or European Championship events since Group C was conceived in 1982, faded from world championship racing rather quietly. Four venerable 962Cs started the race but three retired with engine failures, including the Kremer entry which has supported Group C from the beginning.

The only Porsche that finished was the Trust car which is prepared in Japan; George Fouche and Steven Andskar earned the last three World Championship points that may be awarded to Porsche for some time to come.

What started in Suzuka as a one-sided championship, in Jaguar's favour, ended up very equitably at Autopolis with three wins for the Silk Cut Jaguars, winners of the teams' World Championship, three for Peugeot, one for Mazda and one, eventually, for Mercedes, so no one went home empty-handed. MLC

RESULTS
AUTOPOLIS 430 km, OCTOBER 27

Pos	Driver	Car	Time
1st	Schumacher/Wendlinger	Mercedes C291	2h 25m 36.399s
2nd	Warwick	Jaguar XJR-14	2h 27m 07.187s
3rd	Fabi/Brabham	Jaguar XJR-14	2h 28m 15.860s
4th	Baldi/Alliot	Peugeot 905B	92 laps
5th	Schlesser/Mass	Mercedes C291	92 laps
6th	Lees/Wallace	Toyota TS010	90 laps
7th	Euser/Zwolsman	Spice SE90C	87 laps
8th	Fouche/Andskar	Porsche 962	85 laps
9th	Sandro Sala/Terada	Mazda 787B	85 laps
10th	Kennedy/Yorino	Mazda 787B	84 laps
Rtd	Ratzenberger/Elgh	Porsche 962	78 laps – engine
Rtd	Reuter/Toivonen	Porsche 962	45 laps – engine
Rtd	Konrad/Johansson	Konrad-Lamborghini	24 laps – suspension
Rtd	Dalmas/Rosberg	Peugeot 905B	20 laps – engine
Rtd	Larrauri	Brun-Judd	20 laps – gearbox
Rtd	Pareja/Santal	Porsche 962	12 laps – engine
Rtd	Taylor/Matsuda	Spice SE90C	3 laps – HT lead

Fastest lap: Dalmas, 1m 30.615s, 115.38 mph

Drivers' World Championship: 1, Fabi 86; 2, Warwick 79; 3, Alliot and Baldi 69; 5, Euser 54; 6, Zwolsman 46 etc.

Teams' World Championship: 1, Silk Cut Jaguar 108; 2, Peugeot-Talbot 79; 3, Sauber Mercedes 70; 4, Euroracing 54; 5, Mazdaspeed 47; 6, Kremer-Porsche 43 etc.

Allard reborn

A famous old name aims to make an impact on the 1992 Sportscar World Championship

The Allard name will return to sportscar racing next year, but tight security surrounds the innovative design. There is a Japanese Sportscar Championship version, there could be an IMSA version, but the unveiling of the World Championship Group C car by Jean-Louis Ricci and Costas Los is likely to send a tremor around the design centres of the world. The Allard has a radical shape which breaks away totally from concepts of the last 20 years, and will hit the establishment like an alien craft from outer space.

Even now it can't be illustrated, but it certainly exists and was due to be tested for the first time in November, with a first public appearance scheduled for January. The Allard is more nearly a centre-seater than anything devised, so far, by Peugeot, Jaguar or Mercedes, and would certainly be widely copied if it demonstrates the advantages the designers believe it has.

Who are the designers? Good question. They are not well known in the racing car industry, nor is there a leader. Chris Humberstone, co-ordinator of Walter Brun's sportscar design team, is the man behind the Allard project and he's a great believer in "the team being more important than the superstar."

From the Allard Motorsport headquarters in Basingstoke, Humberstone explains the philosophy.

"We have six or seven key people here, and I'm just the umpire really. None of them are well known, and they are from various disciplines, such as marine and aeronautics, as well as motor sports.

"We started from scratch, without any pre-conceived ideas. Where most designers take their models to the wind tunnel to find improvements, we went to the wind tunnel to see what we could learn. We have come up with something quite revolutionary, and it *will* work."

For instance, suggests Humberstone, the downforce is "amazing" even at relatively low speeds, forcing the designers to strengthen the suspension pushrods massively, yet this is done without significantly increasing the drag.



The new driving force behind Allard: Costas Los (left), Chris Humberstone (centre) and Jean-Louis Ricci.

The biggest drawback, at first, is likely to be the fairly uncompetitive status of the Ford Cosworth DFR engine compared with the 'big three' manufacturers, but a direct comparison would be difficult to make if the Allard customer team tackles the recently lanched FIA Cup class. "Le Mans will be the great leveller," says Humberstone. "There we'll see just how good the Allard is."

Racing and rally enthusiasts would have to stretch their memories back to the 1950s to recall the original Allards, especially the Cadillac-engined J2 which gave Jaguars and Talbots a run for their money. The last car was built shortly before Sydney Allard died in 1966, but his son Alan kept the business going as an engineering concern, specialising in supercharging and turbocharging.

Alan Allard is a director of the related Allard Motor Company and, a longtime friend of Humberstone's, is actively involved in the racing car project. The intention is to produce a road car version of the Allard, not an 'exotic' in the style of the McLaren supercar, but a sensible, more affordable model in the Porsche 911 mould.

Humberstone proposed the embryonic road car project originally to Walter Brun, towards the end of 1990 when the Group C car design was almost finalised, but found that "his mind was on other things." The notorious Montreal accident had caused an immense amount of damage to Brun's Porsche team, and not surprisingly the Swiss didn't want to embark on a diverse road car project.

So Humberstone parted company amicably and set up on his own. "We had enough finance to get everything started, but clearly we needed partners. At the time, we knew that Jean-Louis Ricci and Costas Los had considered buying Spice but decided against it, so circumstances brought us together."

Little can be said about the new Allard, although even without its dramatic bodywork it looks quite unusual. The cockpit appears too small to be accepted as a two-seater, but it complies with the regulations, and unusually the monocoque undertray is extended back to carry the engine.

The slave engine is a Cosworth DFR, but for the States it could just as easily be a Porsche 962 turbo. The engine is lightly stressed, and an additional monocoque structure behind it carries the transmission. This is a March Formula 1 transaxle, with six speeds, and unusually it can be pulled back from the engine and swivelled through 90-degrees, around the driveshafts, to make life easy for mechanics swapping ratios.

Allard's principals intend to have at least one car racing in Japan – the first firm order came from a Japanese company, Terai Engineering – another in the SWC series and a third in IMSA, so as to have plenty of feedback. Recognising that racing cars are extremely expensive, they are also geared up to enter leasing arrangements for the new machine with team owners, an unusual approach that has interested some potential customers.

"As a follow-up to the racing car, we want a road car development," Humberstone explains. "It will have a pedigree, if the racing car is successful. I'd like to think of it as the Jaguar E-type, which succeeded the D-type. We have the ambition to bring aerodynamics to a road car as a safety feature, because I don't think anyone has really tackled this yet."

MLC

Allard is not without a competition pedigree; first time around, they were used in various disciplines.



Most of the early Allards featured striking looks. This is the J2R, from 1955/56.



Fun for the few



Antonis Jeropoulos headed home the largely home-based entry.

No matter how tough nor how well organised a rally, in the long run the factor which determines how memorable it will have become is the quality of the competition. An event which attracts a good field of top class competitors tends to be remembered for the keen, close contest between them, whereas another which does not draw the leading drivers of the day will no doubt merit no more than academic mention.

A rally in the latter category was this year's Rothmans Cyprus Rally, a splendid event, as tough as they are made, organised by as friendly and efficient a bunch of organisers as you will find anywhere. It attracted no less than 86 starters, but there was a distinct lack of Europe's leading crews, which led to an initial fight between just two drivers, one of whom gradually opened the gap until he won by a margin of nearly seven minutes.

The world's top professionals are concerned only with the World Championship and are so bound by their contracts and programmes that they find it impossible to extend them.

This was not always the case. In the days when full onslaughts on the entire World Championship were rare, budgets less tight and development less time-consuming, many factory teams entered cars in the Cyprus Rally because they were more interested in the kudos of winning the event itself than any championship. Indeed, the non-Cypriots in the list of past winners since it began in 1970 include such names as Blomqvist, Clark, Vatanen, McRae, Buffum, Waldegård, Mehta, Loubet, Snijers, Llewellin and others, so it can not be said never to have attracted the world's best.

Nowadays, such people are largely tied up, although there must be several around who would be able to accept an offer to drive for a Cyprus importer or distributor, a system which was once used to good effect by the Pretoria Motor Club for South Africa's Total Rally, an event which has now re-attracted the backing of Total SA.

Nicosia, in the centre of the island, has always been the operational base of the rally, although the route does not actually follow a cloverleaf pattern. This year's start was at 2.30 pm on the Friday, and from Nicosia it ran through five special stages in the mountains around Troodos to a four-hour stop at the south-western coastal resort of Paphos. Then came a night section through four more stages, the first of which was in the unspoilt and desolate region of Akamas, close to the north-western tip of the island.

After an eight-hour day stop at Limassol came six more stages on the way back to Nicosia where the first real night stop lasted from 8 pm on the Saturday to 10 am on the Sunday. The final leg was entirely in the area to the south of Nicosia and went via six special stages which were split by a half-hour service stop at Larnaca. The first car finished back at Nicosia at 3.14 pm.

Any rally which takes place in a mountainous country not well served in its interior by telephones is likely to have a communications problem. The Cyprus Rally is no exception, but its organisers have many experienced amateur radio enthusiasts among their numbers and many years ago they constructed automatic VHF radio repeaters which were then installed on strategic mountain tops.

The result was direct VHF contact between stations which were not in line of sight with each other, and this provided excellent communications from most areas covered by the rally. Indeed this was the system which was later adopted by the Safari Rally, and the Kenyan organisers now have a superb network which is a far cry from drop-line telephones or slinging the dipole wires of SSB radios over the branches of trees and hoping for the best.

Another innovation by the Cyprus AA made its first operational appearance this year. Rather than have a manual timing system which was separate from the communications network, requiring times to be read over the radio or the cellular phone system, they simply integrated the two and made them automatic.

Each control had a small computerised device which incorporated an accurate timer, a memory buffer and a modem which could be connected to either a normal telephone or a radiophone. Competitors carried magnetised cards, similar to credit cards, and when they were slid through the slot in the machine, both the car number and the time were recorded and stored in the device's memory. When the controllers were ready, they simply called a number in Nicosia, pushed a button and the stored data was immediately squirted down the line into the main results processing computer in Nicosia.

The field devices worked really well, and the only hitches were when a control happened to be nowhere near a normal telephone and in a black spot for cellular phone operation. In such cases, the data was either kept stored for a while or transmitted verbally by VHF radio. There were also some hiccoughs in the mainframe computer, but these had nothing to do with the sending devices which worked faultlessly. They should certainly be looked at by organisers of some World Championship events.

Like countries in Africa, Cyprus has rainy seasons and dry seasons. The last rains failed to appear and the result at the time of the rally was a water shortage which left many homes and business establishments subject to a rationing scheme. It also left the roads very hard, very abrasive and very dusty, producing a high rate of tyre wear and a crop of punctures, and resulting in overtaking which was decided tricky, sometimes impossible, in the thick dust of those ahead. There was generally little wind and the two-minute interval between cars was not enough to allow the dust to disperse. Even when, through retirement or delay, a competitor found himself separated by four minutes from the car ahead, the dust was still there.

The temperature was higher than usual for the end of September and in the daytime many crews were complaining of engine overheating and boiling clutch and brake hydraulic fluid. The use of interior heaters was common to take heat from the engine, whilst one competitor lagged his hydraulic lines in an effort to keep heat away from them.

Leading Cypriot entries were 1990 winner Mavropoulos (who lives in London) and Antoniades in an Audi 90 Quattro, Jeropoulos/Michael in a Mitsubishi Galant VR4, Mashias and Panayiotou (the latter from Greece) in a Subaru Legacy and Melissas/Alexandrou in another Legacy. Past winner Terzian was also there, with Sergides, in a well-prepared Honda Civic which he drives impressively.

Two entries from Bulgaria and one from Italy did not materialise, but there was one from the Soviet Union, a Lada Samara driven by Shkolny and Gogonov. Timmers and Fortin came from Belgium in a Mitsubishi Galant VR4, but this was their first experience off the tarmac. Regular visitor 'Bagheera' came from Lebanon with Stefan in a Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4 prepared by Ola Strömberg in Sweden, whilst Atakan and Avimelek brought a Lancia Delta integrale from Turkey.

The leading Greek entries were Panagiotopoulos/Panou in a Toyota Celica GT-4, Constantakatos (who lives in Edinburgh) and Pallas in a Toyota Corolla GTI, 'Leonidas', the Greek Renault importer, in a Clio with Pavli-Corre and Gemenis/Kepetzis in a Mazda Familia 4wd. Two crews came from Sweden, Blomqvist/Lindberg (no relation to Stig) in an Opel Corsa GSI and Sellholm/Böckavall in a Skoda Favorit.

David Sutton brought a Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4 from England for Saudi driver Mamdouh Khayat and British co-driver Dave Nicholson. The car was backed by Samarec, the Saudi Arabian oil company. Another Sierra Cosworth 4x4 was driven by Fielding and Robinson from the UK, and these two cars were the only British representatives. There weren't even any entries from locally based British servicemen this year, although Cyprus resident Mike Hillyar drove a Suzuki SA310 with Georgiades.

Mention must be made of 1983 winner Jimmy McRae who was on holiday in Cyprus at the time. When a certain proposal was put to him, he agreed enthusiastically and found himself at the wheel of a course car, a Peugeot 305 GTI, on the 'superspecial' stage on the second day.

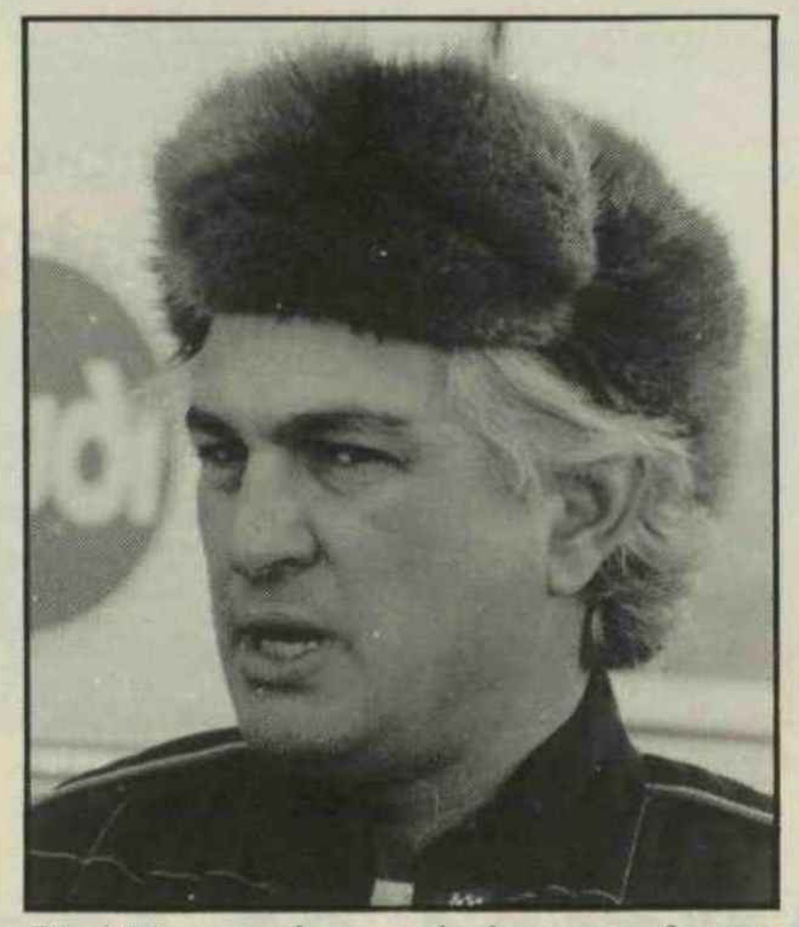
Right from the start, the heat, the dust and the abrasive, puncture-provoking roads took their toll. Terzian, at No 2, was two minutes behind Timmers, and on both first and second stage he caught the Belgian less than four miles after starting. On the second, whilst driving completely blind in the dust, he went straight off the road and out of the rally, only being prevented from going down a very steep slope by the presence of a tree.

Blomqvist rolled on the first stage but continued, whilst Tsouloftas' engine stopped several times, caused by a loose wire to the cut-out switch. Mavropoulos had the first of several charging failures, caused by alternator belts coming off. Jeropoulos had intercom failure but nevertheless made best time. He kept that lead to the end, only being threatened by Mavropoulos in the first two of the three days.

Mashias has a puncture on each of the first three stages, but each was within 250 yards of the finish so he didn't have to stop once to change a wheel.

'Bagheera' ended his rally on the last stage before Paphos when his engine mysteriously stopped. Mechanics ran into the stage, changed first his fuel pump, then the wiring to it, but neither remedy made any difference. They even tried wiring the pump directly to the battery, but to no avail. Later, they blamed a fuel line blockage.

Cypriot driver Michaelides had to stop after stage three when his co-driver, who had complained of dizziness on the first stage, declared that he could go no further. He picked up the co-driver of a car which had retired and continued to Paphos, where he was disappointed when told that he could not continue. Crew changes are



Dimi Mavropoulos was the best part of seven minutes adrift by the end.

forbidden, of course, once an event has started. He was not too aggrieved to cannibalise his car and donate steering parts to a friend in a similar machine.

The first stage after Paphos ran into desolate country in the north-western corner of the island where navigation is tricky, even with a roadbook. Fielding took a wrong road and, when turning around, got the car wedged on rocks. The jack was needed to get it off, and the operation cost some time.

After the return through the mountains to the stop at Limassol, Jeropoulos had extended his lead over Mavropoulos and, barring problems, it seemed more or less certain that the former would win.

Khayat had the misfortune to roll, explained as the result of track control arm breakage, on the last stage of the day. The car was blocking the road, so the crew dashed back to warn others and, when enough manpower had been amassed, the car was righted and pushed to the side of the road. Remaining crews went through the stage as a road section and were later credited with the time of the slowest of the three cars to have completed the stage before the incident.

The only all-girl crew, Kyprianou/Christodoulu, collected a puncture on this interrupted stage and spent so long changing the wheel after their boot lid refused to open that they had no time for service when they got to Nicosia. Fortunately, there was time the next morning.

On the final day, little happened to alter the situation among the leaders, but Swedish driver Blomqvist came to a dramatic stop when he went off the road and just about destroyed his car. They were unhurt, but so shocked that they gratefully accepted the stage officials' offer to drive them back to Nicosia. Fielding also stopped when his camshaft drive belt broke just as they were checking in to an end-of-stage control.

On the last day there was a scene reminiscent of the works Minis of the '60s after Kevezes had a hole punched through the gearbox casing of his Polonez. Quickly, the car was turned on its side, resting on two spare wheels, and mechanics were able to patch the hole with stout canvas and silicone sealant.

Of the 86 starters, only 28 finished. That statistic, plus the winner's average speed of just 35.68 mph over the 230 miles of special stages, bear witness to the toughness of this three-day event. If you want to do well, you need a stout heart, but we have always said that the Cyprus Rally represents a particularly worthwhile event for private entrants.

It is certainly on the rough side, so a strong car with plenty of underbody protection is a requirement, whilst the twisty character of the roads, often climbing and descending steep mountains, places more emphasis on acceleration than sheer speed. For anyone whose rallying taste leans towards a lacing of adventure, who appreciates a warm climate and enjoys good company, this is one which should be near the top of the list.

GP

Rothmans Cyprus Rally – 27 - 29 September, 1991

European Rally Championship - Final Coefficient 20 Round

Results

1.	Antonis Jeropoulos (CY) / Michael Michael (CY)	Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, Gp A	6h 25m 52s.
2.	Dimi Mavropoulos (CY) / Nicos Antoniades (CY)	Audi 90 Quattro, Gp A	6h 32m 42s.
3.	Iskendur Atakan (TR) / Yusus Avimelek (TR)	Lancia Delta Integrale 8v, Gp A	6h 37m 47s.
4.	Manolis Panagiotopoulos (GR) / Nicos Panou (GR)	Toyota Celica GT, Gp N	6h 37m 55s.
5.	Dinos Mashias (CY) / Makarios Panayiotou (GR)	Subaru Legacy 4wd, Gp N	6h 42m 55s.
6.	Menelaos Melissas (CY) / Georgios Alexandrou (CY)	Subaru Legacy 4wd, Gp N	6h 48m 57s.
7.	Charis Komodromos (CY) / Petros Laos (CY	Opel Kadett GSI, Gp A	7h 01m 46s.
8.	Manolis Christodoulou (CY) / Anninos Hadjigeorgiou (CY)	Peugeot 205 GTI, Gp N	7h 09m 35s.
9.	Therapon Kalathas (CY) / Andreas Constantinou (CY)	Suzuki Cultus, Gp N	7h 22m 18s.
10.	Ioannis Constantakatos (GR) / Apostolos Pallas (GR)	Toyota Corolla GTI, Gp N	7h 24m 56s.

86 starters; 28 finishers.



Repeating his Sanremo triumph of 1990, Didier Auriol scored his first victory of the season.

Auriol at last

Since the tortuous dirt roads in the mountains above the Riviera of the Flowers were all covered in spoilsport tarmac, the Sanremo Rally has never been an easy event for anyone. The rally has stages on both tarmac and dirt, which means that stocks of tyres, transmissions and suspensions all have to be doubled to cater for both surfaces, whilst test sessions also have to be duplicated. During the weeks before the event the weather was largely fine and dry, and testing resulted in cars which were set up for those conditions and tyre stocks made up largely of the appropriate types. However, the weather changed, heavy rain made the special stages very slippery indeed and, although any team would be foolish to be caught without the correct equipment, there must have been several managers who wished that space in their service vans was not taken up by items which stood little chance of being required.

As a result of the sudden change of weather, handling, traction, gearing and even braking efficiency all gave cause for concern during the rally and various combinations were still being tried out long after it had started, causing tension and dissatisfaction in many quarters as optimum settings proved to be elusive.

Unlike some World Championship events, the Sanremo Rally still has night sections. There is plenty of rest, of course, but the timetable was such that both first and final nights were spent on the road. After a morning 'superspecial' stage, the rally started properly on the Sunday evening with two tarmac stages close to Sanremo, then another five to the east. An early morning break of two and a half hours preceded a group of three dirt road stages, after which came the first rest stop at Arezzo, from 1.15 pm on the Monday to 6 am on the Tuesday.

There were nine stages on the Tuesday, divided by two stops of an hour and half an hour respectively, whilst Wednesday began at 5.30 am with three dirt road stages before the long motorway run back to Sanremo where the first car arrived at 3 pm. The final leg began at midnight and looped through eight tarmac stages before finishing at Sanremo just before 9.30 am on the Thursday.

No one can complain about the special stages, nor of the mixture of tarmac and dirt, but their widely spread locations and the resulting long, tedious road sections have always been unpopular, especially this year when the rally timetable aggravated the tiring monotony of hundreds of miles of motorway driving.

As it has been throughout the year, the main contestants were Lancia and Toyota, both teams eager to win both drivers' and manufacturers' sections of the World Rally Championship.

The Lancia Martini team consisted of two Delta integrales for Kankkunen/Piironen and Biasion/Siviero, but three others from the factory, finished in Fina colours, were entered by the Jolly Club for Auriol/Occelli, Cerrato/Cerri and Aghini/Farnocchia. Taken as a whole, it was a formidable line-up, its purpose not only to get Kankkunen to the winners' rostrum but to keep rivals Toyota out of the top points-scoring positions. Toyota fielded just two Celica GT-4s for Sainz/Moya and Schwarz/Hertz. Like the Lancias, they had turbocharged engines giving 300 bhp, six-speed geaboxes, 16-inch wheels for tarmac and 15-inch for dirt roads. Lancia used Michelin tyres and Toyota used Pirellis, both companies having developed new types of tyre, both in compound and in tread pattern, for this event.

Ford chose the Italian event to make a

full team return to the World Championship and took three Sierra Cosworth 4x4s, all in Q8 livery, for Wilson/Grist, Fiorio/Pirollo and Delecour/Pauwels. Their 300 bhp engines were coupled to seven-speed gearboxes driving Pirelli-shod wheels which were one inch up on those of Toyota and Lancia; 17-inch for tarmac and 16-inch for dirt roads. Ford Italy entered a Sierra Cosworth 4x4 for former Q8 Ford crew Cunico/Evengelisti and a Group N version for Bentivogli/Gullino.

Minna Sillankorva came from Finland to make a token appearance in a Lancia of the Astra Team, but after satisfying the rules of the ladies section of the World Championship by starting the rally, she promptly retired, more or less assured of the title.

There was a works Skoda from Czechoslovakia driven by Sibera/Gross, another from Finland driven by Aho/Wolff, Sierra Cosworth 4x4s driven by Italian veteran from Monaco 'Tchine' and Peacock/Davies from Great Britain and even a privately entered Vaz Samara 21083 driven by Nikityuk/Volodko from somewhere in what used to be the Soviet Union.

From the start, the running for the lead was expected to be made by Sainz and Kankkunen, but this duel did not get under way at all. On the first proper special stage during the Sunday evening Kankkunen hit a rock and, although he was able to struggle to the end of the stage, the combination of delay and damage was such that he was unable to continue.

This put the ball in Sainz' court, but for the first time in the whole year the Spaniard was thwarted by mechanical trouble and was unable to demonstrate his true mettle. In any case, he was in considerable discomfort and had to wear a neck support following his accidents in Australia.

Even at this early juncture, the Fords were suffering from brake failure on long stages (the first ran for 20 miles) and it seemed that when their pads got really hot they weren't lasting the distance. Wilson had the additional handicap of 'flu.

Ford was not the only team to experience brake problems. The Toyotas' brakes were also fading very badly on long stages, and this was put down to the new pad material. They were even disintegrating after a while.

The fourth stage, where Auriol hit something, flattened his front right tyre and dropped from first to second place, had to be stopped after car 45 had passed because spectators began driving out of the stage along the route itself. The next stage did not even take place at all. The crew of a course car decided that spectators were present in such numbers that it would be dangerous to run it.

After the second group of tarmac stages came a two-hour stop at Il Ciocco and enough service time to enable mechanics to transform cars from tarmac to dirt road specification. Fog became a problem in the morning, though it was probably low cloud, and Sainz side-swiped a tree with his left rear, though he still made best time on that stage. Biasion spun twice, whilst



A conservative run netted a valuable sixth place for Carlos Sainz.

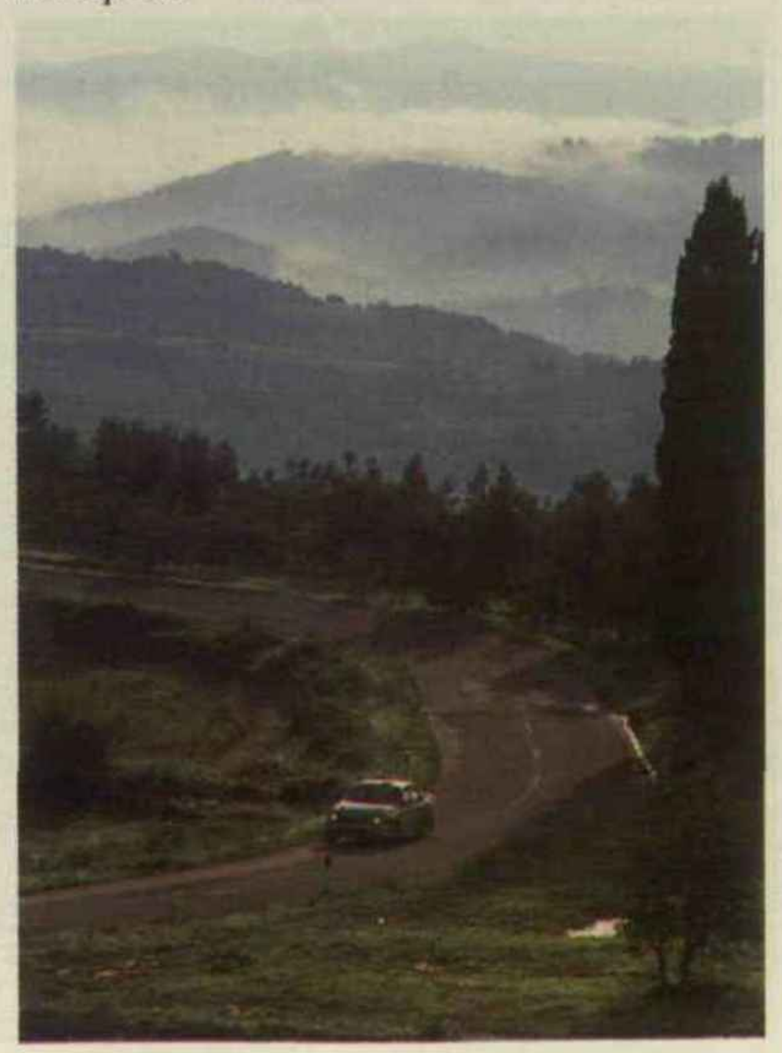
Delecour nearly lost a wheel on a road section due to a front hub which had loosened.

Both Sainz and Schwarz broke front strut top mounts, Delecour had a front left puncture and Wilson lost time by going off the road into a ploughed field. The Sierras were certainly not handling as their drivers wanted and, whenever there was time, various remedies were being tried.

At the Arezzo halt on the Monday, Auriol led by just 22 seconds from Sainz, followed by Biasion, Cerrato, Schwarz and Delecour. With Kankkunen out of the way, Sainz was content to play a waiting game rather than risk everything on the very slippery roads. In any case, his neck was troubling him just as much as his fading brakes.

On the first of Tuesday's stages, Cunico spun in the fog and hit a bank very hard, bursting both water and oil radiators. The car was blocking the stage, so the crew ran back to warn others and, when enough manpower had assembled, the car was pushed to the side of the road. Following cars were at first credited with Delecour's time (14m 21s), the slowest driver to have completed the stage, but later this was declared by the stewards not to be representative and Cerrato's time (13m 56s) was substituted.

François Delecour was first of three Fords in the top 10.



Later, Wilson's rear brakes failed and he had to hold his gear lever whenever he selected third or fourth, whilst Fiorio was left with just rear-wheel-drive after front differential failure. Biasion lost half a minute after going off the road backwards and gave second place back to Sainz. Meanwhile, Sainz, who said that his traction was not as good as it should have been, was not trying to catch Auriol. Being certain of championship points was far too important to risk everything for a win.

In the afternoon, Fiorio had a broken turbocharger replaced and Delecour was given a new gearbox. The replacement had lower ratios and he liked them so much that Wilson also had his changed, he too noticing an immediate improvement.

Sainz' serious problems began when noisy transmission resulted in his gear cluster being changed, an operation which cost him a minute on the road. But the noise persisted, and when engineers deduced that a gearbox main shaft bearing had failed the reigning World Champion was not expected to finish the next stage. But finish it he did, after which there was no alternative to having the gearbox replaced. This added another 6m 30s to his tally of road penalties, dropping him to 10th place. When his front differential and power steering later failed, there seemed no chance that he would be able to take advantage of Kankkunen's early retirement to move substantially further ahead in the World Championship stakes.

Aghini, in one of the Jolly Club Lancias, had been penalised 30 seconds for pushing his car into the closed park at one of the day's regrouping controls, but when



Miki Biasion took second as Lancia finished 1-2-3 on home soil.

this penalty was removed for some odd reason, the Toyota team queried the change and the penalty was restored. Such inexplicable alterations hardly inspired confidence in the accuracy of the results system and teams were paying more attention than usual to their own calculations, based as usual on observations at special stages and time controls.

At Arezzo that evening Auriol's lead over Biasion had increased to 2m 29s. Schwarz was up to third, whilst Sainz was down in 10th. Cerrato, Delecour, Aghini, Wilson, Liatti and Fiorio filled the places from fourth to ninth.

On the Wednesday, a 5.30 am start led to just three dirt road stages before the motorway run back to Sanremo. By this time, the Lancias were slacking their pace to reduce risks and Sainz was setting best times, moving ahead of Fiorio into ninth place. Wilson also moved up from seventh to sixth, but this was not to be for long, a badly miscalculated service stop costing the British driver a considerable road penalty.

In order to reduce engine and transmission stress on the motorway run, the Fords were to have transmission changes after the last of the dirt road stages, but instead of doing this after the Livorno time control which preceded the long road section, for some unaccountable reason it was done before it, when time was limited. Wilson's propshaft proved stubborn to replace, and the operation took longer than expected. The result was seven minutes' lateness at the time control (3m 30s penalty).

Back at Sanremo, Auriol's lead was 2m 37s, whilst Schwarz was just 1m 31s behind Biasion. The Toyota people were not particularly happy, having lost pretty well all their chances of taking the World Championship for Makes and having Sainz in a position which was not going to give him many points in the drivers' series. Even Schwarz' third place was not going to help.

For the final night, having put up with front brake pad failure on most of the long stages, Toyota managed to get hold of the more enduring pad type which they used in Corsica. These were fitted for the long stages, but removed for the shorter ones in order that they would not wear out before the end of the rally.

There was concern in the second part of the night when Schwarz lost second gear, but a replacement was carried out without loss of time. Sainz was still trying to gain a place or two to increase his points tally, and indeed moved up one when Liatti's rear differential broke on a start line. But what happened next came as a surprise for nearly everyone, including Schwarz.

On the direct instructions of team director Andersson, Schwarz drove into the time control before the final stage three minutes early, thus collecting a nine-minute road penalty and dropping from third place to eighth. It seemed a drastic move just to elevate Sainz by one place and give him two more championship points, but with just two events to go (neither Sainz nor Kankkunen went to the Ivory Coast) the decision did have a valid reason, particularly as Kankkunen had eight scores to his credit and Sainz seven. The maximum to be taken into account is nine.

Schwarz did not hide his disappointment at being told to give up his well-deserved third place, but he carried out the instructions without question, saying afterwards that he hoped the two points thus gained by Sainz would turn out to be vital.

Auriol's result pleased him no end, although it was poor recompense for a year filled with disaster and failure after failure. Indeed, in a year of intense activity with the object of the world title in mind, it was his first win since the corresponding event in 1990.

The drivers' title is still to be settled in Spain and the RAC, but the makes' series has now gone to Lancia. In the one remaining event (Spain is only a drivers' qualifier), even if Toyota wins and Lancia scores nothing, the best that Toyota can do is to equal Lancia's score, when the tie decider will come into effect, based on the number of wins followed by the number of second places etc. On that basis, Lancia gets the title by a whisker.

However, although the makes' series is the more important to Lancia, it is the drivers' contest which attracts greatest attention and it does seem that this duel will not be decided until the final round of the year, which will be just over by the time this issue of MOTOR SPORT is published. GP

Sanremo Rally (Italy) – 13 - 17 October, 1991

Results

1.	Didier Auriol (F) / Bernard Occelli (F)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 34m 26s.
2.	Massimo Biasion (I) / Tiziano Siviero (I)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 37m 16s.
3.	Dario Cerrato (I) / Giuseppi Cerri	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 41m 07s.
4.	François Delecour (F) / Anne-Chantal Pauwels (F)	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4, Gp A	6h 44m 41s.
5.	Andrea Aghini (I) / Sauro Farnocchia (I)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 47m 12s.
6.	Carlos Sainz (E) / Luis Moya (E)	Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4, Gp A	6h 47m 33s.
7.	Piero Liatti (I) / Luciano Tedeschini (I)	Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A	6h 48m 12s.
8.	Armin Schwarz (D) / Arne Hertz (S)	Toyota Celica 2000 GT-4, Gp A	6h 48m 26s.
9.	Alessandro Fiorio (I) / Luigi Pirollo (I)	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4, Gp A	6h 50m 12s.
10.	Malcolm Wilson (GB) / Nicky Grist (GB)	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4, Gp A	6h 55m 18s.

87 starters; 40 finishers.

Bandama Rally (Ivory Coast) – 27 - 31 October, 1991

Results

1.	Kenjiro Shinozuka (J) / John Meadows (GB)	Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, Gp A	3h 30m 16s.
2.	Patrick Tauziac (F) / Claude Papin (F)	Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, Gp A	5h 39m 04s.
3.	Rudolf Stohl (A) / Reinhard Kaufmann (A)	Audi 90 Quattro, Gp A	8h 08m 01s.
4.	Patrice Servant (F) / Thierry Pansolin (F)	Audi 90 Quattro, Gp A	9h 29m 19s.
5.	Adolphe Choteau (CI) / Jean-Pierre Claverie (F)	Toyota Corolla 16S, Gp A	9h 47m 26s.
6.	Philippe Doué (F) / Laurent Orlique (F)	Renault Clio, Gp N	10h 08m 35s.
7.	Damien Chabelle (B) / Jacques Delvoux (B)	Suzuki Cultus 1300, Gp A	11h 54m 57s.
8.	Nicolas Min (B) / Josef Lambert (B)	Mazda 323 4wd, Gp N	12h 34m 54s.
9.	Jean-Claude Dupuis (CH) / Nathalie Chastagnol (F)	Toyota Corolla 16S, Gp A	13h 09m 50s.

37 starters; 9 finishers.

World Rally Championship Situation

Drivers (After 12 of 14 rounds)

Carlos Sainz (E)	131 pts.	Armin Schwarz (D)	35 pts.
Juha Kankkunen (SF)	123 pts.	Mikael Ericsson (S)	27 pts.
Didier Auriol (F)	101 pts.	Jorge Recalde (RA)	23 pts.
Massimo Biasion (I)	69 pts.	Kenjiro Shinozuka (J)	23 pts.
Kenneth Eriksson (S)	51 pts.	François Delecour (F)	22 pts.
Markku Alén (SF)	40 pts.	65 drivers have scored points.	

Makes (After 9 of 10 rounds)

Lancia	134 pts.	Subaru	32 pts.
Toyota	128 pts.	Nissan	16 pts.
Ford	46 pts.	BMW	6 pts.
Mitsubishi	45 pts.	Renault	4 pts.
Mazda	38 pts.	Daihatsu	2 pts.

An undeserving case

When Jean-Claude Bertrand launched the Bandama Rally it did not take the French long to figure that this could be their answer to the Safari. The East African event had achieved enormous world acclaim, and why could the Ivory Coast event, in French-speaking West Africa, not do likewise?

But the achievement has never been realised. Mediocre organisation has always marred the event and it has never gained anything like the popularity of the Safari. Indeed, in one year the timing was so tight that there were no finishers at all and the organisers became highly unpopular when they unashamedly held on to the prize money.

Its survival has been due in no small measure to the financial backing of Marlboro, but when that ceased a couple of years ago the organisers were left with precious little funds in order to run the event. This was the case this year, when even such a basic item as paper was in such short supply that no control-by-control penalty lists were produced. Even the travelling press officer, brought in from Belgium, was without transport and had to beg a lift to get to her destination, where she found a room with a few tables and chairs, and a photocopier that didn't work. Not even a telephone!

With such administrational shortcomings, it was not surprising that the operational side was lacking too, and penny-pinching showed up everywhere. Entries were down to 37, despite the event's inclusion in both world and African championships. Neither Kankkunen nor Sainz felt inclined to go, and their teams agreed, whilst contestants in the African series kept away after Satwant Singh clinched the title when Billy Rautenbach put his Celica off the road on the previous round.

The only factory-supported car of any kind was the Mitsubishi Galant VR-4 of Kenjiro Shinozuka and John Meadows and Shinozuka earned the distinction of being the first Japanese driver ever to win a round of the World Rally Championship, an achievement he thoroughly deserves as he has been around for a long time and has competed in a whole variety of rallies, both in and out of the championship.

Another foreign visitor was that erstwhile Austrian adventurer Rudolf Stohl who drove his Audi 90 Quattro with Reinhard Kaufmann. Stohl's son Manfred was at the wheel of a chase car which had been entered in the event and he was overjoyed to find himself in third place after the opening 'superspecial' stage.

The initial lead went to Rudolf himself, ahead of local man Patrick Tauziac in a Galant VR-4, but when the real rallying started, on sections timed in minutes, not seconds, the Austrian dropped to third place, behind Tauziac and Shinozuka.

The Japanese driver took the lead when Tauziac dropped right out of the top 10, partly due to slowing in order to lessen the effects of overheating and partly because his mechanics seemed to have difficulty changing his fan.

Local man Patrick Copetti had been expected to do well but he dropped out when the engine of his Audi 90 gave up, whilst another Abidjan resident, Samir Assef, who came to the Ivory Coast from Lebanon many years ago, stopped in a cloud of smoke when the engine of his Celica also cried enough.

Manfred Stohl had the misfortune to hit a tree stump when he yanked the wheel around to avoid a cow, this ripping off a front wheel and putting his Audi out of the rally. After fettling, he continued as a chase car driver to aid his father. Father, on the other hand, had been slowed by the dust of other chase cars. At the end of the first leg, back at Abidjan, Shinozuka was in the lead by some 20 minutes, whilst going well at this time were Hiroshi Nishiyama, who had brought a Nissan Pulsar, and Frenchman Jean-Marc Dionneau in a Celica.



Kenjo Shinozuka: the first Japanese driver to win a World Championship event.

Early in the second leg, initially identical to the first, there was some confusion when a passage control appeared some five miles off-plot, its marshals having presumably failed to identify the correct location. Jean-Pierre van der Wauwer, the Belgian who came close to winning last year, made a spectacular exit from the rally when he hit a mud hole very hard and flew off the road into a river, fortunately without injury.

Servant lost considerable time after searching for the cause of an electrical failure, whilst Tauziac wasted almost as much time exploring a ditch. As is the custom on this event, traditional tribal dancers greet competitors at ever major town or village, and John Meadows considerably enhanced the reputation of the British when he joined in at Bouake. By this time, Stohl's clutch was slipping badly, probably due to water and mud, and he resorted to the traditional and usually very effective cure of Coca-Cola injections. No doubt Vim was not available as an additive!

Before Yamoussoukro, birthplace of the country's president and its political capital, Shinozuka had a precautionary change of gearbox and front differential, removing just eight minutes from his lead, whilst Stohl had overshot a junction in the town approaches, letting Tauziac into second place. Servant lost a huge chunk of time in search of the electrical failure which slowed him earlier, finally tracing it to a broken wire in the depths of a complex loom.

The stops at Yamoussoukro have always been in the vast and somewhat superfluous Hotel President, the mushroom-shaped tower of which overshadows the city (village!) approaches. Even the entire entourage of the rally can never fill this place, but this year the presence of an African leaders' conference reduced the space considerably as each delegation required a complete floor.

The next leg, after going initially to the north-west as far as Seguela, turned left towards Daloa and Gagnoa, traditional passage points of the Bandama Rally. Stohl was in trouble just as he left the Seguela closed park, hitting a low wall with a front wheel and breaking the wishbone. Nishiyama did the same thing, breaking a wheel and puncturing two tyres. Both cars needed immediate attention, and this must have disrupted service arrangements for what was going to be a tough night.

Of the 37 starters, only 18 restarted from the short stop at Seguela, and by the time the rally reached Gagnoa only nine were left. Already out were Italian driver Bedini who had destroyed the shock absorbers of his Golf and Frenchman Pierre Bos who hit a hole so hard that his front wheels were at right angles to each other. Nishiyama did something similar, losing both a wheel and its halfshaft.

Before the finish, after a welcome stop on the splendid coast at Grand Berebi, Stohl lost some more time when his rear differential failed, whilst Servant's clutch began to slip so badly towards the end that he couldn't even climb the finish ramp!

It's a shame that the Bandama Rally has failed to achieve the status it might have deserved. The terrain certainly lends itself to exciting and adventurous rallying in the best African style, but the country's infrastructure and a distinct lack of appreciation of the needs of World Championship competition has resulted in its never making the grade. On current form, it doesn't deserve consideration for next year. GP

Pre-race testing at Snetterton (above and right) showed the Clio's suspension to be about as supple as concrete. Vive le Sport *(below) : Renault's one-make saloon involvement in the UK has lasted 17 years.*

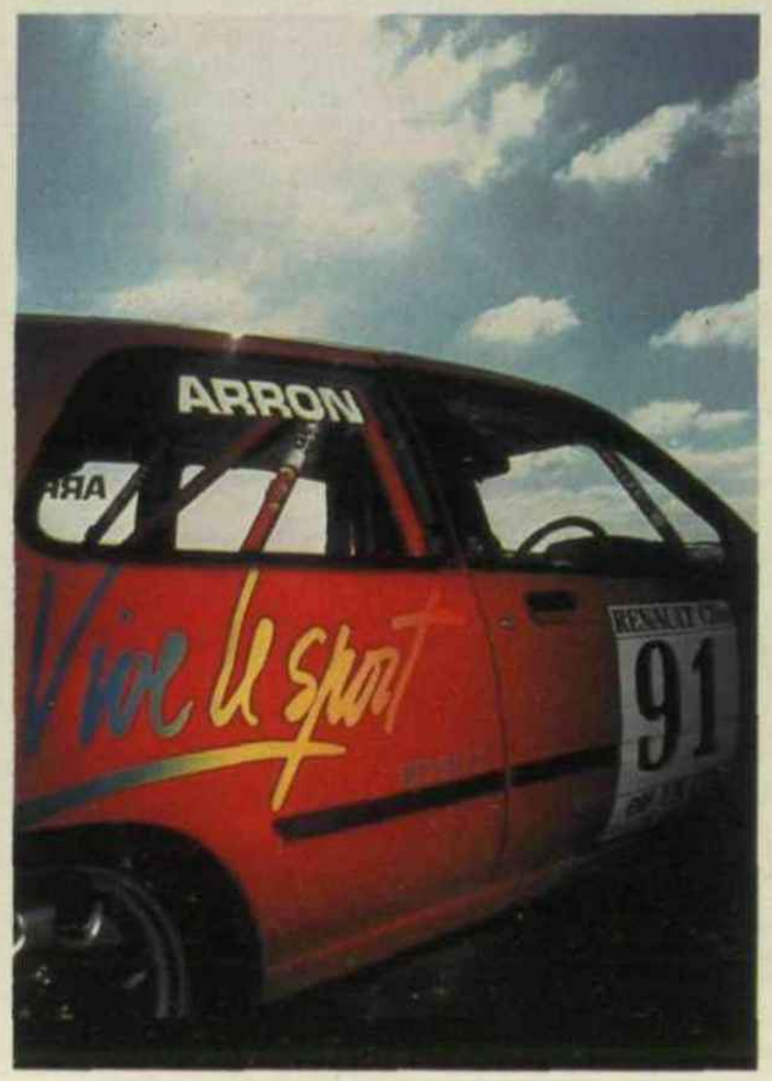
Highly Sprung

Crunch. Scrape. Bang. Rat-a-tat. Wallop. It sounds like the musical score from *Platoon* being thrashed out with more than average gusto by Black Sabbath, but apparently all Renault Clio Elf UK Cup racers make the same noise. It's to do with the stiffness of the front suspension and the proximity of the Michelin slicks to the Noryl GTX (which sounds like an oil, but is in fact a strong plastic composite material) front wings. Those who've driven the suave 137 bhp road car will take some convincing that so little work is required to transform it into a perky one-make racer.

Several months before launching the Clio 16v, Renault UK Motorsport imported 50 for racing purposes. Priced at £11,995, they came complete with roll cage and race preparation kit. The latter comprises shorter front springs, an engine management computer and a competition exhaust. Teams are allowed to fiddle around with tracking, cambers and rear ride height, while brake pad choice is free. Otherwise, you are allowed to do nothing more adventurous than adjust tyre pressures.

"We prefer it that way," says Bill O'Donnell, charged with preparing Radbourne Racing's two championship entries, one of which was entrusted to MOTOR SPORT at Brands Hatch. "It reduces the likelihood of cheating."

As with any one-make category, the Renault Clio Elf UK Cup is strictly policed, and in its first year it has been generally



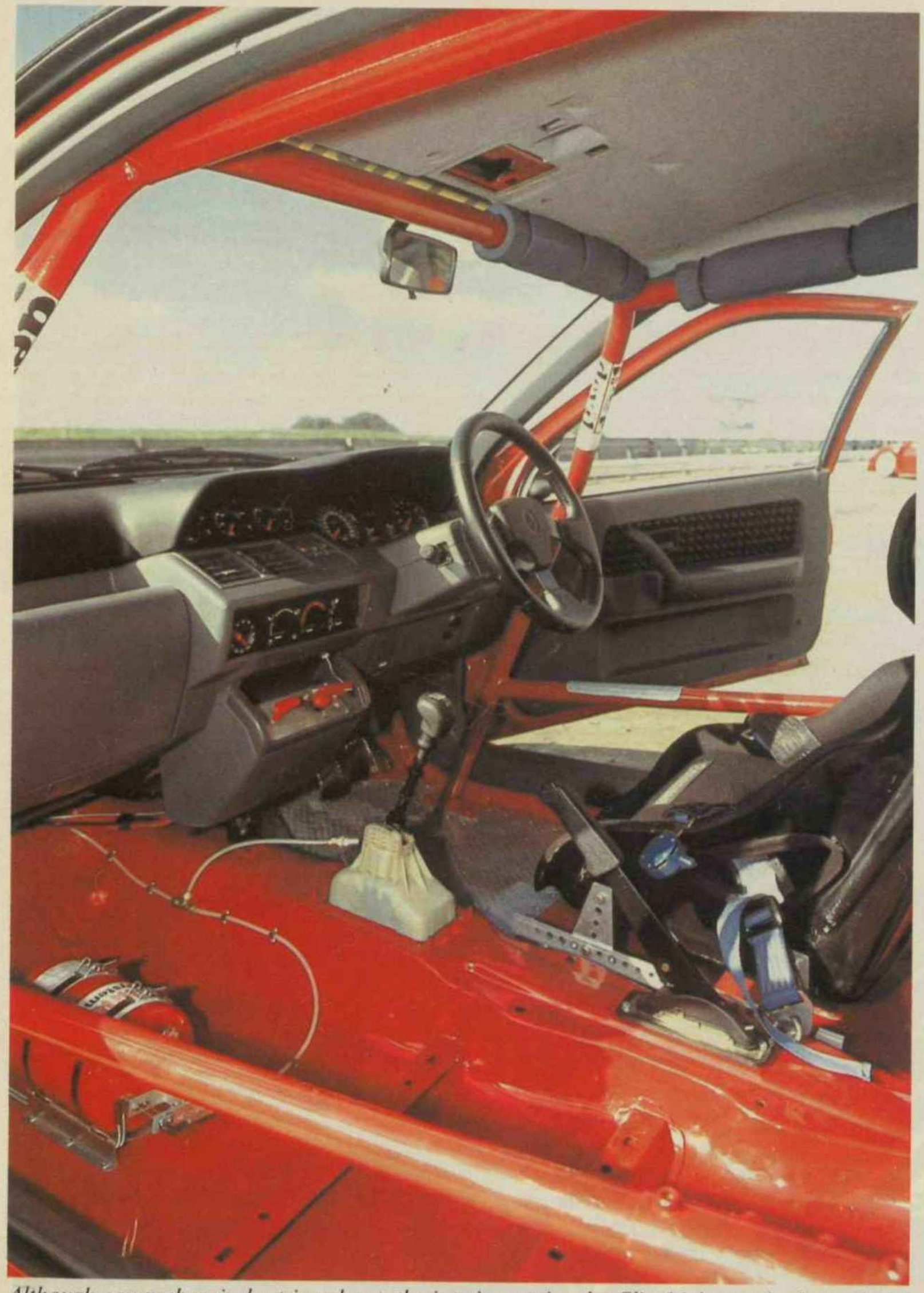
free of controversy.

Despite the plethora of one-make racing that now exists in Britain, the races have been well-subscribed, with over 20 drivers competing regularly. Renault has supported one-make racing since 1974, and it knows how to market a product and attract support. A prize fund of £130,000 certainly helps.

So popular have previous Renault series been that they all still exist, albeit without manufacturer support. Thus there are upwards of 30 5TS racers competing regularly in club events, and the same is true of the 5GT Turbo. Once such series lose Renault's official backing – which happens as successive models are superceded – it creates a ready supply of relatively cheap racing saloons. The 5TS series is the longest running of its kind anywhere in the world; it absolutely staggers the French that we should still be racing the things . . . And such is the championship's popularity that it may well still be around when the Clio eventually gets a facelift.

But back to the present. Away from the regimented qualifying format at a Grand Prix, there isn't much time to acclimatise oneself to a new car during a qualifying session. At a national race meeting, you're


RENAULT CLIO ELF UK CUP
elf
CHELIN
FACOM
Clio
RENAULT
PHILIPS car stereo
elf
MICHELIN
FACOM



Although comprehensively stripped out, the interior retains the Clio 16v's standard wheel and dash.

lucky to get 20 minutes. Around Brands Hatch, that equated to slightly more track time than you got in the 10-lap race itself.

Thus a morning's testing was arranged at Snetterton, Brands' GP circuit not being available for the purpose and its short track habitually having its sessions interrupted to allow the retrieval of Formula Ford cars from gravel traps. Snetterton is ideal in all respects bar its location. Unless you live in Bury St Edmunds or Norwich, a typical journey is arduous. It does however have an interesting mix of corners, so you get a reasonable impression of what a car is like in most conditions. Being in the middle of nowhere, its availability for testing is almost unlimited. Sadly, the controlling Brands Hatch Leisure group has announced plans to sell the site for housing, although it has tentatively said that it will seek another motor racing site nearby. If such a site exists, why not leave Snetterton as it is, and build the houses there instead? Answers on a postcard please to the Norfolk School of Economics, nr Thetford . . .

O'Donnell did warn me that the Clios were not easy to drive quickly. Many of the pace-setters use a left-foot braking technique in order to achieve a decent cornering balance. Fine if you've practised the technique, but not the sort of thing you want to perfect in the limited time available. Renault is very proud of the way its Noryl wings spring back into shape after mild impacts, but there are few places at Snetterton to have such things, so conventional braking seems like the best bet.

After three gentle laps to bed in fresh brake pads, O'Donnell permits a more aggressive approach. That translates to around 7,800 rpm through the gears, and as it's best to keep the engine straining beyond 6,000 rpm at all times, certain corners tend to be tackled one gear lower than you might previously imagined.

Thus the tight right-hander at Sears, easy third gear fodder for most saloons, is best tackled in second if you don't want to burble, off-cam, onto the long Revett Straight.

The most immediately obvious characteristic of the Clio is the aforementioned stiffness. Through the loping right-hander at Coram it bounces violently, the steering is on full lock against the rack stops and it all feels most uncomfortable. There follows a nasty wiggle, which replaced the controversial Russell Corner a couple of seasons ago. Here, the Clio simply doesn't want to know. The slow right-left is completed in a series of hops, skips and jumps. Getting any power to the road, leastways smoothly, is a hopeless task.

As O'Donnell had suggested, the Clio is not an easy racer to master, though at least Snetterton served as a useful pre-Brands eye-opener.

Previous personal experience of the Brands GP circuit amounted to one lap as passenger in a Ford Transit and one-third of a qualifying session for a round of the TVR Tuscan challenge. The latter ended against the Clearways tyre wall, on a day when there weren't enough spare parts to go around. As long as the car survived practice, this would be my first actual *race* on the longer Brands track.

Team-mate Jonathan Salem, a former Formula 750 racer now in his third Renault tin-top season, offered plenty of helpful tips from his lofty perch as a regular top-six finisher. While he agreed with some of my Snetterton impressions, he felt that the Coram phenomenon could have been due to excessive steering input on the driver's part.

The Radbourne entry is beautifully turned out by O'Donnell and sidekick Mick O'Brien, and their relaxed attitude belies some of the dramas the team has suffered during the season. During qualifying for the opening race at Donington, both cars were all but destroyed when they collided . . . with each other. The fact that their latest guest forgot to pack a pair of fireproof socks doesn't bother them; happily, a delay in an earlier practice session allowed sufficient time to purchase a replacement set and still make the assembly area on time.

Within a couple of laps, the Clio already feels a touch more accommodating than the awkward beast encountered at Snetterton. Through the hairpin at Druids it trampolines briefly, and it doesn't much like the left-hander onto the Grand Prix loop at Surtees. That was more the driver's fault than the car's. On one lap, having sailed past what I had previously taken to be the braking point, I actually discovered a better line, though this subsequently proved elusive for the balance of the day.

The quick section around the back of the circuit is worth savouring. Through the rapid right-handers at Hawthorns and Westfield, the Clio feels utterly stable. The following Dingle Dell chicane has attracted

Close racing is typical of the Renault Clio Elf UK Cup. The competition is hard, but generally fair.

plenty of criticism, so many times has it caught out the unwary, but in something as (relatively) tame as the Clio it has a huge grin factor. Spectators reported that poleman David Kay's commitment through there was just *awesome*. It felt exciting enough setting 16th fastest time, even that involving a short spell on two wheels after a brush with the right-hand kerb.

Throughout practice, this whole area was liberally covered with gravel, the consequence of several miscreants having run a yard or so too wide. There isn't much room here for error. Team-mate Salem reckoned that it was possible to take it flat, but found this not to be the case when there are marbles all over the track surface. He wound up axle deep in the kitty litter. His day took a further turn for the worse when a gearbox mounting broke 200 yards after the start; Alderley Edge to Swanley is a long round trip for around seven minutes' sport.

"It's just been one of those days," he sighed, taking some consolation that his next event would form part of the Italian Grand Prix support programme at Monza. The International Renault Clio Cup is another bonus for front-runners, who are invited to take on their European counterparts at five major meetings, including the Monaco GP and Spa 24 Hours. (Each round has a £20,000 prize fund, which might not keep McLaren in cocktail cherries for a season, but to an amateur it represents a worthwhile pecuniary return.)

Although you need to keep the engine in the outer orbit of its rev range once on the move, the start procedure demands a degree of moderation. Anything over 3500 rpm will produce more in the way of tyre smoke than grip. The steering wheel tugs slightly to the right as the clutch bangs in, but thereafter the Clio tracks a straight course, gaining a couple of places into Paddock . . . and then promptly losing them again at Surtees (driver asleep). A

As Bill O'Donnell checks for holes in the block, Mick O'Brian ponders a replacement unit further up the pit lane.



couple more mistakes on the second lap allow the chain of a dozen or so cars ahead to draw away, while the bunch behind are at least 10 metres adrift. It's amazing how much ground one locked brake can cost when the cars are so evenly matched. Until a couple of recovering spinners joined me towards the end, it was quite a lonely afternoon, which eventually netted 13th place in the 23-car field.

That doesn't mean it was uneventful. The Clio demands a particular blend of brutality and precision, a compromise which demands accuracy to within about 14 decimal places if you want to be truly competitive. Like most one-make racers, the Clio tolerates a degree of kerb-bashing, but there is a very fine line between gaining time and clattering into the fence. Finding that line is not five minutes' work; it is no surprise that the leading runners test regularly.

This all adds to the expense, of course, taking into account time spent off work, circuit hire, travel and fuel (plus the increased risk of mechanical or accidental damage). On the flipside, the Renault Clio Elf UK Cup does give competitors the opportunity to perform at some of Britain's top race meetings. That, complete with healthy prize money and start bonuses (Elf offers £100 per driver) helps to soften some of the blow, and also explains why Renault's 17 years of unbroken devotion to the one-make cause have attracted such consistent support. SA



David Coulthard and Rubens Barrichello fought all year for the F3 title, the Brazilian finally edging ahead. Both should be in F3000 in 1992.

Variety pack

The bald fact of Rubens Barrichello winning Dick Bennetts's West Surrey Racing team a second consecutive British F3 title does not truly reflect just how competitive things were at the front in 1991. Both David Coulthard (Paul Stewart Racing) and Gil de Ferran (Edenbridge Engineering) looked in with a strong chance until Barrichello rescued victory from the jaws of defeat with a dominant late season run. Significantly, all three drivers were enjoying their first full year of F3, though Barrichello had competed in the formula in South America in-between winning the 1990 GM Lotus Euroseries.

Barrichello and his WSR Ralt-Mugen had always looked the quickest combination, but the very first race gave a good pointer as to the pattern much of his season was to follow. Having secured pole position, he stalled away from the lights and didn't even make it to the first corner. Time after time, he threw what, post-qualifying, had looked formality victories away due to less than spectacular starts and opening laps.

Concurrently, PSR's Coulthard took a while to master the art of laying down an F3 qualifying lap, but was making it look a somewhat redundant skill anyway. He habitually made screaming starts, put together aggressively brilliant first laps and kept a calculating head under the most extreme pressure to run off with a series of wins which looked destined to bring him the crown.

Against this backdrop de Ferran and the Edenbridge team were bringing Reynard back to the fore as a marque to be taken seriously once more after a couple of desultory British F3 seasons. Were it not for Edenbridge and Reynard getting together when the series was already a few races old, the story of the campaign might well have been different.

Finn Pekka Herva won class B.



Completing the somewhat different pattern of the season, there were two new marques which showed themselves capable of winning, the TOM'S-Toyota succeeding in doing so at a first attempt, the Bowman-VW showing it had the potential to do so, without ever quite pulling off the feat.

With pole position man Barrichello stalled on the grid, Rickard Rydell drove the TOM'S to a debut victory. This Toyota-funded outfit brought F1 construction standards to F3 with the beautiful black 031F. Designer Andy Thorby had come up with a full carbon-fibre monocoque of very low and slim aspect. It was a staggeringly effective car through the fast corners. However, aside from that first Silverstone win, Rydell spent the rest of the season trying to counteract a lack of sheer straightline speed and unfortunately kept intact his record of opening his account with a win but failing to add to it thereafter. (In 1989 he also won the opening British F3 round, and last year he repeated the trick in British F3000.) Whether it was the design or the motive power which accounted for the car's relative lack of mph was open to question, but politically there could never be any question of substituting the Toyota unit with the more common (and success-



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Guided by Roly Vincini, Gil de Ferran didn't take long to make the Reynard 913 a winner.

ful) Honda-based Mugen.

The Bowman too was a carbon-fibre tub, designed by Bruce Carey, formerly of Ralt but more recently responsible for engineering the Bowman team's VW-powered Ralts to a performance advantage over the competition (giving David Brabham the 1989 title). Even lower than the TOM'S, the BC1 relied upon the VW Spiess motor once more, rather against the tide of fashion in the UK. Initially drivers Steve Robertson and Oswaldo Negri found the car undriveable, so much so that Robertson decided to forsake it and concentrate on the team's Ralt. But with steady development, the most notable being a significant increase in its very narrow track, the BC1 came good. Negri started it from the front row four times but in the latter half of the season it was quite plain that the engines were down on power. The official team line was that the Spiess was more adversely affected by the hot weather than the Mugens. Whatever, it prevented the car from realising its full potential and by the end of the year a Mugen-powered example had already been built.

But amid all this innovation, it was the conventional old-style aluminium tubbed Ralts and composite construction Reynard that were doing the winning. Both WSR and PSR relied on the RT35, the latest update of the Ron Tauranac concept first unveiled in the mid '80s. Both, in common with most of the field, inserted Neil Brown-prepared Mugen engines into the back.

Although the combination of Barrichello's driving and Bennetts's engineering saw them taking pole positions almost at will, race wins proved harder to come by in the early season, winning only at Thruxton (round two, after another poor start) and Donington (round eight, after Coulthard retired on the first lap whilst leading). Scotsman Coulthard, on the other hand, had defeated the Brazilian fair and square five times and with just three rounds to go he enjoyed a 10-point cushion at the head of the table. As in all good stories though, there was a sting in the tail as Coulthard suffered an appalling run in the last three races, with Barrichello romping to dominant wins in two of them. He could probably have won the last one too, but needing only to finish within sight of Coulthard, played it safe and allowed Robertson's Bowman Ralt (by now with a Mugen in place of its Spiess) to take its second Thruxton win of the year. Coulthard failed to finish in any case, losing his nose fin against the car of Hideki Noda when trying to take second place from him.

De Ferran had fallen out of title contention in the previous race. But he had shown the Reynard 913-Mugen to be perhaps the quickest car around when it was working at its best. Unfortunately the lateness of the deal meant that Edenbridge was discovering things in testing and qualifying that should really have been established during the off-season.

Reynard's Roly Vincini was the man responsible for developing the less-than-successful 903 model into its much torsionally stiffer replacement, but the new-to-F3 Edenbridge outfit must take major credit for catching the ball and running with it. It was Edenbridge who transformed the 913 from a nearly car to a race winner with a package of changes centering on new front and rear wings, de Ferran winning at Brands in May then following up with two consecutive Silverstone victories, one of them at the GP-support round.

The only other race winner was Hideki Noda who came out on top in his Alan Docking Ralt after a great battle with de Ferran. Noda's season was compromised somewhat by a mid-season damper problem which took a time to trace. In the remaining races, he was sometimes an aggressive front runner, sometimes a little less than that in his second season of the formula. His team-mate was a new boy in the shape of Dutchman Marcel Albers who improved virtually each tine out, to the point where he will start 1992 as one of the strong championship favourites. Another front-runner failing to win a race was Barrichello's team-mate Jordi Gene, who took some sort of record for finishing second.

Class B for older cars was taken by Finland's Pekka Herva, driving for the Fred Goddard team, though he faced stern second-half competition from young American Sandy Brody, who flew once he got himself into an Alan Docking-run machine.

Barrichello has already confirmed his graduation to European F3000 in '92 on his way to F1, whilst de Ferran and Coulthard look likely to join him there. British F3, which remains far more cosmopolitan than its main European counterparts, continues to be the formula's most prestigious proving ground.

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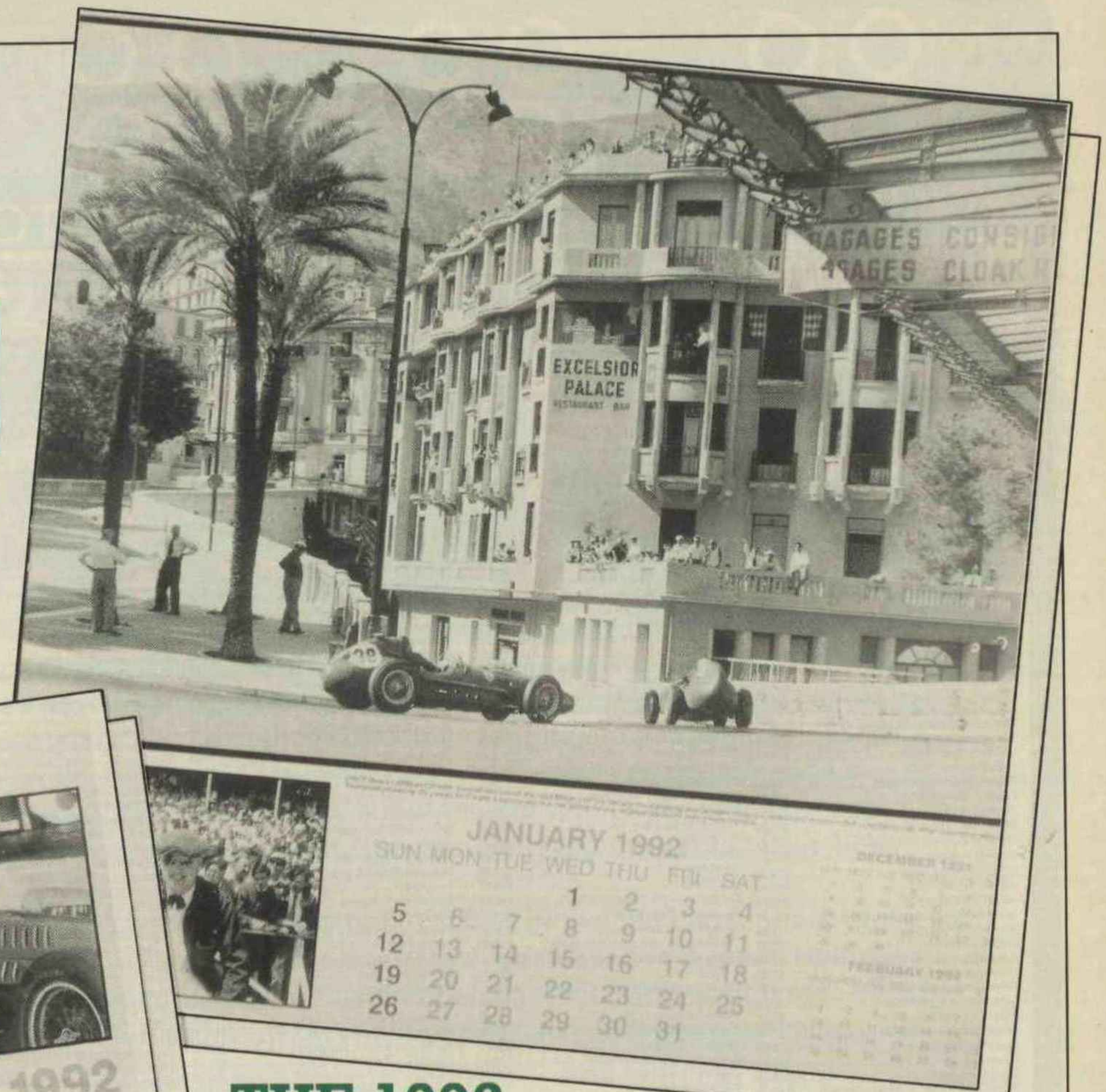
The slimline Bowman (here in Oswaldo Negri's hands at Snetterton) showed promise, but ultimately failed to win a race.



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Breaking the Mould

No foreign-based driver has ever won the Formula Ford Festival, though a couple of Europeans have come close. Now the Americans fancy their chances in one of motor racing's toughest events.

Why, after a championship-winning season in their homeland, should anybody want to step down 110 bhp to risk their reputation in a lottery such as the Duckhams Formula Ford Festival?

Good question. Prior to entering the Brands Hatch cauldron at the end of October, 21 year-old Californian Bryan Herta's career had maintained a sharply ascendant course. If he flopped at Brands, it might do his career irreparable harm. Team managers take notice of Festival performances, and Herta had half an eye on a British F3 campaign for 1992 . . .

He started racing cars at the age of 18, after a six-year spell in karts. The latter netted six regional championships, which isn't as Mickey Mouse as its sounds. California, lest we forget, isn't much smaller than Britain. He had one stab at the national karting title, finishing second.

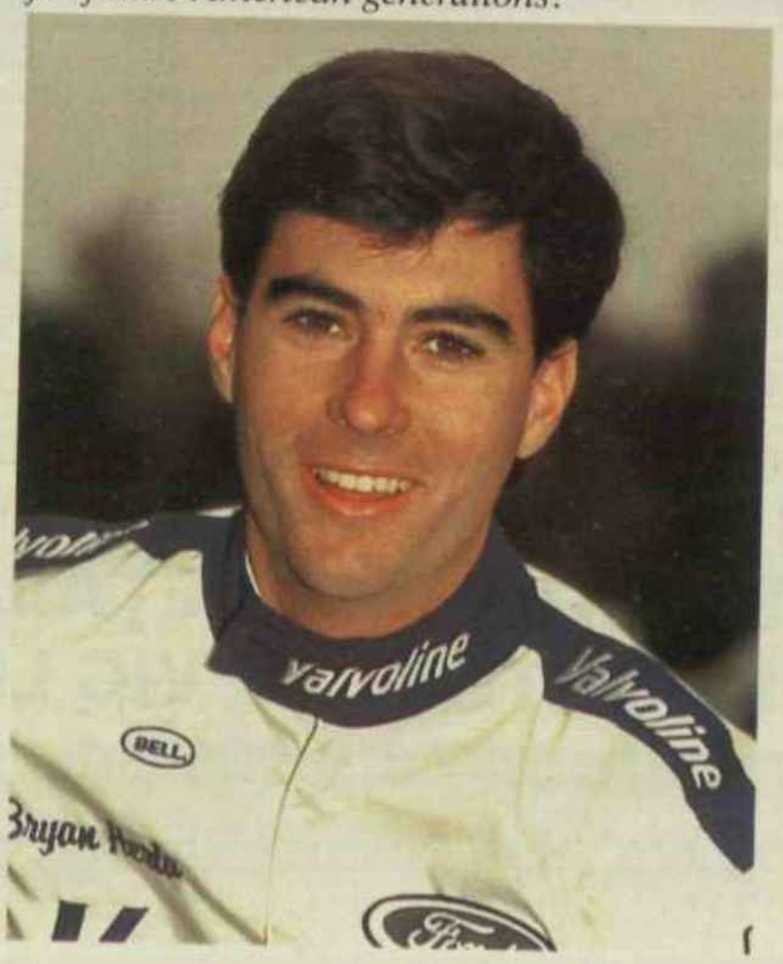
His introduction to cars came via Skip Barber's racing school. Completing a season of races in the institution's well-used fleet of Mondiale chassis, he won no fewer than 14 of the 18 events.

The next step was the national Barber Saab series, for monotype single-seaters with slicks, wings and around 220 bhp from Saab's turbocharged 2.3 four-cylinder. Consistent top five placings, one pole position and three fastest laps marked him as a man to watch in his debut season. This year, after finishing 21st in the opening race at West Palm Beach, he was a model of consistency, taking four wins, three second places, three thirds and a fourth. It was enough to give him the championship by just three points, from Briton Johnny Robinson, and with it he collected a $100,000 career advancement purse. Therein lies something of an irony. Robinson, who won seven Barber Saab events this year, was a successful Formula Ford racer who quit British motorsport after failing to secure sufficient funds to race sensibly in F3 . . .

So after such a successful season, why did Bryan take the decision to contest the toughest assignment of all in a formula with which he was unfamiliar?

"I really fancied the challenge. I read the British motorsporting press regularly, and I'd heard all about the Festival. I knew it would be difficult, but I wanted to measure myself against some of the best young Europeans.

Bryan Herta (in action, top) : setting the trend for future American generations?



"The whole approach to racing over here is so different, so much more intense. With all the testing, I reckon you cover two or three times the number of miles per season that we do in the States."

His Festival opportunity was financed by several modest donations from some of America's most prominent motor racing figures: Carl Haas, Tony Dowe (of Tom Walkinshaw Racing's American division), Steve Horne (of Truesports) and Bobby Rahal all dipped into their pockets, topping up the budget from Valvoline and Ford SVO.

His passage was assisted by magazine publisher Paul Pfanner and expatriate English journalist Jeremy Shaw, who inexplicably decided several years ago that covering Indycar races from a base on the West Coast was preferable to reporting on Formula Three at Thruxton. Shaw competed at the Festival himself a decade ago, driving a works Lanan chassis built up by racer-turned-engineer John Bright. Last year, he re-established contact with Bright to set up a deal to run another American hotshoe, Jimmy Vasser, in the Festival.

After posting promising testing times with the Lanan chassis, Vasser was an early casualty, crashing on the first lap of his heat.

The deal had been put together in a rush, but it was a start. This time around, everything was better prepared, and Lanan agreed to run a proven, mass-production chassis, selecting a Reynard for the purpose.

In the week prior to the Festival, Brands Hatch is awash with Formula Ford cars.

Even testing has a frenetic atmosphere; on one day, there were no fewer than 37 red flag incidents . . .

Herta didn't waste time working out what modern Formula Ford was about. "My experience with the school Mondiales didn't count for much. They were training cars, pure and simple, set up really soft and with hack engines. The Reynard is something quite different." On Wednesday, he lapped in a respectable 48.5s, which gave reasonable cause for optimism. And then, during official qualifying on Friday, a misfire set in.

John Bright knows all about chassis. For the last two years he has looked after Damon Hill in the European Formula 3000 Championship. But he is not, by his own admission, an engine man. And the team didn't have a spare unit. Tuner Jay Ivey couldn't make the trip, and a Transatlantic telephone call was unable to throw much light on the problem. "I spoke to Jay and he asked 'Is it cold?'," grinned Bright. "I replied 'Of course it's cold. We're at Brands Hatch and it's late October.' It wasn't the best way to get to the root of the problem." John tried altering the jets, but no matter what he touched the unit continued to splutter erratically. Despite that, Herta lined up seventh for his heat, aided in part by the damp conditions. "I think that had to be the most satisfying aspect of the whole weekend, because the car was far from right when we did that."

For the race, a solution was at hand. Fellow American Bobby Carville had a spare, Ted Wenz-prepared engine which he duly loaned. There were plenty of offers from British tuners, but it was important to the team to keep as many US ingredients as possible in place.

In his heat, Bryan picked his way through to third place, just nicking the place in a frantic, three-way sprint for the line. "After that, we just picked up places here and there at each stage. I think we maintained a reasonable progression throughout the weekend."

As competition became stiffer by the round, he finished fourth in the quarter-final, eighth in the semi and, eventually, 11th in the final itself. "The target originally was to make the final and finish it," he beamed afterwards. "If we were in the top half of the stack, so much the better. Basically we achieved our objective, and hopefully this will encourage more Americans to come over here in future. I think we showed that we can be competitive."



Festival winner Marc Goossens leads Russell Ingall and eventual runner-up Warren Hughes during their epic final battle.

All in all, the venture was rated a success. But what of the future? Herta does not plan to tackle the Festival again. "I don't think it would benefit my career, though I've really enjoyed it. The standard of driving is really high, and these guys are *seriously* competitive. Now I want to move up from Barber Saab, so I'm going to spend 10 days talking to F3 teams in the UK. The problem is always going to be money though. The recession has hit the States the same way as it's hit you guys over here.

"Although the Barber Saab cars have more power than F3, I think it would be rash to try and jump straight into F3000. A couple of years in F3 would get me used to the European way of doing things, and allow me to settle in. At my age, there's no need to rush."

If he can't find the funds to switch to Europe, the most likely step is a season in the Indy Lights (né ARS) series, America's own equivalent of Formula 3000.

Ever since its inception in 1986, ARS has struggled to establish real credibility, particularly in ever-cynical Europe. Herta feels its future is bright, however.

"The good thing for me is that it follows Barber Saab principles, with fixed specification chassis and engines. That's what I'm used to, and I like that type of racing because it really puts the emphasis on driver ability. I know it's had a couple of bad seasons, but interest is growing for 1992. In the past, the tyre regulations have changed at the end of almost every season, but now that situation is looking more stable. I know Formula Atlantic has been stronger in numbers this year, but it's proved to be costlier than Indy Lights, and there may be a few defectors.

"It could do with testing restrictions and a ban on spare cars to limit costs, like they've just done with F3000 in Europe, but it offers reasonable value and it'll be easier for me to raise an Indy Lights budget than it will to persuade someone to sponsor me in F3."

By the time you read this, Herta may have tried an F3 car for the first time. He is desperately keen to make his mark in Europe, but his outlook is sensible. If no deal is forthcoming, he's quite happy to ply his trade at home. Besides, if the likes of Haas and Rahal are happy to help him at this stage of his career, his efforts can't have gone unnoticed.

He's gaining in experience all the time, and the success of his Festival campaign offered further confirmation of his potential. "Plus I got to stay in a real English bed and breakfast. That was great . . ." SA

The festival can be a lottery. Here, Jason Pollock's weekend comes to an early end.





Civil Service

As a Mercedes Benz badge is one of the most coveted in motoring,it seems appropriate that the same company should also offer the most envied suffix in premium price sports motoring: SL. The initials were first seen in 1952 and factory literature translated the appellation into English as "Sport Light", a cross-reference to the "L" for lightweight tubular chassis and an inline six cylinder engine developed from that of the 300S.

That gullwing competitor and its 1954 production descendant eventually led to an appraisal of the commercial worth of selling a luxury sports car under the SL badge, a process which has been incredibly profitable even by Benz standards. The original gullwing series were far from rare beasts (the factory reports that "a total of 1400 gullwings were built") and the commercialisation of that emotive SL badge has seen production by the thousand as routine: some 25,881 of the 190 SL were made from 1955-63 and 49,912 of its "pagoda" top 230/250/280 SL successor.

The car to bear the 300 SL badge today is a very different animal to the competitor of 1952, and is anything but lightweight at a kerbside 33.2 cwt, over 1.6 tons. There is a six cylinder, 3-litre, engine in the variant we tested. It has all the right power-producing credentials: fuel injection, DOHC, four valves per cylinder. However, it is hitched up to a 5-speed automatic with a kerb weight which means a power to weight ratio inferior to many mundane "hot hatchbacks." The result is the finest of touring 2+2s, one that pampers its owner beyond belief (but not to the peaceful travel standards of Jaguar) and yet remains fun to hustle in ungentlemanly manner. Truly the 1989 debutante 300 SL-24 should be renamed 300 TLS, or "Touring Luxury Sport, " as comfortable speed is its apparent priority.

The UK range

To exceed 150 mph, a 1991-2 Mercedes SL customer must opt for the V8. Demand does seem slightly higher for these eight cylinder variants. A major London-based dealer dispelled all those "wait for two years, and may be you'll go on the waiting list," warnings. His brisk answer to our telephone query on delivery dates was: "we have November production availability of 300 SL, which means you can have one in January 1992, or December production availability for the V8s, which means February UK delivery." Could we have any colour we like? "Certainly sir, you lay down the specification and it will be built to that schedule," was the prompt reply. Mercedes is not alone in witnessing the decimation of waiting lists. We understand that "if you are not fussy about the colour," a Lotus Elan can be "yours tomorrow" from one of the largest London Lotus outlets.

The basic range of Mercedes SL offerings in the UK comprises: an SOHC 6-cylinder 300SL of 190 bhp at a sniff under £50, 000 (49,960); the 300 SL-24v tested here at £54,460 and the 32-valve V8 of 326 bhp at a list £70, 090. All SLs have automatic transmission as their standard fitment, but that of the test car was an optional (£723.37) 5-speed rather than the standard 4-speed. Showroom standard equipment on all SL models is headed by the aluminium hard-top; we took delivery of the car in this form and then went back to Milton Keynes (at the request of the company) to make sure it was removed and stored efficiently whilst we enjoyed open air motoring for the majority of the week. Also included at these elevated list prices are electronic anti-lock braking; power assistance of steering, side glass, mirrors; convertible top; rollover hoop; central locking; radio aerial (but not the radio/stereo entertainment unit itself; that is still left to customers at unspecified extra cost). Small details such as walnut wood finishes and a first aid kit are also included.

Comprehensive though the showroom specification may seem — and the V8 incorporates items such as leather seating and metallic paint — our demonstrator demonstrated that the UK list price is virtually irrelevant. "Our" car cost £10,806.55p more that the list cost. Enough to buy quite a decently rapid small saloon.

Technical analysis

First sketches and outline features for a new generation of SL convertible 2+2 coupes were rendered in 1979. At the time, a mid-engine layout was a distinct possibility (perhaps utilising the Wankel unit) but by 1982 the serious graft had begun. The company told us at the launch, "nearly 20 models, all to 1/5th scale, were built as the design emerged. Full sized clay, wood or plastic models were also built. The roof posed particular headaches, as the safety aspects of the new car were laid down in the original brief. One idea, later abandoned, was to have a finned roof with a rigid rollover bar. In all, 34 designs of roof were examined."

The rakish but plump machine was created in its final form by 1985, complete with the rollover bar that automatically erects (prompted by a G-sensor that activates a spring within 0.3s if it detects an impact), or that can be retracted at leisure, using hydraulics. Even then an over-ride system will flick the rollover hoop into action if the sensor detects excessive lean. More mundane, but pleasing for many sporting owners, is a practical boot that has few rivals from the convertible classes.

The power units, as for the strut and multiple link suspension, were adapted from existing saloons. The 24-valve unit (M104) has been experienced by Motor Sport in the 300 CE and we admire this tough 7000 rpm unit considerably. The overhead camshafts are chain-driven, the crankshaft is of tempered steel and the undersides of the pistons receive a cooling balm of oil sprayed from beneath. The cylinder head is a crossflow layout that utilises hydraulic valve tappets and an



automatic camshaft timing adjustment system to promote good idle and mid-range torque, despite the high rpm capabilities of the unit. It operates an adjustment piston which alters camshaft timing (inlet only) via meshing teeth that are prompted from the engine management system through a magnet. A valve then forces engine oil to enact the timing changes, reducing overlap to "virtually" nothing at idle speed and progressively allowing overlap at middle range rpm, whilst inlet valve closure is delayed at peak rpm.

Action

The SL cockpit is not one to give away its secrets easily. It took us time to release the bonnet or free the handbook from the clutches of the centrally locked glovebox. The flip-top lids to the door compartments are so snugly fitted that we cursed the lack of cabin storage space, until these features had been more thoroughly explored. Add in an American style "hand brake", one that actually operates on a high-stepping foot pedal, and it is easy to feel a stranger in a new Mercedes. Unless, as for so many buyers, you have owned one before. Or learned how to lever open safe doors as training for the hefty portals deployed by Unterturkheim.

Behind a steering wheel made more bulky by the optional air bag equipment, the five dials and their extensive orange calibrations are augmented by a digital outside temperature gauge and 15 warning lights. The seats are special for their mounting bases in magnesium, but do not offer extraordinary location of their occupants, especially in the magnificent array of optional leather facings. The writer is happier to perch upon cloth for practical and animal welfare reasons, but there was no denying the apparent perfection in trim standards throughout the cabin. We simply could not spot a single flaw in the fit and finish of the plastics, woolly carpeting, leather and walnut employed.

It is similarly hard to fault the driving experience, save an overall feeling that a "300 SL" should provide a little more explosive and emotive performance than a machine of this power to weight ratio can possibly display. A precision 500 rpm tick-over is replaced by disciplined aggression to the note of the modest twin exhausts as 4000 rpm is surpassed. By 6500 rpm, when the auto-box shifts from first to second, you have no doubt that a pedigree performance engine is working nobly to haul that substantial girth to greater velocities. We also checked performance using the full 7000 rpm permitted and manual changes of the otherwise totally unobtrusive automatic: there were slight gains, as noted in our performance panel, but the motor always had a zest that contrasted with unexceptional acceleration statistics for a £50,000-plus vehicle. In fact many of the SL speed statistics (0-60 and 0-100 mph) correlate within tenths of early performance test results returned on the Escort RS2000.

Our maximum speed ace — who carries the appropriate initials MPH — squeezed fractionally more mph from the 300 SL than





we had seen recorded elsewhere. Yet the maximum recorded at Millbrook was still 6 mph shy of the publicity claim at 137 mph. As a driving experience, there was no doubting the safety and sheer adhesion of the SL chassis. Yet we were initially disconcerted to find the 225/55-section German Dunlops following the contours and cambers of all but the best in road surfaces. Meanwhile, the steering failed to self-centre and the ride was notably stiff between 20 and 35 mph, the ideal pace at which some clientele will be seen at maximum posing mode. Press a little harder and it is difficult not to be impressed by the sheer composure of the big machine under 50-80 mph pressures, especially those giant brakes — which resisted the ravages of performance research gallantly and effectively.

You can drive the SL hard for fun, and that is not something I would report of the BMW 850i or the Jaguar XJ-S. At least, not without enhancements such as M-Technic suspension or TWR/JaguarSport suspension settings respectively. The roofing arrangements allow you to experience a hardtop express, a civilised and swiftly power-operated convertible top, or the exhilaration of touring in the clean lines of an open-air car uncluttered by fussy roll cage. The success of the 300 SL is that it can adopt these three roles successfully, almost becoming three cars wrapped in one expensive package. The 300 SL is a little less suave than a BMW 850i with the hardtop in place, but far more comfortable and wieldy than a Porsche 928 if you want to explore its cornering capabilities. Under such circumstances you appreciate the efficiency of individual heat/ventilation controls supplied on either side of the cabin. The soft top is motored into place amidst a whirring display of electronically motivated and controlled expertise which demands only that you stop the car before raising or lowering the top. The SL and its double-skinned roof are notably usable on rainy days in this form, but wind noise beyond 100 mph is markedly up on that of the hard top state. I can think of no more civilised convertible, top up or down; the total absence of rattles is also uncanny. When the roof is retracted, the nearest parallel I can think of is the BMW six-cylinder convertibles such as 325i, for they posses the same clean lines, but lack many MB features that could save your life, or that extend the car's versatility.

Snags in use? Very few that are not products of its sheer bulk. The light roof lining cover is a tad impractical. The plastic lower cladding of the exterior is redolent of cheaper machinery and the tool kit is shoddily presented by comparison to BMW, but these are hardly items to deflect purchase.

Verdict

Mercedes make SLs at the rate of 20,000 units a year in good times and that commercial success is deserved. The car is properly thought out and those who want more performance (albeit at the cost of fuel thirst) can always opt to spend £15,630 more on a V8. The SL may wear deceitful initials, but it is an honest automotive engineering achievement of solid worth. It promises enjoyable companionship of a kind that will motor through these recessionary times to resume its role as a creator of speculative queues. JW

MOTOR SPORT TEST RESULTS – Mercedes 300SL-24v

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Water cooled, light alloy block and DOHC 24-valve head, 6 cylinders in line; 4-valve per cylinder head, operating inlet camshaft timing adjustment system. Capacity: 2692cc (88.5 x 80.25mm). Electronic ignition and Bosch KE fuel management; 10:1 cr. Catalytic converter. Max power: 231 bhp @ 6300 rpm. Peak torque: 201 lb ft @ 4600 rpm.

TRANSMISSION: Automatic 5-speed. Front engine, rear drive. Final drive, 3.46:1.

GEAR RATIOS:

First	3.87	
Second	2.25	
Third	1.44	
Fourth	1:00	
Fifth	0.75	.... 28.9 mph per 1000 rpm

BODY: Steel and alloy (the latter 4.6% by weight) construction, open 2-seater, seats on magnesium bases. Spring loaded automatic roll-over hoop action (0.3 second delay), or cockpit hydraulic actuation over several seconds; two doors. Electrically operated soft top or 34kg/75 lb steel hard top. Petrol tank of 80 litres/21.1 gallons.

DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase, 99.0 inches/2515mm; front track, 60.3 in/1532mm; rear track, 59.9 inches/1521mm; width, 71.3 inches/1812mm; length 176 in/4470mm; height, 50.5 in/1293mm as a hardtop. Kerb weight: 3718 lb/1690 kg.

FRONT SUSPENSION: MacPherson struts, gas-filled strut damping and separate, inboard, coil springs; 30mm anti-roll bar. **Steering:** power assisted recirculating ball 3 turns lock-to-lock; 35.27 ft turning circle.

REAR SUSPENSION: Multiple (5 per side) links, coil springs and gas telescopic dampers in strut format; 13mm anti roll bar, weight saving composites at attachment points.

BRAKES, WHEELS, TYRES: Vented 11.81 inch/300mm diameter front and solid rear discs with four piston steel calipers, front, 2-piston rear. Electronic anti-lock braking, ABS. Light alloy wheels 8J × 16 Dunlop D40, 225/55 ZR 16 inch test tyres.

PRICE: £54,460 UK taxes paid. Options on test car: Metallic paint (£690.64); Leather seating (£1019.62); memory electrical seat adjustment (£939.84); memory electrical adjustment of seat and mirrors (£269.67); air bag restraints for both front seats (£2493.13); automatic transmission, 5-speed (£723.37); electrically adjustable steering column (£503.68); rear seats, leather (£1258.47); air conditioning (£2270.21); seat heaters (£414.42); air shield to lower open air turbulence (£223.50). Total for press demonstrator: £65,266.55.

MANUFACTURER/IMPORTER: Mercedes Benz (United Kingdom) Ltd, Mercedes Benz Centre, Tongwell, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK15 8BA.

CLAIMED PERFORMANCE: Max speed, 143 mph (manual); 0-62 mph, 8.3s (manual).

TEST RESULTS

Test conducted at Millbrook Proving Ground using 1991 Correvit electronic measuring gear. Weather conditions: Dry, overcast.

ACCELERATION:

0-30 mph	3.37 seconds
0-40 mph	4.73 seconds
0-50 mph	6.53 seconds
0-60 mph	8.79 seconds (9.17)*
0-70 mph	11.28 seconds
0-80 mph	14.45 seconds
0-90 mph	18.11 seconds
0-100 mph	22.91 seconds (24.85)*
0-110 mph	29.86 seconds

* automatic time, all others taken by manually shifting at 7000 rpm

FLEXIBILITY:

Third gear 50-70 mph	5.8 seconds
Fourth gear 50-70 mph	10.1 seconds
Fifth gear 50-70 mph	9.6 seconds

Standing 0.25 mile/400 metres: 16.73 seconds @ 87 mph (manual changes @ 7000 rpm); 17.08 secs @ 85.6 mph (automatic changes, at 6500 rpm). **Maximum speed:** Millbrook 2.029 mile bowl: 135.2 mph. **Best observed speed:** 137.4 mph.

Maximum gear speeds: At 7000 rpm

First	36.4 mph
Second	63.1 mph
Third	105.0 mph
Fourth	137.0 mph

Overall Fuel Consumption: Average: 18.5 mpg; (95 RON cheaper unleaded) Test track: 14.0 mpg. Government mpg figures: Urban:19.3 mpg; @ 75 mph: 26.6 mpg; @ 56 mph:31.0 mpg



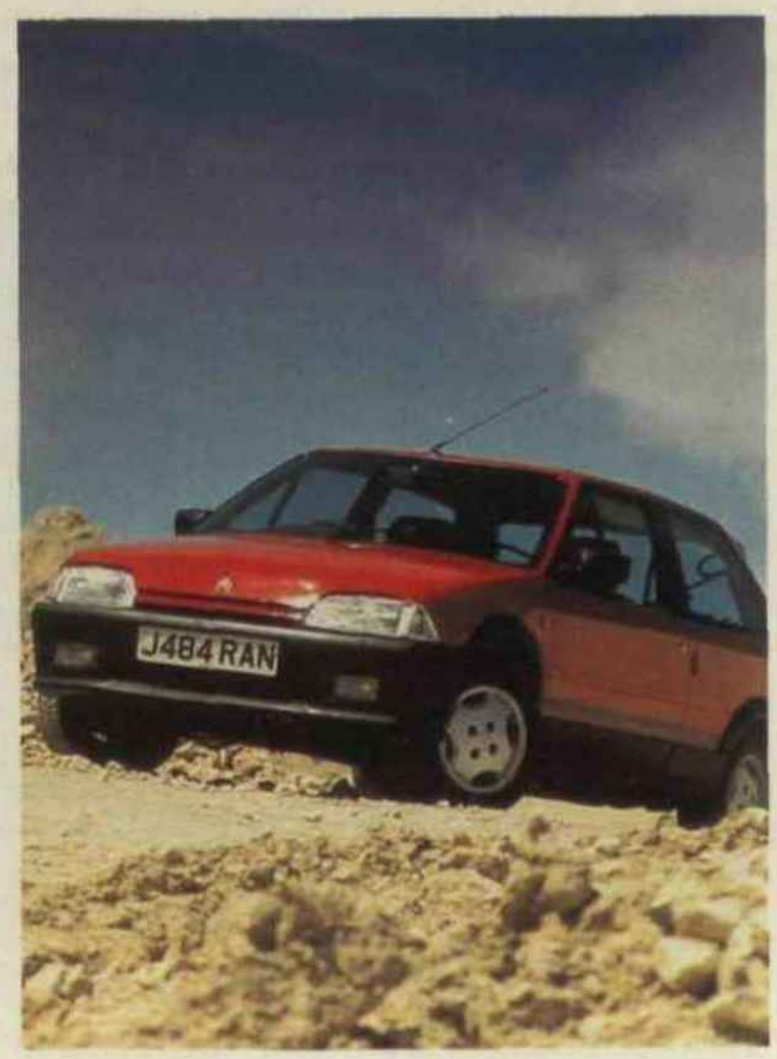
Although brisk, the Ford Escort RS2000 is let down by its engine and – when compared to the Renault 19 16v – its price.

Models of discretion

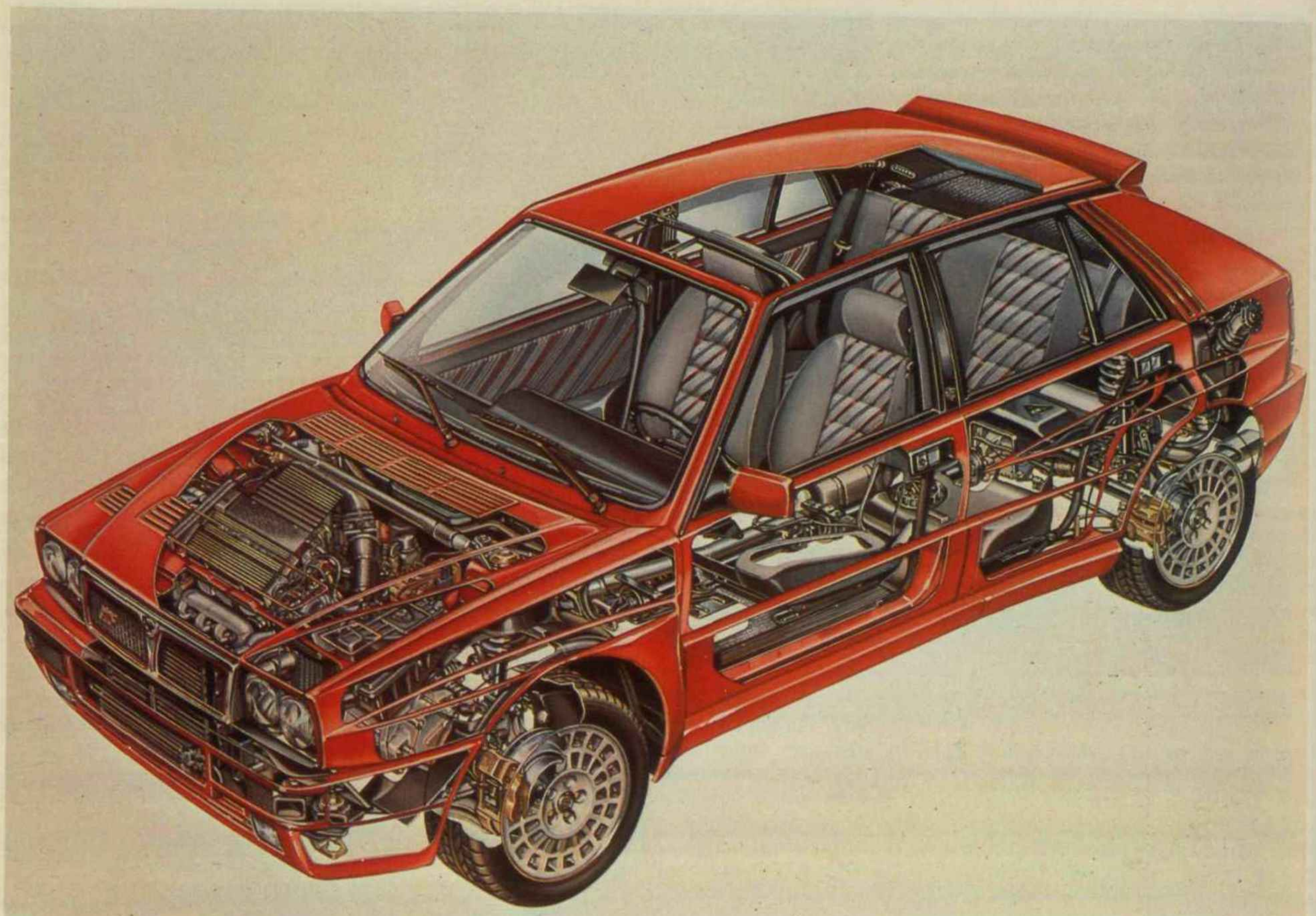
The run-in to the Autumn motor shows of Frankfurt and Earls Court, the London Motorfair, has naturally been overfilled with "new" model launches. Many of these alleged newcomers are revamped versions of old favourites, especially in their high performance guises. The game this year has been to largely avoid use of the cult "GTI" appellation, mainly for fear of upsetting insurance companies already filled with fear and loathing for such machines after recent tabloid "joy-rider" publicity. Thus the existence of machines such as the Honda Civic VTi, Vauxhall Astra GSi, Fiat Tipo 16v and Renault Clio 16v.

There are exceptions to the rule, such as Citroen's addition of an AX GTi to head their second-smallest model line, but the tendency to avoid the appellation that Volkswagen made famous on the 1976 Golf is apparent. We have been driving such models extensively recently and thought a round-up necessary as there is no other way of compressing the flurry of activity in this sector into our pages. We will also briefly comment on the launch of a very important Motorfair absentee — the revamped Rover 800 line, and the existence of new Saabs that are substantially refined despite the retention (for the time being) of their basic front-drive, four-cylinder, format.

Citroën's baby GT now has fuel injection.



Much magazine space has been devoted to the merits of the new Astra GSi and its reborn rival, the Escort RS2000. At first it looked as though both would occupy the territory between £16,000 and £17,000, Ford waiting to see what General Motors did before announcing the cost of their similarly 150 bhp DOHC, 16-valve, hatchback. As we closed for press it looked as though Ford were still going to stick above £16,000 — but they finally swallowed their pride and selected £15,995. Vauxhall opted for £15,600 on their GSi, which had an equal number of "toys" (sunroof, electric front windows, power steering) in the showroom specification. Plus the important mechnical features that customers expect at this price: electronic ABS anti-lock braking, a quartet of disc brakes, alloy wheels and squat tyres. Both the Vauxhall and the Ford are expected to exceed 130 mph on their 150 bhp and snatch the mystery 0-60 mph prize in some 8.0 seconds, so the choice between them will come down to equipment levels and the differences in driving pleasure.



As if the last evolution of the Lancia Delta integrale wasn't enough . . . The HF is reckoned to be even faster than its predecessor in the wet.

We had most experience in the Ford — driving three examples, two in LHD Germany — but there was little doubt that neither machine really offers the customer the best value for money, or the greatest pleasures at the wheel, to be found in the category. Both have major flaws. The Vauxhall has a chassis that has been reworked using many Cavalier parts, notably negative wheel camber angles and honest intentions. Yet the result is an eerie wandering under power that is not aided by the interaction of an electronic traction control that interrupts play via the ABS braking sensors.

Meanwhile the flaw in the Ford is the engine. Pleasant at mid range (2000 to 4000 rpm) it becomes a typical company droner at higher rpm (the engine is gently rev-limited at 6800 rpm), the close ratio MTX 75 transmission in its first front-drive incarnation failing to live up to the slick-shifting character we were asked to expect. The truth is that both the Ford and Vauxhall look distinctly pricey beside the latest 16-valve offerings of Renault (19 and Clio at just above and just below £13,000) or the £13,949.89p Fiat Tipo. The Renaults are both supremely well engineered and the fact that they are of 137 rather than 150 bhp makes little difference to the performance statistics. The revered "figures" remain below the 8-second 0-60 mph barrier, thanks to lower kerb weights than Ford and Vauxhall, and even the diminutive Clio has good enough aerodynamics to allow a maximum speed toward 130 mph. Renault have learned a lot about quality in the last couple of years and I would vote the Escort-sized 19 in 16-valve form as the best value all-rounder in this category at present, allying a superb chassis with an engine that apparently contains no camshaft profiling, so suave are the gains in power from its 1764 cc as it escalates toward its naturally 7000 rpm operational zone.

The Tipo is rated at almost the same power as the Ford and Vauxhall (148 bhp from 2 litres) yet costs at least £1,600 less. We all know Fiat do not have a glowing reputation in Britain — perhaps their poorest market in Europe — but I can honestly say that the Tipo is just as much of a pleasure to drive as the Renaults, having a particularly capable chassis over bumpy going. The engine does not feel as though it has 148 bhp, but that is true of all the catalytic convertor units mentioned here, bar the Vauxhall-Opel 2-litre, which is simply the amiably lusty 16-valve class of the category.

The Citroen AX GTi is the cheapest of the selection driven recently at £9,995 and it has appeal to those aspiring to 16-valve pace, rather than red hot performance. Part of a revamped AX line that begins with a four speed AX Debut at £5895, the GTi summons 100 bhp from its substantially redeveloped ex-Peugeot TU series motor of 1360 cc. I had not driven this engine with Bosch Motronic fuel injection and a 9.6:1 cr before — but had fond memories of ice-racing a Peugeot 104 ZS with a distant cousin of this power unit providing thrills out of all proportion to the speed achieved.

The sub-£10,000 Citroen does have its limitations, but comparative lack of performance and adhesion are not amongst them. It is claimed to rush from 0-60 mph in 8.2 seconds and to achieve 118 mph, such pace possible on 100 horsepower because it weighs just 795kg/1753 lb. Placed against the kerb weights of recents Volkswagens, Vauxhall and Fords, this makes a Citroen GTi the flyweight Lotus 7 of the hatchback set. At this point the self-elected sages of the motoring set will cry "ah, light it may be, but what about all those creaks and rattles. It's dangerously light." It was the sort of criticism Colin Chapman collected throughout his career and (usually) proved to be bunk. Citroen have also disproved the "too light" allegation, not by fundamental re-engineering of the body, but with a one-piece dash and various other trim measures that quieten the squeaks and rattles of the car and media alike.

I had personal interest in driving the new generation of Honda Civics, for their 1595cc/160 bhp VTi must serve as the replacement for the CRX coupé models that I have

I have bought in recent years, until the replacement Targa Top CRX is seen at the 1992 Geneva Show. Provisionally priced at "under £14,000" the Civic VTi packs 100.31 bhp per litre into a rounder and heavier outline than previously. The result is a more civil Civic that lays equal emphasis on the four-door saloon and the hatchbacks, but for the sporting driver the VTi 3-door is the nearest many will come to driving a racing engine on the road.

The VTi model is a reformed character compared with its predecessor (which we have recently been privileged to race, courtesy of the 1991 Firestone Champion Piers Johnson and the Meltune equipe), but its character is still dominated by that amazing 8000 rpm motor. The Honda system of variable valve timing is in a different class to any other that we have experienced. Dubbed VTEC (Variable valve Timing and Electronic Control), and makes phenomenal power claims possible whilst preserving an even temper (but not much torque) for urban mileage.

The rest of the Civic is better trimmed than before and the quartet of disc brakes work effectively with the Honda anti-lock braking system (only previously available on the later CRX). Yet it was for the superb acceleration and astounding top speed that I will fondly remember our German test outing. In cold statistics 0-60 mph in 7.7 sec plus 134 mph may seem average for the kind of cars we have been discussing, but Honda make it special. It is not a comfortable experience, the double wishbone suspension still susceptible to big bumps on comparatively unruffled German tarmac and the engine note reportedly wearing out many of my colleagues, but I found it still the exhilarating choice amongst the brat pack and almost a limousine by the standards of the two CRX 16-valve coupes I purchased. Recommended for the hardy hatchback enthusiast.

For the committed motorsport aficionado, homologation vehicles are hard to resist. Some develop far beyond their basic



Like its Escort RS2000 rival, the Vauxhall Astra GSi has its weak points, notably the chassis.

500-off (Evolution) or 5000-off (Group A/N) production runs. The M3 BMW sold over 17,100 copies before its demise. Lancia's Delta integrale, which we have been driving in France in its final Evolution form, has reached 30,698 Deltas in turbocharged 4x4 trim since the 1986 original became the basis for the most successful Group A rally car of all. The latest Delta integrale has been dubbed "HF" with the galloping red elephant symbol also reborn from the company's sporting heritage. According to Cesare Fiorio the HF initials stood for High Fidelity and were simply a way of identifying a loyal elite amongst Lancia's sporting clientele, officially used by the Lancia HF Club since 1960.

The ultimate wide-track permutation of the Delta integrale offers as much driving pleasure as any roofed road car in the world. It has exceptional performance from its 2-litre counterbalancer shaft 16-valve unit, but sub-6 second bounds from rest to 60 mph are not the point of this 5-door, 210 bhp, parcel. The integrale specialises in demolishing twisty distances and Lancia report a saving of 1.5 seconds per awkward kilometre in dry conditions, or an awesome 4 seconds per km in the wet.

Both figures draw comparison with the previously praised integrale and bode badly for the chiefly Japanese opposition in the World Rally Championship when Lancia field the newcomer in 1992. For the public road conductor, an integrale whooshing through its rubbery five forward ratios is a motoring memory to savour, especially when clambering over difficult roads with unqualled, and deeply pleasurable, poise.

Far removed from both Motorfair and the machinery we have been discussing, we also ventured out amongst the executive classes with Rover's solo update of their 800 saloon and fastback line and spent a weekend motoring the much strengthened Saab CS models. The Rovers looked more like Lancias with the return of a traditional grille to their aerodynamic lines (a trend echoed at Audi) and seemed to represent rather more solid driving manners within a span of roughly £10,000 and a starting cost of £17,495.

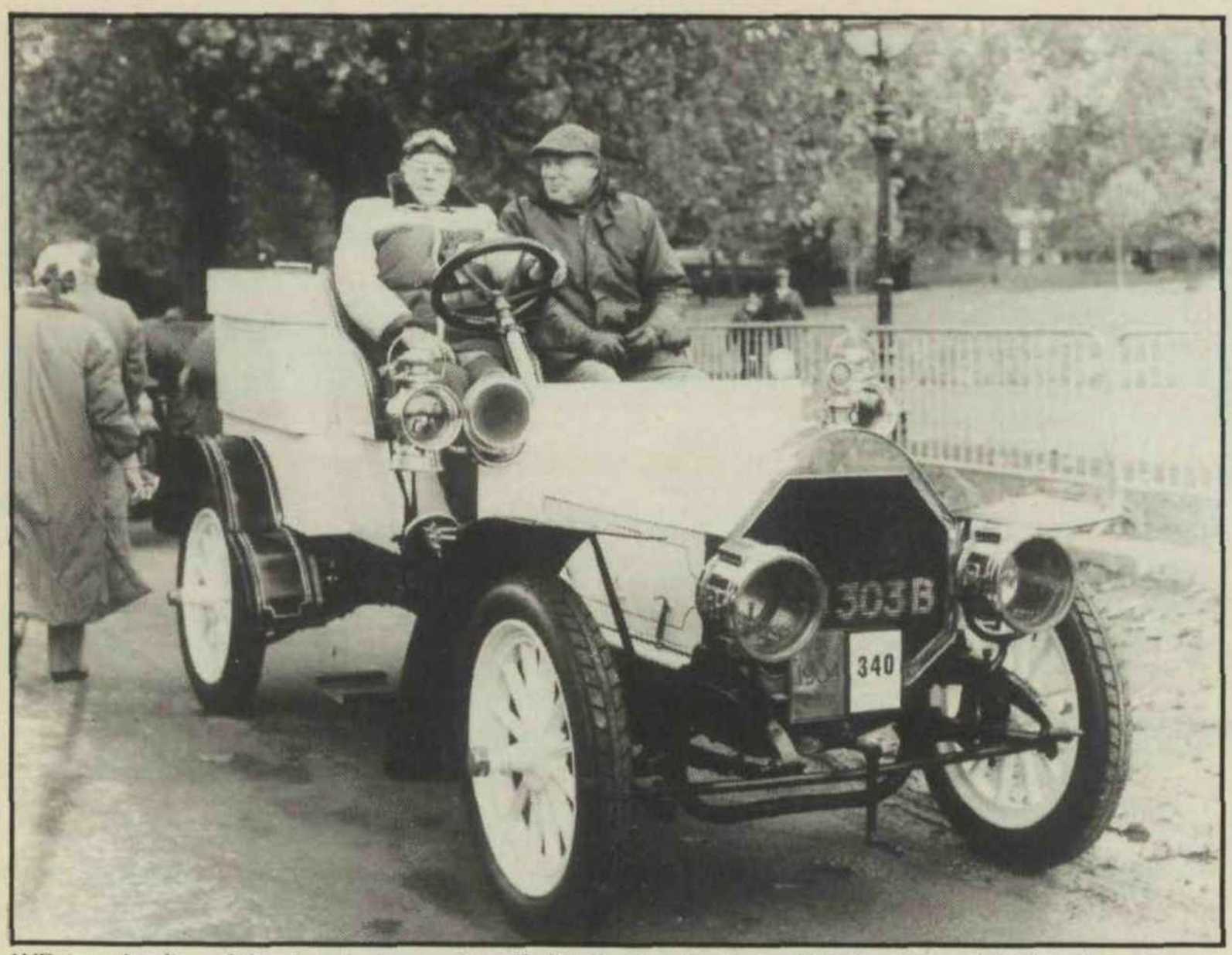
A 180 bhp turbocharged model, originally created by Tickford for limited production in the previous series, will be part of the main production line and engineered "in-house" for sale at £20,650 (less than before) from February 1992.

The 200 bhp Saab 2.3-litre turbo has been with us a while and has much the same low rpm (1950) massive torque peak as the 220 bhp Carlsson version that Motor Sport enjoyed earlier in 1991. The "CS" initials have no particular meaning, but for the customer they mean that the 5-door model has reached, or in some cases surpassed, the impressive standards of rigidity found in the 4-door CD line.

One vehicle attracted our attention but escaped us in the welter of launches, Peugeot's pretty 106. This looks to be an extremely well excuted junior 205 and has a fuel injected derivative that we will inspect when supplies are freely available in RHD. JW

Why do so many manufacturers issue handout shots of red cars pointing to the left? The Honda Civic VTi features the amazing VTEC engine, red-lined at 8000 rpm . . .





WB (at wheel) and the Aster's owner Greville Neale pose for Roger Collings' Hasselblad before the run.

496 veterans

Incredible as it may seem, 496 pre-1905 vehicles were entered for this years Benson & Hedges RAC/VCC Veteran Run to Brighton. Indeed, the programme told of nearly 500 if you believed the RAC/MSA and predicted up to 2 million spectators. Of these, more than 20 of the cars were on their first Run. America had put in 26 entries, Germany ten, France nine, of the nine overseas applicants, four coming all the way from Australia, and the actual number of starters from Hyde Park was 334, led in fine weather by Ruth Moore's 1892 2 hp Panhard with half-an-hour's special dispensation from the otherwise 8am departure. (It broke a valve spring on Westminster Bridge, repaired with an elastic band, and after one replacement of the same kind, arrived after 6hr 38 minutes). The pack was then let loose, in sunny weather that turned to cruel hail storms nearer Brighton. The list was headed by 72 De Dions, 37 Panhards and 23 Oldsmobiles.

On this, my 38th "active" Run, I had been offered a seat on Greville Neale's 1904 16/20 Aster. So it was up before dawn and off in the Ford 4x4 Sierra to collect driver, his daughter and crew from the RAC, outside the hallowed portals of which stood Collings' stripped Mercedes 60, ready for Ben and his father to drive it quickly to the seaside. The Aster is an interesting car. It was found by Cecil Bendall many years ago and later given its present wagonette body, with two very exposed but comfortable front seats and a sort of dog-cart behind, able to take another four people - and the Run has been done successfully many times, even with six up. Mr. Neale bought it from Stephen Langton in 1983.

The Aster Company of St Denis made very good engines, gearboxes, even complete chassis, in the early days, supplied to at least two firms in France and five in Britain, and sold under brand names. So the identity of Neale's car is somewhat obscure, but it is thought to have been sold as a Gladiator when new, but is acceptable to the VCC as an Aster. The neat T-head four-cylinder engine with separate "pots", has a Zenith updraught carburettor low down on the off-side, feeding through well-polished brass manifolding, matched by similar water-piping. Ignition is by a replacement Marelli magneto. The drive goes through a cone clutch, now Ferodo lined, and the three-speed gearbox is controlled by a long gear lever working in a quadrant. Close ratios make this a difficult change, and if a gear is missed you need to stop and sort it out, when the crunching has died down. The owner managed it extremely well in the congested traffic but even he was caught out once or twice, the lever apt to teasingly push one's hand away if a gear has been inadvertently "lost".

A five-spoked steering wheel has the ignition and throttle levers beneath it. Very occasionally mild wheel wobble set in for a few yards. The brakes shoes are brass, now Ferodo-lined, the lever pushing forward to apply them; the foot transmission brake is normally ignored. The piano type accelerator pedal is between the larger pedals and the needs of the engine are looked after by an Aster "oiler" on the low dash, a little plunger pump being depressed to feed lubricant to the glass-fronted drip-feeds, in two pairs, and thence to the main bearings and timing gears, according to the selected setting of the two-way tap beneath the reservoir. This keeps the front passenger busy, but only at wide intervals.

That apart, and the adding of a little water when the radiator, which could have come from an early Humber, began to ask for it, some petrol (average mpg around 20) and stopping at Horley for the generous hospitality at the Forte Crest Gatwick hotel, we had an uneventful journey, occupying overall about 4½ hours. Here I must put in a word for Greville Neale's very skillful "traffic threading", which helped us very materially in getting along – although the hold-ups seemed less severe this year. Certainly if this 87-year-old Aster had not had very good brakes and a performance that many Edwardians might well envy, we should not have had such a competent journey. The ride is comfortable and the 820 x 120 Dunlops gave no anxiety. Some disquiet was felt when, with what appeared to be an easy dual-carriageway drive to the finish, the veterans were turned left, presumably to avoid road-works, and sent on a long uphill detour before swinging right and back past the Pylons. This must have added quite a few unexpected and difficult miles to the declared 57-mile route on the A23.

However, apart from that hot radiator, it was all in the day's work to the Aster, which had been untroubled by the earlier gradients and once on top speed gets going quietly and remarkably well. An entirely practical veteran, in fact. There seemed to have been more cars stationary along the route than formerly and not so many on the Maderia Drive when we got there. First in, in this non-race, had been John Bentley's 1901 15hp Mors, with a time of 2 hr 14 minutes.

I had seen HRH Prince Michael of Kent come swiftly into the half-way stop on the 1903 32hp Mercedes, followed by his police escort, which it was said had been hard-pressed to keep station — how good that we have this Royal support in so many motoring events. I had also seen Lord Montagu's impressive 1903 22hp Daimler which I drove on the 1981 Run going well, and while we were still some way out, there was the Collings' Mercedes speeding back to Hereford, after an early finish. Thus is this unique and prestigeous event seen in different lights by different entrants. The Neale Aster is, of course, a car well-known in VCC circles, and was once owned by Fred Hodgkinson. After our comfortable Sunday outing, it was trailed home behind a turbo-diesel Citroen CX2500 Safari, ready for the next outing. Incidentally, Neville was experimenting in the Aster with the new Penrite HPR-50 40/70 oil.

His interests are by no means confined to driving his veteran. It began when he was 16 and he and his brother bought, for £40, a rough 40/50 Rolls-Royce chassis, from someone who had acquired three Ghosts as a £100 job-lot and who still gets ribbed for making such an excessive profit! They towed the chassis home behind an

Austin A40 pick-up; their father was not pleased when he saw it parked in the drive . . . School holidays were spent working on the bodyless Ghost and driving it round the Worcestershire lanes, sometimes in the snows of winter; it actually handled very well, even to drifting the corners. Later a narrow tourer body was made for it, in the home garage, Graham Neale (no relation) finishing off the body frame, making the panelling, and most of the detail work.

Greville's other car is his 1934 Frazer Nash, which he bought on a very wet Sunday night in 1960. The owner met him halfway and they haggled beneath a railway bridge in Leeds. The car was not really for sale but in the torrential downpour the owner decided he didn't want to drive home and he even came down £35 on the car's value, after finally agreeing to sell it. A short-chassis Meadows two-seater with Shelsley front axle, hydraulic brakes, and a two-seater body, this is "a super road car", which has given Neale years of pleasurable motoring. It was his only means of transport while he was a student at Loughborough College, until he bought from Vaughan Skirrow an LE Velocette, when they both became that rare breed, owners of a chain-drive car and a shaft-drive motorcycle. Having the R-R chassis, Neville had joined the VSCC as a full member while still at school.

Reverting the the Brighton Run, entries came in from 47 counties, led by Surrey and W Sussex and one notes that from the latter Loder's type-9 1897 Peugeot had its original candle lamps, and that Mark Tidy in his Panhard was on his 23rd Run. Gresham's De Dion Bouton was bought by his grandfather at the 1901 Paris Show and used in England until it broke a piston in 1906 and was left in the back of a garage, and Edwin Boorman, Chairman of Kent Messenger newspapers, who used to hold their own veteran runs, was on the 1902 Panhard his father bought from Sir John Prestige for £35 in 1935. The grandson of the maker drove a Dennis, owned by the family since 1935, Tom Wheatcroft had a 1902 Panhard, and the RAC's 1901 Mors was countered by the AA's elegent 1904 Renault (AA 1), the VSCC run a 1902 Wolseley, the Science Museum their 1903 Peugeot, other museums had extracted cars for the occasion, and Ford and Vauxhall had appropriate entries. Certainly a unique event; HRH Prince Michael of Kent was apparently stopped by the police for speeding — on a veteran! We hope to give finishers and retirements next month. WB



The Aster closes on Edward Baldock's 1897 Leon Bollée in South London.

Yes, there were that many entrants. No 496 was Anthony Redsell's 12 hp Wolseley.

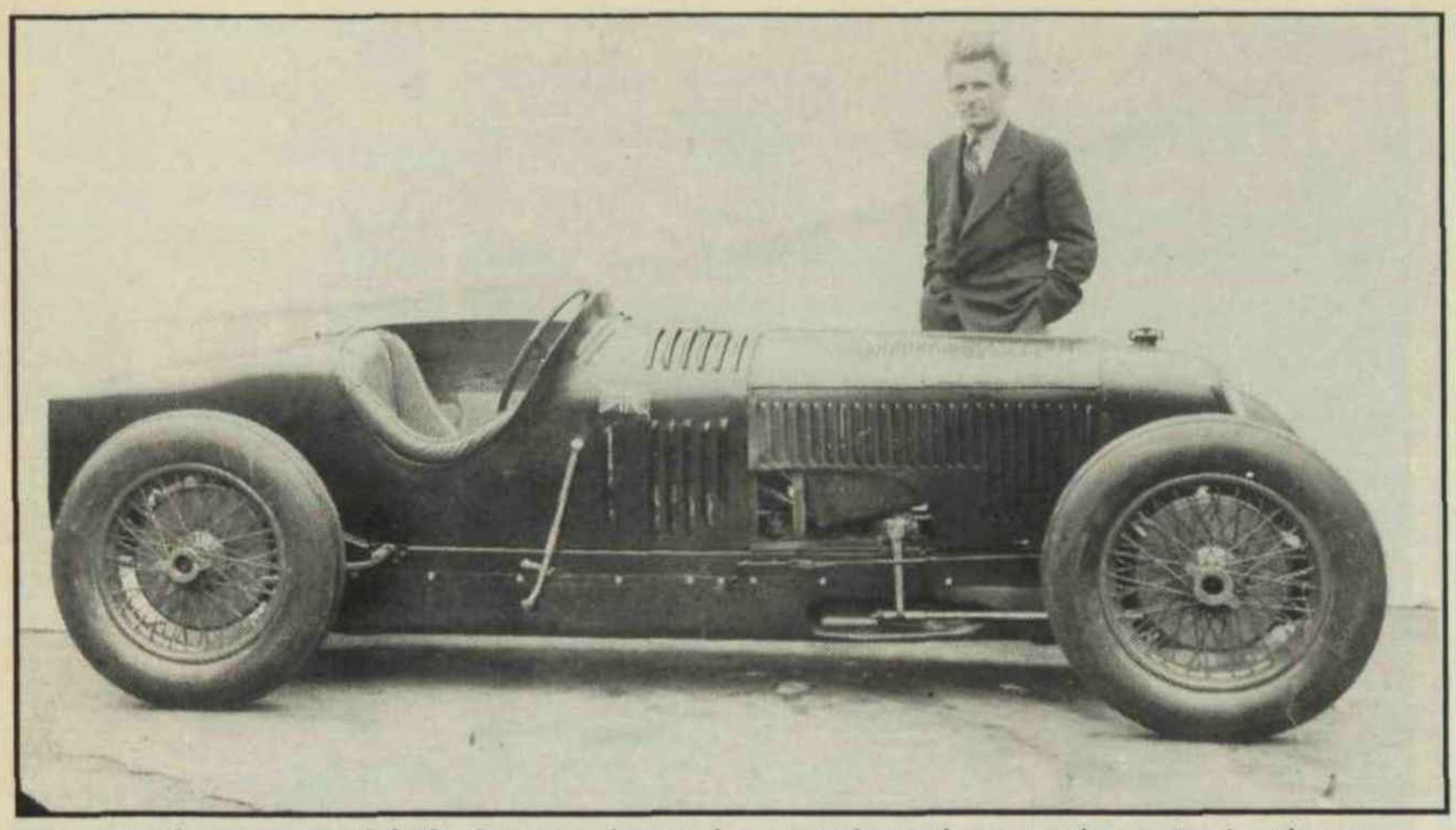


Too Big Too Soon

I see from Eoin Young's celebrated Diary column in "*Motorcar*" that Sir Peter Masefield is searching for two of the Sunbeam "Maori" engines which were in the airship R34 when it crashed in Yorkshire in 1921 after having successfully flown a double-crossing of the Atlantic in 1919. Eoin says these engines were rescued from the wreckage and put into racing cars that were raced by Tim Birkin in 1921 and Malcolm Campbell in 1922, presumably at Brooklands. Now these Sunbeam aero-engines were of 12,728 cc capacity and the biggest car Birkin raced at the Track in 1921 was his 2001 cc DFP and the largest Campbell got his hands on in 1922 was his 7603 cc 1912 GP Peugeot "Bluebird".

The famous 350 hp V12 Sunbeam had a capacity of 18,322 cc but this engine was a sort of hybrid "Manitou", and although Campbell drove this car on the Skegness sands in 1922, it had been built and raced before the R34 crashed and the same engine has always remained in it. It is now an exhibit at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu.

So it would be interesting to know from whence this odd story comes? Sir Peter knows all about airships, having written that monumental work on the R101 disaster. It is important that the Brooklands Museum, which he is so ably fostering, should be accurate in respect of history. So I hope therefore, that Young will tell us more about these mysterious racing cars with their Sunbeam aero-engines and their two very famous drivers. WB



Attractive but unsucessful: the Jameson boasted a supercharged two-stroke engine in what seems to have been a Delage chassis.

Mystery special

When a driver of the calibre of Sir Malcolm Campbell elects to drive it, interest is increased in an otherwise obscure car, about which enquiries crop up from time to time, although its racing achievements were virtually nil. That car was the Jameson Special, built by J Jameson of the Jameson Engine Company (UK) Ltd, at West Ewell in Surrey. (He should not be confused with Murray Jamieson, designer of the last of the works Austin 7 racing cars, including the wonderful little twin-cam cars, and who died in that unhappy accident at Brooklands, when a Delage plunged amongst the spectators.)

The Jameson Special surfaced in 1933 and the fact that it was a supercharged two-stroke was sufficient to arouse interest even before it made the race tracks. There had been other two-stroke racing cars, the Cozette for example, but the Jameson engine was of sufficiently sophisticated layout to attract attention in this field. Not for Jameson the simple two-cycle configuration with the mixture compressed in the crankcase and then fed to the combustion chamber as the descending piston uncovered the inlet port. His engine went very much further than that, in an attempt to over-ride the known deficiencies of the simple two-stroke power-unit.

By the mid-1930s the supercharger was a practical proposition, applied to many four-stroke engines, and Jameson made use of this to produce his high-efficiency two-stroke racing engine. The charge to the four cylinders was forced into them by this means and as poppet valves closed by normal valve springs would have been hard-pressed to cope with the increased opening and closing speeds necessitated by an engine firing twice every revolution of the crankshaft, Jameson substituted piston-valves in the detachable cylinder head, operated by a miniature crankshaft, driven by a vertical shaft and bevel gears. Two superchargers forced the mixture past the open port in the piston-valve as the main piston neared the bottom of its strokes, the exhaust gas being expelled through ports cut all round the base of the cylinders uncovered by the main piston, the incoming charge assisting by evacuating the burnt gases. As the main piston rose, the fresh charge was compressed in the normal way, within the head, topped by the piston-valves.

The aforesaid vertical shaft at the back of the four-cylinder engine drove a vertically-mounted single-rotor, (vane-type) Jameson supercharger and the crankshaft driving the piston-valves. There was another vertically-mounted supercharger at the other end of the engine, driven from the shaft-drive, and both superchargers fed mixture to the cylinders through short pipes to the two inlet ports. A Solex carburettor was bolted directly to the supercharger casing and there were wide exhaust ports on both sides of the cylinder block. Two magnetos, transversely mounted, were driven from one end of the valve-actuating crankshaft in the head and fired 18 mm sparking plugs angled slightly from the horizontal on opposite sides of the combustion chambers. A water pump was driven from the timing-gear shaft.

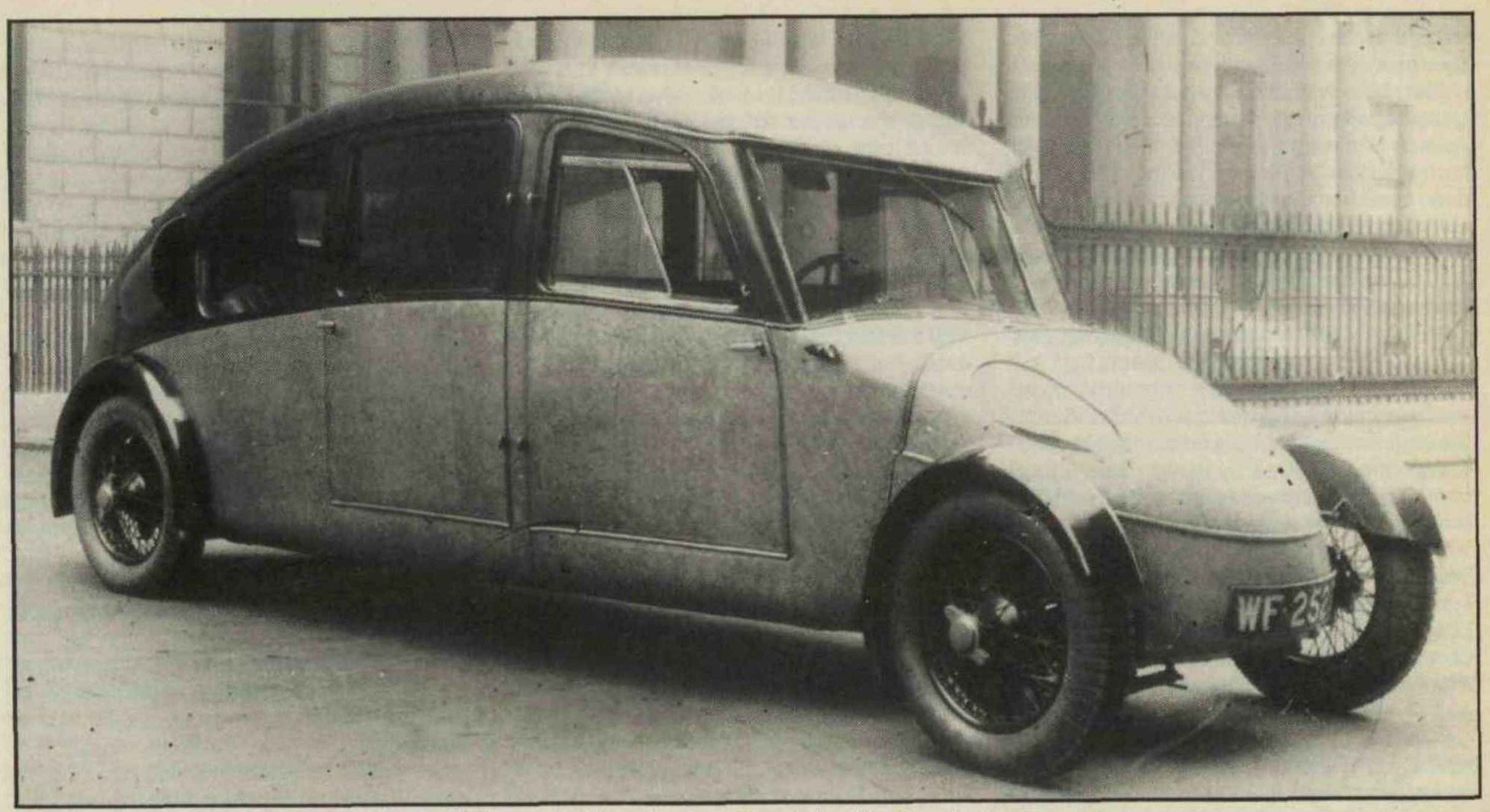
This engine had a bore and stroke of 60 x 88 mm (995 cc). The crankshaft ran in six split roller-bearings, being of the 90-deg pattern, well-balanced. The big-ends were also of roller-bearing type. In experimental form the superchargers boosted at 8lb/sq in, and the blow-off valves were set to open at 25lb/sq in; these had an important function to perform, because with the ingenious piston-valves, there was no safeguard from a back-fire, as these were no conventional poppet valves. The crankcase was of cast iron, with the superchargers mounted neatly on it. Lubrication was of the dry-sump type, the finned aluminium base-chamber containing the delivery and scavenge oil-pumps. A separate oil-pump lubricated the superchargers and yet another small pump, driven from one of the superchargers, sucked oil from the main feed and supplied it via a rotating mixer-valve to the fuel supply to the blowers, so that a mild "petroil" effect was provided, apart from which lubricant was fed to the upper part of each cylinder. Such was this ingenious Jameson two-stroke racing engine, for which 120 bhp at 5500 rpm was claimed, the weight quoted as 350 lb complete.

To accommodate his power-unit Jameson is said in some accounts to have built a special chassis, using for it the axles from a 2-litre GP Delage. Other reports infer that the entire chassis was from a Delage of this type. Two of the complicated V12 cars had been entered for Brooklands races in 1931, one of which WB Scott had found in Sweden and was, I believe, later owned by the Conan Doyle brothers, the other having been bought by Capt JV Nash in the Argentine, from E Forrest Greene. Either could have provided the chassis, or parts of one, for the Jameson Special. It seems likely that the former applied, as modifications like using a Wilson pre-selector gearbox, an ENV differential, and a different axle ratio were described. A very neat two-seater racing body was made for the car by Gurney Nutting, the well-known coachbuilders, giving the appearance of a small Maserati.

With two-stroke racing cars few and far between and belonging mostly to the distant past, the Jameson caused something of a stir when it was entered for the 1933 Light Car Club's Relay Race at Brooklands, a race of some importance, with the works A7 team running and factory support given to other cars such as the Morgans and the MGs. Dudley Froy, who had won his first Brooklands race in 1927 in one of Sir Alastair Miller's Wolseley Moths and who gained his 120 mph badge there with a Bentley, was down to drive it. Unfortunately, it was not ready in time.

It was at the 1934 Whitsun Brooklands races that Sir Malcolm Campbell, then at the height of his fame as holder of the LSR at 272.46 mph, was due to drive the black Jameson Special with its red wheels, in the Merrow Senior Short Handicap. The great man had entered it himself, so presumably he thought well of its chances. He had been set to start 23 sec before Chris Staniland in TASO Mathieson's blown 2-litre Bugatti, which was on scratch. However, the Jameson again non-started. That is not quite the end of the story. When Dunlop's ran their Jubilee Meeting at the Track in 1938 the substantial prize money (as much as £100 to the winners of the bigger races) attracted many entries. Jameson himself was there, with a blue Jameson Special with silver wheels, its engine dimensions as before, although the capacity was now declared as 1092 cc. Froy at last had his chance in the car, or was it another one; the chassis was now said to be Bugatti, so perhaps the 1933 engine had been transplanted, or a second engine built? Dudley Froy got it round at 98.23 mph, insufficient for a place, and it failed to appear for its two subsequent Campbell circuit commitments.

There the curtain comes down. Unless anyone out there knows more? WB



The Burney Streamline in prototype form with its recessed headlamps and straight-eight Beverley-Barnes engine.

Forgotten Makes: The Burney Streamline

When it made its debut late in 1930, the Burney Streamline created a more than mild sensation, even though it was never to achieve full production status. It was the creation of Commander Sir C Denniston Burney, Bt, KMG, who had been responsible for the airship R100. Although this Rolls-Royce-engined 3900hp airship flew a total of 14,956 air-miles, was capable of a speed of nearly 60mph, and had successfully journeyed to Canada and back to Britain, the Vickers-built ship was scrapped (literally steam-rollered) by Government decree after the ill-fated Beardmore-engined Barnes Wallis-designed R101 had crashed at Allone, Beauvais, in France on a flight to India in October 1930, killing most of those on board, including the Labour Secretary of State for Air, Lord Thomson of Cardington. Those who crave full details of the ill-fated R101 should read the wonderfully detailed book "To Ride The Storm" by Sir Peter C Masefield (William Kimber, 1982), which I highly recommend.

Divested of his airship ambitions, Burney turned to the creation of an advanced design of private car, using streamlining to reduce drag and so improve performance for a given power and petrol consumption. In this he was re-creating in a more modern concept the ideas behind such cars as the rear-engined German Rumpler of 1921 and the radial-engined North Lucas (see MOTOR SPORT, March 1991). He asserted that even the exposed headlamps on the modern car absorbed seven bhp at a speed of 80mph, and claimed that his unusual Burney Streamline aimed at substantially reducing such extravagant power losses.

Apart from that, Sir Dennis was after better weight distribution and suspension than was incorporated in most 1930s cars. He had begun to work on these lines in the airship shed at Howden in Yorkshire in 1928, using a 12/75hp FWD Alvis chassis turned back-to-front, with its steering locked, and its back-axle replaced by one with steering pivots.

As finally evolved, the Burney Streamline was most certainly unconventional. The chassis was ordinary enough, being a channel-section frame tapered at each end, but this was supplemented by a pair of steel girders running the full length of the car, braced by cross-girders, with aircraft-type wire bracing tensioned by strainers, between the cross-members. There was a metal undershield, flat and unbroken, to improve streamlining.

Where the Burney differed from the majority of other cars of its time was in having independent suspension front and back, of axle-less design, with a single transverse front leaf spring and two slightly-staggered transverse cantilever springs at the back controlling the movement of the independently mounted wheels. Each front wheel was also independently steered, by means of a duplicated track-rod connected to the Bishop cam-gear. This steering layout gave a 50-deg lock and a turning circle of only 39 feet, in spite of the Burney having a 12 ft 5 in wheelbase, so that it could compete with a taxi in turning round in confined spaces. Moreover, both front wheels retained a vertical rolling motion over the full left and right lock. The front track was five feet, that at the rear 4 ft 8 in.

The engine was at the back, this being a key aspect of the design, to obtain the required low wind-drag. It stuck out of the sloping tail, its cover louvred to extract air, hingeing up and over onto the rear window of the faired bodywork, making the engine easily accessible. This engine-cover was light and easy to open. The engine was behind the place normally occupied by a back-axle and drove forward to a four-speed gearbox controlled by a long central gear-lever, with a ratcheted hand brake to the left of it. There was a direct-drive third speed, the ratios being 4.0, 5.2, 8.6 and 14.5 to 1 with a 14.0 to 1 reverse gear.

The aforesaid independent springing used parallel articulated rods to locate the wheels and these rods had Silentbloc bushes to obviate the need for lubrication. The sloping tail of the fabric-covered body had two rear windows and the undershield ran right to the tail, which enclosed the silencer, number plate and the rear lamps. Ground clearance was some 9½ inches. The engine was cooled by twin radiators mounted one at each side, just ahead of it, drawing air from scoops over the back mudguards, two belt-driven fans forcing the air through the honeycomb. The drive between rear engine and gearbox was by a

very short prop-shaft and a differential to the road-wheel drive-shafts.

Not only was the overall specification quite startling to those accustomed to normal front-engined cars but the Burney had other distinguishing features. Thus the two batteries and electric horn were accommodated in two pressed-steel cabinets in the nose, with the 14-gallon fuel tank just above and behind them. There was a space between engine and back seat for considerable quantities of luggage, access to it gained through side doors or by opening a roof-hatch. The very short nose enclosed the headlamps which shone through tunnels with glass fronts and drag was further reduced by using close-fitting cycle-type mudguards, these at the front turning with the wheels. The spare wheels were fitted to the insides of the doors. (This latter feature caused the Burney designer some worry, because at first suitable hinges to carry the combined 120lb weight of door, window, wheel, tyre and the mounting for the latter, could not be found. Also it was suggested that should the car overturn getting out would be impeded, to which Sir Dennis pointed to the large window area and that the front doors were quite light). The wire wheels were shod with 30 x 6.5 tyres, and normal Lockheed hydraulic brakes were used.

For the finalised form of his sensational motor-car Sir Dennistoun used a straight-eight twin-cam 66 x 106mm (2956cc) Beverley-Barnes engine with Marelli coil-ignition; had one of their engineers had a look at an Alfa Romeo? Beverley-Barnes of Beverley Works, Willow Avenue, Barnes, SW had been building cars since 1924 (another "Forgotten Make") beside supplying parts for other manufacturers including Bentley Motors, and were happy to sell these engines for £50 each at a time of sparse business.

By no stretch of imagination could the Burney be regarded as a handsome car. Its proclaimed merits were stability, comfort, a spacious interior (it seated seven), quiet running (any cacophony was behind it. . .) and a good ride. The usual rear-engine problem of interior warming was solved by having an exhaust-gas heater in the front compartment, piped from one in the back. There was never any intention to go into serious production. Sir Dennis hadn't the facilities. In fact, after leaving Mowden he moved to the Cordwallis Works in Maidenhead, "The Jam Factory", where he shared a large partitioned-off shed with the run-down GWK friction-drive car firm and the makers of the slide-valve Imperia. There was just room for development work. Nevertheless, he formed Streamline Cars, Limited (Telegrams: Streamline, Maidenhead) to advance his product, the Directors being himself. The Rt Hon Lord Vernon, Major JS Courtauld, MC, MP, Lt Col J Benskin, DSO, OBE, SL Courtauld and Sir MP Latham, Bt, MP. There was also an office in London.

With the 2.9-litre 80hp engine a cruising speed of 70mph was claimed and if a buyer did materialise the asking price was a rather high £1500, or nearly as much as an eight-cylinder Lincoln or Renault and £25 more than the price of a Packard Eight. When the Press tried the Burney it was found to be quiet, to pick up most impressively, to have light controls and steering, to ride very comfortably and handle well. At a speedometer 76mph (what an accurate observation) clutch slip intervened, otherwise the 80mph claims seemed valid.

Absence of running boards, wide doors, and the low build made entry and exit easy and it was said that a man wearing a top hat could walk into this Burney without removing it. Also that "No debutante would ever crush her ostrich feathers". . . Sir Dennis said that a chassis would only do 63mph, so that the aerodynamics were worth an extra 17mph, but in fact chassis and body were supposed to be integral. George Lanchester greeted the revolutionary car with jealous praise, saying its suspension was like that used by Dr FW Lanchester before the turn of the century and that the spring-ends sliding in bronze trunnions had been used on Lanchesters since 1912.

One person who acquired a Burney Streamline (perhaps it was a present?) was HRH The Prince of Wales, and this odd if ingenious car could hardly have had better publicity – especially as in spite of the excellent forward visibility he knocked down a girl cyclist with it and insisted on going to see her (an attractive girl probably) as she recovered.

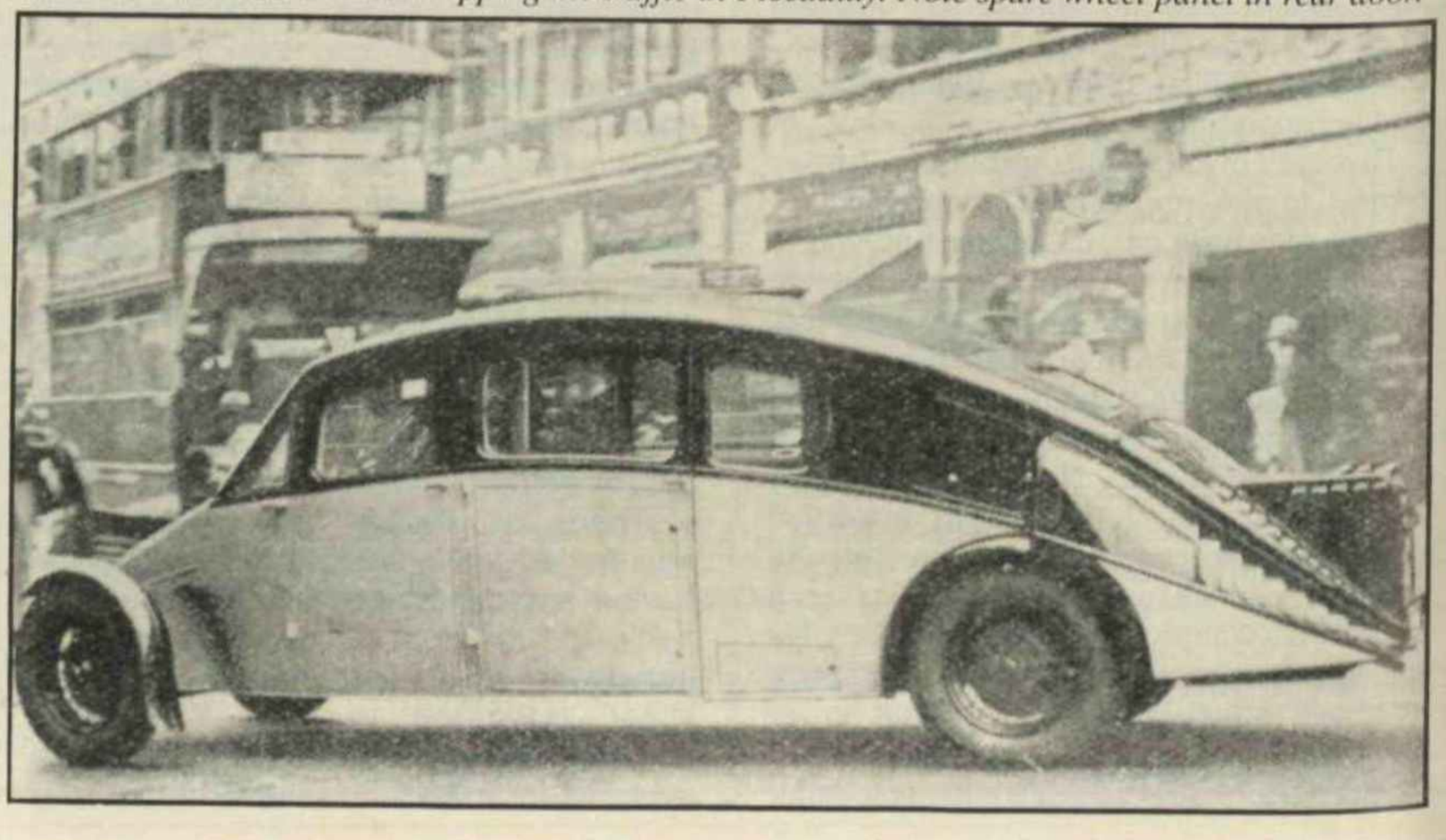
Late in 1931 Sir Dennis sailed for America in the *Berengaria* and gave a lecture to the IAE about his car in Detroit. Before he left he had asked Hives (later Lord Hives) of Rolls-Royce to read through the paper and offer suggestions. Not only were Rolls-Royce interested but they tried a Burney and asked Sir Dennis to bring one to Derby, after Christmas. He was also recommended to approach W Parsons who had been an R-R engineer since about 1911 and who was then with Hotchkiss. ("Who are doing remarkably well I believe") and on Rowbottom's advice was anxious to put the project up to Mr Ainsworth, (the Englishman who managed the Hotchkiss Company).

Indeed, with generous help from the archives of the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation which are kept by the Rolls-Royce EC at The Hunt House, Paulerspury, Northants, it is possible to see how helpful Rolls-Royce were at first to the Burney project, at a time when they were engaged in adapting centralised chassis lubrication to both models, slightly lengthening the wheelbase of the 25/30hp chassis and offering, as an extra, untarnishable metal finishes on both cars. The R-R company discussed his paper, which it was thought Royce might like to read (if sent to him at Le Canadel), suggested that their Mr Robottom who was sailing to the New York Motor Show in the *Baltic* might meet Sir Dennis in Detroit, and said that he should see General Motors, where R-R had "some very good friends who are sure to be intensely interested, because they have been struggling against fundamental difficulties".

After digesting the paper R-R observed that Sir D should ascertain the deflection of the Burney's back springs, as if a 4½ in deflection gave a good ride irs would be a much easier proposition than on a conventional car requiring some 8 or 9 in deflection to get rid of pitching. They did not follow the desire to get equal weight distribution between front and back wheels when braking, trotting out the old R-R preference for 40/60% braking, and they wondered if "Golden Arrow" type streamlining would be beneficial. To which Sir D said that when his car was fully loaded the c-of-g was somewhat behind the total weight, so he needed a 35/65 braking action, and as for the "Golden Arrow", he retorted that the stability of the Burney was fine up to about 88mph, but if he could cruise at 120mph a tail fin might be needed!

The R-R engineers tried two Burney cars. They were very impressed. The Beverley-Barnes one was taken to 4000rpm in the gears and only when the owner said it was being very much over-revved did the driver realise this, as ordinary engine-noise such as piston tap and valve clatter had simply disappeared. More noise could be heard in the back than in a Rolls-Royce,

Sir Denniston's brainchild stopping the traffic in Piccadilly. Note spare wheel panel in rear door.



axle. Although no shock-absorbers were fitted and Burney said no work had yet been done on the springing, the ride was "very good", with no pitching or rolling. The overall length, at 19 ft, was a little longer than that of a Phantom II with two spare wheels at the back, but the Burney's turning-circle was practically that of a 25hp Rolls-Royce. The R-R engineers drove to Maidenhead from London and back, visiting the works, and saw six cars being built or developed. Cooling problems were being met by a frontal as well as the rear-mounted radiators, which helped the interior heating, but mud on the windscreen was a problem and a more conventional nose was available. So impressed were the hard-headed R-R technicians that Burney was invited to call again at Derby when visiting Lord Vernon.

This enabled Hives to confirm that, even with the twin-cam, irritating noises (costly to cure) simply did not exist and that the ride was "very good indeed". He gave the hp at the driven wheels as 43. about that of the old 25hp Rolls-Royce, and in spite of the Burney body "being much larger than anything we have put on a 25hp, speed is very good indeed". He continued; "Anyone riding in the car would consider it more silent than a Rolls and, with development, rear passengers will have comfort approaching that of a train. It is irritating to have to think of an entirely new car, but as it has several sound fundamental advantages I should not like to take the responsibility of turning it down".

In January 1932 A G Elliott had lunch with Sir D at Chichester and tried the car Burnley was taking to America, with a 4.4-litre straight-eight Lycoming engine as used by Auburn. Evernden went also, to assess the bodywork. They were impressed (apart from wind-noise and discomfort in the front seats, due to the short nose), but "these would no doubt be tolerated on a chauffeur-driven car", especially a car built without the resources of Rolls-Royce. But there was to be no rear-engined Rolls-Royce!

Maybe Sir D had been pushing his luck a trifle too far. He had confided to Rolls-Royce that he had the rights to rear-engined cars with the power units behind the drive-shafts and that Standard and Riley had taken out licences and that he had practically completed negotiations to take over the Lagonda Company, whose supercharged 2-litre engine was giving 110 bhp at 5000 rpm on the test-bench, well-suited to the rear-engined Burney. Sir D had been told Hives would try to get Royce to look at his car down at West Wittering. However, the friendly attitude cooled a bit when Sir D endeavoured to get R-R to make parts for him, after having been told they were not interested in his Company or experimental cars. Further visits to Derby were to be discouraged!

So the inventor went it alone, making a dozen Burney Streamlines in all, the later ones called "Pullmans". In 1930 LC Rawlence & Co, the OM agents, had one in their Sackville St showrooms in London's West End. America showed little desire for the Lycoming-powered car, and when the supply of Beverley-Barnes engines ceased, resort was made to 20hp push-rod-ohv Armstrong Siddeley engines for the last two. In 1934 Crossley's of Manchester took up the patents. The outcome was the somewhat better-looking Crossley-Burney, powered by a 2-litre Crossley engine and with a Wilson pre-selector gearbox. Unfortunately they decided to put a Crossley radiator on the car's nose, dispensing with the rear-located ones, and were rewarded with over-heating problems. The recession of those early 1930s, following the Wall Street crash, like today's financial set-back, was not a good climate in which to promote such a novel motor car. The ambitions of Sir Dennis were still-born, even though he bought a Crossley-Burney, installed a Vauxhall Twelve engine, and started to experiment again, around 1938. The War effectively stopped that. WB

Sir Dennistoun Burney, Bt.

Commander Sir Charles Dennistoun Burney was born in 1888, the only son of Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Cecil Burney, the first baronet. Retiring from the Royal Navy in 1919 he joined Vickers Ltd as a consultant and was a Conservative MP for Uxbridge from 1922 to 1929. He succeeded to the baronetcy in the latter year. He proposed an England-India airship service, which the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, caused to be investigated. Commander Burney's brother was a motoring enthusiast who had veteran-car premises at Brooklands, which he disposed of to RGJ Nash. WB

100 mpg

This fuel consumption figure is seemingly unattainable by most cars and drivers. But the news that Daihatsu has got itself into the "Guinness Book of Records" by surpassing this 100 mpg barrier reminds us of a stunt organised by Morris Motors back in 1931, when a supercharged single-seater side-valve Morris Minor was specially prepared with the intention of achieving both 100 mph and 100 mpg. Driven by von de Becke (who is remembered for his Becke Special using a supercharged aged Wolseley Moth engine in a GN chassis) the racing Morris Minor was timed over the flying-start kilometre at 101.96 mph and over the fs mile at 100.30 mph at Brooklands in October 1931, being given BARC Certificates Nos 2469 and 2470 to confirm it.

The supercharger was then removed and the car was driven round a lenient circuit of public roads in the Midlands, and by judicious coasting and low speeds, a consumption of 107.4 miles on one gallon of petrol was accomplished. It was thus possible to celebrate the advent of the lowest-priced of side-valve Morris Minors with the slogan; "100 mph, 100 mpg, £100".

This was a pure advertising stunt but what Daihatsu have done with a standard 993 cc three-cylinder 1.0 Turbo Diesel five-door £7999 Charade is quite different. With three people and luggage on board it was driven 3621 miles round the whole of the British coastline, using 35.155 gallons of diesel fuel (cost £73.77), equal to 103.01 mpg. The lowest figure was 94 mpg, the best 109 mpg. This represents a range of better than 838 miles, with the Charade's normal 8.14-gallon tank. The drivers were John Taylor, Helen Horwood and Joanne Swift, and the overall average speed was 21.36 mph, inclusive of rest stops.

This is a remarkable feat, improving on the previous best by some 10 mpg. Subject to official confirmation it will get into the "Guinness Book". We are sure the records recorded therein are carefully checked, although they are not necessarily recognised in official circles — thus to our knowledge, there is no RAC or FISA Fuel Economy Record. WB

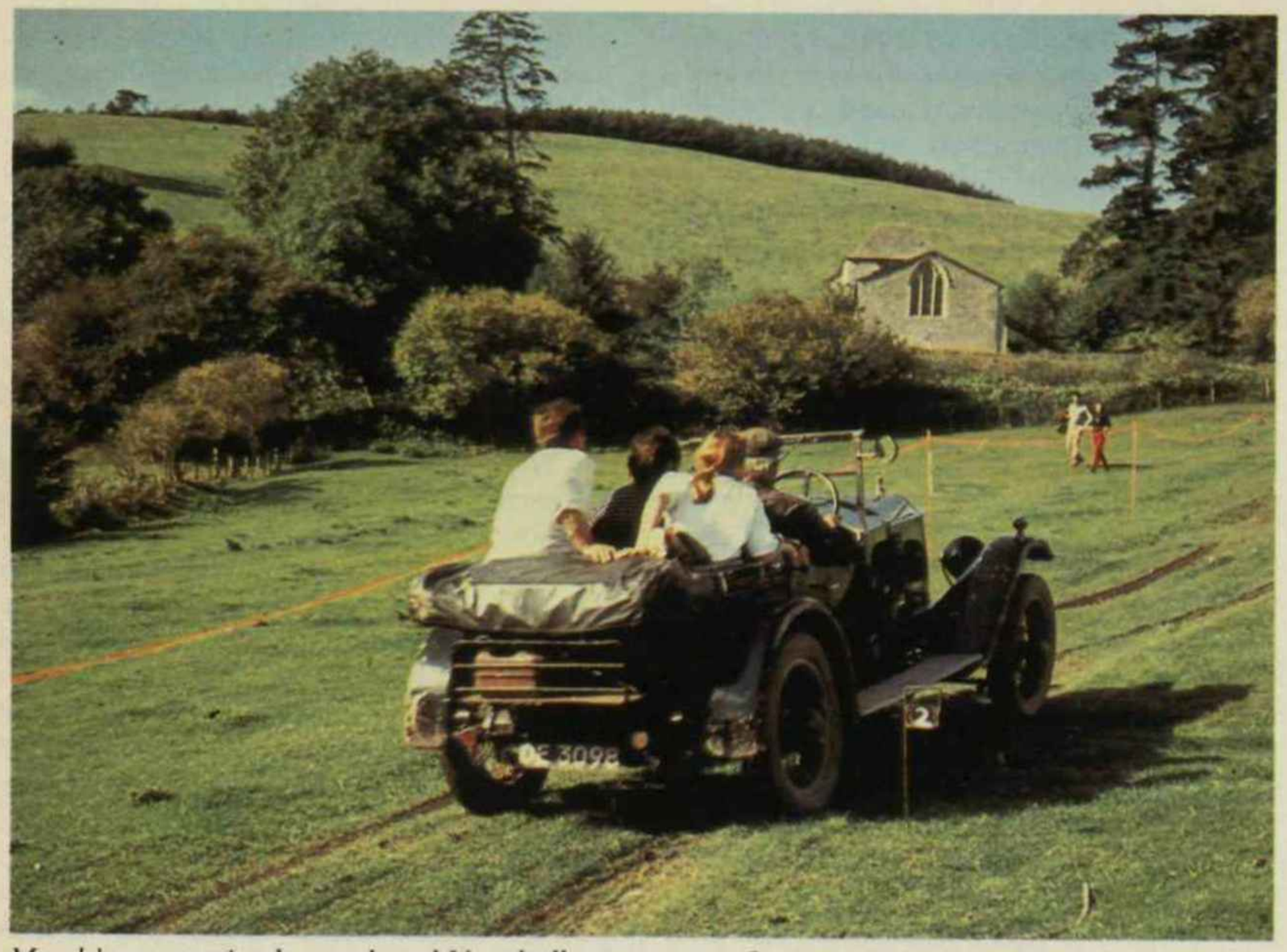
Gopsall again

Last month I referred to a brief visit I made to Gopsall Park, a one-time speed-trial venue. It was here, for instance, that the CUAC ran its 1933 event, at which Oliver Bertram in the 10½-litre Delage (well-known today to VSCC members) made FTD, in 26.8 sec for the slightly uphill half-mile course, Whitney Straight making best sports-car time (30.6 sec) in an 8-litre Bentley, after which he sat in the car reading *The Times*. And where, incidentally, the Chief Constable got his car well and truly bogged-down on the grass at the end of the course, heavy rain having fallen beforehand.

The reason I return to the subject of Gopsall Park, the 1100-acre estate formerly surrounding the mansion owned by the Howe family, and later the property of Lord Waring, is because I was reminded by the young man now living at the Lodge and who is researching the history of the place, that at one time it was proposed that a race-track should be made there. This idea surfaced in 1932/33, the scheme being to construct a road-course of some six miles to a lap, with several shorter circuits incorporated therein, and with plenty of interesting bends and corners, with the mansion as the club-house.

It seems that Hugh P McConnell, the Brooklands' Scrutineer, was interested and the Advisory Committee which planned the layout of the proposed course consisted of Earl Howe, Sir Henry Birkin, Bt, Sir Malcolm Campbell, the Hon Brian Lewis, Chris Staniland and SCH Davis. Unfortunately the necessary finance was not forthcoming and no more was heard of this track or those proposed for Tring, Brighton, and other venues. Meanwhile, early in 1933 the then 2-mile 327-yard Donington Park circuit was successfully opened, ER Hall's MG winning the very first race there. WB

●Having written about the ex-Henry Laird racing Morgan "Yellow" in the October MOTOR SPORT, we learn that its one-time companion, "Red", has recently returned here, from California.



Marsh's appropriately-numbered Vauxhall graces some fine scenery.

VSCC's Top Trial

I think it fair to say that most of the entrants, 93 this year, regard the VSCC Welsh Trial, involving a run-in of 200 miles to the Sunday start on the Saturday and then 13 interesting and now traditional hill-sections on the Sabbath, as the high-point of this Club's trials session — unless the Lakeland Trial comes higher on their agenda. Since the thing was first mooted back in 1939 it has become quite an event locally, too, as people go to Presteign to see the "old-fashioned motors", as one tiny girl was heard to describe them, assemble in the narrow street outside rally headquarters, the famous Radnorshire Arms, dating back to 1616.

This year not quite so many cars had arrived by early afternoon as last year, perhaps because their crews had started later on the compulsory run-in, in deference to dancing until the early hours which now occupies Saturday night and a bit of Sunday morning. However, interest was preserved by an aloof Rolls-Royce parked in a near-by yard and an immaculate 1933 Triumph Southern Cross tourer with the four-cylinder ioe Coventry-Climax engine, the sort of car, with its long bonnet, radiator stone-guard and bogus sporting air, one might not have bought new, but which is now a nice thing to see in such well-presented order. A diversion was a small cavalcade of Lea-Francis cars, back from lunch in New Radnor.

Another Saturday afternoon attraction was Chris Gordon's latest acquisition, the ex-Arnold-Forster solid-tyred Trojan. Although the makers of this unbelievable device used to advertise that if you owned a Trojan you couldn't afford to walk, I noticed that Chris had not, in fact, discarded his shoes . . . . Also that, off on the intro, he was quite willing to accept a push-off, after tugging for some time on the inboard starting lever to the detriment of his right-arm muscles.

So to Sunday's sport. Drama had already unfolded, when Diffey's A7 broke its crank *en route* to Wales, necessitating a return to put in another engine, all night work that finished with a 5.55am arrival for the 8am start. As the competitors assembled, one saw various ploys in search of wheelgrip. Biggins' 1924 bull-nose Morris had three spares on the back, for instance, Roger Collings had two extra doorless seats on the 1903 Mercedes Sixty, one of which was occupied by David Thirlby, no doubt deemed an effective "bouncer", with Roger and Judy up front, a more sporting affair than the touring coachwork Collings uses for his November dashes to Brighton. Even Jones' powerful 30/98 carried two girls in the stern. It had rained buckets in Radnorshire during the preceeding week, nicely doctoring the hills, which may be why, on this hot October day, the two similar A7 Chummies, of Miss Gledhill and P Gledhill, had their hoods erect — or perhaps they are troublesome to furl?

Cocking a snook at the puncture-proof Trojan afore-mentioned, S Colledge was competing in Carlisle's pneu-shod version. Danaher was driving a purposeful-looking Brescia Bugatti reputed to be rather too high geared for trials work. Riddle was driving his ohv GN and the event was deemed not too tough for Goding's 1917 6-litre Studebaker, which indeed, along with Collings' 1903 Mercedes, gained an award, whereas Roscoe's 1913 Overland didn't appear.

In spite of heavy rain in the preceding week, the sections were not too difficult, and only four cars retired: Bowman's Frazer Nash, Brian Gray's A7-Jap, the luckless Diffey A7,and McEwen's Riley 9 which had the misfortune to be clouted by Goding's Studebaker after the section known as Railway, with sufficient damage to make it unserviceable, although it had been going well. The Study was able to continue.

H Colledge's Riley 9 was suffering from mis-firing which changes of plugs only partially cured, but it was able to finish, going quite well at two of the Pilleth ascents. Here Mrs Daniels' 30/98 made it sedately to top marks on section 2, and Marsh in the Morris Sports nearly got to the summit, doing better here than David Marsh in the 30/98.

With VSCC antecedents in mind, some may see this trial as a 30/98 v Bentley battle. In this context, 17-year old Ben Collings, by winning Class 2 outright in the family 1928 4½-litre example of the Cricklewood *marque*, left no room for argument. But congratulations to A Jeddere-Fisher in leading home the Vauxhall element in his 1921 E-type, with 216 marks, (Collings scored 221), from 11 other 30/98s, all OE-types, of which the joint runners-up were Garland and Bruce Spollon, with 213 points each.

It ended, traditionally, at Pilleth Farm, where generous free parking is provided for spectator's cars, the collection this time for the Cystic Fibrosis Research Trust, sponsoring two lads who had *pushed* a 2CV Citroen there from Knighton.

As competitors tackled the three grassy sections distant hammering could be heard, as Chris Gordon's Trojan was fettled in preparation for its slow run home to Birmingham. Mostly it was easy although Pilleth 2 defeated the AJS and Malyan's Frazer Nash near the start-line, while Walker's Gwynne 8, Barry Clarke's A7-GN and Danaher's Bugatti stopped at marker one, in class one, and there was even more havoc in class 2, Bendall's 30/98 stopping low down with spinning back wheels, and he was far from the only one.

Never mind! The mist had dispersed, the day had been fine and warm, and the awards-list lengthy. Young Ben Collings won the Presteigne Trophy in the Bentley, Keith Hill (Helix-Crouch) and J Newell's A7 shared the Harry Bowler Trophy for best overall performance (235 points each), the Leslie Winder Trophy went to Odell's 1023 Riley, and the Smatcher Trophy, commemorating that difficult hill, to Gunn's supercharged A7. In class one First Class Awards were won by Hill, Newell (A7), Gunn, Miss Winder (A7), S Colledge (Trojan), Blake (GN), and Blakeney-Edwards (Frazer Nash), Second Class Awards by Felton (Bugatti), Spence (Lea-Francis), Stringer (A7) and Welch (A7), Third Class Awards by Low (A7), Rolfe (MG), Longhurst (Riley 9) and Moffatt (Bugatti). In Class Two the 1st class Awards

winners were B Collings, Jeddere-Fisher (30/98), Hirst (Alvis), Bruce Spollon (30/98) and P Garland (30/98), Second Class Awards went to Mrs Tomlinson (A7), Baxter (Chrysler), Garland (Alvis), Harris (Bentley) and R Collings (1903 Mercedes), and the Third Class Awards to Goding (Studebaker), Millham (30/98), Threlfall (Ford) and Goldsmith (Lea-Francis).

The Navigation Run was won by Creed-Miles, whose 1929 A7 was so impeccably directed round the course by Anabel Jones that they lost only two marks, whereas the next-best scorer, Burnett in a 1928 12/50 Alvis, forfeited 17. The Award takers here were; 1sts to Creed-Miles, Burnett, Wickham (Alvis), and Baker (Rolls-Royce), 2nds to Milne-Atkinson (A7), Hanna (A7) Johnson (Lea-Francis) and Stimson (Riley 9), 3rds to Hancock (OM), Mrs. Parkin (A7), and Britcher (Alvis). Back in the car-park I was introduced to an elegant 4½-litre Lagonda which is apparently in the same trim as when the late TG Moore, who then owned MOTOR SPORT, competed with it in a pre-war Monte Carlo Rally, starting from some improbable place, and I was heartened to see Good's 1923 Gwynne 8 going home four-up. Incidentally, it was apparent that flat-twin Jowetts are still around in the VSCC, Lilley's cream two-seater competing in the trial — a modified car, but looking exceedingly innocent — Wills' 1924 model in the navigation frolic. And two ACs braved the trial, Hescroff's covetable Montlhéry Six and the brightly-hued 1929 six-cylinder two-seater of Thring, which either had oversize tyres or under-size mudguards. WB

VSCC Eastern Rally

On October the 20th,this versatile club held a rally, as a change from trials and racing, over a route in Suffolk, with penalties for being early or late, or for approaching from the wrong direction, the dozen controls. Penalties were also imposed for bringing one's car on a trailer, missing out a check-point, opening as the event was conducted in daylight the last-named carried no sinister implications! This brought in 47 rallyists, but of these four failed to start and two A7s, an Alvis and a Riley found the tasks too involved and failed to finish the course.

Of those who did well, K Bennett's 1928 Alvis won the Premier Award, P Merrick's 1934 Lagonda Rapier the Newcomer's prize, Miss Winder's A7 the Novices' prize — or rather, the drivers and navigators helped the cars to do this. Out of four class-permutations First Class Awards went to Hart (Humber), Potter (Lea-Francis), Callifant (Alvis) and Cattell (Riley), Second Class Awards to Edge (Alvis), Blakeney Edwards (Frazer Nash), Glover (Alvis), Mahany (HRG) and Fayter (Riley), Third Class Awards to Creed Miles (A7 — navigated by a certain driver used to Mercedes 60 power) and Lupton (Lea-Francis). All cars were pre-1940. WB



Riddle's Anzani-engined Frazer Nash.

More on GNs

The article in last month's MOTOR SPORT about my encounter with two of Edward Riddle's GNs seems to have been well received, but space restrictions caused some items to be omitted. For example, John Garland, to whom Riddle had introduced the GN cyclecar, remained faithful to his for some time, before buying a 3-litre Bentley for £65 and later the 30/98 Vauxhall which his sone Peter drives in today's VSCC events. And it may interest Morris folk to know tht Riddle's second Oxford-engined Cowley had a 3.68 to 1 axle ratio, achieved by inserting a Model-T Ford crown-wheel and pinion into the Morris final-drive assembly. The idea was to get a higher cruising pace with the increased power but this hope of a high-speed Cowley never quite worked out, although it proved a satisfactory replacement for the 12/50 Alvis, which Riddle had regarded as a good car, if a thought over-rated.

It was not made clear that the third car I tried was Riddle's 1925 Frazer Nash, which endorsed his 50mph cruising-speed theory. It was another he built up from a basket-case, that including what he believes to be the first side-valve Anzani engine to have been installed in one of these cars. I found, by the way, that the cubby hole in a GN dashboard would just about take my Canon camera, but certainly not a Rolleiflex. . .

Incidentally, GNs have survived quite well. Apart from the two I tried, another 24 are current in the VSCC Members' List. WB

V – to – C Miscellany

Arising from the recent reference to Duryea cars, we hear that a 1900 four-seater is being restored in this country and are reminded that of the three-wheeler Gems we mentioned, dating from about 1915 but with production, even in the USA, delayed by the war, three remained in the garage behind Charles Duryea's house in Philadelphia, mixed up with sales brochures and the movie-projector used for promotional films. One of these was acquired by L Scott Bailey and Stan Wilkinson, the latter having helped to restore Scott Bailey's 1898 Duryea Trap; he had first discovered the other Duryea in 1958. Today there is a Duryea Gem in the Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles.

The Lea-Francis OC has compiled a grand list of the cars owned by its members. They add up to 325, the breakdown being a 1923 D-type, a 1925 I-type, eight J-types, four K-types the oldest of which dates from 1925, a couple of L-types, three M-types, a 1926 Kirkstone tourer, the racing Lobster Hyper replica, four 1LFS, two 2LFS, 54 P-types running from 1927 to 1933, 28 S-types, four U-types, six V-types, six W-types, seven of the race ohc "Ace of Spades" cars, three Much Park Street, models, 17 14hp Lea-Francis with Estate bodies, 79 with 4-light saloon bodies and ten with 6-light saloon bodies (four of these 14s now in chassis form), three Westland 14s, 28 Sports 14s, four 18hp saloons, 26 2½-litre sports models, a 2½-litre Westland, a 14hp van, two Lea-Francis-engined Connaughts, three Lynx, eleven 12/14hp Specials, and a couple of 1989/1990 modern Leafs. Also three Unihorse, three motorcycles, and three bicycles of the appropriate make. The President of this active Club is CT Delaney, who has the Hyper he raced at Brooklands and two vintage S-types, and the Secretary is DBR Sawers, French's, Long Wittenham, Oxon, OX14 4QQ.

A short-term exhibit at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu was a 1925 Farman tourer, one of those very rare luxury 6.6-litre single-overhead-camshaft six-cylinder cars that challenged the legendary Hispano Suiza. In the Museum's Michael Sedgwick Memorial Run the winner was an A7 Ruby, from a 1939 Series-E Morris and a 1947 Rover 12.

The newly-formed Benjafield's Racing Club, formed "to foster the spirit and camaraderie of the great team to which that doctor/racing driver belonged", is to be congratulated on having already found a new venue for a speed-trial. This was Cornbury Park, Oxon, where over a quarter-mile of the drive Donald Day (ERA) made FTD. The Club's President is Stanley Mann and the idea is obviously Bentley-orientated, although "Benjy" also raced Salmson, Panhard-Levassor, Alfa Romeo, De Dion Bouton, MG and Aston Martin cars. Club membership is limited to 50, by invitation, so we need not give you the secretary's address!

Among all the 0-100-0mph heroics, it is amusing to remember that 65 years ago it was claimed that a Grand Sport Amilcar had done 0-50-0 in 16½ seconds... WB

Parry Thomas Plaque

A plaque to commemorate the Welsh racing-driver and engineer, JG Parry Thomas, who was the greatest Brooklands exponent of the 1920s and who died at Pendine in 1927 defending his LSR at over 170mph in "Babs", has been unveiled recently at his birthplace in Wrexham. He was the son of a curate who soon became vicar of Bwelch-y-Cibau in Montgomeryshire. This is excellent news, and contrasts with the unwarranted opposition to a similar memorial being erected at the spot where Mike Hawthorn lost his life in a road accident.

Shortly after I had moved from Hampshire to Mid-Wales to escape the rapidly encroaching over-spill of cars and people (to find that you could park unmolested for 24 hours in the High Street of what has since become a crowded county-town) I paid a visit to the vicarage where Thomas was brought up. A typical Welsh Vicar, clad all in black, answered my knock. Before I had time to tell him why I wanted to photograph his house he delighted me by saying: "It cannot be for the architecture, so it must be because Parry Thomas grew up here". This was some time before Wyn Owen had dug up "Babs", restored the famous car, and had thus brought Thomas's name back into prominence.

Parry Thomas is well remembered at Pendine where he died, at the Beach Hotel. But it is not possible to erect a plaque on the "Hermitage", his Brooklands home, or at the adjacent works where the Leyland Thomas racing-cars were built, because Bass Charrington, the brewers, had these and other historic buildings bull-dozed out of existence, at short notice, some years ago. I like to think that this may still have a considerable influence on the drinking-habits of many motor-racing followers! WB

Out of the Past

Items from motoring's past crop up from time to time. For instance, I met a gentleman in a Nantwich hotel who had worked as a boy in one of Jack Field's two garages in Southport, and thus had this link with racing cars (see MOTOR SPORT, February, 1990). He did long hours, sometimes 8am to 10pm, for some 10/- (50p) a week. Living in Birkdale, Field sometimes had to take him home afterwards. He remembered the Talbots, Bugattis, the Sunbeam "Silver Bullet" and the old 350 hp V12 Sunbeam raced on the sands by Field. The foreman of the garage was apt to be feared but proved unexpectedly understanding when the lad damaged the mud-guard of the Hudson Super Six on which he had been taking solo unauthorised driving lessons within the premises.

We talked of the old Southport races, of Thistlewaite's and the Conan Doyles' Mercedes-Benz, the latters' gold-painted Bugatti, Selby's Bugatti and the successful 4-speed A7 of Pat Stephenson which competed there. My informant went into the jewellery business but retained his liking for cars, of which his first was a Standard 9, followed by a small Ford. In later times he enjoyed Jaguars, 3.4, 3.8 and an XK140, had a Peerless, and a Riley Kestrel, but the best-remembered car was a Talbot 110 Airline saloon, which cracked a cylinder but was repaired after the back axle had been removed to release the engine.

Others were a V8 Jensen, a couple of quick and durable Saabs, and a much-liked Alfa Romeo Giullietta, followed by two BMW 2002s in succession, up to the present. The Aintree GP in which Moss beat Fangio by a short head, both in Mercedes-Benz, was recalled, and racing at Oulton Park and Donington Park is still attended, especially the VSCC events. I was reminded of the Hon E G Greenall starting with a Cooper 500 (the hotel's beer-mats were another reminder), of Ken Flint from Stoney Stratford racing the ERA "Remus", and that when the British GP came to Aintree the cars were housed in Kelly's Bakery premises. Little snippets from the past, which fascinate me, as I hope they do others. WB

Wheels and Balls

Important rugger matches having been in the news recently, with more air-time, re-plays and pre-post-match interviews than Motor racing receives (the BBC's "all-balls" attitude), I have been reminded of the remark made to me many years ago by a racing driver, to the effect that although he had been very happy to beat the great Malcolm Campbell when both were driving cars of the same kind, he had his happiest day of all when he scored for Cambridge in the Inter-'Varsity Rugby Match at Twickenham in 1923.

The driver was the late WB "Bummer" Scott and he certainly vanquished Campbell when both started from the same mark in identical cars, their 1½-litre straight-eight supercharged Grand Prix Delages, in the 1930 Gold Star race at Brooklands, Scott lapping twice at 122.57mph, which was quicker by 0.90mph than Campbell's best. The satisfaction was at first reversed when Scott was disqualified for crossing a forbidden safety-line at the Fork. But Birkin protested in Scott's favour that he had been forced to do this to give the Bentley room as it was flagged off from scratch, and the disqualification was quickly dropped.

I had wondered about what happened on that happiest of all days in Scot's memory and spurred on by the spate of exciting rugger matches in recent weeks, I was provided by my county-town library with David Frost's book "The Bowrings Story of the Varsity Match" (Macdonald Queen Anne Press), which duly enlightened me. WB Scott (Fettes/Pembroke)played for Cambridge in the 1923 match at Twickenham and, with RH Hamilton-Wickes (Wellington/Pembroke)and Sir TG Devitt (Sherborne/Corpus Christi) scored a try. Scott played again in 1924, without scoring. Oxford won both matches. I thought you might like to be reminded of this! WB

VSCC Racing Drivers Championship

The 1991 VSCC Racing Driver's Championship was sponsored by the Sheraton Pine Cliffs Golf & Country Club Organisation, which was a great help in these times of rising circuit hire charges. Anthony Mayman won both the PVT and Post-War categories with his ERA and Lotus, and Dave Caroline, the Morgan three-wheeler exponent, the Vintage class. The prizes were presented by Nigel Mansell at a dinner at the Knightsbridge Sheraton Park Towers Hotel, and the VSCC President, Bruce Spollon, thanked the sponsors for their very generous support throughout the season. WB

Sunbeam Run

The ever-efficient Sunbeam MCC announces that next year's Pioneer Run to Brighton, from Epsom, will be held on March 22nd. This year the 54th such run had an entry of over 360 pre-1915 machines. Regulations for the 1992 event are already available, from Marjorie Ayers, 59 Beechwood Road, Sandersfoot, Surrey.

MG Yearbook

The 1991 edition of the "T-Register Yearbook" is now out and MG owners should be very glad that the MG car Club issues interesting publications. The contents of this magazine-format 48-page book include an article about George Tuck, who was MG's pre-war Publicity Manager – I remember this handsome young man, who sensibly married the MG General Manager's daughter and his advertising material – who later found himself in the Desert Army and, the war over, joined BMC's Export Division, running a ZB Magnette as his company car. The Alan Hess Magazine which became FLM Harris's *Sports Car* (to which I contributed and was its ad manager for a very brief spell!) and finally *Safety Fast,* comes into it. There is a long piece about Archie Scott-Brown with a cover picture of him racing an MG at Boreham, more about the old Boreham race circuit, news of T-types the world over, etc. This excellent effort is available for £5.00 and back numbers are also available, from: D Saunders, Owl Cottage, 13 Ermine street, Caxton, Cambridge, CB3 8PB WB

Cars in Books

Well, not cars this time, but aviation. Aeroplane followers should find "Air Crash" by Fred Jones (Robert Hale, 1985, ISBN 0-7090-2161-5) of interest, although after reading it they may never want to go in an aeroplane again, because it is about accident investigation, the "clues in the wreckage". The book covers the findings about the prototype, Fairey Firefly which broke up on a trial flight and killed the racing-driver and test-pilot Chris Staniland, in 1941. WB

Senna Censure

Sir,
I am astounded to read about the post race press briefing after the Japanese Grand Prix. I have always admired the driving skills of Ayrton Senna, but at times thought that he was arrogant or rude, both on the track and in interviews. How worthy is he as an ambassador for the sport when he openly admits that he decided to cause an accident, if needed, to gain the 1990 World Championship?

He was variously reported as saying: "I decided if Prost beat me off the line I would take the line into the first corner and not give way, even if there was an accident" (*ITV Oracle*). "I promised myself that if, after the start I lost the first place, I would go for it in the first corner, regardless of the consequence. That's what took place". (*Daily Telegraph*).

If indeed he did say either of these sentences, then FISA needs to carefully review its position. It would seem that some action would have to be taken against him, especially as he used threats such as "The gloves are off" again this year.

Motor racing is meant to be a non-contact sport. It is dangerous enough without some drivers deciding to use brute force to succeed.

B J Walsh,
Twickenham.

Wet-weather Racing

Sir,
Having just read a Japanese newspaper report and subsequent comments from the drivers and orgaisers of the rain-stopped Australian Grand Prix, my first thoughts were of sympathy for the drivers having to race under the reported conditions.

On further reflection, however, I recall earler days of the sport, when Formula One teams were expected to be able to race under any conditions, and the accolade of "regenmeister" was given to drivers who could master the elements. I ask if there is really a valid reason for trying to turn Formula One into a fair-weather sport when, unlike at most venues in the United States, the weather at many circuits used for the world championship cannot be relied on to be fair.

I continue to be amazed at the technological developments and the adaptation of driver skills that allow progressive generations of Formula One cars to be driven in relative safety so rapidly. It should be possible to apply the same technological and driver skills to enable wet-weather races to be run.

The problems faced on a racing circuit and on the road are basically the same — adhesion and visibility. Adhesion is down to tyre design and aerodynamics, visibility to spray control. If it means that cars for a wet race have narrower tyres and cycle wings, so be it, although I don't think the final solutions will be so simplistic. At least the spectators, teams and sponsors would have a complete race, and some of the technology will trickle down (pun intended) to the cars of we everyday-driving mortals.

Opinions expressed are those of correspondents and not necessarily those of MOTOR SPORT.

Although many of the drivers at Adelaide seem to have started the race unwillingly and with good reason, it is to their credit that they did start in cars that seem to have been unsuitable for the conditions. Now is an ideal opportunity for the new FIA management to frame suitable rules that can deliver the goods in rain.

Tony Innes,
Tokyo, Japan.

Circuit Charges

Sir,
Through the pages of MOTOR SPORT I would like to ask the RAC, race organisers and circuit owners to justify the exorbitant fees charged to competitors who wish to race their 'historic' cars. There is a large disparity between the reasonable £30 or £40 (short or long race) which the VSCC requests, to the extortionate £65 charged by Brands Hatch Leisure Club for a 10-lap race on the short (1.4 mile lap) Cadwell Park circuit.

Perhaps these fees explain why many historic meetings this season have been unable to field full grids. I feel that unless something is done to reduce these fees competitors will be denied the opportunity to exercise their cars and spectators will be denied the chance to see them in action. I look forward to the replies from the powers that be.

M J Smailes,
Cleveland.

End of the Rhode

Sir
As a young apprentice I joined the motor-trade in 1937 in Cambridge, I find so many memories are stirred by the pictures, stories and descriptions in your admirable publication every month.

I was employed in a small family business called H Birch & Son of Victoria Road. I mention this only as it may "ring a bell" with some of your older readers, particularly undergraduates, who were the owners of a very interesting range of motor vehicles of all makes and nationalities.

These, I recall had to be kept inside the garage and a car rug or loose tonneau cover always found its way over the rear numberplate. It was some time before I discovered that the "Bulldogs" had very strict rules regarding the personal transport of students.

The reason I have written is because of a brief encounter with a car called a Rhode. This car was stored in a barn in the village of Oakington and belonged to a local farmer. On seeing the car I was impertinent enough to suggest that I might clean it for him, to which he agreed. The car, a four-seater saloon, rather like an early Austin 20, was in a brown finish with cloth-covered seatings. The spare wheel was carried in a recess on the n/s front wing, and the battery was on the opposite side running board. I can't recall the position of the petrol tank; might it have been under the bonnet with the four cylinder side valve engine? It was not until I noticed a very brief mention of a "1924 Rhode" in the account at the Test Hill in the Brooklands Reunion (Motor Sport, August 1991) that I realised this was the only mention I have ever seen, before or since, of the name Rhode.

I recall scanning all the garage lubrication charts that had decorated the walls for years, but no mention of a Rhode. I should be pleased to see any comments from readers who have any knowledge of this make and any pictures that are available. In closing, I would point out that I joined HM Forces in the early forties and lost touch with the car described. I seem to recall a rumour that, on the death of the farmer, the car was taken away as scrap metal for the War Effort. It saddens the heart to think of what must have been a very rare motor car should have perished that way.

Arthur C Pauley,
Cambridge.

Roving clock

Sir
With reference to letters published in the November issue about the Leyland clock from Shap Summit. This clock has been erected at The Brewery Arts Centre, Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria, and has been there for some years now, not at the folk museum in Appleby as stated.

N R Yates,
Cumbria.

Morgan Hunter

Sir,
If it is any help to "Mr Morgan Hunter" (MOTOR SPORT, November), I acquired Morgan 4/4 KUY 474 from a Liverpool garage, which I think was Jimmy Rae, late in 1955 when I was stationed at Oakington flying Vampires. I used it in trials and speed events for a couple of years, whilst I was at Cambridge learning how to be an engineer.

I have a picture of us on Simms in the Exeter Trial of 1956, with my passenger looking concerned because he has just seen the cliff up which we are set to climb. We won a First Class award on that occasion.

I later sold the car to, I think, a London dealer. Perhaps you could tell Mr Lideliard that I have an entry on the 1992 Exeter, and would be very happy to wreck his car once again on that event. It cracked its chassis in 1956, a problem the model was prone to.

T J Threlfall,
Shawforth, Hants.

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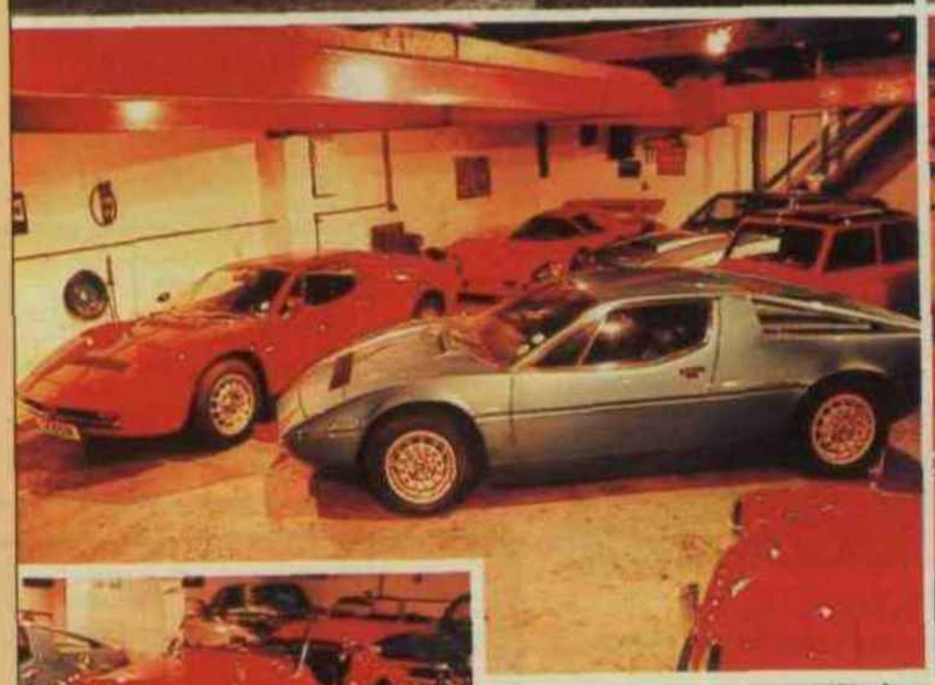
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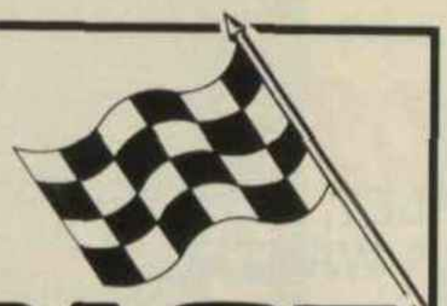
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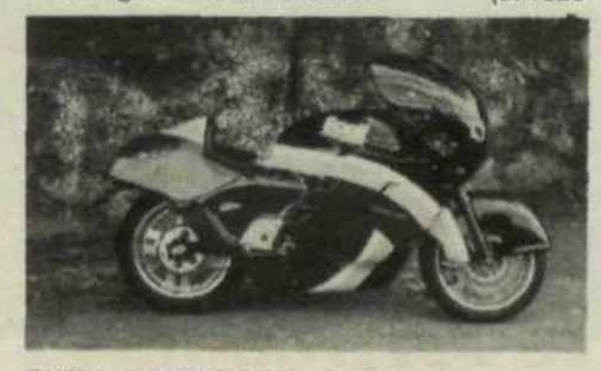
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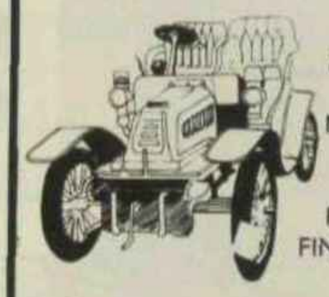
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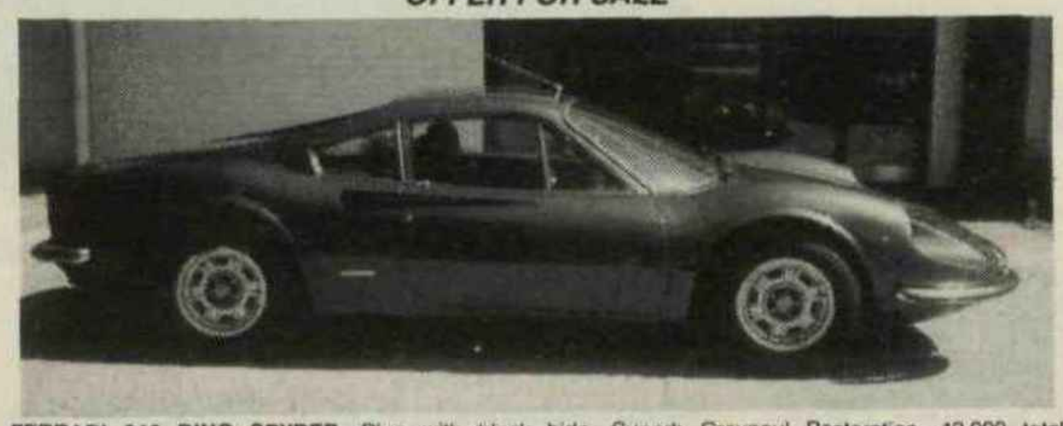
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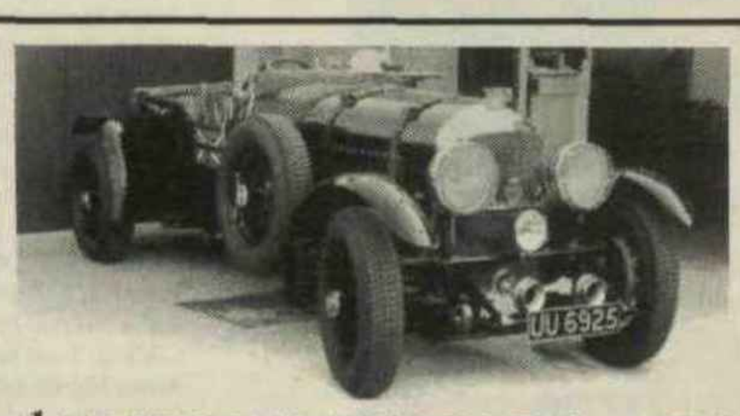
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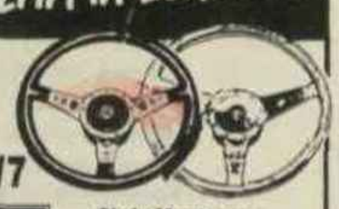
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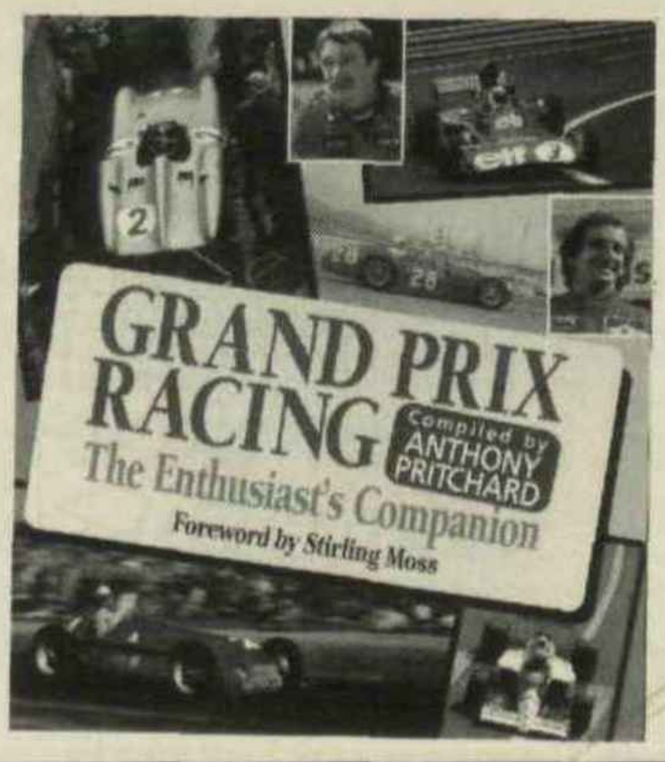
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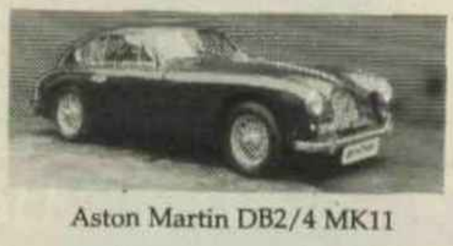
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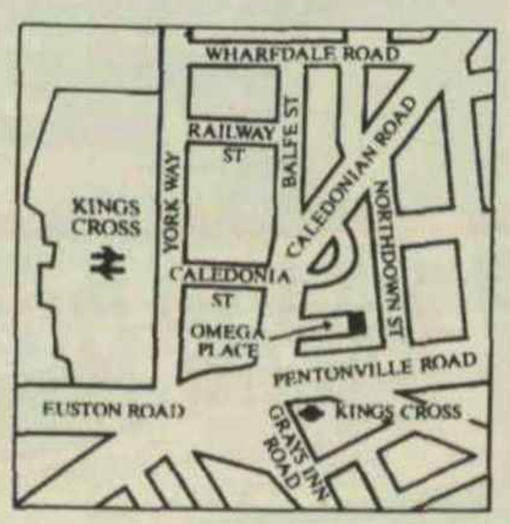
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The Auction was disappointing with regards to both prices and levels of interest, underlining the fact that yet again buyers are reluctant to spend to real market value on cars in a depressed market when all they can do is look at a car prior to buying.

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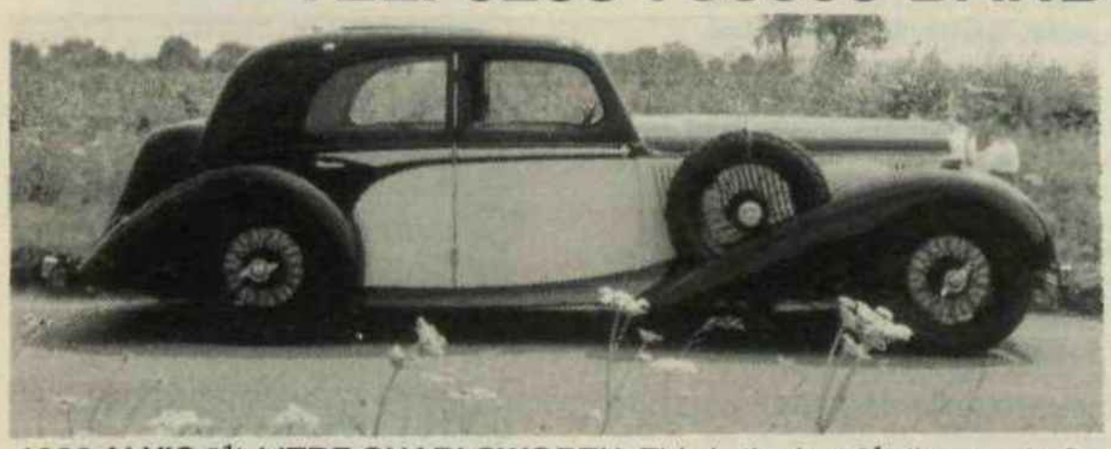
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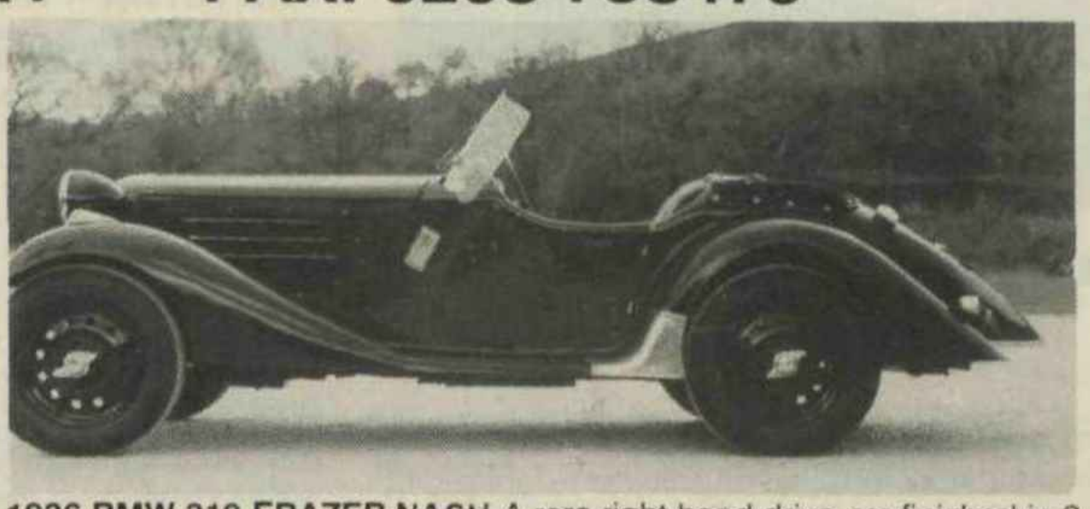
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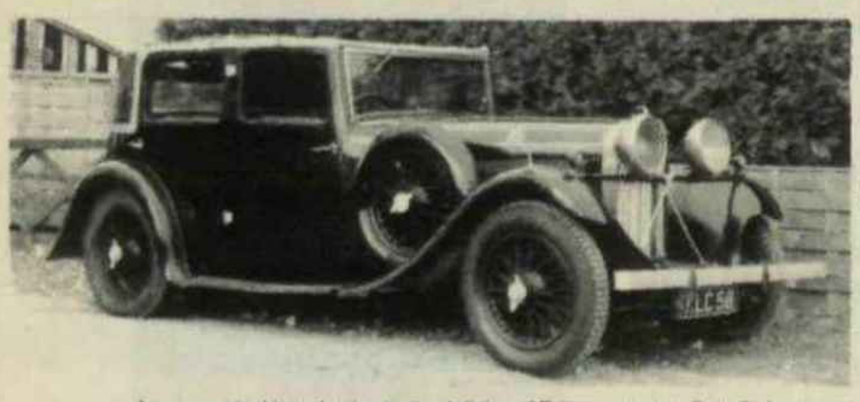
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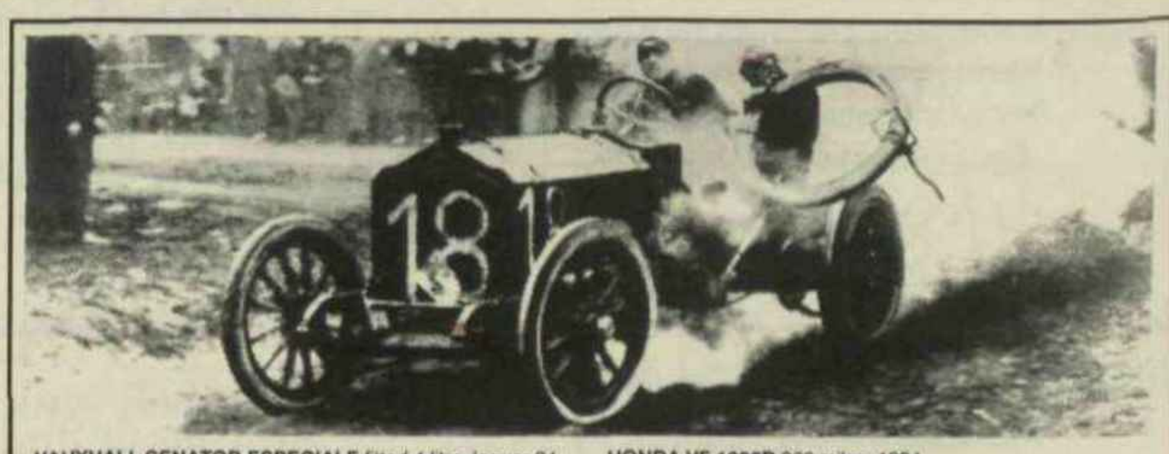


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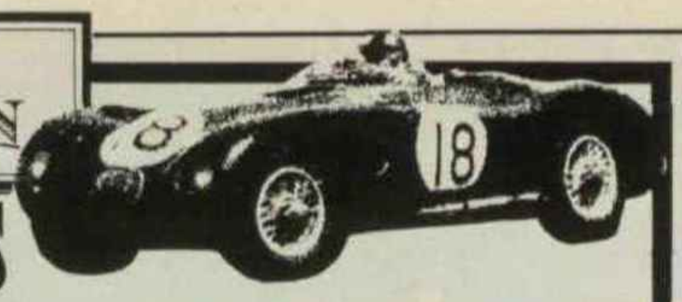


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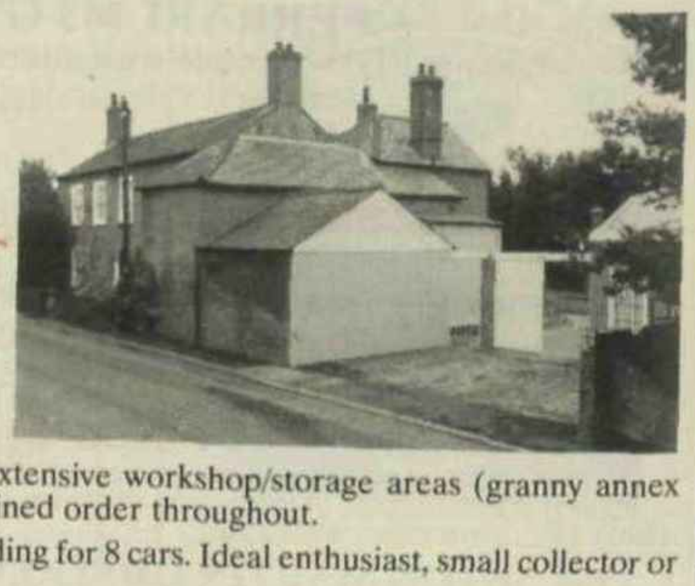
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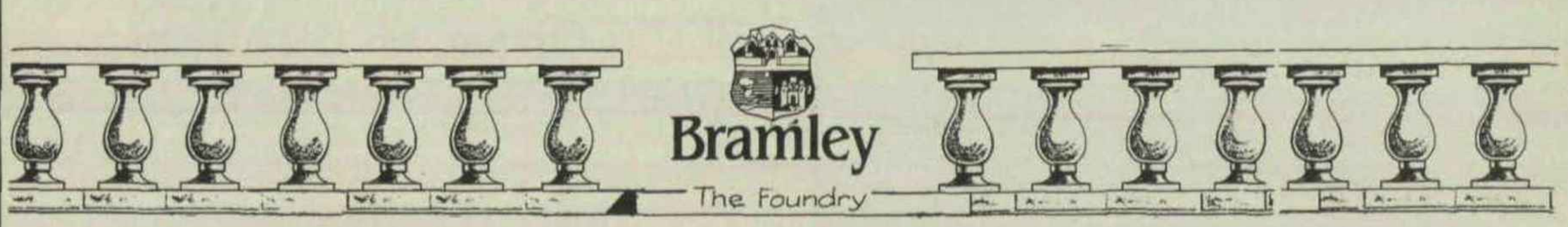
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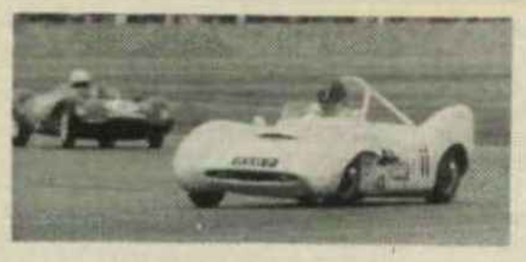
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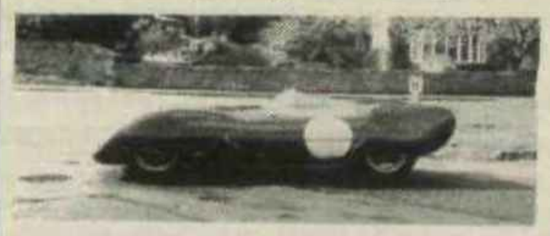
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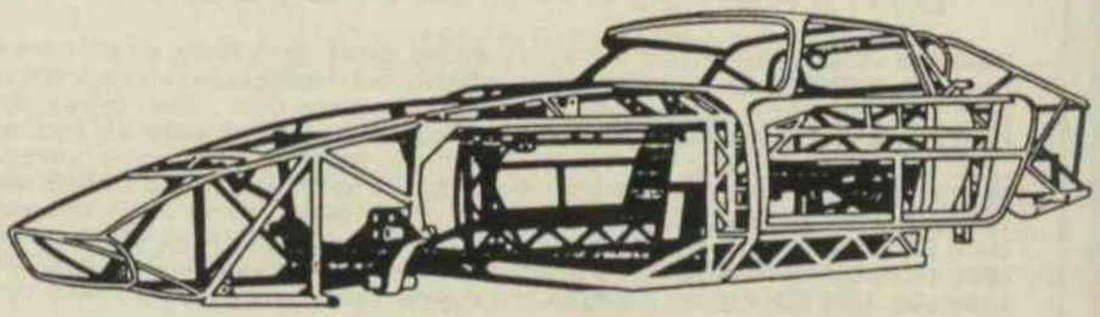
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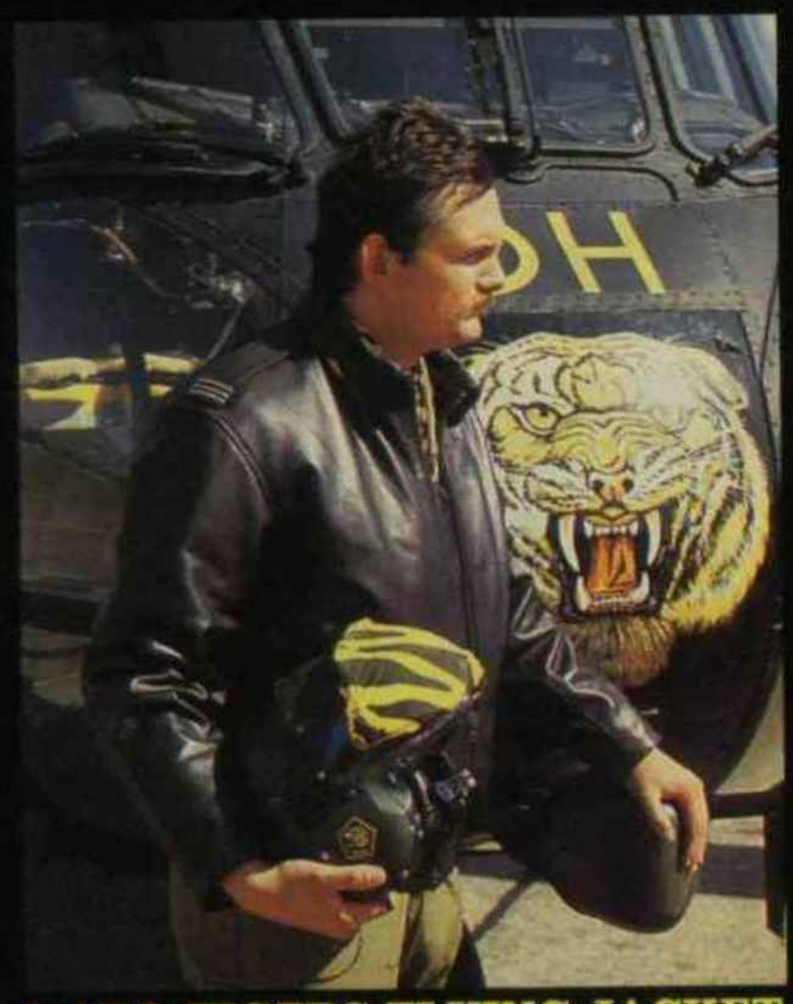


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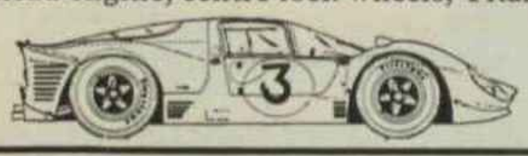
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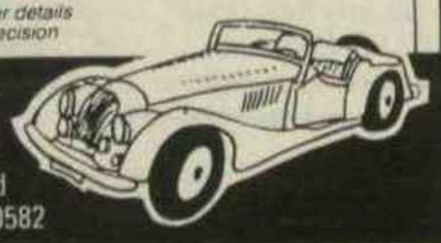
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Ferrari 512 BB. 1981, 22,000 mls, Rosso red
Gulfstream 32 Turbo Diesel. Motorhome. 1989 every extra
Jaguar 3.6 Sovereign 1987, s/roof, a/con, met. blue
Jaguar XK150 DHC. Pearl Grey, concours standard
Lamborghini Countach QV 'D' reg. black/black, rear wing
Lamborghini Muira 'S'. 1969. LHD, 29.000 klms, steel blue
Land Rover Profile, LHD, 11,000 kms, 1987, Pearlescent
Maserati Ghibli 1969, 4.9 SS Coupé, LHD
Maserati Khamsin 'P' reg., Auto, ice blue with natural hide
Maserati 3500 GT. 1964 LHD, Red/Mag. hide
Maserati 4.9 SS Ghibli. 1972, Brilliant red, manual gearbox
Maserati Merak SS. 1979, Ruby red metallic, tan hide
Mercedes 300 SL 'E' reg, 17,000, red, grey hide, cruise
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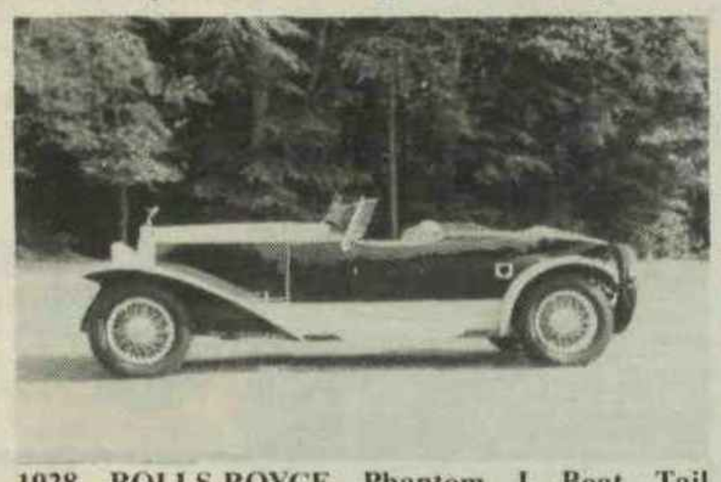
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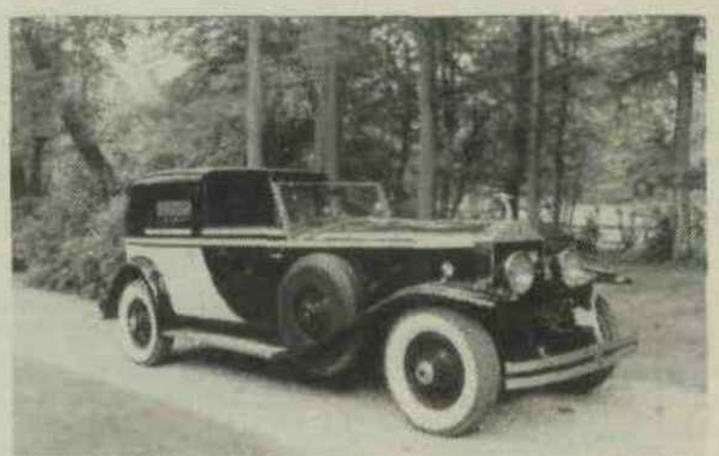
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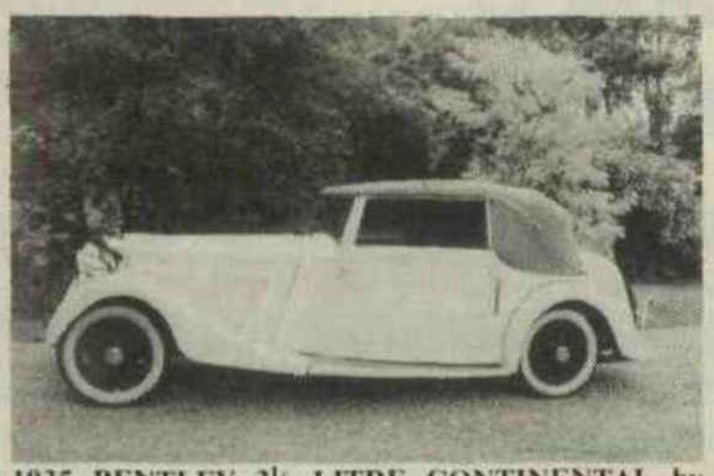
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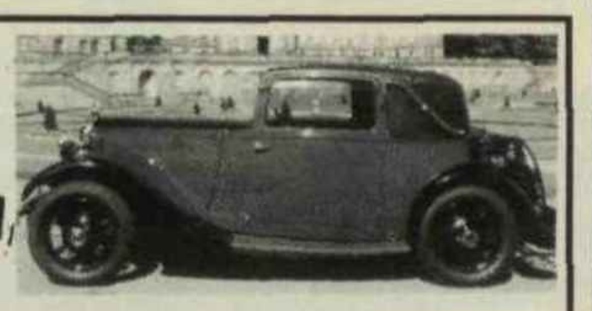
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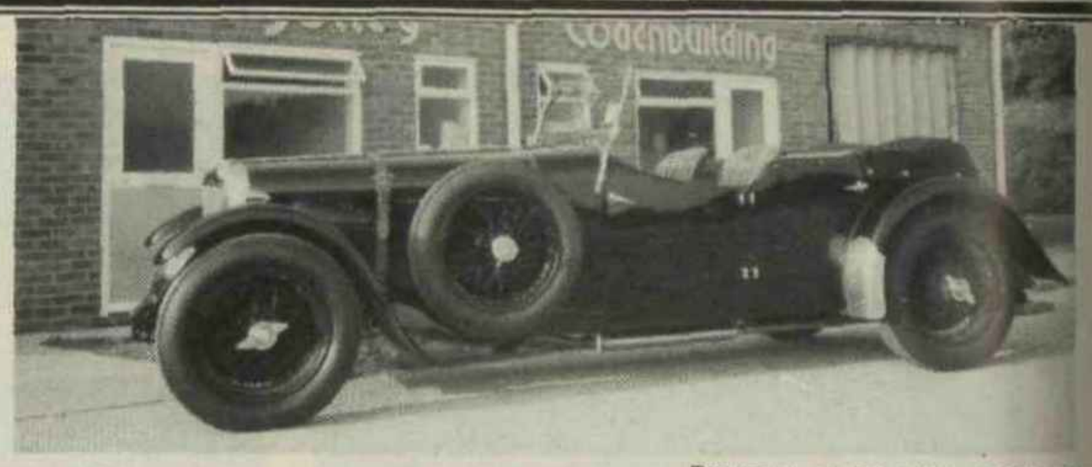
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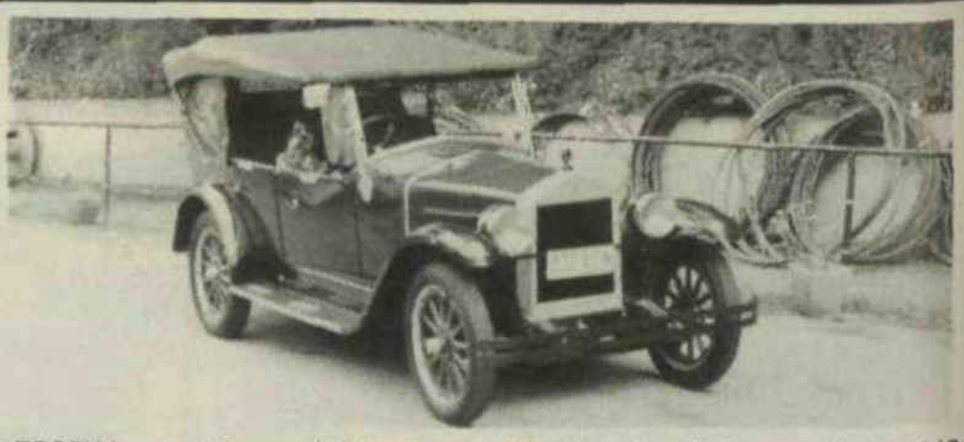
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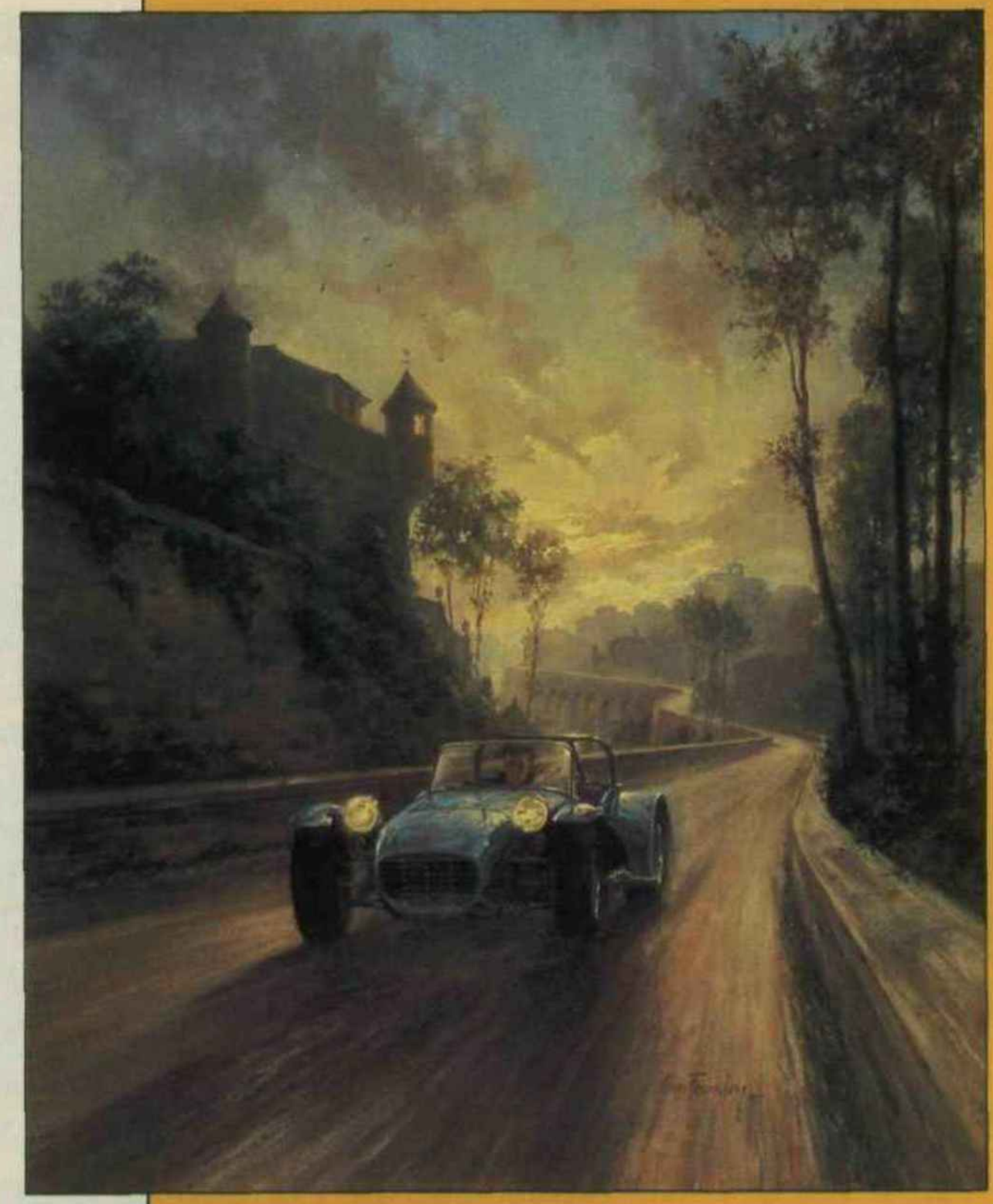
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1970 Damaged by fire.
1978 Knebworth Concours (Monk), Denman Trophy.
1979 Brands Hatch (Monk), 7th.
Silverstone (Monk), 4th H.S.C.C. Donington (Monk), 3rd.
1981 Dubai (Monk), 9th.
1985 Featured in Supercar Classics, Spring.

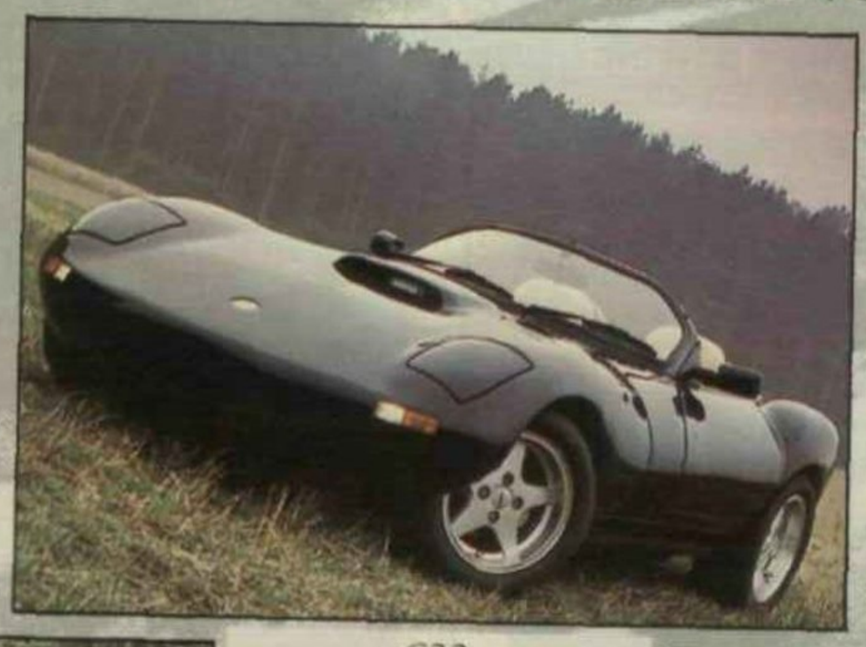
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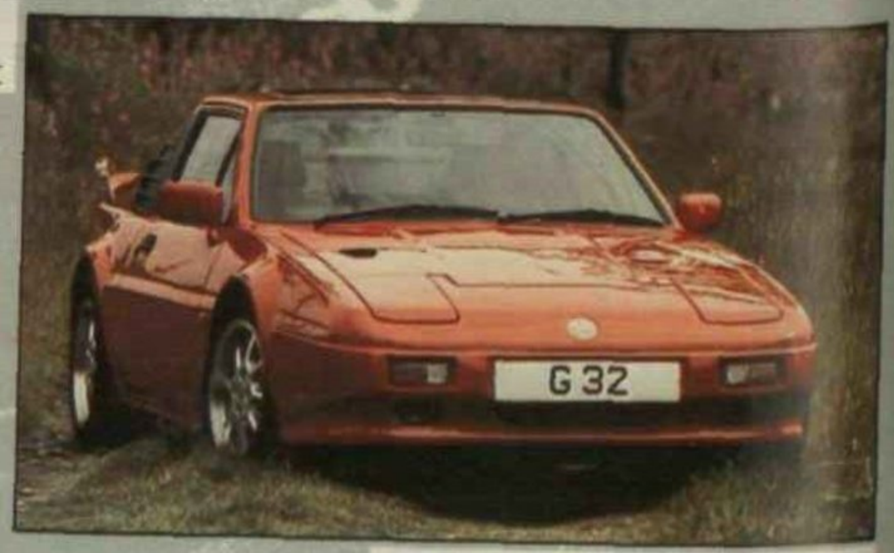




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Total recorded mileage is 97,800, which from the ownership history available & condition of (original) trim, woodwork, fittings & chassis etc., is believed genuine. In 1989/90 the original but faded paintwork was stripped to bare metal & resprayed in dark British Racing Green with red coachlines, at considerable expense & excellent quality. New green Wilton carpets were fitted, & Hofmann & Mountford undertook a comprehensive suspension & brake overhaul, full checkover & service.

This Bentley — 1 of only 208 'R' Type Continental built — drives superbly well, with astonishing performance (125 m.p.h.) & handling/braking to match. It is truly one of the world's all-time-great cars!

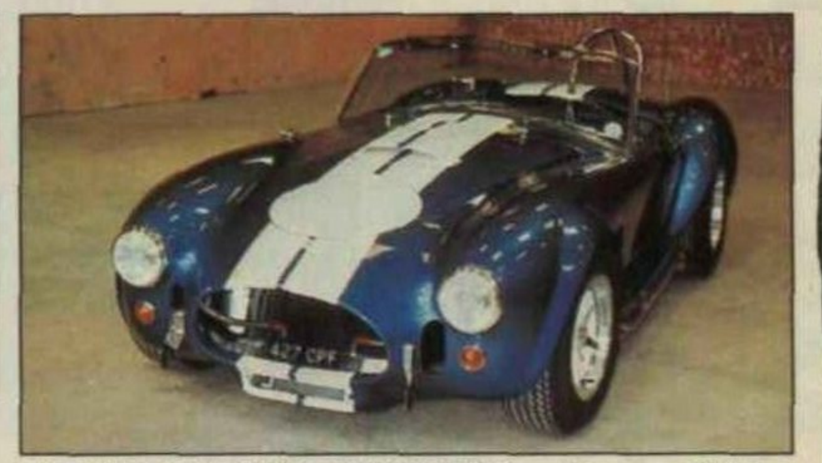




1964 (Model) AC COBRA 289 Mk2. Autokraft complete reconstruction with 300+ b.h.p. engine. Superb performance. Totally 'Concours'. **£87,500**



The entire Nostalgia "collection" — (This actually comprises 10 photos in 1 — spot the joins!)
Some cars now sold, some cars have since arrived — see captions & lists



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1964 (Model) AC COBRA 289 Mk2. Autokraft reconstruction with 300+ b.h.p. engine. B.R.G., black trim. Superb performance. Totally 'Concours' & eligible for Historic retrospectives *(Photo)*.
1987 (E) AC COBRA 302 Mk4 — L.H.D. — 'Standard' 225 b.h.p., 'E.F.I.' Fully certified for U.S. & Europe. Guardsman blue, white stripes, black trim. 1350 miles, as new.

1988 (F) AC COBRA 302 Mk4 — 'Standard' 240 b.h.p. 'Holley'. 1 of only 4 with hard & soft tops. B.R.G., white stripes, black trim. 1850 miles, as new *(Photo)*
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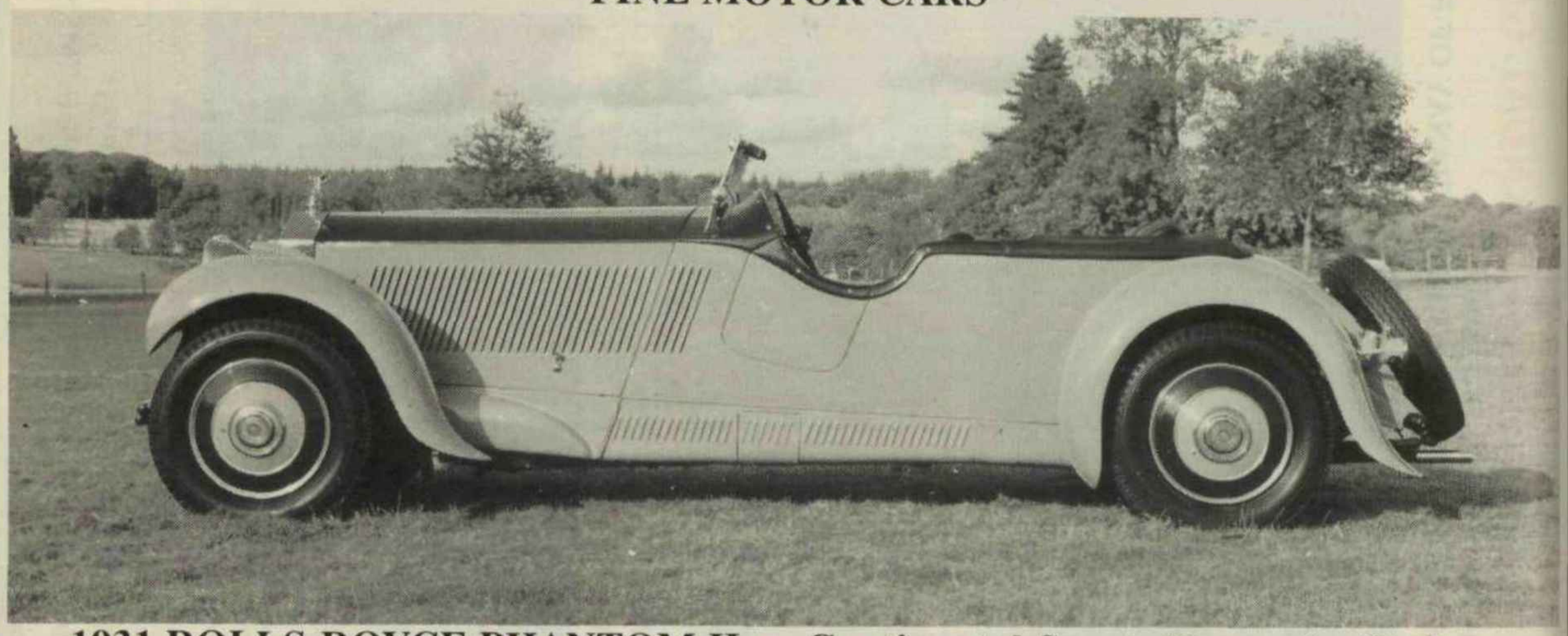
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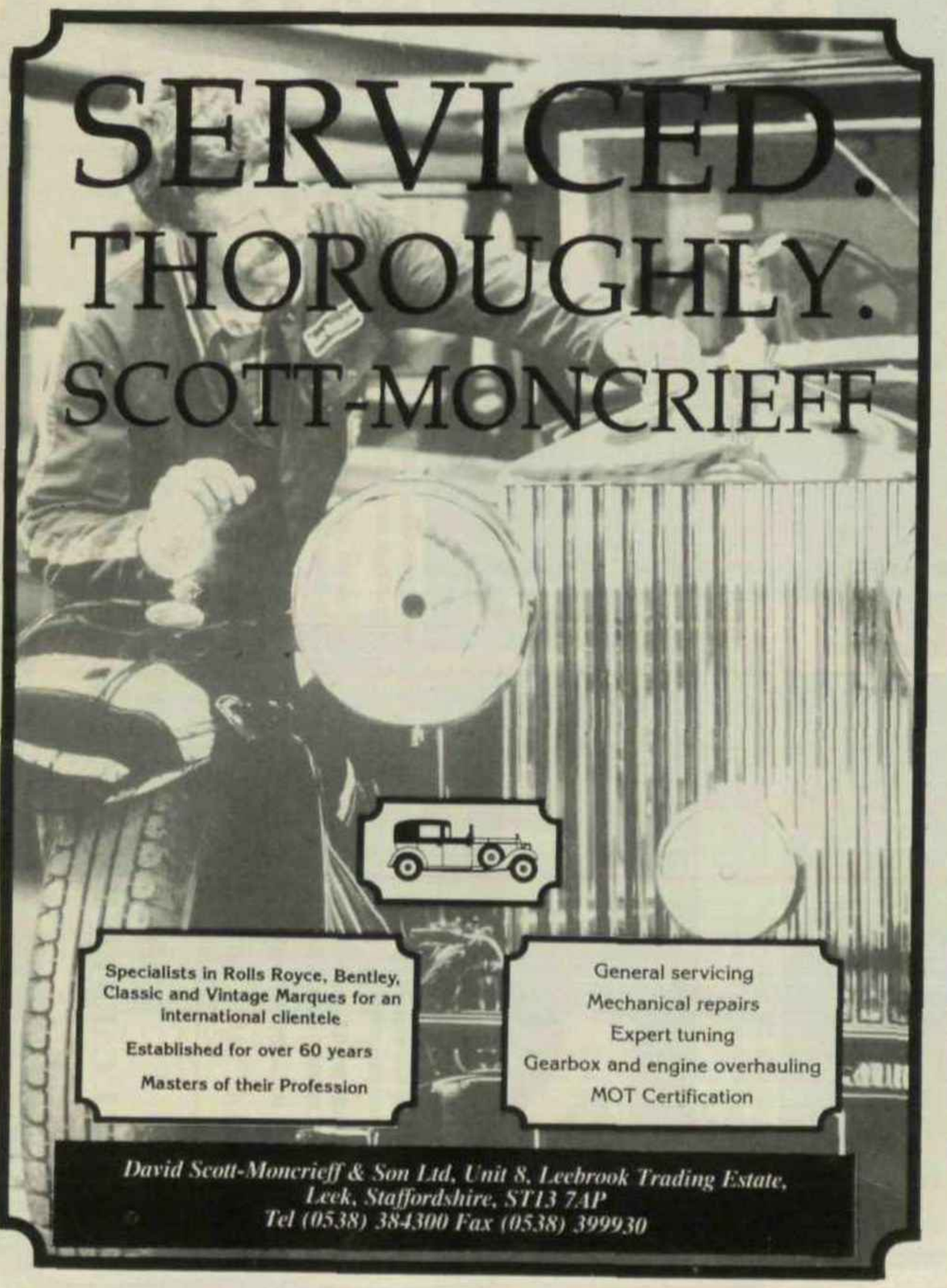
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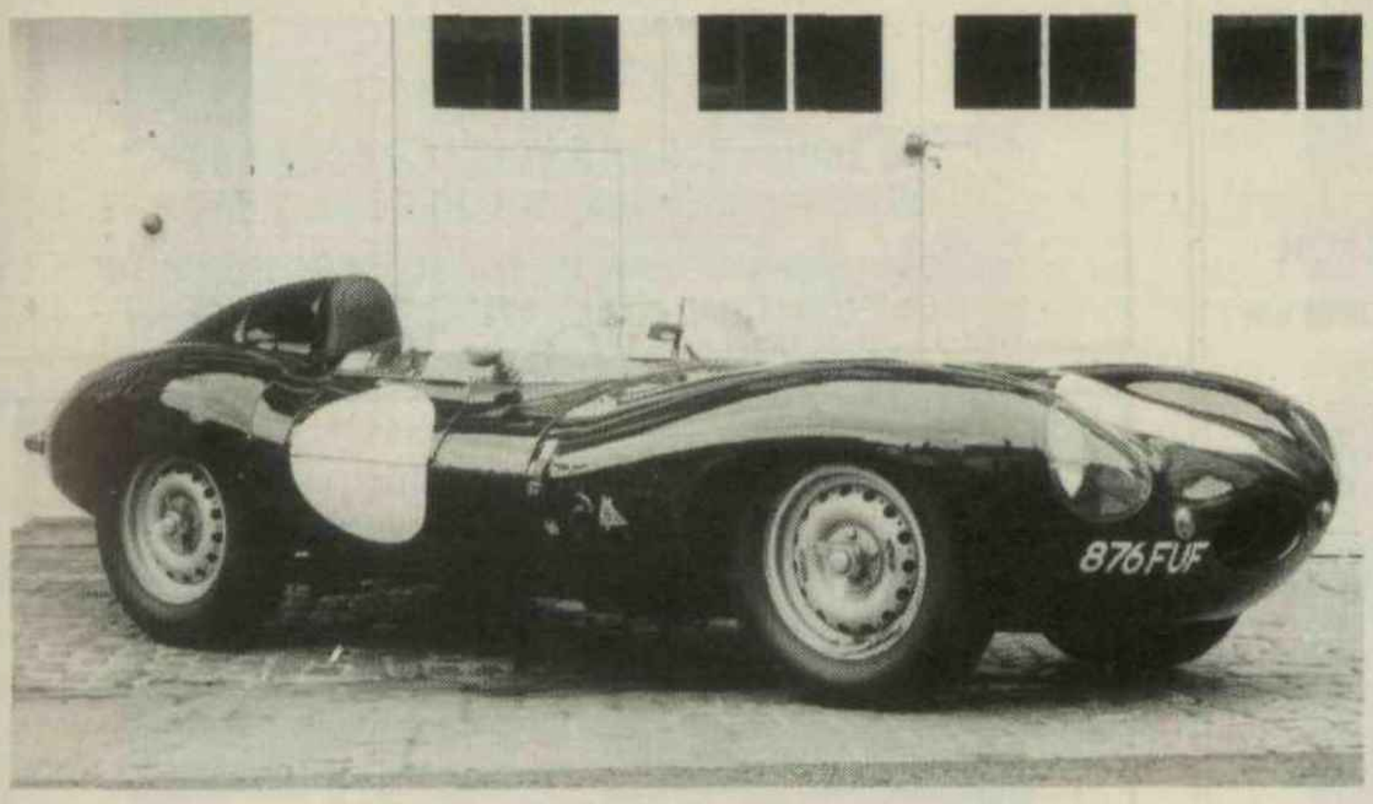
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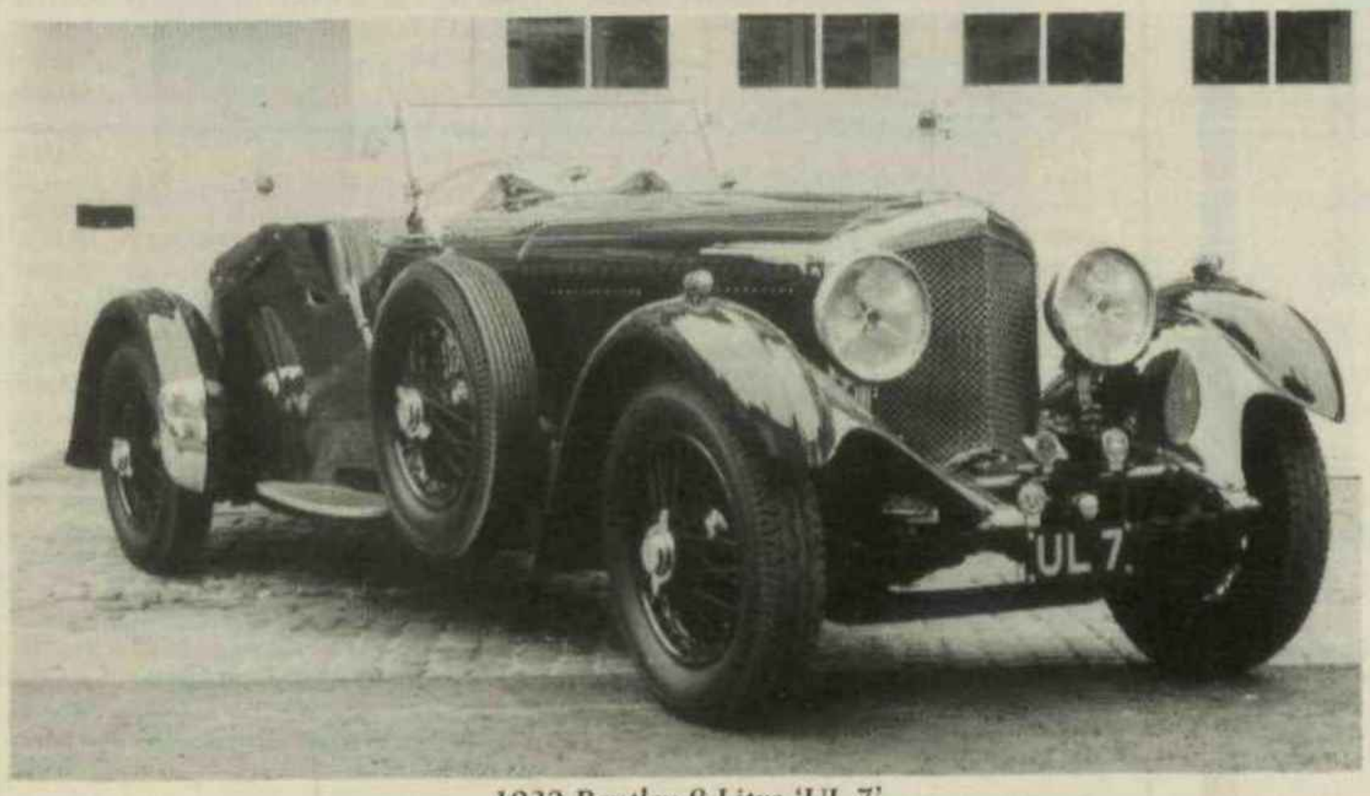
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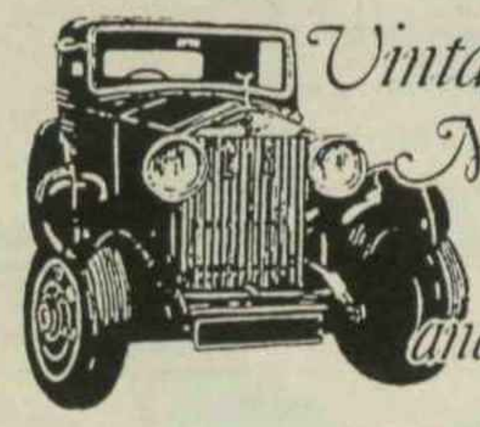
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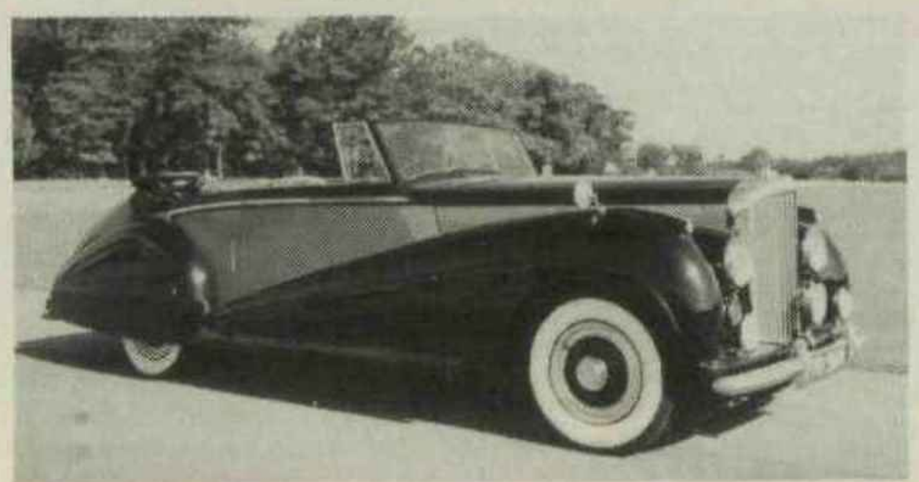
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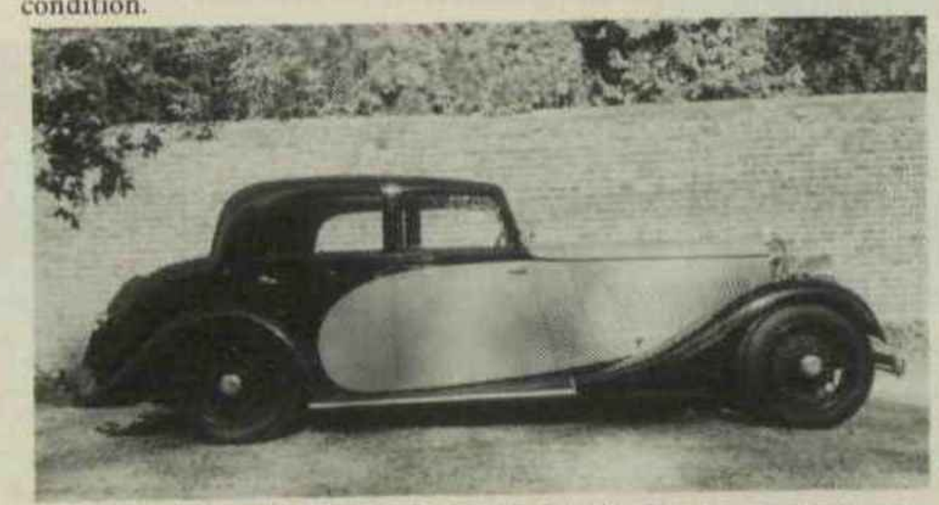
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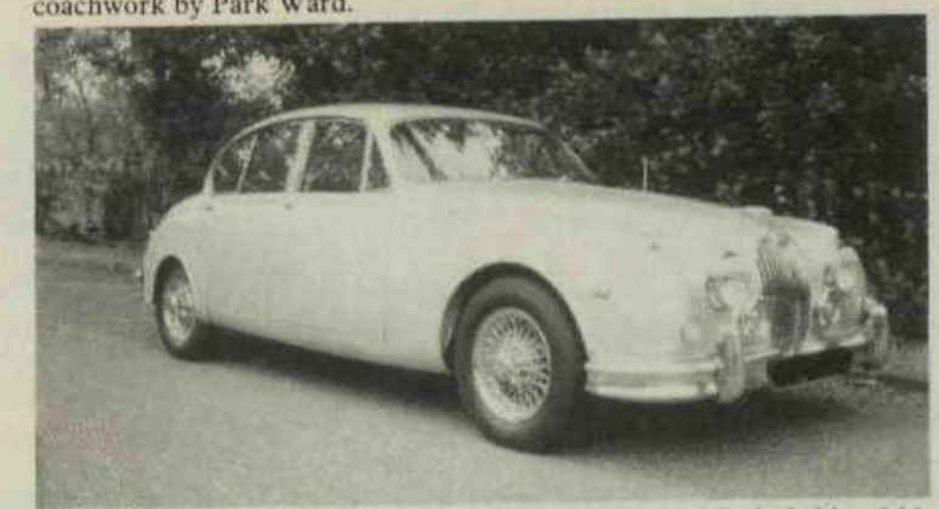
1952 BENTLEY MK VI CONVERTIBLE with coachwork by Park Ward. Magnificent.



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1957 Bentley S1 Continental
1972 Ferrari Dino 246 GTS
1956 Jaguar XK 140 Roadster
1977 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow II
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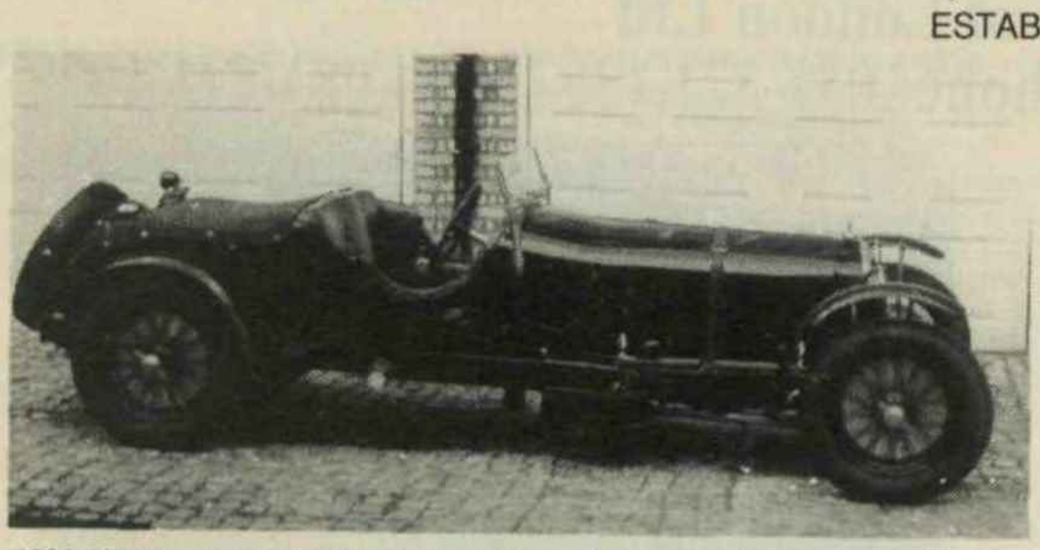
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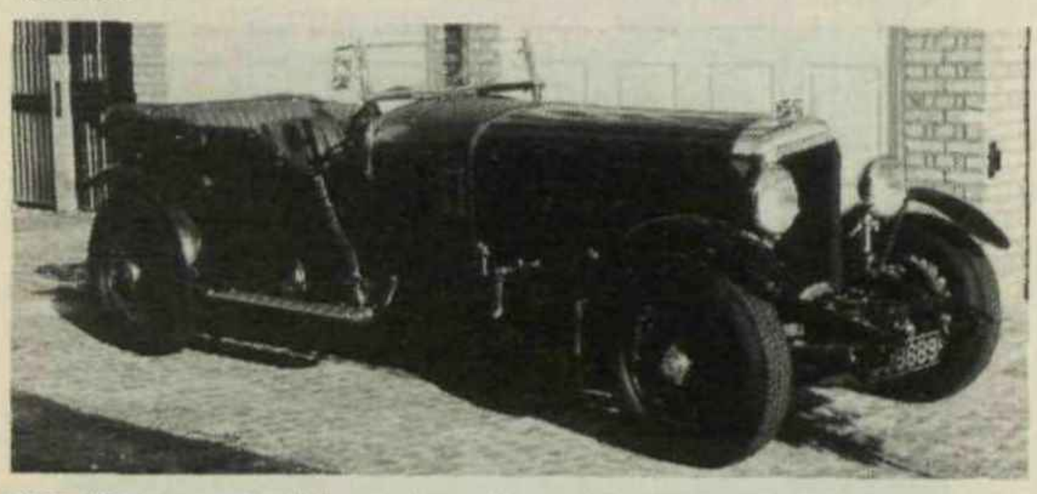
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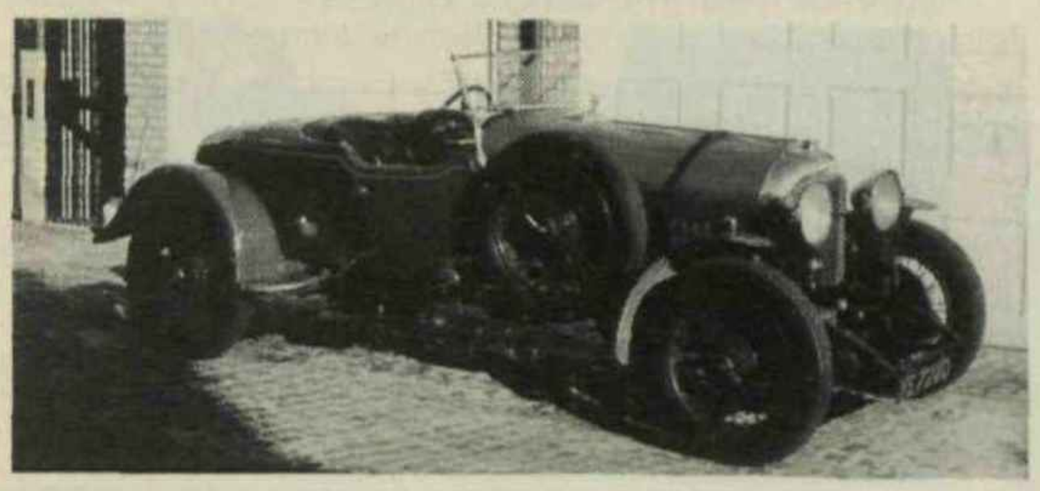
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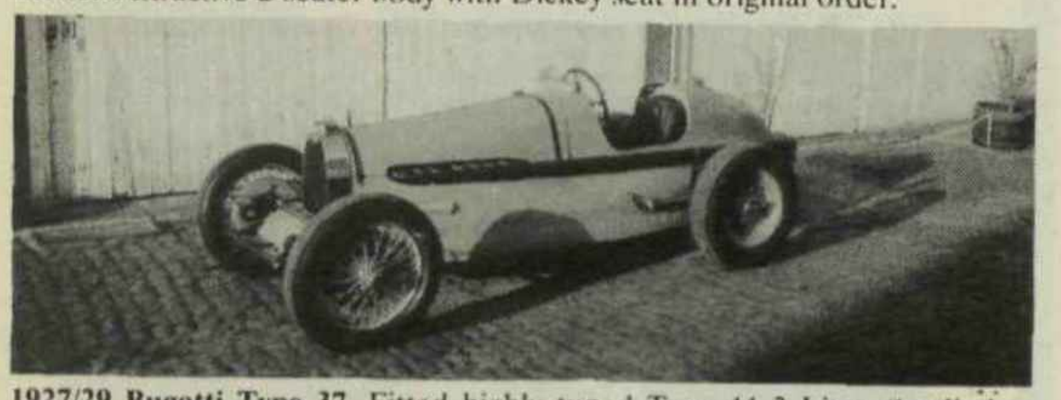
1931 Alfa Romeo 8C 2.3 Litre Supercharged Rare 1st Series. Chassis/Engine No. 2111024. Little use since complete rebuild by leading Alfa Romeo restorer.



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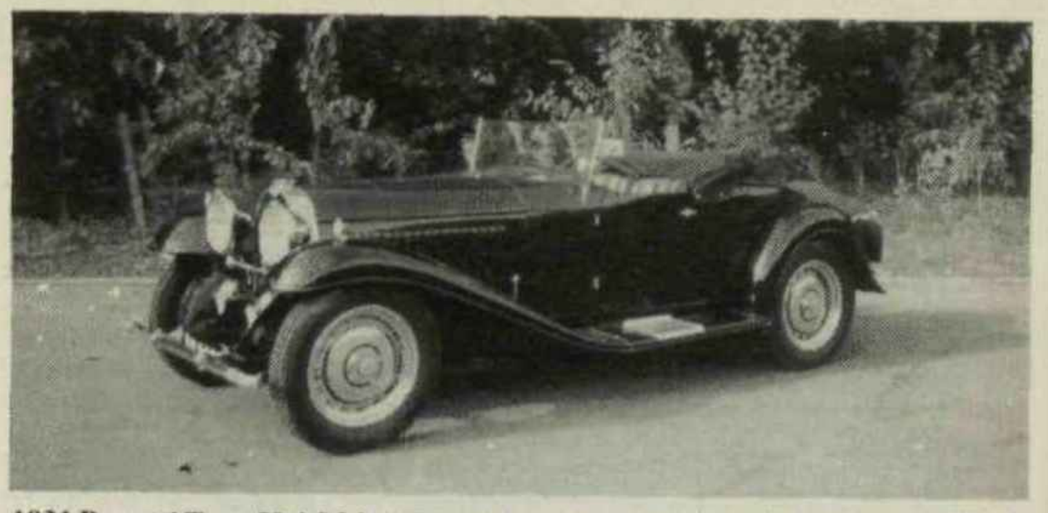
1927 Bentley 3 Litre. Chassis No. AX1652. The only 9'9½" Chassis 100 mph model. Attractive 2-seater body with Dickey seat in original order.



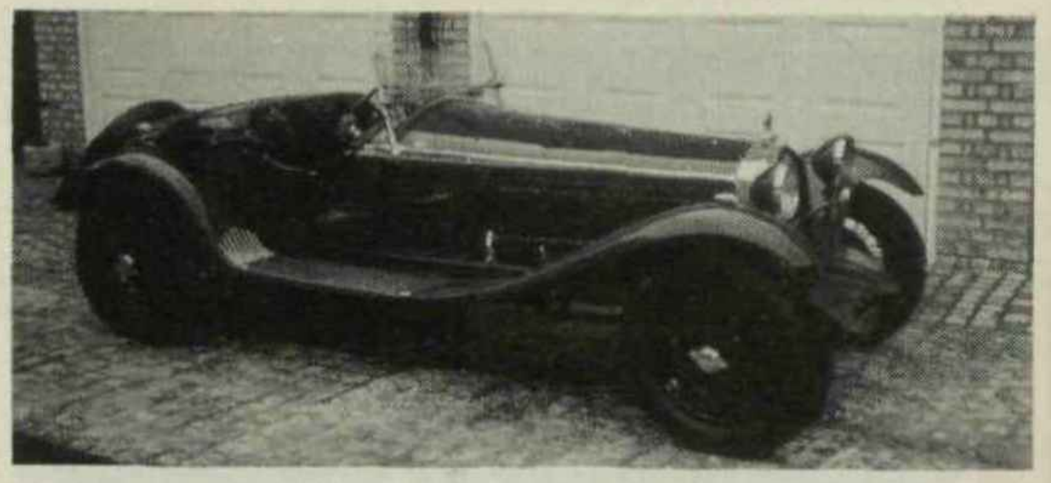
1927/29 Bugatti Type 37. Fitted highly tuned Type 44 3 Litre, 8 cylinder engine. Continuous history.



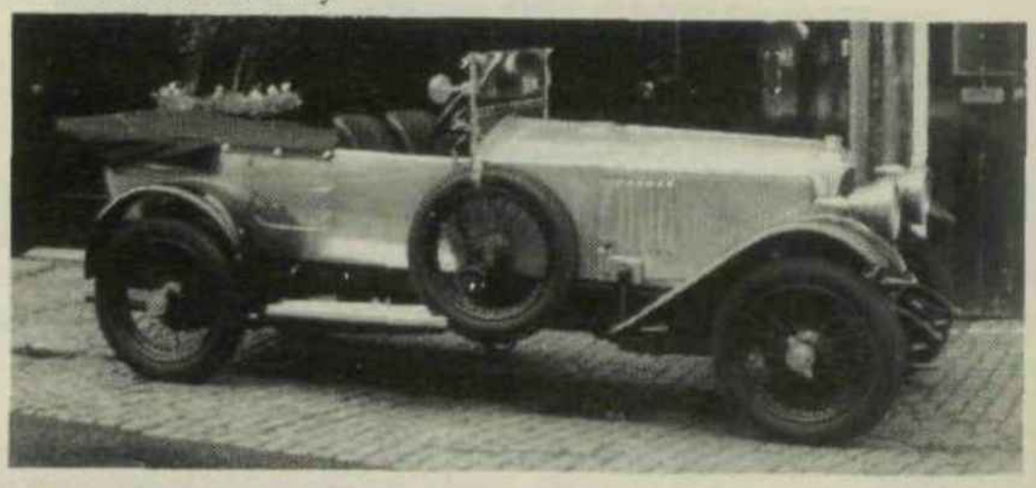
1927 Lombard 1100cc Sports Racing Car. Fitted Salmon Twin OHC Grand Prix engine.



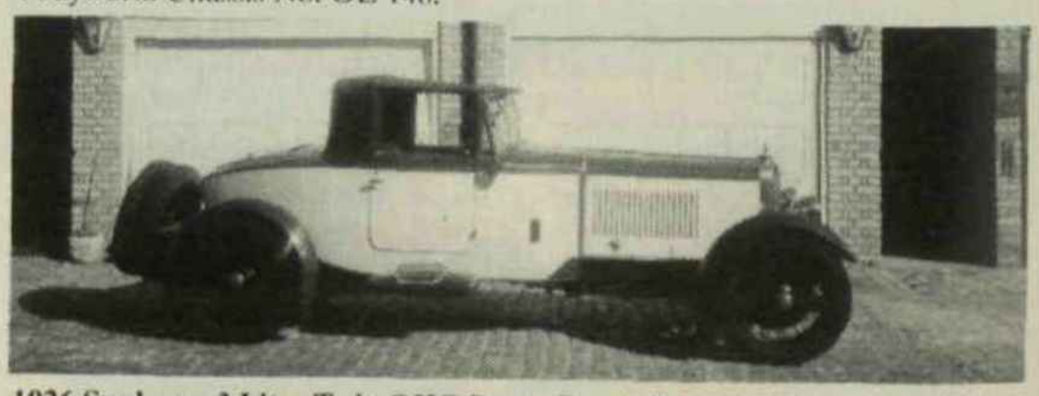
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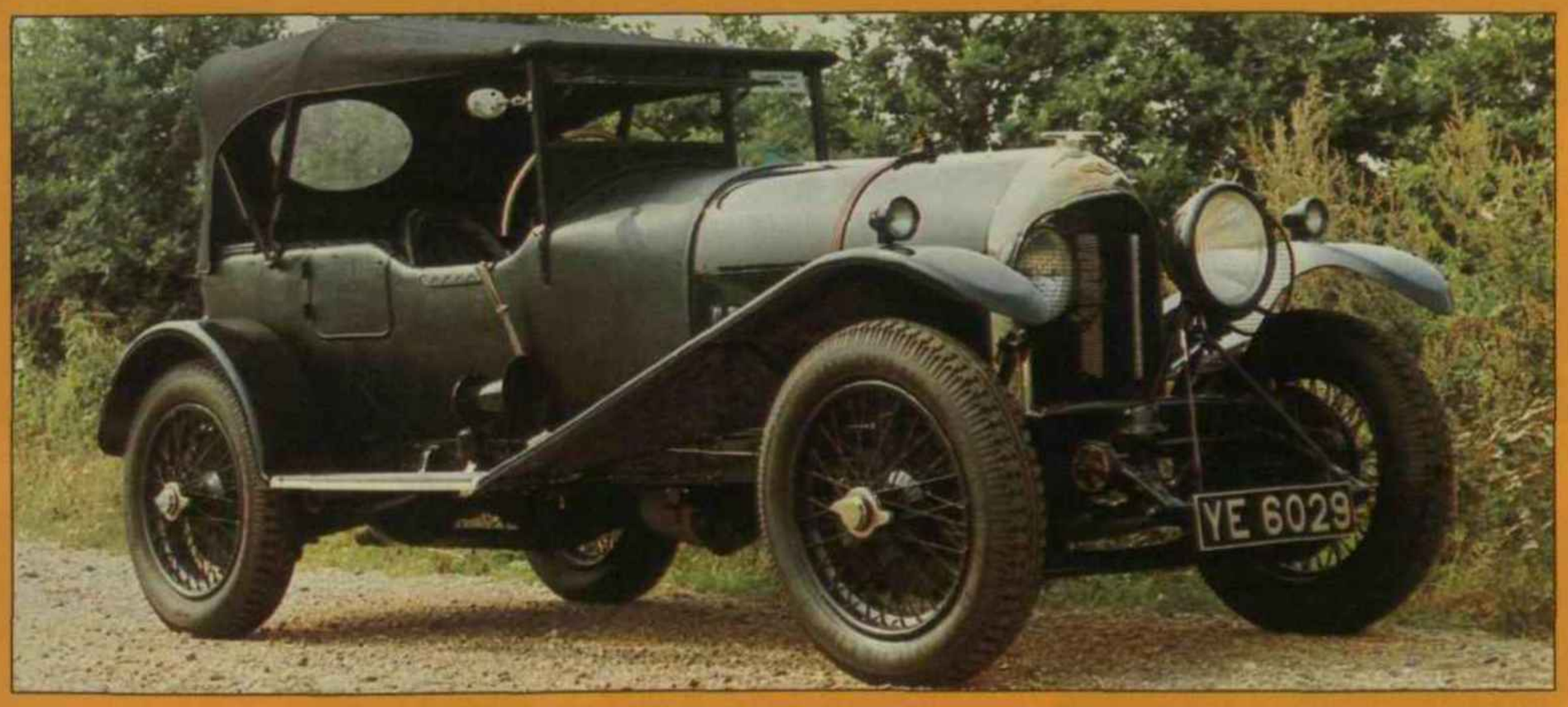
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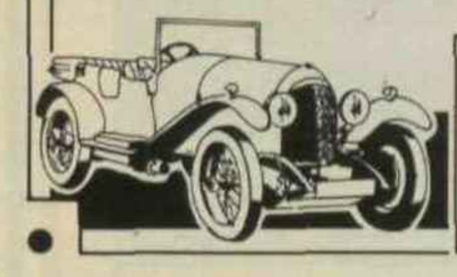
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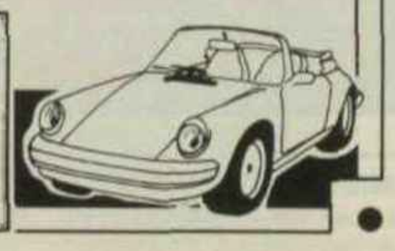
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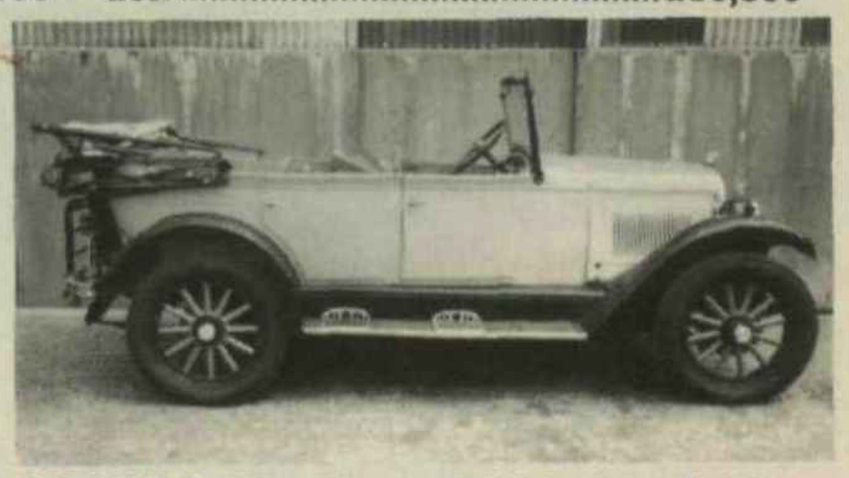


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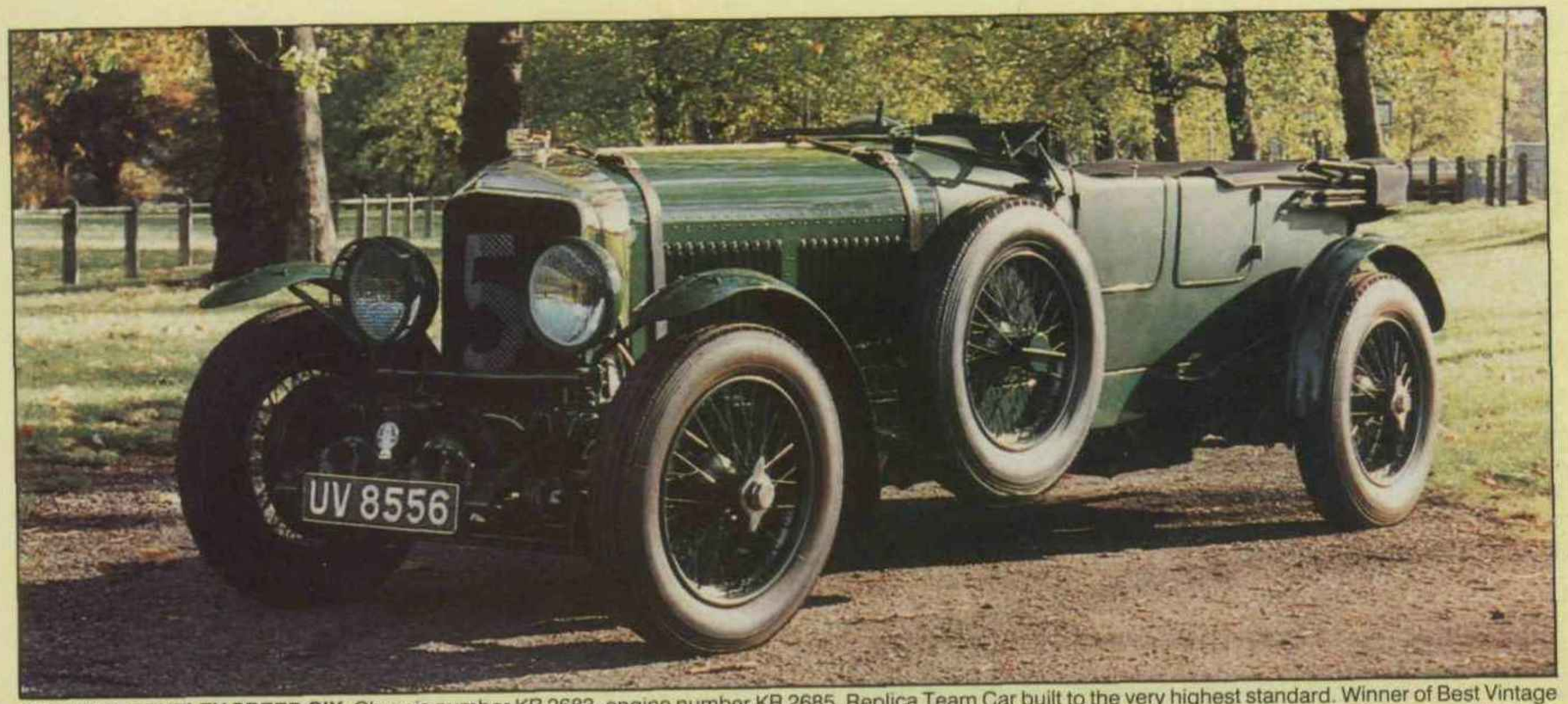
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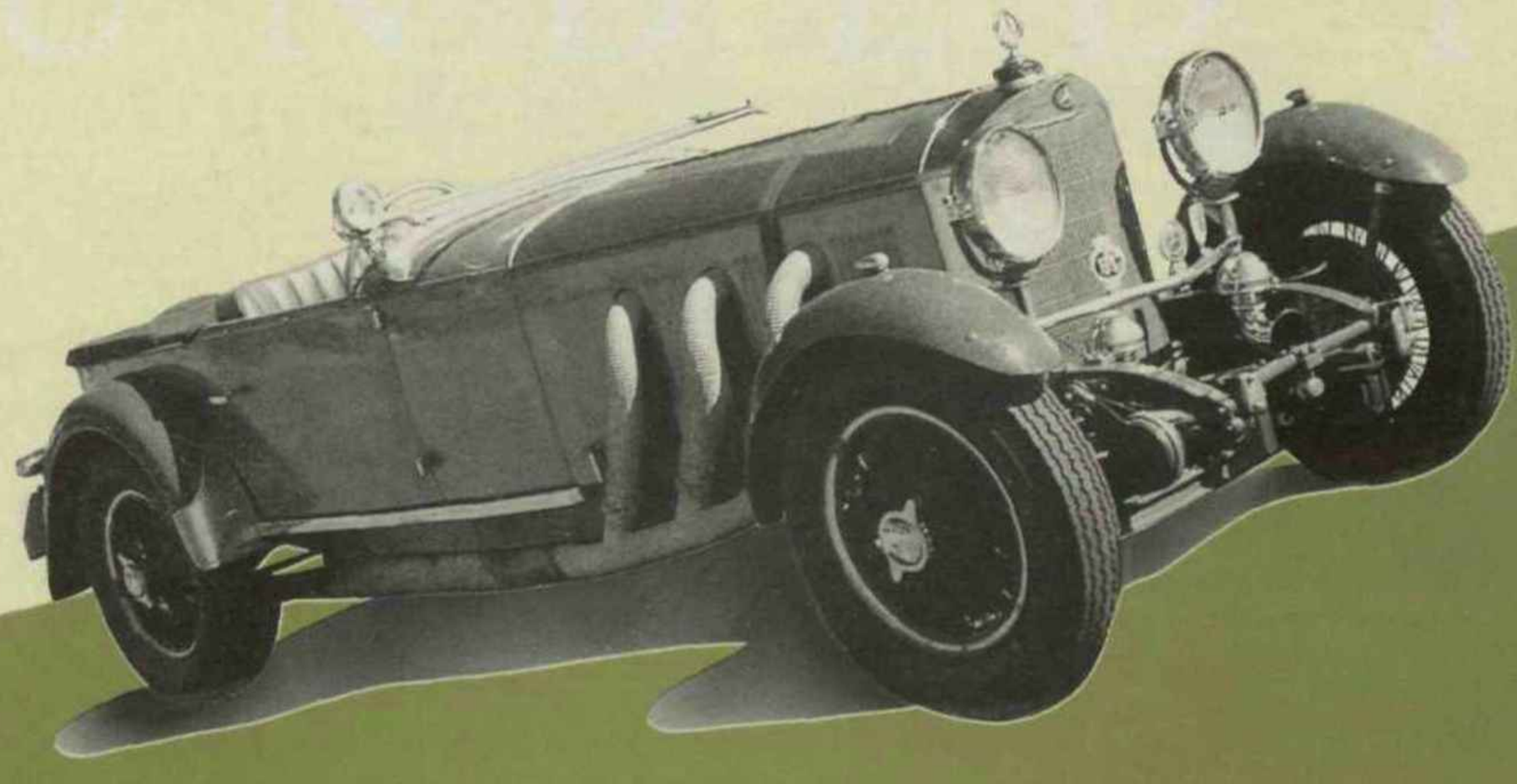
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