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CRAZY DIAMOND

VILLENEUVE: MADMAN OR MAGICIAN?





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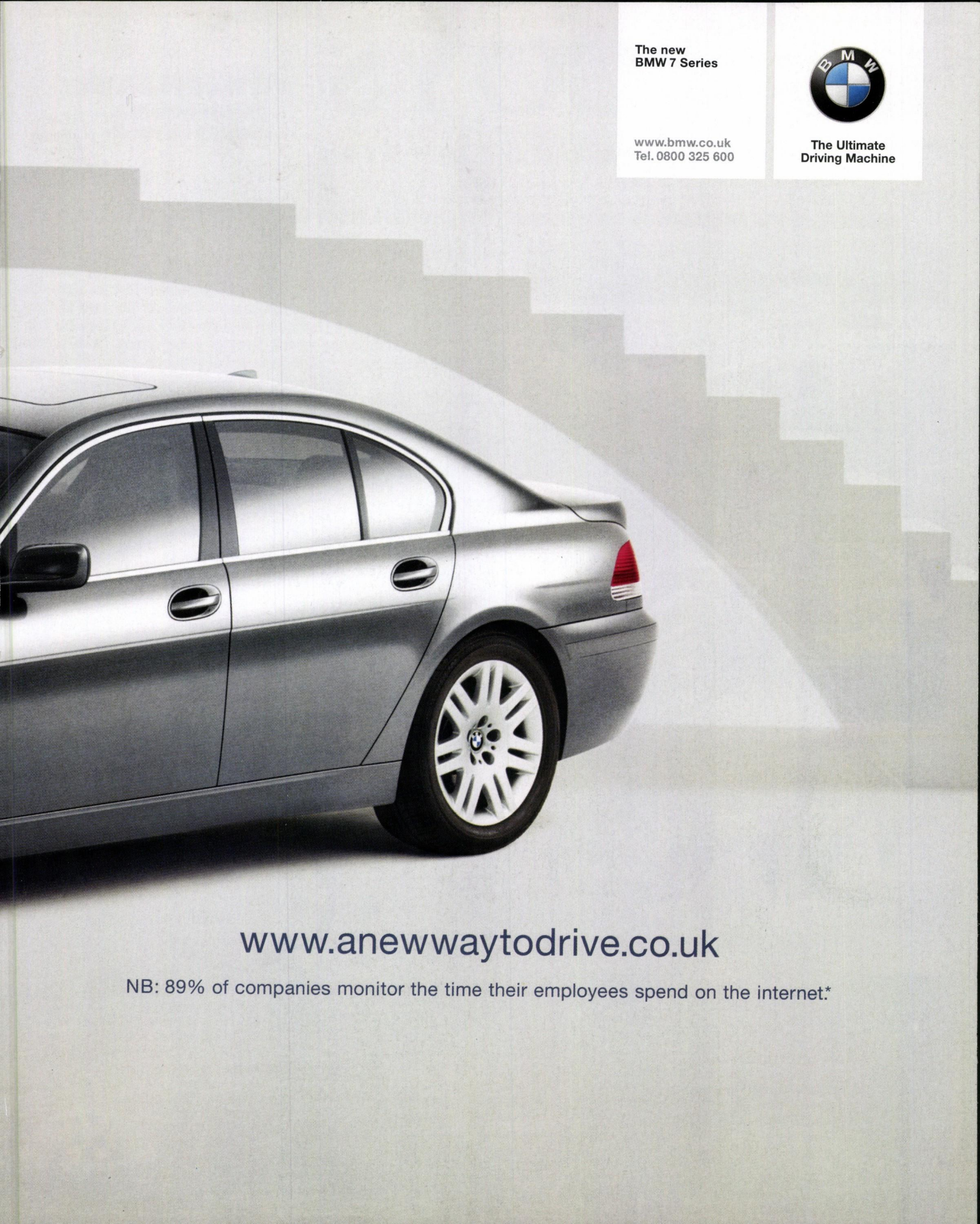
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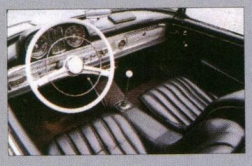
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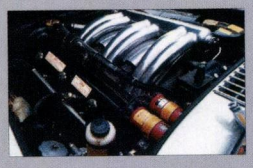
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EXPERTS IN THE ACQUISITION AND SALE OF THE WORLD'S MOST IMPORTANT MOTOR CARS



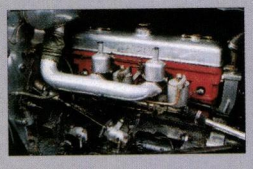
1961 MERCEDES-BENZ 300SL
Meticulously restored by one of Germany's foremost private restorers, this example of Mercedes post war masterpiece features the desirable factory disc brake specification as well as the rare factory hardtop. Finished in the traditional DB180 silver with black leather the car remains stunning in it's level of presentation. A fantastic example of these usable supercars to either show or enjoy, top down, on the open road.

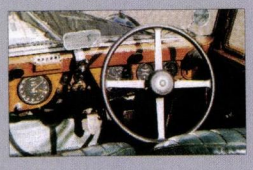






1936 LAGONDA LG45
Having spent most of it's life in the United States, including a lengthy period in dry storage, this LG45 must represent one of the finest unrestored examples of this highly regarded English touring car. Though having never required a full restoration, the car remains in excellent condition, with Green leather trim complimenting the black Frank Freeley designed coachwork. Authentic and original large pre-war cars in such an exceptional state of preservation are sadly nowadays so rare as to be virtually non-existant.

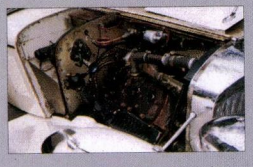






1939 JENSEN 'S' TYPE DUAL COWL PHAETON
One of only a handful of the fifty models produced by Jensen before the war thought to survive, this wonderfully original example is still in regular use. With it's powerful 3 1/2 litre, 8 cylinder engine and elegant, spacious coachwork featuring an unusual rear seat arrangement the car remains an eminently capable touring car, equiped with some of the most advanced refinements of pre-war motoring.





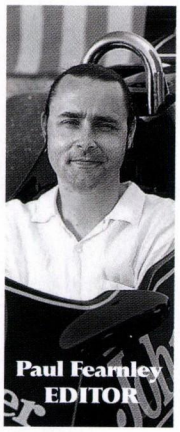
1930 Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Gran Sport
1939 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 Supersport
1936 Alta 2 Litre Supersport
1931/6 Alvis Monoposto
1953 Aston Martin DB2
1954 Aston Martin DB3S
1966 Aston Martin DB6 Volante
1930 Bentley Speed Six
1967 BSA Firebird
1937 Bugatti Type 57
1933 Bugatti Type 59 Grand Prix
1937 Cord 812 Convertible Phaeton
1923 Delahaye Type 84N
1950 Delahaye 175S
1962 Ferrari 250 GT SWB
1959 Ferrari 250GT LWB California Spyder
1970 Ferrari 365 GTC
1973 Ferrari 365GTB/4 Daytona
1931 Invicta Low Chassis S Type
1939 Jensen 'S' Type Dual Cowl Phaeton
1936 Lagonda LG45
1955 Lagonda Mk 1
1960 Lotus 18
1962 Lotus 24
1961 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster
1934 MG Supercharged K type Magnette
1973 Porsche 911 RS Touring
1954 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn
1949 Veritas Meteor Streamliner
1973 Vollstedt Offenhauser Indy car

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editorial



LIKE MOST BRITISH MOTORSPORT fans, I was flying on anticipation. I tuned into the novel televised start-cum-stage in Nottingham's Wollaton Park. And came down to earth with a big bump. Henri Toivonen fired his Lancia Delta S4 along a piddly, very slippery straight – and almost fused the radar gun. I recall a three-figure reading. Four cars later, 'Pondy' could only manage a high-70s mark in the source of my 'rally fever', the MG Metro 6R4.

Not to worry, there was a long way to go. This, remember, was when the RAC Rally was still an all-points-of-the-compass event: Midlands spectator stages, Forest of Dean, Wales, Notts forests, North Yorkshire, Kielder, Scottish Borders and Lake District. Sixty-five stages. Sunday through Thursday. I fervently hoped that 'Pondy' would survive until Tuesday morning, which is when Dad and I would be stood in Clipstone forest.

They fell likes flies on the Monday, in Wales: the Audi quattro Sport S1s of Hannu Mikkola and Walter Röhrl, and the Peugeot 205 T16s of Timo Salonen and Kalle Grundel. But 'Pondy' made it to the Nottingham rest halt. And he was second, too, sandwiched between those awesome Deltas of Markku Alén and Toivonen.

Tuesday, February 26, 1985. Noon. The glorious note of the Metro's V64V motor is drowned by the shouts of a flag-waving crowd. This was my 12th pilgrimage to the RAC, but there had been nothing like this before. Very un-British. Very exciting. A happening.

We jumped into a trusty (rusty?) Datsun 160J SSS Coupé (you know, the one with the dogleg-first 'box!) and thrashed up to Kielder, our plan being to watch the rally pass through SS38, Stang, some eight hours after the cars, or rather *the* car, had traversed Clipstone.

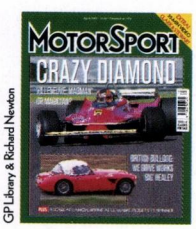
We never did get to see it again, though – a massive Pond-inspired traffic jam thwarted us – but we were happy, somehow. We had been part of it, and that was what mattered.

A few years later, as a raw recruit to sister newspaper *Motoring News*, I clambered into the passenger seat of a Rover Vitesse. It had been tweaked somewhat in order to become the first saloon to lap the Isle of Man TT course at more than 100mph. But what made it really special was that Tony Pond was its driver.

Rover were having a track day at Donington Park and the circuit was littered with cones to keep novices on the dark stuff. The first time we hammered through the Craner Curves, a misplaced cone forced Tony wider than he wanted to go. "That's not right" he muttered.

Next time through, he brushed the erroneous cone, easing it out of his way. Eased, mind, not knocked over.

He never did catch those Lancias, and my cone incident might have been a fluke that he deadpanned, but I knew, we all knew, just how good he was.



GP Library & Richard Newton

Top: Gilles as he is best known – sideways. Below: Austin-Healey 3000 rally-winner

Vol LXXVII No 4 APRIL 2002

CONTENTS

SEVENTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

MOTOR SPORT incorporating SPEED and THE BROOKLANDS GAZETTE



Truly, madly, Healey *On the road with a famous 3000, at home with its driver.* *Page 32*



Lancia off the boil *How the stellar D50 project sent Lancia bust, despite this Naples GP win.* *Page 88*



Crazy Canuck? *Why Gilles was one of the greatest – and subtlest – of drivers.* *Page 22*

MATTERS OF MOMENT 6
LETTERS 8
MODERN TIMES/*Simon Taylor* 14
SUBSCRIPTIONS 16
LEGENDS/*Nigel Roebuck* 18
NEXT MONTH 20

Gilles Villeneuve/*Mark Hughes* 22
Austin-Healey 3000/*David Malsher* ... 32
15 Minutes of Fame: Magnum/*Nick Phillips* 42
Grand Prix – the movie, in pictures... ... 44
Montlhéry remembered/*Bill Boddy* ... 52
The Car I Wish I'd Designed: Nick Wirth 58
Tony Pond/*John Davenport* 60
Athol Graham's LSR quest/*Peter Holthusen*... 68
The One That Got Away: Eddie Irvine ... 74
Warhorses/*Paul Fearnley* 83
Lancia D50 and Alberto Ascari/*Chris Nixon* 88

BOOK REVIEWS 97
BILL BODDY 98
PARTING SHOT 104



Shooting stars *Rare pictures tell the story of John Frankenheimer's* Grand Prix. *Page 44*



Tony Pond *A tribute to one of England's most talented and popular rally drivers.* *Page 60*

MATTERS *of* MOMENT

NEWS, VIEWS AND COMMENT



Jack Brabham won the F1 Gold Cup in 1966-67. He leads Denny Hulme

all LAT

WINGLESS FORMULA ONE TO STAR AT GOLD CUP

EARLY 3-LITRE GRAND PRIX CARS WILL BE THE STAR attractions of the new-look Oulton Park Gold Cup meeting at the end of August.

In period, the Gold Cup non-championship Formula One race was run for these cars, with Jack Brabham winning in 1966 and 1967 in a Brabham BT19 and BT24, respectively.

Now, the F1 cars will return to the Cheshire track as part of the two-day festival run by the Historic Sports Car Club. Other headline races will include HGPCA events and the BRDC Historic Sports Car Championship, as well as a full programme of HSCC races.

Oulton Park's 'wingless F1' race will be one of several pilot events run by the FORCE organisation in a bid to encourage such cars back into racing. They will cater for 1966-68 F1 cars, as well as the 2-litre Tasman cars from the same era and early 1600cc Formula Two cars.

"These cars have never really had a place to race before, but they are out there," said FORCE's David McLaughlin. "They'll be superb at Oulton."

If successful, the as-yet unnamed races will bridge the gap for the period before the FORCE Classic Grand Prix races. "We'll gauge the level of interest this year and hope to run more races in 2003," McLaughlin concluded.

Apart from a couple of races in Europe this summer, rumours are circulating of a possible Tasman series for the cars at the end of 2002.

MOSS AND SHELSLEY REUNITED

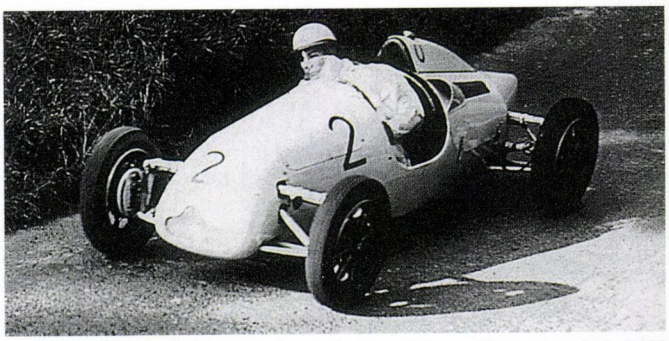
SIR STIRLING MOSS WILL RETURN TO Shelsley Walsh for the first time in over 50 years this summer, when he takes part in a Cooper celebration at the Worcestershire hillclimb.

Moss competed at Shelsley from 1948 to 1950, but hasn't been back since. That will all change on Sunday June 2, which is when he's scheduled to demonstrate several Coopers on the 1000-yard course during a British Hillclimb Championship meeting.

"We're running a class for Coopers at that event," said Roger Thomas of the MAC. "Cars will be very carefully selected to represent the entire Cooper production; we expect to have several F1s as well as sportscars and 500s."

Moss was actually refused an entry at his first attempt to compete at Shelsley, but he went on to score a class win in 1949.

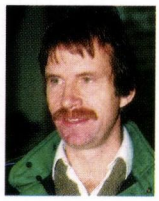
His presence has been arranged by event sponsors Footman James.



Youthful Moss and Cooper navigate the Esses. They will do so again in 2002

obituaries

Tony Pond



BRITISH RALLYING lost one of its big stars in February when Tony Pond lost his fight with cancer. He was just 56.

He came to public fame with drives for BL and Austin-Rover through the 1970s and '80s. His performances in Triumph TR7 V8s and Metro 6R4s won the hearts of the British rallying public. (See page 60 for full article.)

Jack Fairman



THIS FORMER ASTON MARTIN SPORTSCAR driver died in February, aged 88.

Although better known for his test and development skills, Fairman contested 12 GPs over a nine-year period, taking fourth in the 1956 British race with a works Connaught. His greatest successes, however, came in 1959, with two world championship victories alongside Stirling Moss in a DBR1 – the Nürburgring 1000Km and the Goodwood TT.

Spencer Flack

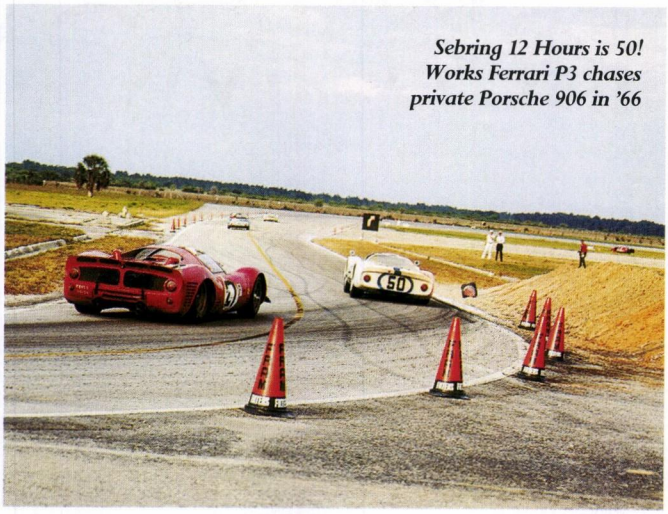


THE BRITISH HISTORIC RACING FRATERNITY WAS shocked to learn of the death of Spencer Flack in late February.

The prodigious racer of post-war GP cars was killed in an accident at the Phillip Island circuit in Australia, when racing his ex-Jo Bonnier BRM P25.

The car overturned after making contact with a backmarker and was destroyed in a fiery accident.

The car, chassis 258, formerly owned by the late Amschel Rothschild, was the only survivor of its type.



Sebring 12 Hours is 50! Works Ferrari P3 chases private Porsche 906 in '66

SEBRING'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

SEBRING CELEBRATED 50 YEARS OF ITS FAMOUS 12-HOUR SPORTSCAR RACE IN mid-March, with many former winning cars and drivers on hand.

Notable amongst the cars was the Porsche RS60 which won the 1960 event in the hands of Hans Herrmann and Olivier Gendebien.

A resurfacing project has been completed at America's oldest sportscar circuit, covering half of the 3.7-mile lap. However, its famous concrete main straight, part of the WWII Hendricks Field airfield, is unchanged.

NEW MUSEUM FOR WILLIAMS

WILLIAMS GRAND PRIX ENGINEERING has opened a brand-new museum and conference centre at its Grove headquarters to mark 25 years of GP success. The museum houses 41 cars, from the 1978 FW06 to last season's FW23.

The building used was originally constructed to house the BMW's Le Mans project in 1998.

Unfortunately, the facility will not be open to the general public, but it is expected that future access will be developed for specific interest groups, such as motor clubs.

RAHAL ALL SET FOR TOUR AUTO

INDYCAR CHAMPIONS BOBBY RAHAL (PORSCHE 904/6) and Danny Sullivan (Porsche Carrera RS) will head a magnificent 200-strong entry for 61st running of the Tour Auto.

Starting from Paris on Tuesday April 16, this will be the 11th time the event has run for historic cars.

Other notable entries include Stirling Moss (MGB), Rowan Atkinson (Jaguar MkVII) and Alain de Cadenet (Porsche Carrera RS).

Most of the entrants will tackle the seven competitive sections on closed roads, and the races at Magny-Cours, La Charade, Ledenon and Nogaro, before the finish at Biarritz on Saturday April 20.

VSCC/BRDC EXTRAVAGANZA

THE VSCC'S ANNUAL SPRING START race meeting is to be a two-day event, following confirmation of a joint venture between the club and the British Racing Driver's Club.

After the customary VSCC races on Saturday April 13, the BRDC will host a series of events on Sunday, headed by the opening round of its Historic Sports Car Championship.

Other races held on Sunday will include historic Formula Junior, Formula Ford and saloon cars.

"The BRDC is delighted to join forces with the VSCC," said Roger Lane-Nott. "This provides an excellent opportunity to develop an historic club meeting."

Following the move of the Historic Festival to Oulton Park (see Gold Cup story on opposite page), the Spring Start meeting will represent the BRDC's only historic event of the 2002 season.

EVENTS OF NOTE

MARCH

24 THRUXTON (GB)
First of the popular BARC Classic Race Meetings will be at the club's home venue: period saloons, sports and single-seaters will be in action. Tel: 01264 882200.

30/31 SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS (B)
First significant historic races of the season, with FORCE events for the burgeoning F5000 series and Classic Grand Prix cars. Fax: 01306 731250.

31 SNETTERTON (GB)
Jaguar CC has its busiest-ever season of racing planned, starting on Easter Sunday. This includes the first of a new series of 100km races. Tel: 0161 748 4662.

APRIL

MAR 31/APRIL 1 BRANDS HATCH (GB)
Opening BTCC event features first of World Sports Car Invitation Trophy races for GpC cars. Tel: 01474 872331.

7 MALLORY PARK (GB)
BARC switches to the Leicestershire track. Saloons will comprise the bulk of the programme. Tel: 01264 882200.

7 DONINGTON PARK (GB)
Opening meeting of the Historic Sports Car Club 2002 calendar. Opening rounds of nine series. Tel: 01327 858400.

12-14 JARAMA (E)
The first major European events. Heading the racing are the opening rounds of the FIA Cup for Thoroughbred GP Cars, the International Supersports Cup and the European Sports Prototype Trophy. Tel: 01621 892814.

13 ASTRA STAGES (GB)
Round two of the MSA British Historic Rally Championship takes crews into North Wales, with a start in Llangollen. Tel: 01332 672533.

13/14 SILVERSTONE (GB)
VSCC/BRDC Spring Start (see opposite). Tel: 01608 644777

20/21 OULTON PARK (GB)
Heritage GT Challenge supports second BTCC. Tel: 01829 760301.

20/21 NOGARO (F)
A Saturday visit by the Tour de France, plus races for FORCE's Classic GP and F5000 series. Fax: 01306 731250.

LETTERS FROM READERS

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

The Editor reserves the right to edit all letters

DALY RECORD

SIR,

Your feature on the 1982 Formula One season was very enjoyable and brought back a flood of wonderful memories.

One of the untold stories of that year centred on my qualifying runs for the French GP at Dijon. My Williams team-mate Keke Rosberg was lightning fast and particularly good in qualifying, and there were unusual circumstances surrounding the only time I started ahead of him on the grid that year.

Halfway through the final qualifying session, I tried my car with the front wings fitted. I was about four seconds behind John Watson's McLaren around the back of the circuit when I missed my braking point for the downhill section. No problem, I simply went down the escape road and rejoined the track, completely bypassing the downhill section. Before I rejoined, however, I waited for Watson to pass and then set off on another lap. So I was only about two seconds behind him when I flashed past the timing beam – to record the fastest time set by a Williams that weekend.

When I stopped, I was just about to tell the team what had happened, when Charlie Crichton-Stuart began congratulating me for the lap and said that Frank Williams had sent orders to put the front wings on Keke's car for his race set-up. I suddenly thought, 'Maybe they don't know about the mistake – and just maybe I should keep quiet about it'. Keke didn't know why he was beaten that weekend and was furious but, all these years later, he now sees the funny side.

Despite the fact that I didn't actually do that lap time, I still thought that, with the front wings fitted, the car would be faster in the race. Keke therefore had enough downforce in the race to hound and eventually pass the Renaults late in the race, and go on to his only win of the season. I like to think that my inadvertently devious lap actually helped him in the long run.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

DEREK DALY, INDIANAPOLIS, USA

* * * *

KEEPING UP WITH JONES

SIR,

Just a point of clarification in the auto racing history magazine of record.

When Parnelli Jones won the Mission Bell 200 Trans-Am race at Riverside in 1970, his victory didn't change any championship outcomes. While SCCA tallied driver points as they related to manufacturer points, the points were only for a manufacturers' championship. The first drivers' championship was awarded in 1972.

(If this doesn't make sense, you can understand why John Bishop left SCCA and organised IMSA.)

I AM, YOURS ETC,

PATRICK O'BRIEN, VIA EMAIL

SUPER SUB

SIR,

I noticed with interest the reference to Graham Hill's Indianapolis victory and the story surrounding it, which I am afraid is somewhat incorrect.

George Bignotti was working closely with Eric Broadley to develop a car to race at Indianapolis. Eric, with whom I was closely associated, asked me if I would assist and work with them in helping to develop the car. I went to Indianapolis with George Bignotti and carried out some testing with a view to competing in the 1966 Indy 500. This, unfortunately, was not to be because I had my accident in a Lola T70 at Mosport.

It was before I was airlifted to England that Eric and Rob Rushbrook touched on the question of Indy, and in that conversation I suggested Graham as possibly the best person to take my place. He had, of course, driven a Lola T70 on one or two occasions for Team Surtees.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

JOHN SURTEES, EDENBRIDGE, KENT

* * * *

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SIR,

Nigel Roebuck's Legends article on Achille Varzi and his rivalry with Nuvolari stirred many memories.

In 1944, I was with 7th Armoured Brigade, pushing up the Adriatic coast of Italy and following the Mille Miglia – but in reverse. Many walls were daubed with 'Viva Mussolini', now hastily deleted, but on a house on the outskirts of Ancona I was thrilled to see 'Viva 1000 Miglia, Viva Varzi' – but there was no mention of my hero Nuvolari.

Little did I know then, but five years later the programme for the Silverstone Production Car Race would include 'T Nuvolari – Jaguar' and, way below, 'E Thompson – HRG'. I cannot claim to have raced against Nuvolari, but I remember him sitting in the red XK120 in the paddock, and we may have practiced together. Sadly, ill health prevented him from racing and Peter Walker took his place.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

ERIC THOMPSON, GUILDFORD, SURREY



Derek Daly: exceptionally quick at Dijon, with or without nosewings

POND MEMORIES

SIR,

It was with great sorrow that my wife and I read of Tony Pond's death. In 1981, with co-driver Mike Nicholson, Tony drove the Dealer Team Vauxhall Chevette HSR developed and prepared at our Shepreth workshop.

In the years leading up to our 1981 season, we had kept an eye on him, and he on us. He had appreciated and admired our engines for some time (we had supplied him with 2.3-litre 16v engines for his Chevairs, campaigned in South Africa). When DTV were compelled to run only one car that year, and Tony was free to join us, we were delighted.

He soon became a great favourite of our staff and mechanics at Shepreth. He was always positive and mindful of our efforts to give him the best car and preparation to match his talents. He loved the HSR 'Plastic Fantastic' or 'Silver Rollerskate' as he preferred.

The combination of Tony, Mike and Chevette proved quickest that year, winning five internationals: the Scottish, the Manx, the West Cork and two televised Rallysprints, at Esgair Dafydd and Donington. That they missed out on the drivers' title was not due to them but to failures on the Mintex and Circuit of Ireland. However, they gave Vauxhall its first rallying Manufacturers' Award.

Tony was a true gentleman who was considerate to his mechanics, and who kept everyone motivated with his wonderful sense of humour. But once in the car, he was formidable. When Tony Pond put the hammer down few could keep up.

We mourn a very human and gifted man.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

BILL BLYDENSTEIN, BUNTINGFORD, HERTS

* * * *

'ARDENT' ENTHUSIAST

SIR,

I was thrilled to read Gary Watkins' fine article on Watkins Glen, and to see the photograph of the Bill Milliken mural I painted last year.

One of the most exciting races on the original Watkins Glen circuit took place in 1949, when Miles Collier's Riley-Ford V8 hybrid, named the 'Ardent Alligator', passed Briggs Cunningham's Ferrari 166 to take the lead on the final lap.

This Ford/Ferrari battle predated the famous rivalry of the 1960s by more than a decade. The 'Alligator' is currently on display at the Watkins Glen International Motor Racing Research Center (the correct name of the Watkins Glen museum mentioned in your picture credits).

True to the spirit of the 'Glen, the mural of Bill Milliken was a community effort; the Research Center generously provided technical support for the project and greatly assists the racing community with its diverse archives.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

ROBERT GILLESPIE, PENN YAN, NEW YORK

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1956 Watkins Glen Grand Prix: first owner George Constantine at the wheel of XKD545, the 1956 Jaguar D-Type to be offered at Monaco 46 years later in pristine, race ready condition.







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LETTERS FROM READERS

SPLASH AND 'TACHE

SIR,

In 1966, I was a 15-year-old schoolboy who hitchhiked or cycled to race meetings in the south-east of England. I could afford the entry fee but not a paddock transfer, so I would wait until after the meeting, when the security guard left his post at the gate, to go into the paddock.

I asked Graham Hill for his autograph in the paddock at Brands Hatch. He said, "Hold on, son," and I waited while he chatted to a few people. Then he said, "OK, follow me," and we walked down to the old lock-up garages at the bottom of the paddock, where he stripped to the waist and washed in a cold bucket of water before giving me his autograph and wishing me well. This is a man who had already been world champion and earlier that year had won the Indy 500.

A few years ago, I found his grave in what is now somebody's garden and paid my respects to the man. He was a gentleman.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

JOHN DAY, EPSOM, SURREY

* * * *

LASHAM TO GOTHAM

SIR,

The article by Bill Boddy covering Jenks' time with OVX 355D, the Ford GT40, brought back many happy recollections.

Jenks was a long-standing friend and it was usual to be invited to be driven in whatever 'super' car he had currently on test.

I was picked up one Sunday morning, and off we drove towards Lasham airfield. There was one corner near Odiham that I had always found difficult to take at speed – 55mph was about my limit in the firm's 1200cc Anglia. That morning, Jenks went round the bend at an effortless 80mph. The car's performance and handling were a revelation. We would pass slow-moving Sunday motorists one at a time, and scare the daylights out of them with flame pouring out of the exhausts on the overrun.

I asked Jenks to demonstrate the brakes. He accelerated to about 120mph and braked heavily. The deceleration was so great that the senses literally had to catch up. There was no nose-dipping, just serious straight-line retardation. And on the road between the 'Golden Pot' and RAF Odiham, the car was momentarily pushed to 144mph, giving driver and passenger great confidence in its ability should a difficult situation arise.

Towards the end of the demonstration run, Jenks suggested a pint in the Odiham High Street pub. We stopped opposite in an apparently deserted street. But as we got out of the car, two young school children emerged from nowhere, took one look at us and declared, "Blimey, Batman and Robin!"

I AM, YOURS ETC,

DEREK ARGYLE, CAMBERLEY, SURREY



Michele Mouton's Audi Quattro on the 1983 Rally of Portugal LAT

LOAN STAR

SIR,

With reference to Bill Boddy's recent GT40 article, the car registered OVX355D (ch1013) was never raced; it was a road version loaned by Ford Advanced Vehicles to important customers such as Bernard White.

Bernard's BRM V8, driven by Bob Bondurant, came fourth, albeit last, at Monaco in 1966. Innes Ireland, whose last three F1 races were in this car, drove Bernard's ex-Essex Wire GT40 and David Hobbs his Ferrari 275LM (ch5907) at Zeltweg in '66, where Bernard, Innes and I had a memorable dinner with Jenks in Judenberg. Jenks went to bed, while we three came close to spending the night in a cell when caught trying to ride (yes, three of us) the local bobby's bike round the fountain.

Bernard was concerned about driving OVX355D as the registration numbers added up to 13. His misgivings were well-founded. We clipped a motorcyclist who, independently witnessed, crossed a dual carriageway oblivious to the GT40. Mercifully, neither biker nor car were severely injured! The police insisted on a brake meter test, the officer threatening me with dire consequences when I suggested he remove his hat and brace himself. The door crushed his hat and the fascia hurt his nose when Bernard stood on the brakes at the very moment the policeman raised his hand, rather than when he tapped the fascia, as he had proposed.

Whilst Bernard had OVX355D, it carried three of us – my wife, plus Bernard and me, both 6ft 3in' tall – unbelievable to most.

Innes returned OVX355D to Slough, leaving Bernard's home in East Yorkshire in thick fog, which was forecast for the whole journey. He phoned us from his mews house in central London, 220 miles away, less than three hours later – "Just a trifle misty, boy," said Innes!

The 'loan' worked, as Bernard acquired a road GT40, now owned, I believe, by Noel Edmonds.

Bernard has lived quietly in Spain for 30 years, having provided enough fun to last a lifetime.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

RICHARD MILNER, COTTINGHAM, YORKSHIRE

THE RIGHT CROWD

SIR,

Having read John Davenport's story on the Rally of Portugal, I wish to congratulate him for not blaming crowd control for its exclusion from the world championship calendar. Someone with his experience knows that there are, still today, other famous places where crowd behaviour is much worse – Monte Carlo, San Remo, Corsica – just to name a few.

I agree with his views on César Torres' main role as the rally's supremo. He *was* the Portuguese Rally. And that explains why the rally got dumped. It was nothing to do with last year's fiasco in the rain. Only if you live in Portugal can you understand that winter 2001 was the worst in more then 20 years – eight months of consecutive rain.

Davenport, though, fails to mention that the decision to dump Portugal was taken before San Remo and the Rally of Great Britain were held, these two being under warning from the 2000 season.

Being a small peripheral country, with no national car manufacturer, it was obvious that Portugal was the weakest link in the WRC – especially when the almighty German Rally wanted to get in. But ask drivers if they would prefer to have Portugal or Turkey, and you would get the same answer from all – Portugal.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

FRANCISCO MOTA, LISBON, PORTUGAL

* * * *

OPENSHAW CASE

SIR,

In his piece on 'The Riddle of the Mystery Fiat', Bill Boddy reports that he has been unable to tie up his two references to LP Openshaw. I offer fairly conclusive evidence that they refer to the same man.

Lawrence Pratt Openshaw was born in 1892 and joined the Royal Naval Air Service in November 1914. He began flying training at Eastbourne, as a Flight Sub Lieutenant, RNAS, in December 1914, eventually taking his RAeC ticket in a Bristol at Hendon in March 1915. In December 1917, Openshaw was promoted to Squadron Commander, Royal Naval Air Service, which was converted to Major, RAF, in 1918.

Bill Boddy has more detail than I have available on Openshaw after his demobilisation, but he attended the Beardmore Flying School at Renfrew in 1924 to requalify as a pilot. He joined Westland as test pilot shortly afterwards, and later married Alice Bruce, daughter of Westland's MD, Robert Bruce.

The fatal crash at Bournemouth was on June 6, 1927. Officialdom recorded his death had not occurred on RAF duties, presumably so the public purse was protected from any death benefit claims.

I AM, YOURS ETC,

GRAHAM MOTTRAM,

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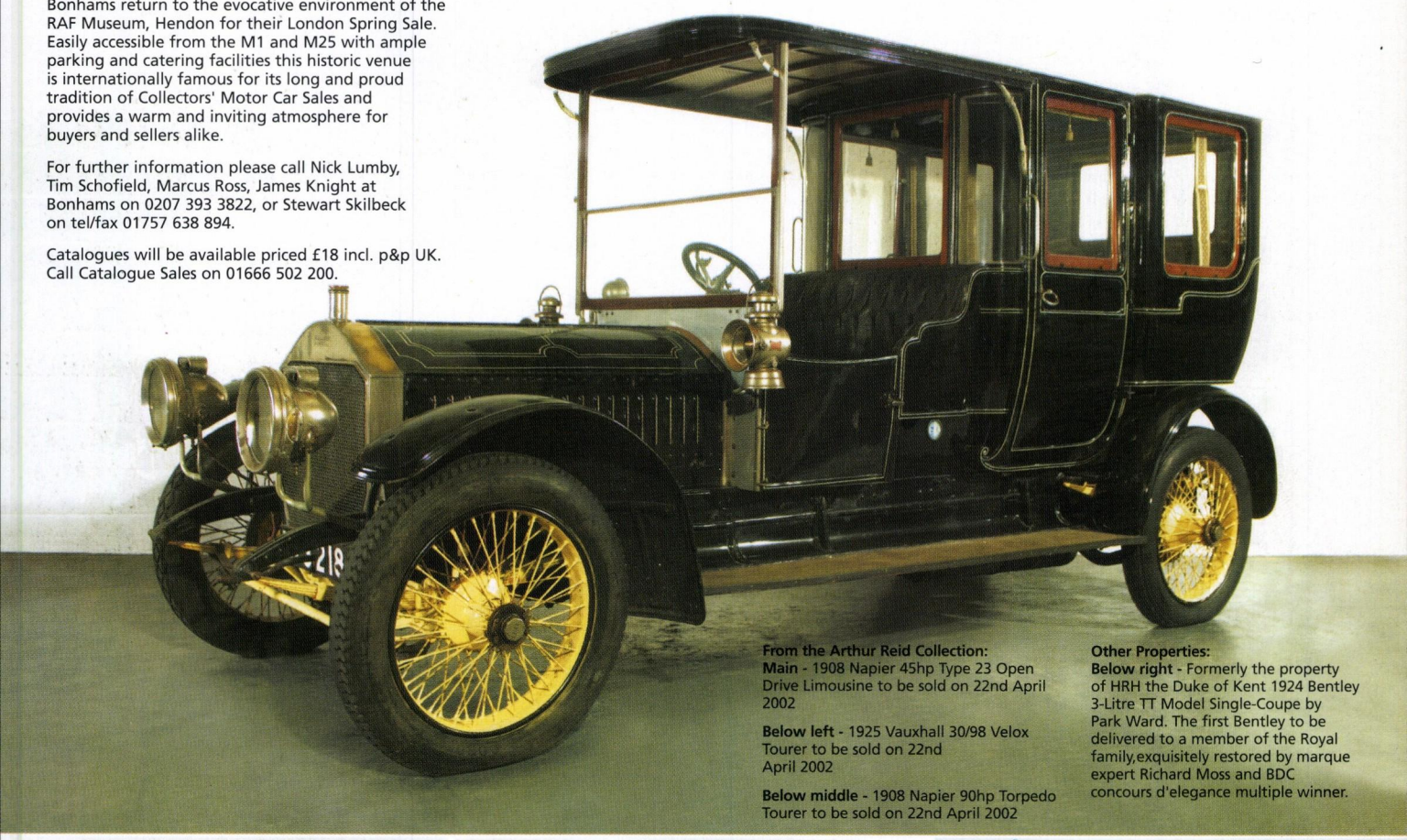
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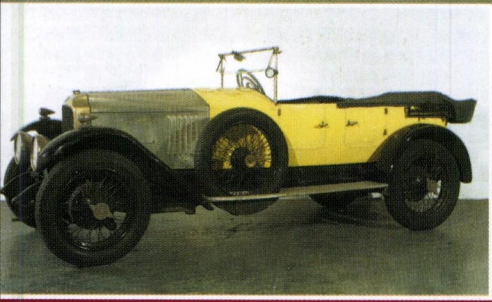


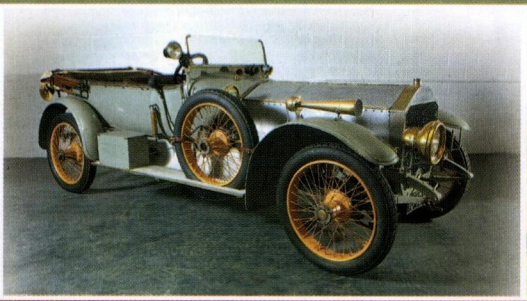
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Below left - 1925 Vauxhall 30/98 Velox Tourer to be sold on 22nd April 2002

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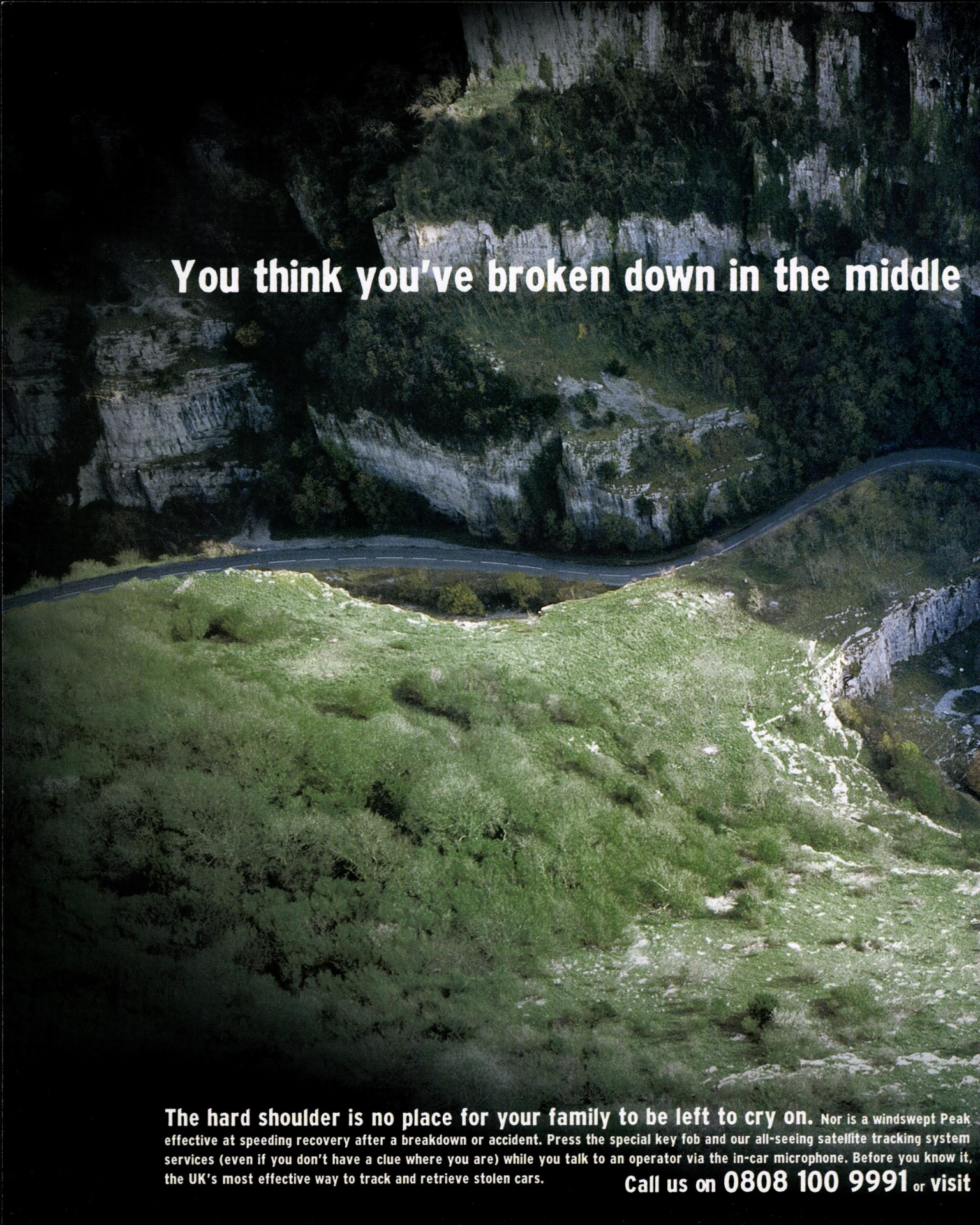
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MODERN TIMES

THE ONE RESULT BERNIE ECCLESTONE didn't want in Australia was the one he got – a Michael Schumacher win. And Maranello's decision to rely for the time being on last year's Ferrari seemed to be no handicap at all. (In fact, the flawlessly prepared F2001s in Melbourne had plenty of 2002 about them, including some engine parts, and so perhaps should more accurately be called F2001.5s).

There must be serious worries now that Schuey's Fangio-equalling fifth title will be wrapped up by the end of July, with consequent damage to Bernie's television figures for the last few rounds of the season. But, while you didn't have to be much of a pundit to forecast the winner of the first race, you'd have been hard pressed to foresee the first few hundred metres, when little brother Ralf went ballistic over the back of Rubens Barrichello and set in train an immense accident that wiped out eight cars.

Predictably, Ralf blamed Rubens for weaving; and equally predictably, Rubens blamed Ralf for forgetting to brake. And forthwith, the hopes and dreams of so many going into this first round went up in a cloud of rubber smoke and shredded carbon fibre. Any ambition that rookies Felippe Massa (who qualified an impressive ninth for Sauber) and Allan McNish (a respectable 16th with Toyota) might have entertained of scoring points in their first GP evaporated; so did Giancarlo Fisichella's desire to make Eddie Jordan smile again, not to mention Jenson Button's determination to show new form for Flav. And yet the impervious Michael came through the carnage smelling of red roses, adroitly taking to the grass on the left as he sensed out-of-control wreckage coming up fast on the right. If he hadn't made an indifferent start he might well have been in the thick of the accident: or was he being canny, remembering the costly recent grid bust-ups in Austria and Hockenheim, and knowing that once the race settled down, he'd have little difficulty getting to the front?

For that is exactly what happened. He was stuck behind Jarno Trulli's Renault for a few laps, and he then had a stirring battle with Juan Pablo Montoya's Williams for several more. But he knew that the Michelins on the Williams would be losing their edge just as his Bridgestones were settling in: unusually cool Melbourne weather was an additional help to his strategy, for this year's Michelins seem so far to work less well in low temperatures.

The real battle would have been between him and Coulthard, for DC had smoothly taken his McLaren scot-free through the first-corner carnage and, once the Safety Car came in, was building a useful lead while Michael was stuck behind the Renault. Once the Renault had spread itself over the wall, a second Safety Car queue removed that cushion, but it was now that Coulthard's gear-selection woes began, with the embarrassment of an off behind the Safety Car, and his race was pretty much over at that point. A McLaren-Ferrari battle would have started off the season nicely – but, given the difference between their tyres, Schumacher would sooner or later have been in front.

With the sparse field now in an orderly procession, we were left with the astonishing spectacle of Eddie Irvine putting Jaguar into fourth place in the constructors' championship. Afterwards, Irvine sensibly refused to celebrate: in qualifying and the race, his best laps were more than 4sec off the pace, and he knows Jaguar have much to do.

Even more weird was the sight, from lap 30 onwards, of two Minardis running in the points. In the end, Mika Salo, bent on giving Toyota a point in their first GP, demoted Alex Yoong,

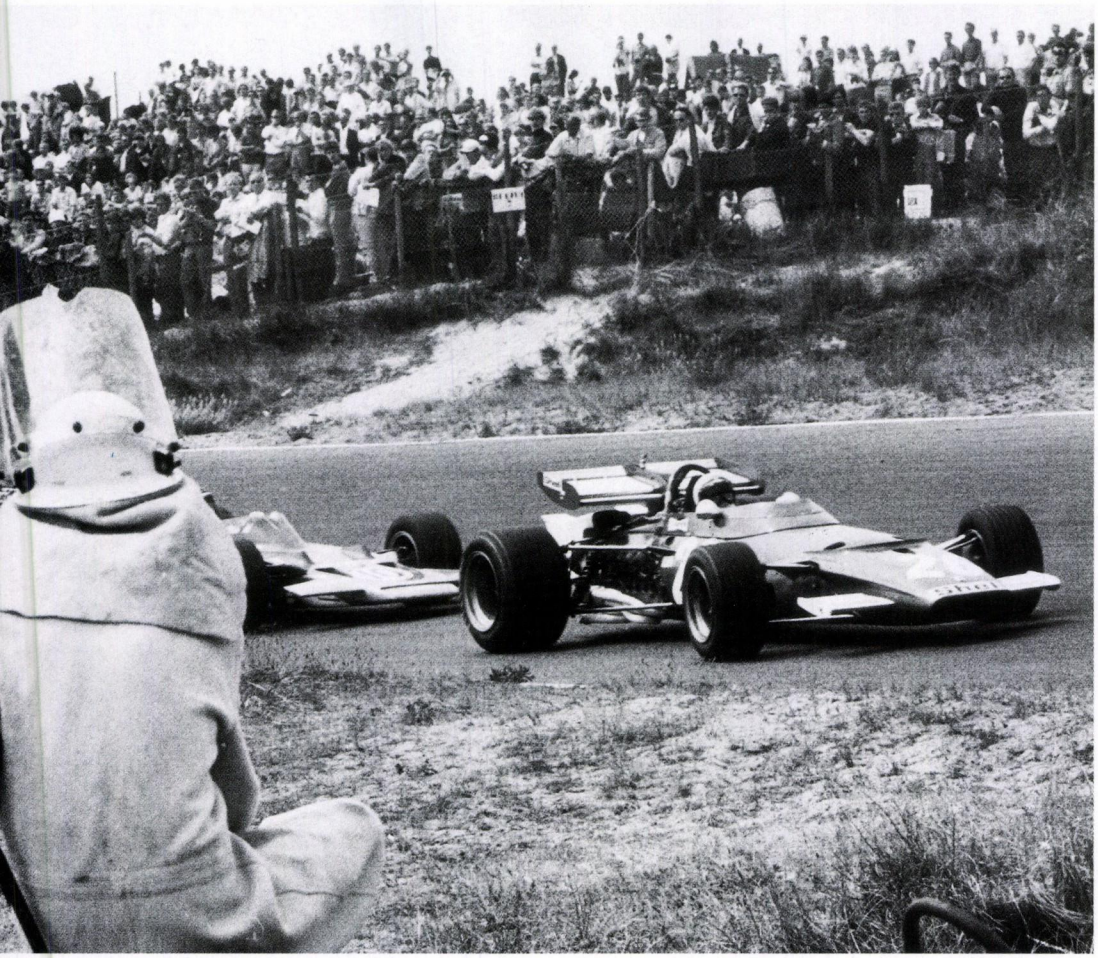


1970: Clay Regazzoni's GP debut at Zandvoort in Ferrari 312B. He qualified sixth and finished fourth



all: LAT

Wizards of Oz: Stoddart and Webber mounted the podium having finished fifth



but for Minardi's Australian owner Paul Stoddart and his new Australian driver Mark Webber, fifth place was fantasy turned reality, and the high point for the crowd on a lacklustre afternoon. Minardi scored as many points in this race as they have earned in the last seven seasons, and Webber joined the elite list of drivers who've finished their first GP in the points.

He's in good company. Neither of the Schumachers did it, but Alain Prost did. So did Jackie Stewart, who scored in all of his first six rounds, and won his eighth. Johnny Herbert's fourth place on his debut, in Brazil in 1989, still crippled by his Brands Hatch F3000 accident, was an act of tremendous courage. Jean Alesi and Martin Brundle were two Tyrrell protégés who scored points first time out. So, out of today's grid, did Irvine and Pedro de la Rosa. Jacques Villeneuve not only finished second in his first GP, but also started it from pole – a feat managed by Mario Andretti and, more surprisingly, by Carlos Reutemann, in 1972, for Bernie's newly-acquired Brabham.

Time was when drivers as young as Button, Kimi Raikkonen and Massa were rare in F1: rookies quite often had fruitful experience in other disciplines already. Mark Donohue, third in Penske's McLaren in Canada in 1971, had been racing successfully for Roger in other categories for six years. Having won the Monte Carlo Rally for Porsche in 1968, versatile Vic Elford hustled his unwieldy Cooper-BRM to fourth in his F1 debut, at Rouen. Mike Parkes was 34 when he had his first F1 ride, for Ferrari: he qualified third at Reims in 1966, and finished second. In five GPs, Mike scored two seconds and one pole: then he broke his legs at Spa, and did not race in F1 again.

But there were youngsters, too. In 1970, Emerson Fittipaldi won his fourth GP, and went on to be world champion in his second season, at 25. Bruce McLaren's debut grand prix, in 1958, aged 20, was on the daunting Nürburgring in an F2 car, but he still finished fifth. He won his seventh GP in a proper F1 car, and by then was just 22. Mike Hawthorn's Cooper-Bristol gave him fourth in his first GP, at Spa: the following year, he was racing and winning for Scuderia Ferrari.

When motor racing was even more dangerous, inexperience could be fatal. The talented youngster Chris Bristow had his first grand prix in an F1 car at Monte Carlo in 1960, and qualified an impressive fourth in his Yeoman Credit Cooper: just three weeks later, dicing with Willy Mairesse at Spa, he died in a grisly accident. Teenager Ricardo Rodriguez was so quick in Ferrari sportscars that Enzo put him, still only 19, in a works Ferrari for the Italian Grand Prix, and he qualified a sensational second between teammates Wolfgang von Trips and Richie Ginther. He was not yet 21 when he died in practice for his home GP the following year.

Many young talents would surely have achieved greatness had they lived. Near the top of that list are Tony Brise, lost in the 1975 Graham Hill air crash; Roger Williamson and Tom Pryce, victims of cruelly stupid accidents; cancer victim Gunnar Nilsson; and Carlos Pace, another to die in a light plane crash. F3 graduate Stuart Lewis-Evans had two brilliant seasons for Vanwall until the fiery Morocco accident in 1958 that killed him. Slight of build, he would have found great success in the coming generation of light rear-engined cars.

Sometimes success seems to come too early. Giancarlo Baghetti, of course, famously won his first championship race, and achieved little else. Clay Regazzoni was another to have his first GP as a works Ferrari driver: he finished fourth at Zandvoort in 1970, and ended his debut season, despite missing the first four rounds of it, third in the overall standings. He was fired by Ferrari, recalled to support Niki Lauda in 1974, fired again at the end of 1976 and, despite scoring Williams' first win, in 1979, ended his F1 career with the little Ensign team, with whom he had his crippling final accident.

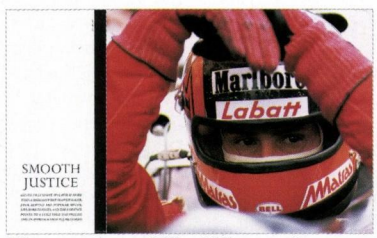
Whatever all this history tells us, Webber can feel well pleased with his debut. Some of his Minardi predecessors, like Fisichella and Trulli, have gone on to greater things; Fernando Alonso, clearly a substantial talent, remains waiting in the wings as test driver to Renault. Webber's success, however, must be particularly galling to Justin Wilson, the young Englishman who comprehensively outdrove him to win last year's F3000 title, yet has still not found a drive of any stature for this season. Wilson doesn't bring big bags of sponsorship gold with him – just cockpit talent. Which, these days, isn't enough.

As we head to Malaysia, Schumacher is nicely on course for a third straight title; Ferrari are first in the constructors' championship, Williams second, McLaren third. No surprises there, then. We must pray for a few more upsets from the likes of Mr Stoddart and Mr Webber – otherwise this year is going to be done and dusted almost before it's started. M

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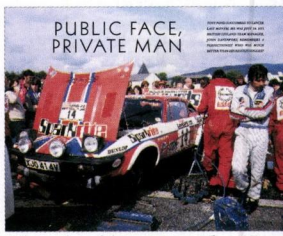
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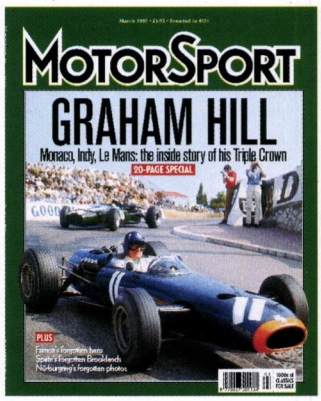
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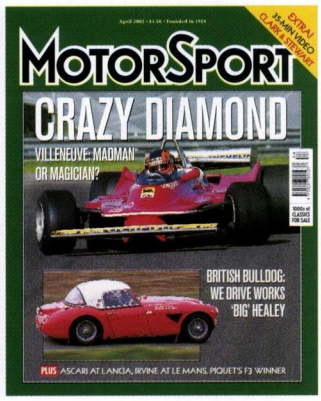
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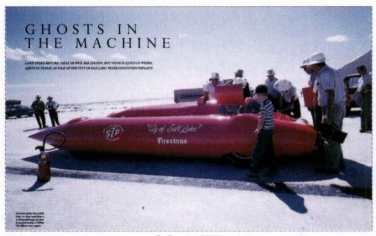
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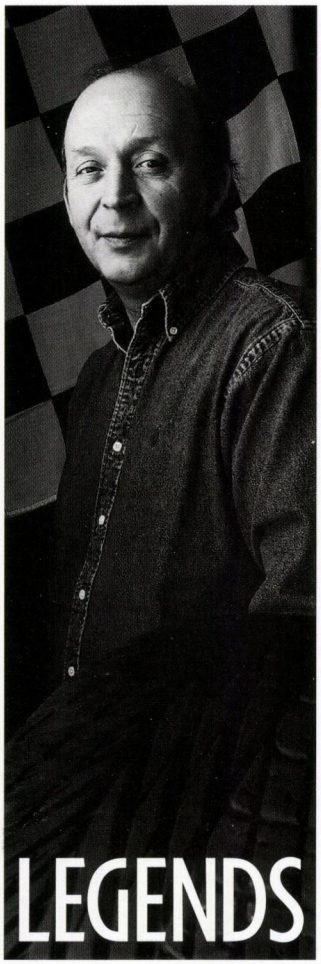
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LANGHORNE

'ALL PATRONS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED to visit the pits following today's race. You may have the opportunity to meet your favourite drivers and look over the race cars at close range.' These words are from a race programme, so already you have some clue that we're not talking about modern F1.

It is over 30 years since the 'old' Spa-Francorchamps circuit hosted the Belgian Grand Prix for the last time. After that, militant drivers refused to go back, claiming the place had become unacceptably perilous. On the other side of the water they were saying the same about Langhorne.

I have some programmes from the place, and it is from one of them that my opening paragraph comes. Consciously or not, the word 'may' was well chosen, for there was a fair chance, in this place, that your favourite race driver and his car might not be in one piece by the end of the day.

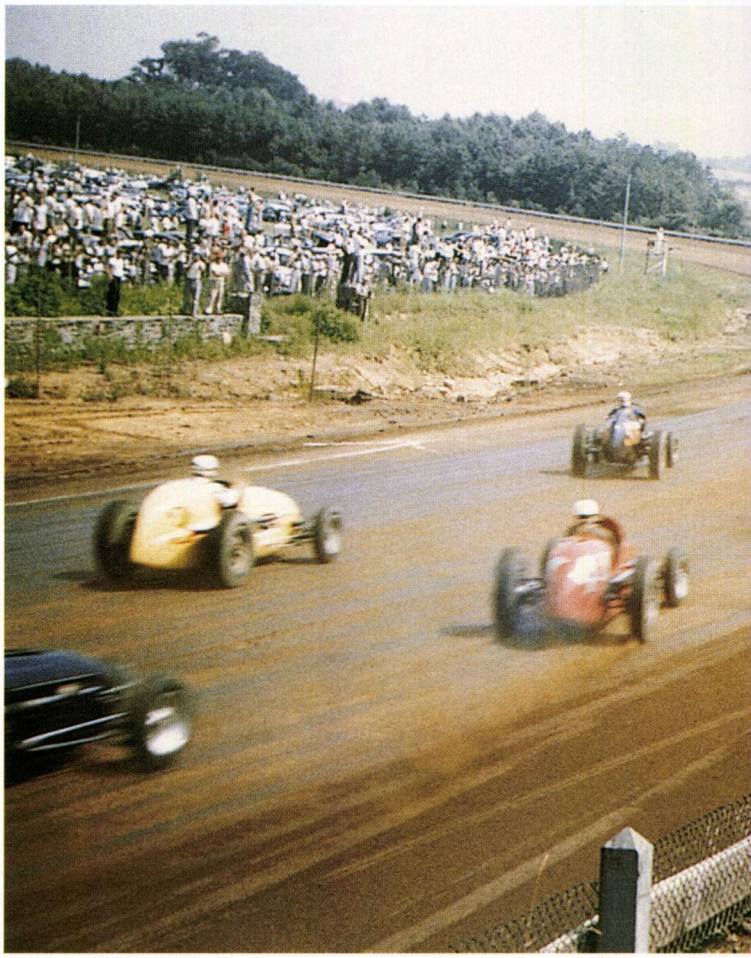
Langhorne, indeed, would be an ideal twin town for Francorchamps. You will find it a few miles north of Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania's Bucks County, but there's no trace of a track. On the site now is a faceless shopping mall, just like any other, save that the foundations of this one are bloodied.

Langhorne was a one-mile dirt track, like DuQuoin or Syracuse or Sacramento. But where these others were conventional ovals, Langhorne was rounded off, almost circular. It was known, in fact, as 'The Big Left Turn'; there was nowhere for a driver to relax even momentarily. The whole of his lap was effectively one long, opposite-lock slide. Even on the narrow tyres of 40 years ago, a great driver could lap at close to 115mph.

Not far away is Nazareth, where Poppa Andretti settled his family in 1955. "Even now," Mario says, "when I think about Langhorne, I get goose bumps. There was something special about that place. When we were in our teens, my brother Aldo and I went out there lots of times to watch, and it seemed like every time somebody would buy the farm.

"People don't realise these days that, in the 1960s, the USAC Championship was still a mix of paved tracks like Indianapolis, and dirt tracks like Langhorne. I liked that, because they were totally different disciplines, and you had to excel at both.

"Langhorne's 100-mile championship race was run in June, when the heat was tremendous. The track would get dusty, and the ruts deeper and deeper – man, you'd see cars pitched clean in the air by those ruts."



In part, Langhorne's viciousness stemmed from its location. The track, built in 1926, was on marshland, with a host of underground springs, so parts of it tended most of the time to be moist and soft; wheels dug ruts, which then baked in the summer sun. Most notorious of all was the section soon after the start, downhill, very quick. The drivers called it 'Puke Hollow'.

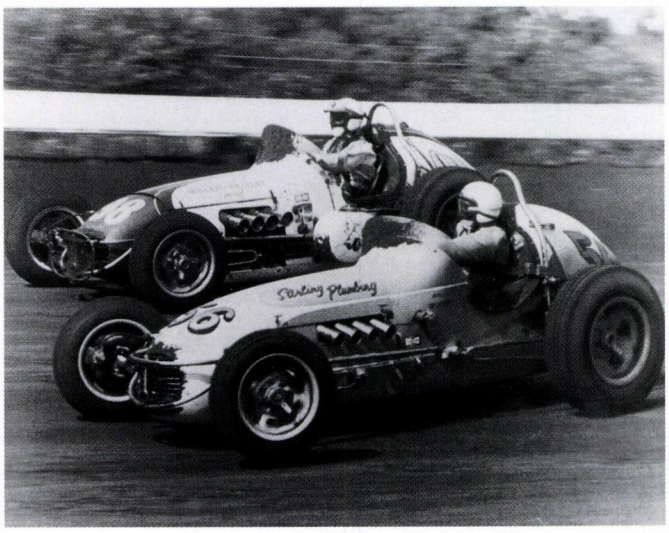
In 1964, Andretti was a feisty young sprint car driver aiming for Indianapolis. Early in the season he had a one-off drive in a roadster at Trenton, and soon afterwards was approached by legendary crew chief Clint Brawner, then running the Dean Van Lines team. It was a plum drive, and the contract should have come into effect at Langhorne, but Brawner said Mario wasn't ready for that place.

"He was smart to say that, no question," Mario says, "but I was just getting started in the big time, full of vinegar. Okay, if Clint wouldn't let me run, I'd find a ride someplace else. What I found was the Windmill Truckers Special."

In my programme, opposite the entry of car number 74, the space for the driver's name is left vacant. 'Mario Antratti', the original owner has scribbled in. The Windmill Truckers Special was not a car in the first flush of youth. Its engine was tired but, more crucially, it lacked power steering, by then a standard item on front-running dirt cars. In short, it was everything a small, slight man didn't need on a torpid afternoon.

"That deal had two things going for it," says Andretti. "It was quite a forgiving car. But more important was that the chief mechanic was Tommy





all: courtesy of Judy Riggs

Top: Langhorne was just one long left-handed slide. Its 'mad momentum' sometimes led drivers to lose their bearings. Above: Parnelli Jones (98) grabs second place from Jim Hurtubise on the very last lap of the 1962 100-miler

Hinnershitz, who had been one of the greatest drivers on dirt. Anything that man said, I was gonna listen to."

Hinnershitz warned Mario of a phenomenon peculiar to Langhorne. The almost circular shape of the track, he said, sometimes caused a driver to lose his bearings. "It was a kind of 'mad momentum'. You were turning left the whole time, and you could literally forget where on the racetrack you were! Tommy warned me about turn three: that was where you ran out of road, he said, where you could so easily catch the fence.

"On my first hot lap in practice, I was really keen to get at it, you know. The handling felt good, and it would have been very easy to have gotten carried away with myself, tail way out of line, holding the thing on the throttle. It felt good! But I just remembered what Tommy had said, and came off the gas early for turn three. You know what? I only just made it through. Without him, I'd have been up in the stands someplace."

Andretti finished ninth, somehow wrestling the car to the flag. For that he earned a princely $637 – which had to be split with the owners.

"I had no idea where I was at the end. It just seemed like it would never end, with all that heat and dust. I would love to have quit, but there was no way – I had to finish, after what Brawner had said. And my hands... Jesus, my hands! I really had to fight that thing, and the steering wheel had been taped up with black electrical tape. I wore those thin leather gloves, and my hands were skinned – I mean, just like raw hamburger."

Langhorne, for Andretti, was bitter to endure, sweet to remember. Before the race, he had been so scared that it had kept him from sleep: "When a guy like Rodger Ward – who'd won Indy twice and was also real good on dirt – refused to run Langhorne, on safety grounds, it had to be one spooky place. And it was."

Ward had no fear of the dirt cars, as such, and would happily race at Springfield or Sedalia. But Langhorne, no. If his team wanted to run there, fine, they could get another driver. In 1960, they got Jimmy Bryan.

Here was one of the greatest of American drivers, known for his skills on the dirt, but who, after winning the Indy 500 in 1958, had gone into virtual retirement. In future, he said, he would drive only in the 500, and for a couple of years he kept to that. By 1960, though, his hedonistic way of life had taken its toll on his savings. It seemed like the classic cliché story of the fighter, broke and past his best, coming back for all the wrong reasons. When Ward rejected Langhorne, Bryan snapped up the ride.

Why Langhorne, of all places? Because he loved it, he said. It was his kind of track; he had won there many times. And in qualifying, only Don Branson, whom Andretti considers the best on dirt there has ever been, beat him.

The temperature was close on 100deg when the green flag waved. Bryan snatched the lead, crossing the line sideways – not even the start/finish area was straight. Followed by Branson and Jim Hurtubise, Bryan pitched the Leader Card Offenhauser into turn one. Ahead lay the ruts of Puke Hollow, and there, as he fought with the car, he tagged Hurtubise, and began endlessly somersaulting.

The same day, at Spa, Chris Bristow and Alan Stacey were killed in the Belgian Grand Prix. Ten years on, Chris Amon would lament the passing of the old circuit: "It frightened the hell out of you, but a quick lap gave you satisfaction like nowhere else." Roger McCluskey said much the same of Langhorne: "I'm glad they've stopped it, but I'm still going to miss it."

Faced with dwindling entry lists, the Langhorne promoters did the unthinkable in 1965, and paved their infamous mile. It was, in many ways, the worst of both worlds: it remained lethal, yet now lacked the spectacle which had drawn driver and spectator alike for 40 years, that of a car held sideways, balanced on the throttle.

"Langhorne never changed," says Andretti. "It was always going to be a widow-maker. I guess Foyt's the only guy I ever heard say he really liked the place but, of course, with his size and strength, it suited him.

"It was safer after they paved it, but then the speeds went up. By the end of the '60s, the lap speed was upwards of 130. I don't think I've ever experienced g forces like that. I won there a couple of times, but it was always the race you didn't look forward to."

A bizarre spot for muzak and Mothercare. I wonder if there are ghosts in the mall? There should be. M

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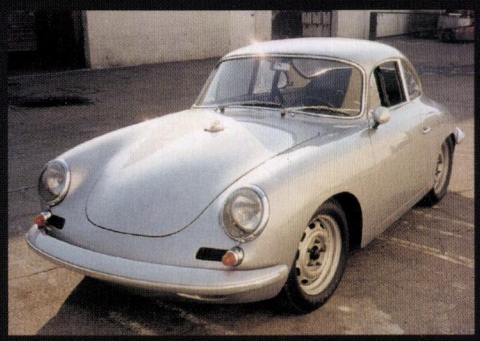


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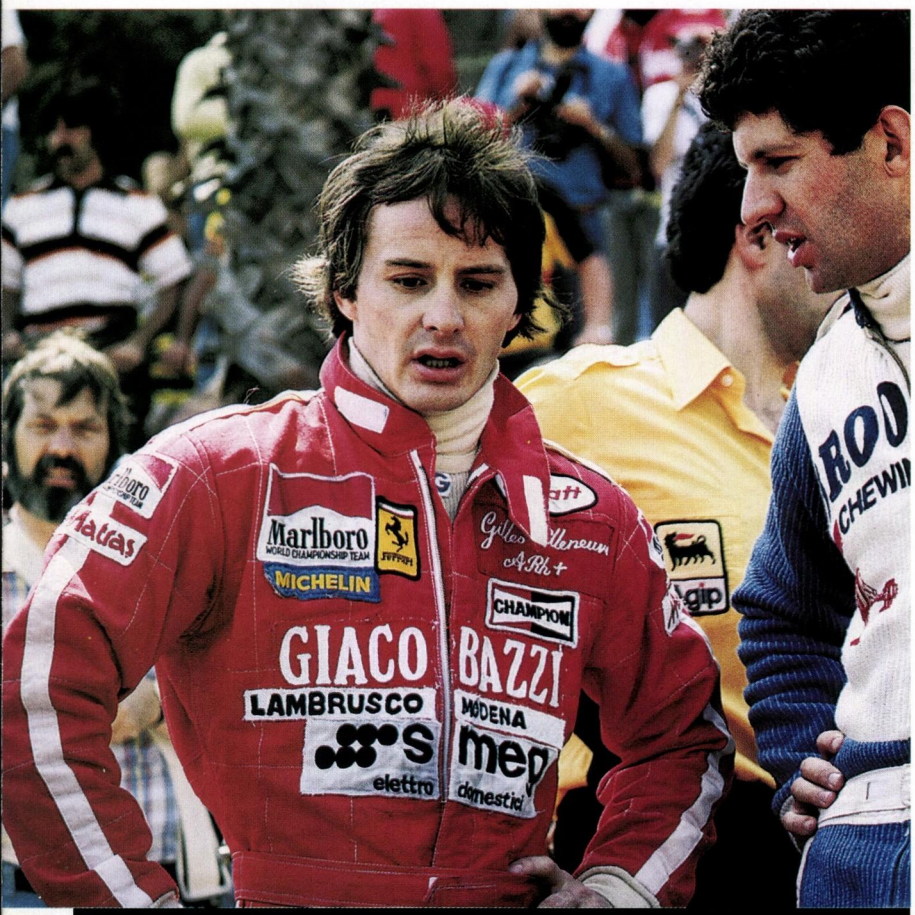
SMOOTH JUSTICE

GILLES VILLENEUVE WAS MUCH MORE THAN A BRILLIANT BUT FLAWED RACER. LOOK BEYOND THE POPULAR MYTHS, SAYS MARK HUGHES, AND THE EVIDENCE POINTS TO A STYLE THAT WAS PRECISE AND AN APPROACH THAT WAS MEASURED



Rainer Schlegelmilch


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Above: Villeneuve was meant to support Scheckter in 1979, but such was his pace… Right: … Jody was given until the Monaco GP to prove he was number one. He won… Below: … and took the title, but the spectacular Gilles was the year's uncrowned champion



Rainer Schlegelmilch, DPPI

A LONG TIME AGO THERE WAS A RACING DRIVER, a fantastic driver, who did many impossible things. He took his first GP victory – at the end of his first full season – by choosing a compound his tyre supplier said was way too soft. But he knew better; he had an uncanny feel for how to nurse the rubber but still conjure winning speed from it. His team-mate, renowned as one of the most sensitive drivers of all time, knew he couldn't make these tyres last, opted for the harder ones – and finished third.

The driver took his next victory early the following season by pushing his new team-mate hard enough to make him overwork his tyres. That done, he simply glided past and reeled off the remaining laps, untroubled, serene.

He took his third victory in the very next race by going a whole compound softer than his team-mate. Again, the tyre men drew sharp breaths and shook their heads. Again he confounded them, winning by over half a minute.

In the last race of that season he took win number four. This time he had to conserve a sick engine, its oil pressure almost non-existent for the last 20 laps.

Who was this angel of *simpatico* with the touch of silk? Gilles Villeneuve, that's who. Surely not? This is the man once described by Enzo Ferrari as "a high priest of destruction", isn't it?

The very same. It's the driver, one of the fastest and most spectacular of all time, whose image is forever captured in racing minds for three-wheeling back to the pits at Zandvoort, or sitting in the middle of the track at Imola with not a wheel on his smouldering wreck.

Ferrari once described him as 'a high priest of destruction'

The paradox is only superficial. Villeneuve was one of the greatest drivers the world has ever seen, of a calibre that comfortably compares to such accepted greats as Senna, Clark, Schumacher, Fangio or Moss. That's not the general perception, because his life was cut short before the overwhelming glories that were his due ever got to play out. But it's the reality. Look beneath the surface, beneath the snapshots of drama that have lasted more vividly than the subtleties, and the evidence is overwhelming.

Mauro Forghieri described Gilles as having a "rage to win" greater than any driver he had known, and it was this competitive intensity that drove him on. And that, allied to a twist of DNA, allowed him impossible victories like Monaco or Jarama 1981. It was this same rage, however, that sparked incident and spectacle when in 1980-81, at a time his career should have been coming into full flower, Ferrari provided him with dogs.

"He was an innocent believer," says Forghieri. "He had surrendered his own chances [of the world championship] for the team in 1979 with Scheckter, and he believed that he would be ➳


KACO
GITA


LONGINES
Agip

paid back." When circumstances conspired against that, desperation occasionally surfaced.

But what about before 1980-81? There was incident then, too, surely? Villeneuve's close friend and fellow GP driver, Bruno Giacomelli, puts that into perspective: "You have to make the distinction between early in his career and later. Those who talk about Gilles as crazy, I think they got it wrong. You must remember that he had no real experience when he first came into F1. I mean, he didn't even have international experience, just Formula Atlantic in Canada and North America. He had to learn so much more than the rest of us brought up on racing in Europe. If you think, he came to F1 without any international experience, he had to learn the tracks as well as all about F1 – and with all the pressure of being a Ferrari driver.

"Of course he made mistakes! There were only two possible outcomes in that situation, no matter how talented you were. You would either not have been quick enough or you would have accidents. And if you're not quick enough, you're not going to get to stay in F1. So there was only one option. I think he did incredibly well. Jesus, he almost won one of his first races!" That would be Long Beach '78, his sixth GP, a dominant victory lost only by failing to allow for Clay Regazzoni's notoriously limited peripheral vision when he came up to lap him.

Testing for his first GP – with McLaren at Silverstone in 1977 – was probably where the reputation for wildness took root. It's now the stuff of legend how many times he spun. But it wasn't clueless spinning; it was the result of a calculated strategy to get up to speed in time for

'Those who talk of Gilles as crazy. I think they got it wrong'

qualifying in a car far more powerful than his Atlantics, on a track he didn't know, and when there was only one chance to make a favourable impression. Not once did he hit anything; he chanced his arm only where he could recover, and his spin recovery was quite fantastic. Come qualifying and race, he was flawlessly polished – and sensationally quick. With an obsolete M23, he set the race's fifth-fastest lap, and had he disregarded the information of a faulty temperature gauge, he would have finished fourth.

Mega-talented though he was, he was still in over his head in terms of experience. If the McLaren run had been in at the deep end, stepping in at Ferrari later the same year – as a short-notice replacement for the legendary Niki Lauda, and in a car that handled diabolically in the autumnal cold – was akin to leaving the toddlers' pool to swim in shark-infested waters. In Japan, his second race for the team, he messed up, getting airborne after misjudging a move on Ronnie Peterson. At this point, yes, he was wild.

"When he first arrived, his driving style was not really suitable for F1," says Giacomelli, ➤



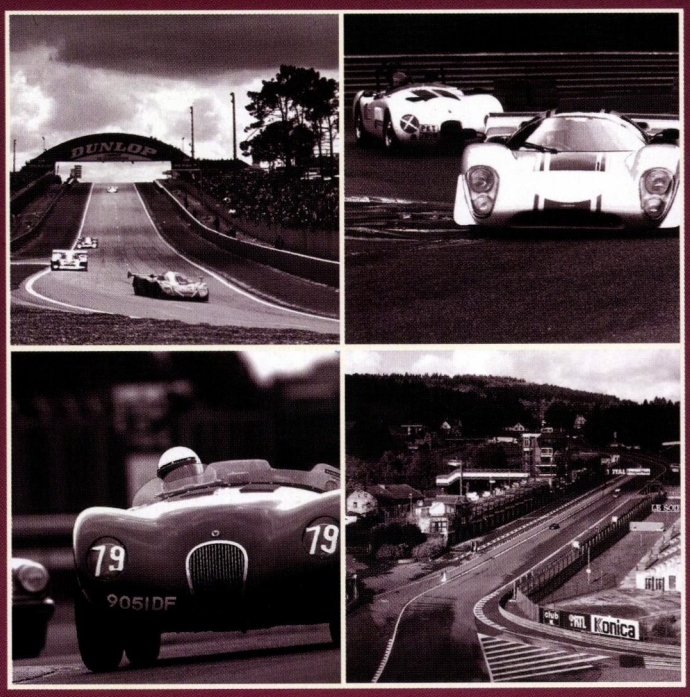
Above: Gilles qualified on the third row at Long Beach in 1981 and led – extremely briefly! Left: The following year should have been a title season, but it ended in tragedy. Below: Intense in the car, Villeneuve was very analytical out of it and gave good feedback



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"or any single-seater, really. He was still quick, but the style made him have accidents, too. But he learned and actually, though he remained spectacular, he became smooth as well. People get the two confused. You can still be super-smooth but be right on the limits, using all the track and more. People saw him pushing like hell because his cars weren't competitive in 1980 and '81 – up on the grass, crazy things – but I tell you, he was smooth in the way that he used the car, in the way he made the inputs into it. You could see that just watching his car."

Carlos Reutemann, stunningly quick and with many years of experience, was Ferrari team leader in 1978 and performed brilliantly to win four races in an outdated car. His average performance was, not unexpectedly, higher than that of his rookie team-mate. But never did he take the fight to a fit and healthy ground-effect Lotus 79. Villeneuve did so twice – pressuring Mario Andretti for victory virtually all the way at Zolder and Monza. Which merely confirmed that his potential was off the scale.

His payback for the bad luck of Long Beach came in Canada thanks to the retirement, when well in front, of Jean-Pierre Jarier's 79. But Gilles' style was evidently smoothing out. How else did he make those soft Michelins – which even super-sensitive Reutemann shunned – last?

For 1979, Jody Scheckter came on board at Ferrari as the established superstar, the world champion elect. The plan was for Villeneuve's second season to be one of support. He agreed, but in the first half of the year was conclusively quicker. His victory at Kyalami was a stunner, forcing a pace upon Jody that did for his tyres, overturning Scheckter's logically 'correct' choice of slicks in a race that turned out to be only briefly wet. Villeneuve had begun on wets. That shouldn't have been the right strategy, but he made it so.

At Long Beach, he again trounced Scheckter, this time by going for another of his marginal compound choices and delicately making it work – from the front of the field throughout. Shouldn't have been possible.

On the eve of the Belgian GP, Ferrari issued a statement to the effect that Scheckter had until Monaco, one race before the halfway point, to score a victory, otherwise the team would switch its championship effort to Villeneuve. Scheckter being Scheckter, won in Belgium – and Monaco. But the Belgian win was incredibly fortuitous, and with hindsight is the pivot upon which the perception of Villeneuve's career stature swings.

Scheckter made a clumsy first-lap passing attempt on Regazzoni at the chicane, the two making hefty contact. Jody got away without damage, but Regazzoni was cannoned into Villeneuve, who had to stop for a new nose-cone and rejoin last. Gilles made a stunning comeback, his lap times showing that he ➳

'I tell you, he was smooth in the way he used the car'



LAT

Ferrari won the constructors' title in 1979, but their flat-12 312 was already lagging far behind in terms of chassis design. A deficit Gilles battled against for the next two seasons



Above: Ferrari fans fell in love with Villeneuve's never-give-up approach to racing. He rode kerbs harder than any of his rivals, his talent enabling him to keep control… Below: … and set the fastest lap of the 1979 Spanish Grand Prix at the hilly Jarama



DPPI

could have dominated the race from the front. He was up to third when he ran out of fuel on the last lap. Even had he scored those four points – and not the nine Scheckter's error probably cost him – Villeneuve would have been that year's world champion, despite Scheckter's number one treatment.

"I've read people say he couldn't have won a championship," says Giacomelli, "and I really don't understand what they are talking about. He would have won in '79, but he handed it to Scheckter on team orders at Monza. He would have won in '82, for sure, and he could have won many titles after that. No doubt about it."

The mind boggles, in fact, at the statistics that might have been set had he not perished at Zolder '82 and instead lived to accept Ron Dennis' repeated offer to join McLaren.

Zandvoort 1979: the three-wheel incident,

'He was a very sensitive driver. …the greatest I ever saw'

I hear you say. Totally irrelevant in assessing Villeneuve's worth as a driver. The only reason he had damaged the rear end was that he had suffered a tyre blow-out. While leading. Having passed Alan Jones' far superior Williams FW07. Round the outside of Tarzan. He hadn't made a mistake. Just as he hadn't at Imola 1980: the famous accident after which that corner is now named. Again a tyre blow-out was the culprit.

Now consider this: in his four-and-a-bit years, 67 grands prix, he crashed out due to driver error no more than five times. Legend would suggest far more.

Now consider this: rock apes aren't quick in the wet. Watkins Glen 1979: wet first practice. Villeneuve was fastest by 8.5sec. Monaco 1980: a late-race downpour. Villeneuve was faster than anyone else by 5sec – in the hopeless 312T5.

Now consider this: crazy guys hanging on by their fingernails cannot sustain pressure from behind for any length of time. Jarama 1981: running at the front with four faster cars lined up behind him for virtually the entire distance. Not a single mistake. Not even the hint of one.

This was a very, very great driver indeed.

And that's without even talking about the miracles. Putting a car that should really have struggled to qualify at all on the Monaco front row in 1981 – pipped by Nelson Piquet's illegally light Brabham. Getting the T5 up to third place at Zandvoort in '80, in a field of FW07s, BT49s, Ligiers and Renaults. Leading with it in Brazil and setting second-fastest lap. In underdog terms, that's Senna, Moss and Nuvolari territory. All that and a Clark/Prost feel for tyres, too.

"He wasn't only fantastically quick," says Giacomelli, "he had everything. He knew a lot of the technical side – in fact, he was a connoisseur of that. He knew exactly what the car was doing and he could talk about it very well. He was a very sensitive driver, actually.

"He was the greatest driver I ever saw." M

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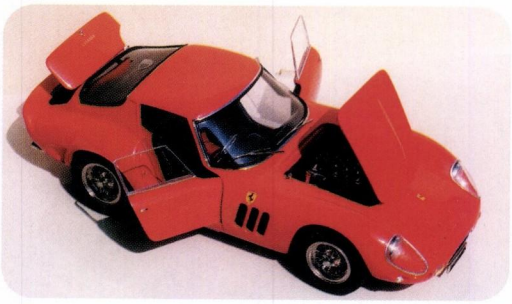


Image courtesy of Grand Prix Sportique

'Villeneuve Pit Stop' - Alan Fearnley



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Maurizio Contis' Ferrari 250GTO

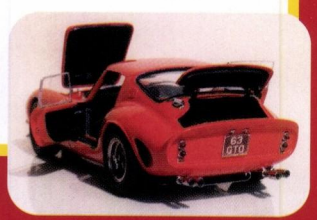
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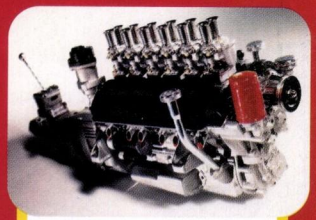
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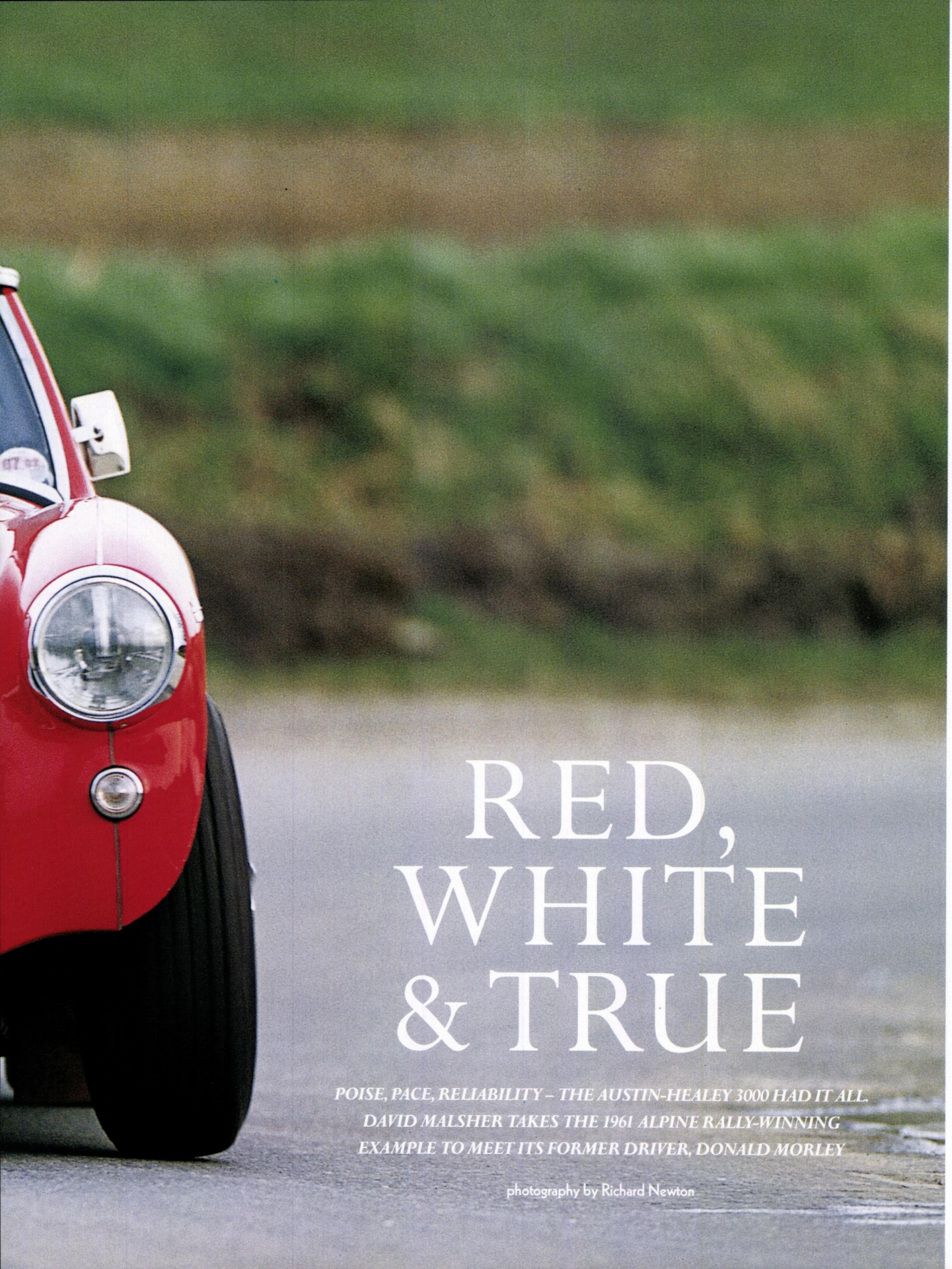


Schumacher - 'Seeing Red' by Colin Carter



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photography by Richard Newton

IT'S A BRIGHT RED, TRUE BLUE BRITISH SPORTSCAR, with the charisma and presence of Sir Anthony Hopkins, but will any of the post-rush hour drivers let it join the traffic flow? No soul, some people.

To commemorate 50 years of Austin-Healey, we have taken the opportunity to drive a legendary example, XJB876, and meet Donald Morley, the man who made it famous with victory in the 1961 Alpine Rally.

But for now it seems we'll be sitting forever outside Brown & Gammons, in Baldock, where the car is stored. Eventually, a truck driver concedes, and a glance in the mirror reveals only the artic's number plate. Larger than a 'Frogeye' Sprite this car may be, but it hardly lives up to its 'Big Healey' nomenclature. It's more commodious than a Series 1 Jaguar E-type of identical vintage and, it is startling to discover, not much slower. Even in overdrive top, this 3000 can hang on to fleeing repmobiles once it hits dual carriageway. Flick off o/d, and it gets seriously urgent – which is handy since we are late for our appointment.

We make it on schedule after some spirited driving, and we're intrigued to discover the car's mid-rev range alacrity is largely down to Donald's brother and navigator, Erle.

"After the 1960 Alpine Rally, when we had a lot of gearbox trouble with SJB471 *[see sidebar]*, BMC decided to sort the gears out, and asked what ratios we wanted. And so Erle worked out a system whereby, with the use of overdrive in third and top, we would have a 6-speed gearbox. So it went first, second, third, overdrive third, fourth, overdrive fourth. He came up with the correctly-spaced ratios which made a lot of difference to Healeys thereafter – especially on the Alpine rallies."



'Flick off o/d, and it gets seriously urgent – which is handy since we are late'

The torque from 3700 to 5000rpm is not quite kidney-compressing, but it does shove you firmly into the back of the bucket seat. More impressive still is the car's composure. Yes, it does require constant minor steering corrections, but that's necessary from the 40mph mark on and, curiously, gets no worse as the speed rises. In fact, its tall tyres allow it to soak up grooves and ridges more competently than wide-tyred low-profile rubber fitted to 21st-century cars, while the non-period roll-cage prevents bad flexing over the larger crests.

If constantly tweaking the tiller comes as second nature, then so does braking early and lightly, anticipating rather than reacting. If you wait to see the brake lights ahead glow, a Healey grille/Mondeo boot interface is all too likely. And don't assume, either, that you will be saved by engine braking. Even double declutching won't guarantee slotting a lower gear in time to be of any use in retardation. Unless, of course, you are a past master.

"I felt that we got a reasonable amount of ➠



Room for two spare wheels in rally-spec car's still-cute rump. Above: Central light is one of five at front

Donald and Erle Morley head for victory in 'our' car on the 1961 Alpine. The first of three wins

DONALD MORLEY'S MOUNTAIN HIGHS

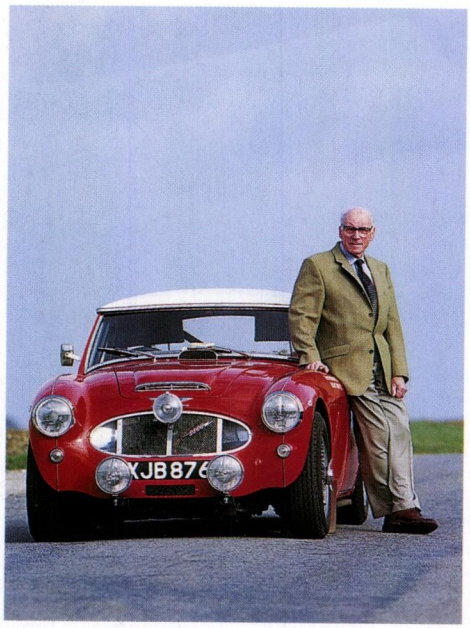
DONALD AND ERLE MORLEY ARE SYNONYMOUS WITH BIG HEALEYS and the Alpine Rally. But it was a different event and a different marque that sprang these two Suffolk farmers to prominence in the rally world.

"My brother and I did the Tulip Rally for four years as privateers," says Donald, "and the reason we did this one international rally each year was that the route was always kept secret, which meant the works drivers had no advantage of practising and making pacenotes.

"Well, in 1959, we won it outright in our own Jaguar 3.4 saloon. It was then that BMC's competitions manager Marcus Chambers approached us and said, 'Come on, you'll have to drive the Healey for us.' The first event we did for BMC was the 1959 RAC in Healey SMO745, and we placed fourth overall and won our class."

An outing in the 1960 Tulip saw the Morley brothers complete a works Healey 1-2 behind Pat Moss and Ann Wisdom. They would also win their class on that year's RAC. But in between these two events, Donald and Erle revealed a very special talent for the Alpine Rally, an event they would win in '61, '62 and '64.

"You could say that we twice lost the Coupe d'Or [awarded for three consecutive Alpine wins]: in 1960, we had gearbox trouble and lost three minutes, finishing with only top gear; in '63, we had the differential fail, literally on the startline of the Col d'Allos. They changed it, which took 45min, and that effectively put us out."



Both are legends in Big Healey circles, four decades on

And so a Coupe d'Argent (awarded for three non-consecutive wins) has to suffice. But what was the Morleys' secret on this daunting event?

"Some of it was loose, but a lot of it was good Tarmac, and I loved fast Tarmac stages where you could really set the car up for the bends and be very precise. But to really go for it on stages like that it was essential to have very good pacenotes, and have them read very well to you."

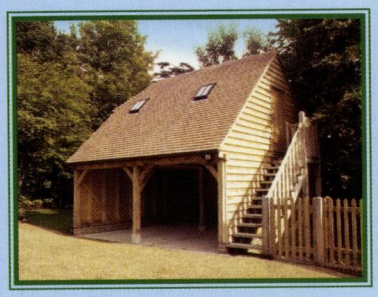
Aside from victory in the 1961 Alpine, Donald and Erle also used XJB876 in that year's Tulip, again finishing second to team-mates Moss/Wisdom, and in the RAC, where they retired with a broken rear hub.

History shouldn't link the Morley-driven Healeys with the Alpine Rally only; they won their class every year on the Tulip from '62 to '65. "It was always a very enjoyable event," remembers Donald, "but our problem was that, although we had all the fastest times, we didn't win overall because it was done on handicap, based on engine size."

Nor should we think of Donald and Erle only in Healeys: "We did the 1962 Monte Carlo in an MGA and won our class; we did the '64 Monte in an MGB and won our class. And we did one or two events in Minis and Mini Coopers."

But the bond between Donald Morley and Austin-Healey is unbreakable.

A privilege to drive the car, an honour to meet the man.







Look after your loved one

For owners of classic and historic racing cars, ownership is more than just a means to compete in racing, rallying or other forms of motorsport. It is a love affair with a particular car, marque, period or type of competition car. It goes far beyond mere ownership.

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engine braking," says Donald. "As for the brakes themselves, well, they weren't bad at all for the day, especially once they got properly warmed up. Mind you, many times at the end of a special stage we would get out and see our brakes were glowing bright red."

One imagines an Austin Healey 3000, especially in rally spec, to be a brute. The image of a beast lurking beneath the beautiful Gerry Coker-penned skin is what sold them after all. But it's an animal of the Whipsnade Zoo variety: the potential to bite is there, but it's harmless unless cajoled into doing something it oughtn't. Donald confirms this.

"For its day, the Healey handled really very well, and once the Weber carburettors went on in 1962, we had 200bhp with which to throttle-steer the car, and that made us very competitive against the Porsches, for example. The downside was that it was quite heavy on tyres. I remember once on the Alpine Rally wearing out a set of tyres and a set of brake pads in four hours."

Today, that docile-if-handled-with-common-sense nature remains, inspiring confidence in the novice driver. Keep a firm hold of the steering wheel and, providing entry speed isn't overly optimistic, the front will grip amazingly well in the dry, encourgaging the driver to get full on the gas ever sooner on successive apexes. The natural limit is found as the front end gets a ➳



'I remember once on the Alpine wearing out a set of tyres and brake pads in just four hours'

TECHNICAL SPEC

ENGINE

Type	in-line six, pushrod
Capacity ...	2912cc
Bore/stroke...	83.36 x 88.9mm
Max power...	189bhp @ 5400rpm
Carburation...	three Weber 45DCOEs

DRIVETRAIN

Transmission	4-speed with overdrive
Clutch	competition Healey

CHASSIS

Suspension (f) independent, coil springs, lever-arm dampers, wishbone, anti-roll bar

Suspension (r) rigid rear axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, Panhard rod (dropped on later cars)

Brakes	discs all round
Wheels	15in

DIMENSIONS

Length	4000mm
Width	1537mm
Height	1245mm
Wheelbase ...	2337mm
Track (f/r) ...	1238/1270mm
Kerb weight	1105kg



Surprisingly roomy cockpit. Above: Underbonnet heat caused Healeys to suffer fuel vaporisation until gills were added in '60

little light, there is a momentary vagueness in the steering and a touch of understeer, but if you've left enough room, it's nothing troubling.

That's the score on A- and B-roads, at least. Down dusty single-track lanes, a prod of throttle on corner exits can be used to straighten the car out as 190bhp breaks traction. And beyond that – are you kidding? Not on blind corners on public roads, not in the dry, and certainly not when the emotional ties between car and owner, Mick Darcey, are so strong.

Says Mick: "After the Morleys rallied it for BMC, Peter Moon ran XJB876 with works support from 1962, which is when the triple SUs were replaced by triple Webers. And then a gentleman called Sid Segal bought it, completing his trio of ex-works Healeys which comprised 67ARX and SMO744. I had a road-going 3000 MkIII at the time, and he befriended me just through that link. When he came to sell them, I was starting my own business, and I couldn't afford to buy one, let alone the whole trio. So I assumed I had missed my chance.

"One Sunday morning, though, I got a call from him to pop over for breakfast. That was quite a regular occurrence, only this time he told me to bring my Healey. After breakfast, we walked down to his garage, opened the doors, and there was XJB876. He said, 'I want you to have it,' and I replied, 'Sid, I still can't afford it'. And he told me to give him my road-going 3000 in exchange, and to forget the difference in value! Sid Segal was one of a kind." Clearly.



BIRTHDAY BONANZA

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Austin-Healey 100's Motor Show debut, the Austin-Healey Club has organised a week-long celebration.

Starting at Reading and culminating in a packed race day at Thruxton on Saturday, August 3, celebrations will involve the greatest collection of 'special Austin-Healeys' ever seen in the UK, together with special guests, including Marcus Chambers, Paddy Hopkirk, Donald Morley and Jack Sears. Details can be obtained by 'phoning 01202 814277, emailing AH50@austin-healey.com or logging on to www.austin-healey.com

No suprise then that Mick never intends to sell the car. But he is not afraid to use it in competition.

"Absolutely not. These cars thrive on being driven; it's a crime to leave them locked up and to cosset them too much. Three years ago, we finished third on the Liège-Rome-Liège, and were leading the Classic Marathon until we wrong-slotted and I tried to make up too much time on one stage; we lost a lot of time wedged on a rock next to a precipice in the Alps."

Donald Morley loves the way the car has been maintained, and can spot few alterations since its heyday beyond the addition of a roll-cage and the Weber carbs. "The overdrive switch was originally on the dashboard and we had it moved to the gearlever, as it is now, only we had wooden gearknobs and this one's aluminium. Also, we had a horn in the passenger footwell for Erle to press, as well as here on the transmission tunnel. But otherwise, it's just like it was."

The temptation to press any horn button you can find is strong indeed when swimming with the sharks of today. No favours are granted by motorway drivers who see the car in their mirrors, ignore its closing speed, and pull out in front anyway, then look startled as it blasts past at the next available opportunity. ➳



Donald, the Healey, three Coupes des Alpes and the resultant Coupe d'Argent

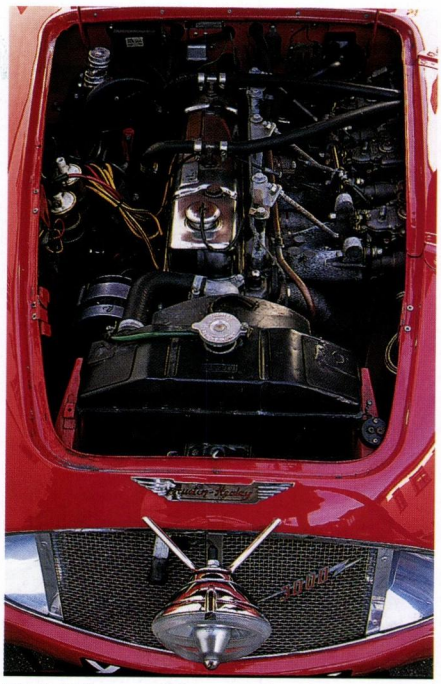
Not quite as elegant as 100/4, but in bumperless rally spec, the styling puts TR3s and MGAs to shame

And 'blast' is the operative word here. If there can be one criticism, one gripe, one reason to shy away from using XJB876 as a road car, it's the lack of refinement. With the exhaust exiting in front of the left-rear wheelarch, perspex slide-windows that rattle at the slightest vibration, and doors that fit as snugly as a catflap over a manhole, the cockpit is preposterously noisy.

'Terrible' and 'quite frightening' are phrases Donald uses to describe the in-car cacophony. He's too kind. From the outside, the sound of a Healey gunning hard makes young children cower in terror. Having that sound constantly around, where there's no protection, no escape, is quite another prospect.

Erle used to complain that the exhaust heat was so severe it caused the floorpan to burn his feet, but it's the multivibes of exhaust against floor that leaves the biggest impression. Way down at 2350rpm, there is a resonance that soothes like a Black & Decker drill being thrust through the inner ear. It's a spasmodic problem when accelerating through this rev-zone, but if you're trying to potter in fourth – well, best find an alternative.

Past 4000, though, when it's pulling hard and fast, both engine and exhaust are glorious clarion calls, and the aftertaste is a melodious zim that leaves the ears ringing. Unsilenced is golden. More importantly, the unit sounds as unburstable as it proved in Morley's hands: "We set ourselves a limit of 6500rpm, and they were fine up to there. It was a very strong engine; in fact, I don't think we ever had one let us down."



Triple Webers could boost Healey power to 200bhp

Nor does it give any hint of doing so, over four decades on. It was hard to suppress a chuckle when passing broken-down cars of about 10 per cent the Healey's age. Up to the point they quit, were they providing 10 per cent of the driving thrill offered by this beautiful machine? Exactly.

This is not a temperamental thoroughbred ill equipped to deal with the rigours of modern life. It can play the workhorse role, blessed as it is with a reasonably supple ride, benign handling, decent traction, good grunt and a temperature needle that never edges too near the danger zone in heavy traffic.

But nor is it stoical: this car informs the driver, through all of his – or Pat Moss' – senses, how much of itself it's giving.

Return the effort accordingly, though, and this Austin-Healey 3000 provides a wonderfully satisfying driving experience. M

Our thanks to Mick Darcey, Donald and Val Morley, Paul Woolmer of the Austin Healey Club and Brown & Gammons for their help above and beyond.

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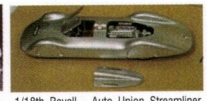
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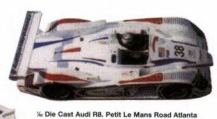

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MAGNUM OPUS

MAGNUM: BRITISH FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP, ROUND ONE – MARCH 6, 1983

EVERYONE EXPECTED RALT TO DOMINATE BRITISH F3 IN 1983. EVERYONE WAS EVENTUALLY PROVED RIGHT. BUT THERE WAS ONE DAY IN THE SUN FOR UNFANCIED MAGNUM, AS NICK PHILLIPS RECALLS

"Do you feel lucky, punk?" queried Clint Eastwood, as that most famous of Magnum-wielders, Dirty Harry. His victims never were, of course. At Silverstone in 1983, Ayrton Senna was the young gun in the sights of a Magnum – but it was an 833, not a .44.

Senna ducked round the outside of its 'wielder', David Leslie, and disappeared, to score the first of many Formula Three wins. But for a few hours, the brilliant Brazilian had been put off his stride by the combination of a down-to-earth Scot and a neat, effective car built and run on packed-lunch money by a Northampton engineer.

Round one of the 1983 British F3 Championship, and Ayrton and Martin Brundle in their Ralt RT3s were embarking on an epic battle for the title – but neither was on pole. Leslie was. His Magnum had stunned the established West Surrey Racing and Eddie Jordan Racing teams – and their lead drivers Senna and Brundle – with a lap of the Silverstone Club circuit that put him firmly fastest. This put the cat among the pigeons – "Senna just could not understand why someone like me, in a car like that, should be on pole," remembers Leslie – and Magnum boss John Robinson immediately found himself subject to cheating allegations. The controversy surrounded the Magnum's skirt system.

"It was advanced aerodynamically," says Robinson, who designed the car as well as building it, running it and even tuning its Toyota engine, "but we weren't doing anything wrong. The skirts were different to those on the Ralt [the RT3 dominated that part of F3 history], but that doesn't mean they were illegal.

"People who say we were cheating should remember that we were on the front row at Silverstone again later in the season with a very similar lap time. Anyway, we didn't worry too much about the accusations."

Nowadays, Robinson is flattered rather than irritated by the barrage of backbiting, and chuckles when recalling the scene on the pitwall after Leslie had set the time: "Eddie Jordan was next door to us, and he saw us put the time on the board. 'That's not real, is it?' he asked. But it was.

"Because we were on a shoestring, we often used to borrow gear ratios and so on. Later that day, though, we asked Eddie for a ratio and he just said: 'You're on pole, I'm not lending you anything.'"

Come the race, Leslie and Robinson had sought to improve the car and made set-up changes. But they simply ended up with severe oversteer.

"I thought I could make it better," admits Leslie. "Racing drivers always think they can go better, but unfortunately these changes made it worse, and so I finished down the field – I don't remember where."

Seventh.

The car's potential was never fulfilled, and like so many before or since, the marque was unable to turn a competitive car into a commercial success. Lack of money was always the obstacle to on-track glory; both Leslie and Robinson are adamant that, had they found a budget to match those of their rivals, things would have been different.

"The car looked the part," recalls Leslie, "and it was as well made as anything on the grid. With the money to do what he [Robinson] wanted to with the car, I'm sure we could have taken the fight to the Ralts. It was the usual thing that,without money, you couldn't go testing, you couldn't put new tyres on as often as the others, and so on."

The 833 always seemed quickest at Silverstone, and that was down to its aerodynamics.

"The Silverstone Club circuit in those days was basically just a triangle," says Leslie. "It was all about straight-line speed, and the Magnum had plenty of that." An efficient skirt system and one-piece underbody generated the downforce, allowing it to run small conventional wings, and hence have relatively low drag.

Leslie's performance in that opening round was far from a flash in the pan, though things never quite got that good again. The car qualified on the front row twice more at Silverstone, and was a frequent top-six finisher. The Scot's best result of the year came late in the season, at Oulton Park, when he was third. He finished seventh in the championship, the best non-Ralt driver, and was only pipped for sixth at the final round, which he did not contest.

The firm that produced Magnums – then, as now, run by Robinson and his three sons, Stuart, Ian and Peter – continued to build racing cars until 1992, producing several more Formula Three machines – the last of which came out in 1987 – a batch of cars for a VW-powered one-make single-seater series in the Caribbean, and finally an IMSA sportscar, the SC206 – "They all look like the SC206 now," says Robinson proudly. The company now concentrates on making components for other racing teams – Jaguar Racing and Cosworth being among its biggest customers.

"They were good times, and they put us in good stead for what we do now," says Robinson.

Still, you can't help but feel there's a touch of regret that Magnum racing cars weren't a commercial success.

Robinson concludes: "We won races with the Formula Three car in the Swedish and German series, and we figured that, if the car was winning, we would be able to sell them. But we never could." M



Leslie gathers his pre-race thoughts. It didn't work: he lost the lead at Copse

Slipping back into the pack, Leslie (35) is left to rue his pre-race 'tweaks'. Below: Magnum 833 flew again on Silverstone Club circuit later in the season





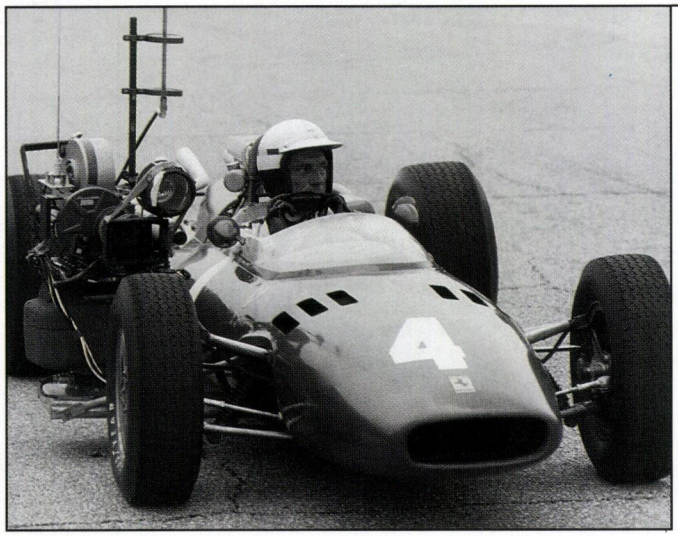


FILM PRIX VIEW

THESE RARE PICTURES TAKE YOU BEHIND THE SCENES OF JOHN FRANKENHEIMER'S OSCAR-WINNING RACING FLICK, AS IT WAS FILMED DURING THE 1966 EUROPEAN GP SEASON

photography by LAT





The cast relax off the set. Antonio Sabato, who played Nino Barlini, Ferrari's young lion, is with screen girlfriend Lisa, played by Françoise Hardy. In the background is a Brylcreemed Brian Bedford, who played Scott Stoddard

Yves Montand in Mike Parkes spec' helmet prepares for a run as Jean-Pierre Sarti. Parkes had replaced John Surtees at Ferrari and Sarti's lids changed so film and race footage matched. Suspension had to be jacked up because 70mm camera was so heavy

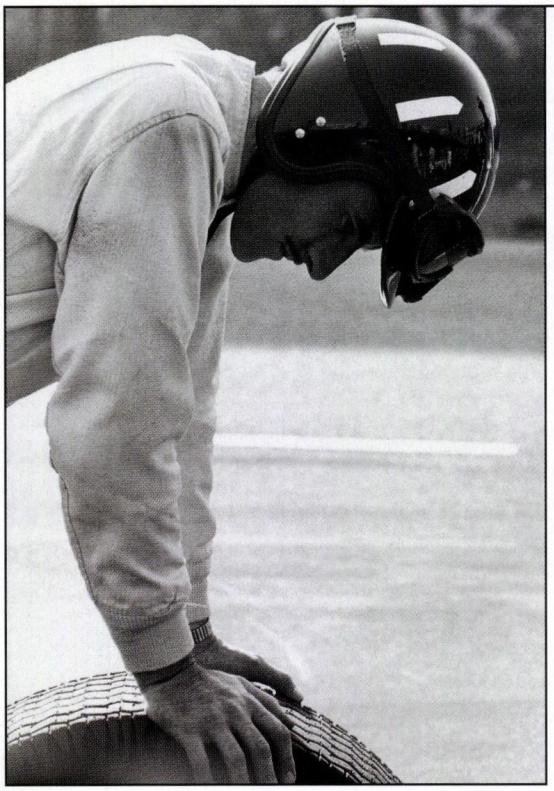


James Garner (Pete Aron) and Toshiro Mifune (Izo Yamura) in the Yamura factory. This scene was shot at Cooper Cars' works in Byfleet, Surrey. Garner was an enthusiastic driver and the film's insurers pulled his cover after he was spotted at speed in the rain at Spa. He also narrowly escaped injury when a fiery stunt at Brands Hatch went wrong

Stoddard is helped from his car after a triumphant return from injury in the Dutch GP. Jack Watson, playing team owner Jeff Jordan, is his prop. Two years later, Jackie Stewart would return from injury to win the Dutch GP. Spooky!

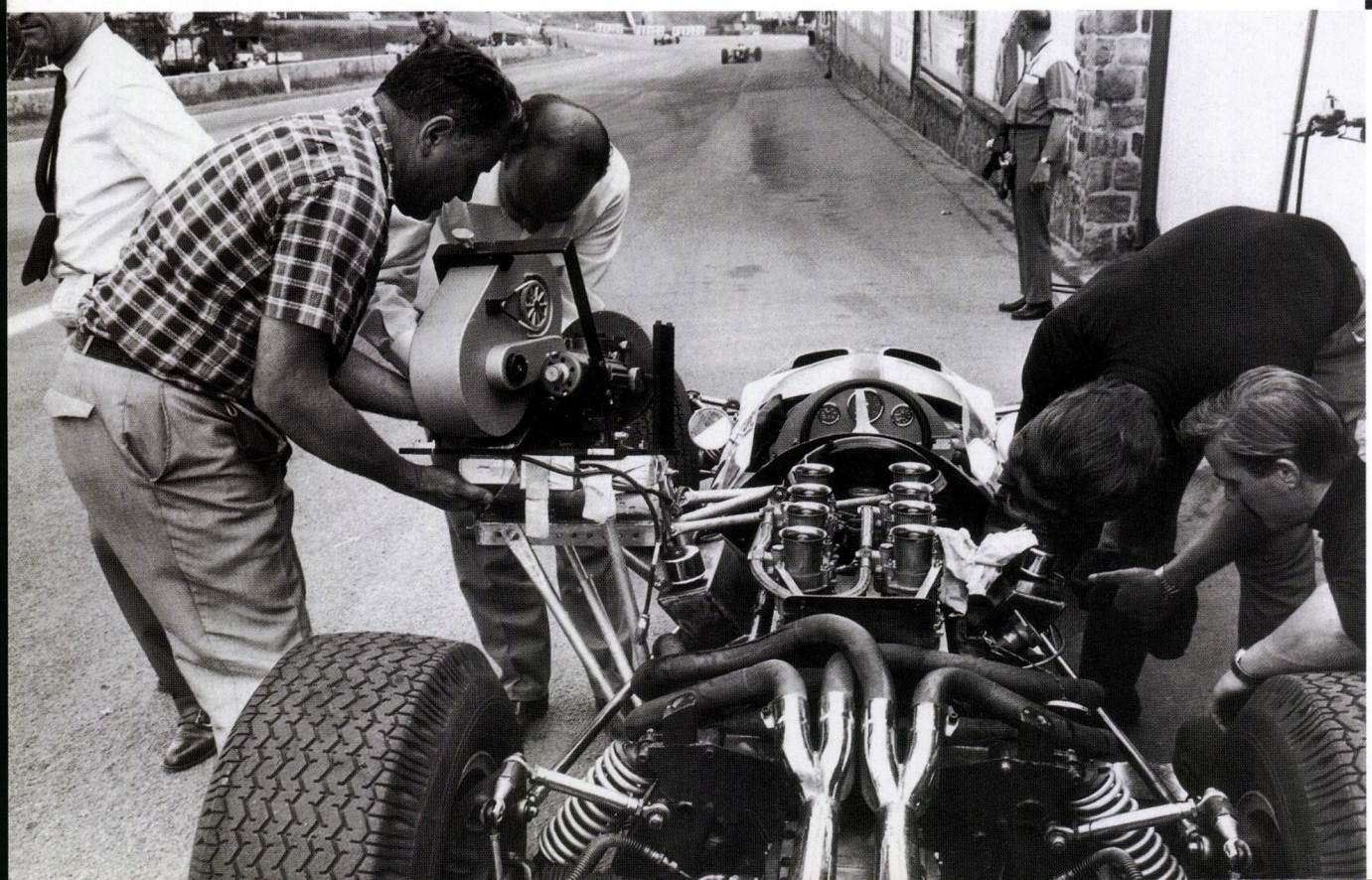






Graham Hill searches for his motivation in a tread pattern. Hill had a speaking part as Bob Turner and was one of many true drivers in the cast. Ironically, however, Stewart and Surtees, whose helmet colours Stoddard and Sarti used, were contracted to Steve McQueen's aborted rival motor-racing picture, 'The Day of the Champion'

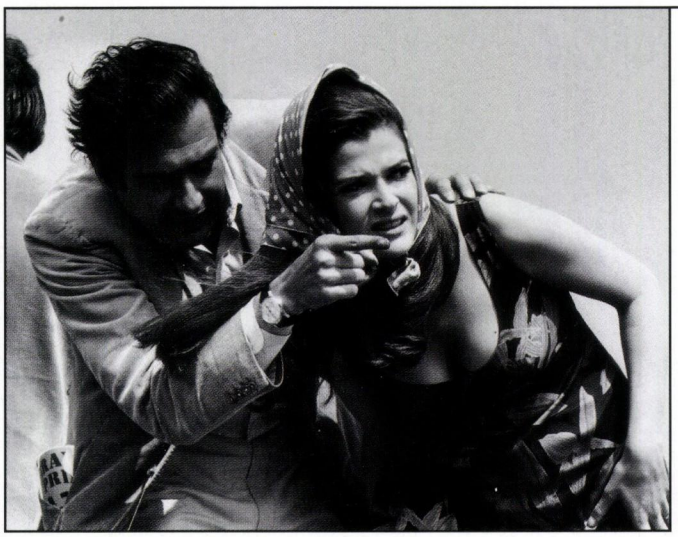
A camera car in the pits at Spa. Phil Hill was allowed to film the start and a dramatic opening lap (sudden rain caused seven cars to crash) of the Belgian GP from the production's McLaren. The car was fitted with an Indy engine



Director Frankenheimer chats with Bedford. Behind them is a BRM (aka Jordan). According to Jim Russell, who mocked-up the cars, Frankenheimer said the stars cost him thousands of dollars and the cars thousands of cents – but that the cars were the real stars of the film



1950 F1 world champion Giuseppe Farina (left) and Montand (in Surtees helmet). Farina worked as a driver double on the film, but sadly died in a road crash, while making his way to Le Mans, before it hit the screens



Mocked-up GP cars (racing school FJuniors modified by Russell after MGM paid new-for-old money to acquire his fleet in a hurry) gather for early morning filming. Monte Carlo's streets were closed especially for this purpose. Russell talks with Phil Hill, while Jo Bonnier and Jochen Rindt mingle in the background. At the wheel of number 4 'Lotus' is Jo Schlesser

Frankenheimer directs Jessica Walter, who played Stoddard's anti-motor racing wife, Pat

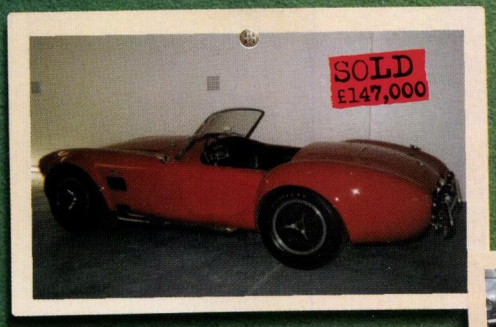
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Despite the Italian and French love of motor racing, it wasn't until 1922 that a track was built at Monza or until 1924 that the Montlhéry Autodrome was opened, near Paris. But once opened, Montlhéry was used almost daily for high-speed or long-distance record bids and other forms of endurance testing. But, more than that, Montlhéry, like Monza, had its road circuit. This made possible the honour of holding the prestigious French Grand Prix – which it did on eight occasions.

The French GP of the Automobile Club de France is usually accepted as having started in 1906, although some regard it as a continuation of previous great races in that motor-pioneering country. But it wasn't until '25 that the race went to Montlhéry with its artificial, but twisting course, which also took in the steep northern banking. After a fiasco of this great title going to the flat Miramas track in '26 – a farcical entry of three Bugattis, only two of which finished, 2hr 15mins apart – the French GP returned to Montlhéry in '27. It was to be the venue six more times, with diversions in '28 to Comminges, in '29 to Le Mans, and in '30 to Pau – Bugatti winning on all three occasions.

The 7.67-mile undulating course incorporated seven corners, one a hairpin. It was tar-surfaced, 10m wide, and up to 1-in-8 at its steepest. It was built at a cost of £500,000 by Alexandre Lamblin, who made radiators and owned newspapers, on a 12,000-acre site some 15 miles south of Paris on the Orléans-Linas-Montlhéry road.

It might have been expected that the 1925 GP at the new course, within easy reach of Paris, would be well supported by spectators, but the huge uncovered grandstand was by no means full when the 14 cars lined up for the 8am start of this grand prix, run in the 2-litre formula. The Alfa Romeo P2s which had won the European GP at Spa were the favourites, with Antonio Ascari and Cavaliere Giuseppe Campari as their drivers, and with a third car to support them, driven by Count Gastone Brilli-Peri, who overturned it in practice. The Italian domination was challenged by the twin-blower V12 Delages, to be driven by such greats as Robert Benoist, Albert Divo and Louis Wagner. The field was completed with a number of Bugattis and the Sunbeams of Henry Segrave, and Counts Giulio Masetti and Caberto Conelli.

Ascari led away at the rolling start and, with lap records, had soon built up a significant lead, backed up by Campari. A two-minute pitstop to change the Alfa's back wheels and refuel, Campari taking 30sec longer, did not spoil what would surely be another Italian walkover. Then tragedy struck.

Light rain had begun to wet the road surface and, as Ascari came into the long but easy left-hand bend after Bailleau, the Alfa Romeo went into mild oversteer, hit the inside palings and overturned. Ascari was thrown out and the P2 ran over him. He died in the ambulance rushing him to Paris.

Campari was now well ahead, but when the sad news reached Scuderia Alfa, the cars were respectfully withdrawn. The 621-mile race finished in heavy rain as the *Marseillaise* rang out for Benoist's winning Delage, which had averaged 69.7mph over nine hours. Wagner, relieved by Torchy for a while, was second and Masetti's Sunbeam third, after Segrave's had broken a valve.

After Miramas, it was a relief when the race returned to Montlhéry in 1927. But if the grandstand was now covered, the race (over 500km) had just 10 starters – hardly one to inspire onlookers. Yet a reasonably large crowd turned up, to learn that the Bugattis of Jules Goux, Conelli and Andre Dubonnet would not start, as Ettore was not happy about his new Type 39s. The news brought boos and catcalls from the paying public, who would now endure a race of seven runners: Benoist, Edmond ➳



Right: Wimille/Sommer Bugatti wins Montlhéry's penultimate GP



FASTER OF PARIS

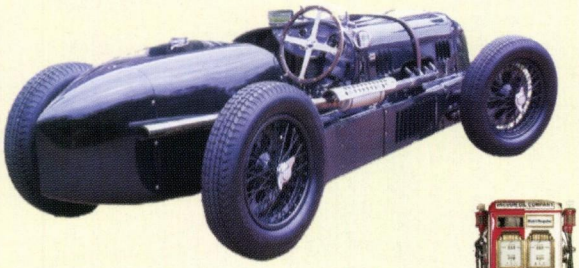
"THE FRENCH GP, EUROPE'S MOST IMPORTANT RACE, HAD ALWAYS BEEN RUN ON TEMPORARY ROAD CIRCUITS – UNTIL MONTLHERY IN 1925. BILL BODDY TAKES UP THE BANKED TRACK'S STORY

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Bourlier and Andre Morel in the beautiful 1.5-litre Delage straight-eights, Divo, 'Williams' and Wagner in the Talbots, and George Eyston's lone, borrowed Halford Special. Delage had dominated the British GPs of 1926 and 1927, so it was perhaps a foregone conclusion when they came home 1-2-3, led by Benoist, at 77.24mph, from Bourlier.

The famous race was back at Montlhéry by 1931, under an odd ruling that cars must be two-seaters but with only the driver in them, so reserves were called for, as it was of 10 hours duration. The start was again at 8am, but a good crowd came to see an interesting entry, and many very important drivers. There were Bugatti Type 51s, works and otherwise, Alfa Romeo 8C Monzas, and Maserati 8Cs. Germany sent Rudi Caracciola and Otto Merz with a works Mercedes-Benz SSKL, and sportsmen like Earl Howe/Hon. Brian Lewis (Bugatti T51) were there.

When Bugatti had trouble with their Michelins in practice, it was reputed that 'Williams', having arranged for Dunlop substitutes, was given a works T51 in return, scratching his own Bugatti.

Old rivals Louis Chiron and Achille Varzi were united for this race, and they led from the first half-hour to the end. Noteworthy retirements included Luigi Fagioli's Maserati, which had terminal brake problems, and the Mercedes of Caracciola, which had a clutch seize. Tazio Nuvolari was partnered by Giovanni Minozzi, and they got up to second, breaking the lap record twice, but at the end of this long race, they eventually finished only 11th out of the 12 within the time limit. Second was the Campari/Baconin Borzacchini Alfa, while third place went to the Clemente Biondetti/Luigi Parenti Maserati 26M.

'Nuvolari helped Piero Taruffi at his tyre swap, then leapt into the car, only for the crown-wheel to break'



Robert Benoist after winning the 1925 French GP. Top: Antonio Ascari (8) embarks on his final race

The grand prix went to Montlhéry again in 1933, the facility improved at the request of the ACF, which put up a generous 100,000 franc purse for the winner of the 40-lap (310.75-mile) race. Thus encouraged, there was a field of 28: Alfa Romeo and Bugatti in equal numbers, with the addition of a couple of Maseratis, Campari's being the works car. Several top drivers who would have raced were recovering from accidents or were ill, and so Bugatti left it to their privateers, Count Stanislas Czaikowski's 4.9 and four 2.3s, of which Earl Howe's lined up on the front row grid, with the Alfa Romeos of Juan Zanelli and Pierre Felix. Eyston had his overgeared Alfa Romeo on the third row, and Nuvolari, in spite of sensational practice laps (the record left at an amazing 87.76mph), was on the second row alongside Julio Villars' Alfa Romeo.

It was expected that Tazio's bored-out Alfa or Chiron's Monza would win. Tazio accelerated into the lead at the start, followed by Campari. But after only six laps, Nuvolari and Chiron were already in trouble (tyres and back axle respectively), to the benefit of Campari, who lowered the race lap record to 5min 23sec. Nuvolari helped Piero Taruffi at his tyre swap, then leapt into the car, only for the crown-wheel to break when he had got up to fourth.

The race was now between Campari in the tyre-hungry Maserati and Phillippe Etancelin in an Alfa Romeo. The Maserati stopped for new tyres, and got within 2sec of the leader before its treads ➳



showed canvas once more. Rain was now falling.

Then, drama! Three laps to go, and Campari had two more wheels changed in 20sec. He now had a minute to make up on a rival whose clutch was likely to expire at any moment.

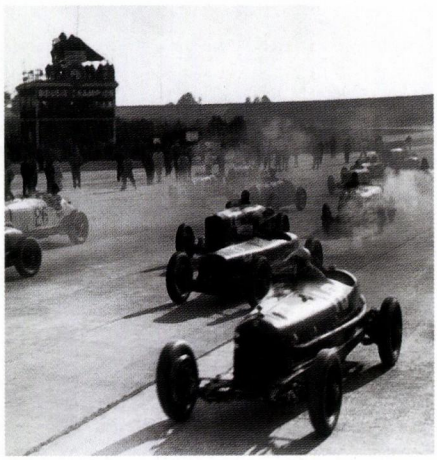
Etancelin had to crawl in after a stop to engage a gear, and so Campari won, at 81.49mph. The sick Alfa second, and the steady Eyston – who said he was just a record-breaker? – third, ahead of Raymond Sommer and Guy Moll.

The new 750kg Formula was in force by 1934. It was intended to reduce speeds, but the Hitler-inspired Germans managed to counter this. The entry included Caracciola, Manfred von Brauchitsch and Fagioli in the 3.3-litre Mercedes-Benz W25s, and Hans von Stuck and Auguste Momberger in the V16 4.35-litre Auto Unions. It seemed hopeless for the rest – especially when the German cars made mincemeat of the lap record in practice, von Brauchitsch lowering it to 5min 05sec.

In the race, however, it all went wrong for the Germans: Momberger's suspension collapsed, von Brauchitsch's blower stopped blowing, Fagioli ran out of brakes, Caracciola ran out of gears, and Stuck lost fuel-feed. Thus Chiron's Alfa Romeo Tipo B won from team-mates Varzi and Felice Trossi/Moll.

By 1935, both Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union were using bigger engines and, of the 11 starters, six were German. Yet the incredible Nuvolari put his Alfa Romeo on the front row between the Auto Unions of Stuck and Varzi. The latter had been quickest by far in practice, but Nuvolari was impressively faster than Stuck. Caracciola was on the second row.

'Three chicanes were erected, – after the cars had passed on lap one – in a bid to hamper the Germans'



Campari heads Ivanowsky (26) and Scott (2) in '31. Top: Bugatti T51 of Chiron/Varzi won 10-hour race

Three chicanes were erected around the circuit – after the cars had passed on lap one – in a bid to hamper the German cars. And Nuvolari did gain on those artificial corners, and led on the first lap, ahead of Stuck, to loud applause. Then Caracciola went ahead, but was hounded by Tazio, who regained the lead on lap seven and held it magnificently for five laps. But then trouble struck the red car, Vittorio Jano and Tazio conferred, and it was pushed away. The Auto Unions were in dire trouble, too, Stuck's lacking stopping power, Rosemeyer lacking transmission. So Caracciola was the victor (at 77.42mph), ahead of von Brauchitsch, with Goffredo Zehender's Maserati beating Fagioli.

The French couldn't have this! The 1936 and 1937 French GPs were to be sportscar contests. They produced fine fields of the best National makes, too – but it was not the same. The 1936 1000km event was won by Jean-Pierre Wimille and Sommer in a 'tank-bodied' Bugatti T57S. The 1937 race was over 500km, and produced a Talbot walkover, Chiron the victor.

That was the last French Grand Prix to be held at Montlhéry. After WWII, however, the track was the scene of some important races, such as the Paris GP, the Bol d'Or, and the Coupe de Salon. But it was less used in recent years, except for some very pleasant club meetings, which continue to this day.

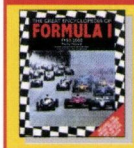
It is said this historic track may have but five more years before becoming an industrial site. I hope this is profoundly untrue. M

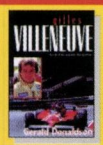
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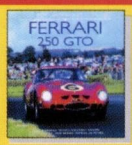
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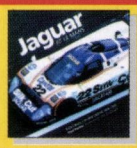
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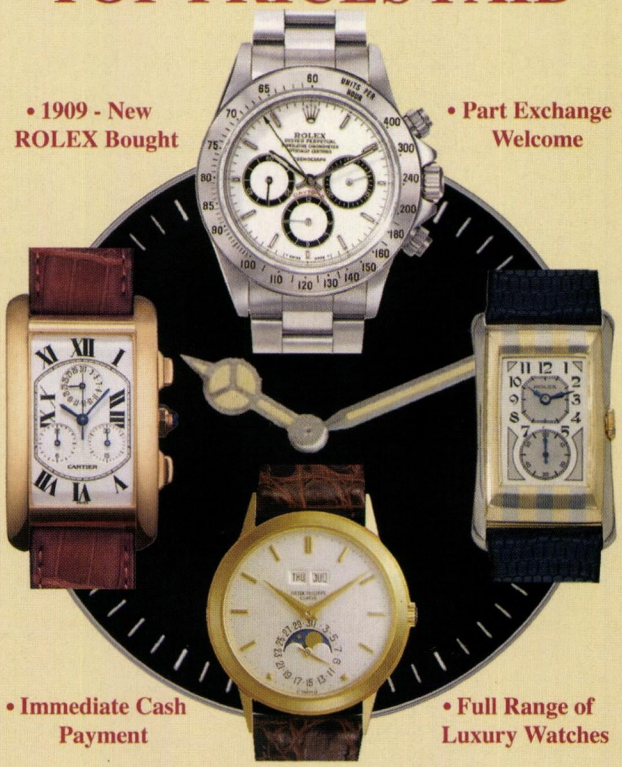
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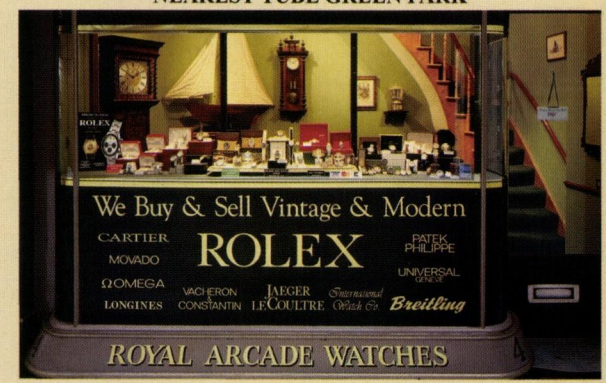
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McLAREN MP4/4

A BUDDING DESIGNER AT MARCH, UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF ADRIAN NEWEY, HE WAS CONFIDENT OF THEIR LATEST F1 OFFERING. BUT WHEN HE SAW McLAREN'S NEW CAR, HE WONDERED IF HE MIGHT HAVE DONE BETTER

NICK WIRTH
Technical Director,
Reynard Cars



IN 1987, I HAD JUST STARTED IN FORMULA ONE AS aerodynamicist at Leyton House. I worked a little bit on developing the 871, and then worked throughout the winter on the 1988 car with Adrian Newey. I was straight out of university, so it was obviously a fascinating and formative time in my career.

Particularly at that age, one had a tendency to get fixated in the direction that we were developing the car. Adrian was completely focused on aerodynamic efficiency – achieving the smallest possible package was the flavour of the month. The 881 was absolutely tiny in all respects, and had what is now quite a conventional 'female' moulded chassis.

Our March seemed reasonably good, but there was this other car which was just totally and utterly dominant – the McLaren-Honda MP4/4.

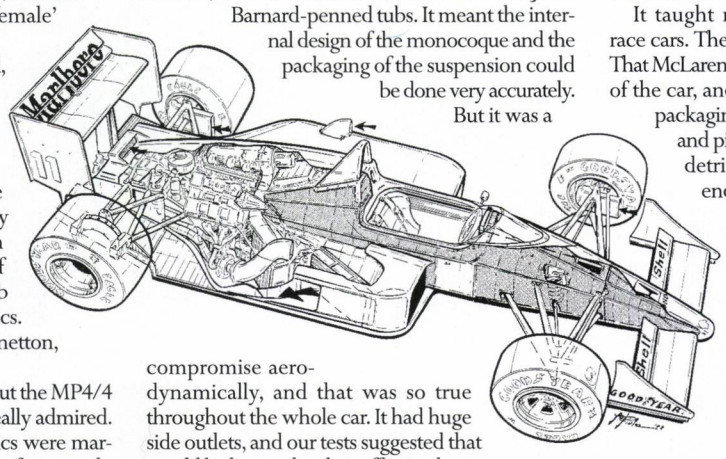
It came out at a time when John Barnard had left McLaren, and there was a new order, with Gordon Murray overseeing everything. The design team was led by Steve Nichols, and of particular note for myself was Dr Bob Bell, who worked on the aerodynamics. He eventually worked with me at Benetton, and has become a firm friend.

There were a number of things about the MP4/4 which taught me a lot, and which I really admired. The detailing and packaging aesthetics were marvellous. Under the bodywork, it was fearsomely symmetrical – a glorious machine. The attention to mechanical detail was very impressive. It still looks good to me, bodywork on or off.

The Honda engine was great in terms of driveability and consumption, but McLaren did far better with it than Lotus that year. They had paid great attention to the installation of the engine, and did a fantastic job on the transmission. They made a triple-shaft gearbox which kept the engine as flat and as low as it could be, because it was a low-crank engine with a small clutch. I believe Lotus used a two-shaft gearbox, pointing the engine and gearbox up at an angle to get the output flange at the right height for driveshaft angularity. Obviously, that had an effect on centre-of-gravity height.

Rule changes that year meant a driver's feet had to be behind the front axle centre line, and the fuel tank was cut down to 150 litres, so there was much repackaging to do. McLaren reclined the driver a bit more, which was obviously Gordon Murray-esque, harking back to what he did with the ultra-low Brabham BT55.

In almost all respects, it was the antithesis of what we had done on the 881. It was a male moulded chassis, which continued in the line of all John Barnard-penned tubs. It meant the internal design of the monocoque and the packaging of the suspension could be done very accurately. But it was a compromise aerodynamically, and that was so true throughout the whole car. It had huge side outlets, and our tests suggested that would be horrendously inefficient, because the dirty air would come out and go straight underneath the car. Well maybe it did, but that's what the Honda turbo required to make its power. We soon realised we had paid not nearly enough attention to the cooling system of the 881, which boiled the hell out of the engine (John Judd's V8).



At the time, I didn't understand the MP4/4. Most of my conversations with Adrian were of the 'We don't know why they're doing that' variety. Why haven't they got a bi-plane rear wing? Why haven't they got a trick front wing? Why haven't they got a narrow monocoque? It was completely at odds with what we had found to be efficient. If they did the same car, but with a different shaped monocoque, or optimised it with a bi-plane wing, it would have been even faster. But perhaps those efforts would have taken them away from something else.

It taught me a balanced view of designing race cars. They aren't quick because of one factor. That McLaren design team had taken a holistic view of the car, and balanced up the centre of gravity, packaging, engine installation, and all the bits and pieces. Some of them would have been detrimental to aerodynamics – but they ended up with a dominant car.

Okay, one can't dispute the quality of the drivers. If ever there was a dream team, it was Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost. But it wasn't just the drivers – it was a magnificent car. It was only because of Senna's late-race tangle at Monza that it didn't win every single race in '88.

We had our glorious moment in Estoril, when Ivan Capelli was sandwiched between the two McLarens, and we were gaining on the leading one. We were sitting there thinking, 'Is this really happening – are we actually racing against this amazing machine?'

Having said all this, I would have to add that the 881 reflects more the way that cars are now being designed, in that it was aero-dominated. In terms of construction techniques, female moulding has become standard, as have some aspects of what we did with the monocoque and how we squeezed everything in. More of the 881 has become the norm in F1.

However, the really successful teams still take a holistic approach. The Ferrari isn't quick because it's got great aerodynamics, a great driver or great engine: it's a balance of all factors, not dominated by one particular side. And I think that's a trend that was very much started by McLaren. The MP4/4 certainly influenced the way I think about race cars. And it came at a good age for me, when I wasn't too fixed in my ways!

Nick Wirth was talking to Adam Cooper

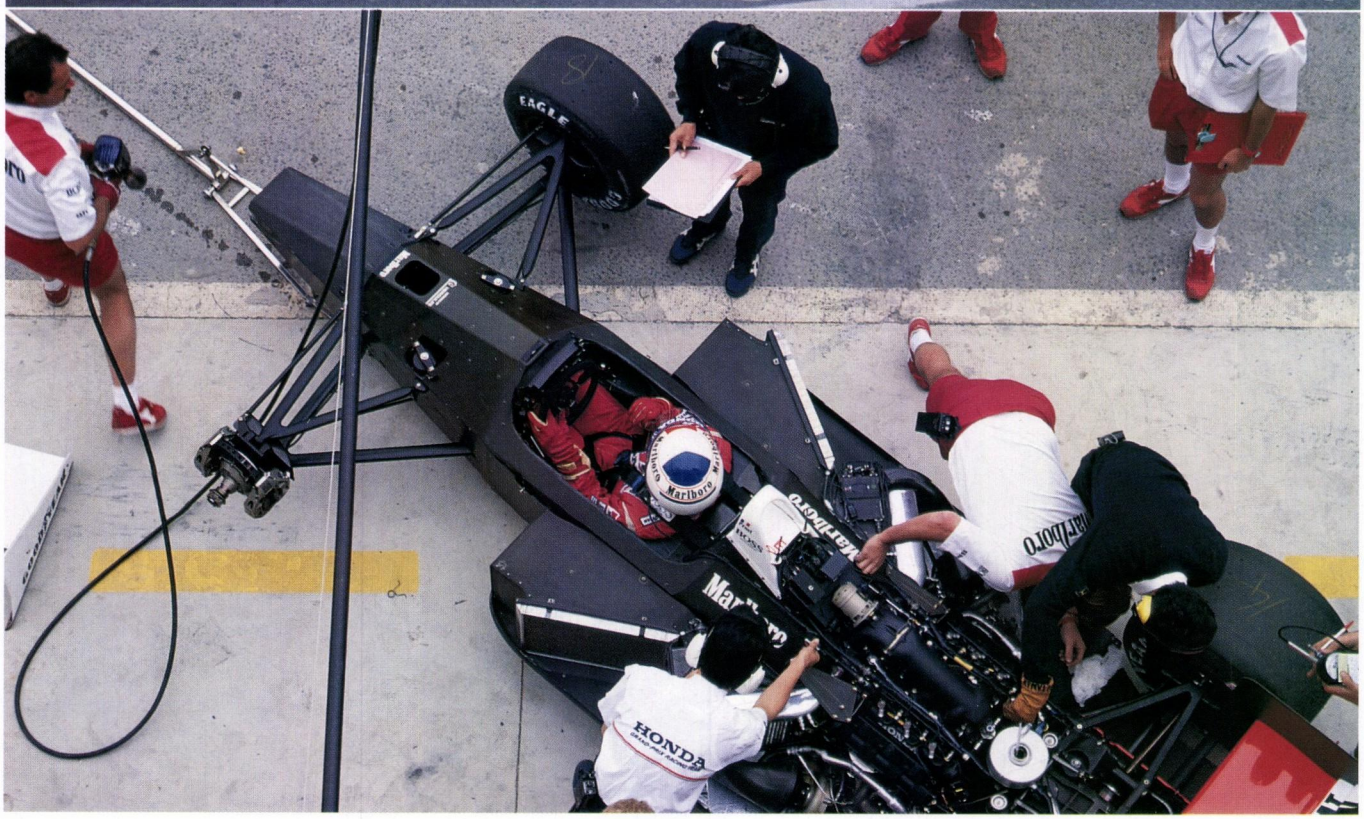


Air vents should have upset aerodynamics but were necessary for Honda

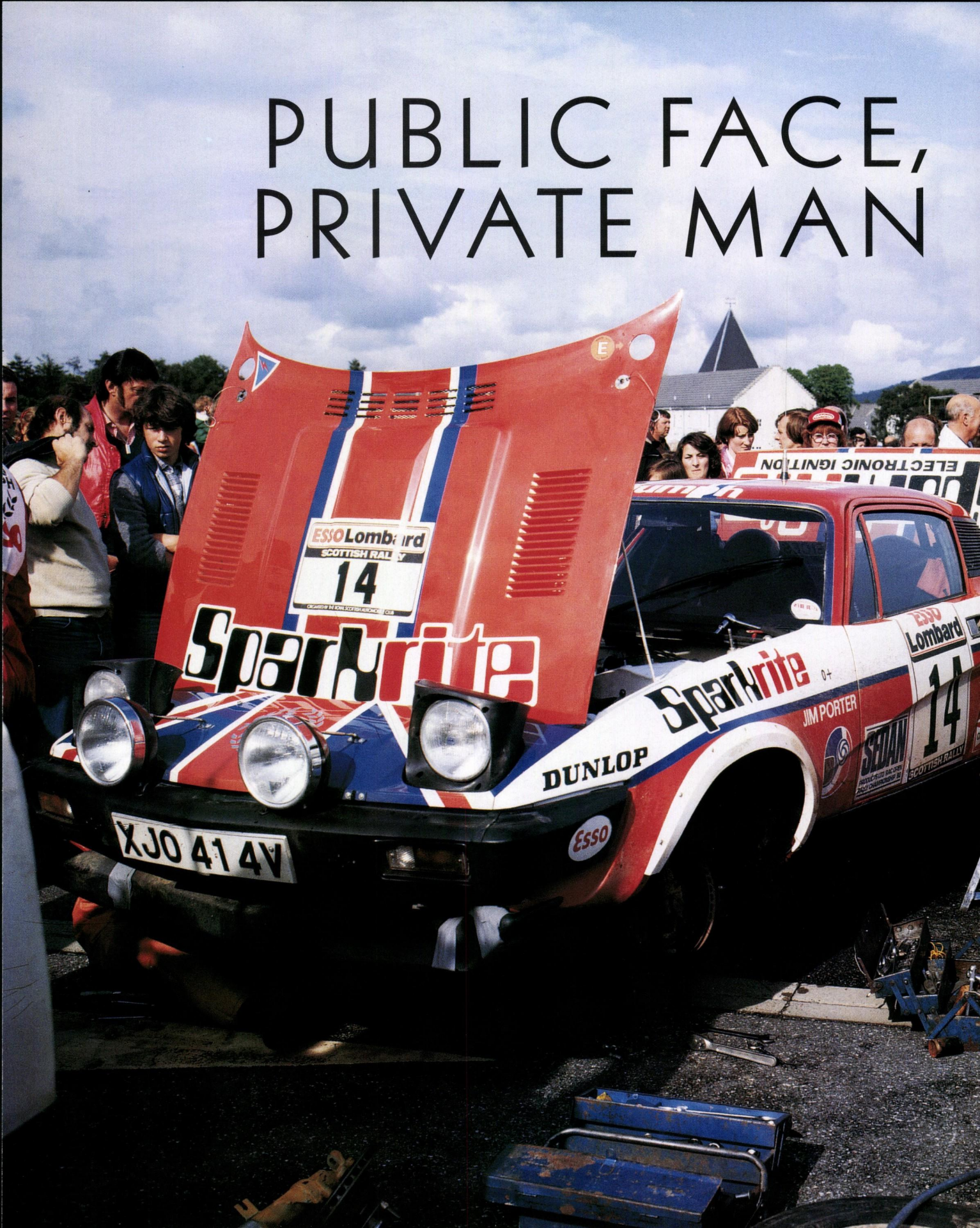
all LAT



The amazing MP4/4 won 15 out of 16 GPs in 1988. Below: Triple-shaft gearbox allowed Honda's turbo V6 to be mounted flat and low



PUBLIC FACE, PRIVATE MAN



TONY POND SUCCUMBED TO CANCER LAST MONTH. HE WAS JUST 56. HIS BRITISH LEYLAND TEAM MANAGER, JOHN DAVENPORT, REMEMBERS A PERFECTIONIST WHO WAS MUCH BETTER THAN HIS RESULTS SUGGEST



He never won a world championship rally, let alone a world title. But those in the know were well aware of just how good Tony Pond was.

When asked whom he would most like as a team-mate for the 1986 season, Walter Röhrl said: "I'd rather have Tony Pond in my team than driving against me."

When you add engineer Wynne Mitchell's assertion that Pond was the best test driver he ever worked with, and understand that Mitchell's career included a spell at Audi when Hannu Mikkola was in his prime, and you can see that Pond's reputation was far from a simple reflection of the English public's frequent perversity in choosing heroes.

The first impression one got of Tony was that of a playboy, always ready with a quotable quip. He was a good performer in front of camera or microphone, and his appearances at motorsport forums were very popular. One in Chester before the 1985 RAC Rally drained the audience from a performance by Gilbert O'Sullivan and created massive overcrowding in the local Austin Rover dealership. A month earlier, after winning the national Audi Sport Rally in an MG Metro 6R4, Tony was presented with an expensive Audi Sport sweater. He immediately thanked Audi GB at the prize-giving for providing him with gardening clothes.

Tony's other side appeared when you put him to sorting out a competition car. Mitchell, who worked with him at Chrysler, Vauxhall and Austin Rover, recalls how his understanding of the man changed as he got to know him.

"The first time I saw Tony," says Mitchell, "was at the prize-giving for the 1973 Scottish Rally, where he had just finished seventh in a factory Escort. I didn't really take to him. There was a bit too much of the second-hand car salesman image for a lad from the valleys like me."

Some years later, though, they worked together for a day on a pre-homologation Sunbeam Lotus. Tony had been 'loaned' to Chrysler in the hope he might learn something (he didn't, because every time they changed the suspension, he was led away). By the end of the day, Mitchell had changed his view of the man completely.

"He was nothing like the person I had imagined him to be. He was quiet, very serious, and dedicated to the job in hand. Nothing like the bloke I had seen on TV."

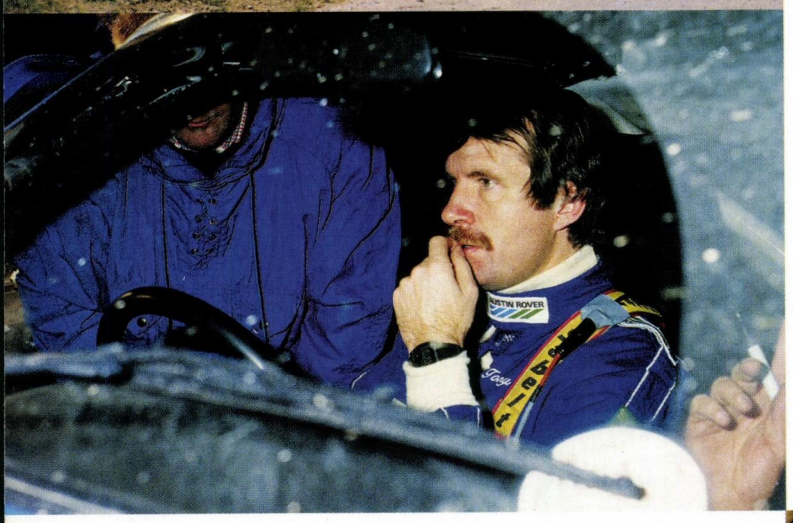
Perhaps what also endeared Pond to Mitchell was a sense of humour that kept breaking through the serious analysis. Mitchell would ride as a passenger, evaluating for himself – in those pre-digital information days – what the car was doing, and recalls Pond remarks, such as one uttered beside a fearsome drop: "If we go off there, that suit you're wearing will be out of fashion before we hit the bottom."

Tony's career started in road rallying and progressed via the Ford Escort Mexico Championship, in which he finished second in 1972, to stage rallying in an Escort RS1600. By 1974, he had been spotted by Tony Fall and drove first an Ascona and then a Kadett GT/E for the Dealer Opel Team. In 1975, he and David Richards finished fourth on the RAC Rally, and for 1976, the pair joined Leyland Cars to head up the TR7 team.

It was not until 1978, and the arrival of the V8-engined TR7, that Tony found himself in a truly competitive car. He took on some lofty opposition on rallies like the Manx Trophy and the 24 Hours of Ypres, and came out firmly on top. ➳

Pondering life on the loose with the TR7 V8. Pond's fourth place on the 1980 Scottish was the car's first finish in that year British Open series. He was 11min behind the winning Escort





The TR7 V8 was not as adaptable to unseen forest roads as it was to Tarmac, but despite that, he notched up a fourth place on the RAC Rally.

He took a sabbatical from the Triumph to try his hand with the Sunbeam Lotus. That was 1979, which was mainly a development year for the car. He got some more European experience and was second on the Mille Pistes in France and fourth on the world championship San Remo Rally. The latter event was his second with Ian Grindrod in the co-driver's seat.

"It was a rude awakening," says Grindrod. "The first stage went down over Abbeylands crossroads. We just flew and, in my mind, we missed at least two corners. I realised I had just moved up a league, or even to a whole new sport."

Like Mitchell, Grindrod found that Tony did not bring his public persona to events: "For my money, he was a technical sort of driver, particular about everything. The reason he was such a good driver on asphalt was that he put a lot of time into finding the correct line round corners. It is the norm now, but was not so then, when rallies were longer. In many respects, he was a driver before his time."

The same applies to his personal fitness – he took it very seriously. This was in the days when a serious interest in the delights of the table and a frequent cigarette were a hallmark of most top drivers, apart from the admiring Röhrl.

When Leyland canned the TR7 at the end of 1980, Tony stayed under contract to the company, placing his faith in our assurance that we were going to come up with another rally car. With our willing consent, he took drives with Datsun and Vauxhall to widen his experience – and astounded just about everyone who did not know him well with what he achieved.

The 1981 season saw him finish third in Corsica in a Datsun Violet GT (with its live axle!) and fifth in Portugal with an even older Datsun 160J. For some reason, that excellent result in Corsica, added to his double victories in Ypres and on the Manx, led to Tony being dubbed a Tarmac specialist. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The 1981 British Open Championship saw Tony in a Dealer Team Vauxhall Chevette HSR, going up against Jimmy McRae in an Opel Ascona 400. Of the five rounds, two were Tarmac: Pond won the Manx with McRae second, and the positions were reversed on the Circuit of Ireland. On gravel, Pond would have been second, ahead of McRae, on the Mintex had he not been excluded for missing the end of stage three. On the Welsh, he finished second, with McRae third, and he won the Scottish, ahead of McRae. His performances were enough to give





Vauxhall the manufacturers' title – but McRae took the drivers' crown. It was the closest that Pond got to winning a major championship. It was also a season that proved beyond doubt he was no slouch on gravel.

"He was not like Roger Clark, throwing the car sideways all the time," says Grindrod. "He was a much tidier driver, even on gravel, and this was important with cars that were not as powerful as the competition." The Chevette occasionally fell into that category. In 1982, Tony underlined his versatility when he contested the Safari for the first time and finished fourth overall in a Nissan Violet GTS. The following year, he was sixth in Portugal with a Nissan 240RS.

Clockwise from left: Trying year with Talbot; rare quiet time on 1985 RAC; Rover on '85 Hunsruck; Corsica third for Datsun. Right: Winning 1981 Scottish Rally in Vauxhall Chevette HSR


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if the cars were not top rank.

He took to racing like a duck to water, putting the Rover 3500 on pole in the wet in his first BTCC race, at Donington, and finished third – then won his second race, at Silverstone, outright. When Austin Rover abandoned the British series and went European, Tony paired up with Eddy Joosen. They led the Spa 24 Hours and generally distinguished themselves in a car which, at that time, was not completely sorted. On the rally scene, Tony, teamed with Rob Arthur, nearly won the Gp A section of the 1985 British Open Championship with the Rover. They won the category on four of the six events, but retired on two and lost on points to Per Eklund's Toyota.

The Manx retirement was thanks to a rare occurrence, a Pond accident. Right from his early days, Tony was well known for keeping his cars looking good – and for keeping them away from harm. It later transpired that the Rover's crown-wheel had broken, causing the shunt.

The 1985 RAC story has been told and retold. Suffice to say that Tony captured the imagination of several million of his countrymen and very nearly nailed that elusive WRC win. As it was, to be third behind Henri Toivonen and Markku Alén on a lot of ice and snow was good going.

The Metro 6R4 never did better on a World Championship event though Tony did add the Manx to his trophy cupboard for the fourth time, in 1987.

Pond had his preferred events, and his attitude to them could even affect his performance.

"Tony's favourites were Corsica on Tarmac and New Zealand on gravel," says Arthur. "He had reservations over events like Sweden and 1000 Lakes, which I never understood. He thought there was too much local knowledge

The rally world was now heading towards the dizzy heights of Group B, and when it appeared the Leyland/Austin Rover effort was lagging, Tony put out feelers to see what else might be available. He talked to Fiat, who always liked to hire a lot of drivers and run a lot of cars, but the negotiations foundered – officially on the Italian company's unwillingness to prepare one car in right-hand drive form.

But behind the scenes, that year Austin Rover actually had a 4WD Metro for him to test – and the first Rover 3500 Group A rally car. His 1984 programme was to involve rallying and racing the Rover, and national rallies with the Metro 6R4. It was enough to stifle thoughts of driving for a foreign team. In any case, Tony was immensely loyal. At many points in his career, he chose to work with people that he liked – even





needed. But I am sure that if he had done them, he would have enjoyed them immensely."

Perhaps the truth is that Tony Pond was no extrovert and, if anything, was slightly insecure. Put him on an event he liked and he was a different chap, with the perfectionist streak well to the fore. His ability to concentrate and pull out a stunning performance on a long stage was one reason he liked the old-style Corsica so much. Ninety-kilometre stages were just his cup of tea.

A man whose results never truly reflected his talent, Pond inspired respect in rivals and colleagues and a loyal following from the public. His place at the top of the tree is secure. M

Clockwise from left: Pond took over from where Clark left off; Rob Arthur was his WRC co-driver 1985-86; early TR7 V8s suffered on gravel; 1986 started with a crash in Monte Carlo

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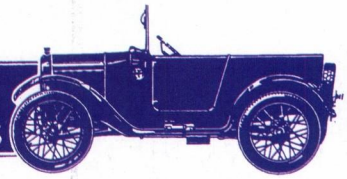
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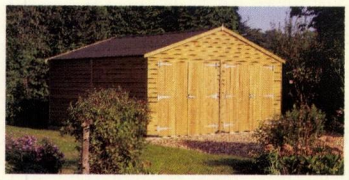
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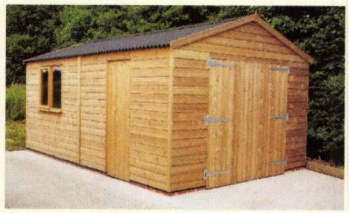
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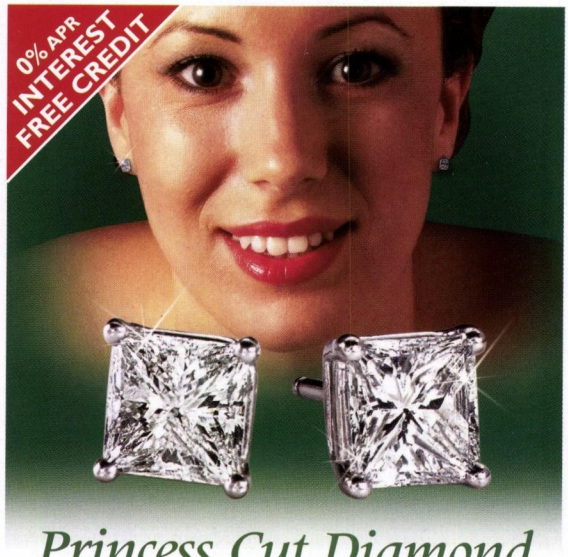


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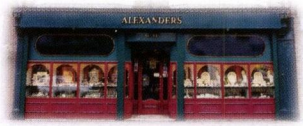
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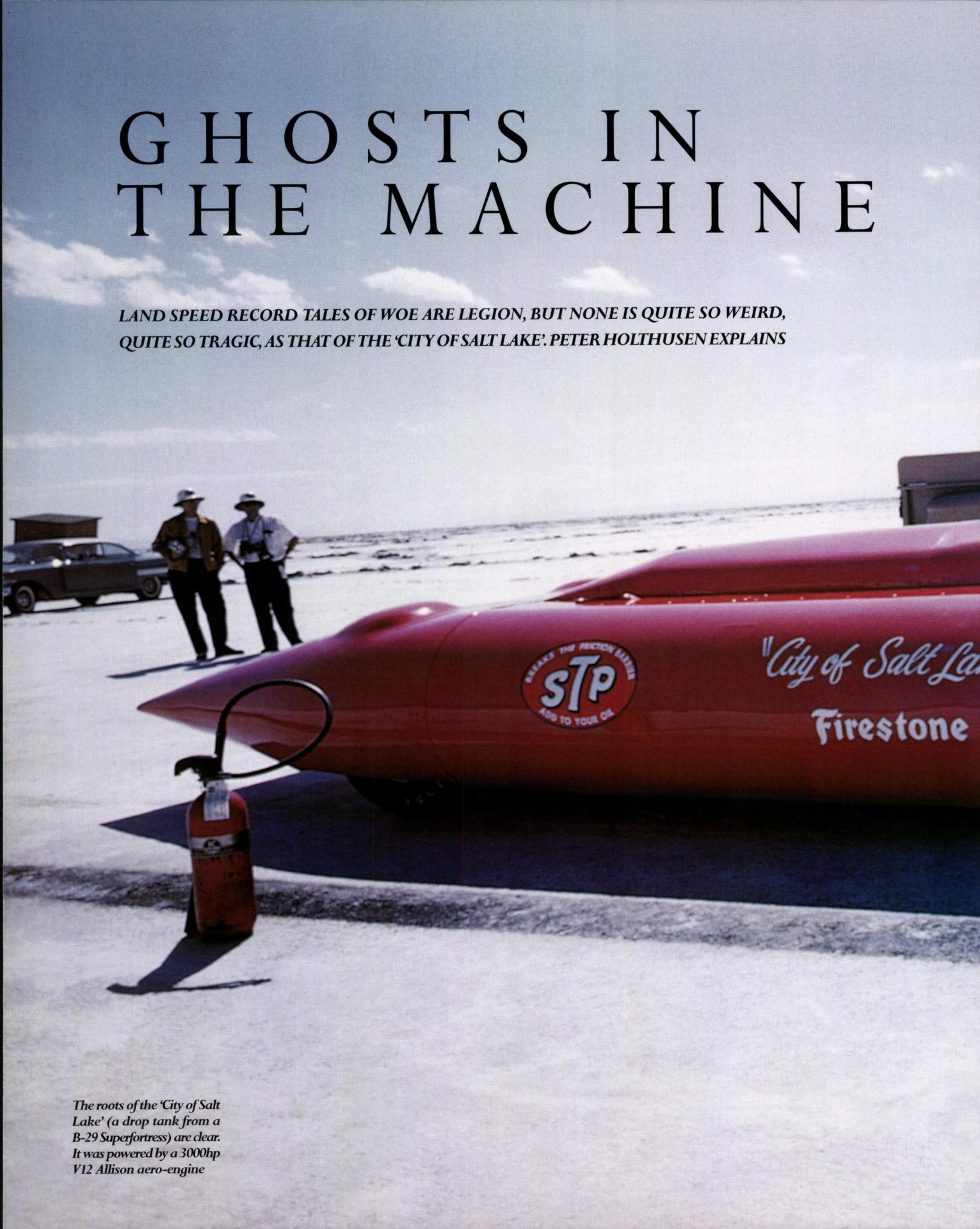
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MOTORSPORT APRIL 2002

GHOSTS IN THE MACHINE

LAND SPEED RECORD TALES OF WOE ARE LEGION, BUT NONE IS QUITE SO WEIRD, QUITE SO TRAGIC, AS THAT OF THE 'CITY OF SALT LAKE'. PETER HOLTHUSEN EXPLAINS



The roots of the 'City of Salt Lake' (a drop tank from a B-29 Superfortress) are clear. It was powered by a 3000hp V12 Allison aero-engine



all:courtesy of Peter Holthusen



BONNEVILLE SALT FLAT IS A DOOR TO THE OUTER LIMITS – A PLACE of strangeness where almost anything can be imagined, almost anything can be achieved. Sahara hot in the summer, Arctic cold in the winter, this vast basin of mineral residue, deposited by prehistoric Lake Bonneville, has stood as a natural barrier to travellers since the opening of America's western frontier. Animals avoid it like the plague; birds that fly over it usually perish.

But there is one animal that returns religiously to this saline plain: the modern speed addict. For the baked-hard, blown-smooth surface here provides the world's most perfect speedway.

From the end of August – when the salt is at its driest – until the November snow, a steady stream of dreamers and achievers flock to Wendover, the only town within an 80-mile radius. They bring their cars, their motorcycles, and other exotic vehicular monstrosities, each one bent on breaking some kind of world record. Each one with a glint in their eye.

Such obsession is the natural habitat of the bizarre, the weird, for eccentricity is the mother of the unconventional. But in the offbeat, out-there annals of the Land Speed Record there is an underfinanced, underpowered attempt from the Utah backwoods that really grabs the attention: that of Athol Graham.

Graham had helped machine components for John Cobb's British LSR car, the immensely complex Railton-Mobil-Special, with which the courageous Englishman had set a new mark of 394.20mph at Bonneville in 1947.

The experience of meeting Cobb proved inspirational for Graham, so much so that, for the rest of his short life, the Salt Lake City garage owner devoted every minute of his time to planning an LSR car of his own. The final impetus to launch that LSR bid, however, came from a dream he had during 1957, at his home in Ogden.

Left: Athol Graham's wife, Zeldine, sits aboard the 'City of Salt Lake' as it is checked. Below: Graham beside the machine that cost him his life

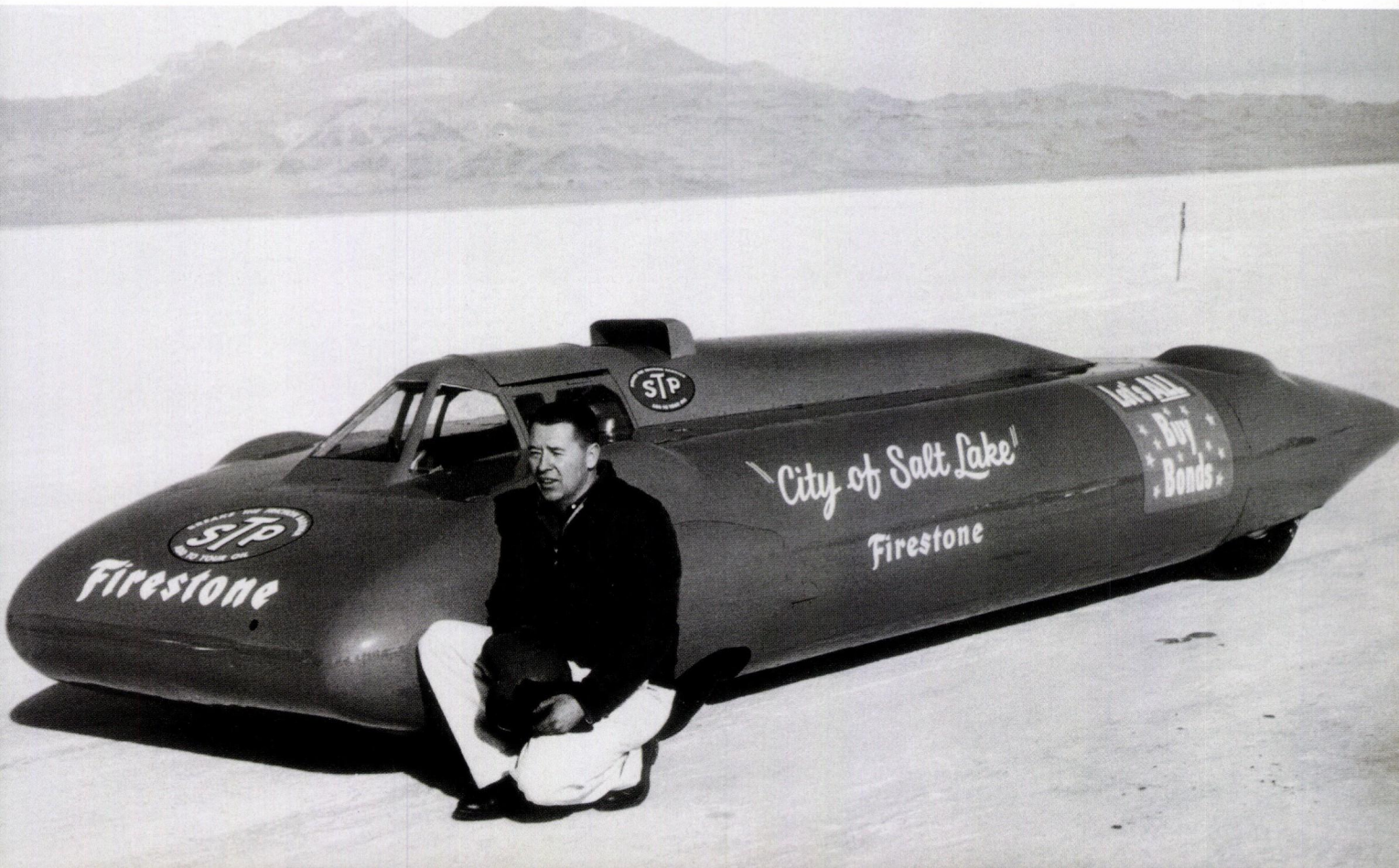
In 1958, Graham turned his dream into reality, in the form of a car dedicated to his beloved Mormon State Capital – the 'City of Salt Lake'. Its power came from a 3000hp USAF-surplus supercharged V12 Allison aero-engine. This particular unit had been fitted to William E Boeing Jnr's unlimited hydroplane 'Miss Wahoo', which Jack Regas had piloted in the 1957 Gold Cup on Lake Washington. Graham mounted the powerplant in the rear of the car, driving the rear wheels.

The streamlined bodyshell was fabricated around a drop tank taken from the belly of a World War II Boeing B-29 Superfortress, cut into three sections to form the nose, centre, and sandwiched tail section, aft of the engine housing and fuel tanks. The chassis was made of 12in-deep aluminium and incorporated stock Cadillac components throughout.

Most experts, including Mickey Thompson, opined that the car lacked aerodynamic co-efficiency and would prove unstable without a tail fin. How right they were.

On the morning of August 1, 1960, Graham made his final attempt on Thompson's flying mile record. Shortly before 9.15, he fired up his STP- and Firestone-backed $2500 vehicle. But ➳

'The final impetus to launch an LSR bid came to this Salt Lake City garage owner from a dream'



just two miles down range, the car veered slightly off course, began to slide, pitching violently, turned, became airborne and crashed. Violently.

Graham wasn't wearing a seat belt or safety harness. On impact, the firewall shattered the cockpit – and broke the driver's spine. Athol died three hours later in Tooele Hospital.

It was thought he had accelerated too hard, causing the left-rear hub to shear off under the load of the tremendous torque transmitted at the start of the run.

That should have been the end of the 'City of Salt Lake'.

It wasn't.

In the aftermath of Graham's death, Otto Anzjon, a 17-year-old mechanic from Salt Lake City, persuaded Graham's widow Zeldine to let him rebuild the car for another crack at the record in 1962. The idea of breaking the LSR, after witnessing his hero lose his life in the car, perhaps stemmed from a young man's impetuosity – but it was certainly indicative also of his courage and determination. Anzjon was made of the stuff of heroes.

Duly concerned by the car's unfortunate history, Joe Petrali, Bonneville's wise elder statesman, counselled the inexperienced Anzjon regarding a number of design changes he considered mandatory for a fresh attempt. But with very little funding and, as it transpired, very little time, a compromise was agreed: the car would be run with a small device to measure the loads on the troublesome rear axle.

"The idea of rebuilding the car was all Otto's," explained Zeldine Graham. "I would never have asked him to race, but he has expressed a very strong desire to fulfill Athol's dream."

And the man himself?

"I guess I should be scared, but I'm not," Anzjon told Petrali. "My parents say it's okay, and I am most eager to drive the car."

He attained an impressive 254mph on his first one-way pass across the salt, and Zeldine quickly applied to Petrali for a record attempt sanction. Anzjon was roaring past the timing beam in excess of 200mph when the left-rear Firestone suffered a blowout. 'City of Salt Lake' once again pitched, turned – and crashed.

Anzjon survived but never got another opportunity to drive the car, for leukaemia claimed him in the winter of 1962 and, like his hero, he died in Tooele Hospital.

That should have been the end of the 'City of Salt Lake'.

It wasn't.

It was re-rebuilt and, on the October 12, 1963, Harry Muhlbach hurtled it down Bonneville's course at an estimated 395mph – which is when the car veered out of control, pitched violently, turned and crashed, sliding upside down for over 1000ft before coming to a halt.

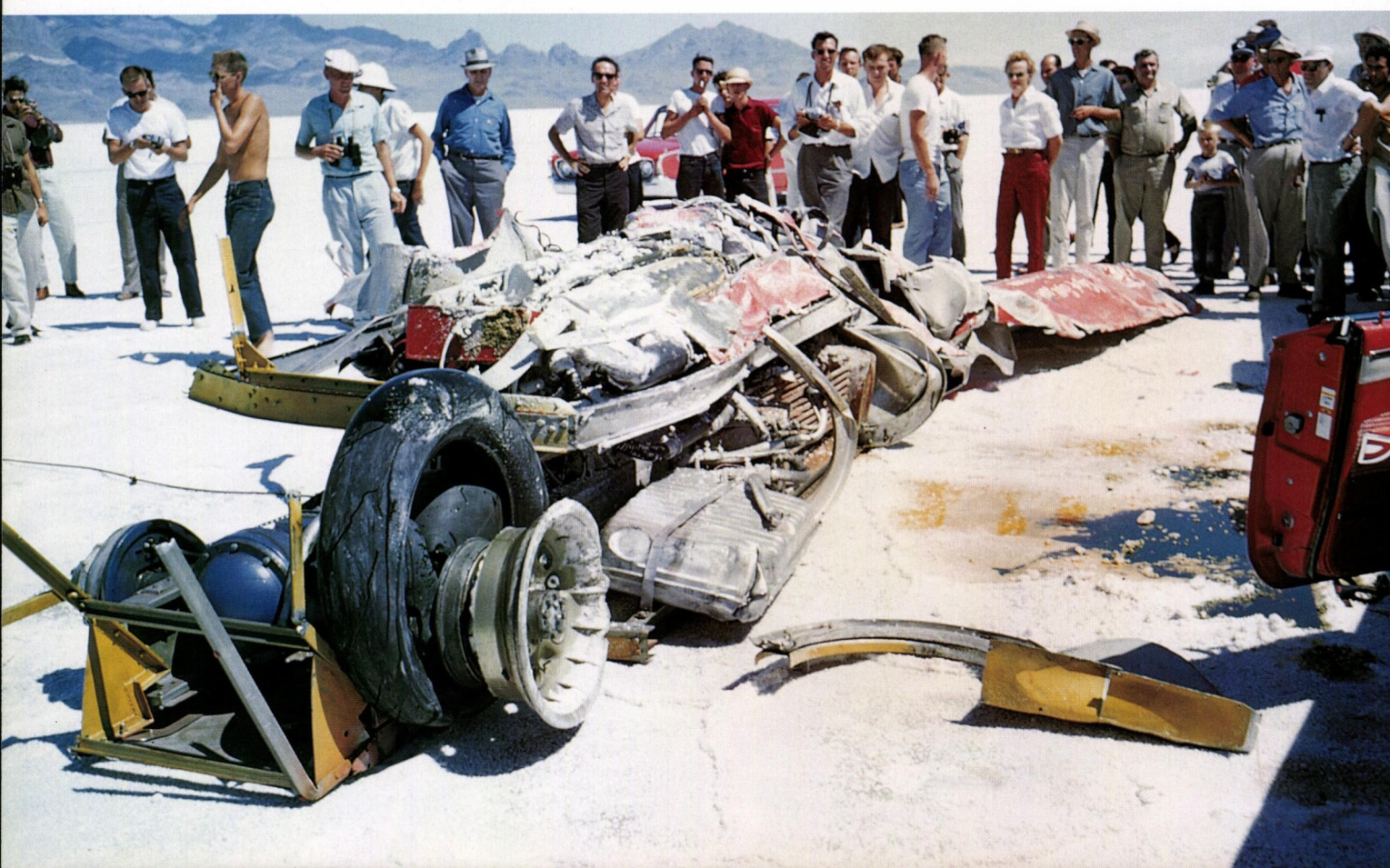
Muhlbach survived, but the car's reputation did not. Both STP and Firestone withdrew their support.

This was the end of 'City of Salt Lake'.

One final irony: Zeldine worked at Tooele Hospital. M

Below: Graham didn't stand a chance of getting out of this alive. Yet twice the car was rebuilt – and tried to kill its occupant each time

'I should be scared, but I'm not. My parents say it's okay, and I am most eager to drive the car'

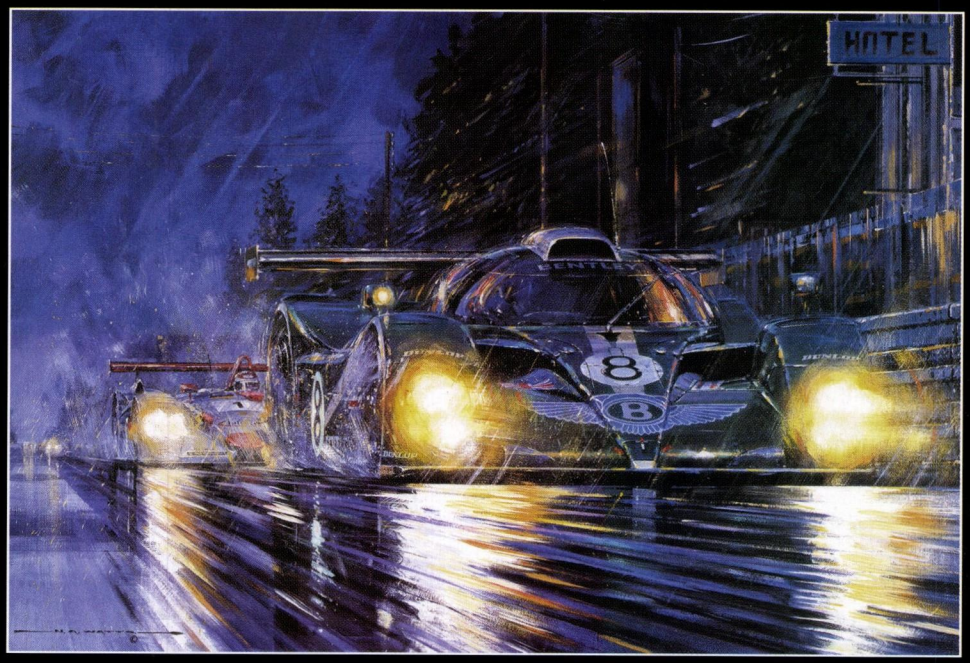


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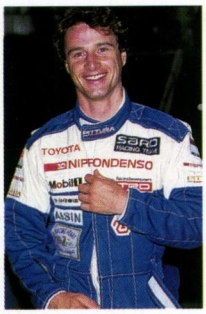
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THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

SARD LUCK STORY

EDDIE IRVINE 1994 LE MANS 24 HOURS

BROUGHT TOGETHER IN TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES, THE SARD TEAM DESERVED A FAIRY TALE RESULT. EDDIE IRVINE TELLS ADAM COOPER OF TWO SAD LOSSES

EDDIE IRVINE IS NOW IN HIS 20TH SEASON OF RACING, and there have been a lot of near misses during that career. One that still rankles is the 1999 British Grand Prix, a win that might have contributed to a world championship title.

"I should have won, but it went wrong at the pitstop," he recalls. "Another one was the Macau F3 race in 1988: I set the pace, got pole position and won the first heat, before an accident at the start of the second heat. And then there's Le Mans..."

In 1994, Eddie came within an hour-and-a-half of winning the 24 Hours, but ultimately had to settle for second.

His first appearance at La Sarthe came in 1992 with the SARD team, which had long been the home of Roland Ratzenberger. Sharing a Toyota Group C car with the Austrian, and veteran Swede Eje Elgh, he finished a much delayed ninth. Though the result was disappointing, he instantly fell in love with the event.

"It's a great circuit and a great race. Even if you're running a lap down, you still have a chance to win."

The following year, Eddie transferred to the 3.5-litre atmo works TOM'S team, and a sensational performance pushed Peugeot all the way – and netted a lap record.

"That car was fantastic, the TS010, a dream to drive. There was no-one lapping as quickly as me the whole race, which was incredible. I thought I was in a different league from anyone else there."

A watching Eddie Jordan was impressed, and by 1994, Irvine was a full-time F1 driver. As such, he had no plans to go back to Le Mans. But after Ratzenberger was killed during qualifying for the San Marino GP, the devastated SARD team got in touch. Eddie was the only man they wanted to replace Roland, and he didn't take long to say yes, even though it meant cancelling plans to join EJ to watch the World Cup in the USA.

His co-drivers were to be old pals Mauro Martini and Jeff Krosnoff, the best-known double act in Japanese racing. They had been team-mates in F3000 and sportscar racing, and in 1991 had driven a works TWR Jaguar at Le Mans.

"I didn't have a problem with going back," says Eddie. "I knew Jeff and Mauro well, and I really wanted to do the race. I wanted to be quicker than them! The team didn't have a massive budget, but they didn't do a bad job with what they had. We were three good drivers who worked hard together, and worked well together. It was not the most nimble of the cars at Le Mans that year, but it was fun to drive."

It was an emotional weekend for the drivers, all of whom had known Ratzenberger well. And for me, too: thanks to an introduction from Roland, I had been part of the SARD team for three years, writing press releases. Memories of the Austrian were everywhere: his name was still written on the door of the car, and a helmet and framed photograph were on display in the garage. Eddie had to put that out of his mind: "I didn't really see it. I switched off to that, big time. You have to."

It was an open race, as the works atmo cars were gone. The old Group C cars were ballasted up to 1000kg and had their underbodies trimmed, but the SARD Toyota and the rival Trust entry looked promising, as did the Courages.

However, Porsche had interpreted the rules in an interesting fashion. Privateer Jochen Dauer had homologated a road car version of the 962, allowing Joest to enter a pair of tweaked works Group C cars in the new GT class. Their big advantage was a 50 per cent larger fuel tank – a huge bonus in terms of time in the pits. Porsche also had a stellar driver squad, with Hans Stuck, Thierry Boutsen, Danny Sullivan in one car, and Hurley Haywood, Yannick Dalmas and Mauro Baldi in the other.

Sure enough, the 962LMs set the pace, but early problems dropped them down the order, allowing Krosnoff and Martini to establish the SARD car in the lead before Eddie got in. Then a brake disc change dropped them back at the five-hour mark. Irvine was on great form, bolstered by watching Ireland beat Italy one-nil in the World Cup on Saturday evening.

"I came in, went up to the team's hospitality suite, and was watching the times on the monitor. I decided to change channels to see if there was anything else on, and I saw this green-shirted guy kicking the ball into the net. Then I realised Ireland had scored!" At the next stop, Eddie made sure that Martini knew the result when they swapped over.

Anchored by Bob Wollek, the Trust Toyota was the main competition during a night of fluctuating fortunes, but when it hit trouble, SARD were able to establish a firm lead. The Porsches, however, were getting ever closer.

As the race crawled into its final hours, the Japanese car overcame recurring brake problems to remain in front. Too confident, I distributed a press release explaining SARD's background and Le Mans history. Then, inevitably, it all went wrong.

With just 90 minutes to go, Krosnoff came on the radio shouting, "I've got no gears, I've got no gears!" The car stopped just past the pit exit, and Jeff jumped out and started fiddling with a broken gear linkage. Fortunately, he was pretty handy – he built Tamiya kits to wile away endless hours in Tokyo – and was able to jam it into third. He edged back to the pits, where a proper repair was carried out.

Both Porsches got by before Irvine was able to resume. Realistically, he had no chance of catching the leader, but at least there was a possibility of relieving Boutsen of second. Then the Toyota's abused third gear broke. But Eddie continued to put in storming lap times. Ducking and diving past the walking wounded, he caught Boutsen's Porsche and finally nipped past on the very last lap, scaring the flag-waving marshals.

"At least the problem gave me a chance to do that great drive back. It was so much fun, but looking back, it was madness. We were going past cars that were cruising to get to the chequered flag, and we were still doing 230mph or whatever. Madness. But I boshed Boutsen and broke up the Porsches, which was great. I had as much fun that day as I ever have in a racing car."

In the circumstances, a win would have been something really special. And it would have been made even more poignant by the fact that two years later Krosnoff was killed in the Toronto CART race.

"For sure, but it didn't happen, so there's no point in talking about it." M

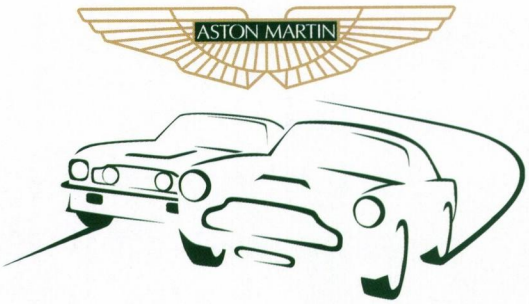


Eddie at the wheel of SARD's Toyota during a fantastic last stint



The Toyota's doors still carried the name of the late Roland Ratzenberger as a mark of respect for a long-time team member

dit: LAT



HERITAGE

Every new Aston Martin inherits an illustrious bloodline. Qualities of speed, grace and craftsmanship are passed on like a genetic fingerprint. The long bonnet, the distinctive grille, the sinuous curves of the bodywork – all speak of a shared heritage. Evolution comes with each generation, but the essential spirit remains the same.

The latest models, such as the DB7, have successfully married the skills of Aston Martin's craftsmen with the very best in modern production techniques and technology – the sign of modern times at a traditional company. But while a new generation of models is defining Aston Martin's values for today, what of preserving that which has gone before?

Heritage Operations is Aston Martin Lagonda's vision of a bright future for its celebrated past. The company has always taken pride in looking after its own, and through Heritage Operations, is renewing its commitment to preserve the generations of classic Aston Martins across the world. The initiative was the brainchild of David Byrne, General Manager of Parts Operations, who in the past two years has totally reorganised the way in which Aston Martin conducts its parts business.

After months of searching the globe for like-minded experts, Aston Martin has afforded Heritage status to the very best specialists. These select few will serve as centres of excellence for the maintenance and restoration of Astons from the DB4 of 1958 up to the last of the big V8 Vantages, production of which ceased towards the end of 2000.

'Each Heritage specialist has been chosen on the basis of years of experience,' explains Chris d'E. Vallancey, Manager of Heritage Operations at Aston Martin Lagonda. 'They have proven reputations for excellence and customer service built up over many years.'

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE SCENES

At the centre of this worldwide dealer network is the dedicated Heritage Operations team – Manager Chris d'E. Vallancey, Sales Specialist Mark Hewitt, and Procurement Engineer Des Lovett. Between them, they have 62 years of experience, living and breathing Aston Martins.

Chris d'E. Vallancey has been a life-long Aston Martin fanatic. 'I started saving for my first Aston Martin when I was fifteen years old,' Chris explains. 'By the age of 19 I'd put together enough money to buy a DB5 which had just failed its MOT.' Chris has owned the car to this day.

His 20 years' experience of working at Aston Martin dealers and restorers, as well as within the company itself, make Chris ideally placed to understand the needs of Aston owners and specialists. 'As a former Parts Manager at RS Williams I've seen first hand the strengths and weaknesses of the way Aston Martin has looked after its owners and specialists in the past. The launch of Heritage Operations will bring an even greater level of service, and a new focus to the way Aston Martin cares for Heritage models.'

Mark Hewitt shares his manager's passionate commitment to the older cars. 'There's been a much greater concentration on the needs of the older cars at Aston Martin over the last two or three years,' believes Mark. 'Heritage Operations is the culmination of that process.'

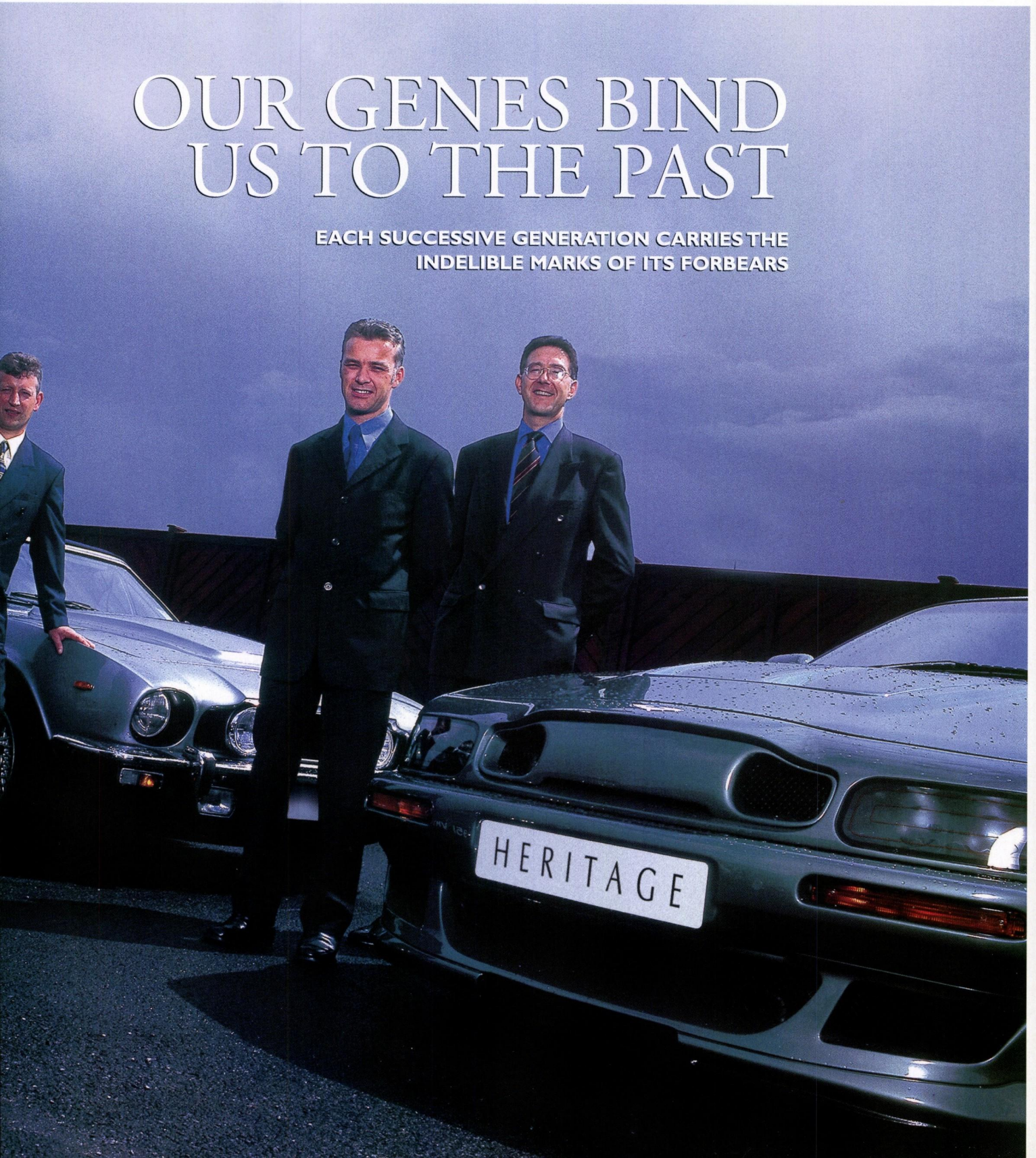


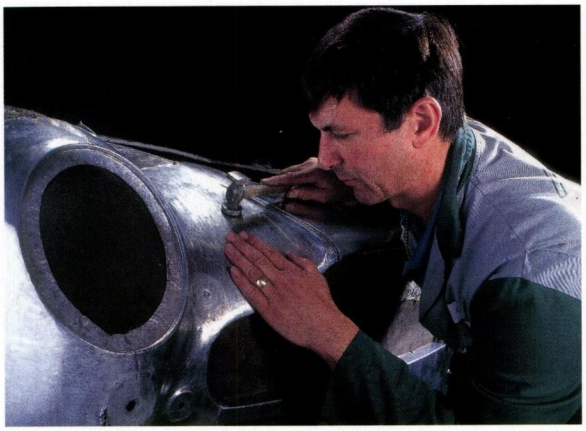
From the left: Mark Hewitt, Des Lovett, David Byrne and Chris d'E. Vallancey.

'Heritage Operations is Aston Martin's vision of a bright future for its celebrated past.'

OUR GENES BIND US TO THE PAST

EACH SUCCESSIVE GENERATION CARRIES THE INDELIBLE MARKS OF ITS FORBEARS





Mark has spent the past two years preparing the Heritage project for launch, though his involvement with Aston Martin goes back to 1983. His passion for cars, however, goes back much further. 'I've been tinkering with cars since I was four years old,' Mark says proudly. The machines from Newport Pagnell have always held the greatest fascination.

In his time at Aston Martin, Mark has developed an encyclopaedic knowledge of the firm's parts inventory, right down to the last nut and bolt. 'Much of the fine detail was never written down – it's in our heads.' Throughout the last decade, if an Aston Martin dealer needed specialist advice to ensure a restoration project was carried out to the highest standards of authenticity, Mark's name was top of the list of experts to call.

Des Lovett's working life with Aston Martin goes back even further. Des started out as a Machine Shop Apprentice back in 1976. From 1991 to 1995 he enjoyed the role of team leader in the machine shop, before being made Senior Team Leader Major Assemblies. Des welcomes the challenge of his new role as Heritage Operations Procurement Engineer.

EXPERTISE AND VALUE

The three-man team and the specialist network it serves share a determination to make owning and running an Aston Martin stress-free and entirely pleasurable. 'Finding an expert to look after an Aston properly and for a fair price has been something of a minefield for the uninitiated,' says Chris d'E. Vallancey. 'Some companies claim a level of expertise which they really aren't in a position to deliver.'

'The Heritage product should put an end to all that. We've brought together the world's foremost Aston Martin specialists and given them the full support of the factory. Whenever owners take their car to a Heritage Specialist, they are assured of original parts, expert knowledge and a fair price for the level of service they are offered.'

While the calibre of authentic Aston Martin parts has never been in question, this quality has sometimes come at a price. Nonetheless, Chris is adamant that owning such an elite motor car need not mean elitist running costs. 'Our pricing will be under constant review to ensure that we provide excellent value for money. But the one thing we won't do is compromise on quality.'

This commitment to quality and originality not only helps keep cars in the finest possible fettle – it also makes money spent at a Heritage Specialist a wise investment. Genuine Aston Martin factory approved parts for owner confidence are the only way to safeguard a car's originality, and so preserve its value and provenance.

There's more to the Heritage philosophy than originality for originality's sake, however. 'It would be foolish to ignore technical advances where they can bring improvements and make the cars more usable from day to day,' acknowledges Chris. 'We're happy to see cars fitted with enhanced standard parts, so long as they remain Factory Approved.'

Mark Hewitt gives a couple of examples, 'The original Girling Brake master cylinder for the DB5 and DB6 is no longer produced. But we now offer a new version, using modern technology, which is one hundred percent Factory Approved and that fits with very little modification'.

'Heritage Operations can also supply new and improved V8 chrome bumpers that are produced from thicker gauge steel and finished to a higher standard than the originals. We are also looking to reproduce DB5 and DB6 bumpers to the same high standard in the near future. With certain items, customers will even have the choice of absolute originality or improved parts which retain the look and spirit of the original'.

The Heritage Operation has direct access to the only source of genuine Aston parts in the world – Parts Operations at the new 46,000 sq ft Wolverton Mill facility. Here, 34,000 individual part lines have been catalogued and stored.

Incorporated in the new building is a resource every bit as valuable – an archive of original parts drawings stretching back to 1952. 'Thanks to this great asset, we can look at re-manufacturing any obsolete items, however obscure they may be,' says Chris d'E. Vallancey.

David Byrne has also applied his wide-ranging experience of communications to develop a state-of-the-art Internet-based Dealer Communications System (DCS). The first of its kind in the motor industry, DCS not only allows dealers to order on-line but also to check stock availability in 'real-time' and access pages from parts manuals for easy identification.

The Heritage team believes this kind of comprehensive professionalism will encourage Aston owners old and new to enjoy their cars to the full. 'Through our Heritage Network, owners are assured of the highest possible expertise and service. And through using only Factory Approved parts, they can be sure of authenticity and excellent engineering.'

'We want Aston Martin enthusiasts to have confidence in the ownership experience. If they don't feel the support network is there, then they won't continue to buy and run Aston Martins.'

HERITAGE ON-LINE

Heritage Operations' new website has an important role to play in keeping owners in touch with the company, whether they need to visit the network or not. Detailed technical specifications of all models should interest and inform, while owners will be kept up-to-date with the latest parts product initiatives.

An on-line 'Heritage Owner' registration service will be used to build up a database of Aston Martin owners and to ensure a continual line of communication between the company and Aston Martin owners. So, just like the latest generation of Aston Martin models, Heritage Operations will be combining the best of modern technologies with Aston Martin's traditional appeal and reputation for personal bespoke service.

With the latest models to inherit the Aston Martin name now launched, it would be all too easy for the company to neglect its history. But the staff of Heritage Operations know the value of preserving the past. As future generations of Aston Martins come and go, it's reassuring to know that the company's legacy is in such safe hands. ◆



Parts, Operations – Wolverton Mill.

'Through our Heritage Network, owners are assured of the highest possible expertise and service.'



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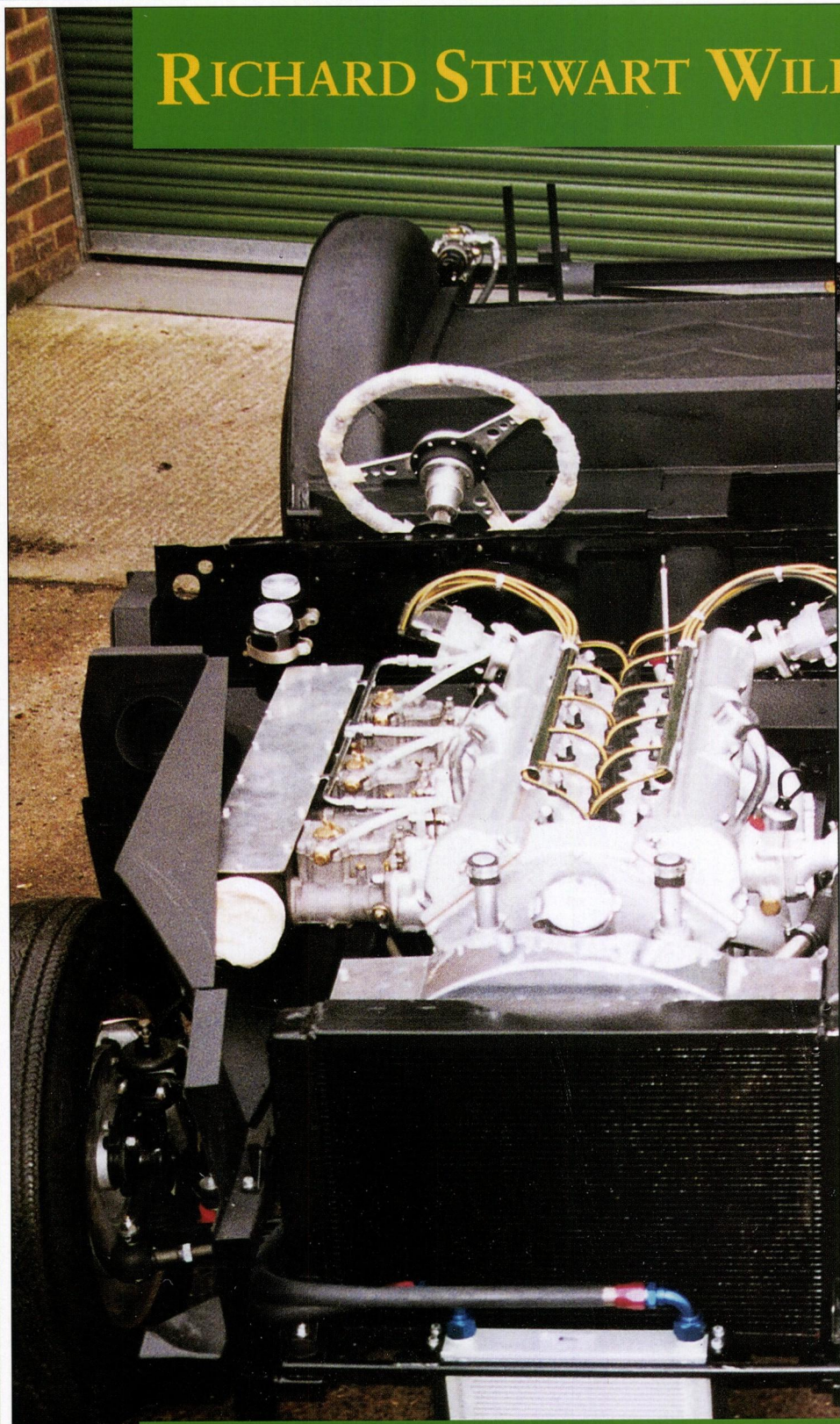


ASTON MARTIN

HERITAGE

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RSW Ltd has recently undertaken a complete rebuild of chassis 0148/R for the current owner, returning it to its former 'GT' glory, whilst incorporating many of the unique modifications originally carried out by the Factory. The chassis is currently at the Zagato factory in Italy having an original style DB4GT Zagato alloy body fitted.

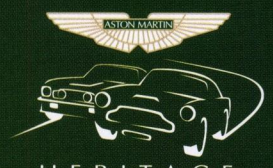
Service First

Many Aston Martin owners are familiar with the exciting projects successfully undertaken by the RSW team in Cobham, such as the restoration of the DBGT above, 6.3 & 7 litre V8 engine conversions, race car development and preparation, plus many others. However, at the core of the RSW proposition is regular servicing for all Aston Martins. Our trained engineers are supported by extensive workshop facilities, which include Factory and specialist diagnostic equipment, a full machine shop and over £1 million in specialist parts. This ensures that at RSW Ltd. regular servicing for your Aston is thorough, efficient and affordable.

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HERITAGE



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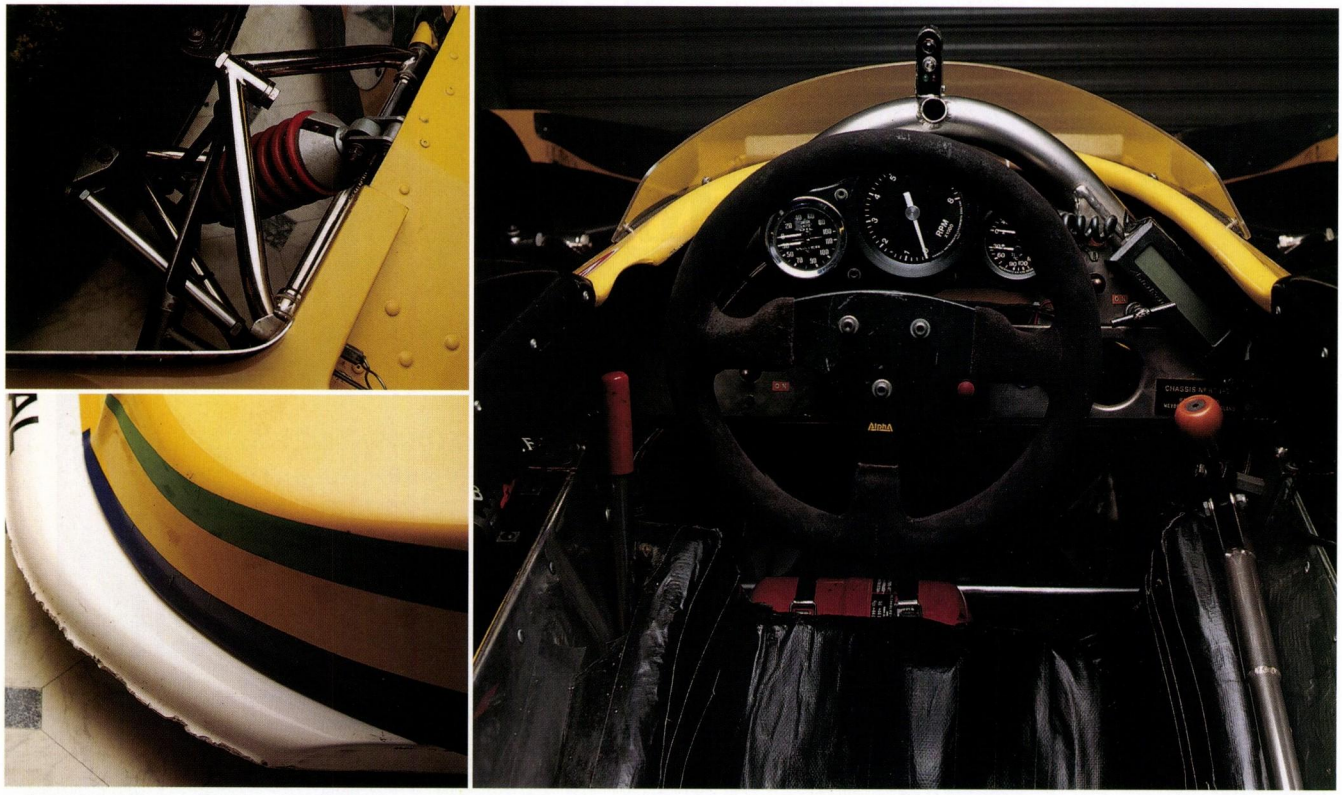
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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: CAR FORCED TO RUN HIGHER GROUND CLEARANCE TODAY; DOUBLE-WISHBONE FRONT END; B AND F ON LEFT ARE THE ROLLBAR ADJUSTERS

Ron Dennis used to be based next door, during his Project Four days. His still-under-construction hi-tech temple to hi-tech, Paragon, lies only a few miles down the road, but it might as well be on Mars, such is the leap of faith, aspiration and budget it represents. Same sport, different world.

McLaren are a blend of style *and* content. Only the best will do. Which is why Gomm Metal Developments Ltd still craft handmade parts for them – even though their cramped Manor Way works in Old Woking would cause their former neighbour to throw a fit.

Product is what matters. Style is sacrificed. But the content is fascinating. The offices are time warp temples to scrapbooks, framed letters of thanks from John Wyer, steering wheels from old Ferraris, and a fusty library of dusty magazines. The workshop is a temple to low-tech machines that, in the hands of experts, do a job computers still cannot.

Gomm Metal are part of the vital underbelly of British motorsport. Perhaps more famous than most of their blue-collar peers, but still known only to a few. But when I say it was they who created the beautiful Ford F3L sports-racer, built the original Tyrrell 001, fabricated pieces for the lightweight GT40 that won Le Mans in 1968 and '69, did the shells for Alan Mann's racing Escorts *and* the works rally Escorts, their importance to our motorsporting success story becomes apparent.

And their talents don't stop there: the film version of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, the sleep pods from *Aliens*, a turret off the Memphis Belle, and the submarine in *For Your Eyes Only* were all constructed by the company set up by Maurice Gomm in 1950.

The one-of-a-kind Maurice, father figure to many young, impecunious racers, passed away in 1996, and son Frank has been in charge since. He's running a bit late, which is fine by me. I browse to my heart's content: Rodriguez's 1971 Monza 1000Kms trophy, Stewart's 1970 Spanish GP prize, Graham Hill's old desk.

A dark red Doctor Marten appears from behind the door. It is followed by a mane of black hair. Frank has arrived. He is bemused by my enthusiasm for the motorsport 'jumble' therein, and genuinely seems surprised when I point out some of the 'goodies'. Tyrrells, McLarens, works Escorts: it's just what they do. My anorak response seems as alien as some of the pods they've built.

But that's not to say Frank is as cold to every car as the sheet steel he forms them from. Tucked away in a small, disused office, in the corner of the rear workshop, is his 'weakness'. We skim past a D-type and the Richard Utley-designed 1960 FJ Caravelles to reach it: Nelson Piquet's 1978 F3 Ralt RT1, chassis 131, the car that won the BP Championship and ushered the Brazilian into Formula One. It's hardly wrapped up in cotton wool, far from it, but Frank's affection for the car is clear.

He bought it in 1980 for £1500 – even though there was nowhere for him to race it. That changed in '86 with the inauguration of classic F3 championships, and since then, barring two or three seasons, he has campaigned it. Business commitments have always prevented him from undertaking a full programme, and will do so again in this season's HSCC Classic F3 series, but that sits well with his obvious do-it-for-fun attitude. He reckons to have clocked up 40 races this car, so striking a happy balance between keeping it aired and keeping it original. The only items replaced

'He bought the car in 1980 for £1500 – even though there was nowhere for him to race it'

'The only affectation is an F1 title-winning Alain Prost gear knob (a present from McLaren)'

during his 22 years of ownership are the wishbones and front discs. The only mod is an upchange light on the front roll-hoop; the only affectation is an Alain Prost gear knob (a present from McLaren); the only sop to political correctness is a silencer.

"It's easy to maintain." Frank says. "A cheap formula, really. A set of tyres [Avons in place of the period Goodyear G54s] will last us a season. We have the engine [a 2-litre Toyota Novamotor strangled to 6000rpm and 165bhp by the mandatory air restrictor] looked at once every two years. Straightforward stuff. Which is a good job because, give me a piece of metal and I know where I am, but give me an engine and I'm a bit lost.

"It doesn't give much warning of when it's about to swap ends, but it's brilliant fun."

This will be sweet music to RT1's creator, Ron Tauranac. The Australian is one of the greatest commercial race-car designers. During his 10 years with Brabham, the company built 600 customer cars. They were usually simple, rugged, a joy to drive – and competitive. While Colin Chapman was chasing the next big thing, Tauranac's designs were subtly evolving. And unlike Chapman, Tauranac was responsible for every nut and bolt on his cars – never more so than on the RT1, the car that marked the second phase of his career.

He left the now-Bernie Ecclestone-owned, now-F1-centric Brabham in 1972 and, after short spells with Frank Williams and Trojan, contemplated retirement. And then set up shop at Snelgar Road, Woking, during the winter of 1974. Ralt was to be revived.

An amalgam of Ron's and his brother's (Austin Lewis) initials, the first Ralts were built in Sydney during the 1950s: two single-seaters for Ron, and a sportscar for Austin. Ron laid down a batch of the second single-seater and planned to sell them, but was whisked away to England by Jack Brabham before the project could be finished.

So Ralt lay dormant – until March 31, 1975, which is when Larry Perkins lined up his RT1 at Thruxton for the first round of the BP Super Visco F3 series. He might have won, too, but for a moment's inattention and the resultant off. He secured the European F3 title, though, with victories at Monza and Croix-en-Ternois.

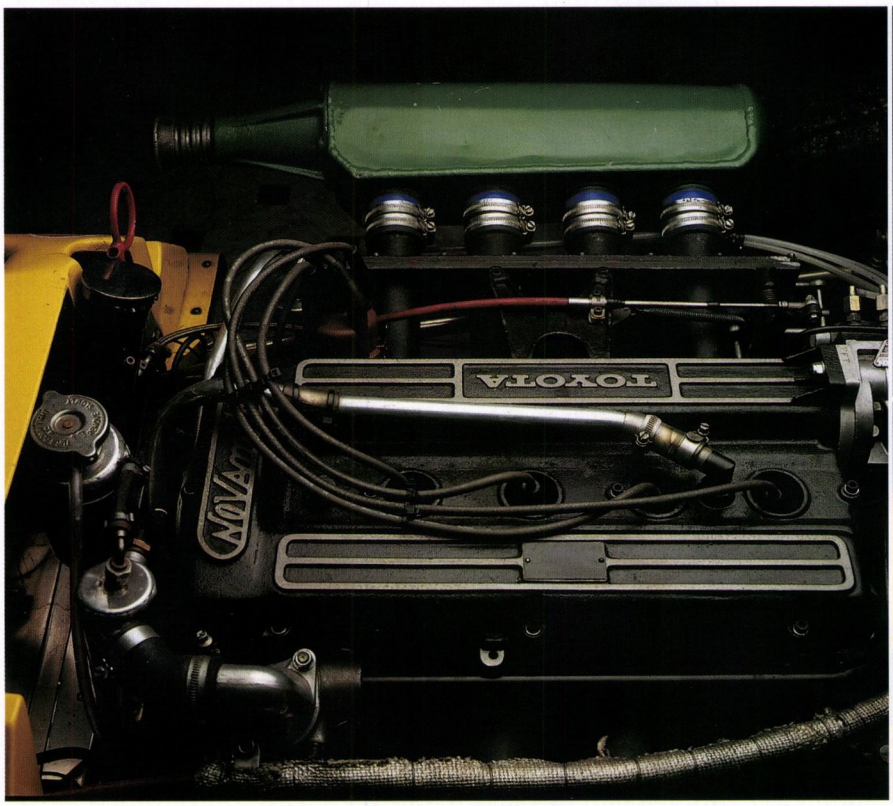
Ten RT1s were built (the early cars were constructed by Gomm) that first year: four F3s, three Formula Atlantics and three F2s, all based around the same tub: adaptability was a Tauranac watchword. Thirty were built in 1976, and 41 in '77, one of which went to Italy for Nelson Piquet Soutomaior.

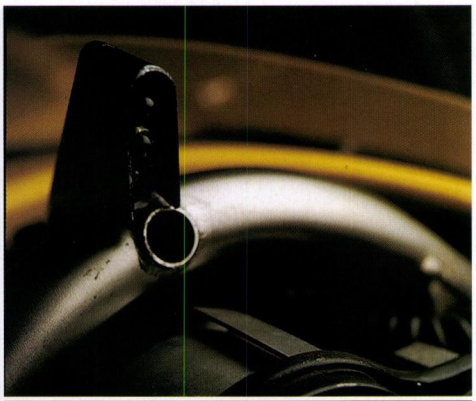
The reigning Brazilian Super Vee champion had begun the European F3 series disastrously, in a March, and so swapped allegiances. This brought him an upturn in results, winning at Jarama and Kassel-Calden (a German airfield). The following year, he decided, he would focus on Britain. The subsequent campaign would change the face of British F3 for ever.

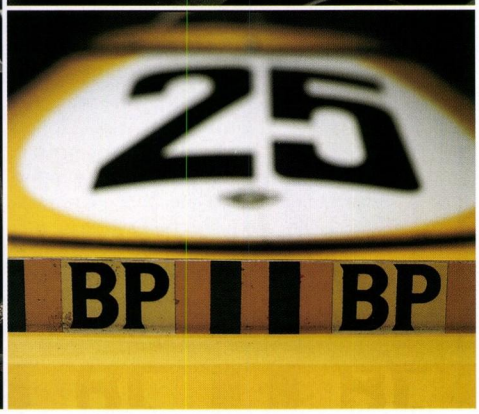
A brand-new RT1 was ordered, but its build ran late, and the early season proved fraught, as Derek Warwick's year-old RT1 won five of the first six races. Piquet, however, had time on his side. Warwick was competing while holding down a full-time job at his family's trailer business, whereas Piquet had no such distraction and, along with mechanic-cum-manager, Australian Greg 'Peewee' Siddle, set about turning the tables.

"The main thing was the amount of testing we did," says Siddle. "We had a spare car ➤

CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: PEDRAZZANI-TUNED NOVAMOTOR TOYOTA GIVES FEW PROBLEMS; UPCHANGE LIGHT IS ONLY MODERN ADDITION; NOSE-CONE GURNEY FLAP

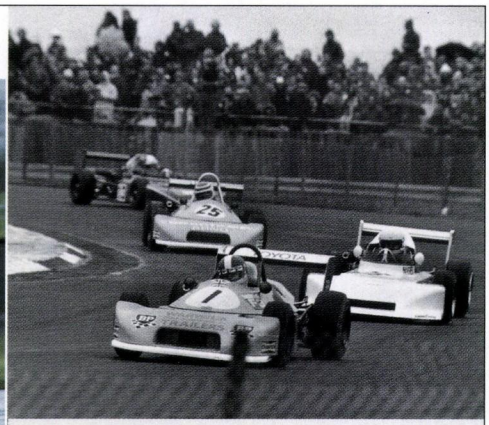


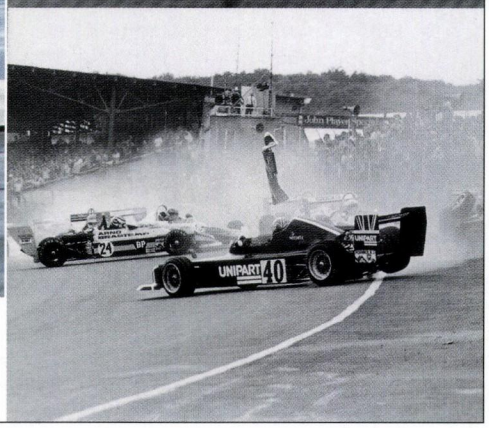




ADMIRABLE NELSON RIDES OUT THE STORM







all: LAT

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: PIQUET'S RALT BECAME A FAMILIAR SIGHT AT THE FRONT OF THE PACK, BUT THE YEAR WAS NOT WITHOUT PROBLEMS OR DRAMA; DEREK WARWICK (1) WAS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM, WINNING FIVE OF THE FIRST SIX RACES; THE BRITISH GP SUPPORT RACE PROVIDED THE BIGGEST DRAMA

by May, and we tested them continually. We really got to know the car." And maximise it.

The formula's strict regulations, the cars' straightforward designs, and Tauranac's desire not to be seen to be favouring one particular team, meant performance gains would be fractional, but precious and crucial. This RT1 became the best, most important, of the 150-or-so built because of a host of detail changes.

"We were critical on weight," continues Siddle. "There's not much you can do when the monocoque is aluminium and the wishbones are steel, but we were the first to use aircraft nuts and bolts, which are lighter. We had lighter fibreglass bodywork made, too. And what weight we had, we put as low and as central as possible: we resited the battery and extinguisher, and lowered the headrest. We were able to go a bit lighter in the diff, too.

"Another area we spent a lot of time on was the aerodynamics. We had about five or six different nose-cones, and were constantly assessing different Gurney flaps, which we ran on the nose as well as the wing. Nelson could tell if we changed a Gurney by an eighth of an inch. Towards the end, we even ran a venturi at the back, but we were guessing a little bit."

It was fitted also with cockpit-mounted front and rear anti-roll bar adjusters from mid-season; Warwick only got his towards the end of the year, and then only to the rear. Other tweaks included the wider Formula Atlantic front suspension (double wishbone) for slower circuits, revised geometry at the rear (top link, lower wishbone, twin radius arms) to generate anti-squat, and rubbers in the shock absorbers (usually Bilsteins, sometimes Konis, depending on the conditions) to stop them crashing out.

Tyres were another boon. Piquet found that some G54s were better than others, and he'd happily assess 20 sets to find five good ones. In contrast, Warwick used to take one spare, for the left-rear, to the abrasive Thruxton.

Mallory Park, May 14, round seven of the BP series, was pivotal: Piquet won; Warwick, who was flirting with March's 783 and, by his own admission, becoming confused, retired on lap three. This was the first in a run of seven wins for Piquet, including a dominant drive in front of the F1 teams at Ricard. He would make his GP debut a month later, at Hockenheim, with Ensign, and drive Bob Sparshott's M23 McLaren in Holland, Italy and Canada.

Despite these 'distractions', he ran off four more F3 wins in a row, securing the BP title – and a Brabham F1 contract – in the process. He had won 11 of his 13 starts since Mallory, and finished up with 13 victories. Warwick beat him to the Vandervell title, Piquet missing two rounds because of his F1 commitments, but the Brazilian was content to sit out the last two races of the season, his future secure.

"We had raised the F3 bar [and doubled the usual budget to £70k]," says Siddle. "Some people said we were the works team. Yes, we were based in a shed at Ron's new place [near Byfleet], but that brought its own problems. He would stick his nose round the door, see what we were doing, and get on to the phone to his other customers. But he did pay us a great compliment by saying that, if we had worked to the same level in the 1970 F1 championship, we would have won it."

Warwick, too, had performed superbly, on a fraction of his rival's budget (he estimates £17k) to score eight championship race wins – yet had no such security of future for 1979. And even the determined Hampshireman was unable to ever fully close this gap. So Frank Gomm's cherished RT1 straddles the fine line from which such career paths diverge. M

'...the first in a run of seven wins, including a dominant drive in front of the F1 teams at Ricard'

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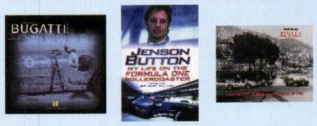
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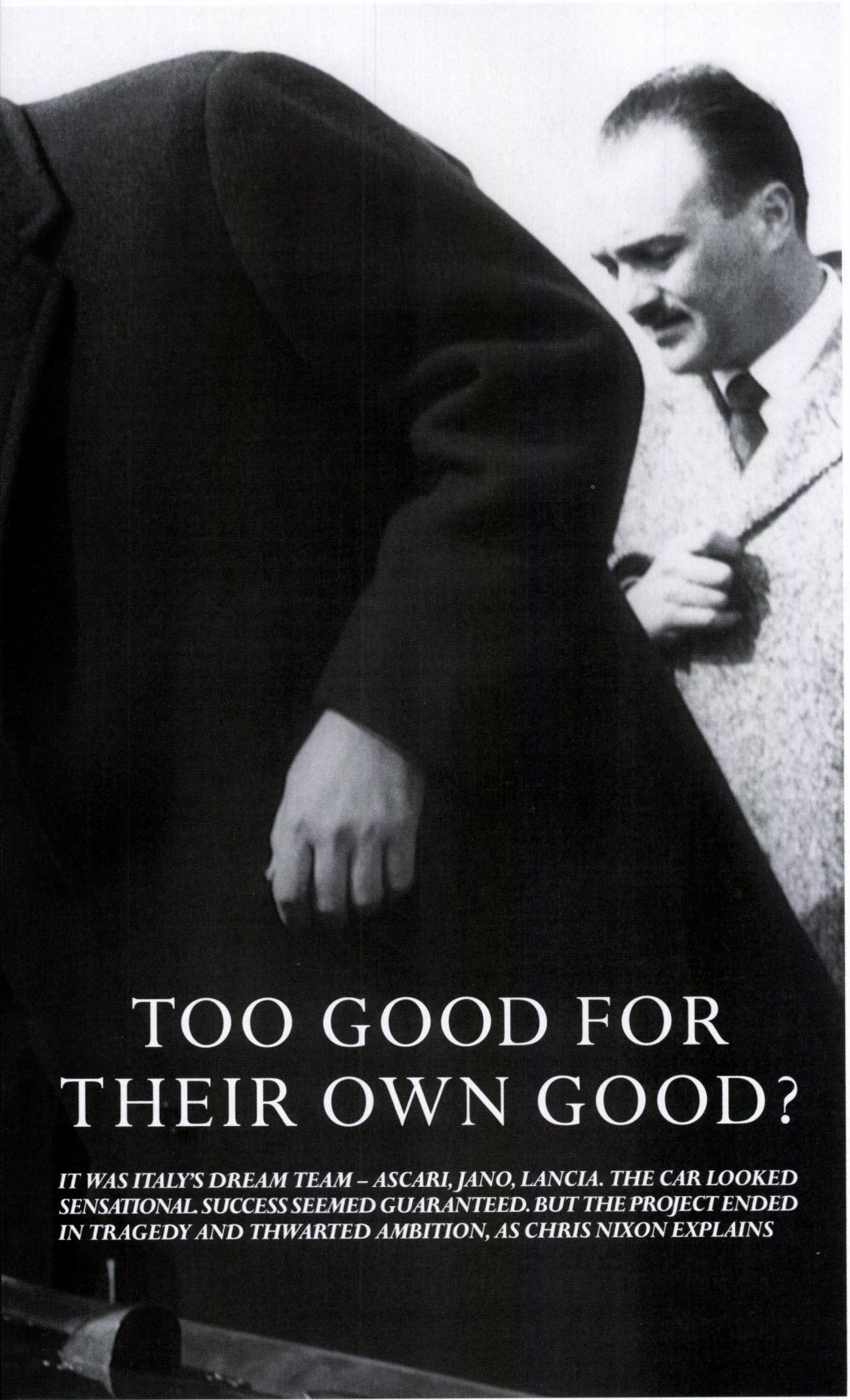
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Wim Oue Weemink

EARLY IN 1954, MOTORSPORT ENTHUSIASTS found themselves looking at photographs of two new grand prix cars so startlingly different in appearance that it was hard to believe they had been built for the same Formula. In February, *Autosport* published pictures of the Mercedes-Benz W196, a gorgeous, fully-streamlined machine, rumoured to have an inclined, straight-eight engine with fuel injection, and disc brakes.

Three weeks later, the magazine put the Lancia D50 on its cover. Whereas the long, sleek, curvaceous Mercedes was indeed a Silver Arrow, the Lancia was a Scarlet Fist – short, clenched, pugnacious. The knowledge that these two fabulous-looking cars would soon be locked in competition was a tremendous prospect.

Better still, it was now confirmed that these machines were to be driven by the two best drivers in the world: Juan Fangio and Alberto Ascari. The scene was set for a sensational start to the new 2.5-litre F1.

Sadly, it was not to be. The Mercedes went on to win 11 of its 14 races in 1954-55, while the Lancia was doomed to failure, an intriguing might-have-been.

It must all have looked so good to 30-year-old Gianni Lancia when he saw his brainchild, the D50, run for the first time, at Turin's Caselle Airport on February 20, 1954, in the hands of his friend and hero, Ascari. With its fuel tanks slung between the wheels, it looked superb, but its appearance did not reveal the many technical innovations that were on Lancia's drawing boards in Turin, several of them produced by the fertile brain of Gianni himself.

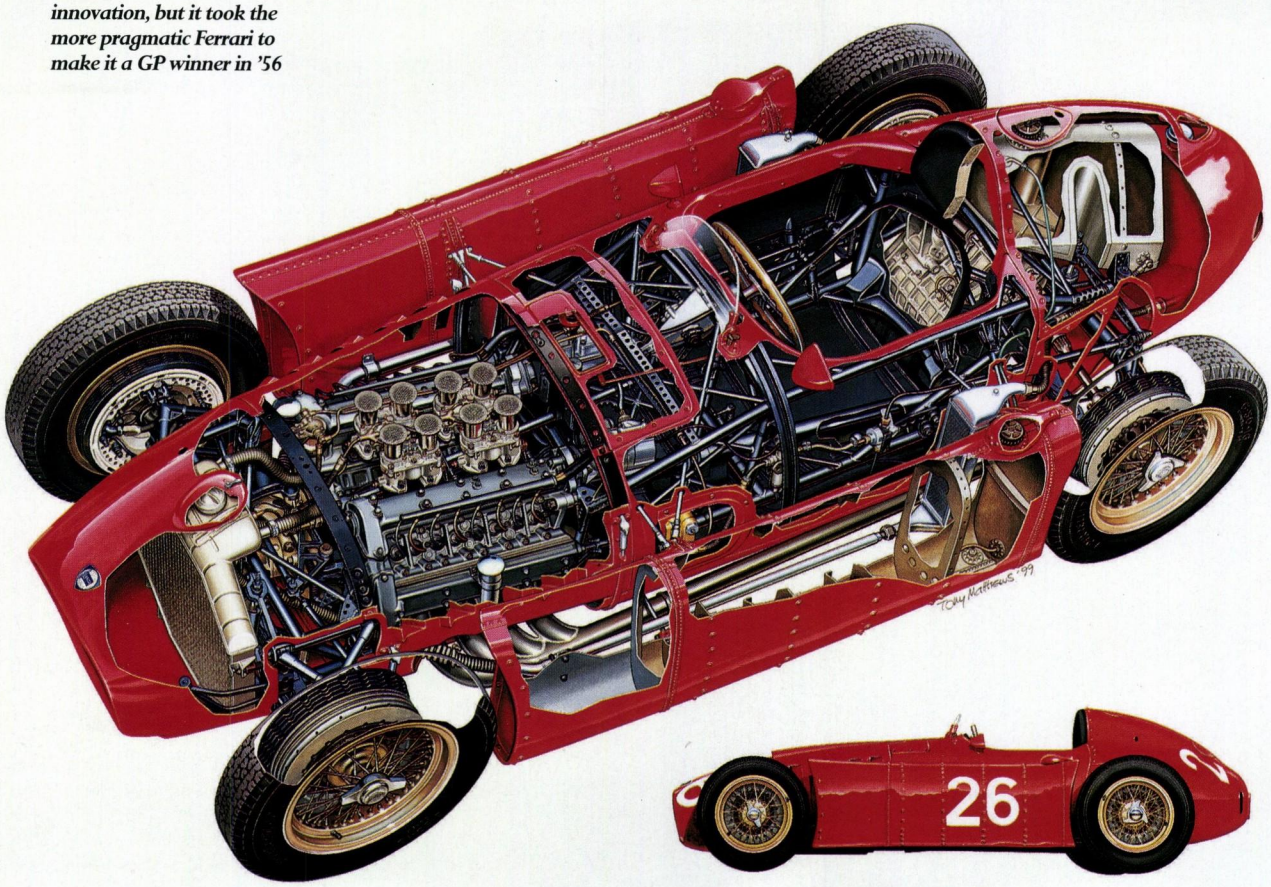
The original specification called for a dry sump V8 engine with fuel injection; four-wheel drive; a pre-selector gearbox; disc brakes; side-mounted fuel tanks; the engine and rear-mounted gearbox as structural parts of the chassis. And these were not just pipe dreams – all were built and tested, though not all made it onto the car.

D50 has often been hailed as Vittorio Jano's baby, but Ettore Zaccone Mina (in charge of engine design) denies this: "Jano was the leader of the team, but he was not the designer! No one person was responsible for the overall design of the car. Its engine as part of the chassis and at an angle to it, the fuel tanks between the wheels – these things all came out of discussions between us, with Gianni Lancia making the final decisions."

With the D50 on the drawing board, Gianni now needed someone to drive it and, remarkably, he succeeded in persuading Ascari to leave Scuderia Ferrari and join the fledgling Lancia team. Ascari had become disenchanted with Enzo ➠

Gianni Lancia shakes Alberto Ascari's hand prior to the D50's maiden test, at Turin's Caselle Airport, Feb 20, 1954

Lancia's D50 bristled with innovation, but it took the more pragmatic Ferrari to make it a GP winner in '56



Tony Matthews

Ferrari's poor pay and, at the end of 1953, was making noises about not racing in '54. The latter was a bluff, of course, but when Gianni outlined his plans for grand prix racing, and revealed details of his new car, Ascari decided to join him, and got his great friend, Gigi Villoresi, to do likewise.

By this time, Fangio had agreed to drive for Mercedes, and it was clear the new 2.5-litre F1 was about to usher in a new era of motor racing. Sadly, it would have to begin without the Lancias.

Both teams announced that they would debut in the French GP on July 4, but only the W196s made it to Reims. The D50 was plagued with problems in testing: unpredictable road-holding, unsatisfactory brakes, a chassis that needed reinforcing to combat torsional stress, and oil circulation so poor that the V8 could complete only four or five laps at a time before overheating.

The French GP provided a crushing win for Mercedes. Although one of the W196s retired, the other two, driven by Fangio and Karl Kling, demolished the opposition and finished over a lap ahead of the rest.

By the time of September's Italian Grand Prix, the Lancias had still not appeared – and were still well off the pace. While the Mercedes, Ferraris and Maseratis were all lapping Monza in under two minutes, rumour had it that, in private testing, Ascari's best was a mere 2min 08sec. Humiliatingly, Lancia did not enter their home GP.

But Gianni and his team persevered and, late in September, things began to go their way – so much so that the Italian press was alive with rumours that Ascari had lapped Monza in 1min 56sec. True or not, the D50 had clearly taken a turn for the better, and it was announced that two cars would contest the Spanish Grand Prix at Pedralbes, on October 24.

Practice provided the opposition with their first good look at the handsome newcomer. It was immediately apparent that there was no four-wheel-drive and that the five-speed gearbox was conventional, too, as Ascari and Villoresi did not like the semi-automatic pre-selector unit.

'The Lancia D50 could complete only four laps before overheating'

The D50's chassis was a short spaceframe with the engine and rear-mounted gearbox/final drive forming a structural part of the chassis at each end.

The 90-degree V8 developed 260bhp at 8000rpm and was offset at an angle of eight degrees to allow the propshaft to run beside the driver, giving a lower seating position. Mercedes-Benz had followed Lancia's lead in mounting their drum brakes inboard on the W196 – the D23 and 24 sportscars were thus equipped – but Lancia put the D50's drums outboard (discs arrived in '55) in order to preserve the very short (89.8in) wheelbase afforded by the neat engine/transmission/chassis design.

The elegant pannier fuel tanks were Gianni Lancia's idea. Not only did they ensure the car's weight distribution did not alter during a race as the fuel was used up, they also, as wind-tunnel testing with a model showed, improved the car's aerodynamics. It's not unreasonable to suggest the Lancia was more technically advanced than the Mercedes.

Fittingly, the Lancias looked terrific ➤

Lancia



Lancia's transporter could carry four cars, but Lancia only took three D50s to the Spanish GP in Barcelona

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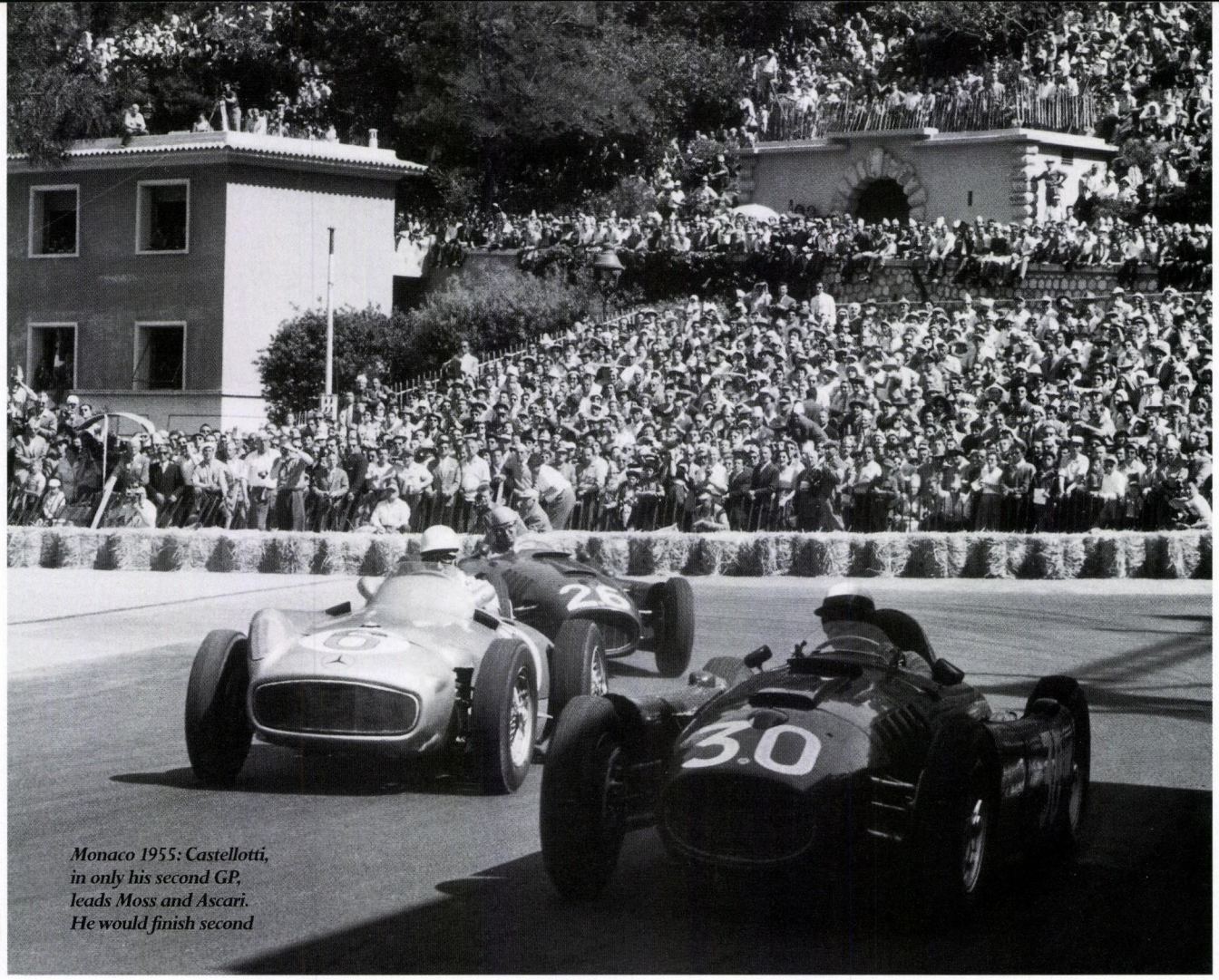
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9M22



Monaco 1955: Castellotti, in only his second GP, leads Moss and Ascari. He would finish second

GPP Archives

and Ascari immediately showed they had the performance to match, taking pole at Pedralbes, one second faster than Fangio (in an unstreamlined Mercedes), with Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari) a further 1.5sec back. Had Mercedes met their match?

Yes, but at the hands of Ferrari, not Lancia. Going into lap nine, Ascari was leading by almost 20sec when he had to retire with oil in the clutch. Villoresi suffered a bearing failure on the opening lap, and Hawthorn went on to win, ahead of Luigi Musso's Maserati 250F and Fangio.

Nonetheless, Fangio was the new world champion, and Mercedes had won five of the seven GPs they entered (including the non-championship Berlin GP). But for all its much-vaunted superiority (spaceframe chassis, fuel injection, desmodromic valves and aerodynamics), W196 had not proved significantly faster than the 'old-fashioned' Ferraris and Maseratis. Would the Lancias see them all off in 1955? The answer was to be a resounding no – but it had nothing to do with technology.

The first GP of 1955 was in Buenos Aires, where Ascari and Villoresi were joined by young compatriot, Eugenio Castellotti. At Mercedes, Stirling Moss had been brought in to give Fangio better back-up.

The Argentine race was a disaster for Lancia – and a foretaste of things to come. In 52-degree heat, only the remarkable 44-year-old Fangio drove throughout – and thus took a deserved victory. Everyone else stopped to hand over to a relief driver. Of Lancia's pilots, Villoresi retired on lap two with carburettor trouble; Castellotti was overcome by the heat and handed his D50 to Villoresi who crashed out; Ascari took the lead from Fangio on lap three, but went off on lap 22 and retired.

There was a four-month gap before the next championship grand prix, at Monaco. Lancia took the opportunity to revise their car considerably, increasing the wheelbase, improving the oil cooling system, and fitting new drum brakes. The developments were then tried out in minor GPs at Turin, Pau and Naples. Ascari won the first, a fractured brake pipe cost him victory in the second, and he won again in the latter. Buoyed by this, Gianni Lancia sent five cars to Monaco. His largesse, however, belied the parlous state of his company.

'Within days of this race, the sport was plunged into turmoil'

In the middle of May, grand prix teams converged on Monte Carlo for the first time since 1950, and with Mercedes-Benz, Lancia, Ferrari, Maserati, Gordini and Vanwall gracing the glamorous Principality, it seemed F1 racing was entering a golden age. Yet within days of this race, the sport was plunged into turmoil, first by the death of Ascari, then by the collapse of the Lancia company, and finally by the horrendous tragedy at Le Mans, where more than 80 spectators were killed.

Meanwhile, the Monaco GP provided one of the biggest upsets of all time, being won by Maurice Trintignant, whose Ferrari had started in 12th position on the grid. The three Mercedes retired (although Fangio and Moss were almost a lap ahead of Ascari when they went out), and while three of the four Lancias finished, they were in second, fifth and sixth positions. The ➤



Alberto Ascari's Lancia is hoisted out of the Monaco harbour, where it plunged during the 1955 grand prix

courtesy of Chris Nixon

other D50 finished up in the harbour when fading brakes caught out Ascari at the chicane and the Lancia dived into the water. Fortunately, cockpits were wide in those days, and Alberto swam to safety. Despite the freak result, Mercedes-Benz had shown they had the legs of the Lancias (and, indeed, everything else) while they were running. Clearly, the red cars had some catching up to do.

Sadly, they never had the chance. Just four days after Monaco, Ascari was at Monza to watch the testing for a sportscar race and, on the spur of the moment, borrowed a helmet, some goggles and a Ferrari from Castellotti. Unseen by anyone, he crashed at Curva Vialone and was crushed to death.

For Gianni Lancia it was the end of the road. His company had been in deep financial trouble for some time. Sending five cars by air to Argentina may have seemed like a grand gesture, but he was spitting into the wind. The death of Ascari was the final straw and it was announced that Lancia were withdrawing from racing.

As if to keep the faith with Ascari (but, in fact, to claim much-needed starting money), two cars were sent to Spa for the Belgian GP, and Castellotti gave a bravura qualifying performance to put a D50 on pole position, in memory of his hero. In the race, though, he was overwhelmed by Fangio and Moss and eventually retired with transmission trouble. And that was the end of Lancia racing.

But not quite: there was no question of scrapping the D50s, which still held so much promise. All the cars and spares were offered to Officine Maserati, but their 250F looked like a future winner, so they declined. The Italian Automobile Club then decided to give the cars to Scuderia Ferrari – a bitter pill for Ferrari, whose cars were nothing like winners in 1955. But when Fiat chipped in with 50 million lire over five years, he swallowed hard and accepted, though with a singular lack of grace, not once mentioning Gianni Lancia's achievements.

There was one, final indignity to come.

'Lancia D50s easily outqualified the Ferraris at the Italian GP'

For the Italian GP at Monza, Ferrari sent four Lancias and three Ferrari Supersqualos. Driven by Castellotti, Giuseppe Farina and Villoresi, the D50s easily outqualified the Ferraris of Umberto Maglioli, Hawthorn and Trintignant.

However, the Lancias had been designed to run on Pirelli tyres, whereas Ferrari were contracted to Englebert. The Belgian company insisted that, as the Lancias were now officially Ferraris, they had to run on their rubber, with the result that several treads were thrown at high speed. Englebert had refused to allow the D50s to revert to Pirellis, so Ferrari withdrew them from the race.

But was that the whole story? The very idea that Enzo Ferrari (of all people) would take orders from a Belgian tyre maker at Monza (of all places) stretches credulity more than somewhat – unless it suited his purpose! And in this instance it most certainly did: the Lancias were much faster than his own cars, and would doubtless have been even faster on Pirellis – and in front of thousands of *tifosi* and the world's press, too.

In effect then, the remarkable D50s were not raced because they were too good for their own good. Gianni Lancia's dream had become a nightmare. M

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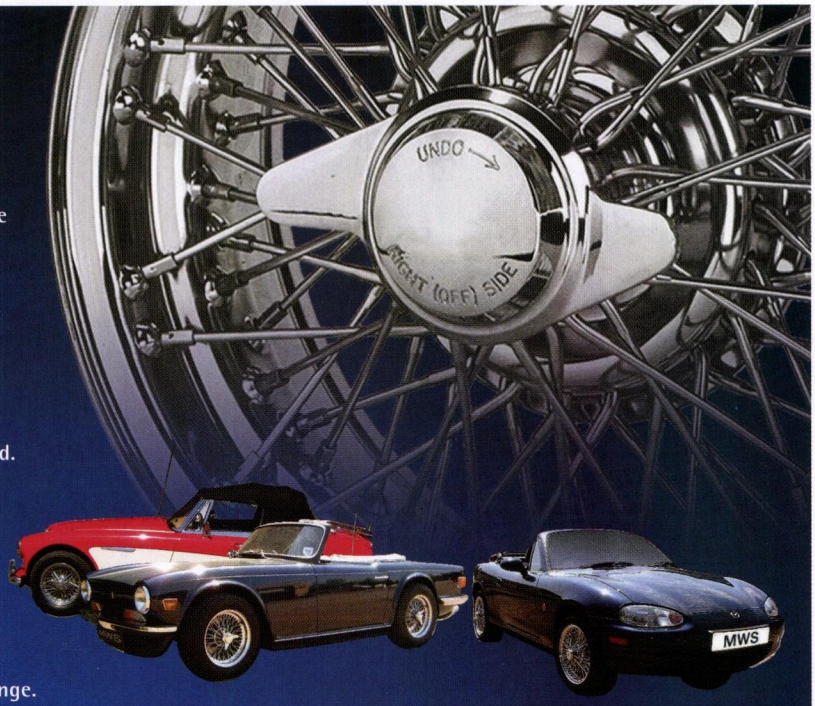
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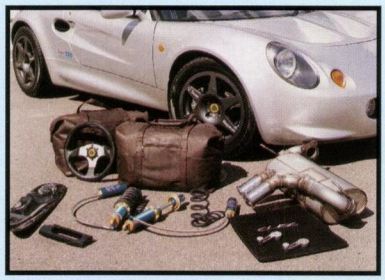
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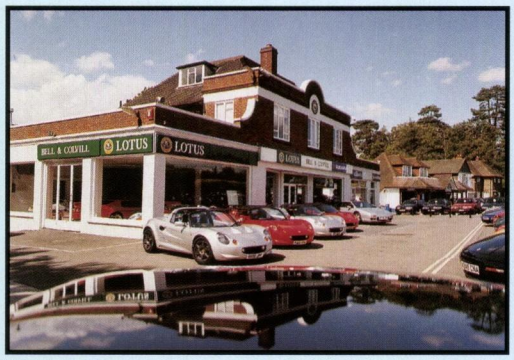
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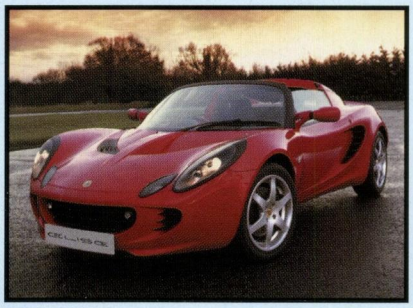
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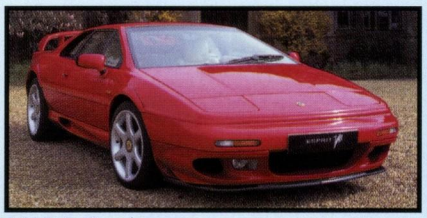
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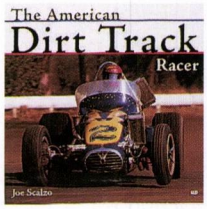


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THE AMERICAN DIRT TRACK RACER

BY JOE SCALZO
ISBN 0 7603 1017 3
Published by MBI, £29.99



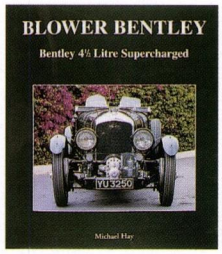
A book that deserves to be read out loud. Scalzo's colourful language has a 'to hell with the rules' feel, just like this rowdy branch of racing. With his trademark off-the-wall metaphors and cheery insensitivity, Scalzo draws a crude, raw, intense sport which threw up great names like Foyt and Andretti, but also killed and scorched plenty.

A dirt-track reporter himself since the 1950s, Scalzo tells it to you first-hand, and reveals the hidden official censorship: the national press campaigned to stifle this lethal game, but those scribblers and snappers who dared report any deaths were cold-shouldered, even beaten. Official incompetence and bullying were rife.

After the big laughs, great stories and lavish pictures, Scalzo finishes with the cold shower of reality. It makes for great reading. **Gordon Cruickshank**

BLOWER BENTLEY

BY MICHAEL HAY
ISBN 0 9535827 0 2
Published by Number One Press, £65.00

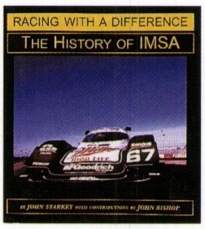


Although Hay covered them in *Bentley Factory Cars*, this expansion must be the definitive word on Blowers. Majoring on the five works cars, Hay sets the scene with portraits of Birkin, Villiers and Dorothy Paget. Obsessive about details, but not adulatory about these legendary machines, Hay is frank about Villiers (who claimed superchargers were his invention). Sifting a vast range of sources, he contrasts differing stories to draw his own thoughtful conclusions, but he is equally good on the science – at last I now understand just how Cozette and Powerplus superchargers differ.

Crisp photos – both period and recent colour – plus useful diagrams complement this perfect blend of fastidious research and readability. **Gordon Cruickshank**

RACING WITH A DIFFERENCE – THE HISTORY OF IMSA

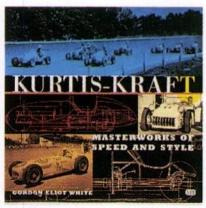
BY JOHN STARKEY
ISBN 0 9703259 1 6
Published by Menoshire, £69.99



What a contrast to the story above. These two eras of American racing virtually overlapped, yet while the dirt-trackers clung to pre-war technology, IMSA eventually pitted the best European machines like Porsche's 962 against home-grown heavy metal. Starkey's year-by-year overview plus results approach is thorough rather than gripping, but with the help of IMSA's 'godfather' John Bishop, and quotes from drivers and team members, we get an insider's view of how a breakaway outfit came to run some brilliantly close racing and encourage technical creativity, from the early streetcar classes to the final big-dollar prototypes of Nissan and Toyota. IMSA even inspired Jaguar's comeback, thanks to Bob Tullius and his Group 44 GTP cars. An appendix describing all the cars is a plus, but the interminable pages of results get in the way of the story, which occupies only a fraction of this 1100-page tome. **Gordon Cruickshank**

KURTIS-KRAFT – MASTERWORKS OF SPEED AND STYLE

BY GORDON ELIOT WHITE
ISBN 0 7603 0910 8
Published by MBI, £29.99



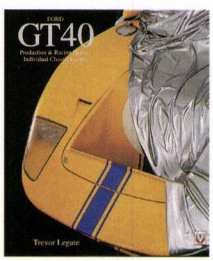
In the decade after WWII, Frank Kurtis was the most significant and prolific race-car builder in the US, with 110 Indycars (five winners) and hundreds of others to his credit. What is easy to miss is his wonderful eye for style.

Tutored by Harley Earl, GM's style guru, Kurtis had a flair for bending sheet metal into seductive, dramatic curves. Some of his pre-war custom road cars are stunning, and his race cars were always handsome. This book also reveals a forward-thinker who introduced the low, offset roadster which ruled Indy in the 1950s, and experimented with aerodynamics and disc brakes, but suffered the establishment's lack of interest in his new ideas.

Covering sportscars, midgets, dragsters and even rocket-sleds, this makes interesting reading. But while you'd expect a tight US perspective, it's just not tenable to claim Kurtis invented tube-frame chassis, nor state: "now every purpose-built racecar in the world uses a tubing framework". **Gordon Cruickshank**

FORD GT 40

BY TREVOR LEGATE
ISBN 1 903706 11 4
Published by Veloce Publishing, £45.00

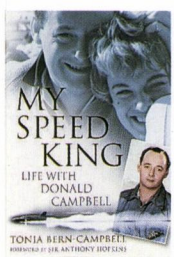


If there's anything new in this book, I missed it. The oft-told story is there, but there are no revealing insights or quotations from the main players. Pictures are plentiful, but the layout's crude; photographs overlap and period publicity material is poorly reproduced.

Legate begins with Shelby and the Cobras and goes right up to the 'run-on' cars, as well as discussing the huge replica market, but he throws away a historian's objectivity by describing one replica as "virtually a GT40, lacking only an original chassis number". Replicas can be well engineered, but they are still not real, which should be the defining view in any marque history. Included are chassis histories, which though not comprehensive may serve as quick reference. **Gordon Cruickshank**

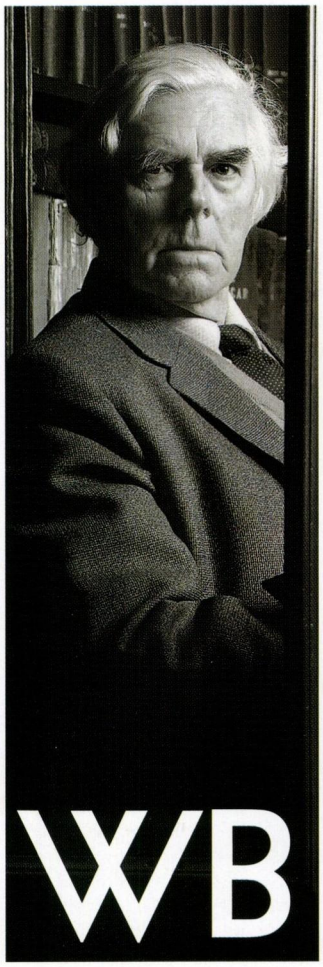
MY SPEED KING

BY TONIA BERN-CAMPBELL
ISBN 0 7509 2931 6
Published by Sutton Publishing, £17.99



Donald Campbell's private life could have fuelled the tabloids of today and completely overshadowed his record-breaking exploits. But he was famous when the public craved stories of achievement, not adultery, when the press enjoyed building a hero. When they eventually turned on him, it was for lack of results, not morals.

Tonia Campbell, his third wife, reveals the stress of living with a driven man. At first her frankness about their many affairs looks a little sensational, but gradually she makes it plain that this irascible, yet understanding man would never have fitted into an ordinary marriage. This is not Campbell's biography, but the story of their life together; yet it shows why his supporters became devoted to him and how she learned to handle a tough job. **Gordon Cruickshank**





The '200' Darracq made regular beach speed runs, here depicted by artist Gordon Crosby

Autocar

Darracq on the way back

I HAVE SEEN SOME BIG RACING CARS, BUT WHEN GERALD Firkins let me look at the legendary 1905 200hp Darracq, I was rendered almost speechless, the more so when I realised the incredible, and commendable, attention to original detail which has gone into its rebuild.

To see a very famous racing car of this power with no bodywork, just two bucket seats, no bulkhead to isolate the occupants from the huge flywheel and enormous engine, the comparatively flimsy chassis, the wicked exhaust stubs, and the polished copper water tank which tops everything, really takes one's breath away. If Mr Firkins – a VCC and VSCC member and a pre-war Darracq enthusiast – hadn't undertaken this immense task of engineering, every part to mirror the original, we would never again have had the chance to contemplate – and eventually, I hope, to hear – one of the most exciting of such cars.

Alexandre Darracq, having been notably successful with his racing cars, decided that the LSR was the ultimate goal. His 100hp car raised this to 104mph, and in order not to lose the title, the fearsome 200hp car was built. In December 1905, it was taken to the Arles-Salon, where Victor Héméry, with a brave riding mechanic alongside, achieved an official 109.65mph. In America, it clocked over 122mph at Ormond Beach, driven by Demogeot.

Sir Algernon Lee Guinness was then apparently persuaded by Lord Annesley to buy the '200'. Sir Algernon and his brother Kenelm Lee Guinness (later to race for Sunbeam and STD) used to test their new possession on the Hartford Bridge Flats, watched by enthralled policemen. In 1906, Sir Algernon covered a kilometre at the Ostend speed trials at 117.7mph, gave a demo at Skegness, beat a 90hp Napier at Blackpool, and set FTD at the Gaillon hill climb. In 1907, an American, Dugal Ross, tried to buy it; he was given a timed 115.4mph demo at Brooklands, but was said to be too frightened to close the £2000 deal.

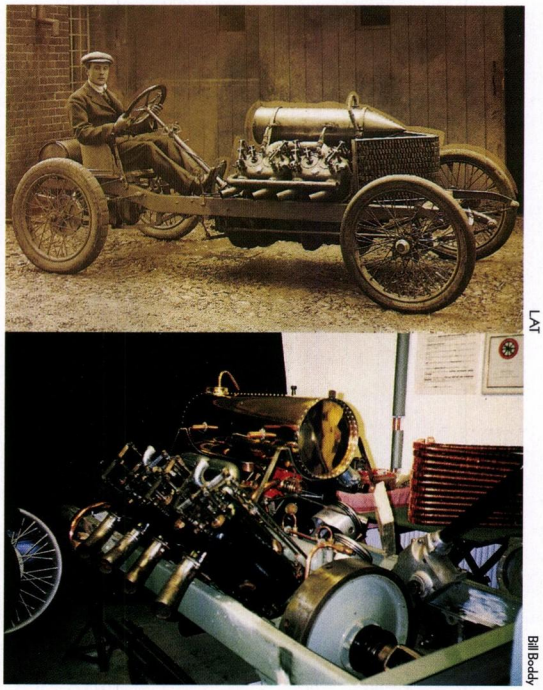
With its 8ft 6in wheelbase, two speeds, total-loss lubrication, etc, and weighing a mere 19.25cwt, the '200' was a sprint rather than a track car, and that October, at Saltburn, 'Algy' set the 'Yorkshire sand-racing record' to 111.84mph. In 1908, again at Saltburn, he raised the 1km

record to 121.57mph – far quicker than Newton's 90hp Napier – Kenelm, the intrepid passenger, operating petrol feed and oil pressure pumps without proper handholds.

The Guinnesses had a stable of racing cars, other Darracqs included, and around about this time the chassis of the '200' was cut off behind the seats and ahead of the engine (possibly intended for a boat).

When Algernon died in 1954, the engine was in Cookham Dean. Anthony Heal, knowing Mr Firkins' interest in Darracqs, told him, and Lady Guinness gave him this great one-off power unit.

I was privileged to be shown it and to see the quite remarkable manner in which Mr Firkins has made replacement parts exactly to original specifications. The engine has four bi-blocks at 90deg, with overhead valves, the pushrods and rockers exposed, the exhaust rockers some eight inches long! The oil tank is triangular to fit between the seat backs. Two carburettors nestle between the cylinder blocks, the heads being cross-flow semi-hemis. From photographs, the secrets of the '200' were exposed: the spokes of its wire wheels, for instance, were seen to be a millimetre larger than usual, so ones of this size were made. Forked conrod bolts, flat headed for clearance, had unusual threads, and although modern bolts could have been substituted, instead the originals have been properly copied. On the workshop bench were the massive crown-and-pinion for the two-speed back axle (no differential) and the vee-shaped radiator (9600 correct size washers space the tubes).



LAT

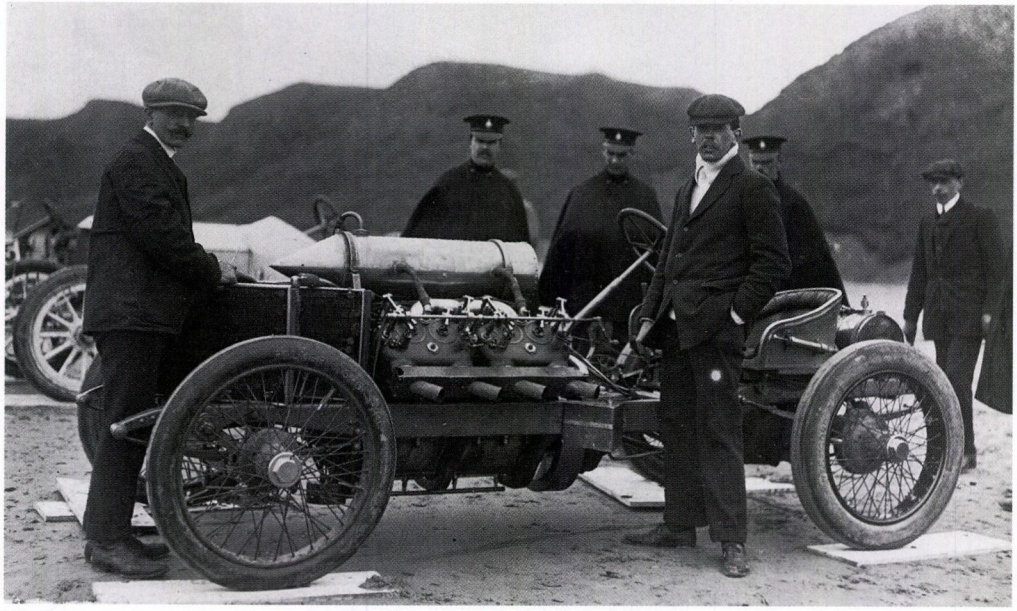
Bill Boddy

Top: At Blackpool in 1906. Above: Faithful restoration work on the unique 25,432cc V8 engine is extremely impressive

The axle ratio is 1.2:1 and the engine power is estimated to be 265bhp at 1500rpm. It was usual for drivers to change up at about 30mph to spare the gearbox and cone clutch. Aluminium pistons have replaced the cracked cast-iron originals. The engine size is now 25,432cc.

It has been a costly and long undertaking by this dedicated enthusiast.

Shame on me. I had been wondering in what chassis the engine was to be installed – a vintage Vauxhall or Bentley, perhaps? But of course, Mr Firkins has replicated correctly a new frame, springs and transmission, etc. The car is almost unbelievably impressive, and it will be absolutely wonderful when the engine is once again fired up



National Motor Museum

Sir Algernon Lee Guinness with the 200hp Darracq, pictured at Saltburn where, in 1908, it did a run at 121.57mph

miscellany

FROM A READER IN South Africa comes a defence of post-vintage cars. He has had his MG TC for 53 years. In 1949 TC/7217 cost £470.10 shillings, and apart from a water thermometer and a Derrington steering wheel, it is original. Other than routine servicing, it has been notably reliable. It was repainted 20 years ago, and by 1949 had done 156,000 miles. For a time it was given a Shorrocks supercharger but this alarmed the brakes. Used for speed trials and raced at Kyalami, it continues to be the pride of a stable containing also a Kawasaki 550, a Caterham 7, a modified Mini and a Dino.

* * *

THE NATIONAL JOWETT Rally is due at Norwich from May 31 to June 3.

* * *

ANOTHER AERO-ENGINED CAR IS being built, using a Rolls-Royce Eagle engine, R-R 20 chassis, R-R PII gearbox, a Delage front axle and Minerva brakes.

* * *

GOOD NEWS, IF RATHER TOO late, is that British Heritage has announced that the whole of Brooklands is now scheduled as an Historic Monument. It means that it now has protection against damage and that it will be exceedingly difficult to obtain permission to build any more new buildings there. While there is no obligation to maintain the track, it would be a criminal offence actually to damage it. However, the erection by Helical Bar of office blocks and a multi-storey car park very close to the Paddock and Clubhouse proceeds, and Grand Prix Academy have planning permission to run their karting school and to put up Portakabin offices in the centre of the estate, which will not be rescinded until 2006.









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Case of the lost aero car

JUST WHAT WAS THE EXCITING AERO-engined car the late Lord Donegall had when he was up at Oxford? A Sherlock Holmes addict, Donegall edited the Baker Street Journal, but when, 50 years later, he decided to write his autobiography, he could remember little about the car.

The car was known as an HS and Donegall believed it might have been the famous Count Zborowski Higham Special. But his inability to recall the number of cylinders, type of engine, or whether his car had had chain or shaft drive made identification a problem for me back in 1973, when Lord Donegall was living at Vaud, in Switzerland. Having ruled out all known aero-engined giants, I concluded that His Lordship's car must have had a Hall-Scott engine.

The Zborowski legend (an account of which should appear soon in the late David Wilson's comprehensive book) is that the Count built his first famous Chitty-Bang-Bang in 1920, and that it won its first race at Brooklands in 1921. But there was a little-known earlier aero-engined car with which he was associated.

Its exact date is unknown, but it was around 1919 that Zborowski had seen a big Itala chassis over at racing driver Giulio Foresti's premises in Bryanston Square, London, and had brought there a Hall-Scott aero-engine (said to be of 250hp/ 13.5-litres) to have it installed therein. This took four months, and when Foresti made a test run round the Square, the prop-shaft broke away from the gearbox, and carried with it the flywheel and brake gear. The HS crashed through Foresti's vehicle-lift gates and embedded itself in the far wall.

Zborowski decided to take the car away as it was, either to his Higham estate down in Kent, or perhaps to the British Mercedes Motor Co in Long Acre, WC2, where in the war he used to call upon the manager, Walter Dewis. When Clive Gallop arrived at Higham to help build the first Chitty, I assume the HS would have been sold.

A friend who shared rooms with Donegall remembered how he had had to delay dinner, waiting for the arrival of the HS which Donegall was collecting from London, and how it had a notice on the front: 'For Registration', presumably to draw attention away from the fact that this rather obvious car was untaxed.

Donegall had then apparently had the car registered, indexed with the number FC1799 (asked the engine size he didn't know it and was modestly taxed in consequence).

I have no idea whether the accompanying picture is of Donegall's car. The Mercedes(?) radiator could have been supplied by Zborowski with the HS engine, or as a replacement for that damaged in Foresti's prang, while the London number may be from the Itala, before the Oxford redeclaration.

If not, whose car was this?



Is this the mystery aero-engined car Lord Donegall had when at Oxford?

Bill Boddy

miscellany

THE VSCC'S MEASHAM NIGHT rally attracted 49 entries, with only four non-starting. Well organised and blessed with clear nocturnal conditions, it was won outright by Mike Tomlin, with Nigel Raeburn navigating, in their 1932 12/60



Tony Bond

Alvis (above), gaining them the Dames Longworth Trophy. The Measham Trophy went to John Potter, with Ian North directing, in a 1927 12/50 Alvis, and the Jeddere Fisher Trophy was awarded to Adrian Ducker, with Anita Littler map-reading.

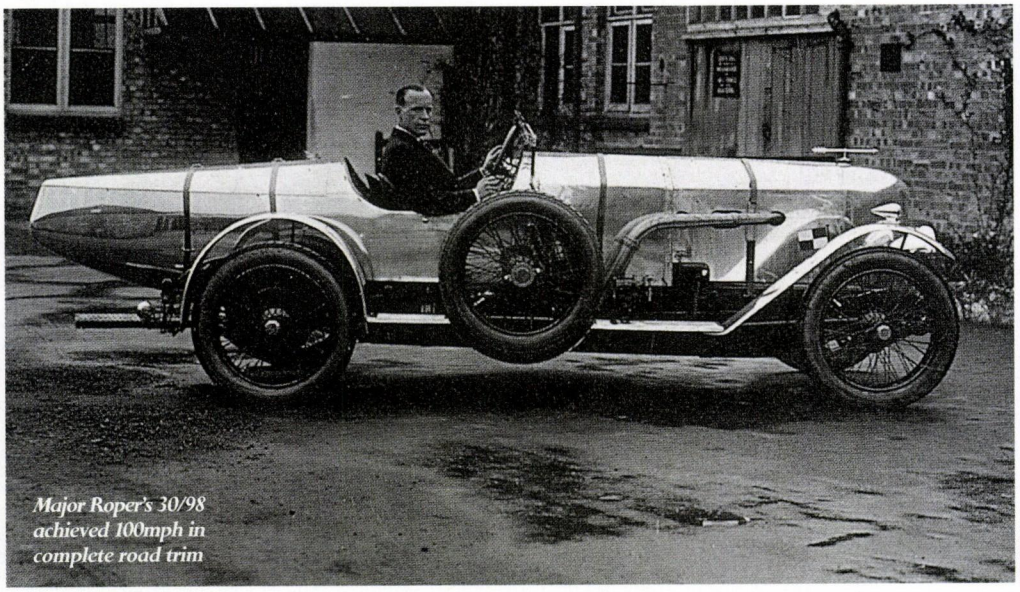
First-Class Awards to:
R Parsons (1927 Frazer Nash),
Mark Garfitt (1937 FN-BMW).
Second-Class Awards to:
F Adams (1932 Riley 9),
K Boosman (1922 Dodge),
C Podger (1926 12/50 Alvis).
Third-Class Awards to:
J Gill (1929 Lea-Francis),
P Wardle (1932 Riley 9).
Retirements: a 4.3 Alvis and an Austin 12.

* * *

THE NEW SECRETARY OF the Pre-War Austin 7 Club is John Barks, 73 Cow Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham, NG7 3BB.

* * *

THE EX-REG MUNDAY 30/98 Vauxhall (NM6006) is being rebuilt, being reasonably original, although a new body skin and engine were fitted in the early 1950s. The new owner's father and grandfather owned 30/98 Wensum RU26, thought to have been owned by boat-racer Betty Carstairs.

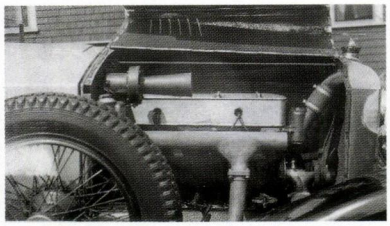


Major Roper's 30/98 achieved 100mph in complete road trim

all: Bill Boddy

30/98: a hard act to follow

WHEN THE PRODUCTION RUN OF Vauxhall 30/98s – a car which was the epitome of VSCC ambitions – ran out, there was much speculation as to what Luton would follow it with. General Motors' takeover was imminent, making Vauxhall's future unpredictable. Would they follow Laurence Pomeroy's masterpiece with another car of like appeal and performance?



Final 30/98s pushed out remarkable 120bhp

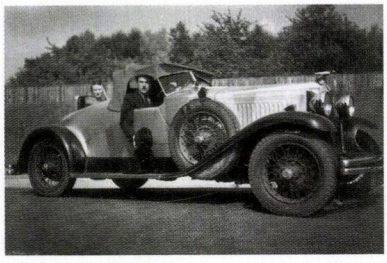
A decent 30/98 or 'Red Label' 3-litre Bentley was good for about 80mph, and stripped 30/98s were said to be guaranteed to do 100mph. The quickest 30/98 lapped Brooklands at 114.23mph, a less-hot one, of normal engine size, at 112.47mph, and in 1953 Plowman's did 107 miles in the hour. So what would General Motors come up with?

C E King, who had designed the ohv engine for the OE 30/98 in 1923, was anxious that this so-famous Vauxhall should continue in improved form. But he was up against American ideas. In 1925, GM took over. They were concerned with a mass-production market, catered for by Vauxhall's Cadet, the big 20/60 just a stop-gap. There was, however, a return to something sporting, when the Hurlingham emerged in 1928. It was a good car but one scorned then by vintage-car folk. Times change, and now at least four of these Vauxhalls have VSCC membership.

The US styling of this sportscar revival was clear. Apparently, it was on the drawing board before GM arrived, its gearbox internals, for example, the same as those of the 23/60 dating back to 1922. The six-cylinder 2762cc push-rod ohv unit developed 80bhp at 3400rpm, with enlarged ports, a 6:1 compression ratio, Zenith 42U carburettor, and increased valve-lift, compared to 120bhp at 3500rpm from the final 30/98s. The 1930 Hurlingham had a nine-bearing crankshaft, and bath-tub combustion chambers. The car had a wheelbase of 10ft 3in, Marles steering, an axle-ratio of 4.18:1 and stiffened springs.

In 1930 MOTOR SPORT road-tested a Hurlingham. Even then it was compared with the 30/98, which by then you could buy in good order for around £50. We found the new GM Vauxhall smoother and more refined, and capable of 22, 35 and 53mph in the lower gears. It was a well-used car, which attained 70mph in top gear. The steering was thought to be a trifle low-geared, the brakes excellent, and quick cornering produced no roll. It was priced at £650. Later, the engine was bored-out to 2916cc and the cast-iron pistons changed to aluminium, which increased the speed.

Michael Sedgwick said that the age of magnificent fast tourers might be over but that the Hurlingham had the edge on many a 30/98, even if its 70mph was not accompanied by good handling. Cecil Clutton wrote that the 20/60 was of moderate price, roomy and well-braked, though undergeared– and in ordinary form, very much a family car. So although a sound enough machine in its way, the Hurlingham was an unworthy successor to the immortal 30/98.



The Hurlingham was smooth, but no 30/98

books

IN THE 1920S, PROFESSOR A M LOW DSC, who wrote articles simplifying obscure scientific facts, told us that one day the human race would lose its legs, because it would never need to go out, as it would watch continual TV, and eat food in tablet form. Aldous Huxley forecast 'smellies', cinemas in which appropriate scents would waft to the audience in company with the films. The latter has yet to happen, but the internet brings Low's prophecy nearer! Nevertheless, for the present the flow of books is as great as ever.

Brooklands Books have a new Portfolio on ***Morgan: 1968-2001*** (ISBN 185 520 5777, £24.95), which fills its 120 pages with reproductions of road test reports, etc., from most of the leading motor magazines of the time, including how I enjoyed Welsh hill roads with a new Plus 8. Shire Publications have a £3.50 mini-book by Graham Robson on ***The Ford Cortina*** (ISBN 0 7478 05199), covering the Mk1 and its competition successes. The MGCC's ***Vintage MG Yearbook 2001*** has arrived and there are some copies left at £6 post-free while supplies last. The Triple M Register has its ***40 Years Commemorative Guide*** to historic MGs of this type, which includes very fine pictures, from a 1930 12/12 M-type to a racing 1934 K3 Magnette.

The *Daily Telegraph*'s 'Honest John' has ***Mystery Motors***, 128 pages of unusual older cars from 1903 onward. The book may appeal to those with £9.99 to spare (ISBN 1 84119 430 1, Constable & Robinson, London).

From the Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust comes ***Fast Jets - the history of reheat development at Derby***, by Cyril Elliot and John Goodwin. It runs to 126 enormous landscape pages with masses of diagrams and pictures, and is available to non-members for a very modest £6.00 (ISBN 1 872922 20 1) from R-R Heritage Trust, PO Box 31, Derby, DE24 8BJ.


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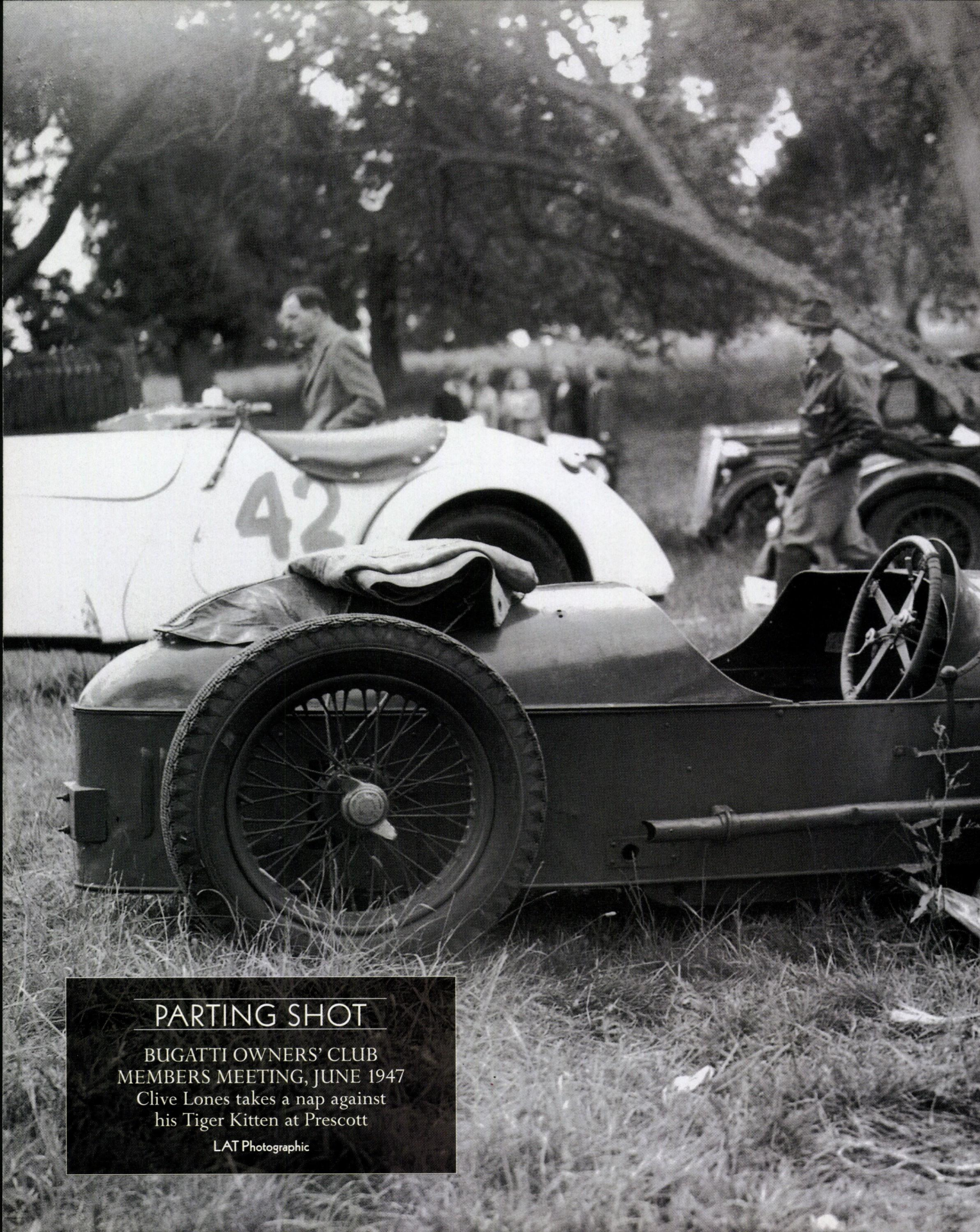

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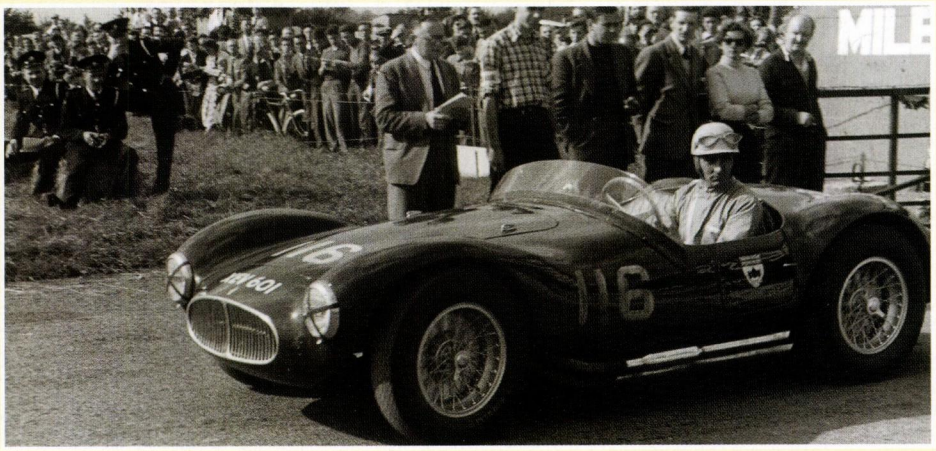
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Clive Lones takes a nap against
his Tiger Kitten at Prescott

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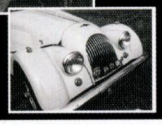
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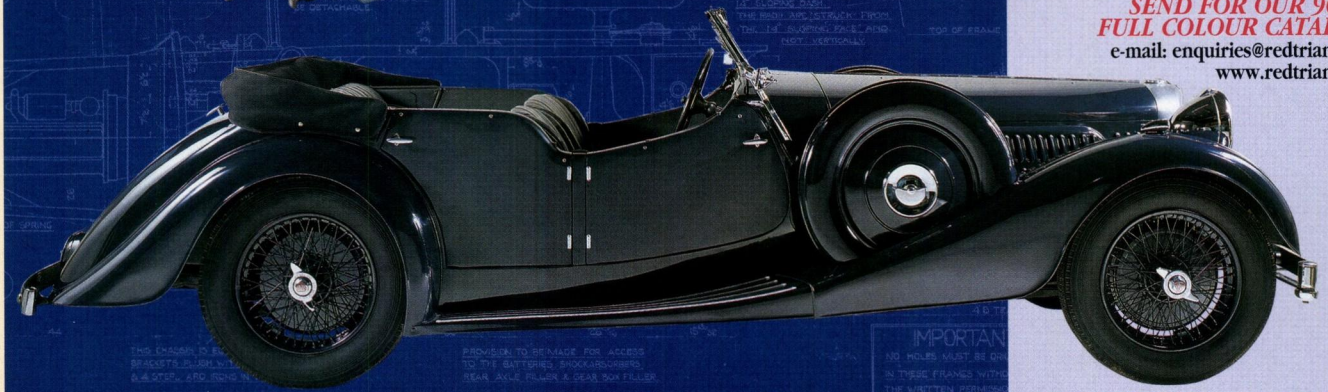
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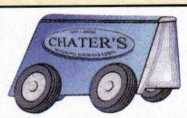
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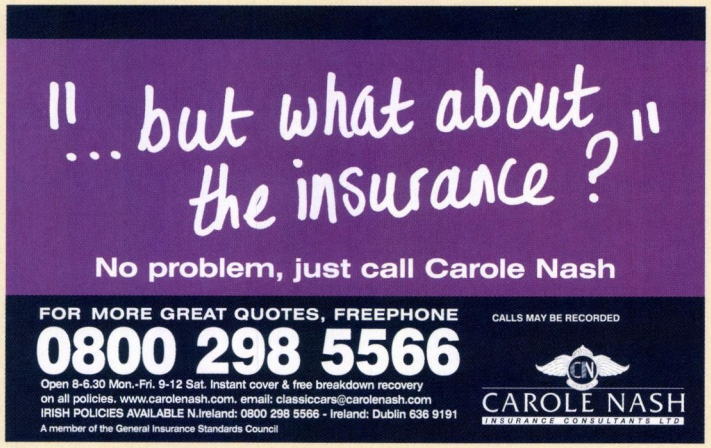


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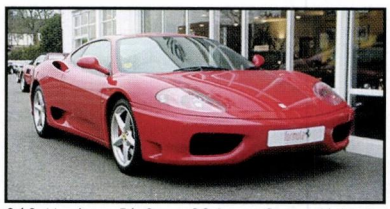


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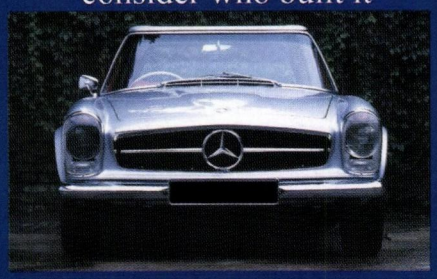
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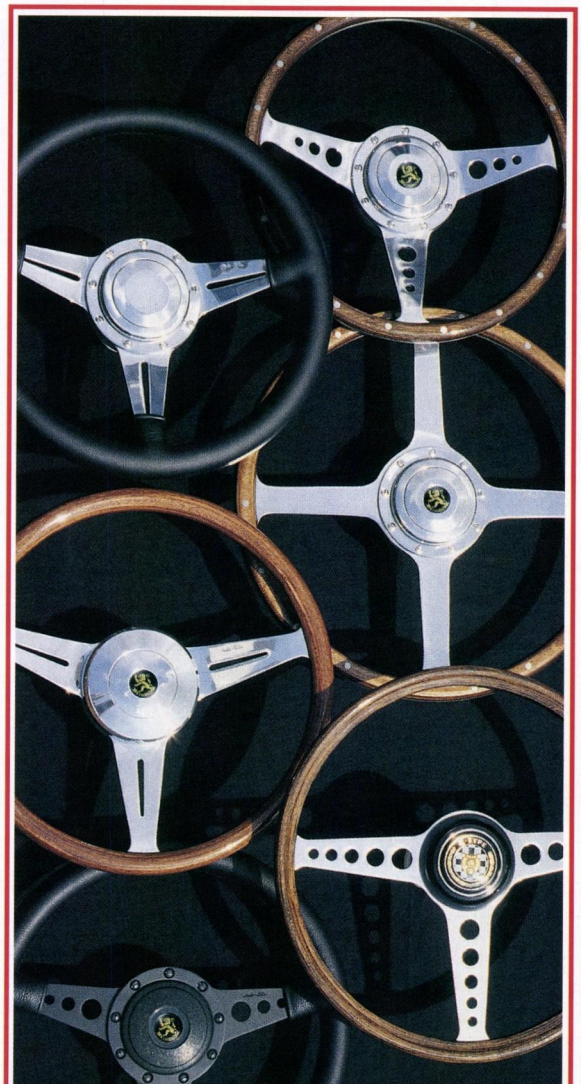
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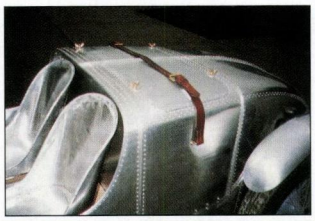
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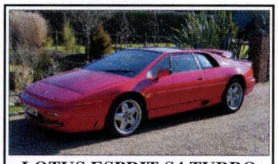
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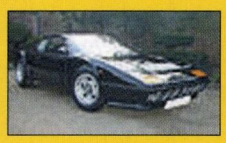
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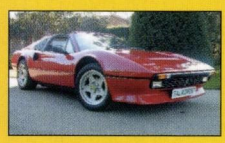
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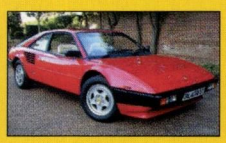
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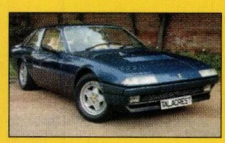
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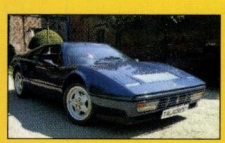
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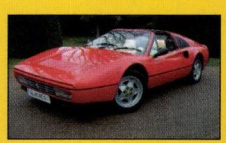
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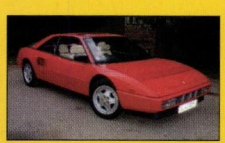
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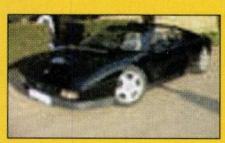
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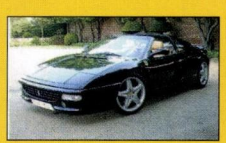
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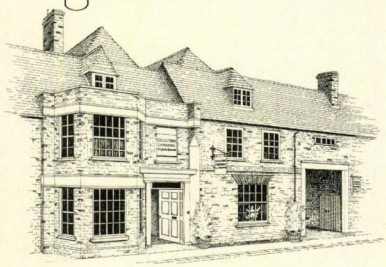
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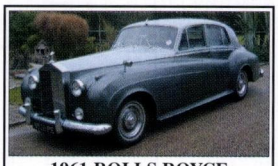
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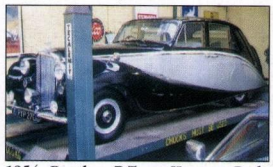
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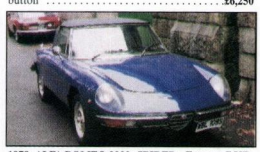
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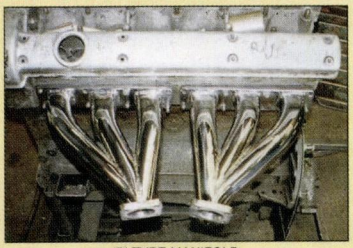
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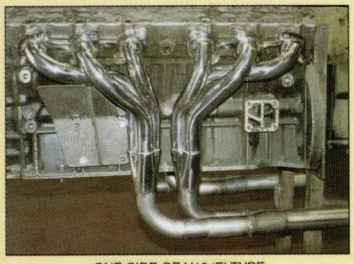
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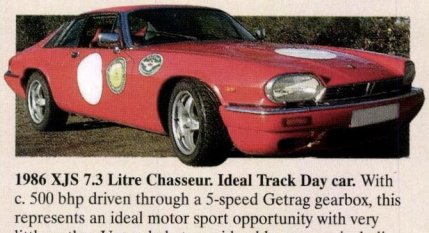
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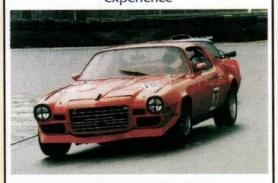


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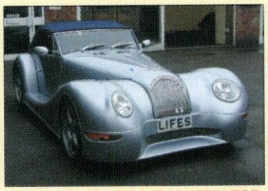
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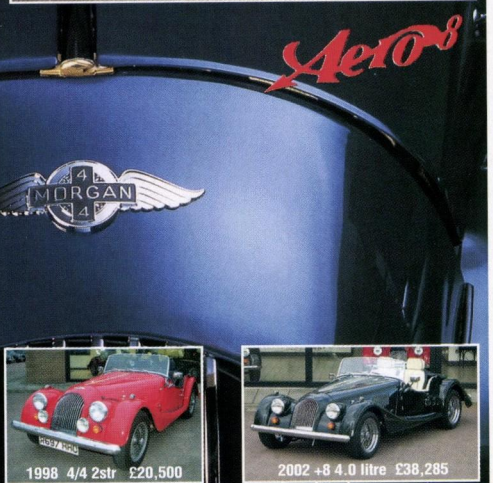
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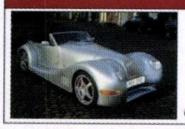
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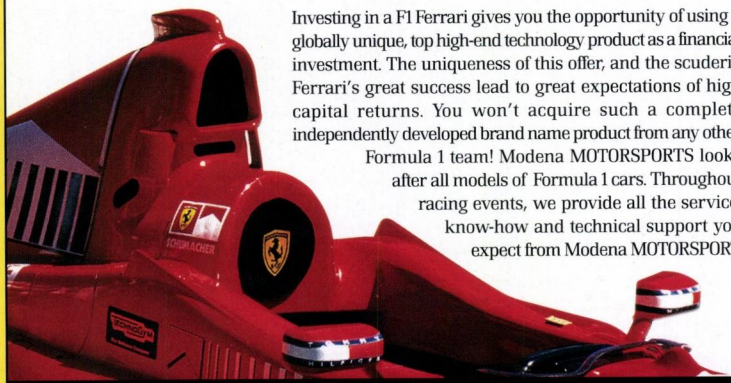
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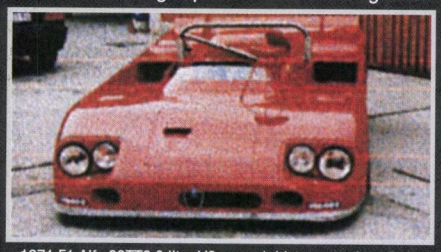
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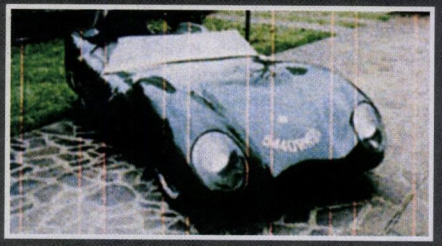
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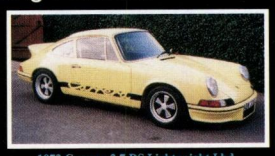
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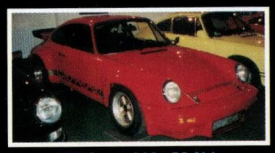
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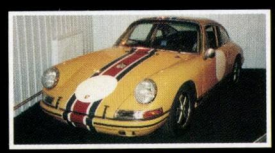
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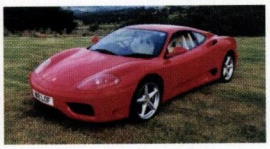
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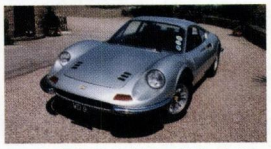
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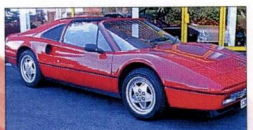
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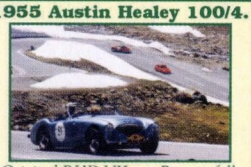
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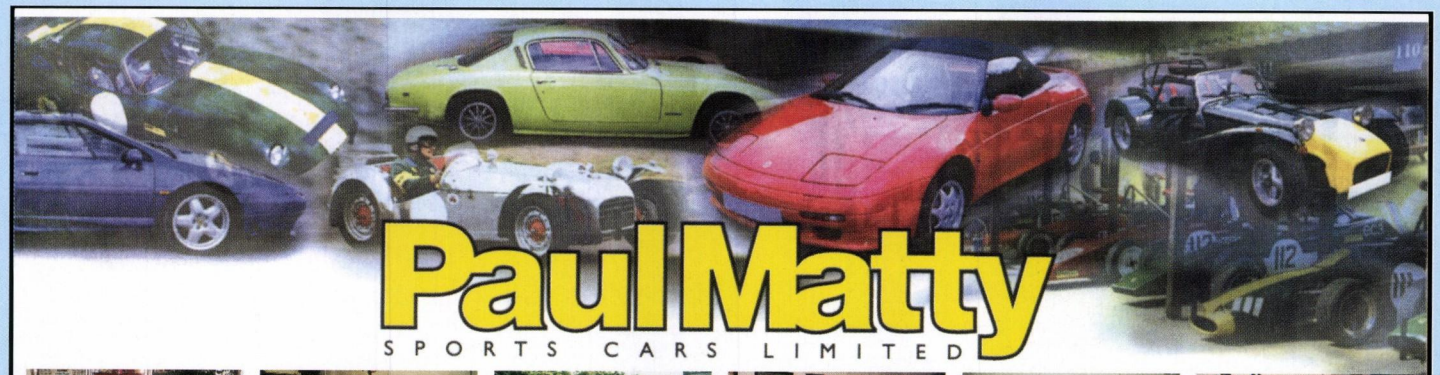
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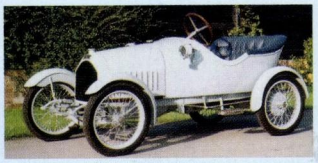
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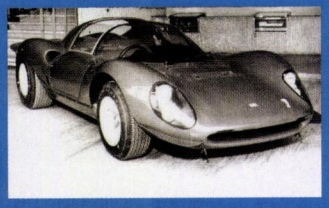
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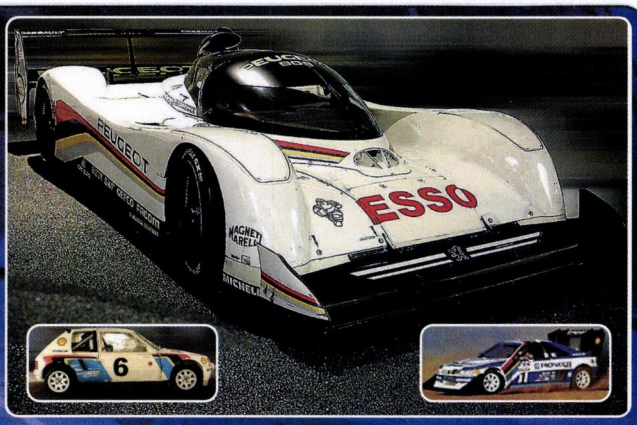
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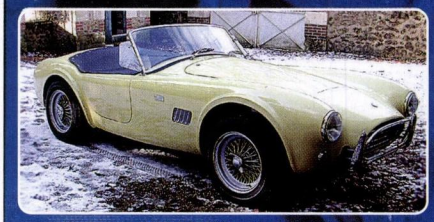
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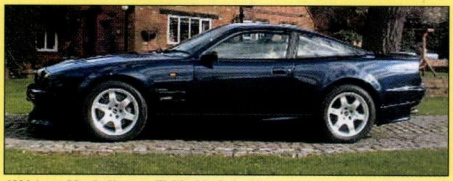
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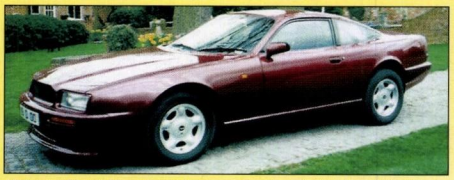
1979 Aston Martin V8 Volante. This is a beautiful example finished in Rolls-Royce Royal blue with blue mohair hood and magnolia hide interior piped blue. It is fitted with all usual refinements including automatic transmission, power hood and power steering and it also has a beautifully detailed engine bay. In the last six months this car has benefited from a complete repaint and a complete retrim and is in first class condition throughout .**£59,500**



1994 Aston Martin Vantage. Finished in Oxford blue with beige hide interior. First of this late shape Vantage series and fitted with 550 bhp twin supercharged engine and six speed manual gearbox. Used as an occaisional car throughout it's life, it has covered only 17,000 miles from new and has been serviced with Aston Martin agents. 2200rpm is 100mph in sixth gear. Great car to drive and unbelievable value at **£89,950**



1980 Aston Martin V8 Volante. Finished in Chichester blue with deep red hide interior. During the past six years this car has been the subject of a virtual rebuild in that it has been retrimmed, repainted and the engine has an unleaded conversion. Its hood has also been replaced in dark blue mohair and the car performs faultlessly. An exceptional car at only **£59,500**



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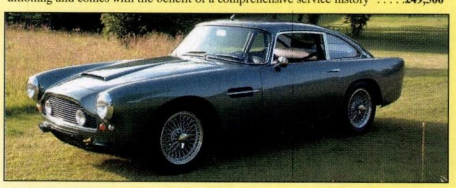
1988 Aston Martin Vantage. Finished in Royal cherry with contrasting pale grey hide piped red. Prefered by many to the later Virage model these cars are very quick, handle well and are comfortable high speed tourers. This late model example previously owned by Lord Gapp of Aylesbury has 5 speed manual transmission, Ronal wheels & air conditioning and comes with the benefit of a comprehensive service history **£49,500**



1957 Aston Martin Db 2/4 MkII (similar to above). This is a truly wonderful car to drive. It was fully restored by us in the mid nineties and was supplied to a peronal friend. He has thoroughly enjoyed the car, using it for touring and various Aston Martin Owners Club events in which it has performed very well. It is finished in BRG with beige hide interior and has recently had various upgrades including gas flowed head & larger valves, diaphram clutch & high pressure fuel pump. Also fitted with 4 point harness drivers seat belt. Very realistically priced at . .**£32,950**



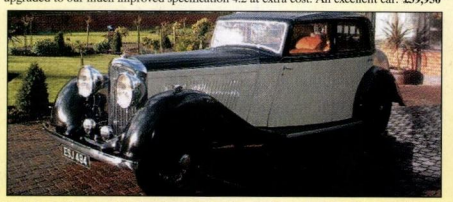
1961 Aston Martin DB4 srs3 This is a very nice example finished in burgundy with black hide.It is one of the rarer overdrive models and was delivered new with electric windows. With the car we have a considerable service history file showing it's continous maintainance over the past years. It is currently fitted with the standard 3.7 engine but this could be upgraded to our much improved specification 4.2 at extra cost. An excellent car. **£39,950**



1961 LEFT HAND DRIVE Aston Martin DB4 srs IV. Rebuilt last year in our own workshop from a bare shell to an extremely high standard. Fitted with high output 4.2 unleaded Vantage engine, uprated suspension, uprated cooling system, Torrino alloy wire wheels, stainless steel exhaust system, additional map pockets, neat roll cage trimmed in leather, increased sound proofing and completely detailed throughout. Can be reverted to RHD and supplied with bumpers if required.The build cost was in excess of £100,000. It is difficult this standard of Aston .



1962 Bentley 4 Door Continental Flying Spur with Coachwork by HJ Mulliner. This is a very nice example finished in burgundy with beige hide which has just been re-connelised. All of the wood veneer has recently been professionally refurbished and the car comes with a thick and detailed file of it's continuous history. Fitted with the tried & tested V8 Bentley engine and power assisted steering this car offers excellent luxurious period motoring at a reasonalbe cost. Offers invited based on. **£38,500**



1935 Derby Bentley 3.5 Litre Alloy Bodied Sports Saloon by Park Ward. Finished in black over ivory with full tan hide interior, this car has been the subject of considerable recent expenditure and is both mechanically and bodily in very good order throughout. Priced very reasonably for quick sale at. **£19,950**



1975 Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith. This is a very fine example of the marque and not to be confused with some of the average old shadows currently on the market. Finished in masons black with sumptuous red hide interior, the car comes with full Rolls-Royce service history and drives like a very well serviced motor car. If you are really lookintg for a nice example, this is it **£10,995**



1967 Aston Martin DB6. An exceptional example finished in BRG with full black hide interior. This is a very attractive car for the enthusiastic driver as it has been the subject of an engine upgrade to 4.2 litres and fitted with triple Weber carbs taking it to beyond Vantage specification. It is a real pleasure to drive and has recently completed an extensive European tour on which it behaved perfectly. An appreciating asset **£55,000**



1969 Aston Martin DB6. Finished in Kingfisher blue with blue hide interior, fitted with automatic transmission, power assisted steering and chrome wire wheels and is in very nice all round usable condition, £29,590 also another similar car finished in midnight blue to the same specification @ **£29,950**



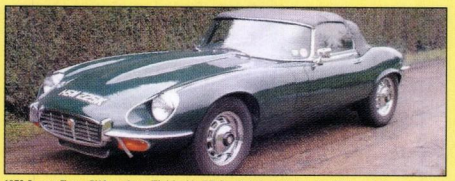
1966 Aston Martin DB6 Vantage. This is an original Vantage fitted with the ZF five speed gearbox and the car has been the subject of enormous expenditure by it's previous dutch owner. It is finished in Aston Martin racing green with black hide interior and is obviously in very fine conditure throughout **£49,950**



1962 Jaguar E-Type. This is a very nice example of an early E-type finished in dark Jaguar green with original light grey interior, body coloured wheels and radial tyres. For the last two years it has been owned by a main Jaguar distributorship, during which time it has had over £4,000 spent on it and has been used by them for show and demonstration purposes. This car is an inexpensive route into numerous classic events . .**£18,750**



1980 Aston Martin V8 Oscar India. Finished in storm red with beige hide interior. This car has been in the same ownership since 1989, during which time it has covered 21,000 miles. The car comes with full service history, mainly with Aston Martin agents and has been very well kept, priced to sell **£16,995**



1972 Jaguar E type V12 roadster. Finished in BRG with beige hide interior. This car is in near perfect condition, it has never been restored and the last owner viewed 10 other E types before purchasing this one from an elderly Scottish gentleman. Fitted with power assisted steering, chrome disc wheels and automatic transmission, 51,000 miles only from new. If you are looking for an E type as Jaguar built it and not one that has been bolted together by someone else, then look no further . .**£34,950**

We are constantly seeking more stock – telephone us if you have something to sell – Commission sales undertaken. We are situated 12 miles west of Heathrow – please phone or fax for an appointment to view. We will pick up from Heathrow by prior arrangement. Photographs and more detailed specification on request.

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1965 FRUA JAGUAR 3.8 COUPE. 1966 Geneva Show car in Opalescent Silver Blue with Champagne hide. O/D, PAS, CWW, restored in 1990/95 at a then cost in excess of £100K to the highest of standards. A unique styling exercise by Frua, never taken up by Jaguar. I know not why, other than maybe the cost of production, the whole concept is absolutely stunning, 'unrepeatable'.....POA - LHD



1966 TRIUMPH TR4A. BRG with Tan trim. Wire wheels, o/d, hard and soft surrey tops. Kenlowe fan, total re-build 93/94, full photographic record. A very nice example.....£13,995 - RHD



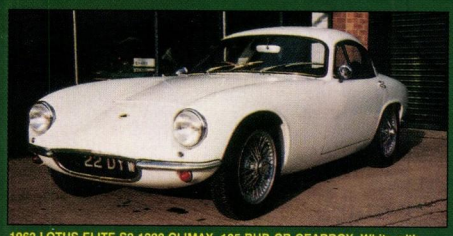
1955 JAGUAR XK140 DHC SE. Original UK car in Signal Red with Biscuit hide and weather equipment. CWW, O/D, C-Type head, disc brakes etc. Total body off restoration to the highest standard, only 700 miles since. It would be advisable to view all others first, then view the best.....£49,995 - RHD



1971 TRIUMPH TR6 150 BHP. BRG with Biscuit hide. CWW, O/D, works hard top, wood rim wheel etc. Restored to perfection some years ago. Benson & Hedges concours winner, used sparingly since, superb.....£16,995 - RHD



1964 JAGUAR 3.8 MKII AUTO SALOON. Opalescent British Racing Green with Champagne hide. Restored & uprated to the highest of standards at a cost well in excess of £60K. PAS, CWW, unleaded head, Koni shockers, LSD wood rimmed wheel, Reuter reclining seats, radio, driving lamps, large capacity radiator, Kenlow fan. An English matching number, very low mileage car that is hard to better .....£29,995 - RHD



1962 LOTUS ELITE S2 1220 CLIMAX, 105 BHP, CR GEARBOX. White with Black trim. Twin 40 DCOE carbs, both chrome and painted wires, 27K miles believed genuine. An outstanding example ready to use or race. An all time great in superb order.....£28,995 - RHD



1960 ROVER P4 100. In Rush Green with Blood Red hide. Equipped with overdrive, HRW, original radio badge bar etc. A low mileage and extremely original example in impecccable order. Very raely found in this condition.....£6,495 - RHD



1964 DAIMLER DART SP250 C SPEC. Ivory with Black hide piped Cream. Rack & pinion steering, tonneau cover, over riders, wood rimmed wheel, fuel reserve etc. History from new, unrestored but lovely .....£13,995 - RHD



1947 MGTC 1250. Black with Biscuit hide and Tan double duck weather equipment. Restored to a concours standard by a leading TC specialist. The attention to detail is second to none. The finest example I have ever had the pleasure of offering.....£19,995 - RHD



1966 JAGUAR 3.4 MK2 MOD. Golden Sand with Red hide. All syncro gearbox, original radio, wire wheels, Reuter reclining seat, HRW, 61K, 3 owners, history from new, rare to find in such original condition and very sensibly priced.....£12,995 - RHD



1973 TR6. Damson with Black trim. Equipped with CWW, radio, sports exhaust, electronic ignition, wood rimmed wheel, twin spot lamps etc. Restored from chassis up at a cost in excess of £30,000. Only 6K miles since. .....£9,995 - RHD

1963 FORD LOTUS CORTINA MKI 'A BRACKET. Team Lotus colours, just in the process of total race prep to a standard rarely achieved. Firstly a perfect corrosion free, seam welded and strengthened shell, the finest of every component available. Will be under homologated weight to F.I.A. spec. In the right hands will be unbeatable .....P.O.A.

1967 LANCIA FLAMINIA 2.8 3C. Ivory with Black hide. Last owner since 1972, a warranted 25K. 1 of only 17 RHD, out of a total production of 180. Works hard top, Nardi steering wheel, period radio. Quite unrepeatable £29,995

1963 FORD GALAXY COUPE 7 LITRE. A race prepared example in Team Willment colours, full cage, corbeau seat, 5 point harness. 550 bhp engine, T10 CR gearbox, Detroit locker, Airhart brakes, Koni shockers, 15x10 & 15x8 Shelby wheels. A perfect entry for Goodwood and possibly a race winner £25,000

1972 ROADSTER. BRG with Black hide. Total restoration on a new heritage shell. Stage 2 engine, uprated suspension, overdrive, C.W.W. etc. Built to the highest of standards, would cost in excess of £20,000 to replicate. Quite sensational £13,995

1968 MGB 2.0 ROADSTER. Signal Red with Black hide. Osselli engine, CWW, up-rated suspension, overdrive, walnut dash & door cappings, Kenlowe fan, radio Total re-build on new shell, only 16,000 miles since. An exceptional example £13,995

1963 MGB ROADSTER. Pull door handle. B.R.G. with Black hide, overdrive, wire wheels, period radio, an English example professionally restored to the highest standard, very little use since. They don't come any better.£13,995

1978 MERCEDES BENZ 450SL. Ice Blue Metallic with Biscuit trim, 90k miles, used in summer months as a second car. Auto, PAS, radio, wash wipe, boot spoiler, front fogs, top tint etc. A stunning example £12,995

1987 FORD SIERRA COSWORTH 3DR. Polar White with Anthracite cloth. 3 owners, 50k, FSH, original unmodified, unpainted and simply stunning. I have not seen a better example.....£8,995

1973 MGB GT V8 (CB). Damask Red with Blue Grey hide. A total bare metal re-build was carried out in 1994 including upgrades to engine, suspension and interior. Equipped with minilite wheels, overdrive, webasto sunroof, CD player etc. An outstanding example.....£7,995

1991 H REG JAGUAR XJS V12 LE MANS NO 15. In metallic Flamenco Red with Magnolia hide piped Red. 70,000 miles, Jaguar time serviced history, 16" cross spoke alloys, elec sports seats, front and rear spoilers, twin head lamps, etc. A stunning example, one of only 250 produced.....£7,495

1972 TRIUMPH SPITFIRE MKIV. In Magenta with Black trim. A total body off chassis restoration carried out 96/97 to the highest standard, very little use since. Only three owners from new and low mileage. They don't come any better £6,995

1978 PILGRIM FAMILY TOURER. Finished in Primrose with contrasting Black interior. This fine example is fitted with the 2.3 V6 engine and Cortina running gear. Built to an exacting standard and totally detailed throughout. An awful lot of fun.....£6,995

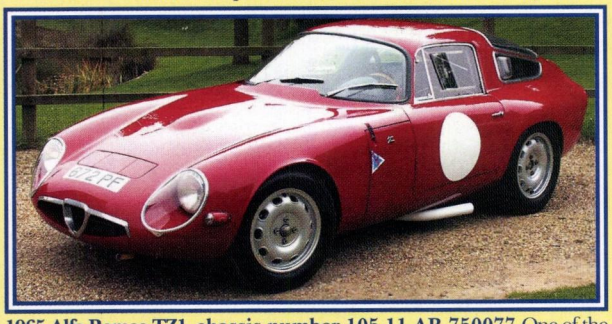
1964 MINI COOPER 1275S. Blue, White roof, Black trim. 1340 eng, minilite wheels, twin tanks, Monza fillers, wood rimmed wheel. Not for the faint hearted.....£4,995

1973 ROVER 2000 SC MANUAL. Tobacco leaf with Biscuit trim. 4 owners, 64k miles with extensive service history, radio, HRW, reclining seats. A very nice example.....£1,995

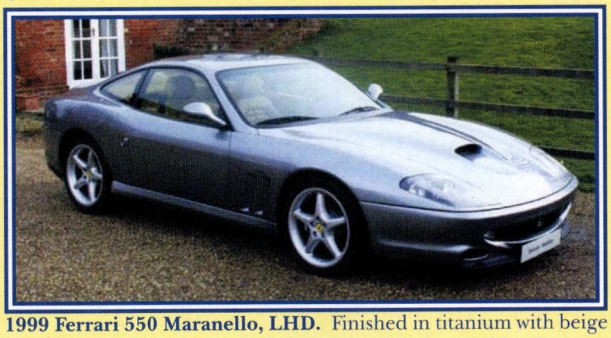
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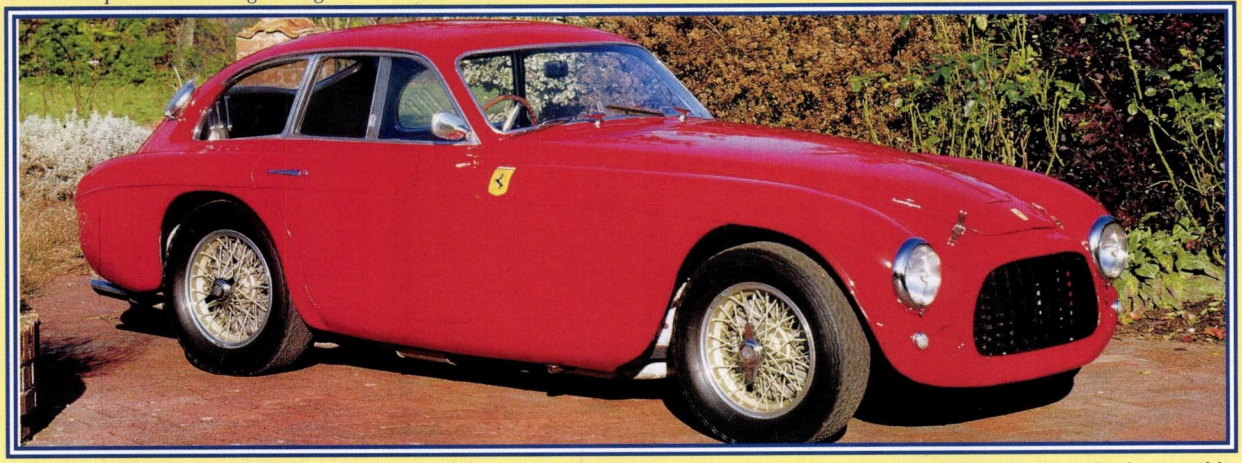
1968 Ferrari 275 GTB/4, RHD. Finished in red with black hide trim. 17,000 miles only, well known history from new and extensive recent mechanical overhaul completed on time rather than mileage, including new Borrani wire wheels. Please call for further details. **£POA.**



1965 Alfa Romeo TZ1, chassis number 105 11 AR 750077 One of the finest looking Italian GT sports cars ever made. This car has come from a well known collection and is highly desirable. A fine opportunity to acquire a wonderful piece of Italian engineering ..... **£ POA**



1999 Ferrari 550 Maranello, LHD. Finished in titanium with beige hide trim. 17,500 miles only, an exceptional car with of course history and great value. ..... **£79,500.**



1951 Ferrari 212 Export Berlinetta Le Mans by Touring. Chassis no. 0112E. A very rare and unique Ferrari. Engine size increased by factory to 225 in 1953, prior to competing in the Mille Miglia of the same year and again in 1955. Immensely fast and eligible for every rally, a true investmen ..... **£POA.**

For further information on any of the above outstanding cars please call: Adrian J. Hamilton

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JAGUAR XK 140 DROPHEAD, RHD – British Racing Green, Green hide, Dark Green hood, 16" chromed wire wheels, matching numbers, C-Type head, sandcast SU's,, J.D. Sport 5 speed gearbox and brakes, restored by ourselves to the highest standard 2 years ago, excellent detail throughout.

JAGUAR XK 140 ROADSTER, RHD – Dark Blue/Grey hide, Dark Blue carpets, Dark Blue hood, chromed wire wheels, total chassis off restoration to J.D. Sports specification including modified original C-Type engine, 5 speed gearbox (not Getrag), disc brakes, uprated suspension, rack and pinion power steering, uprated wiring loom with alternator, bucket seats, full harnesses, full burr walnut dashboard, etc. Only 300 miles since completion last year. Ideal touring/rally car.

JAGUAR XK 140 ROADSTER RHD – Pastel Blue/Blue hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, 4 wheel disc brake conversion with Servo, subject of a total chassis off restoration to a high standard, an excellent useable example.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.8 LITRE DROPHEAD, RHD – British Racing Green/Green hide, Black hood, 16" chromed wire wheels, original right hand drive, matching numbers, subject of a total chassis off no expense spared restoration by J.D. Classics over a two year period, finest attention to detail throughout, very limited use since. The best available.

JAGUAR XK 150 3.8 LITRE DROPHEAD, LHD – Cotswold Blue/Grey hide and carpets, Blue hood, 16" colour coded wire wheels, full matching numbers, 2 owners and 22,000 miles from new, totally original never restored unrepeatable.

JAGUAR XK 150 3.8 LITRE DROPHEAD AUTOMATIC, RHD – Old English White, Red hide and carpets, Black hood, 16" chromed wire wheels. Subject of a total chassis off restoration. Wonderful example of this rare car.

JAGUAR XK 150 3.4 LITRE DROPHEAD RHD – Dark Blue/Grey hide, Dark blue carpets, Dark blue mohair hood. 16" chromed wire wheels, full chassis off restoration to J.D. Sport specification including mildly tuned engine, 5-speed J.D. Sport gearbox, alloy radiator, electric cooling fan, rack and pinion power steering, alternator with modern wiring loom, uprated brakes, burr walnut dashboard and door cappings, uprated heater etc etc. 700 miles since completion. Stunning and as new.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.4 LITRE ROADSTER, RHD. Red/Black hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, subject of a total chassis off restoration to the highest standards, original colour specification, rare example in excellent condition.

JAGUAR XK 150 'S' 3.8 LITRE FIXED HEAD COUPÉ, RHD – Sherwood Green/Beige hide and carpets, 16" chromed wire wheels, full matching numbers and original colour specification, subject of a total chassis off restoration 12 years ago, now nicely mellowed, superb example of this very rare car.

THE J.D. SPORT MARK II SALOON, XK 140 AND XK 150 – Developed over 10 years, and hand-built by J.D. Classics for modern motoring, with a little old-fashioned excitement! Colour specification to your choice, J.D. Classics sports front seats, complete leather interior, including door panels, parcel shelf etc., inertia reel belts to front and rear, our own unique walnut veneered centre dash to match your choice of woodwork, CD/music etc. to your choice. Highest specification, completely rebuilt sports engine, choice of either 3.4 or 3.8 litre, 4.2 litre fuel injection or our latest XJR V8 Supercharge. 3.4 to 4.2 litre engines are gas flowed, lightened and balanced, unleaded fuel head, electronic ignition, fast road camshafts. 2" stainless steel manifolds and exhaust system, catalytic converter, rack and pinion power steering, remote adjustable sports suspension, competition wire wheels, sports braking system, VR tires, choice of gearbox, air-conditioning, etc. Our work is carried out to an impeccable finish, and we will build to your individual specification if you wish. The world is blessed with 'look-alike', efficient, luxury vehicles. But are you excited? Boredom can be very expensive! The "J.D. Sport" is exclusive. It is a car that will express your taste, and your individuality. You may even get excited, again...!

J.D. SPORT MK II SALOON, SUPERCHARGE V8 4.0 LITRE, 5 SPEED AUTOMATIC – Opalescent Silver/Dark blue hide, grey carpets, competition chromed wire wheels, fulll XJR V8 drivetrain, J.D. Sport independent rear suspension, remote adjustable suspension, climate control, electric steel sunroof, electric seats, Alpine stereo, satelite navigation, full electronic dashboard with original MKII instrument fascia, alloy switchgear, leather headlining, tuned to 420 BHP etc, etc. The highest specification MKII we have ever built, properly engineered in our workshops, test miles only.

J.D. SPORT MK II SALOON, 4.0 LITRE 5 SPEED MANUAL – Opalescent Dark Blue/Grey hide and carpets, competition chromed wire wheels, X300 fuel injected engine, J.D. Sport 5 speed manual gearbox, ABS brakes, full climate control, electric steel sunroof, electric windows, central locking, inertia reel seat belts, electric heated seats, bespoke alloy switch gear, full leather interior etc, 6,000 miles only. STUNNING.

JAGUAR MARK II 3.8 LITRE SALOON, MANUAL WITH OVERDRIVE – Opalescent Blue/Red hide and carpets, chromed wire wheels, subject of a total restoration, updates include rack and pinion power steering with alternator, air-conditioning, modern stereo etc. Excellent example.

JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES 1 3.8 ROADSTER – LIGHTWEIGHT RECREATION CHASSIS No.51 – Silver/Black interior, modified engine, Webers, race exhaust system, correct lightweight wheels, vented hard top and boot lid, roll cage and full harnesses etc. We have just completed a major mechanical overhaul and body detailing. A very early example ideal for Race/Rally or Road use.

JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES 1 4.2 LITRE ROADSTER – LHD. Opalescent silver blue/black hide and carpets, chromed wire wheels. **Genuine 17,000 miles from new.** Wonderful condition throughout. Unique. Please call for full details.

JAGUAR 'E' TYPE SERIES III COMMEMORATIVE V12 ROADSTER – Black/Beige hide, Black hood, chromed wire wheels, one of sixteen manual cars built, subject of a sympathetic restoration 2 years ago. Stunning.

JAGUAR E-TYPE SERIES III V12 2+2 MANUAL. Red/beige hide and carpets, chromed wire wheels, subject of a major restoration 2 years ago, recently fitted with JD Sport Brakes and ignition system. Excellent example.

JAGUAR XJC COUPÉ 4.2 LITRE AUTOMATIC – Red/Black hide and carpets, chrome pressed wheels, 17,000 miles from new, previously supplied by ourselves at 9,000 miles, original paintwork and interior, unused tools, original 8 track stereo meticulously maintained full history, the finest original example available.

JAGUAR XJ220 LHD – Spa Silver, Grey hide and carpets, 4500 kms from new, 1 owner, maintained by J.D. Classics, recently fitted with J.D. Sport clutch (softer pedal), J.D. Sport brake upgrade, new timing belts and tensioners, new tyres etc, underated supercar, excellent value.

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The people

Millers is a company of enthusiasts working to support enthusiasts, and the driving force behind the outfit is three-pronged.

- GRAHAM LORD, Technical MD, has a background in the additives industry, and thus possesses very specialist knowledge. Involved in motorsport since the early 1960s, he is also a classic car owner.
- RICHARD HEY, Sales and Marketing Director is an MGB owner and sees the classic and motorsport market segments as an integral part of Millers brand development.
- ROBIN LONGDON has worked with Millers for three years, and develops the sales and marketing of these special products. Robin is an active racer (with famous Lotus Elite DAD10, and his Formula Junior Lola 5A).

How it started

Millers' first oil was Classic Sport 20W50. The big oil companies had decided to stop making this grade when car manufacturers moved on to 10w40, so Graham spied a gap in the market. Sure enough, for owners of older machinery, a semi-synthetic 20W50 was lifeblood.

Since then, Millers have developed a unique list of products that range from steam engine oils, through vintage mono grades, classic 20w50 mineral oils to semi- and fully-synthetic competition oils.

The next big opportunity came with the rumoured demise of leaded petrol in January 2000. Few people took this seriously, but Graham had worked for Ethyl Corporation and was fully conversant with the machinations of the unleaded crusade in the USA. He was also aware it would be difficult to run a classic without a lead substitute, and nigh on impossible to race an older engine without some protection. Thus Millers was ahead of the game in launching a fuel treatment for classic cars (VSP Plus) **before** the ban on leaded fuel came into force.

In parallel, Graham had appreciated the problems that historic race engine builders would experience. Unleaded fuels have high aromatic content to provide octane that would otherwise be provided by lead, and this has a totally different burn characteristic. Unleaded fuel in a combustion chamber designed for leaded fuel will burn erratically, forming tiny explosions that result in detonation and piston damage. This can be avoided by retarding the ignition, but the resultant loss of power is at odds with the objective of the race-engine builder.

Millers was therefore instrumental in working with the MSA fuels committee to change the Blue Book's wording, in order that specific lead substitutes were allowed in motorsport. Thus was formed Millers' new business strategy: a full range of vintage, classic and competition lubricants marketed to the enthusiast and professional, based on the policy of extremely high quality, value for money and a high level of technical back- up.

Special Millers products

- A unique 20w50 for Minis and applications where the crankcase and gearbox share the same oil. The additive package improves the gear-change, reduces wear on idler gears and protects cams and bearings. It is available in mineral form (Classic Transverse M 20w50) or in a competition semi-synthetic formulation CTV20w50.
- Running-in oils, specially formulated for test-bed running or for on-road run-ins.
- Liquid Glazebust. A formulation for restarting the bedding in process in an engine with glazed bores. The procedure avoids the need to remove the pistons and hone the bores.
- Guardeine, a storage oil which gives off anti-corrosive vapors to protect engines and gearboxes that are in long term storage.
- Off Road Lube, for the four-wheel-drive fraternity. Maintains lubrication of transmission bearings when the vehicle tilts to extreme angles.
- Worm steering box oil. Though developed specifically for Rolls-Royce steering boxes to reduce drag and improve self centering, this product can be used on any vehicle with a steering box.

The great advantage for the enthusiast, whether they be a professional race team, competitor or classic car driver is Millers' knowledge of the motorsport and classic world, as well as their flexibility and technical support. The website www.milleroils.co.uk lists products, gives access to technical data sheets and gives the facility to ask technical questions which will be answered within 24 hours. Alternatively the Technical Dept can be contacted on free phone 0800 281053.

If you are a classic restoration shop, race team or specialist distributor and wish to explore a business opportunity with Millers, please contact Robin Longdon on 07974 169136 or email him via the website.





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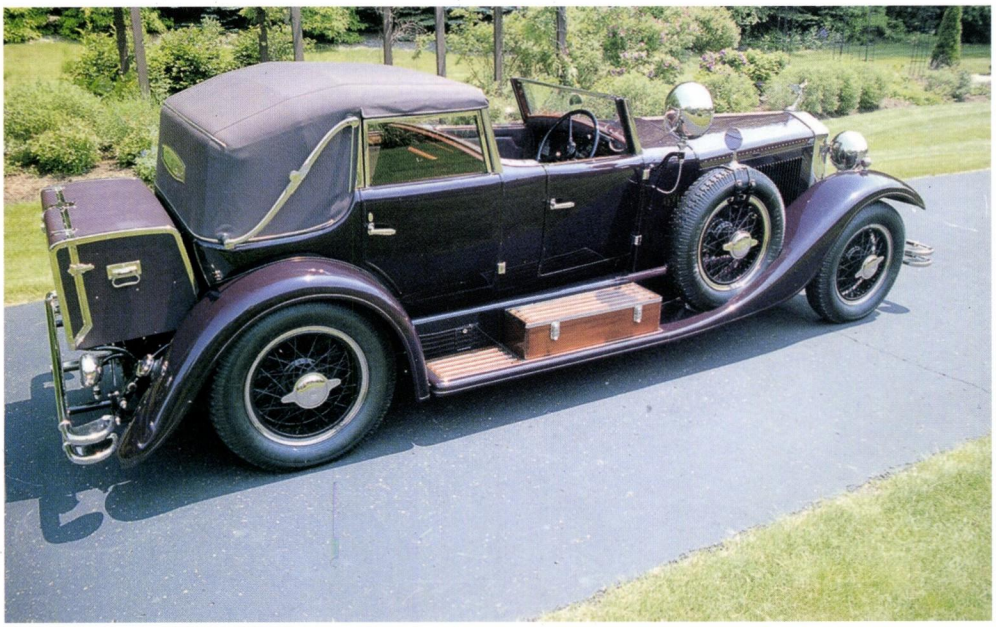
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