

# MOTOR SPORT

NOVEMBER 1993

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## BTCC in focus

### Lagonda: past & future

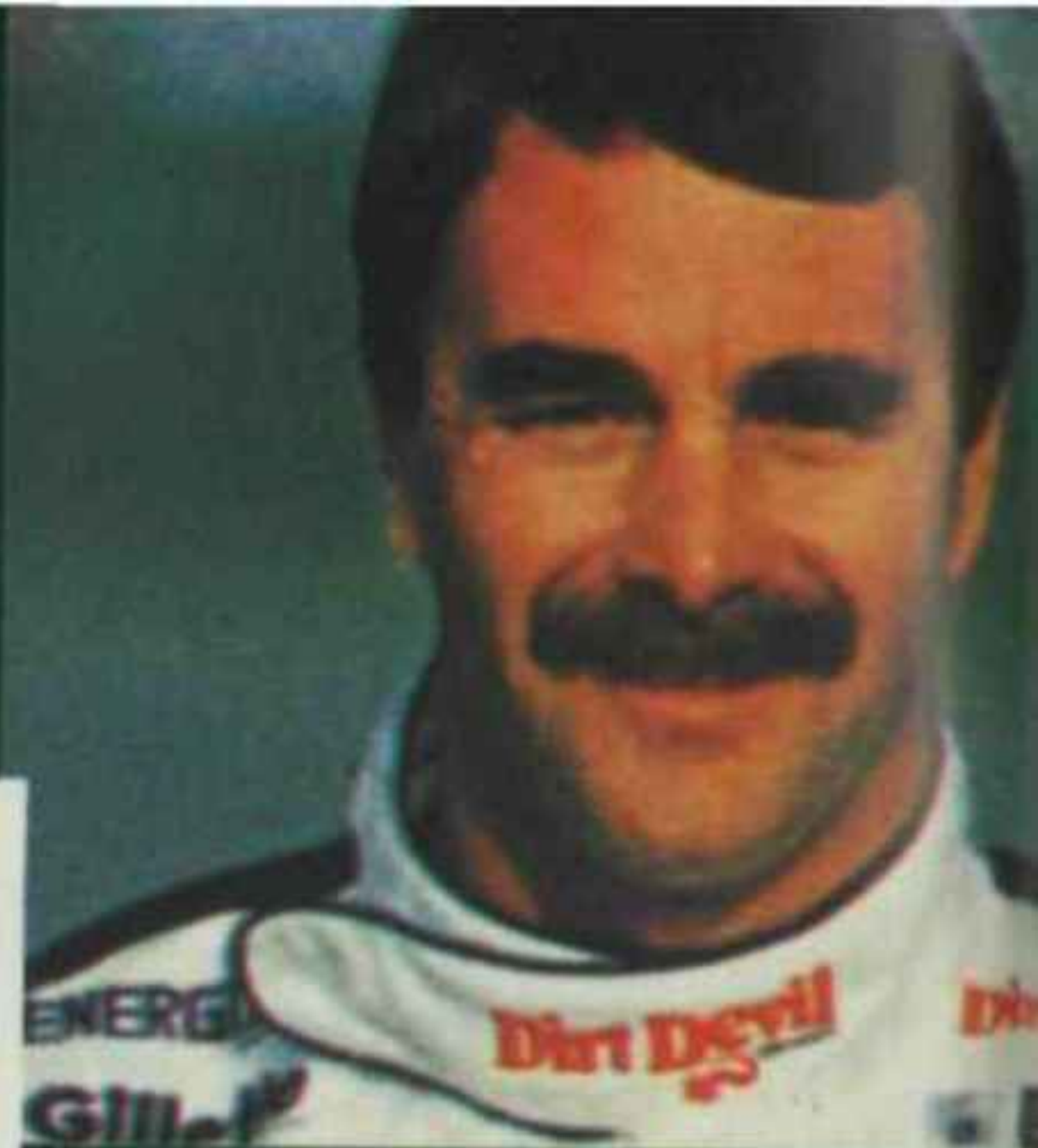


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## BTCC in focus

Lagonda: past & future



Top: BMW (Steve Soper pictured) took both manufacturers' and drivers' titles in the BTCC. Below: we've recently driven Lagondas new (left) and old.

INCORPORATING *SPEED* AND THE *BROOKLANDS GAZETTE*

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March unveiled its radical Ralt 93C F3 challenger during September. Here, Hilton Cowie shakes the car down at Snetterton.

# The month in MOTOR SPORT

## SEPTEMBER

**15:** Peugeot confirms that it will enter F1 in 1994, but declines to nominate a partner for the time being. Larrousse is said to be favourite.

**15:** Michael Andretti announces that he's to quit F1 forthwith. Mika Hakkinen will partner Ayrton Senna for the final three Grands Prix; Andretti will return to IndyCar racing in 1994, driving one of Chip Ganassi's new Reynards.

**15:** Chevrolet pulls out of IndyCar racing. Ilmor, which has built recent Chevrolet-badged V8s, will continue. Amongst the manufacturers said to be interested in an association with the British engine company are Mercedes-Benz, Toyota and Chrysler.

**17:** Richard Burns wins the Manx International Rally and, with it, the British Open Rally Championship title. At 22, the Subaru driver is the series' youngest ever champion. Malcolm Wilson's title chances evaporate when he rolls his Escort Cosworth for the third time in two rallies.

**17:** Harvey Postlethwaite returns to Tyrrell, to head the team's technical operations.

**17:** March unveils its radical new F3 challenger, the Ralt 93C.

**18:** The first leg of the Rally Australia is marred by the death of Rodger Freeth, 'Possum' Bourne's 39 year-old co-driver. Freeth succumbs to injuries sustained after the pair's Subaru Legacy struck a tree. Bourne escapes uninjured.

**18:** European F3000 series leader Olivier Panis visits Benetton, for a seat fitting. Panis is tipped to join the team for the final two Grands Prix of the season.

**18:** IndyCar qualifying at Nazareth is rained off. The grid for the penultimate round of the championship is decided by championship positions, thus giving Nigel Mansell (below) pole . . .

**19:** . . . which he duly converts into victory, thereby securing the IndyCar title. He is the first man in the history of the sport to have won F1 and IndyCar titles back-to-back (though he's the first to have attempted the feat). His winning race average is 158.686



mph, helped by a complete absence of yellow flag periods. During the weekend, Mansell announces that he has signed to continue with Newman Haas Racing for the next two seasons.



**19:** Joachim Winkelhock (above) becomes the first foreign driver since Frank Gardner, in 1968, to win the British Touring Car Championship. As the Ford Mondeos of Paul Radisich and Andy Rouse chalk up a 1-2 in the final round at Silverstone, eighth place suffices for the German. His only remaining title rival, team-mate Steve Soper, finishes fifth. Radisich, whose season only started in August, winds up an impressive third in the final points table.

**19:** Despite rumours to the contrary, Andy Rouse says he will continue his dual role as BTCC engineer and driver in 1994.

**19:** The GTCC concludes at Hockenheim, where Alessandro Nannini takes a brace of



## Follow the French

In our summary of the final two European Formula 3000 races of the season (see page 1104), we have remarked upon France's embarrassment of riches when it comes to young racing drivers. This position of strength is at least partially due to substantial financial support from national fuel giant Elf and the French government itself, whose sports ministry has agreed to help following the enforced withdrawal of the tobacco companies.

In Britain, we have often heard pleas for state aid to assist young sportsmen and women. We've got inadequate tennis facilities, and we need to invest to maintain the standard set by our international athletes. Horse racing wants betting tax re-invested in facilities. Soccer would like to see the government redirect some of what it earns from the football pools towards the development of new stadia.

British motor racing *needs* something similar.

But where are we going to find it?

France's position can only get stronger still. Renault sets the pace in Formula One, is returning to Formula Three next year and, in the long term, has hinted that it may also become involved in Formula 3000. What better way could there be to channel the best young drivers to the top? Remember the glut of Frenchmen who graduated to F1 in the 1970s, helped by Elf and Renault in Formula Two? Peugeot has now moved into F1, too, and the presence of such national

giants in the motor racing limelight can only stimulate further interest, among both the general public and the world of commerce.

So what have we got in the UK?

Vauxhall has an excellent staircase which runs from karting to Formula Three and supplies its Formula Vauxhall (né Vauxhall Lotus) champion with a competitive F3 engine for the following year, but this is where the problem *starts*, for there has been no shortage of talented Britons in F3. This season, however, we had only two regular competitors in Formula 3000, and one of those was never always sure where the money for his next race was coming from. By way of comparison, there were seven Frenchmen (and seven Italians).

So is there anything that can be done?

Schemes such as Racing for Britain and Motor Racing GB have toiled worthily to provide welcome, but token, support for young drivers. What is needed, however, is something on a much grander scale.

Car and petrol taxes are redirected, supposedly, towards rebuilding our crumbling, often inadequate road network, so there seems little hope there.

However, according to official statistics issued by the RACMSA, the motor racing industry in Britain accounts for 50,000 jobs, turns over in excess of £1 billion and brings in £650 million from overseas.

Surely enterprise on *that* scale merits governmental support? **S A**

victories for Alfa Romeo. Final F3 honours of the season fall to Roberto Colciago and Sascha Maassen, as champion Jos Verstappen has a trying day.

**19:** Victory at Le Mans almost clinches the French Supertourisme title for Audi's Frank Biela. The national F3 series is building to a dramatic finale, after Elton Julian allows team-mate Didier Cottaz through to win, and gives Cottaz a narrow points lead over Guillaume Gomez with just one race to go.

**19:** There's no stopping Indy lights champion Bryan Herta, who takes another win at Nazareth. Briton Steve Robertson escapes uninjured after a 150 mph impact with the wall on lap one.

**19:** Rusty Wallace takes NASCAR honours at Dover, in a race slowed by no fewer than 16 caution periods.

**19:** Gianantonio Pacchioni scores his first F3 win since Monaco in the Italian Championship round at Magione.

**19:** Stephen Murphy/Michael Morrissey (Sierra Cosworth) win the Wexford Rally.

**20:** It is learned that former racer Tommy Sopwith will take over as acting chairman of the BRDC, following the resignation of John Handley.

**20:** Michael Bartels is forced to cede his F3000 seat at Pacific Racing, because of sponsorship troubles. Phil Andrews takes over.

**20:** Reynard says that it will only build an F3 car in 1994 if it strikes an exclusive engine

position in the drivers' championship and guarantees Toyota the manufacturers' crown.

**21:** McLaren runs its Chrysler V12-powered test mule at Silverstone, and continues development the following day at Pembrey. Ayrton Senna and Mika Hakkinen both drive the car.

**22:** The ACO discloses its 1994 Le Mans regulations, which permit the use – for the final time – of old Group C machinery.

**22:** Spedeworth announces plans to stage an indoor hot rod meeting at Earls Court, on December 11/12.

**25:** Alain Prost announces that he will retire from Formula One at the end of the season. The Frenchman's surprise decision paves the way for Ayrton Senna to partner Damon Hill at Williams in 1994. The Brazilian is believed to have signed a deal with the Didcot team two days after the Italian GP.

**25:** Scuderia Italia confirms that it will miss the last two F1 races of the season.

**25:** Victory on the Artemis Forest Stages Rally clinches the Mintex National Series for Dougie Watson-Clark.

supply deal with a major manufacturer. Negotiations with Renault, which is also thought to have a long-term eye on F3000, pending rule stability, are under way . . .

**20:** Former world rally champion Carlos Sainz is tipped to be rejoining Toyota.

**20:** British champion Richard Burns could be elevated to the world stage. Subaru contemplates giving him a car for the Sanremo Rally.

**21:** The Rally Australia concludes. Juha Kankkunen's victory (above) strengthens his





**26:** Second place behind Michael Schumacher is enough to secure a fourth World Championship for Alain Prost. In a Portuguese Grand Prix marked by several accidents but, happily, no injuries, pole-winner Damon Hill storms through to finish third, after being forced to start from the back when he stalls his Renault V10.

**26:** Off-track controversy mars the penultimate round of the British F2 Championship at Thruxton. Series leader Philippe Adams returns after a four-race absence, but former entrant Robert Syngé tries to stop him running, after obtaining a court order confirming that the Belgian driver owed his team around £90,000. Syngé's initial complaint is referred to the RACMSA, and Adams is allowed to start. He goes on to win the race – whereupon he is promptly protested by Syngé for alleged suspension irregularities. The stewards refer this to Reynard for verification . . .

**26:** Events at Thruxton have nothing on those surrounding the French F3 finale, at Le Vigeant. Championship contenders Guillaume Gomez and Didier Cottaz tangle, as a result of which the former crashes out of the race. Cottaz goes on to take third, behind Christophe Tinseau and Elton Julian, which is enough to secure him the title. Afterwards, some of Gomez's supporters wade into Cottaz's pit wielding iron bars, and the new champion is attacked on his way to the podium.

**26:** Ross Cheever wins the Japanese F3000 race at Suzuka, and moves into a one-point series lead over second place finisher Eddie Irvine, who announces during the weekend that he will contest the final two Grands Prix of the season with the Jordan team. The supporting F3 race falls to outgoing champion Anthony Reid.

**26:** Ernie Irvan is Martinsville's NASCAR victor.

**26:** Victory at the Nürburgring is enough to clinch the inaugural German GT crown for Johnny Cecotto.

**26:** The Formula Vauxhall Euroseries ends in chaos at Estoril. Belgian Vincent Radermecker takes the title, though the verdict could go to Italian Patrick Crinelli. The latter has appealed against the decision to re-run an earlier Zandvoort race, which was red-flagged because of heavy rain, and there are also doubts about fuel samples taken in August at the Nürburgring . . .

**26:** Steve Skitmore takes the European Hot Rod title at Wimbledon.

**28:** As several F1 teams stay on to test at Estoril, new faces in strange places include Gil de Ferran, Jos Verstappen and Christian Fittipaldi, all of whom test for Footwork. The latter is given special dispensation to do so by Minardi. Verstappen proves impressively quick before shunting the car heavily; de Ferran's trial is halted prematurely when he

walks into an open door and cuts his head, requiring two stitches. Also present is Eddie Irvine (Jordan).

## OCTOBER

**2:** Rumours that Alain Prost will buy into Ligier gather pace. There is one theory that the team will be renamed Prost GP, and serve as a Williams Junior Team . . .

**2:** Formula 3000 teams and suppliers agree on a compromise deal to stabilise the formula, pending the FIA's acceptance of new proposals. Contrary to an idea put forward at Spa, one month earlier, it is decided that new cars will be eligible in 1994.

**2:** John Roberts (Sierra Cosworth) wins the Cambrian Rally. Neil Freeman (Peugeot 205) is first Formula Two car home.

**3:** Martin Donnelly competes in a circuit race for the first time since his fearful accident at Jerez in 1990. Driving a Chamberlain Engineering Lotus Esprit, Martin finishes third in the GT event at Silverstone.

**3:** Franck Lagorce takes his first F3000 victory in tricky conditions at Magny-Cours. Erstwhile leader Emmanuel Collard escapes with concussion, after crashing at 150 mph. The Frenchman's car is split in two by the impact.

**3:** The Penskes of Paul Tracy and Emerson Fittipaldi finish 1-2 in the IndyCar finale at Laguna Seca. Bryan Herta wins the supporting Indy Lights event. During the weekend, Mario Andretti confirms that he will do one more season with Newman/Haas before retiring.

**3:** Gabriele Tarquini (Alfa 155) and Fabrizio Giovanardi (Peugeot 405) win the ITCC heats at Mugello, but Roberto Ravaglia takes the title.

**3:** Victory at North Wilkesboro moves Rusty Wallace closer to Dale Earnhardt at the head of the NASCAR points table.

**3:** Michael Krumm beats the Italian F3 regulars at Vallelunga.

**3:** PJ Jones wins the IMSA finale at Phoenix, beating Toyota team-mate Juan-Manuel Fangio II.

**3:** Laurent Aiello wins the penultimate round of the Supertourisme series at Montlhéry, but Frank Biela's sixth place is enough to secure the title.

**3:** Nascent GP team Pacific confirms that it will also carry on in F3000 in 1994.

**3:** The radical Ralt 93C F3 chassis debuts at Silverstone. In Jeremy Cotterill's hands, it finishes 16th. Further up the road, Kelvin Burt takes his eighth win of the season. Debutant Jan Magnussen is an impressive fourth.

**3:** Larry Perkins/Gregg Hansford (Holden Commodore) win the Tooheys 1000 at Bathurst. After the race, Win Percy (below) announces his retirement as a racing driver.



**3:** Jean-Luc Pailier clinches the European Rallycross Championship for Citroën, by finishing second to Per Eklund's Subaru at Estering, Germany.

**4:** Jordan recruits Steve Nichols as chief designer.

**4:** Tyrrell signs up for a three-year technical collaboration with Fondmetal Industries.

**4:** Rumour suggests that Louise Aitken-Walker may be tempted out of retirement to drive a Mini on the 1994 Monte-Carlo Rally. Paddy Hopkirk may also form part of a three-strong team.

**5:** Luca Badoer, said to be close to a deal with Benetton for 1994, tests a B193B at Silverstone.

**5:** Footwork counters Japanese newspaper stories that it is to pull out of F1.

**6:** A technical commission excludes Philippe Adams from the Thruxton F2 race, for suspension irregularities. Adams appeals

**7:** Penske confirms that Al Unser Jr will drive its third IndyCar entry in 1994.

**8:** Peugeot announces that it will enter F1 with McLaren, which leaves Chrysler – who had been hoping that the Woking team would use its V12 in the final two GPs of the season – out in the cold.

**9:** Team Lotus confirms that Pedro Lamy will race full-time in 1994. Johnny Herbert is expected to lead the team, though that has still to be confirmed.

**9:** Renault BTCC driver Alain Menu fractures his right leg during qualifying for a one-off French touring car race at Nogaro.

**9:** Jason Elliott steps uninjured from Weylock's Reynard 91D, after vaulting the retaining wall during British F2 qualifying at



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Donington Park.

**9:** José Luis di Palma wins the final British F2 round, but Mikke van Hool's position as champion is strictly provisional, pending the outcome of Philippe Adams' appeal against his Thruxton disqualification, and a protest by Adams' entrant, Argo, against van Hool's car at Donington. Consequently, any of the three could take the title.

**10:** Despite being punted off on lap two at Nogaro, Olivier Panis is confirmed as the ninth European F3000 champion. Panis's rivals Pedro Lamy and David Coulthard also strike trouble early in the race. Franck Lagorce takes his second consecutive victory in an event monopolised by the host nation's drivers.

**10:** Kelvin Burt takes another F3 win at Thruxton in the British Championship finale. Oliver Gavin and the impressive Jan Magnussen are next home. F3 debutant Piers Hunnisett wins class B.

**10:** Audi clinches the manufacturers' title as Frank Biela takes Supertourisme honours at Nogaro.

**10:** Ernie Ivan dominates Charlotte's NASCAR race.

**10:** Michael Krumm, ineligible for points, wins his second consecutive Italian F3 race, at Imola. Second place on the road gives Christian Pescatori nine points, and the title.

**11:** Williams confirms that Ayrton Senna will partner Damon Hill in 1994.

**11:** Derek Warwick will join Nigel Mansell in the TOCA Shoot Out at Donington. Warwick will drive a Park Lane Toyota Carina. Mansell, previously confirmed in a Ford Mondeo, will also race a TVR Tuscan!

**11:** British F3 runner-up Oliver Gavin tests for the TOM'S GB F3000 team at Nogaro.

## Project Trust

**T**he Grand Prix Mechanics' Charitable Trust day at Silverstone on October 6, organised by Jackie Stewart, was adjudged a huge success. As detailed last month, participants paid £120 for the right to be chauffeured around the GP circuit by Luca Badoer, Mark Blundell, Martin Brundle, Erik Comas, Andrea de Cesaris, Mika Hakkinen, Johnny Herbert, Damon Hill, Pedro Lamy, Ukyo Katayama, Nicola Larini, JJ Lehto, Allan McNish, Michael Schumacher, Derek Warwick, Alessandro Zanardi, Julian Bailey, Tim Harvey, Will Hoy, Alain Menu, Tiff Needell, Patrick Watts, David Coulthard, Gil de Ferran, Paul Stewart, Kelvin Burt, Dario Franchitti, Jackie Stewart and John Watson. Cars were supplied by Alfa Romeo, Aston Martin, Audi, BMW, Ford, Honda, Jaguar, Mazda, Mercedes, Nissan, Peugeot, Renault and Vauxhall, and the racing drivers ended

up enjoying themselves almost as much as the public.

Between them, sponsors such as Allsport, Agip, Camel, Canon, Castrol, Cosworth, Elf, Forte Hotels, Ford Electronics, Goodyear, Ilmor, Lamborghini, Philip Morris, Sasol, Seita (Gitanes), Shell and Yamaha pushed the total raised to beyond £70,000.

Michael Andretti and Alain Prost also made cash contributions, while Ayrton Senna gave a cash donation and a silver trophy for the Formula Finesse competition. Further income was generated during the popular evening auction of various drivers' and team personnel clothing.

"We'd like to run another one," said Stewart the following week. "Maybe not next year, though we will organise fundraising events of some kind for the Trust, but certainly in 1995. The whole thing worked really well. Silverstone and all the suppliers were just fantastic."

## OBITUARIES

### Rodger Freeth

**F**atal accidents are fortunately rare in rallying, which makes it all the more difficult to accept them when they do happen. When Rodger Freeth died from injuries received in a crash during the Australia Rally, the entire rallying fellowship was stunned. Rodger was more than just a co-driver, he was an all-round motor sportsman, a highly qualified academic and, most of all, a gentleman.

Whilst at university, he began racing motor cycles and eventually collected a whole string of national titles. He was the only non-Australian to have won the Arai 500 race at Bathurst, which he did twice. He began rallying in 1973 and, in 1986, won the New Zealand Championship as Neil Allport's co-driver. The following year, having sat alongside several notable drivers, including Pentti Airikkala, he began his partnership with 'Possum' Bourne which took him to events all over the world and to two more New Zealand titles. At the time of his death, he and Bourne were leading both the Asia-Pacific and the Australian championships.

During this time, he gave up his position as a lecturer at Auckland University - he held a doctorate in astrophysics - in order to devote his time to motor sporting activities. A hand injury during the 1986 Olympus Rally forced him to give up motor cycle racing, so he took to four wheels and was highly successful in a V8-powered Toyota Starlet. He even acquired an ex-

Indianapolis Lola and broke the New Zealand land speed record, driving it at 194 mph on the most unlikely of tracks, a narrow, country road which was far from level.

Rodger Freeth was a devoted sportsman whose geniality brought him new friends everywhere he went. He will be sorely missed, and we offer our sincere sympathy to his wife and two sons. **G P**

### Rob Combes

**W**e were shocked to learn of the recent death of Rob Combes in a freak road accident. On the road from Ruiru to Nairobi, his car was struck at the top of its windscreen by a falling tree branch and Rob died instantly.

One of the most notable of Kenya's motor sportsmen, Rob was well known and liked by everyone who came into contact with him, and his infectious humour invariably introduced a warm conviviality to any gathering.

A first class co-driver, he had partnered leading Kenyans Shekhar Mehta and Patrick Njiru.

When he stopped competing he became a deputy clerk of the course on the Safari Rally, during the event playing a troubleshooting role in remote parts of the route, his coolness and composure invariably leading to the solution of problems with a minimum of fuss.

His passing leaves a void in many circles, and we feel deeply for his wife Trish and their children Glenton, Murray and Natasha. **G P**

### NOVEMBER FIXTURES

Date	Venue	Event	Type
Nov 1/3	Lloret de Mar, Spain	Cataluña Rally	INT
Nov 6	Snetterton	F/Ford, Minis, F/First, F/Vauxhall	R
Nov 7	Adelaide, Australia	Australian GP	INT
Nov 7	Hyde Park Corner, London	London-Brighton Run	N
Nov 7	Croft	Rallycross	R
Nov 13	Brands Hatch	F/Ford, F/First, Fiats, F/Vauxhall	R
Nov 14	Suzuka, Japan	F3000	INT
Nov 14	Atlanta, USA	NASCAR	INT
Nov 21	Snetterton	F/Ford, Minis, F/First, F/Vauxhall	R
Nov 21	Macau	Macau F3 GP	INT
Nov 20/21	Birmingham	Rallye Britannia	INT
Nov 21/24	Birmingham	Network Q RAC Rally	INT
Nov 28	Brands Hatch	F/Ford, Minis, F/First, F/Vauxhall	R
Nov 28	Fuji, Japan	F3 International	INT



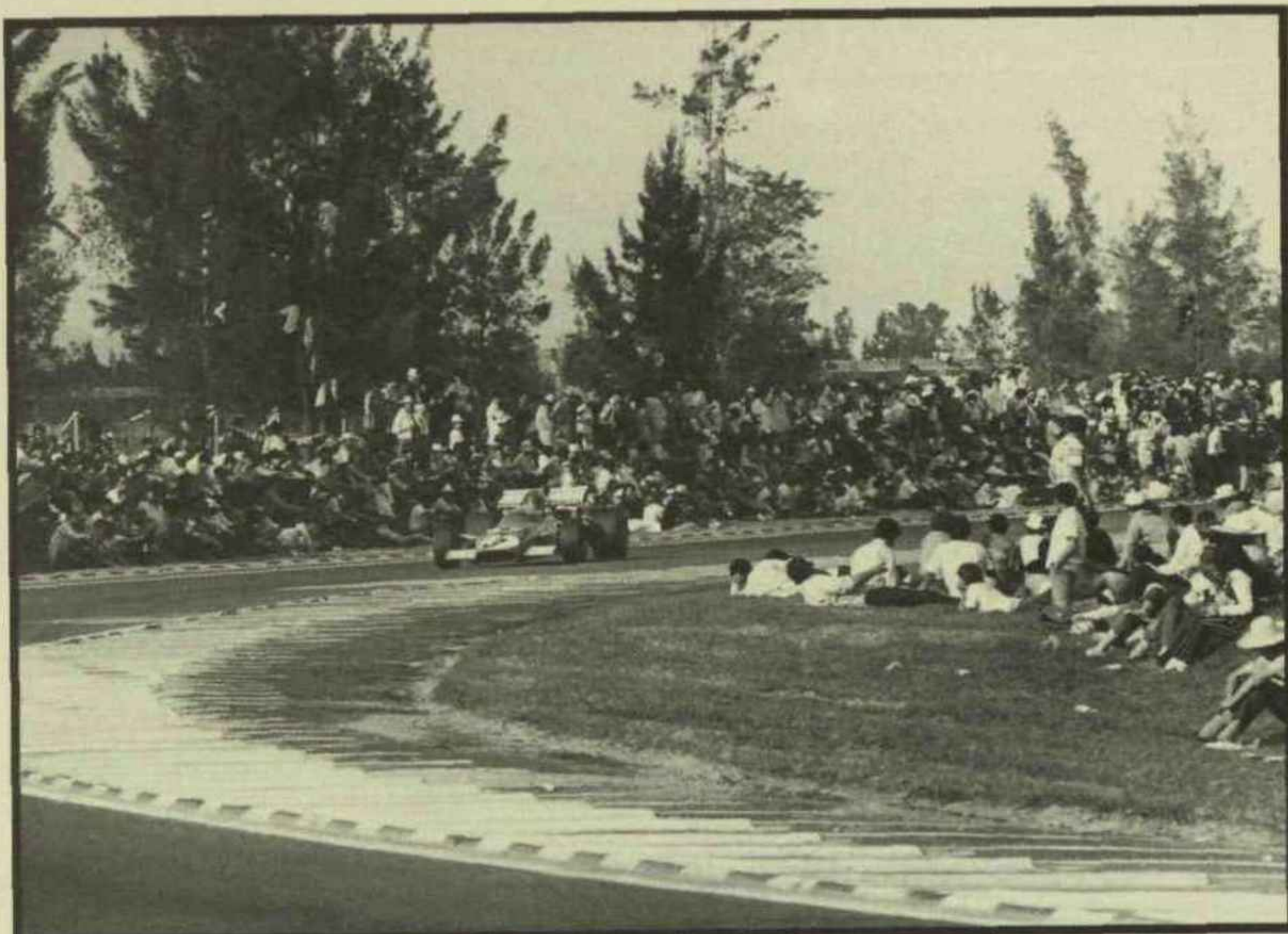


IMAGE OF 1970: The first year of the new decade brought the dramatic change of the era with the arrival of the turbo engine which Colin Chapman would again reduce the gawwiness of F1 design. With the world, and the old F1C, both would think the 1970s, but that of those without knowing that he had been enough to last until the 1980s (see the 1980s issue of the magazine, above) is that that was not even F1C's designer's plan could provide the best to ensure safety requirements and keep behind the times, but to avoid a car it went ahead.

DECEMBER 1993						
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JANUARY 1994						
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SPORTSYS

# ***Benetton's sleepless knight***

*Whatever was wrong with Michael Schumacher's race car, swapping to the spare brought him an unexpected Portuguese triumph*





Surprise early leader Alesi is harried by Senna, Hakkinen and Prost. It was the first time a Ferrari had led on merit since Belgium 1991.



Highly charged: his pole position wasted when he failed to get away on the formation lap, Damon Hill scythed through the field to finish third.



Second will do: having announced his impending retirement, Prost went on to clinch his fourth world title by trailing Schumacher across the line.



**M**ichael Schumacher didn't look particularly tired, but then he never does. The man Martin Brundle describes as the fittest racing driver he has ever seen was chipper enough on Sunday morning in Estoril, even if he was not desperately sanguine about his chances in the Portuguese Grand Prix. Twelfth fastest time, a full two seconds adrift of Damon Hill's at the head of the morning warm-up timesheets, was not what he had envisaged after spending all night trying to work out just why his Benetton B193B refused to work properly all through qualifying. It leapt from bump to bump, and handled inconsistently, and he lined up only sixth, behind the Williamses, the McLarens, and Alesi's Ferrari.

The knowing whispered conspiratorially of four-wheel steering which was being tried secretly but didn't work, but Benetton had only one set of parts to convert its cars, and all along intended to do so only for the post-race test that followed, but even had it been fitted in qualifying, it is just conceivable that it would have been taken off on Friday night when it first became apparent that the green and yellow car was, for some reason, not working anything like as effectively as we have come to expect since Monaco.

"We had so many problems during the first two days of practice that I was still here at 11 o'clock last night trying to get on top of the problems, and we looked at all the data," said Schumacher when it was all over and he had taken his second F1 triumph by the skin of his teeth. "When I went to bed I slept with the data in front of my eyes!"

On Sunday morning the team checked his race car against the spare, and found that there was a significant difference in their behaviour. The latter felt much better, so he used it for the race and — hey presto! — he was back on the pace.

So what was the problem? Still, it would seem, the team doesn't know. It conducted back-to-back tests with the race car and the spare on the Tuesday after the Grand Prix, and everything seemed in order.

"It meant compromising our test programme, but obviously we needed to know what the problem was," said engineer Frank Dernie. "Michael spent a lot of time trying the cars, but whatever the problem with the race car was, it remains a mystery. When he tried them after the race, they were both quick straight away. Explain that, if you can! There was absolutely no problem at all . . ."

Others wished for such a fairy tale ending to an awful weekend.

Hill's problems began on the line as the field moved off on the warm-up lap, in a repeat of Prost's Hungarian grief. The two Williams team-mates had once again battled for the pole, and this time Hill had been quicker when Prost, uncharacteristically, got caught out by the slipperiness in the third corner and hit the barrier backwards on Saturday afternoon. Now, all that advantage had gone.

"The original air starter broke when Paul

West tried to fire up the engine," said Hill. The engine requires an external starter which looks like a long driveshaft, and on occasions it has been known to jump out of mesh when in use. This was one of them. As West withdrew it, Dave Juniper took over, both trying desperately to start the stricken Williams as the grid cleared. Remembering the start proper at Zolder in 1981, it was quite a brave thing to do. "Things were getting a bit panicky," recalls Hill, "and when they finally did get my engine going I couldn't hear it because of all the noise of the other engines around me. I just stalled it. There are a number of procedures that you have to go through to get the car into gear, and with all that I was last away, although I was desperately trying not to be so I could resume my position. As it was, I had to start at the back and I was so far back that I couldn't see the lights! I had to lift my visor and I tried to raise myself in the cockpit so that I could see them."

Overtaking has always been difficult at Estoril, and like Schumacher last year Hill would find that the task got tougher the further up the field he clawed. At the end of the first lap he went from 26th to 18th, and by lap 10 had advanced to 10th place, behind Alesi, Senna, Hakkinen, Prost, Schumacher, Berger, Blundell, Patrese and Brundle. By the end of the race, after a dashing drive that brought him fastest lap a whole 1.3s faster than Prost, he was third, only 8.2s behind. Without that starter drama, a fourth consecutive triumph would not have been too much to expect.

McLaren's weekend began badly and got worse, although there were glimmers of light for the future. Following a convivial press lunch at the McLaren factory one of the nine writers elected not to respect certain off-the-record comments Ron Dennis had made with regard to Ayrton Senna's position during the season. Instead, he relayed them to Brazil, where they duly appeared the following day, to the embarrassment of all parties. Senna was livid, and initially declined pointblank to speak with Dennis when they arrived in Portugal. When he did, his comments were icy, to say the least. The relationship has naturally meant much to Dennis over the years, and his anger was further compounded when Senna announced on Friday afternoon that he wouldn't be driving for McLaren in 1994. During the lunch Dennis had expressed clear expectations that he would be, or else would be taking a sabbatical, so you can imagine how tense the atmosphere was in the red and white camp.

Senna's mental state can hardly have been smoothed by the raw speed Mika Hakkinen showed throughout qualifying, even though, to the Brazilian's credit, he did an excellent job of masking what emotions he may have been feeling.

Hakkinen, in fact, was the breath of fresh air F1 needed in Estoril, and he bounced into the paddock like some golden retriever puppy that had finally been let off a leash on which it has been held all season. He narrowly outqualified Senna, too, which says it all.

From third place on the grid — naturally his best ever position — the Finn took full advantage of the fact that Damon Hill was starting from the back after vacating pole position through stalling his Renault V10. He sped alongside Prost and, in a little bit of unethical feinting that betrayed how keyed up he was, appeared to have grabbed the lead as they headed for the first turn. Senna was boxed in behind them both, temporarily unable to consider a challenge. Then from nowhere came a blur of red round the outside, and to cheers Jean Alesi pushed a Ferrari into the lead of a Grand Prix for the first time since he had

## **Schumacher: "When I went to bed I slept with the data in front of my eyes!"**

led, prior to blowing up, at Spa in 1991.

At first it seemed that Jean's exuberance would be overcome quickly, as Senna dived past a surprised Hakkinen at the end of the back straight to take over second place before the first lap was complete, but the Ferrari began to look steadily more comfortable and after a while it was obvious that Senna was having to bide his time and await his chance. On a circuit where overtaking is very difficult, Senna had the handling but not the straightline speed to do anything serious about the F93A. Truth be told, it was a shot in the arm for F1, to see a race going against the expected form, and it was great while it lasted.

It didn't last long enough for Senna, though, for on lap 20 he pulled up suddenly halfway down that back straight, taking Hakkinen by surprise again, as his Ford HB did itself an internal mischief. That very lap Alesi and Hakkinen had come into the pits for their tyre stops, resuming their battle instantly, so the order then became Prost, Schumacher, the recovering Hill (more of whom anon), Mark Blundell, who was driving extremely well in the Ligier-Renault, Alesi, Hakkinen and Gerhard Berger.

Sadly, Hakkinen's first GP of the year came to a premature, and violent, end on the 33rd lap, when he lost downforce in Alesi's wake coming through the daunting Parabolica corner that sweeps the cars back on to the start/finish straight. The McLaren slipped wide on to the grass, was thrown into the air where there is a slip road for emergency vehicles, and then shot across the road to smack the right-hand



barriers for good measure. "It was my fault," said the chastened Finn immediately, but there is no doubt that his speed had been highly impressive, even if he had to wait to see just how race fit he is. Whatever, Ron Dennis must be very pleased to have him under contract for 1994.

While one Ferrari was starring, the other was not, and the popular Berger's tale of recent woe continued in alarming style. He delayed his pit stop as long as he dared, in an attempt to make it through on only two sets of Goodyears, but when he resumed disaster very nearly struck. According to

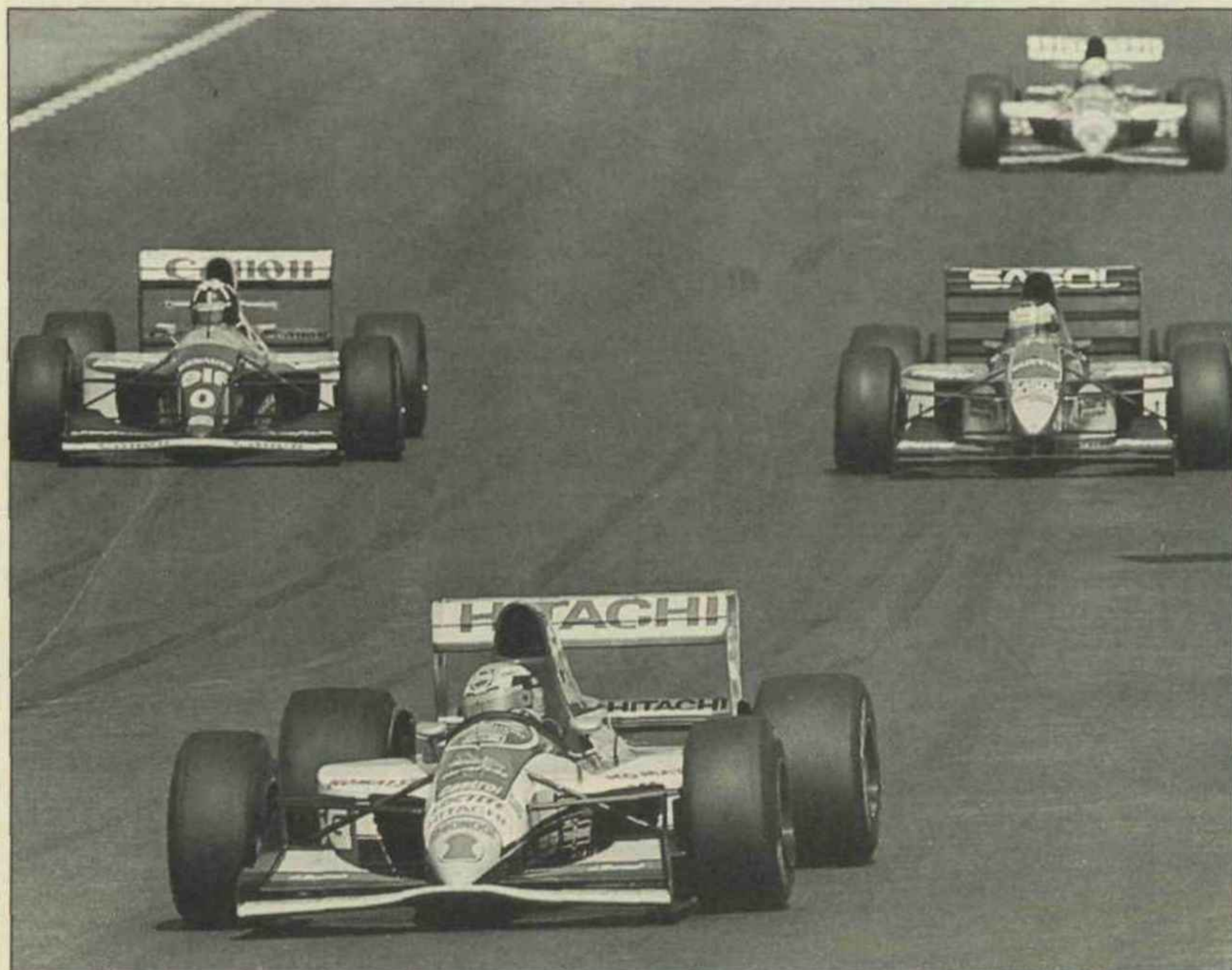
see that it had bounced back into Lehto. For sure I knew that I was past the accident, but I thought he'd end in a big mess. The thing is, you think all this in a split second. It's the sort of thing where it's best just to keep your head down and keep going. If you try to work it out too much, you start to lose concentration."

Like Fittipaldi's somersault at Monza two weeks earlier, it was as bad an accident as FI has seen in a long while, and it had an equally fortunate outcome, for both Warwick and Lehto came literally within inches of T-boning the red car. All three could have

the sand and Derek was naturally livid to have lost possible points, but it has to be said that Riccardo had the grace to proffer contrition even if it was a while before the Briton could acknowledge the gesture.

"I said to him, 'Here you are, you've done more than 250 Grands Prix, and you make a mistake like you've only done five!' I needed that point, and that sort of thing begins to get to you in the end."

Ligier, too, might reasonably have expected better than Brundle's subsequent sixth place, and was particularly upset that Ferrari drew ahead in the points race for fourth place in the Constructors' Championship. Blundell was looking a strong candidate for fifth until lap 52 as his recovery from his second tyre stop brought him back up to Karl Wendlinger in the Sauber. The two came together that lap, however, when the Austrian closed the door ruthlessly and sent



Herbert leads the recovering Hill, Barrichello and home hero Lamy. Both Lotuses eventually crashed out.

Ferrari, he was simply the victim of 'an unlucky combination of circumstances'. By that it meant that he had reached a speed at the end of the pit road at which its active ride system automatically raises the nose of the car. This is known as the 'low-drag' mode for motoring down the straights. The car generates less downforce and is thus faster. This, said Ferrari, then combined with a nasty bump at the end of the pits, which literally threw the Ferrari out of control. It was thus, it insisted, neither a driver error nor a systems failure.

Be that as it may, several observers reported that the right rear wheel was flopping about, with visible positive camber, long before Berger shot at 90 degrees to the left, right across the paths of the duelling Warwick and Lehto, before crashing hard into the Armco and bouncing down to instant retirement at the end of the straight.

"Obviously I had my head tucked down, going down the straight," said Warwick. "Then from the right side I saw this red thing come across. At first you wonder what's going on. Then you think, 'where's it gonna go, what's it gonna do?' I knew I had to jink round it, and I could just see it hit the barrier. When I looked in my mirrors I expected to

been grievously injured.

That should have been a signal to Footwork that it's race was going wrong. Aguri Suzuki had already retired with transmission failure, detuned after two practice shunts, but Warwick had been steaming along in ninth ahead of a train comprising Lehto and Patrese (and which Brundle would join after falling back from sixth place following his second tyre stop). Lehto, however, was obliged to drop back after receiving a 10s stop-and-go penalty for inadvertently baulking the leaders as they were lapped. JJ had misidentified Schumacher as Patrese, and had understandably been reluctant to concede a place. (Erik Comas, much further down the order in his Larrousse, steadfastly held up anyone who tried to pass him, yet somehow escaped without any penalty whatsoever, such are the vagaries of Formula One punishments these days.) Typically, the Finn immediately admitted his guilt afterwards, and apologised to Schumacher.

That left Patrese to challenge Warwick, but his effort to overtake at the end of the back straight on lap 64 was misguided, to say the least. He tried from a long way back, locked his wheels on the wrong line, and clouted the Footwork's left front wheel. Both went into

**Herbert: "It was like driving on a knife edge all afternoon. Like trying to balance a ball on a pinhead"**

both into a sandtrap. The Ligier stayed there, while Wendlinger was lucky to keep his momentum going and to be able to drive out again. By the flag, Brundle was only feet behind, his own attempts to pass firmly discouraged at the end of the straight.

Sauber thus had an upbeat weekend, revealing its human side over an enjoyable meal on Saturday evening, and then seeing its cars finish fifth and seventh on Sunday. With better luck Lehto should have scored points too, but his stop-and-go penalty destroyed any such hope.

Once again the reliable Minardis were around to take the lower top 10 finishing positions, but they should have belonged to Lotus, which had an appalling weekend. Herbert was clearly dispirited to find the upswing from Spa and, to an extent, Monza, had again fallen victim to serious handling imbalance. "The car is either one thing or the other at present," he said. "It's either handling very well or very badly. It was like driving on a knife edge all afternoon. Like trying to balance a ball on a pinhead." He appeared to be going through the motions in ninth place, only 8s ahead of novice team-mate Pedro Lamy after 60 laps, the speed balance of which was poised 34/26 in his favour as the local hero did a sterling job in his second GP outing. Disaster finally struck both within a lap, Herbert losing it in Parabolica on lap 61, and Lamy going off backwards in the third turn next time around.

What won Michael Schumacher the race was the timing of his pit stop. Early on he was trapped in the train of leaders, stalemated behind Prost. "I knew I was quicker than him in some places on the track," he ventured, "but they weren't the right places." At Estoril,



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that means on the straight. There the Renault V10's urge kept the Williams firmly ahead, although it was not sufficient to help Prost to push by the three cars in front. As Hakkinen discovered to his cost, the big problem is that you can't get really close to the car in front going on to the straight, which is what you really need to do if you are going to get a good tow down to the first corner and have a chance of passing there.

Originally Benetton had planned two tyre stops, but that was to change after Schumacher ducked in on lap 20. He had just risen to second behind Prost as Alesi and Hakkinen dived in for their fresh Goodyears, and Benetton turned him round so quickly that he got out after a stop lasting less than five seconds. It was the turning point of the race, because now he sat in third place behind the two Williams-Renaults, which surely had to stop at least once.

"Actually, we could have gone through with only one stop," said Michael, "but for performance reasons we planned to make two. In this

situation, when I was in fifth place and couldn't get by Alain, I knew that as Alain was behind Hakkinen he couldn't go at the speed he wanted to either. Then we did the first stop, which gave us the chance to decide later whether we wanted to make a second, depending on how things developed in the race."

That perfect stop left him in first place when Prost and Hill stopped on laps 29 and 30 respectively, and though that gave the two Didcot cars a significant number of laps less on their new tyres than the Benetton has already done on its fresh set, Schumacher was where you need to be in Estoril - out in front. From now on he could control the race.

It has to be said that his tactics were at times a trifle unruly as he moved over on Prost on more than one occasion. Nowadays, when you're known as a gent, people take advantage. Ask Ayrton. But Prost was in no mood to fight hard enough to risk an accident that might rob him of the six points he was about to score. With Hill failing to win, they would be ample to secure him his fourth World Championship.

"I think what Michael did was very good," acknowledged Prost of the timing of his rival's pit stop. "He was behind me, and when Hakkinen and Alesi stopped for tyres I knew that I would have to push. I never imagined that he would only stop once, and when he was ahead of me at the beginning I was not aware that he wasn't going to stop again. But then I could see that he was going to be difficult to overtake.

"Just after my pit stop I just thought I would

have to catch up a little bit and then he would stop again. But when it got to 20 laps from the end, I knew he was not going to stop, he was going to try and do it on one set. But again, to stay close behind another car on this track is very difficult. In the fast corners you get more and more understeer, and in the low speed corners you cannot do what you want. Okay, I could have been World Champion by staying behind Michael, but I wanted to win this one for my team. He was difficult to overtake and he was weaving a little bit too. But it was okay, and I understand that."

For Benetton and Michael Schumacher it was a great triumph, taken the hard way and snatched from the gaping jaws of defeat that had threatened to close on them all throughout qualifying. They won technically because the spare car worked properly where the race car didn't; and they won managerially because of the timing of that pit stop. And they won in the cockpit because Schumacher proved himself equal to Prost's challenge on the day. Had the Frenchman needed 10 points instead of six it might have been a different race, but that's academic. What was sad, though, is that he had to make the announcement of his impending retirement at a place like Estoril. Somehow, it would have been more apposite to see a driver of Alain Prost's calibre bowing out at a great track such as Monza, where you can cut the atmosphere and history drips from every grandstand. But for that Renault engine failure that afternoon in Italy, such a gameplan would have been observed. **DJT**

**STARTING GRID**

 <b>0 HILL*</b> Williams FW15C 1m 11.494s (2) 1m 12.290s (1)	 <b>2 PROST</b> Williams FW15C 1m 11.683s (1) 1m 12.762s (2)
 <b>7 HAKKINEN</b> McLaren MP4/8 1m 12.443s (2) 1m 12.956s (1)	 <b>8 SENNA</b> McLaren MP4/8 1m 12.491s (2) 1m 12.954s (1)
 <b>27 ALESI</b> Ferrari F93A 1m 13.101s (2) 1m 13.682s (1)	 <b>28 BERGER</b> Ferrari F93A 1m 13.933s (2) 1m 14.159s (1)
 <b>6 PATRESE</b> Benetton B193B 1m 13.863s (2) 1m 14.206s (1)	 <b>5 SCHUMACHER</b> Benetton B193B 1m 13.403s (1) 1m 14.135s (2)
 <b>9 WARWICK</b> Footwork FA14 1m 14.338s (2) 1m 15.200s (1)	 <b>26 BLUNDELL</b> Ligier JS39 1m 14.577s (2) 1m 14.591s (1)
 <b>25 BRUNDLE</b> Ligier JS39 1m 14.708s (2) 1m 14.779s (1)	 <b>30 LEHTO</b> Sauber C12 1m 14.833s (2) 1m 14.978s (1)
 <b>29 WENDLINGER</b> Sauber C12 1m 15.016s (1) 1m 15.070s (2)	 <b>12 HERBERT</b> Lotus 107B 1m 15.183s (2) 1m 15.831s (1)
 <b>14 BARRICHELLO</b> Jordan 193 1m 15.433s (2) 1m 15.479s (1)	 <b>10 SUZUKI</b> Footwork FA14 1m 15.491s (2) 1m 15.968s (1)
 <b>4 DE CESARIS</b> Tyrrell 021 1m 15.904s (2) 1m 16.072s (1)	 <b>11 LAMY</b> Lotus 107B 1m 15.920s (2) 1m 17.198s (1)
 <b>24 MARTINI</b> Minardi M193 1m 15.942s (1) 1m 16.323s (2)	 <b>19 ALLIOT</b> Larrousse LH93 1m 16.144s (2) 1m 16.777s (1)
 <b>3 KATAYAMA</b> Tyrrell 021 1m 16.186s (2) 1m 16.655s (1)	 <b>20 COMAS</b> Larrousse LH93 1m 16.417s (1) 1m 16.998s (2)
 <b>15 NASPETTI</b> Jordan 193 1m 16.566s (2) 1m 17.845s (1)	 <b>23 FITTIPALDI</b> Minardi M193 1m 16.651s (1) 1m 16.684s (2)
 <b>21 ALBORETO</b> Lola T93/30 1m 17.118s (2) 1m 17.778s (1)	 <b>22 BADOER</b> Lola T93/30 1m 17.739s (2) 1m 19.064s (1)

\* started from back

**PORTUGUESE GRAND PRIX, Estoril, September 26**  
71 laps of 2.703-mile (4.350 km) circuit (191.910 miles; 308.850 km)

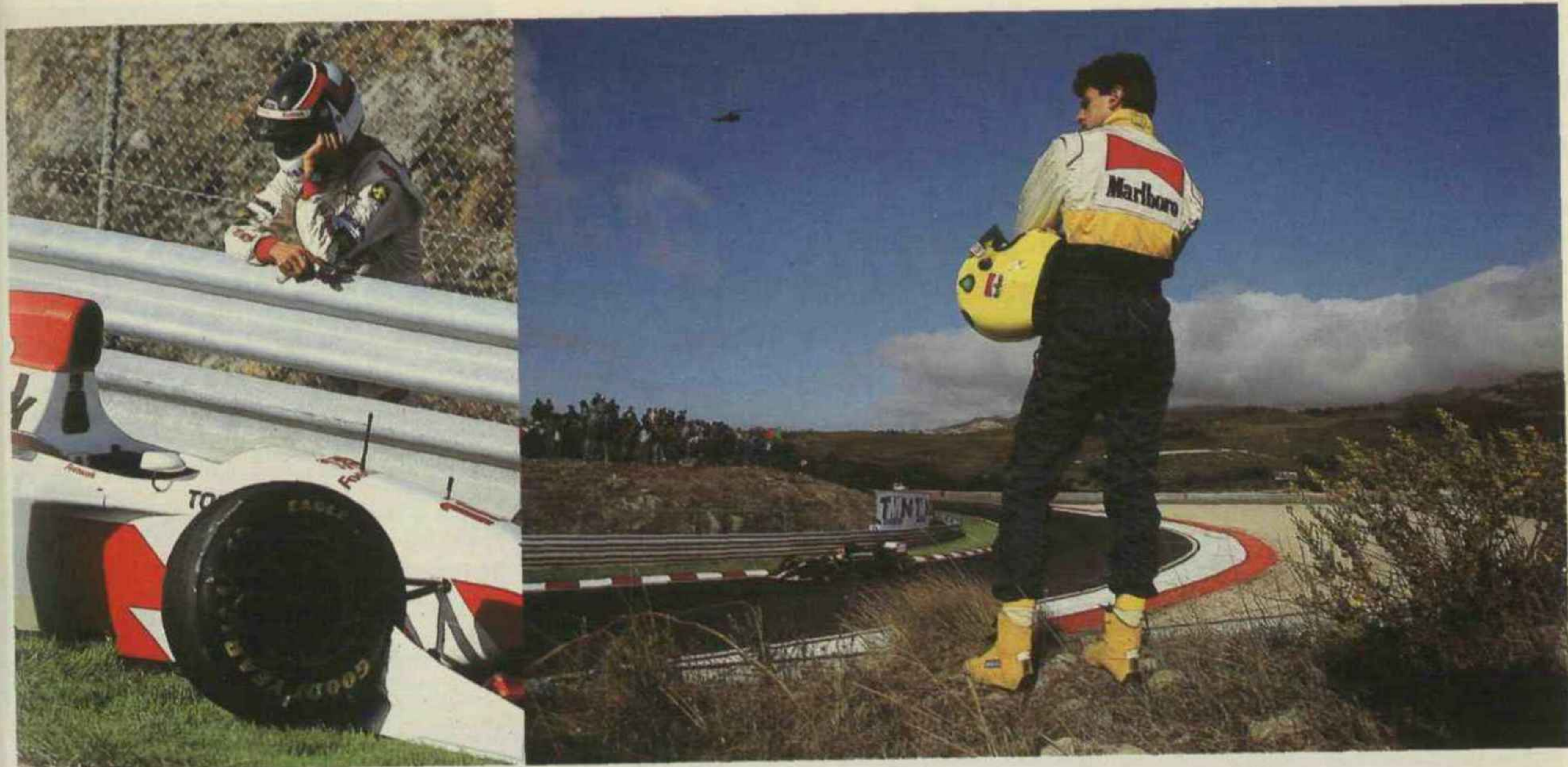
Pos	Driver	Nat	Car/Engine	Time/Retirement	Best Lap	Lap
1	Michael Schumacher	D	Benetton B193B-Ford HB V8	1h 32m 46.309s	1m 16.201s	56
2	Alain Prost	F	Williams FW15C-Renault V10	1h 32m 47.291s	1m 15.780s	45
3	Damon Hill	GB	Williams FW15C-Renault V10	1h 32m 54.515s	1m 14.859s	68
4	Jean Alesi	F	Ferrari F93A-Ferrari V12	1h 33m 53.914s	1m 16.806s	51
5	Karl Wendlinger	A	Sauber C12-Ilmor V10	70 laps	1m 17.694s	40
6	Martin Brundle	GB	Ligier JS39-Renault V10	70 laps	1m 17.638s	40
7	JJ Lehto	SF	Sauber C12-Ilmor V10	69 laps	1m 18.069s	47
8	Pier-Luigi Martini	I	Minardi M193-Ford HB V8	69 laps	1m 18.806s	53
9	Christian Fittipaldi	BR	Minardi M193-Ford HB V8	69 laps	1m 18.581s	68
10	Philippe Alliot	F	Larrousse LH93-Lamborghini V12	69 laps	1m 18.769s	42
11	Erik Comas	F	Larrousse LH93-Lamborghini V12	68 laps	1m 19.014s	43
12	Andrea de Cesaris	I	Tyrrell 021-Yamaha V10	68 laps	1m 18.290s	53
13	Rubens Barrichello	BR	Jordan 193-Hart V10	68 laps	1m 17.114s	39
14	Luca Badoer	I	Lola T93/30-Ferrari V12	68 laps	1m 19.602s	49
15	Derek Warwick	GB	Footwork FA14-Mugen V10	63 laps - accident	1m 18.134s	60
16	Riccardo Patrese	I	Benetton B193B-Ford HB V8	63 laps - accident	1m 17.340s	32
17	Pedro Lamy	P	Lotus 107B-Ford HB V8	61 laps - accident	1m 17.758s	59
18	Johnny Herbert	GB	Lotus 107B-Ford HB V8	60 laps - accident	1m 18.961s	31
19	Mark Blundell	GB	Ligier JS39-Renault V10	51 laps - accident	1m 16.793s	47
20	Michele Alboreto	I	Lola T93/30-Ferrari V12	38 laps - gearbox	1m 21.270s	38
21	Gerhard Berger	A	Ferrari F93A-Ferrari V12	35 laps - accident	1m 19.568s	31
22	Mika Hakkinen	SF	McLaren MP4/8-Ford HB V8	32 laps - accident	1m 17.992s	31
23	Auri Suzuki	I	Footwork FA14-Mugen V10	27 laps - transmission	1m 20.446s	22
24	Ayrton Senna	BR	McLaren MP4/8-Ford HB V8	19 laps - engine	1m 18.365s	17
25	Ukyo Katayama	I	Tyrrell 021-Yamaha V10	12 laps - spin	1m 21.563s	5
26	Emanuele Naspetti	I	Jordan 193-Hart V10	8 laps - engine fire	1m 22.756s	4

Winner's Average Speed: 124.118 mph (199.745 km/h) Conditions: sunny, windy  
Fastest Lap: Damon Hill, 1m 14.859s on lap 68, 129.987 mph (209.193 km/h)

Championship points: 1. Prost 87; 2. Hill 62; 3. Senna 53; 4. Schumacher 52; 5. Patrese 20; 6. Alesi 13; 7. Brundle 12; 8. Herbert 11; 9. Blundell and Berger 10; 11. Andretti and Wendlinger 7; 13. Lehto and Fittipaldi 5; 15. Warwick 4; 16. Alliot and Barbazza 2; 18. Comas and Zanardi 1.

Constructors: 1. Williams-Renault 149; 2. Benetton-Ford 72; 3. McLaren-Ford 60; 4. Ferrari 23; 5. Ligier-Renault 22; 6. Lotus-Ford and Sauber 12; 8. Minardi-Ford 7; 9. Footwork-Mugen Honda 4; 10. Larrousse-Lamborghini 3.





Above: Aguri Suzuki glumly contemplates transmission failure (left). Christian Fittipaldi (right) observes Karl Wendlinger during qualifying.



Worth the wait: having champed at the bit to get his hands on a McLaren during a race weekend, Mika Hakkinen did it full justice.



Above: Hakkinen stole the lead momentarily at the start (left) — though his forceful tactics didn't impress Prost — but Alesi (to the right of the photograph) had outfoxed them all by the first corner. Martin Brundle (right) salvaged a point for Ligier, but the team might have fared much better.



# When Senna drove the Williams



**Ten years after he first drove for Frank, Senna has finally been reunited with the Didcot team, this time to race. But what did happen at Donington in 1983?**

It was a cool, dry day, Tuesday July 19 1983. Donington Park was bathed in weak sun, and conditions were favourable. Two days earlier Alain Prost had just won the British GP at Silverstone for Renault, beating Nelson Piquet and Patrick Tambay. In the Formula Three clash, Brazilian sensation Ayrton Senna had just trounced Briton Martin Brundle again (although the latter would turn the tables several times thereafter in a fantastic year). It was a good summer, and Donington was ideal for a young man having his first Formula One test. Frank Williams had had his eye on Senna since the beginning of the

season, as he wracked up win after win in the F3 series, and now he brought him together with one of his FW08Cs, a development of the car with which Keke Rosberg had won the 1982 World Drivers' Championship, and in which he had only recently won the Monaco Grand Prix. It would be a sensational combination.

A couple of days later, Senna assessed it quietly. "It was everything I could have wanted. I learned a lot, got some consistent laps in and benefited from having Frank Williams there to watch over everything."

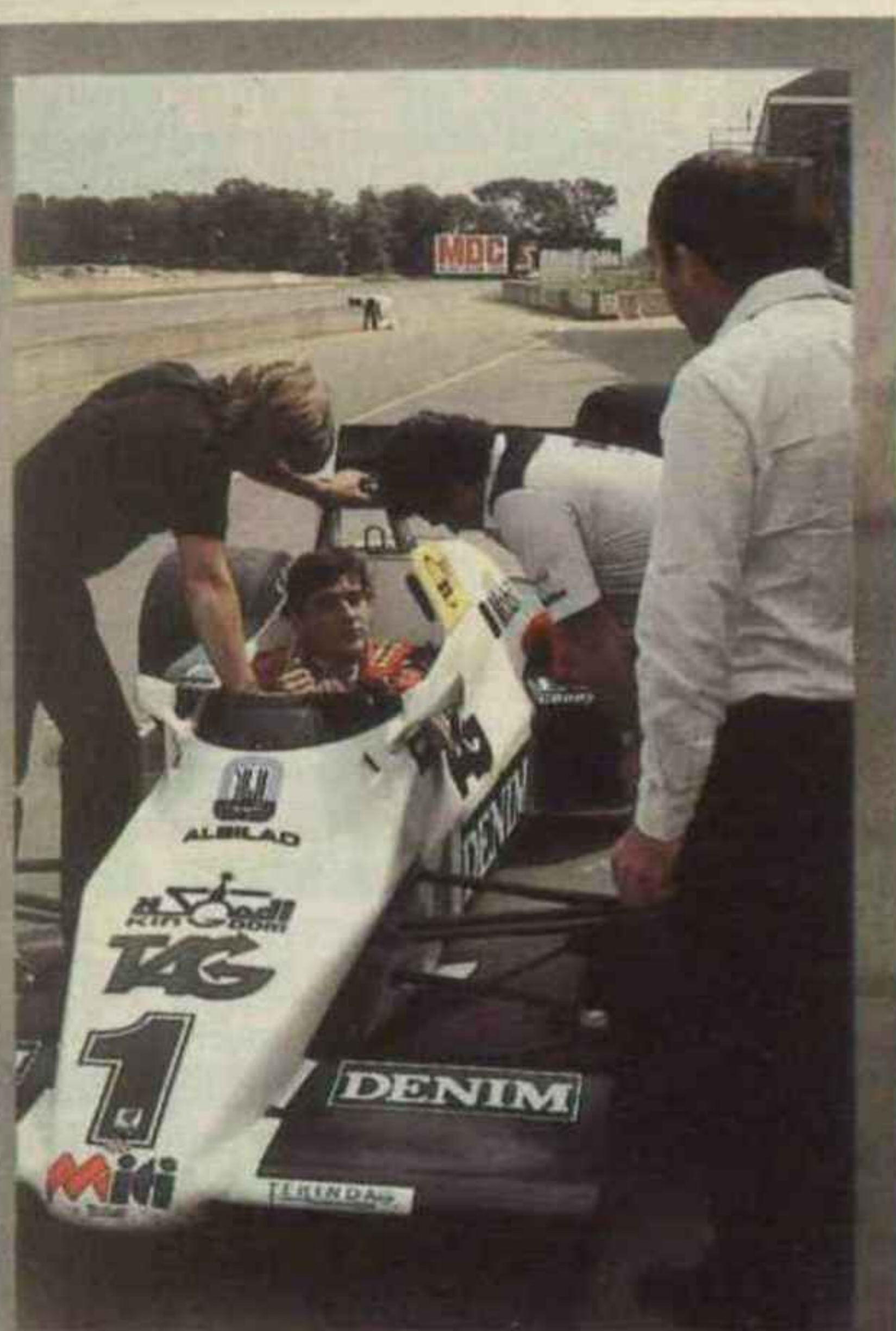
At the time, Frank himself said: "He took to it like a duck to water. It was very easy

for him."

Further on down the road it is easier to place that quiet little test in its true perspective. There were only two photographers present that day, incredible as it seems, for it is easy to see it now as the start of something big.

Robbie Campbell, now in charge of Damon Hill's car, was second man on the spare Williams that year. "Charlie Moody was in charge of the car, and Alan Challis was there too. I knew Ayrton already, through Emerson Fittipaldi. He was always hanging about with him and we'd seen him in Ford 2000. I used to kid him he had a big





engine in the car but, of course, he hadn't. He was just quick.

"That day he went round Donington faster than anyone had ever driven a Williams, and really, he wasn't trying too hard because he didn't fit the car. It was Keke's, and he was a really cramped fit.

"He did some laps, then came in at one stage and said to me: 'How many gears does this car have?' I told him it had six. 'Okay,' he said. 'I only use five so far.'

"He was very confident, but he wasn't pushing too hard. I think he might have had one spin at the chicane, but that was all. He never touched anything. I *knew* he was gonna be quick . . ."

Frank, naturally, has never forgotten that day. Ten years later his recall is still precise – when he wishes it to be.

"My recollections are coloured, though, because my car broke down two junctions before Donington on the M1. My Jaguar. To be fair, the factory came and picked us up and sent a new car to the circuit later in the day . . ."

"Ayrton? He was quick immediately. You could tell he was the real thing. I think it was within nine laps that he equalled Jonathan Palmer's best lap set some time before, which was 61.6s or 61.7s."

Frank thinks he drove no more than 30 laps, although at the time our story mentioned 83. Whatever, Senna exuded confidence, even with Frank playing an unaccustomed role as *Ingegnere* Williams.

Some who were there recall little tests Senna was put through. "There were some funny bits," said one observer, our photographer Steven Tee of LAT. "They changed the time board three times, because they couldn't believe how fast he was going! After that I think they might have been a couple of things to slow him down a bit, because everyone thought he was going too fast. They kept refuelling the car, things like that, to keep it heavy. I think they might have changed the suspension geometry and the wings a couple of times too, without telling him. Nothing nasty, just little things to see if he noticed. To test him. He did notice. He spotted them all."

"I don't recall doing anything to the car," counters Frank cautiously. "I didn't know much about engineering one – still don't – so I didn't pay too much close attention to all that. I have no capability in that area! As far as I remember, we ran him with a standard fuel load, 10 gallons in those days. About 45 litres.

"But at one stage he came in, towards the end of his run, and told me that he thought the engine was nearing the end of the road. He said the note had changed and he didn't want to risk breaking it."

Later that year Senna approached the line at Silverstone during a McLaren run that was his prize for winning the Marlboro British F3 Championship, blowing the engine as he did so. Asked by Ron Dennis why he hadn't lifted off, he replied: "I was on a quick lap . . ."

"He was totally confident," continues Frank. "He was giving it one. I think *Motoring News* had a photo of him with the left front on the rubbing strip under braking for the chicane . . ."

"By the end he had lapped in 60.9s, even though he was a tight fit in Keke's car, because Ayrton is slim and Keke was quite broad and short. Obviously the guy was a bit different. It was all pretty easy for him, getting down to our previous best time within 10 laps. I certainly went away very impressed."

"He was mega under braking into the chicane," says Tee. "He was getting on the brakes really, *really* late. Using all the track, to the point where he ran out and just touched the entry kerb there a couple of times. But he only spun once on the exit.

"Looking back now it's amazing how young he looked, and how few people were there to see what we now know was an historic event. It was just one of those really relaxed days. Today there's so much aggravation attached to similar things, but it was all different then . . ."

And there hung the tale – until the Tuesday after Monza, September 14 1993 when Ayrton Senna is reputed to have done the deal that finally placed him in a Williams. All of 10 years – and three World Championships – after his first F1 test with the team . . .

**D J T**



**July 19 1983, Donington Park. A youthful Ayrton Senna (seen talking, left, with locum engineer Frank Williams) tries a Williams – and, indeed, an F1 car – for the very first time. Inset, he relays his initial impressions to Charlie Moody (left) and Alan Challis, as Williams looks on. On October 11 1993, it was finally confirmed that he was to join the team.**



# Farewell



## to an artist

*Alain Prost's retirement leaves Ayrton Senna a clear road*

"We used to have a sort of natural culling of drivers. We used to lose one or two a year and if Prost or Mansell had been killed, it would have been forgotten after a couple of races."

There can be few motorsport enthusiasts who are not now familiar with those words, attributed to Bernie Ecclestone by two colleagues during an interview in Estoril. I happen to respect both – Oliver Holt of *The Times* and Bob McKenzie of the *Daily Express*, and to hold their integrity in esteem. They are not the kind to manufacture such things.

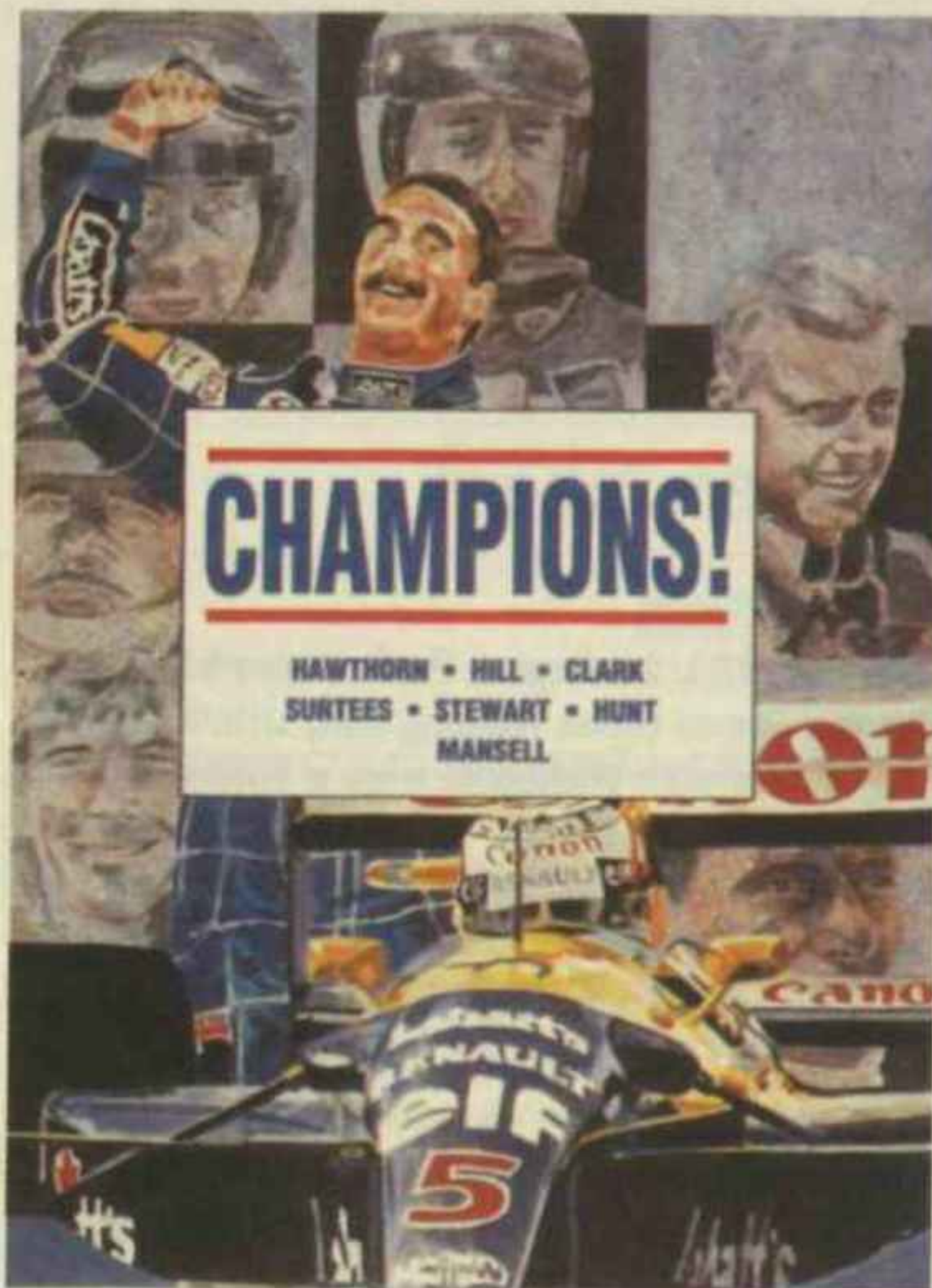
Ecclestone, they claimed, then went on to say (mainly referring to Prost): "Some drivers just flit in and out to suit their own convenience." He appeared to have his enthusiasm for the Frenchman under firm control.

No doubt those words will haunt Bernie, and those who recall his friendships with Stuart Lewis-Evans, Jochen Rindt and Carlos Pace will be well aware that the apparent insensitivity and brutality of them is not necessarily a reflection of his true feelings. Ecclestone likes to shock, and he admits that it was not a good time for the two writers to pose questions about the future of the sport over which he has ruled these many years.

The effect, however, was saddening, for in the scrappy little paddock of Estoril a great champion announced his decision to retire, and prepared to walk away in circumstances which did not match his glittering career.

It is easy to think of Alain Prost as the man who, ultimately, preferred to quit rather than to face another bout with Ayrton Senna as his team-mate, and no matter how much all the parties deny it, that is the impression that remains. Few truly credit the idea that Prost decided to quit before Frank Williams began enticing Senna as his likely 1994 partner. Some, whose interest in motorsport dates

## Champions!



*Appreciation of a new book dedicated to Britain's seven F1 world champions*

Following the concept of its previous publication, *Racers Apart*, which researched heavily into the recollections and personal anecdotes of relatives, friends and colleagues to paint portraits of 29 racing and record breaking drivers, Motor Racing Publications continues the theme with this volume, priced at £19.95, written by the prolific Chris Hilton and MRP publisher John Blunsden.

Within its 320 pages they concentrate minutely on the lives of Britain's Magnificent Seven – the nation's World Champions, Hawthorn, Hill, Clark, Surtees, Stewart, Hunt and Mansell. Between them, they won the coveted title a total of 11 times, winning 115 of the 532 Grands Prix staged over the past 43 years.

Uniquely, the book is divided into two sections as it takes its in-depth look at their careers. In the first, Hilton constructs a portrait of each driver up to and including the first time he won the championship. In the second, Blunsden provides personal insights into the world of Formula One and unveils the personalities behind the wheel. He speaks from the heart, having known each of them at the height of their fame. Fittingly, that great 'unchampion' Stirling Moss is also accorded his rightful place in the scheme of things, even though the

crown itself eluded him.

The result is an excellent book, for both men produce fascinating insights into characters and situations. The portrait of Hawthorn is gripping. In public our first World Champion appeared a sunny, curly blond-haired 'chap', who liked a drink and a joke and lived life to the full with a cheerful smile and a puff on his pipe. Yet behind that facade lurked a troubled man, wracked by doubt over the Le Mans disaster, and doomed by a terminal kidney problem that doctors believed would have claimed him within a matter of years had he not lost control of his Jaguar on the Hog's Back in January 1959.

Hawthorn was a moral man, and this comes out strongly as Hilton probes his life with the help of those who knew him best. Part of his tragedy was that he was in frequent pain, yet refused to divulge his illness even when the press of the day pilloried him because he had apparently avoided national service. At the time of his death he was planning to marry model Jean Howarth, now Mrs Innes Ireland. He felt very strongly that racing drivers shouldn't be married, and that conviction, allied to the death in 1958 of his close friend Peter Collins, had prompted him to retire once he had clinched his title. Hilton also suggests



back only to Nigel Mansell's rise to true stardom, see Prost as a percentage player who was never prepared to lay everything on the line.

He is devious, we are told, manipulative. A *political* animal! We've heard all that too, mostly from Mansell and his disciples in the national media. As if any champions these days aren't.

Perhaps he is. Perhaps not. You can only speak as you find. And I have always found him a perfect gentleman. A busy one, true, but always prepared to honour commitments,

## "A great champion prepared to walk away in circumstances which did not match his glittering career"

always courteous, and, usually, prepared to consider even the most difficult and probing questions.

His penchant for wearing his racing heart on his Nomex sleeve can be irritating at times, but in human terms it indicates a character which would much rather have things out in the open. In that light the characteristic becomes more endearing.

In his first season of F1, he annihilated John Watson at McLaren, yet was sensitive enough to remonstrate with a team joker when he saw him drawing critical cartoons of Wattie on the garage wall. The Ulsterman was going through a bad patch, and that seemed too much like kicking him when he was down. I always thought that an interesting index of the man.

In his years with Renault Prost was invariably among the qualifying pacemakers, and when Niki Lauda found himself paired with him at McLaren in 1984 and '85, he was astounded. "I soon realised that there was just no way I was going to be prepared to go to the lengths he did in practice," he would relate. Only some years later, when Senna joined him at McLaren, did Prost see life in such terms, too. If he stays around long enough, Senna too may experience that, for that is the way nature works.

I prefer to recall Prost as the man who twice (Silverstone 1988 and Adelaide 1989) had sufficient courage to withdraw from wet competitions. His reasoning has been well documented, and though personally I prefer the Rodriguez type of competitor, I admired his honesty on both occasions. I prefer to think of his drive to sixth place at Spa in 1986 when his McLaren had been damaged at the start; that day he drove balls-out with controlled aggression. Or his fight with Senna at Suzuka in 1989. That was the most electrifying battle I have seen in F1. Or his unnatural self-control in the early stages of the 1990 Mexican GP, as he held back and preserved his Ferrari and its Goodyear tyres before launching into the attack that would take him from 13th place to victory.

You don't win 51 Grands Prix by luck; like any topline sportsman Prost has been totally adept at making his own, but there is a huge measure of rare skill in the mix too. With Senna he remains at the pinnacle of his profession.

The decision to quit, he said, came slowly during the season. "I think it is better to stop," he said. "After all, I have to one day. It was hard to find the motivation for 1994. It has been such a hard season with the politics." Don't forget that at the start of the

year FISA at one stage threatened not to grant him his superlicence, or Williams its entry, and at Monaco his penalty for an alleged jump start was little short of scandalous. "After 13 years in Formula One you sometimes have to make the decision to stop," he said, barely audibly.

It saddened me that his enforced 1991 sabbatical – in marked contrast to Mansell's decision to move to IndyCars – met with such little outrage, but then I have always suspected that his very smoothness has militated against him. Mansell and Senna have brawled in public, both in and out of their cars, and frequently exited races after inflicting mutual damage. By today's standards of sporting conduct, that bash-and-crash mentality has elevated them to spectator favourites. Prost, on the other hand, with his Clark-like precision and control, was said to be boring to watch. Even on quick laps, he looked slow.

The one time I ever saw him drive dirtily, when he weaved at Senna in the chicane at Suzuka in 1989, the effort was lamentable. It was as if he had no idea how to pull a dirty trick. Most F1 drivers today are like the sort of jobs on motorways who block and brake test; Prost is in a minority prepared to give its rivals racing room, just like they used to in more glamorous days. His style compared with so many others was like pugilism compared to street brawling. I for one will miss the thrill of watching such artistry at firsthand.

Whatever the reasons, he has elected to leave at the top. In retrospect, though, it was an indeed ironic twist of Fate that blew his engine in Monza, and thus denied him the chance to check out with dignity at one of the world's great circuits. Somehow, in Portugal, with Bernie's acerbic comments muddying the waters, it all seemed so sordid. **D J T**

that his continual pain – and occasional blackouts – in those pre-transplant days also played a key role in the decision.

The portrait of Graham Hill is also commendably frank. 'The man was hard and soft, public and private, rational and unreasonable, just like you and I.' He also hits a nerve when he says, early in the chapter: 'The other portrait is darker, and few care to speak about it on the record although many witnessed it; the temper, the insensitivity. One time he vented this on his wife Bette in front of the mechanics and a fist fight almost broke out because someone protested and was rewarded with a virulent torrent grouped around the f-word.

'This darker portrait is inhibited by considerations for Bette . . .'

How very true.

Apposite, too, is Derek Bell's assessment of Hill, as 'a Henry Cooper of Formula One . . .', but it is hard to buy the ideal of Graham Hill as the forgotten champion, as family members are sometimes prompted to suggest.

All of the portraits tell stories, perhaps the best being that of James Hunt because his passing is still so strongly felt. Said Hesketh team manager Bubbles Horsley of the man who often used to vomit with nerves before a race: 'I think that James was

very honourable, a very decent guy, a very nice human being, which is quite rare in this business.' We also learn how Jody Scheckter quite possibly lost Hunt the chance of winning a Grand Prix in only his third attempt when he spun his McLaren and hit the pit wall at Silverstone in 1973. His rear wing sliced away the Hesketh team's only tall airbox, obliging it to run with a smaller version. In the race Hunt finished fourth, only 3.4s adrift of victor Peter Revson, and that tall airbox had been worth another 15bhp on fast tracks . . .

Hilton's style improves with age, and we have come a long way from the staccato, listen-to-this-or-else snappiness of some of his earlier books. His research ability remains awesome and totally rewarding, his sense of humour wry. Of Nigel Mansell, he says in his opening paragraph: 'When everything has been raked over, dissected, analysed, when all the evidence has been assembled – and by now there is a library of it – a strange question won't go away. Who is Nigel Mansell? Somehow you know the answer and somehow you don't. It gets pungent because you're sure you do.'

This is a benign book, and perhaps a little bit harder edge would have improved it. Hilton doesn't like Mansell, but neverthel-

ess his chapter on him is almost overly fair. Perhaps it is because of that fact, for he has not pulled punches in the past. Like Blunsden, his natural style is to take the most positive view of given situations. It is part of their gentlemanly natures.

In his section Blunsden has the perfect platform to reveal not only the writing ability honed over the years with publications such as *Motoring News*, *Motor Racing* and *The Times*, but his startling talent for observing, assessing and distilling information. Never has this better been showcased, than in his seven chapters of memories.

*Champions!* is a splendid tribute to Britain's World Champions, and in telling their stories it paints a portrait of the social, economic and sporting changes within Grand Prix racing over the years. It stands as a detailed insight into how each used whatever circumstances they encountered to claw their way to the top of the pile. Each achieved his success – and coped with it – in vastly different styles, and this brings that out brilliantly.

It is not a *moving* book, and the cover is appalling, hiding Jimmy Clark behind Nigel Mansell's rear wing, but these are minor carps. It's engrossing and highly informative, one of those rare motor racing works which is terribly hard to put down. **D J T**



# The circuit that never was



In the summer, we carried a letter proposing the use of the title 'Scottish Grand Prix' to bring a second Formula One race to the UK. The writer, Ian Scott-Watson, went on to recall attempts to develop a new race circuit in Scotland in the 1960s, which prompted a response from a reader who was involved at the time — Professor Christopher Riley, the Liverpool architect who was engaged to produce outline plans for one such circuit. This is how he recalls the project:

"In 1963, if I remember correctly, Motor Circuit Developments who then owned Oulton Park, Mallory, Snetterton and Brands was approached by a group from Scotland consisting of Lord Bruce, Jim Clark and Ian Scott-Watson to consider a site at Polkemmet, midway between Glasgow and Edinburgh."

In fact, according to Scott-Watson, the instigators were Lord Bruce (later the Earl of

Elgin) and David Murray of *Ecurie Ecosse*; Clark and Scott-Watson were later asked for their technical input. The aim was to replace Charterhall, the Borders airfield circuit, whose doubtful safety was proven when two spectators died there. It was also a loss-maker: there may have been a crowd of 20,000 but, with no fencing, only a quarter of them might have paid.

Riley continues: "Rex Foster, manager at Oulton Park, was asked by MCD to undertake the work, and I was asked by Rex to act as consulting architect through my practice in Liverpool. The site, virtually alongside the yet to be built M8 motorway, had been the former home of Sir Gawaine Baillie's family, but, as at Oulton, the old hall had gone.

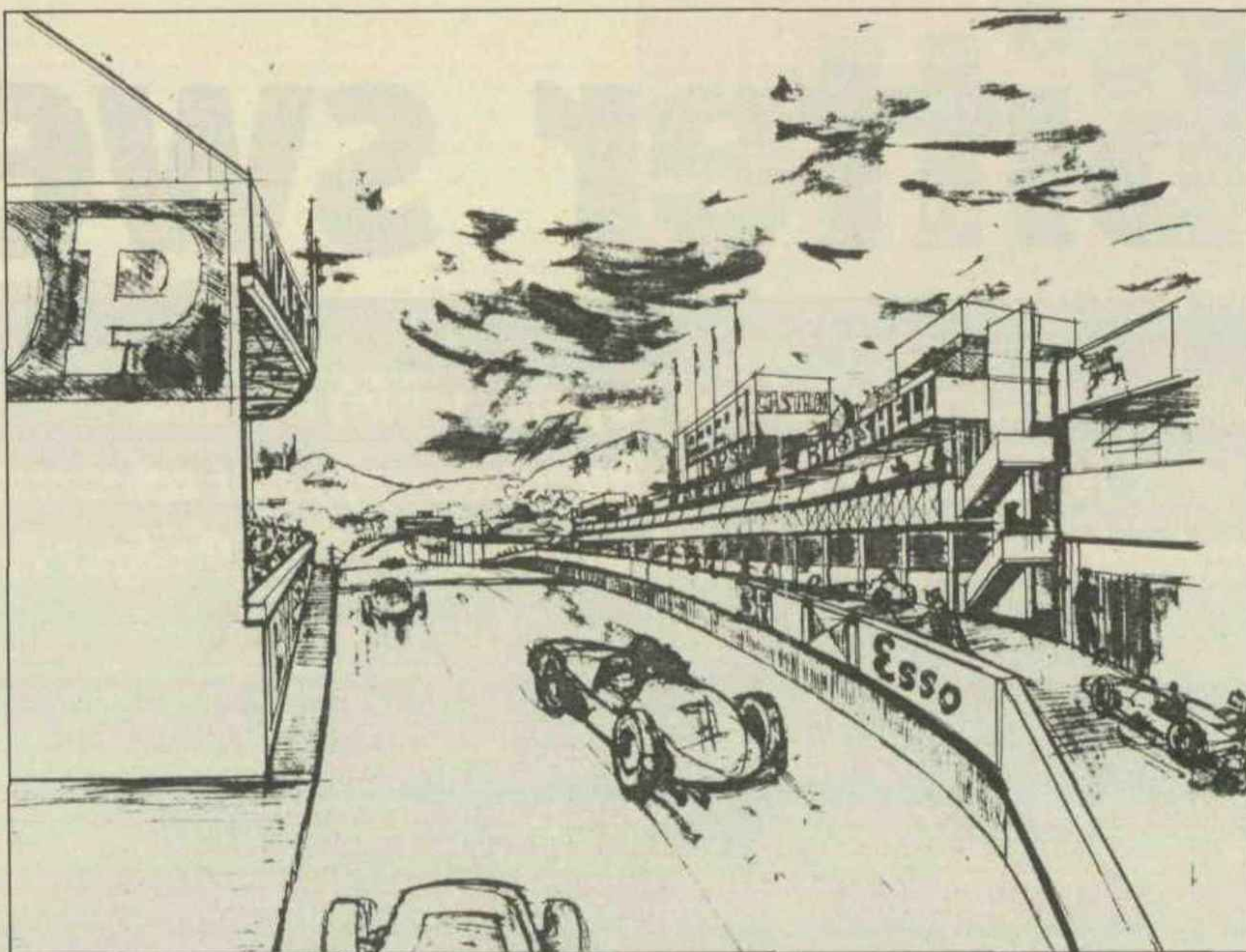
"Jim Clark and I walked around the pegged-out line of the proposed track, and Jim advised which trees should stay and which be removed. Remember, this was before Armco, and I recall Jim defending the retention of trees which I and others felt were in dangerous positions — "part of the drivers' confidence and skill to get it right"!

"It was to be called the Scottish National

Motor Racing Circuit, and planning was well advanced by early 1964. Maybe it did not go ahead on financial grounds, but I do remember Rex being extremely disappointed, and also saying that negotiations with the Coal Board who had mines in the area had something to do with its abandonment. It would have made a quite splendid track with superb viewing."

Indeed, Riley's plans show an interesting wooded setting; imagine an Oulton Park crossed with Brands Hatch. With its narrow infield area, most of the parking and viewing was on the outside of the track, minimising access difficulties; tunnels gave vehicle and pedestrian access to the paddock inside the west loop. Particularly novel was the pits arrangement: the working area was to be raised several feet above track level, reached by ramps at either end and protected by a concrete retaining wall. At a period when at some circuits the pit lane was still separated from the track only by a white line, let alone Armco, this would have represented a significant safety improvement. Prompted by the natural slope at this point, this layout provided covered garage space underneath the pit lane, with access from the rear. Such provision would have been an advanced feature for the time; but





Polkemmet's well-wooded site (left) would have enclosed a tight little track; physical restrictions and lack of capital made it a non-starter. Above; a perspective of the novel pits complex; note the raised pit-lane.

as Riley points out now, teams would soon have tired of having to run cars down the pit lane ramps and round to the back entrances. It remained an idea stage in the evolution of today's pits complexes.

But the circuit was under two miles long, and plans to extend the track into nearby fields to reach Grand Prix standard merely intensified local opposition. The roads authority was worried that the racing would distract drivers on the new motorway, and worse, the Coal Board, which had used the hall as a training centre, retained the mineral rights to the land, and would not rule out future workings.

On top of these physical problems, the financial questions had simply not been answered. Things went as far as asking the construction firm Wimpey to start work, but their checks indicated that, not surprisingly, the backing was not there, and Polkemmet faded quietly away.

Graham Gauld, friend and biographer of Jim Clark and later involved in Ingliston circuit, confirms that the threat of mining meant that the Polkemmet proposal could never really have worked, even if the financial picture had looked good; "it was just the flicker of an idea — but you have to have ideas. . ."

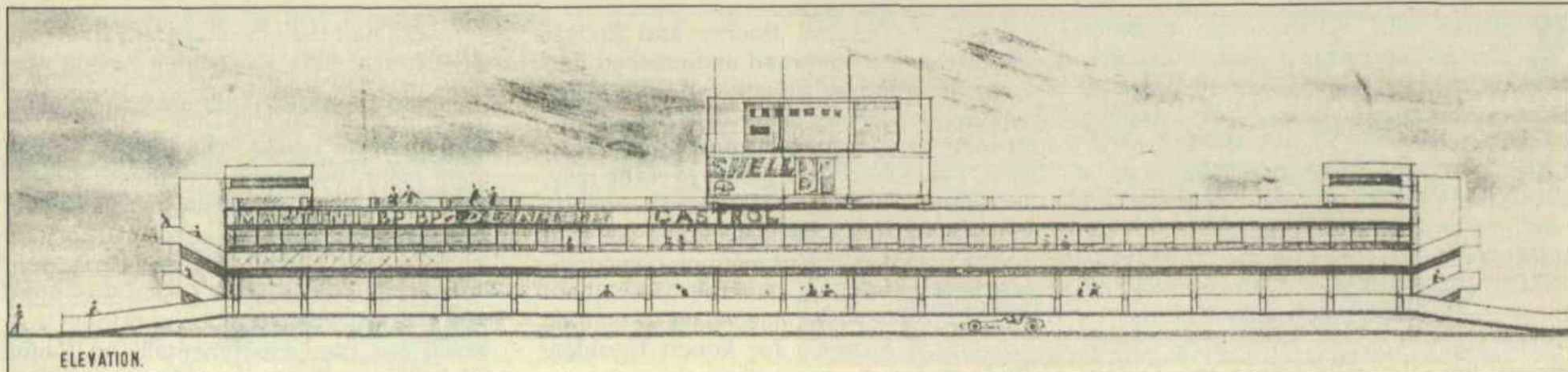
With Charterhall in its last season in 1964, there was suddenly nowhere at all to go motor racing in Scotland. Realising that an all-new circuit was a long way off, Scott-Watson swung into action in August, and by October work had started at the Ingliston showground outside Edinburgh to thread a tight but exciting circuit around the various show-buildings. By using existing infrastructure such as the actual show arena and grandstands, the new track was able to pay its way. It remained the only Scottish circuit until Knockhill was built, although in 1966 Scott-Watson, working with racing driver

Angus Clydesdale, later the Duke of Hamilton, drew up an ambitious project for a GP-standard circuit near the town of Hamilton. It combined racing facilities far ahead of Silverstone or Brands with water sports and athletics provisions to make it a multi-purpose venue — but it would have cost just too much. — £600,000. It got to the detailed planning stage, but went no further.

Riley (who incidentally still hillclimbs a Lotus XI and runs an Esprit Turbo) adds an interesting footnote about Oulton Park:

"Rex Foster was approached by the film people who made *Grand Prix* to build a one-mile straight for filming purposes. We produced proposals for this showing this extension coupled up to the existing long circuit. It would have made a quite superb track. I was not present at the financial negotiations but sadly the project did not proceed." Like Polkemmet, and Hamilton. G C

Hospitality suites were another forward-looking feature of the elaborate Polkemmet pits building.





# Bitter sweet

*Juha Kankkunen's victory delighted Toyota, which became the first Japanese manufacturer to take the World Championship, but celebrations were overshadowed by the death of popular Kiwi Rodger Freeth*



**S**adness and delight came together during September's Rally Australia, backed primarily by Telecom Australia. With an outstanding win, virtually unchallenged, Juha Kankkunen and Nicky Grist scored enough World Championship points for Toyota to put the make out of reach of any other in the three remaining qualifiers, and the Cologne team was delighted that Toyota will now be the first Japanese manufacturer to take the title.

The sadness came only three special stages into the rally, when the Subaru

Legacy of 'Possum' Bourne and Rodger Freeth went off the road and crashed into trees. Bourne was unhurt, but a seriously injured Freeth was taken by helicopter to hospital where he died shortly after admission. The tragedy cast gloom over the rally, for New Zealander Freeth was a popular competitor, and it was only after a talk with Freeth's widow, not to mention considerable heart-searching, that the 555 Subaru team decided to continue. A Legacy entered by Subaru Australia for Robert Herridge/Roderick Horsley was withdrawn.

Toyota had the advantage of experience in Australia, Juha Kankkunen having won three times in a row (once in a Toyota and twice in a Lancia) and Didier Auriol once, last year in a Lancia. The Castrol-backed team sent two cars for these drivers, Kankkunen again partnered by Nicky Grist who now looks likely to keep that position into next year. Auriol had his regular partner Bernard Occelli. Neither Celica was fitted with the electronic traction control system which was tried experimentally on Hannu Mikkola's car during the 1000 Lakes Rally.





**Juha Kankkunen and Nicky Grist celebrate the fact that they have just secured Toyota's first World Championship. The Finn also strengthened his own position at the head of the drivers' table.**

Ford was making its first foray to the event and had two Escort RS Cosworths for François Delecour/Daniel Grataloup and Massimo Biasion/Tiziano Siviero. The cars seemed not to be ideally set up for the peculiar conditions in Western Australia, with narrow, slippery tracks and trees right up to the track edges to make corner-clipping a very risky practice indeed, and neither crew was able to display top mettle.

Lancia's presence, again only by virtue of the Jolly Club's continued participation, consisted on just one Delta integrale for

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Colin McRae (above) and François Delecour both had their problems, but the gulf between the leading runners and the rest was such that they remained in the top six, taking sixth and third places respectively.



Carlos Sainz/Luis Moya, backed by the Spanish oil company Repsol.

Subaru had the full strength of Prodrive in attendance, with three 555-liveried Legacy Turbos for Colin McRae/Derek Ringer, Ari Vatanen/Bruno Berglund and New Zealanders Peter 'Possum' Bourne/Rodger Freeth. The model is called a Liberty in Australia, and the cars had been rebadged accordingly. Like other teams which have also tackled the New Zealand Rally, Prodrive had left vehicles, spares and other equipment in the Antipodes to be ready for the Australia Rally, whilst staff flew back to Europe for the 1000 Lakes. No doubt this was one of the main reasons why the Impreza was not used in Australia.

Mitsubishi Ralliart did not make the trip from the UK, but its Australian offshoot was there with a Lancer which had been built using works team parts. It was driven by Ross Dunkerton/Fred Gocentas and entered

by Team Mitsubishi Ralliart so that it could be nominated as eligible for points in the World Championship for Makes.

Among the non-works cars was a Lancia Delta integrale from Italy's Top Run team for Argentinians Jorge Recalde/Martin Christie, whilst Josef 'Sepp' Haider/Klaus Wendel took an Audi S2 Quattro.

Several Japanese privateers made the trip, including Yoshio Fujimoto/Hakaru Ichino and Kiyoshi Inoue/Satoshi Hayashi, each in a Group N Mitsubishi Lancer. Australians Ed Ordynski/Mark Stacey drove a similar car, as did David and Kathryn Officer, also from Australia.

Neal Bates and Coral Taylor were in a Toyota Celica, whilst Daihatsu Australia had entered two Group N Charades for Brett and Ross Middleton and Robert Nicoli/Dale Hynes. Nobuhiro Tajima brought a Suzuki Swift from Japan to be partnered by Australian Ross Runnalls, and it was quite amazing

to see the the bulky frame of the driver emerge from his diminutive car.

This was the fifth time that the event has figured in the World Championship. The organisers have done an excellent job of promoting it and gathering the necessary backing. They also do a good job of running the event, having travelled around other rallies for some years to collect ideas. Unfortunately, the Western Australian public is not quite in tune with what goes on, although enthusiasm is certainly not lacking.

The rally was based at Perth, the whole width of the continent away from the area where the Southern Cross Rally, the other Australian event to attain international prominence, was held in the forests inland from Port Macquarie.

It spanned four days, returning each night to Perth where the overnight *parc fermé* was at the city's Langley Park which also served





as a venue for a short spectator stage used twice on the first day and once on the second. Rally headquarters were at the nearby Sheraton Hotel. Total distance was about 1200 miles, of which some 350 miles were devoted to the 35 special stages.

The layout of the route was somewhat complicated, for one stage was tackled three times, two twice and parts of four more driven several times. The nine-stage first day went eastwards from Perth, the second and third (eight and 13 stages) to the south and the four-stage final day to the east again.

The first stage, a two-at-a-time, figure-of-eight affair in Langley Park itself, preceded by a publicity competition for team managers in Daihatsu Charades, was just under 1.5 miles but even in this short distance Kankkunen managed to be fastest by two seconds from Sainz and Auriol. He continued as he started, setting best time on

every one of the first day's stages, being equalled three times by Auriol and once by McRae.

On the first real stage, Recalde went out when the suspension of his Group N Lancia collapsed. One stage later, after a heavy storm, the spirit was knocked out of the event when Bourne and Freeth had the accident which, tragically, claimed Freeth's life.

The same stage also saw the end of Sainz's effort. Whilst cutting a corner he went straight off the road and into the trees.

Later in the day, Auriol hit an unexpected rock in the road so hard that his sump broke, the oil pressure falling to zero almost immediately. This left Kankkunen as the only Toyota team survivor, but he was very much in command, ahead of McRae and Delecour at the end of the day. The Fords had not been performing as well as was expected and one reason put forward was

that the engine management computers were not programmed ideally for the quality of Australian aviation fuel.

Dunkerton had some trouble at the 6 am restart on the Sunday, his engine first starting then spluttering to a stop and refusing to restart. However, it was got going eventually. Haider had been experiencing a power drop on the first day, but when a leaking pipe joint in the turbocharger was put right the engine performed well again.

On the second stage of the day McRae was fastest, but Kankkunen lost a little time when he went off the road and had to use reverse gear to regain it. In any case, the Finn's lead was well over a minute.

In the big forest complex around the town of Bunnings, some roads had considerable standing water, and McRae and Ringer were doused when they suddenly and uncomfortably discovered that a loosened gaiter at the base of the gear lever was not capable



**Sepp Haider finished a creditable fifth in his Audi.**



of keeping it out!

Biasion needed to have two broken shock absorbers replaced and complained yet again that his engine was down on power. However, team-mate Delecour reckoned that what he was short of was low rpm torque rather than power. From here on, Biasion's car was used as an in-event test bed, whilst Delecour was given free rein to keep his World Championship position.

Vatanen got ahead of Delecour for a while but was later slowed by a fault which caused the turbocharger wastegate to malfunction. This was later cured, by changing the whole turbocharger.

At the end of the day, Kankkunen held a lead of 1m 19s over McRae, whilst Vatanen was another 2m 12s behind. The two Fords followed, Delecour after 1m 03s and Biasion after another 1m 17s. Dunkerton was sixth, a further 6m 20s behind.

On the third day, Kankkunen continued to inch further ahead, but Delecour, after starting well, lost a huge chunk of time when he experienced fuel starvation and a misfire under full throttle. Various things were changed, including the pumps and the engine's black box, but it was not until a sensor at the end of the crankshaft was swapped that there was any improvement. He was one minute late at the next time control, despite having a police escort – which he promptly overtook!

Delecour was angry with his team-mate for not stopping to help when he was stranded in the stage with a dead engine, claiming that he would have lost far less time had the Italian pushed him bumper-to-bumper. Biasion merely shrugged his shoulders. It does seem that there is still very little love lost between these two Ford drivers.

Despite the loss of time, something like 12 minutes, Delecour only dropped two places, and had regained one of those by the time two more stages were run. A change of prop shaft cured a vibration in Vatanen's car, but Bates lost seven minutes after his propshaft broke. At the end of the day, Delecour's front differential was replaced when the Frenchman reported that it had become noisy.

Back at Perth for the second night stop, Kankkunen had increased his lead over

McRae to 2m 09s. Vatanen was another 4m 07s behind, followed 6m 32s later by Biasion. Delecour was 8m 49s behind his team-mate and just 53s ahead of Dunkerton.

Very little drama was expected on the last day, for Kankkunen had enough of a lead to

**“Biasion shrugged his shoulders. It does seem that there is still very little love lost between these two Ford drivers”**

slow a little and McRae did not really have a chance of ousting the Finn. However, McRae reckoned without a steep bank down which his car dropped after he left the road. There were no spectators and the two Scots had to use tree branches to dig out their own escape route back to the track. All

this cost them well over half an hour and let team-mate Vatanen into second place. On a European event that sort of loss would have cost at least 20 places, but McRae dropped only from second to sixth, so great were the penalty differences between the leading drivers in Australia.

Almost within sight of the finish, Biasion went out of the rally for a bizarre reason when he lost a good hour on the last stage but one and was beyond maximum lateness at the next control. A bump jolted his front spoiler so much out of position that it obstructed the airflow to the cooling intakes. The result was a seriously overheating engine, and when the same crankshaft sensor that failed on Delecour's car also stopped working properly on Biasion's, the rally was over for the Italian.

For Toyota, becoming the first Japanese manufacturer to clinch the world title for makes led to some emotional scenes at the finish. For Kankkunen, it was another big step towards taking the drivers' title for the fourth time. He has by no means clinched it yet, but we doubt whether anyone would put much money on his losing it.

No matter how gleeful the celebrations, the tragic death of Rodger Freeth was still fresh in everybody's minds and this cast a shadow over everyone associated with the event. **G P**

**Telecom Rally Australia – 18 - 21 September, 1993**

**Results**

1. Juha Kankkunen (FIN) / Nicky Grist (CYM) .....	Toyota Celica, Gp. A .....	5h 19m 58s.
2. Ari Vatanen (FIN) / Bruno Berglund (S) .....	Subaru Legacy RS, Gp. A .....	5h 25m 50s.
3. François Delecour (F) / Daniel Grataloup (F) .....	Ford Escort Cosworth, Gp. A .....	5h 43m 42s.
4. Ross Dunkerton (AUS) / Fred Gocentas (AUS) .....	Mitsubishi Lancer E, Gp. A .....	5h 46m 18s.
5. Josef Haider (A) / Klaus Wendel (D) .....	Audi S2 Quattro, Gp. A .....	5h 48m 48s.
6. Colin McRae (SCOT) / Derek Ringer (SCOT) .....	Subaru Legacy RS, Gp. A .....	5h 56m 33s.
7. Ed Ordynski (AUS) / Mark Stacey (AUS) .....	Mitsubishi Lancer E, Gp. N .....	5h 58m 42s.
8. Neal Bates (AUS) / Coral Taylor (AUS) .....	Toyota Celica, Gp. A .....	6h 04m 50s.
9. Kiyoshi Inoue (J) / Satoshi Hayashi (J) .....	Mitsubishi Lancer E, Gp. N .....	6h 09m 04s.
10. David Officer (AUS) / Kathryn Officer (AUS) .....	Mitsubishi Lancer E, Gp. N .....	6h 11m 43s.

84 starters; 44 finishers

**1993 World Rally Championship Situation (after 10 of 13 rounds)**

**Drivers**

Juha Kankkunen (FIN) .....	111 pts.
François Delecour (F) .....	82 pts.
Didier Auriol (F) .....	71 pts.
Massimo Biasion (I) .....	66 pts.
Colin McRae (SCOT) .....	50 pts.
Carlos Sainz (E) .....	35 pts.
Ari Vatanen (FIN) .....	30 pts.

Kenneth Eriksson (S) .....	26 pts.
Tommi Mäkinen (FIN) .....	26 pts.
Markku Alén (FIN) .....	25 pts.
Andrea Aghini (I) .....	22 pts.
Mats Jonsson (S) .....	20 pts.
Armin Schwarz (D) .....	20 pts.

(61 drivers have scored points)

**Makes**

Toyota .....	151 pts.
Ford .....	125 pts.
Subaru .....	90 pts.
Mitsubishi .....	69 pts.
Lancia .....	67 pts.

(FISA's rule of prior nominations only)

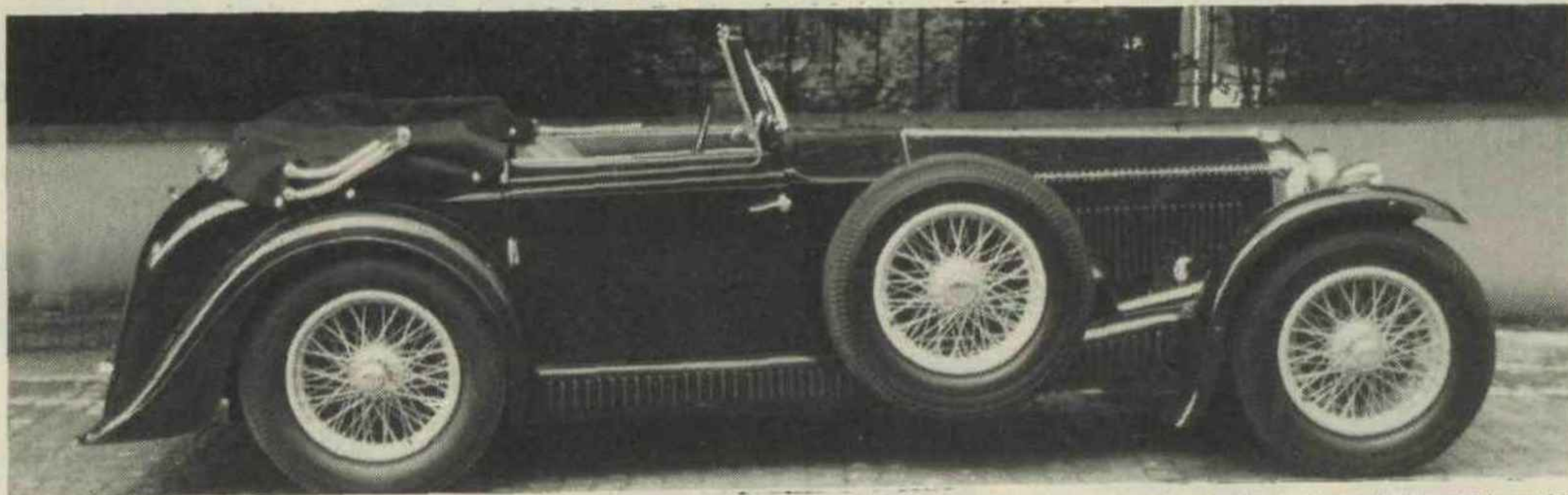


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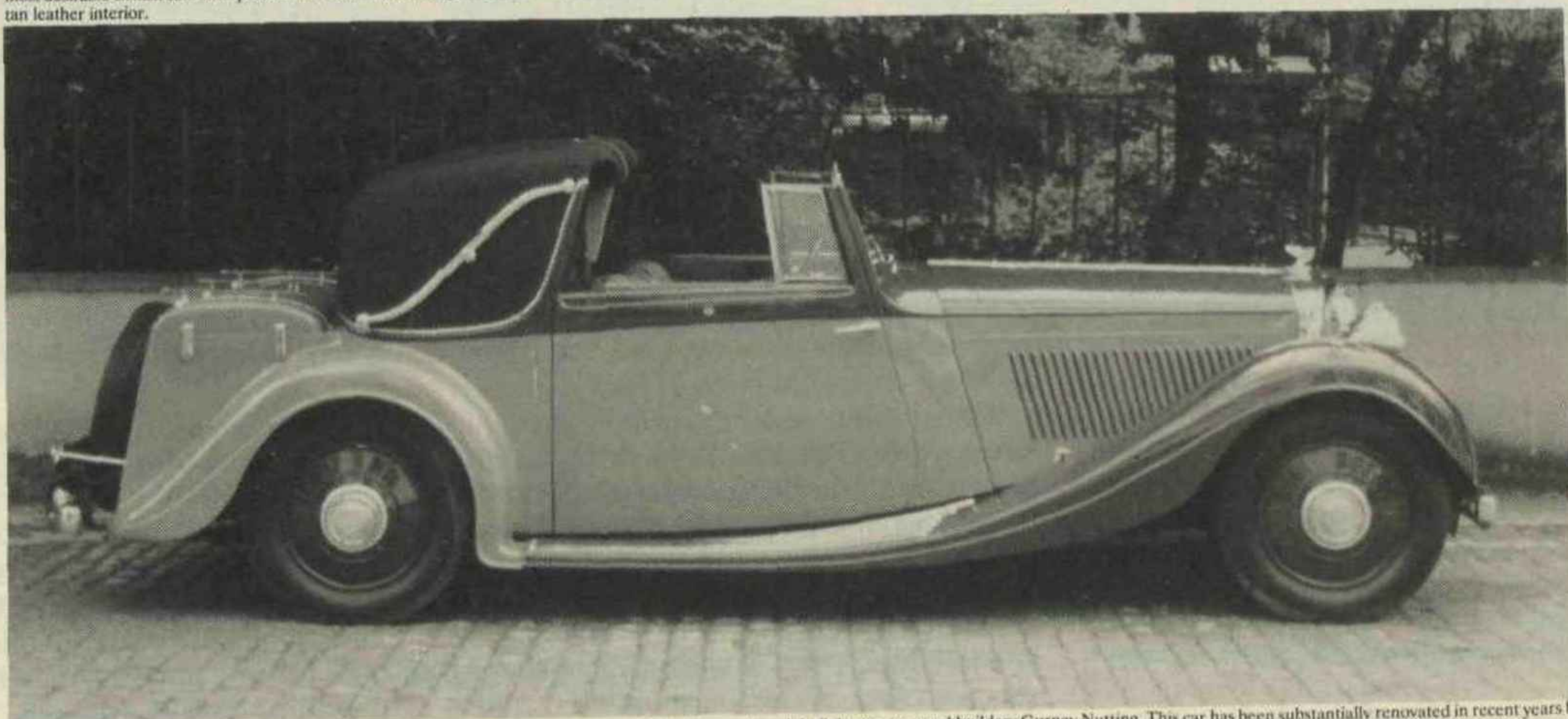
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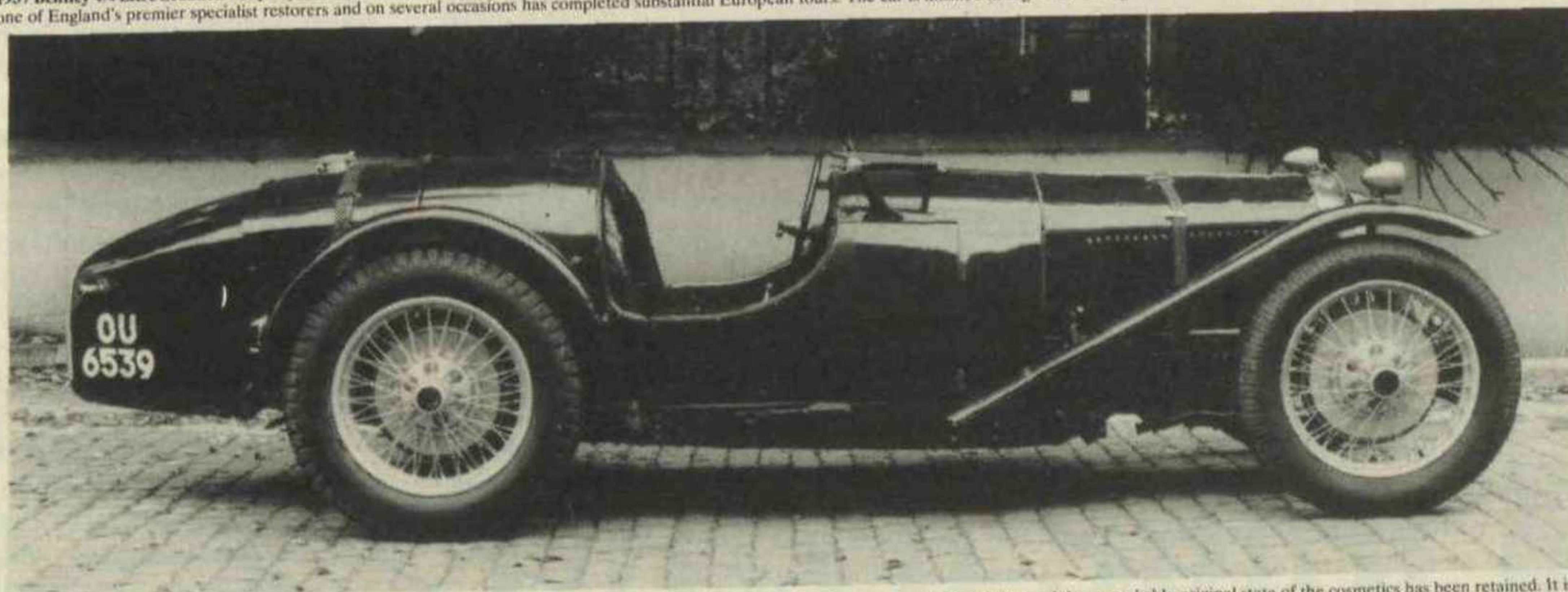
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1930 Invicta S Type Low-Chassis DHC by Salmons. One of the most respected high performance cars of its era, the 4½ litre Low-Chassis Invicta has long been considered a motoring legend and is certainly one of the most desirable British cars of its period. This car retains its original coachwork, which itself is an exceptional example of the style of the period. The car is in first class condition throughout and is finished in dark red with a tan leather interior.



1937 Bentley 4½ Litre Sedan Coupe by Gurney Nutting. Certainly some of the most desirable coachwork built by master coachbuilders Gurney Nutting. This car has been substantially renovated in recent years by one of England's premier specialist restorers and on several occasions has completed substantial European tours. The car is finished in sage over dark green with a matching leather interior.



1930 Riley Brooklands. Undoubtedly one of the most original Brooklands in existence today, this car is in excellent mechanical condition and the remarkable original state of the cosmetics has been retained. It is finished in what would appear to be its original dark blue paint with the original dark blue leather interior.

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1930 Aston Martin 1½ litre International 2/4 seat tourer  
1965 Aston Martin DB5 Coupe  
1963 Aston Martin DB4 Convertible  
1966 Aston Martin DB6  
1937 Attenborough Special  
1930 Bentley 4½ Litre Supercharged Le Mans Tourer  
1955 Bentley S1 Continental DHC by Park Ward  
1935 Bentley 3½ Litre "The Eddie Hall Team Car"  
1934 Bentley 3½ Litre Sports Saloon by Thrupp & Maberley  
1937 Bentley 4½ Litre Owen Sedan by Gurney Nutting

1954 Bentley R Type Continental Fastback by H J Mulliner  
1954 Bentley R Type Convertible by Park Ward  
1947 Bentley Mark VI 2 Door Coupe by Park Ward  
1886 Benz Velo 3 Wheeler Replica  
1936 Cord 812 Convertible  
1931 Delage D8 Sedan Town Car by Fernandez & Darrin  
1938 Delahaye 135 M Drophead Coupe by Fignoni & Falaschi  
1947 ERN-BMW 328 Sports Racing Car  
1967 Ferrari 275 GTB/4 Cam, LHD  
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1952 MG TD  
1930 Riley Brooklands  
1912 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Roi des Belges  
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1924 Vauxhall 30/98 OE Velox Tourer

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# Ice cool for Alex

Photos: Collin Taylor Productions

**W**hilst Colin McRae was spending much of his mid-year time on the other side of the world, the other rallying members of the family were deeply involved in preparations for the Cyprus Rally, the final co-efficient 20 round of the European Championship and certainly the one which has the greatest endurance factor.

As the last major qualifier of the series it rarely attracts drivers who are chasing championship points, but this is an event which stands on its own feet without needing a championship prop, and to win it is to demonstrate both skill and a certain degree of stamina. The special stages are all on dirt roads, many of them very much on the rough side, rest stops are relatively short and there is a full-blooded night leg. This is no forest race; this is a real battle over rocky, dusty tracks; rallying almost in the old style, in which reliability counts as much as skill and in which regulatory dilution has not reared its ugly head as much as in other events.

Those who were tackling the event were there to enjoy as tough and as satisfying a rally as you will find anywhere in the world. Merely to finish is an achievement, a fact which is emphasised by the winners' overall stage average speed of just 38 mph (in the 1000 Lakes Rally it was 71.7) and the retirement rate of 62 per cent (46 per cent in Finland).

The organisers of the Cyprus Rally are as competitor-friendly as they are innovative. They pioneered radio communications via mountain-top repeaters (since copied by the Safari Rally, but no other), introduced swipe-card direct input timing which, to our knowledge, no other event has yet introduced, and are as helpful to competitors as

any organising club you will find in the world. Add to these points the delightful climate and the spontaneous hospitality of the people and you will be part of the way towards appreciating the quality of this unique event.

Based at Nicosia, the rally was divided into four legs. The first went via four special stages to Paphos, on the south-west coast, where there was an evening stop of five hours. The second, running from half-past-midnight to 6.45 am, led through the desolate, north-westerly area of Tilliria and the forest areas of the Troodos Mountains, via six special stages, to Limassol on the south coast, where there was a lengthy stop. The third leg ran from 14.00 to 20.18, leading crews via six special stages back to Nicosia. The final leg, on the Sunday, was a loop starting and finishing at Nicosia, running through six special stages and an official 25 minute service stop at Larnaca.

Among the entrants, Italy's Astra team sent a Lancia integrale for Fiorio/Brambilla, whilst a similar Astra-built car was provided for Lebanese crew 'Bagheera' (real name Maurice Sehnaoui)/Stephan.

Jimmy McRae took his own Ford Sapphire Cosworth with Ian Grindrod, whilst son Alister drove a locally prepared Subaru Legacy with David Senior. Both had made a sponsorship deal with Cypriana Holidays. There was a group of four private crews from Lancashire, Coupe/Watson and Skidmore/Kidd in Ford Escort Cosworths, Joannides/Patterson in a Ford Sierra Cosworth and Morton/Whittaker in a Lancia Delta integrale.

Also from the UK, although he is a Cypriot and commutes regularly, came Dimi Mavropoulos, partnered by Nicos Antoniadis in a Ford Escort Cosworth. Bulgarians Jekov/

Tcholakov drove a Mazda 323, whilst Nikonenko/Talantsev from Russia took a Lada Samara and drove it very spiritedly indeed.

Svanholt/Marx brought their Peugeot 309 GTi from Denmark, and Antypas/Richa an Audi 90 Quattro from Lebanon, the latter crew chasing points in their national championship. There was one French crew, Pascale Neyret/Carole Carboneschi in a locally provided Suzuki Swift, the first right-hand-drive car that Bob Neyret's daughter has ever driven in a rally.

Among the local crews, Jeropoulos/Michael, Cleanthous/Antoniou and the Hadjisavvas brothers were in Mitsubishi Galant VR-4s, Tsouloftas/Achilleos in a Lancia Delta integrale and past winner Terzian with Sergides in a Toyota Celica. Melissas/Zorpas were in an Opel Astra GSI and Georgallis/Kollitiris in a Nissan Sunny GTI.

From the Friday start, the route led southwards to two stages, then, after skirting Limassol, inland via two more stages to Paphos. Alister McRae didn't even make it to the first stage. Despite much round-the-clock work to improve his local Legacy, there were still fears concerning its durability, and when the gearbox began leaking faster than it could be refilled, they decided to pull out rather than risk seizure or, worse, a fire caused by oil spray on the turbocharger.

Ironically, it was father Jimmy who came to a stop due to a fire. In the first stage, probably due to a stone damaging either a fuel line or a pump, leaking fuel was ignited by the hot exhaust pipe. There is no actual evidence of this, but it is the only logical reason. The rear of the car caught fire, and within seconds the whole thing was ablaze.



Eventually, nothing remained except a charred, mostly-melted skeleton, and it is to the discredit of the Cyprus authorities that McRae was later compelled to take the worthless wreck out of the country in order to avoid paying import duty on the entire original car. Far better and simpler for everyone to have dug a hole and buried it, for nothing salvageable was left. Red tape can often be scissor-proof!

A point worth making here is the danger of souvenir hunting. Valves and various other parts had been taken from the remains before mechanics arrived to cart the lot away, and those who took them no doubt had no idea of the risks involved. Several components of modern rally cars, particularly engines, undergo chemical changes when subjected to fire, the residue often becoming highly dangerous, capable of skin penetration and cancer production. If you see a wreck, leave it well alone.

Joannides pulled out after the first stage after having been told by a FISA representative that oversize tyres would probably lead to his exclusion at Paphos, whilst Mavropoulos' left rear shock absorber went soft and began leaking fluid. Both rear shocks were changed at Paphos.

At the evening stop, Fiorio was leading from Jeropoulos by 59 seconds, followed after another 1m 55s by 'Bagheera', and another 24s by Terzian. Mavropoulos was fifth, another 23s back, whilst Nikonenko was 10th, Coupe 20th and Neyret 47th.

On the second stage of the night leg, Fiorio had a rear halfshaft break, which allowed Jeropoulos to get ahead of him by one second. But on the next stage he regained the lead without any trouble. Terzian lost his second gear and, in a Group N car, could not find sufficient service time to have the gearbox changed. He went right through the rally with one eye on his class rival Cleanthous, the other on the road, and all his other senses on gearbox noises, smells and vibrations. Amazingly, he survived and even won the category.

Jeropoulos had his windscreen wipers pack up. It was not raining, but the dust was extremely dense. Mavropoulos cracked a rear cross member and had to lift off for the remainder of the night as, apparently, there was no opportunity to have it fixed. It was eventually welded before the Limassol



A fire utterly destroyed Jim McRae's Sierra when the rally had barely begun.

regrouping control, where Fiorio led Jeropoulos by 2m 08s.

On the Saturday afternoon run back to Nicosia, Jeropoulos stopped for four new shock absorbers (the front struts were bulging the bodywork), whilst Terzian still struggled gamely with no second gear. On the way into Nicosia that evening, roadworks caused some problems, for several people arrived too hard and damaged their cars on a hole which became known as 'The Nicosia Pothole'. Damage caused by this hole was being repaired throughout the next day.

By this time, and with just half a day to go, Fiorio had extended his lead over Jeropoulos to 3m 16s and had decided to relax his speed. Jeropoulos, on the other hand, had resigned himself to second place and was taking no chances of losing that position. There was therefore no more fighting at the front.

Last minute mishaps on the final day included sheared bolts causing the front of Mavropoulos' sumpguard to drop and become almost like a scoop. Later, he very

nearly stopped altogether when his fuel filter blocked, but some determined pushing got him under way and the offending part was quickly replaced by mechanics.

The Group N battle was resolved most dramatically when Cleanthous rolled and went out of the event, leaving Terzian to coast to the finish, treating his gearbox, still without second, even more tenderly than before.

Local man Mannouris rolled his Peugeot spectacularly on a short piece of tarmac between some houses on stage 19, but there were so many spectators there that he had no time even to get out of the car. Within seconds, it had been put back on to its wheels again and, puffing a little white smoke, went on its way. It was Mannouris' second inversion of the rally and, remarkably, he finished 15th, albeit with no glass in his car save for the right rear window.

Melissas was not so lucky. Stemming from damage caused at the previous evening's roadworks on the way into Nicosia, the last of several driveshaft failures finally put him out. Russian driver Nikonenko, after a stirring drive in his private Samara, ditched his car just two stages from the end and, try as he might, he just could not get out.

Fiorio was delighted with his second successive win on this tough event, as was Mauro Pregliasco, boss of the Astra Team. There is no doubt that this event remains one of the toughest on offer. Whether it gets into the 1995 World Championship remains to be seen, but we sincerely hope that meddling Paris-based hands refrain from diluting its strength and changing its character. **G P**

### Rothmans Cyprus Rally - 1 - 3 October, 1993

#### Results

1. Alessandro Fiorio (I) / Vittorio Brambilla (I) ..... Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A ... 5h 44m 38s.
  2. Antonis Jeropoulos (CY) / Michael Michael (CY) ..... Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, Gp A ..... 5h 48m 47s.
  3. "Bagheer" (RL) / Nadji Stephan (RL) ..... Lancia Delta HF Integrale, Gp A ... 5h 56m 47s.
  4. Vahan Terzian (CY) / George Sergides (CY) ..... Toyota Celica, Gp N ..... 6h 07m 33s.
  5. Dimi Mavropoulos (CY) / Nicos Antoniadis (CY) ..... Ford Escort RS Cosworth, Gp A ... 6h 12m 04s.
  6. Savvas Hadjisavvas (CY) / Christos Hadjisavvas (CY) ..... Mitsubishi Galant VR-4, Gp N ..... 6h 23m 06s.
  7. Constantinos Georgallis (CY) / Athos Kollitiris (CY) ..... Nissan Sunny GTI, Gp N ..... 6h 25m 19s.
  8. Elie Antypas (RL) / Zaïd Richa (RL) ..... Audi 90 Quattro, Gp A ..... 6h 31m 22s.
  9. Marios Chrysanthou (CY) / Dermotrius Demetriou (CY) Ford Escort RS Cosworth, Gp N ... 6h 36m 42s.
  10. Zacharias Prastitis (CY) / Omiros Demetriades (CY) ..... Honda Civic SI, Gp A ..... 6h 39m 03s.
- 90 starters; 34 finishers.

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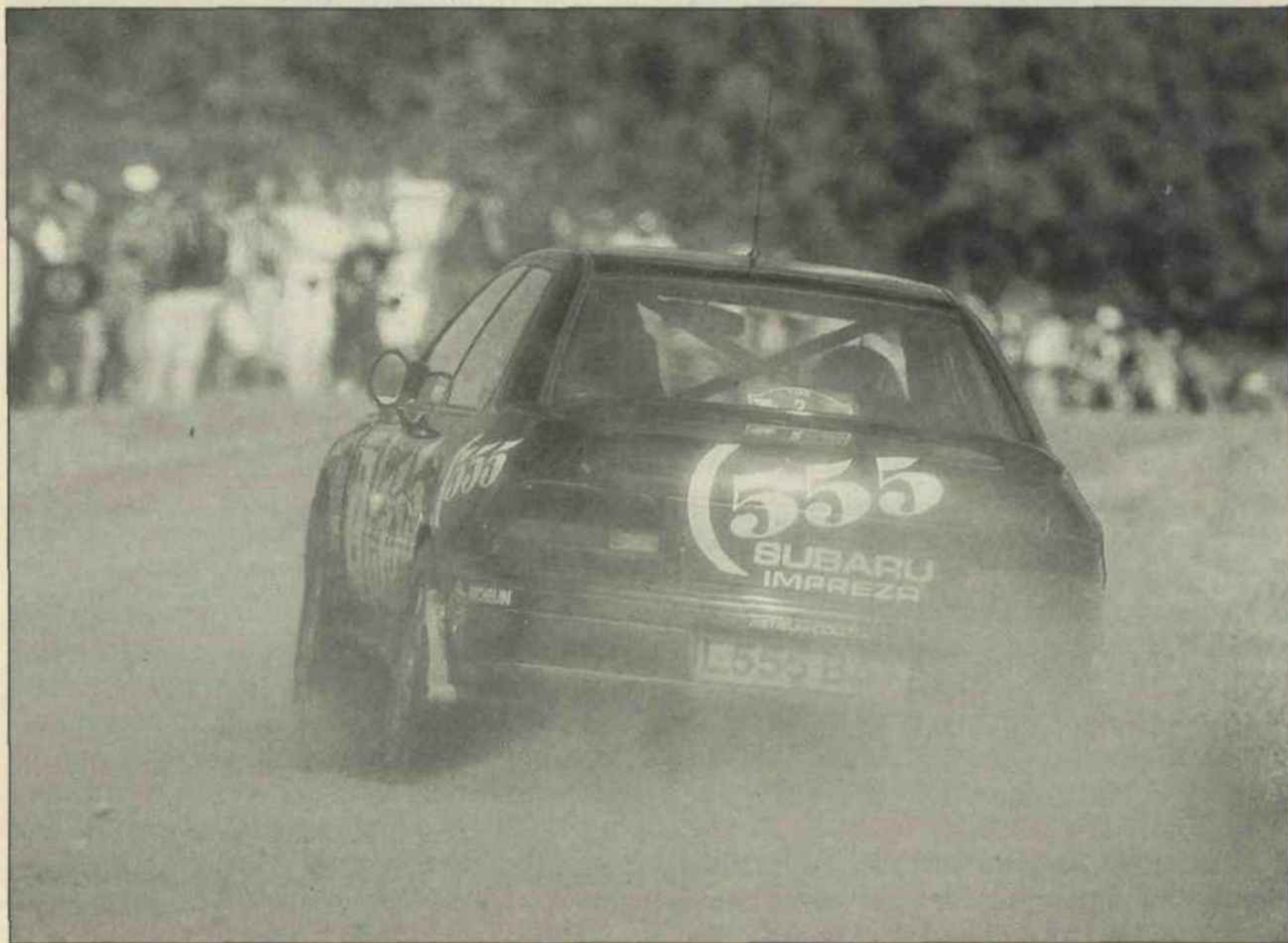
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# A winter's tale



Ari Vatanen, pictured on the 1000 Lakes, and Colin McRae are due to compete in Subaru Imprezas.

From November 21-24 Britain's biggest sporting event will take place. The RAC Rally regularly attracts more on-the-spot watchers than the Derby, Wimbledon or even the cup final. It is sponsored this year by Network Q.

More than likely, the weather will be cold, damp, foggy and generally miserable, pretty well the most unattractive conditions of any event in the World Championship, yet it gathers one of the most impressive fields of the series and more spectators than any other of Britain's sporting events.

It will be centred at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena and its 150 or so competing cars will begin leaving the city's Centenary Square early on November 21. Car scrutiny will have taken place from 7.00 the previous day. (Note that there will be a charge for public admission to scrutineering and to special stages.)

The first day of the 1600-mile route will take competitors through nine special stages in stately homes, private parks and racing circuits ranged in a clockwise loop starting and finishing in Birmingham.

After a night stop, Monday's 4.00 restart will take the crews westward into Wales, first tackling special stages in the forests of Dyfnant, Myherin and Hafren before the customary regrouping stop and service halt at Machynlleth. After this will come Pantperthog, Dyfi, Penmachno, Brenig and Clocaenog before the motorway trek up to Lancaster for the second night stop.

The third day's 6.30 restart will take competitors northwards via the two Grizedale stages, to be tackled just before 8.00, to the Kielder area, where there will be seven special stages (the last starting at 18.56) before

another overnight stop in Gateshead, where the closed park will be at the stadium.

On the final day, the run back to Birmingham will start at 6.30 and will go via Hamsterley to the Yorkshire forests of Cropton, Gale Rigg, Langdale and Dalby. There will be a 10m regrouping stop at Whitby from midday. A special stage at Scunthorpe will allow no spectators, but the final (35th) stage at Donington, starting just after 18.00, will be open to all. The first car is expected back at Birmingham's Centenary Square at 20.00 on November 24.

As the final round of the World Championship, the event is always likely to suffer an entry loss due to that series being settled earlier, but this has never affected the numbers.

As this is written, there are two championship qualifiers to go before the Network Q RAC Rally, Italy's Sanremo Rally and Spain's Cataluña Rally. However, there is still a very real possibility that the drivers' section of the World Championship will remain open until the final round. The makes' series is already settled in Toyota's favour.

Among the teams attending this year is Ford, with two cars actually from the factory for François Delecour and Massimo Biasion (although those crews are not yet named on the list) and two from Michelin Pilot for Malcolm Wilson and Robbie Head. The Toyota Castrol team has two cars for Didier Auriol and Juha Kankkunen, whilst Toyota Sweden is keeping its eggs in its own basket this year by entering potential winner Mats Jonsson.

Mitsubishi Ralliart has two cars for Armin Schwarz and Kenneth Eriksson, and David

Llewellyn will drive for Vauxhall Sport.

Two Subarus have been entered, a Legacy apiece for Richard Burns and Alister McRae. Although they do not appear on the provisional entry list, we understand that two Subaru Imprezas will also be entered for Colin McRae and Ari Vatanen.

Italian teams have a history of late entries, usually waiting until after the Sanremo Rally, and it was not surprising to note the absence of the Jolly Club. However, Pirelli has made a series of hotel bookings, so it is more than likely that Andrea Aghini will be there in a Delta integrale. As far as Carlos Sainz is concerned (he drives on Michelins), we will have to wait and see.

G P

## Timetable & special stages

As an aid to spectators, we have included details of all special stages on the rally, even those which are not suitable or open for viewing. The following grading system has been used to assist spectators in their choice of viewing:

\*\*\*\* – The best viewing, with extensive car parking, safe protected areas, live commentary and ease of access.

\*\*\* – Reasonable viewing, with some organised car parking and acceptable access. Possible traffic problems.

\*\* – Limited car parking, difficult access, and possibly a long walk. Congested and/or narrow approach roads.

\* – Very limited car parking and difficult access. Long or difficult walk into the stage. Very congested and/or narrow approach roads.

**Saturday 20 November, Birmingham:** 07:00 – Scrutineering and rally show (\*\*\*\*)

**Leg one (Sunday November 21):** Start (07.30, Birmingham – \*\*\*\*); 07:57 – SS1 Sutton Park (\*\*\*\*); 08:46 – SS2 Weston Park (\*\*\*\*); 10:34 – SS3 Oulton Park (\*\*\*\*); 11:29 – SS4 Tatton Park (\*\*\*\*); 13:25 – SS5 Chatsworth (\*\*\*\*); 14:47 – SS6 Clumber Park (\*\*\*\*); 16:31 – SS7/8 Donington Park 1 and 2 (\*\*\*\*); 17:50 – SS9 MIRA (Strictly no public admission); Finish (19:51, Birmingham – \*\*\*\*).

**Leg two (Monday November 22):** Restart (04.00, Birmingham – \*); 06:32 – SS10 Dyfnant (\*); 08:34 – SS11 Myherin (\*\*); 09:38 – SS12 Hafren (\*\*\*); 11:13 – SS13 Pantperthog (\*\*\*\*); 11:42 – SS14 Dyfi Main (\*\*\*\*); 12:19 – SS15 Gartheiniog (\*\*\*); 14:21 – SS16 Penmachno South (\*\*\*); 14:42 – SS17 Penmachno North (\*\*\*); 15:44 – SS18 Brenig (\*\*\*); 16:25 – SS19 Clocaenog (\*\*\*); Finish (20.41, Lancaster – \*\*).

**Leg three (Tuesday November 23):** Restart (06.30, Lancaster – \*); 07:51 – SS20 Grizedale East (\*\*\*); 08:04 – SS21 Grizedale West (\*\*\*); 11:05 – SS22 Kershope (\*\*\*); 12:28 – SS23 Wauchope West (\*\*); 12:49 – SS24 Wauchope East (\*\*); Regroup (14.20, first car leaves 15.10, Rothbury – \*\*); 15:32 – SS25 Harwood (\*\*\*); 16:58 – SS26 Falstone (\*\*\*); 18:06 – SS27 Broomlynn (\*\*\*); 18:56 – SS28 Pundershaw (\*\*\*); Finish (21.25, Gateshead – \*\*).

**Leg four (Wednesday November 24):** Restart (06.30 – Gateshead – \*); 07:36 – SS29 Hamsterley (\*\*\*); 10:47 – SS30 Cropton (\*\*\*); 11:13 – SS31 Gale Rigg (\*\*); 12:39 – SS32 Langdale (Strictly no public admission); 13:11 – SS33 Dalby (\*\*\*); 15:55 – SS34 Scunthorpe (Strictly no public admission); 18:12 – SS35 Donington 3 (\*\*\*\*); Finish (19.55, Birmingham – \*\*\*\*).



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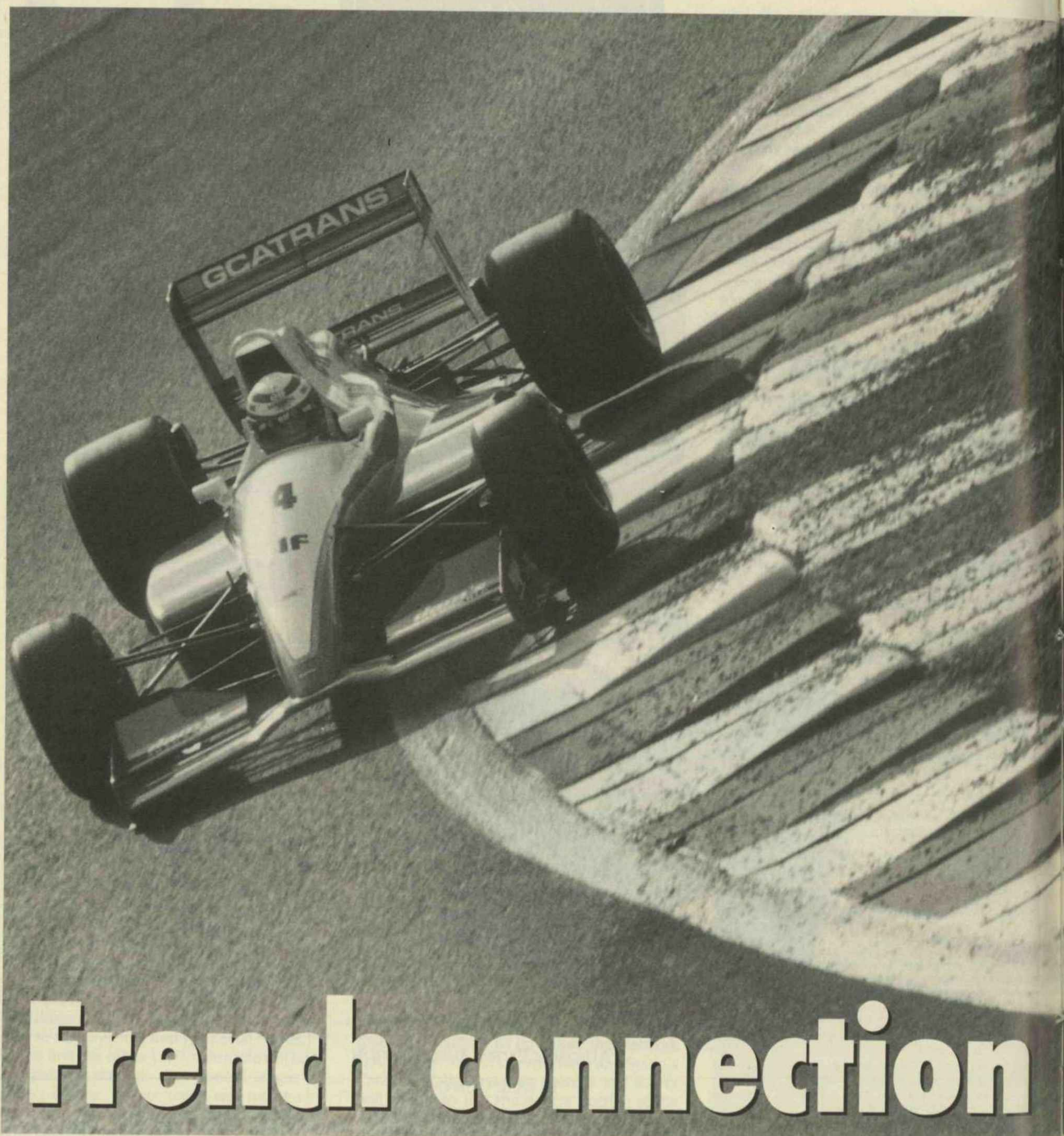


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**C O Y S**





# French connection

**G**oing into the final two European Formula 3000 Championship rounds, both of them in his native France, Olivier Panis was a clear title favourite.

And yet . . .

It's hard to know which is the more astonishing: the fact that Panis failed to add to his championship score, or the fact that his main adversaries failed to do so sufficiently to knock him off his perch.

Hence the 32 points he had accrued after Spa, when he had moved into the series lead for the first time, were enough to make him the ninth European F3000 champion. It

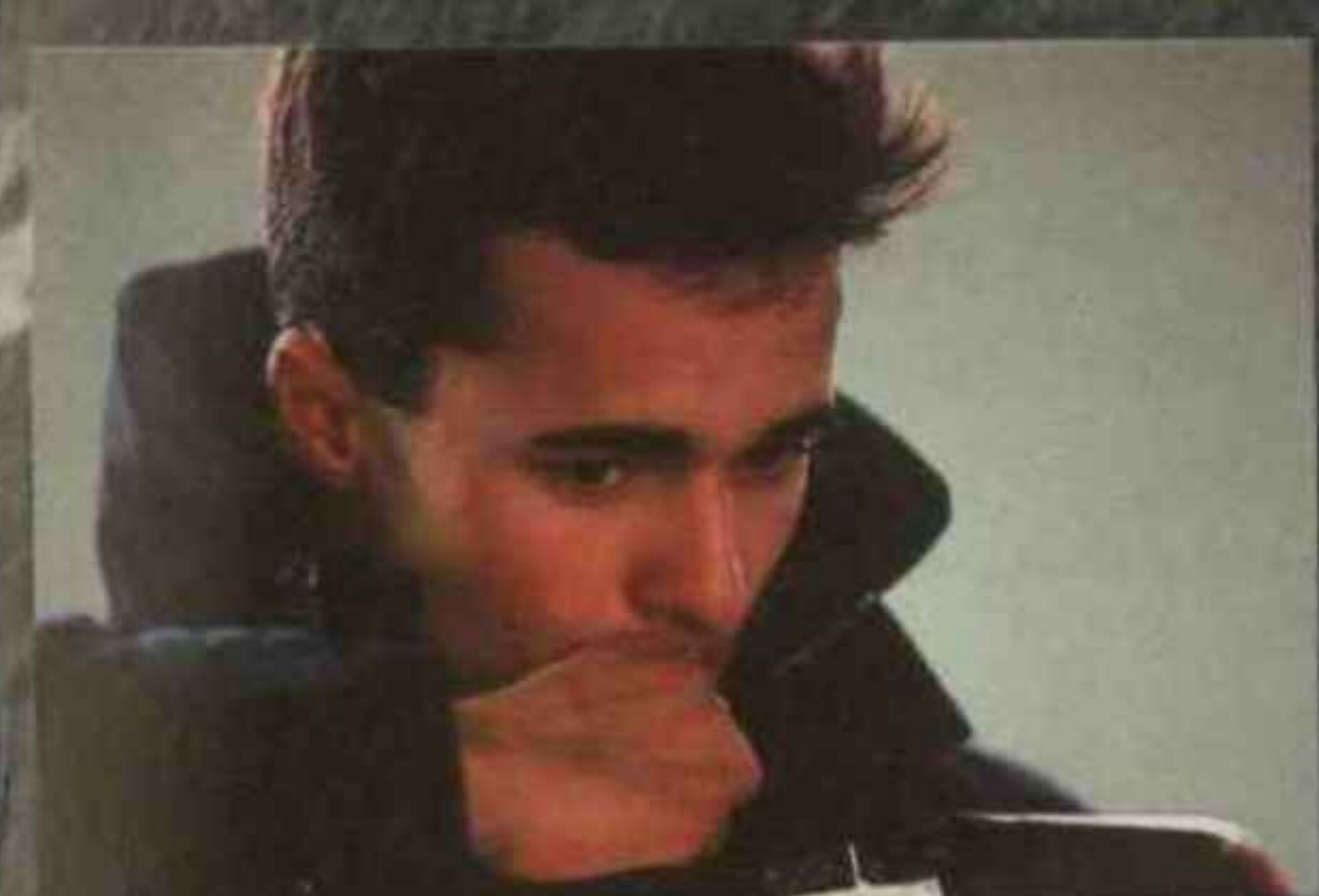
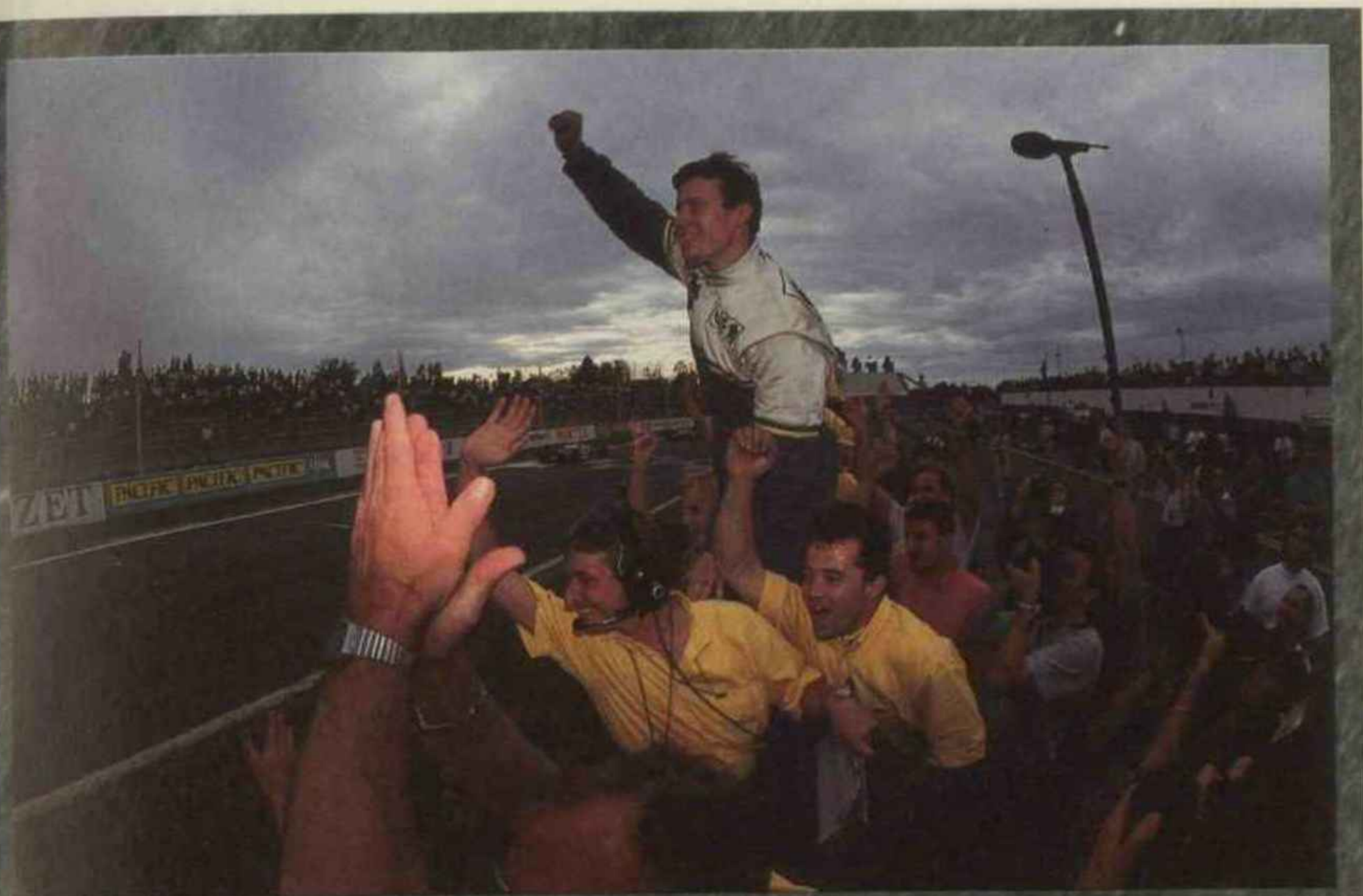
was the lowest ever series-winning points haul (though there were fewer rounds this season).

In the end, victory at both Magny-Cours and Nogaro went to Panis's team-mate Franck Lagorce, who ended the dismal run of form which had followed his thumb-breaking accident at Hockenheim in the most emphatic way possible. Lagorce, a confident, slightly distant 25 year-old, mastered difficult wet/dry conditions at Magny-Cours, impressing particularly as he stayed out on the track on slicks, in deteriorating conditions, for he was prevented from pit-

ting while the DAMS team wrestled to free a jammed wheel nut retaining pin on Panis's car. This delay, ultimately, was to cost Olivier the chance of securing the title that weekend, though he might have salvaged at least a couple of points in the foul conditions had he not spun off with only a couple of laps to go. The indiscretion persuaded him to postpone a promised FI test with Benetton until his main objective – the F3000 title – was under wraps.

The main beneficiary of Panis's error was Pedro Lamy, who finished third. This was a triumph for tenacity in an ill-handling car,





Olivier Panis (above right) and celebrating (top) is France's third European F3000 champion. Pedro Lamy was a puzzled man at Nogaro (above left). Pacific pow-wow (above right): David Coulthard, Paul Owens, Phil Andrews and Ian Dawson try to engineer their way ahead of the French.

whose understeering tendencies were, ironically, reduced after Lamy had been clattered by Jules Boullion when the latter almost lost control as he swept through to finish second. The young Frenchman was left to contemplate what might have been, for his inexperience led him to make no fewer than three tyre stops, which accounted for rather more than the 65 seconds which eventually separated him from Lagorce (F3000 teams do not make tyre stops as a matter of course, and cyclone changes in the F1 mould are, as yet, unknown). Everyone else made just the one.

The result closed the gap at the top of the championship to just a point in Panis's favour, and Lamy was given a further boost in the week leading up to the Nogaro finale when confirmation of his 1994 F1 with Lotus, which had been signed at Monza, one month earlier, was made official.

The only man who could overhaul the top two was David Coulthard, who learned the hard way that it was raining at Magny-Cours, skating off into the gravel as he was challenging for second place. The Scot's hopes were slim, however. Only a win would suffice, and then only if Lamy and Panis

were outside the top five. His chances were further diminished by the fact that French teams DAMS and Apomatox were permitted by the regulations to test at Nogaro during the week leading up to the event. Teams based outside the host country were not, and their consequent disadvantage was to be immediately apparent.

It was the first time since 1985 that three drivers had entered the final round with their championship hopes intact. On that occasion, at Donington Park, two of them, Emanuele Pirro and Mike Thackwell, had tangled at the first corner, allowing the third, Christian Danner, who needed to finish in the top three, to take victory and, with it, the crown.

The destiny of the title was to be decided with even more haste this year, for the protagonists were effectively eliminated before the race was three laps old. Coulthard, impressively fastest in the warm-up, and confident he could challenge the French quartet who had monopolised qualifying, was first to suffer. Of all the banal things to go wrong with a £120,000 racing car, his throttle cable snapped as he changed up to fourth gear after the start. He took his disappointment with good grace, but engineer Paul Owens was supremely confident, when surveying the pace of the front-runners afterwards, that David had had a car good enough to win.

Panis was next to go. After a cautious start, which saw him running third behind Lagorce and Boullion, he was rashly assaulted at the hairpin on lap two when Vincenzo Sospiri spun while trying to wrest third place from the Frenchman. The two cars touched, sustaining suspension damage. It would be the first time since round two at Silverstone that Sospiri had failed to score a point, but more significant was the fact that Panis's car was unable to continue beyond the pits.

He was, understandably, furious.

Seeing Sospiri's similarly crippled car entering the pit lane, Panis leapt out and made a dash for the Italian's Mythos pit. There followed a huge scrum as mechanics tried to keep the drivers apart, but the commotion was defused by DAMS principal Jean-Paul Driot, whose own anger subsided when he noticed Lamy trickling into the pits, front left wheel askew after he had become involved in somebody else's accident.

As it happened, it is improbable that Lamy would have been able to make up the necessary ground in any case. He looked lost all weekend, qualifying a dismal 12th, and he was running 14th at the time of his own misfortune. He rejoined, three laps down, but the crown was Panis's.

"I'm happy, of course, but upset that the season finished in this way," said the Frenchman. "I don't usually react the way I did, but I was just so angry. We've all worked so hard this year, and for a moment I thought that Sospiri's moment of stupidity was going to put it all to waste."

Certainly, the Frenchman is noted for his placid temperament. Some feel he projects too dour an image, but in truth he's a thoughtful, approachable individual, who -





Olivier Beretta heads for a lonely fourth place at Nogaro. Max Papis and the squabbling mass follow.



Jules Boullion passes debutant Nicholas Leboissetier at Magny-Cours. Leboissetier finished fourth.



The Franck Lagorce fan club goes into overdrive as the Frenchman heads for his maiden F3000 success.



Marshals clear the remains of Emmanuel Collard's Magny-Cours wreck.



Gil de Ferran takes a breather. He had a disappointing end to his season.



Whose line was it anyway? Paolo delle Piane (left) and Alessandro Zampedri conduct a post-mortem into their first-corner fracas at Magny-Cours.



Lagorce: two straight wins for him, five for DAMS.



The Stewarts, père et fils. Will Paul be seen in F1 next year? He's tested the Footwork recently.

unusually for a racing driver – is well liked by many of his rivals. When he took his first win, at Hockenheim, the other French drivers were genuinely delighted. Lagorce, whose victory at Nogaro was achieved under considerable pressure from Boullion, which bodes well for his own title chances next year (particularly if, as seems likely, he stays with DAMS, which won the last five races, and became the first team ever to have taken two European F3000 titles), was quick to pay tribute to his team leader.

"He's helped me an awful lot. Whenever I've needed help, setting up the car for instance, he's always been totally open with me. I'm very grateful, and pleased that he's won the title."

The French have received welcome help from both Elf and the government this season, the sports ministry providing welcome funds to bolster the ambitions of young drivers such as Panis, Lagorce, Boullion and Emmanuel Collard. Collard, whose vast potential remains largely untapped, took his first F3000 pole at Magny-Cours, and was running comfortably at the head of the field when he left the track at some 150 mph. The massive impact at Estoril corner cleft his car in two, the engine

finishing up many yards from the tub. Collard stepped out with nothing worse than a headache. The cause of the accident has not yet been confirmed, though initial indications suggest that a top rear wish-bone may have broken.

Whatever, Collard was unfazed, taking the team's hired replacement chassis to third place at Nogaro seven days later. The smart money says he'll partner Lagorce at DAMS in 1994. That, on paper, looks like a strong team. It remains to be seen what will happen to Boullion, whose confidence in Apomatox may have improved after the late-season upswing brought about by changes to the engineering staff, but France has always had an enlightened attitude to promoting its young drivers. Just look at the present crop in F3000.

France, like Italy, has provided three Formula 3000 champions. Britain, despite several worthy candidates, the most recent of whom is Coulthard, has yet to supply its first. While the latter is keen to continue in the formula next year, possibly dovetailing a season with an F1 test programme, it is unlikely he will spend quite as relaxed a Christmas as some of his French counterparts as he searches to put together a budget.

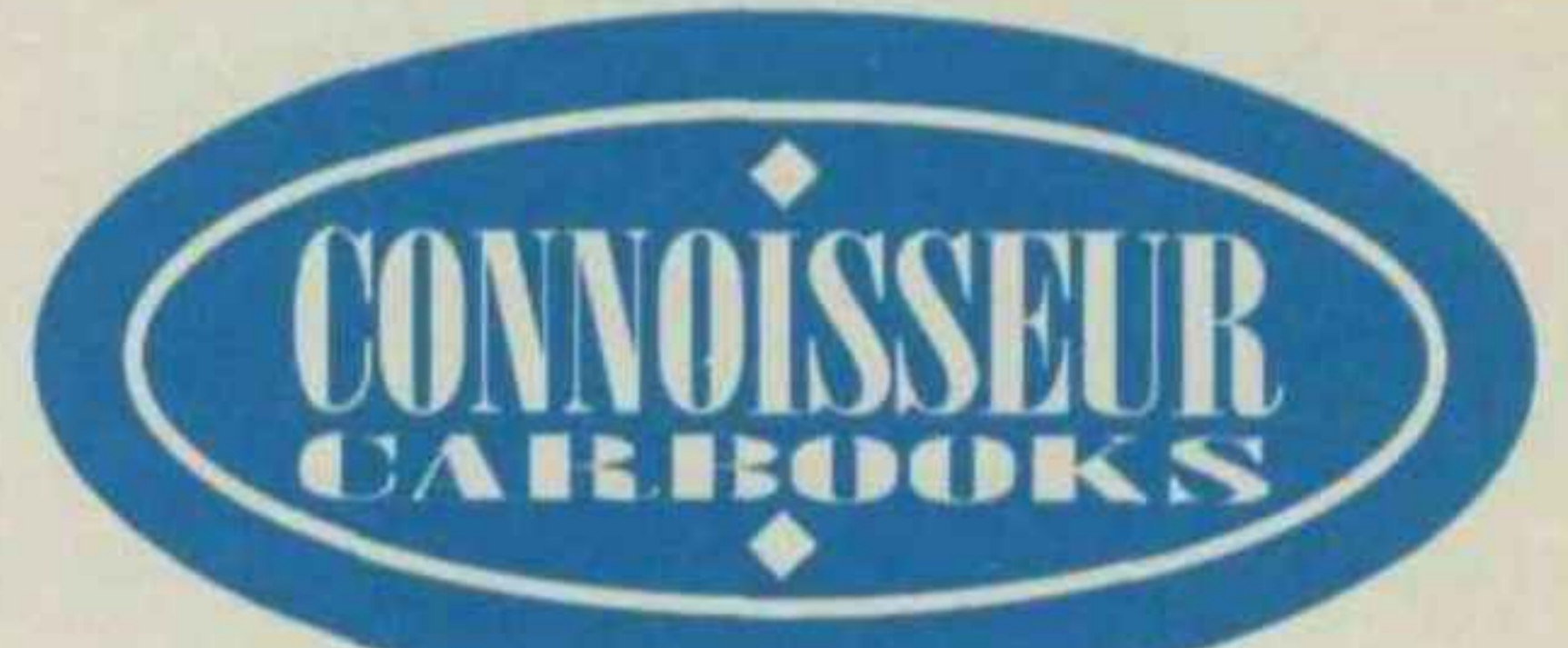
If there is a sudden new wave of French drivers in F1 over the next few years, Elf's investment will have been worthwhile. Mind you, budgets – theoretically – should be a little easier to obtain next season. After numerous meetings, Formula 3000 teams finally agreed at Magny-Cours, where there was almost as much action off-track as there was on, to reverse their original decision not to use new cars next year. A compromise agreement thrashed out between teams and suppliers means that a new car will cost £90,000, or, for around half the price, you can have a kit-tub included – to transform your 1993 Reynard into a 94D. The decision also opens the door for the return of Lola, and at least one team was due to test the Huntingdon marque's product in the close season. Engine suppliers Cosworth and Zytek-Judd have similarly agreed to prune costs. "I think," said a relieved Adrian Reynard, "that we'll be able to offer the best value for money the formula has ever known."

All in all, the future for F3000 looks almost as bright as it does for French motor racing. The British government please take note . . .

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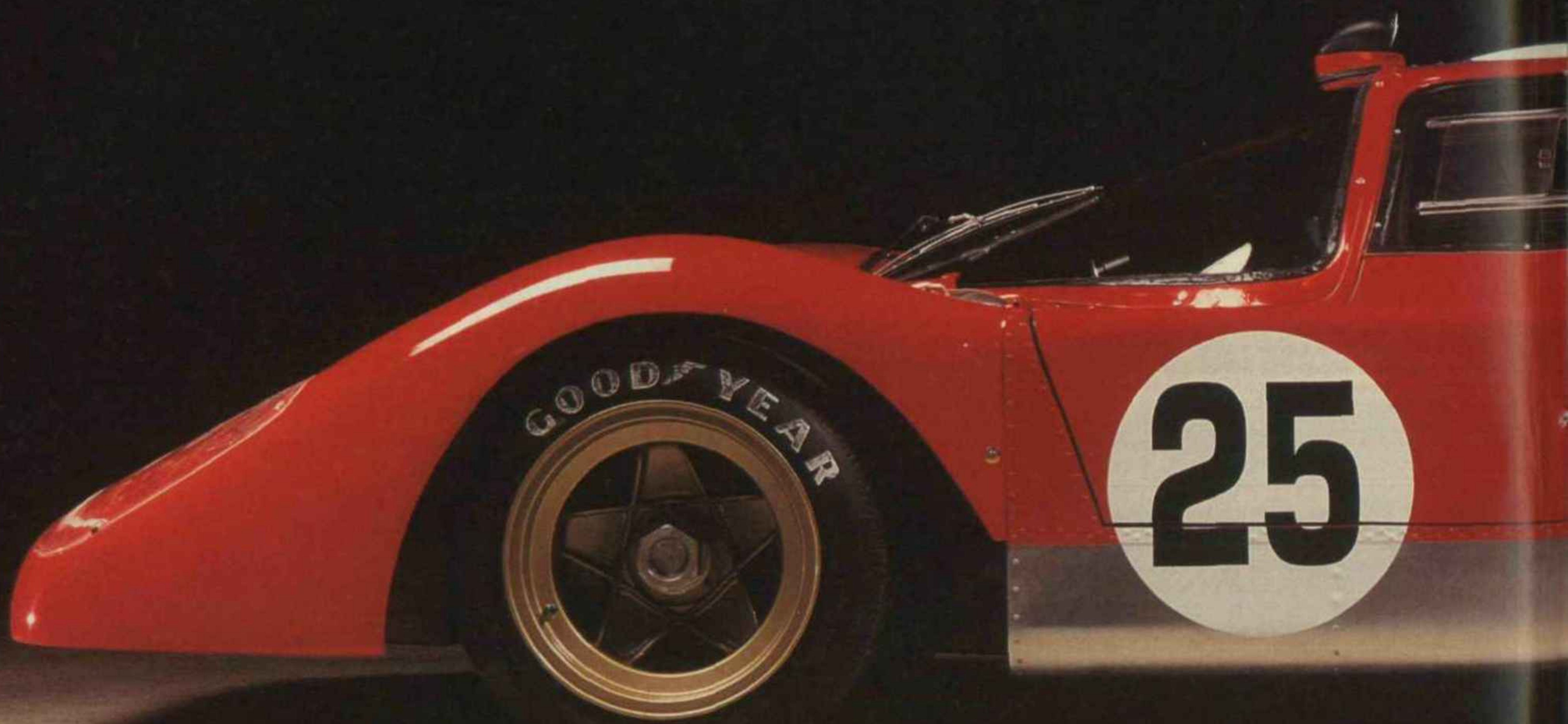
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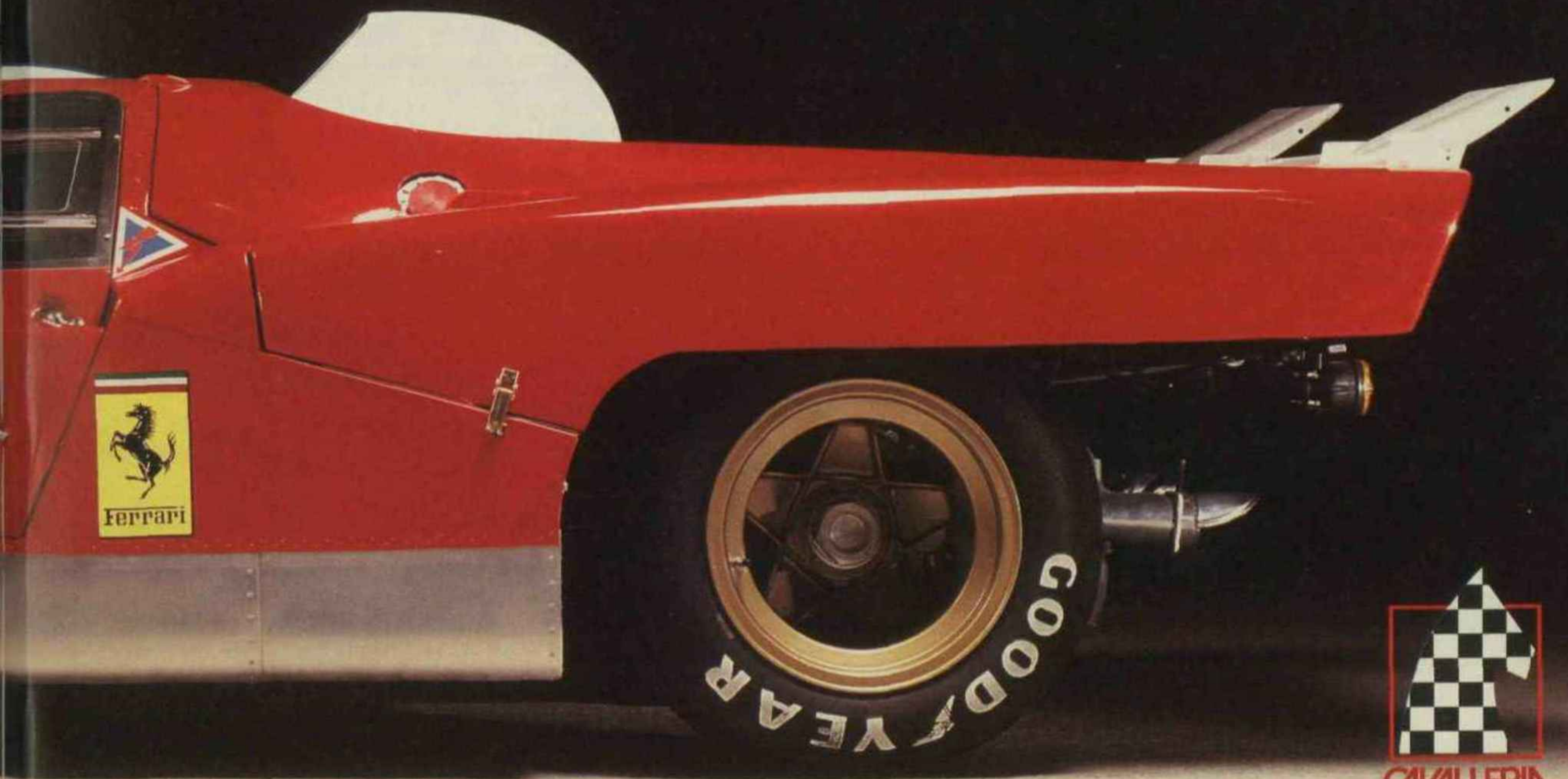
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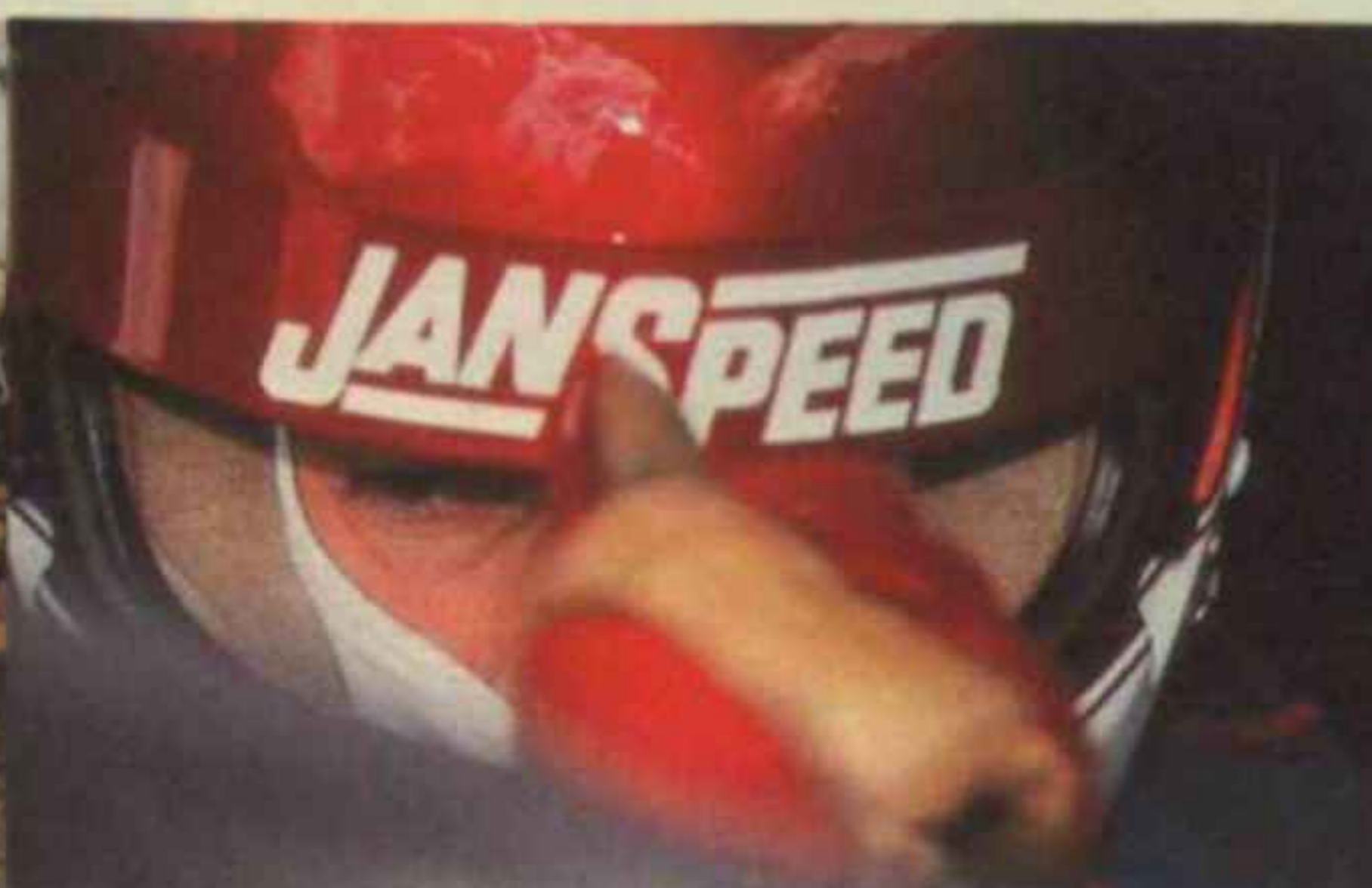




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Paul Radisich: third, despite starting season in June.



# At the hop



**T**he BMWs of Joachim Winkelhock and Steve Soper would squat down and catapult off the line as the lights flashed green. They would breeze past their front-wheel drive rivals, who would be consumed by wheelspin or, worse still, too much grip. Thus, weight transfer under acceleration was a vital factor in this year's hugely popular *Auto Trader* British Touring Car Championship; it mattered not where the weight-handicapped Bavarian machines qualified, they always seemed able to get into the first corner first, from where they would establish the early lead so vital in these frenetic sprint races. First away, always ahead.

And the season panned out similarly. Seven wins from the first eight races proved just enough to give the established order – BMW and Yokohama – its third straight championship, although the writing looked to be on the wall for this successful combo by the end of the season.

This year's championship was definitely "a game of two halves", which the world renowned Schnitzer outfit won on away goals. Undoubtedly, the team had the right tools; its new four-door challenger was slightly longer, narrower and taller than the coupé which so dominated the latter part of 1992, but was basically an evolution of this proven machine. It was the short notice of BMW's British plans and the commuting that made the job difficult. Charly Lamm's team put its reputation on the line and did nothing other than bolster the claims of it being the best in the world. New car, new championship, new tracks, same old story – very impressive.

That BMW wound up as the winningest

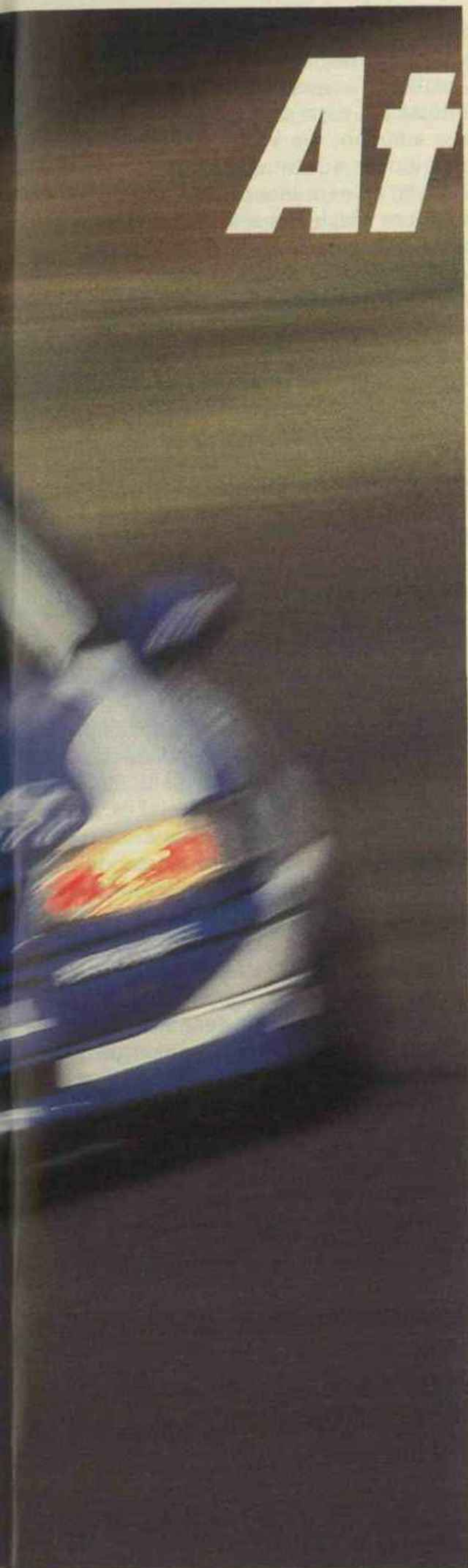
manufacturer was not a great surprise, but there was a twist in the tale. It didn't go entirely to script. Surely, Steve Soper was supposed to be the champion? Not at the behest of BMW, but according to the prognostications of the pundits. The man from Bushey is oft mentioned in the same breath as Roberto Ravaglia and Klaus Ludwig as being one of the best saloon car drivers in the world, and Winkelhock had not been much of a problem for him in the German series...

The man from Stuttgart arrived on these shores with the reputation of being an all-out, seat-of-the-pants racer. A chain smoker with a fairly relaxed outlook on life. He was not expected to be the constant threat to Soper he proved. However, he quickly made it clear that he wasn't willing to pay lip-service to his illustrious teammate by leading briefly in the first race. It was abundantly clear the Brit had a fight on his hands. Wins for the late-braking German at Donington Park, Oulton Park (twice), Pembrey and Brands Hatch meant he was able to drive for points towards the end of the season – a fact rendered virtually academic by the late arrival of the Ford Mondeo – and his controlled drives at a streaming wet Donington showed another side to his character. Steve had some wretched luck, but Jo won because he was quicker when it mattered most.

And that was in the early part of the year when the latest lowline, sequential gear-boxed, front-wheel drive cars were ironing out the bugs, which for some took most of the season. Their buzzword of the year was "hop", which put simply is a form of axle tramp in the horizontal rather than vertical plane. Vauxhall, Toyota and Peugeot were all blighted, and curing it seemed nothing more scientific than trial and error – even for the likes of the super-successful Vauxhall Dealersport team.

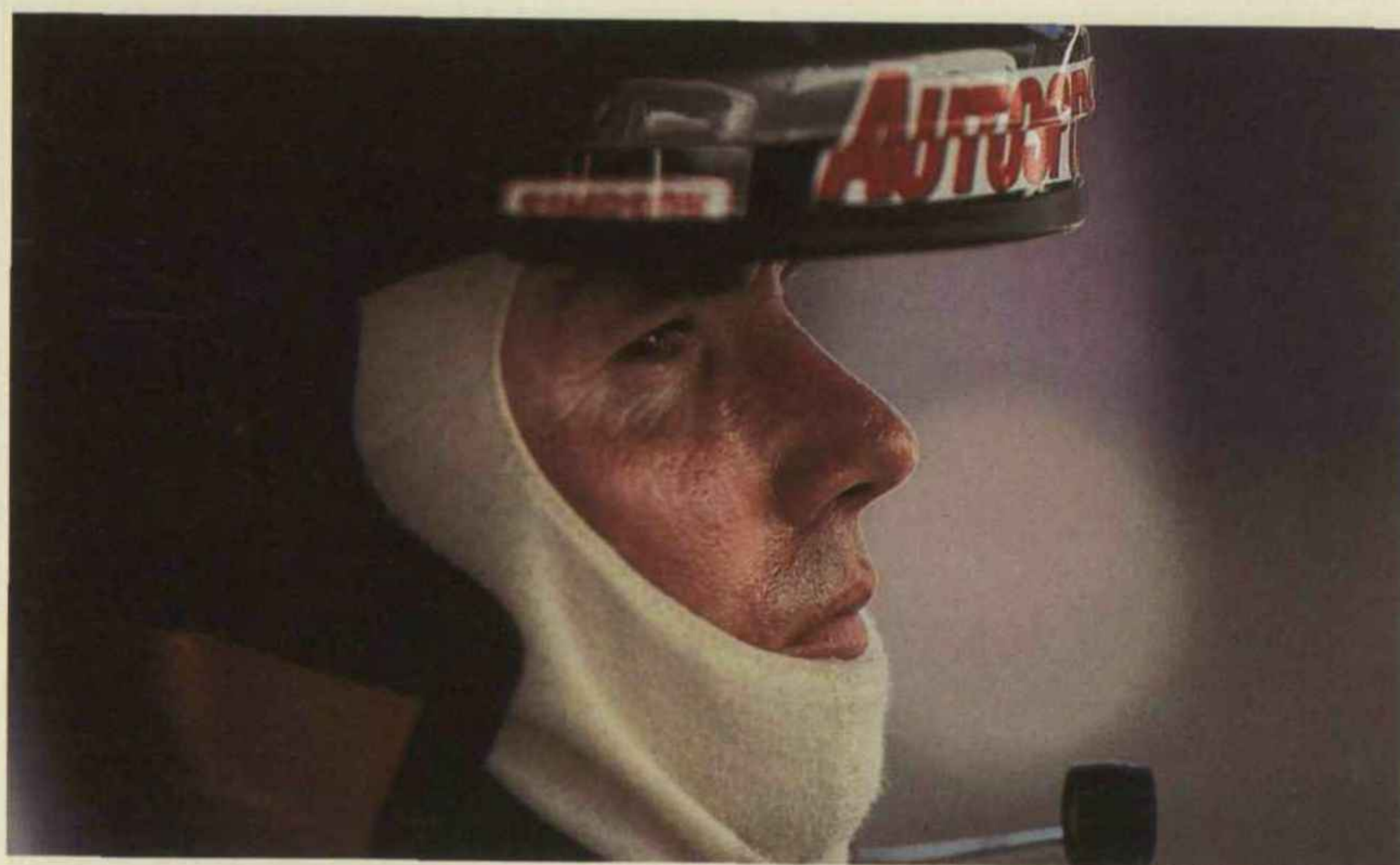
Those who found an antidote to this virus included Ray Mallock and Andy Rouse. The former's team runs the Ecurie Ecosse Vauxhall Cavaliers, which put the works team to shame on a fraction of the latter's budget, while the latter took some flak for his initial decision to run Ford's latest challenger in a rear-wheel drive format, before coming up trumps with yet another pacesetter, albeit with its driven wheels at the front.

As touring cars get stiffer and lower, and move towards single-seater-like responses – minor suspension tweaks bringing about major changes in a car's trackside manner – this pair of experienced racers appeared best able to interpret driver feedback and the glut of information from the on-board computers. Mallock admitted that a great

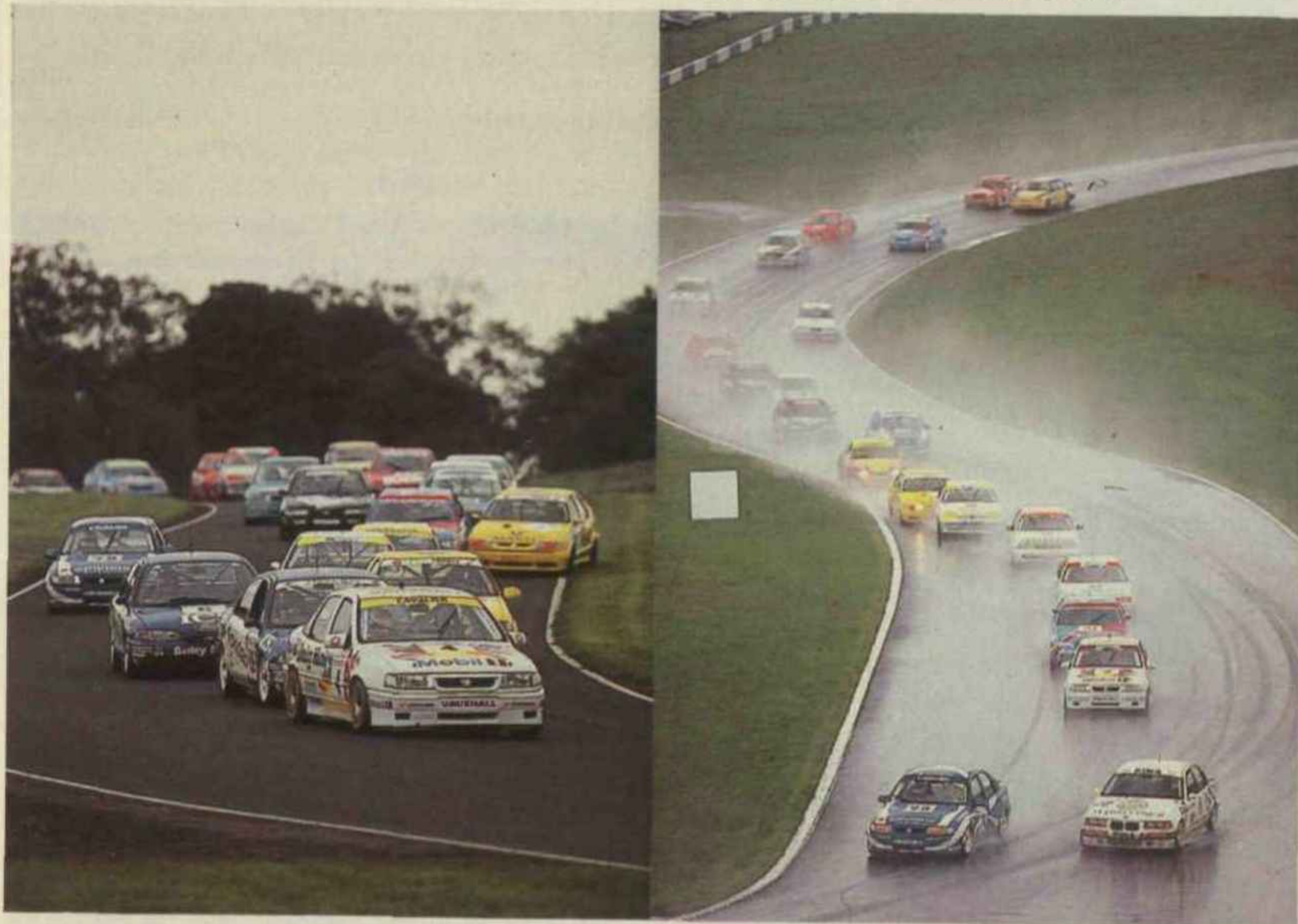


Julian Bailey: gave the hi-tech Carina its only success.





Steve Soper: pre-season championship favourite found the going tougher than many expected.



Jeff Allam leads the way at Oulton. Right: Leslie passes a cautious Winkelhock at Donington.



Works vauxhall drivers Allam and Cleland were hard-pushed to keep up with the Ecurie Ecosse Cavaliers.

deal of Group C accumulated knowledge had gone into the re-engineering of his Cavaliers, especially in the infinitely adjustable rear suspension, while Rouse was adamant his V6 cars did not enjoy a huge power advantage, and put their pace down to an excellent chassis. Certainly, the Mondeo, which has a wider track than any of its rivals, rode the kerbs like no other front-wheel drive car could, and the impressive Paul Radisich, a personable New Zealander, scored three wins towards the end of the year to finish third in the series having only tackled half of the races. Ecosse's David Leslie would have scored a similar number of victories had the luck gone his way, but instead had to settle for a solitary Thruxton success.

Of the other manufacturers, the Yokohama-shod Nissans, Dealersport Vauxhalls and Toyotas enjoyed brief spells at the front, but were unable to maintain this momentum.

The improving Kieth O'dor gave the Janspeed-built Primera its first BTCC win, the team scoring a memorable 1-2 at the British Grand Prix meeting, but this proved to be a false dawn. Although viewed as the best handling car of the field, it is still lacking in the horsepower stakes, and is thus at a disadvantage once its speed through a corner is compromised during a typical saloon car scrap. It also vehemently dislikes having to compromise its optimum line.

John Cleland scored his only win of the year in front of his countrymen at Knockhill, but suffered a fraught year with Vauxhall. For its fourth year of competition the Cavalier received a major revamp, including a far stiffer shell and an engine sited four inches lower than previously. The Scot was as aggressive as ever in it, but a switch to a viscous differential mid-season proved a backwards step, and saw him visit parts of



Ten of the best: from left, Winkelhock, Menu, Radisich, Allam,



the grid he had only previously seen in his mirror. Half a second in this championship can be the difference between a clear view of the first corner or a neck straining peek at the green light.

After a fraught year with Andy Rouse, Toyota switched camps to TOM'S GB, and the team which had been geared to go F1 before the plug was pulled brought with it the most sophisticated car of the series. Its engine was the lowest of the low and perhaps the strongest in the field, but the new front suspension proved tricky to set up, the car being very finicky about temperature changes and possessing an unner-

**"Steve had some wretched luck, but Jo won because he was quicker when it mattered most"**

ving tendency to alter its attitude mid-corner. Both Will Hoy and Julian Bailey had their moments, the former Lotus driver scoring an impressive win at Knockhill, but the season will be forever remembered for their spectacular collision at Silverstone, where Bailey tipped his partner into a roll as they were running first and second in the Grand Prix support race.

Both Peugeot and Renault struggled, although the latter scored two wins at a wet Donington Park. The former was lacking in racing experience, being basically the ex-rally team, and took most of the season to dial out a time-consuming hop; a stiffened rear subframe proved very beneficial, and as last year, its 405 showed promise towards the end of the season.

The Renault 19s were hopelessly off the

pace initially, thanks in the main to an unsuitable rally gearbox which meant the driveshafts had to run at a ridiculously steep angle. The arrival of the Hewland sequential unit improved matters, but the team was never able to rid the car of fast corner oversteer and slow corner understeer. One plus in its favour was the form of Alain Menu, the Swiss driver regularly hauling the car round faster than it wanted to go, and consistently outpacing team-mate, and 1992 champion, Tim Harvey.

Mazda provided the biggest "if only" story of the year. Armed with the stunning Xedos 6, which featured the same Ford Probe engine as the Mondeo, the all-action Patrick Watts looked set to take the series by storm after setting pole position at Snetterton. This moment of glory lasted until the first corner however, whereupon he landed in a field. From then on it was a case of "nearly was". Undoubtedly, Watts was hindered by the pressure of being the team's only driver, while a lack of budget restricted engine development to a bare minimum.

Eight manufacturers, with at least two more to come for '94, huge crowds and millions of TV viewers – the BTCC is on the crest of a wave. Undoubtedly, it is going to get even better next year. But will the bubble eventually burst as in Germany, or will be the series become a self-perpetuating entity in the NASCAR mould?

Manufacturers will come and go, and in this respect TOCA will have to look after the privateers who have been the backbone of the championship for many years, but who tend only to get TV coverage when they crash and who are being forced out by the million-pound budgets of the leading teams. There is a delicate balance to be struck here, and if one can be reached the series should continue to grow and grow.

By the way, this year's top privateer was Matt Neal in a BMW. P T F

## Rubber bullets

Yokohama has ruled the roost in the BTCC tyre war since Robb Gravett's dominant 1990 season, but finished this year having to share the nest with both Dunlop and Michelin.

Concentrating its development with Ecurie Ecosse, Dunlop was able to lay to rest its old bogey – the inability to last a full race distance – and a stiffer sidewall allowed David Leslie to string four or five quick laps together in practice while his rivals were generally limited to one or two on qualifiers.

Michelin entered the fray with Peugeot and Renault, but despite a win for the latter in monsoon conditions at Donington – they were untouchable in the wet – it was not until Ford switched from Yokohama to its product that the French tyre's true potential in the dry was revealed.

In response, Yokohama stepped up its development towards the end of the year with a host of compound and construction derivatives, but ended the season with a bloody nose.

Dunlop and Michelin, both of which had a taller profile than the Yokohama, appeared to provide a more progressive grip than the once dominant product. And the Yoko runners felt the tyre's propensity to grip, release and grip again, was one of the contributing causes to hop. They also felt the tyre was better in warmer condition, something which was in short supply this year.

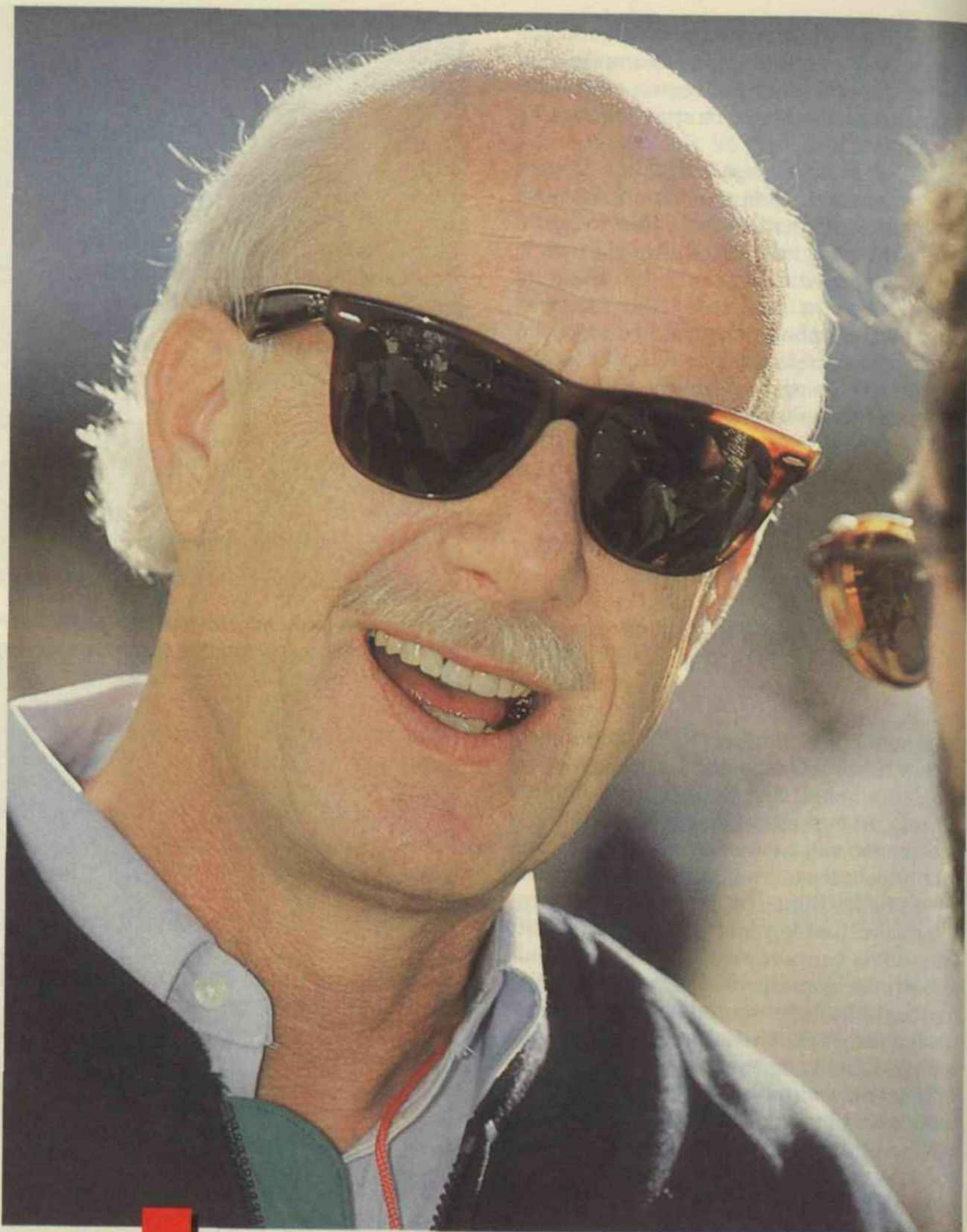
In a recent test the works Cavaliers went quicker on Dunlops than on their usual Yokos, and it will be interesting to see how many teams switch before next season.

It must not be forgotten, however, that Yokohama *did* provide the championship-winning product for the third year in succession. Bloodied, but unbowed. P T F



Bailey, Soper, Hoy, Cleland, O'dor and Leslie.





# Board games

Mike Kranefuss (top) is the bookies' favourite to take over as chairman of CART (right), the status of which has increased globally since the recruitment of 1992 world champion — and, as it turned out, 1993 IndyCar champion — Nigel Mansell (opposite).





**N**igel Mansell's victory at Nazareth Speedway having turned the IndyCar finale at Laguna Seca into something of an anti-climax, it was only natural for the talk on the Monterey Peninsula to centre on Bill Stokkan's successor as CART chairman. Little more than a month earlier, Stokkan caught everyone off guard by announcing he would not seek to renew his contract beyond the expiration of his current term on January 1 1995 and that he would work with the Board to insure a smooth transition should a replacement be named before his scheduled departure.

Nobody seriously entertains any thoughts of Stokkan staying on as a lame duck chairman for more than a year; indeed, the general belief is that a successor will be nominated by the current Board of Directors before the election of a new Board, scheduled for November 10. Since Stokkan dropped his Road America bombshell, four names have been widely circulated as candidates: Nick Craw, Bill Hildick, Michael Kranefuss and Jim Melvin.

In many ways, Melvin appeared to be the best qualified of the candidates. He is general manager of the Milwaukee Mile and his Pinnacle Marketing firm handles the promotion for Road America. Moreover, he is past president of the Sports Car Club of America, he was CART's first president for a time and he also managed Michigan International Speedway. Thus he is fully conversant with the ins and outs of the geo-politics of racing on both the national and international fronts. And as a successful marketing man in his own right, Melvin would be eminently capable of building on the progress made by Stokkan in the past three years. Moreover, having worked for Roger Penske and Carl Haas he knows both well and would, presumably, be able to stay a half step ahead of them in their ceaseless efforts to stack the IndyCar deck in their favour.

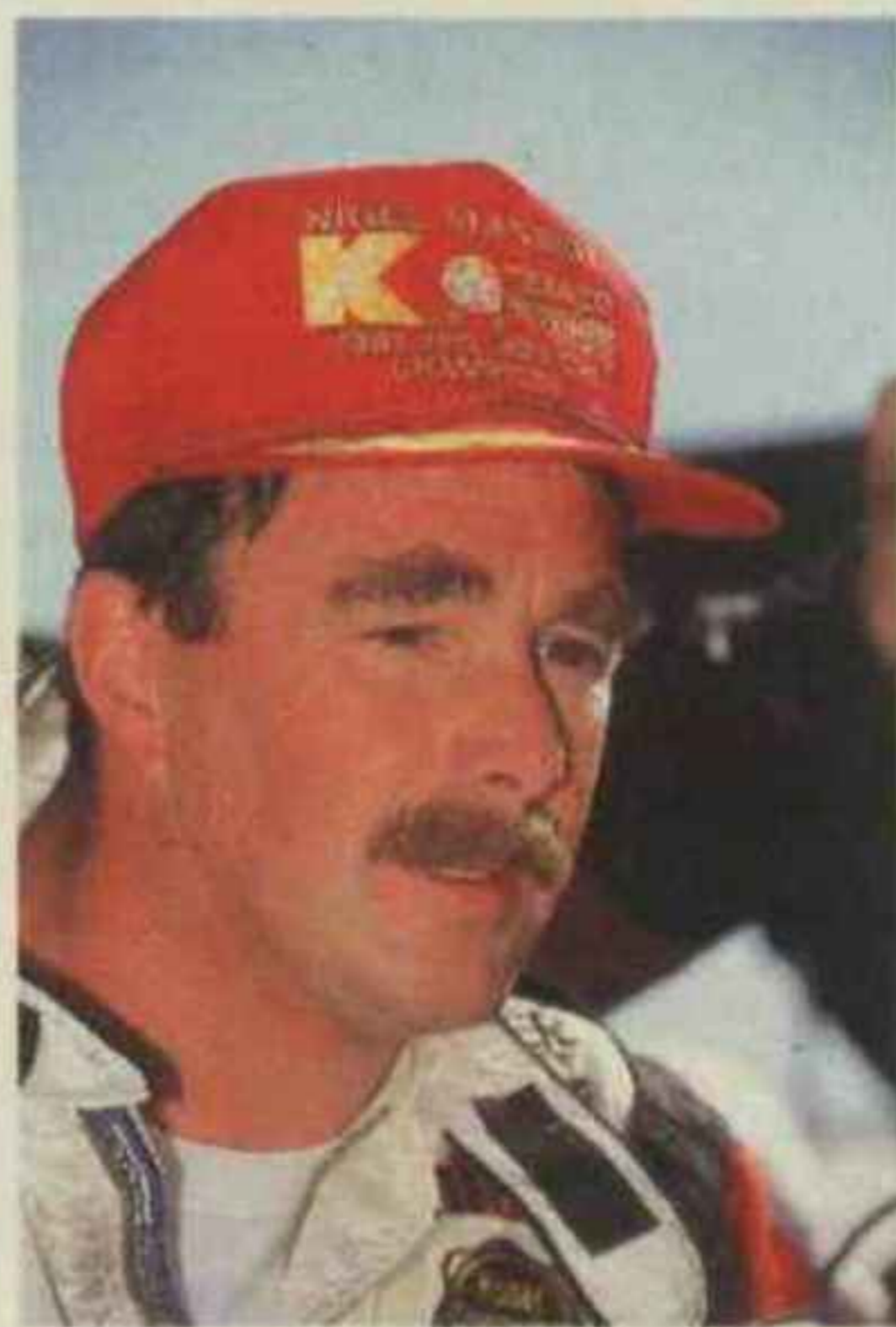
Unfortunately, Melvin was interviewed for the chairmanship back in 1989/90 when the search committee went with Stokkan after reports that Melvin was "too aggressive" – ie he made it clear he thought CART needed a chairman who wouldn't be pushed around by the likes of Roger Penske and Carl Haas. And this time around, despite his name being bandied about in the press, Melvin was apparently never given serious consideration, perhaps because he is too valuable a man for Carl Haas to lose at Milwaukee!

Craw is something of a career bureaucrat, having held a number of prominent positions in the federal government including director of the Peace Corps. In his younger days, he was also an avid sports car racer himself, and since 1983 has been president of the Sports Car Club of America. His tenure at SCCA has met with mixed reviews, with membership growing from 23,000 to 54,000 but a number of his ventures – most notably the SCCA spec series, in which the SCCA contracts with outside vendors to build cars such as the Spec Racer (formerly Sports Renault) and CanAm, which compete with existing classes – have been

highly controversial, to say the least.

Craw was one of three candidates to be invited to interview with the Board in late September and while by all accounts he made a favourable impression, being quite candid about his strengths and weaknesses, most see him filling the role of a straw man who will be sacrificed in the name of a "thorough" search.

As chairman of the Portland Rose Festival Association and the Portland IndyCar race, Hildick has considerable experience as both an organisational leader and event promoter. Portland is annually one of the best run, most popular events on the IndyCar calendar. Hildick has been very effective in upgrading what was once little more than a glorified club racing circuit into one of the better tracks in the PPG IndyCar World Series, and while much remains to be done before it challenges the likes of Mid-Ohio and Laguna Seca, the fact that Port-



land annually attracts the largest sports crowd in the Pacific North-West is testimony to his promotional expertise. The question is whether he has the horsepower to move from successful race promoter to head of an organisation that must deal with the multi-headed hydra of technology run amok as well as the likes of Bernie Ecclestone, Max Mosley and Tony George.

Kranefuss, of course, is well known throughout the motor sports world, as outgoing head of Ford's Special Vehicle Operations division. As such he saw Ford's joint ventures with Cosworth in Formula One and, more recently, IndyCar racing, as well as a highly visible (and successful) presence in NASCAR, TransAm and IMSA GTO programmes. A skilful politician, Kranefuss is also fully up to speed on the technical issues facing CART in the here and now, as well as the future. Rightly or wrongly (but, undeniably, successfully), he lobbied long and hard to get CART's controversial engine supply rules enacted. And having worked in racing from the "other" side for so long, he is also keenly aware of the challenges manufacturers and sponsors alike face in justifying astronomical (even in IndyCar racing) financial outlays in a sport where success is far from guaranteed.

On the other hand, of course, Kranefuss will inevitably have to overcome the perception – fair or not – that his ties to Ford will make it hard for him to be impartial when it

comes to decisions affecting engines and manufacturer involvement. Indeed, his part in the CART engine rules can not have made him a favourite with Honda or Toyota, to say nothing of Tony George and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Which brings us to Cary Agajanian. Not among the early candidates, Agajanian's name surfaced in mid-September and he had his interview with the Board at Laguna Seca. The son of JC Agajanian, whose Ol' Calhoun roadster Parnelli Jones drove to a controversial victory in the 1963 Indy 500, Cary is a lawyer who successfully defended the Long Beach Grand Prix Association against Clay Regazzoni's lawsuit in the aftermath of the Swiss' horrible accident in the 1980 US Grand Prix. He was also the promoter of the famed Ascot Park track in Los Angeles as well as a principle in the Curb Motorsports IndyCar team of the 1980s and a trusted adviser to a number of bright young drivers including John Andretti, Tom Kendall, Jeff Gordon and Bryan Herta. And in 1991 he was named on the board of ACCUS, the FIA's United States arm.

Although some may see Agajanian as a return to the John Frasco and John Caponigro days when the lawyers ran CART, in fact his appeal stems from the fact that he is fully conversant with issues in racing ranging from stock cars to sprint cars, from IndyCars to funny cars and, here's the key, would instantaneously improve the relationship between CART and the IndyCar fraternity in Indianapolis – the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the United States Auto Club. Indeed, IMS president Tony George has privately informed some key CART constituents that Agajanian is the *only* candidate that interests him.

What path is the Board likely to take in recommending a candidate?

"I think we need someone who has a vision," says Derrick Walker. "A person who is able to see how we can keep the many positive things about the series while growing and also coming to grips with the thorny technical issues ahead of us. IndyCar racing is changing, and we have to have someone with a clear vision of where we're going at the helm."

For his part, Carl Haas seemed to be leaning towards someone who could build upon the tentative steps towards reconciliation between CART and USAC and IMS when, at the CART awards banquet following the Laguna Seca race, he said "In order to grow further, to reach the next level we are making a transition. Some are afraid of change, I am not. In fact I welcome it, because it is the best course of action for our organisation... I know I speak for everyone here when I say one of our most important objectives for the future is not just to keep Tony George and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway involved but to create a structure where you feel you can continue to be involved."

Who will it be? The bookmakers seem to favour Kranefuss with Agajanian a very legitimate contender as well. Stay tuned. **D P**



# Eifel power



**L**ife can be pretty tough for Britons touring northern Europe in the 1990s. I mean, in August you could actually see people smiling in the queue at the P&O bureau de change because the pound had 'risen' to 8.5 French francs . . .

At the same time, a full tank of unleaded for a family-sized saloon would set you back around £40 in Belgium. Then you crossed the border into Germany, and life started to get expensive . . .

Still, there is a part of Germany where you can get extraordinarily good value for money, irrespective of the exchange rate.

Nestling in the Eifel mountains, it's a place well known to motor racing aficionados.

It's the Nürburgring.

We're talking here about the classic original, with its 14 miles of verdant complexity, and not the antiseptic modern racing facility next door which, shamefully, is allowed to carry the same name. Actually, modern racing drivers quite like the new 'Ring, because it does at least have a few gradients and a little variety. "It allows you to build up a really good rhythm," opined European F3000 contender Olivier Panis upon arrival. "From a driver's point of view, it's a satisfying place."

To spectators, however, it's simply soul-

less. Perhaps that's why the annual ADAC Formel Festival, which draws an entire sub-F1 single-seater staircase (Formel Junior, Formula Ford, Formula Vauxhall Lotus, F3 and F3000) to the new track, attracts a smaller crowd than its serpentine neighbour over the course of the same weekend . . .

What, you might well ask, are they watching?

The answer, in short, is the general public.

Since Niki Lauda crashed exiting Bergwerk in 1976, the incident which did most to prompt the transfer of the German Grand Prix to Hockenheim, the old Nordschleife has been rather more than 14 miles of misty legend. There is still an annual 24-hour race, in mid-summer, where no fewer than 180 cars take the start (in three batches of 60!). It's an event in which more or less anything goes, so long as it has a roof. Preceding this round-the-clock festival are twin rounds of the German Touring Car Championship, four laps apiece, on the Thursday. And that's about it, racing-wise. The rest of the time, the 'Ring is open for hire to Joe and Josephine Motorist, at 14 deutchsmarks per lap, payable on the gate.

It's a popular haunt, all year round, for expensively attired motorcyclists, riding

machines with telephone number cubic capacities, and for drivers of a wide diversity of cars. When the Formula 3000 championship is in the neighbourhood, the regular mix of ludicrously low-slung BMWs, aggressively conducted Porsche 911s and full Group N-spec VWs and Opels is visibly boosted for a couple of days beforehand by a proliferation of standard 1.1 Corsas, Golfs and Fiestas . . . with Avis, Hertz and Budget stickers in the rear window.

For a first-time driver, the venue is memorable and mesmerising in roughly equal measure. Did they *really* allow F1 cars to run here as recently as the mid 1970s? Group C sports cars and Formula 2 cars until the early 1980s? Even today, it seems astonishing.

In an otherwise sober, orderly country such as Germany, the way in which this temple of hedonism is still liberally used is quite an eye-opener.

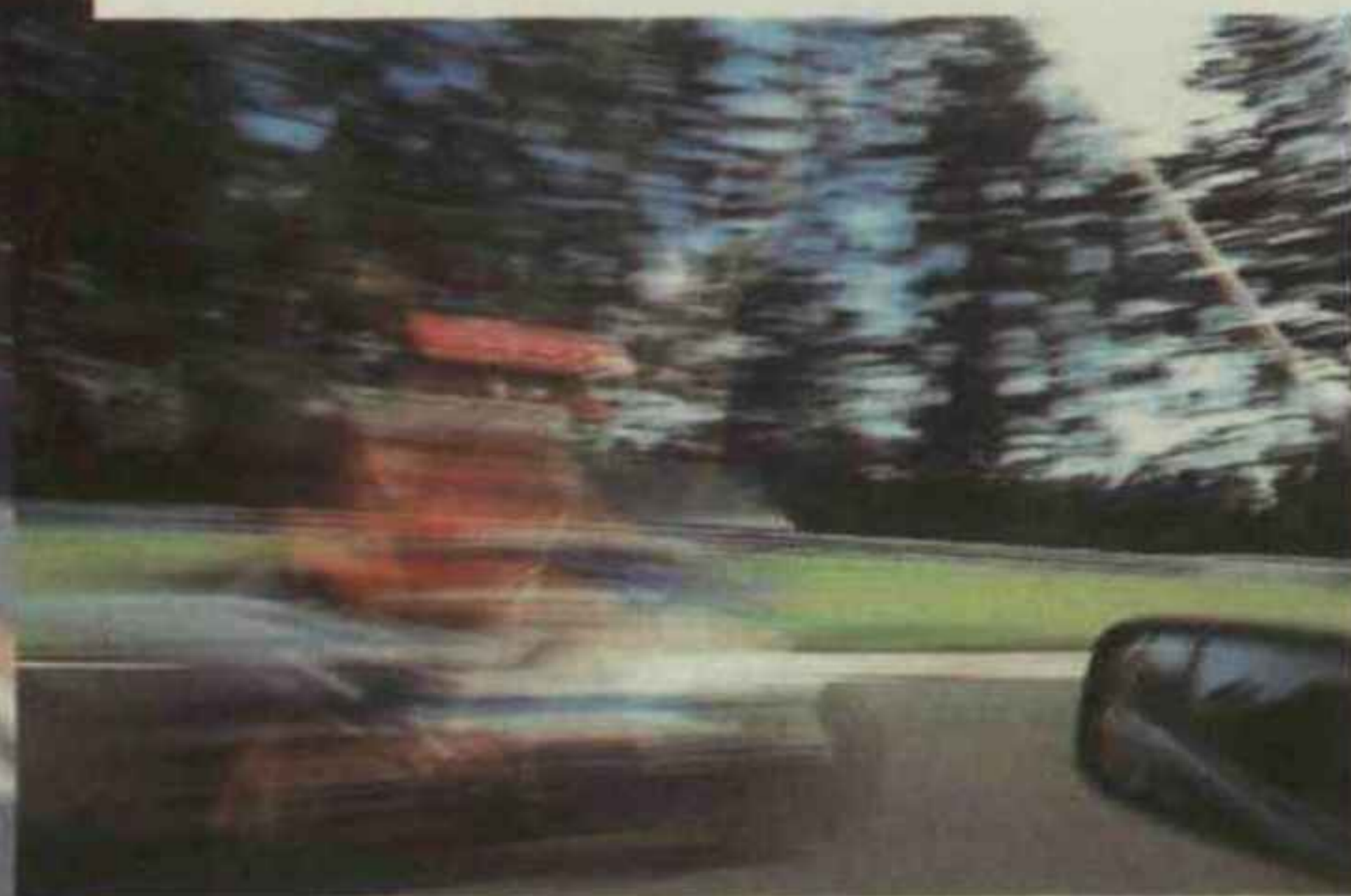
Watching some of the 'bikers lapping can be just awesome. Ultimately, none of them may be Kevin Schwantz, but their commitment is absolute.

Accidents, inevitably injurious and sometimes fatal, are not uncommon, nor, unsurprisingly, are they deemed to be the responsibility of the circuit management. Those hiring the track are fully aware of the





Left, de Ferran faces a traffic jam. Driving standards are as varied as the cars themselves. Above, the smile suggests that he recognises this bit. Below, yet another absurdly fast two-wheeler zaps the Volvo.



potential consequences of an error, even if that may not appear to be the case from their bravado.

The circuit is potentially at its most lethal whenever it gets busy, for there is always something of a disparity in performance – and ability. Even if you're knocking at the door of Formula One, there's not much you can do to avoid getting the way of a well-riden Honda CBR 900 if all you've got is a Hertz Nova. The problem for motorcyclists is that few paying punters have such track awareness as the visiting F3000 drivers. Everyone needs to concentrate 110 per cent on where they're going . . . and 120 per cent on their mirrors. It's a hazardous cocktail, which might explain why, even on weekdays, there are always knots of people gathered at the most spectacular points on the circuit.

Whatever the perils, there are always those who will argue, quite rightly, that it's better to let Wannabe Sennas and Schwantzes have such freedom within the confines of a racing circuit rather than on the public road.

Guided tours (on four wheels, though you do see the odd pillion passenger) are not hard to come by.

My first, back in 1985, was courtesy of Christian Danner, then on his way to win-

ning the inaugural European F3000 title, nowadays one of Alfa Romeo's leading lights in the GTCC. It was a weekend when several incidents stood out, notably Mike Thackwell lightly rumpling his VW Golf by misjudging Adenau Bridge during an exploratory tour of the old circuit and the scheduled racing debut (in an Alfa Romeo GTV6) of downhill skiing legend Franz Klammer . . . which had to be postponed as the meeting was abandoned due to heavy snow!

Danner's invitation came on the Friday afternoon, long before the white powdery invasion. "Ever been round the old track?" he queried, as we sat ruminating on the handling niceties of his March 85B. "Come on," he beamed as I shook my head. "I'll show you. Just let me find a car . . ."

A few minutes later he was back in a BMW 320. "It's Gerhard Berger's," he grinned, "shouldn't think he'll mind."

The running commentary that ensued wasn't geared to inspire passenger confidence.

"You see the tops of those trees just over the barriers there?"

"Yes . . ."

"I rolled my Renault 5 into those during my first season. Really big crash. Oh, and that barrier there?"

"Yes . . ."

"Put my Formula Two March into that a couple of years ago. Head on. Really big crash. Biggest of my career. Look! There. You see that kerb?"

"Yes . . ."

"Rolled my Renault there as well. Missed the apex by miles."

You resist asking whether there are any corners where he *hadn't* crashed. Much of the time he was steering one-handed. Relaxed. Confident. An assurance borne of familiarity accrued through experience, some of it not always pleasant.

It was a memorable 12 minutes or so, though it might have been rather shorter had Berger left any fuel in the car. Two-thirds of the way around, Danner backed off as he felt the first signs of starvation under heavy cornering loads.

His low-key approach was a marked contrast to that of my most recent such chauffeur, F3000 front-runner Gil de Ferran, whose eagerness to learn the place was tempered with caution, the Brazilian never having never been before. While Gil was one of several drivers who enjoyed the new circuit, the challenge presented by the latter was put firmly into perspective when he ventured onto the Nordschleife.

A tape recorder ran for the duration of the lap, in an effort to capture his thoughts. Normally, a racing driver talks his way around a circuit in something of a structured manner. Braking points, revs, gear-changes and significant surface alterations are usually recounted parrot fashion.

The 'Ring had a different effect on the habitually loquacious de Ferran, who was strapped for coherent comment for much of the lap, other than his repeated grumble that "This thing's too soft, really."

In fairness, the Volvo 850 GLT estate was not conceived with sub-11 minute laps of the Nordschleife in mind.

Leastways, not five up.

While de Ferran's observations were, by necessity, given the concentration factor, sporadic, his enthusiasm for the place was total. He'd been around the previous day, in a couple of cars, and was looking forward to passengering team patron Jackie Stewart the next. Some 20 years after his retirement, JYS said he could still remember every nook and cranny. De Ferran was understandably keen to acquire a slice of such knowledge.

Subsequently listening to the recorded cassette of de Ferran's own lap, several themes recur: frequent puzzlement over what lay beyond blind brows, whoops of delight whenever positive ID meant that the Volvo could be committed accurately to a given part of the circuit . . . and the unmistakable, fizzing sound of motorcycles on heat, flashing past yet another car full of awestruck visitors.

Like the remnants of the old Grand Prix circuit at Reims (MOTOR SPORT, October 1992), the Nordschleife is something that anyone with a soul ought to experience at least once.

All it requires is a little common-sense and, of course, sufficient deutschmarks to satisfy your curiosity.

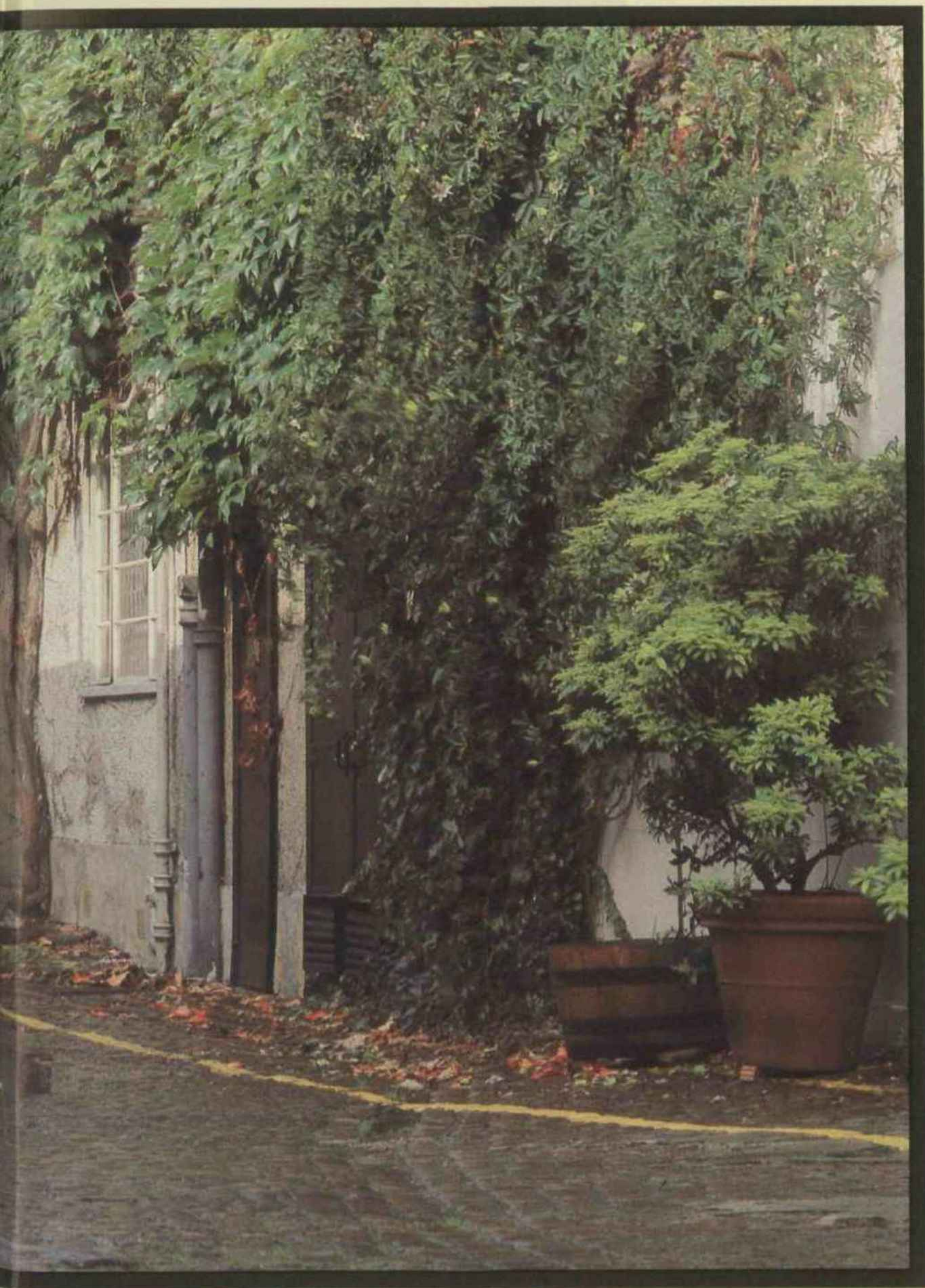
It is unlikely that 14 will be enough . . . S A



# The finest of fast cars?



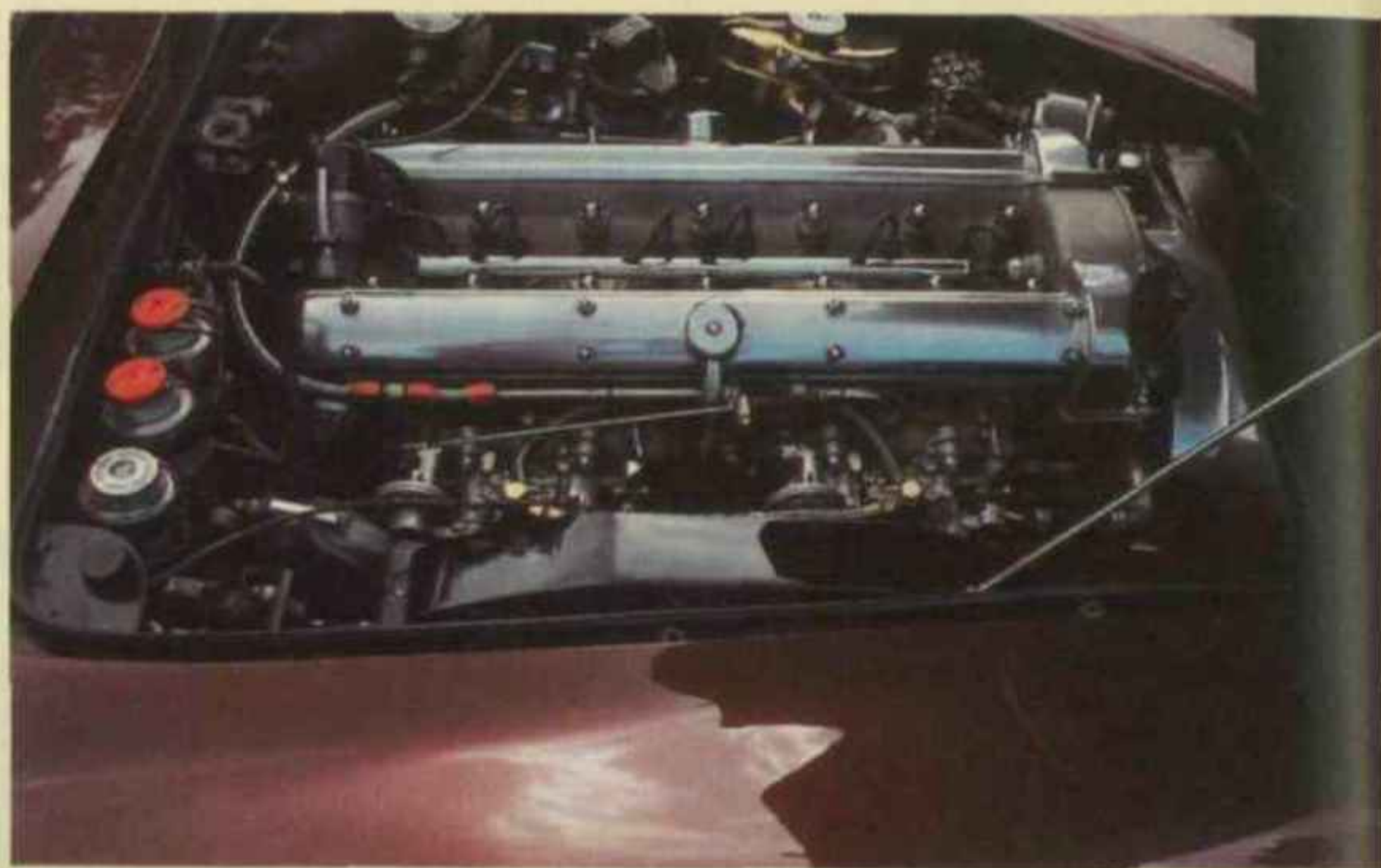




**With his Lagonda Rapide, the late Sir David Brown aspired to 'invade the future audaciously'. The car flopped, but was it quite the failure that historians like to suggest?**



The Rapide featured an enlarged version of Aston Martin's 3.7 litre twin-cam six, which would subsequently be adopted for its sibling DB5.



Interior has all the creature comforts, including an elaborate heating and ventilation system. Michael Groves' car has been beautifully refurbished inside by Robert Berridge.





It has long been my ambition to produce a car which would be equally suitable to drive or to be driven in, offer great comfort, large luggage carrying capacity yet still be exhilarating to the owner driver and capable of effortless sustained high performance.

"There is such a similarity between modern cars that one is fearful of the day when all will look, and be, alike.

"Motorists to whom a car is just a means of transport have many from which to choose. This new Lagonda will appeal to those who prefer a car of outstanding merit, possessing the thoroughbred characteris-

car now offered fallen short of this concept, its introduction would have been further delayed."

Those were the words of the late Sir David Brown when, at the end of 1961, he masterminded a fresh revival of the Lagonda marque. The aspiration was to produce what his sales brochure described as 'The finest of fast cars', something altogether more sporting than the preceding 2½ and 3-litre offerings.

Sadly, the Lagonda failed to live up to such lofty ideals. It hadn't been under development quite as long as he had suggested, although it *had* been a germ in his mind since the elegant 3-Litre had gone out of production in 1958. The truth was that the Rapide indeed lacked development, and had been pushed through by Brown against the recommendations of General Manager John Wyer, who was strongly opposed to its introduction.

The Rapide made its public début at the Paris Motor Show in 1961, and received a lukewarm welcome. Its 'Chinese' twin headlamps and upright grille were perhaps a little too reminiscent of the unlamented Edsel, and the treatment was not as elegant as the Mulliner Park Ward Bentley Continentals even in their single-light guise. The rear was happier, and the fact that it bore a strong resemblance to Maserati's 3500GT was scarcely surprising since Italian coachbuilder Carrozzeria Touring had had a role in the creation of both cars. It was much more elegant from the three-quarter rear view, but in its January 1962 edition, *Road & Track's* Henry Manney III was only moved to comment: "Aston was another house to pre-jump the London exhibit, choosing the time to reveal a convertible on the DB4 and also the new Lagonda. The Lagonda proved to be a rather undistinguished 4-door sedan, bearing a resemblance to the late 1900 Alfa saloons. It is powered by an enlarged (3995-cc) version of the well-known Aston Martin 6-cyl. A 3-speed automatic is standard, 4-speed manual optional - for those who want something besides a Jag or Bentley."

For all that, the Rapide boasted an impressive specification. The uprated Aston engine produced 236bhp at 5000rpm, and 265lb.ft of torque 1000rpm lower down. There were disc brakes on all four wheels, the front suspension was via wishbones and coil springs, and the rear end featured a well-located, racing practise de Dion axle with transverse torsion bars. Performance was a claimed 125mph, which was entirely reasonable. The seats, naturally, were hide leather, the wipers two-speed, the windows were operated electrically, and the heating and ventilating

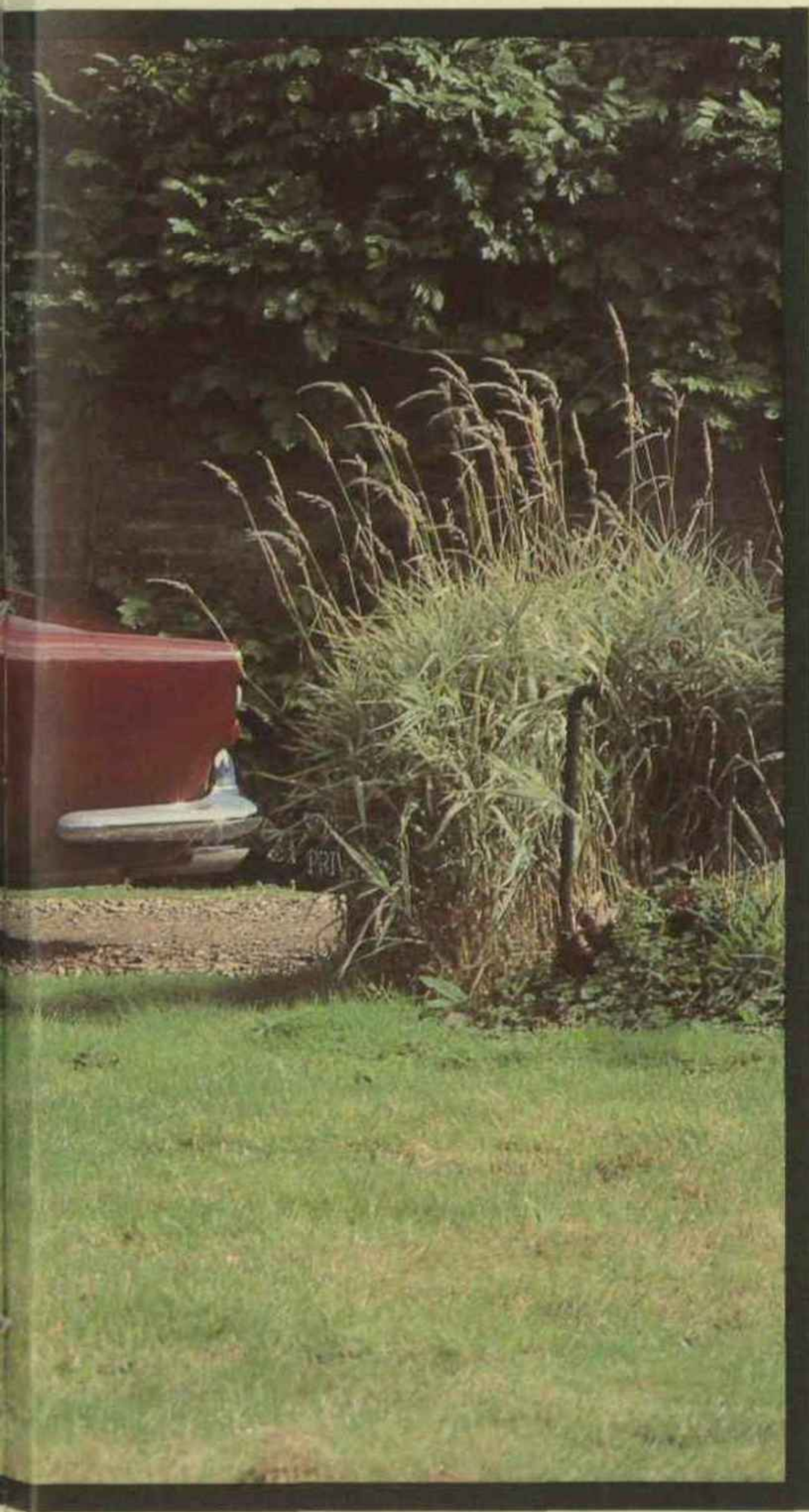
system (with air-conditioning as an option) was impressively elaborate. An electric release allowed the driver to operate the fuel filler flap from the cockpit, something we take for granted today. There was even a very nice little tool that gently eased off the hub caps to gain access to the perforated disc wheels' centre-lock nuts. The Lagonda owner, or his chauffeur, did not have to resort to anything as crude as levering them off with a screwdriver.

Touring's famous Superleggera construction mirrored DB4 methods and comprised a platform chassis clothed with unstressed aluminium panelling over a framework of thin steel tubes welded to the chassis structure. It all weighed in at 3780lbs. By comparison, its principal rival, Jaguar's new Mk X, produced 265bhp at 5500rpm and 260lb.ft of torque at 4000 from its similar 3781cc twin-cam six, but weighed 3990lbs. The Lagonda sat on a 9ft 6in wheelbase, but was 16ft 3½in long and 5ft 9½in wide. The Jaguar was five inches longer but markedly wider at nearly 6½ft.

*Lagonda!* As a kid I loved the sound of the name, the image it conjured of untrammelled luxury and performance. The Rapide was everything I wanted in a car. This was Simon Templar's Hironnelle incarnate. It was rakish, elegant, fully suited to the car snob that I was and would always be. But it was as rare as hen's teeth. You could find the Loch Ness Monster, Bigfoot and the yeti quicker than you could locate one. An elderly friend of mine owned a 3-Litre, but until we tried Michael Groves's car recently I'd seen but four Rapides in 27 years... Funny how you remember them, too. There was the maroon prototype 92 MY on the factory forecourt in 1966. A sable version that we espied in Kentish Town one day in 1967; I sulked for days at my father's reluctance to drive quickly enough to catch it up. A dark blue example at Brent Cross a few years later, and another in Harrow in 1986.

When first announced the Rapide was initially priced at £5251 in 1961, which fell shortly thereafter to a more modest £4351 in a vain attempt to attract buyers. Used examples were usually advertised in the back of MOTOR SPORT and *Autocar* for £2250 for a long time in the late Sixties, dropping as low as £1350 before rising again to the current market level. What's a Rapide worth now? Well, bear in mind that only 55 were made, and that *Classic & Sportscar's* well-based guide lists a Condition 1 car at £17000; Condition 2 £12000; and Condition 3 £8000. Michael Groves's car is the 54th of the production run and has agreed value insurance of £40000 with General Accident, on a collector's car policy. It has, however, been totally rebuilt...

Only seven cars were made with the optional four-speed manual transmission (although some automatics have since been converted) and JHR 302B is one of them. He bought it January 1990, and now its mileage currently reads 08962, "but that's not accurate! When I bought it it said 47,000



tics and distinctive appearance of a high calibre British car.

"The new Lagonda is the result of three years' intensive development by my design staff and craftsmen. When the project was promoted, no one concerned had any wish to make just another very good motor car or even one with superiority on individual features to anything we had yet produced. We wished rather to create something which should, from the outset, invade the future audaciously and set such an advanced standard of mechanical perfection, beauty of form and all-round performance, that no other car would compare with it. Had the



miles on the clock, and I thought they must have forgotten the odd hundred thousand. The wear in the door locks, things like that, just wasn't compatible with a car that was only supposed to have done 47,000."

The car was for sale in South Africa and he flew out to view it. "I had to go all the way to Johannesburg to look at it, and of course I knew I wasn't going all that way and not buy it! It took two months to get it home.

"I then had a big argument with the VAT man, because when it was exported in the first place, of course, no purchase tax had to be paid. Of course, I had also bought it at the height of the classic car market, so there we were in this customs place at Southampton, where they wouldn't release the car because we hadn't agreed a correct value. I had given £55,000 for it – really I should only have paid £30,000 – and it wasn't as if I had tried to smuggle it in, either. It was all done above board. But they said it was worth much more than £55,000, and even called Astons. The customs people tried to suggest that it was worth £100,000, but whoever they spoke to seemed never to have heard of the Rapide!

"In the end I paid another £8250 on top of what I paid for it, and probably it was worth a third of what it cost me!

"It had all been stripped right down to the bodyshell, with the bits stored in boxes until the Aston agent in Johannesburg rebuilt it. When we finally got it back here, we rebuilt it all again, right down to the window switches."

The mechanical work was carried out by Goldsworth & Young, the Aston Martin specialists down in Mere. It helped that John Goldsworth is Michael's nephew. "Mechanically it was very sad. It had been put together with a Jaguar clutch, for instance, and there were some terrible vibrations as a result. The Aston agent out in South Africa had obviously had difficulty getting the right parts."

The paintwork had all been refurbished professionally in South Africa, and whoever was responsible did a superb job in metallic Burgundy, described by the factory as Dubonnet. "It's a difficult colour to match, but where we have had to touch it up now and then I don't think they've done a bad job at ADP Coachworks," Groves volunteered.

The tan leather upholstery was initially retrimmed in South Africa, "but we thought they must have used some old cows that had been out roaming the plain for years, so we threw that all away," he recalls cheer-

**The Rapide's looks were always the subject of controversy. 5293 MM was a works registration seen in this rare publicity shot (right), but depicted a little more subtly in the company brochure (below).**



One of the most mechanically advanced cars available today. Many years of practical experience combined with advanced theory in engine and chassis design have been translated into highly successful practice. The engine is a logical development of the world-famous Aston Martin light alloy twin overhead camshaft unit, a design which has attained international renown. The smooth power and silence of this new engine are truly remarkable.

The automatic transmission enables the Lagonda to glide through traffic with ease and grace, or to accelerate effortlessly to speeds in excess of 125 m.p.h. immediately road conditions allow. The David Brown four-speed all-synchromesh gearbox can be fitted if preferred. The independent front suspension and De Dion rear suspension combine to provide exceptional road holding and comfortable riding qualities under all conditions. The chassis, with its tubular steel superstructure, is a most advanced example of modern motor car design. Light in weight, it has exceptional torsional rigidity and beam stiffness. The steering, by rack and pinion, is finger light, precise, and free from road shocks. Servo assisted disc brakes provide smooth, powerful braking, more than adequate for any emergency. The resplendent interior is luxuriously upholstered in the finest English hide throughout, and fitted with the highest quality Wilton carpet. The instruments and controls are neatly grouped before the driver. Radio with electrically operated aerial; speakers front and rear. Heaters front and rear, with demister back light. All doors open to nearly 90° and have electrically controlled windows. The two front doors have Yale locks.

# LAGONDA RAPIDE

THE FINEST OF FAST CARS

fully. Back home it was all redone by Robert Berridge, whose expertise extended to manufacturing a neat cover for the battery which lives under the back seat.

As we discussed how Brown had forced the car into production against Wyer's practical counsel, Groves recalled a time they had met. "We had a gathering for all the BARC Gold Medallists a couple of years back, and Sir David attended. I told him I had bought one of his Rapides, and he looked at me aghast and replied: "Dear boy, what on earth did you do that for?"

Groves, a BARC member for 40 years and the current Chairman of the club, also owns an immaculate Jaguar XK120 and a new XJ12 (as everyday transport), and his past vehicles include an XK150S and a Jensen CV-8. He has driven the Lagonda round Thruxton several times, and vows that he does not believe in pampering his cars. When the time comes, he expects them to work for their living. The week after he charmingly let me realise an ambition he was an entrant in the RAC European Classic Rally, a four-day event that set out from Brands Hatch, headed to Le Touquet and went to Belgium before finishing at the

Nurburgring. And yes, he would be giving it a few laps there, too, he said. "Rather! It'll have been hauled round Croix, Chimay and Spa before then, so why not!

"Like all old cars it lurches and squawks around, but it handles quite well until you get the boot full of luggage," he says. "Then a lot of the weight at the back is outside the wheelbase." Filling the twin fuel tanks, one mounted in each rear wing in the style Jaguar would later adopt on the XJ6, would also influence the handling too, one suspects.

The Rapide provides a good driving position, upright but with a good view all round through the wraparound screen and the relatively shallow side and rear glass, even though the interior and door mirrors on Michael's car vibrated badly because the Avon Turbospeed-shod front wheels needed balancing. The bonnet stretches ahead and its central section and both front wing tips are easily visible, which helps with positioning the car. Despite its length, it feels small and can be placed easily through tight gaps. It's easy to reverse, too.

The front seats are comfortable even if they offer little lateral support, but despite



Brown's claims passengers in the rear are rather less well catered for, even with the compact de Dion rear end which was chosen specifically to minimise technical intrusions. Headroom is generous enough, but there is no more legroom than there is in a MkII Jaguar, which is more than a foot shorter. That means that there isn't very much room at all – it's a bit like a four-door 2+2!

The Goldsworth & Young twin-cam six fires readily, and with a lovely throaty burble at low speed which warms into a delicious

hum when you pick up revs. Groves insists the six cylinder unit is very smooth by normal Aston standards, and it's also oil-tight, which is quite an achievement. G & Y also rebuilt the suspension, steering, gear-box and rear axle – the latter a phenomenal job – and everything is very smooth apart from repeated clonks from the rear axle. Herein lies the Rapide's Achilles Heel.

The problem arises because the driveshafts are angled forward an inch between the final drive (which was bolted direct to the chassis) and the rear wheels.

This not only passes vibrations directly into the chassis, but also results in heavy wear on the splines, which tend to wear out every 10,000 kilometres.

Some of the remaining cars still go back for service at Aston Martin Lagonda's factory in Newport Pagnell, where they are remembered fondly by Service, Restoration and Retail Sales Director Kingsley Riding-Felce. "The rear ends can be clonky, but it is possible to set them up really well to overcome most of the problems. You do need to be sure that the carburation is spot-on too, though, to avoid any chug-chugging in traffic which magnifies things."

We were warned that the interior can get "red hot – an old Aston Martin tendency" – and indeed this proved the case even on our relatively cool day which had started out wet but then turned reasonably sunny. The only answer is to risk using the Piper electric windows. One stuck down for a while, but after being left to its own devices for a few minutes elected to function properly again.

Interior heat is inevitably linked with under-bonnet heat, and G & Y fitted twin Kenlowe fans and a non-standard oil cooler, which have since ensured that the engine temperatures stay precisely where they are required.

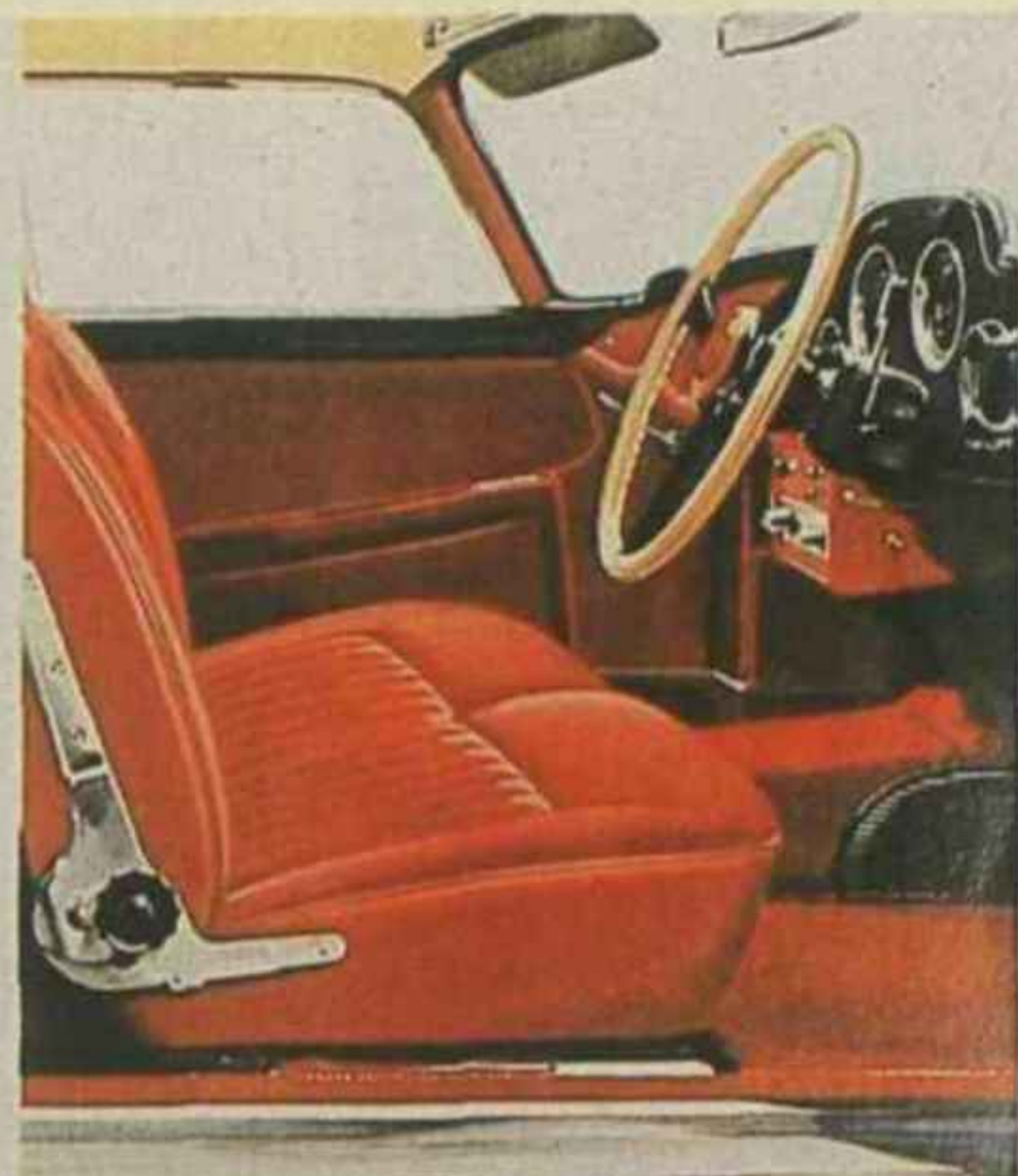
"One of the big problems that we have only just cured in the last six months," Groves reveals, "was smoothing out the idle and stopping it oiling its plugs." The two twin-choke Solex 44PHH carburettors are to blame here, for they are notoriously difficult to set up accurately. "Very few people seem to know how they work, but luckily Gower & Lee just north of Hyde Park do. The trouble is that after a while the venturis go oval, but these seem to be okay in that respect."

The speedometer reads 10% slow on JHR 302B, which had to be taken into account when we saw 3400rpm at 70mph (which was thus really closer to 80). That's still very low geared, due to the 3.77 to 1 rear axle ratio that Groves prefers over the alternative 3.54 to 1. Certainly this Rapide didn't seem likely to touch the claimed 125mph maximum without running out of revs, but Michael prefers the ratio for cruising, and there's no doubt that the Lagonda has plenty of urge in fourth gear as a result. At one stage my use of third gear – Cosworth thinking – was gently chided on a country road, and sure enough the Rapide would pull fourth without even thinking about it. There is a lot of torque.

The gearlever has a surprisingly delicate



Rear compartment appointments include side and centre armrests. The side armrests serve also as door pulls. The luxurious centre armrest serves as a container for personal requisites. Concealed picnic tables are provided for the convenience of rear seat passengers.



The front seats have generous fore and aft adjustment. Backs are infinitely adjustable for angle, by instantly responsive single controls from each seat. These features, combined with the outstanding quality of the upholstery, ensure the utmost comfort for both driver and passenger.



The luggage compartment is exceptionally large and unobstructed, by virtue of the arrangement of petrol tanks, carried on each side of the rear wings. Fitted suitcases in matching leather can be supplied if desired. The filler cap is electrically controlled from the driver's seat.

## LAGONDA RAPIDE

THE FINEST OF FAST CARS



**Mighty racer:** back in the Sixties Aston apprentices Richard Williams (now of Protech) and Ian Mason prepared this Rapide for Peter Sellers' manager Bill Wills in their spare time. It was fully road legal, had a triple-carb Vantage engine, five-speed 'box and Borrani wire wheels, and Pat Ferguson (seen here at Snetterton) had several successes with it. "I often think we should do another for Historic saloon racing," says Williams today.





The Rapide debuted at the Paris Show in 1961, to a lukewarm reception.

appearance, but nice short throws and a notchy but precise movement. In common with old Moss units, it's best to pamper the all-synchromesh gearbox by pausing in the neutral plane on upchanges from first to second to avoid an unseemly crunch. However, that little foible is offset by a lovely clutch action. It's nowhere near as heavy as I'd expected, and it takes up gently, facilitating smooth starts.

On 'our' car the brake pedal took up right at the top of its movement, which is reassuring, especially as at times you get the impression that the brakes aren't quite going to work until you give them a final good push. "I've never got them to lock," beams Groves. "It's as if they have their own inbuilt ABS system." Really, it's just a matter of mentally deprogramming the higher standards one has become used to with modern systems.

The steering is heavy, being devoid of power assistance, but it's direct and pleasant, and relays faithfully to the driver what the front wheels are doing. The wheel is large, with a diameter of 17 inches, but the thin wooden rim and the sharp-edged spokes are a tactile pleasure. Unlike my old Jaguar MkII, with its 4.9 turns between locks, the Lagonda's rack and pinion steering is far more sensibly geared at 3.75.

Noise levels were higher than I'd expected, partly perhaps because of the exhaust's tone, but it's nothing you wouldn't enjoy. The ride is good too, soaking up bumps and undulations well enough to suggest that in its day it would indeed have been in the extremely good category. There's a little bit of float in some situations, but the car tracks well and goes

where you point it. In slow corners the inevitable understeer obliges you to do a bit of wheel twirling, especially in roundabouts, but on more open roads the handling is well balanced. I'm told, though I didn't have the opportunity to experience it, that it shifts gently towards oversteer when you push really hard at high speeds. It's not quite in the class of the original XJ6, (and certainly not of later variants) but it is sufficiently impressive even today for a car that weighs getting on for two tons, and I would imagine it could embarrass a lot of more vaunted machinery in this department. As a vehicle for modern-day traffic, the Rapide can more than hold its own. The price is high fuel consumption, something else that the low geared rear end doesn't help, but you pay for your pleasure one way or another.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder – and when I finally beheld the Rapide close-to and then drove it, it was the culmination of a 27 year-old dream. Ugly? Clumsy-looking? Ill-balanced? Not to me. It's still as impressive as I thought it was in the naive days before it was totally apparent to me that I would never own one. (The closest I ever got was buying the keyring.) I once saw the factory prototype 92 MY at Newport Pagnell in 1966 with the front end modified along the lines of Touring's Sunbeam Venezia, and one other Rapide was converted to a DB4 front end with, to me, unfortunate consequences. It's a car that looks better in darker colours, but it certainly still turns heads in traffic. It didn't invade the future audaciously, but David Brown was certainly closer to the mark than history remembers when he aspired to create something that would stand among the finest of fast cars. **D J T**



The last Lagonda was produced in May 1990, but the Vignale seen at the Geneva Show last March was a curtain-raiser for the revival of the name, although certainly not with such an immensely large, rounded car as made its controversial debut in Switzerland.

To loathe or to love? Like the Italianate Rapide that we also drive this month, that was the question. "Vignale believes that it was not shown at Geneva in its best light," says Aston Martin Lagonda's director of public relations, Harry Calton. "We believe that it deserves a fresh appraisal."

So MOTOR SPORT was invited to Millbrook, not only to see the Vignale in all its glory but to drive it, to see whether our first impression was just a little . . . well, unfortunate.

The Vignale does, after all, have a future, whether or not it ever goes into production, as it is currently at Ford's design centre in Dearborn being prepared for the most intimate of automotive examinations, a series of customer clinics.



# A hint of the future?



Standing on a concrete apron in deepest Bedfordshire, the Lagonda immediately discards the impression of colossal size. Warm sunshine glinted on the gunmetal paintwork and the elephantine dimensions – it is nearly 17 ft 6 in long and 77 in wide – seem to be diminished by the fashionably short overhangs.

The appearance is changed, too, by the aluminium five-spoke AZEV wheels which are fitted for road work. They are 18-inch diameter with huge Pirelli tyres, 355/55, and visually they make the Lagonda look more hungry for driving than the 19-inch, Goodyear equipped wheels seen at Geneva.

A minute button on the satin finish stainless steel door strip releases the electronic catch, and as the driver's door swings open the steering column rises to make more space. The doors seem very light, and this is explained by the fact that carbon fibre is used for the entire body!

This was not disclosed at Geneva, simply because the composite material was

chosen for easy, and speedy production. There will be a MkII and it will be made in hand-beaten aluminium, in Vignale's traditional way.

Can you afford the Vignale? A wealthy, persistent customer was told at the Geneva Show that he could have the first replica for \$250,000, which cooled his enthusiasm a little.

Exterior designer Moray Callum set out to produce a "timeless capsule", with styling a redolent throwback to the '30s. His colleague Sally Wilson has designed a most sympathetic interior, capturing the sumptuous clubhouse atmosphere of that era, but incorporating some futuristic ideas.

A miniature screen in the centre of the dashboard is used for satellite navigation, and the circular satin finish discs at the sides of the front seats have push-button controls for the comprehensive in-car entertainment system.

Natural hides, fine carpet and unusual beechwood applications on the dashboard,

doors and even the steering wheel rim make the Lagonda Vignale look, and feel, something out of the ordinary.

The mechanical specification is almost irrelevant in the context of evaluating the Lagonda Vignale. For the record though, it is based on Ford's Lincoln Town Car and is powered by a run-of-the-mill V8 engine, though a modular V12 is being developed for the MkII.

Within minutes of taking the controls I learned to appreciate the push-button control of the transmission system. Nearer the driver are the D (drive), L (low) and OD (overdrive) buttons, and on the further panel are the P (park), N (neutral) and R (reverse) buttons, each with a colour lamp.

What could be simpler? Select P or N to start the engine then D to drive away. You have to know, though, that the Americans have a new fail-safe: D can be selected only when the driver's foot is on the brake pedal, the answer to the 'unintended runaway' syndrome.



Interior, right, combines 1990s hi-tech with hide and beechwood trimmings reminiscent of a 1930s club. Rear of Vignale (far right) stretches some way beyond the driver's immediate field of vision. Extreme care required to place the vehicle with accuracy.



The last Lagonda, the long, low razor-edge saloon of the 1980s is the epitaph that designer William Towns wished for. It was a quirk of the market at that time that made it the choice of Arab sheikhs and wealthy Americans and, when the recession came, it was curtains for the rakish car.

After persevering with it for 14 years, during which time 645 examples were built, then chief executive Victor Gauntlett finally pulled the plug in 1990 when the recession bit the world markets.

Lagonda was a big name in the sports car world in the 1930s. The marque was founded by an American, Wilbur Gunn, who emigrated from Springfield, Ohio, at the turn of the century. He named his cars after Lagonda Creek, Ohio, and by 1935, when a 4½-litre car driven by John Hindmarsh and Luis Fontes won the Le Mans 24 Hours, the make had virtually ousted Bentley from the pinnacle.

WO Bentley was appointed chief designer in 1936, and his great contribution was the design of an advanced straight-six dual overhead camshaft engine, with 2.6-litre

capacity, which replaced the bought-in Meadows unit.

In the post-war period industrialist David Brown first bought Aston Martin and then, casting around for a decent engine, acquired Lagonda as well, to bring the two marques together. Fate decreed that Lagonda would always play second fiddle although in 'positioning' (that phrase so favoured by marketing men) Lagonda was some way above Aston Martin.

"Don't forget," says chief executive Walter Hayes, "that Lagonda used to be Bentley's rival. They did make big cars, and the Vignale is not really meant to be practical. I am not so interested in what people think of the appearance as in the general concept: it asks some challenging questions about seating and packaging."

The Vignale came about as the result of a conversation last May between Hayes, 69, a former Ford vice-president, and Ford's design chief, Jack Telnack.

Ghia, a Ford subsidiary, was already working on a high-luxury model based on the Lincoln Town Car, and the possibility of

turning it into a Lagonda focussed everyone's attention.

Moray Callum, 34-year-old younger brother of TWR's resident stylist Ian, was given the task of turning his notional prestige model into a Lagonda. By an amazing coincidence Ian was transforming a JaguarSport project into the Aston Martin DB7 at exactly the same time, but neither was aware of the other's plan. Walter Hayes, though, was the catalyst for the two projects.

The V12 engine is another element in the development of the Lagonda Vignale. Rod Mansfield, former head of Ford's SVO department in Essex, briefly AML's technical director, now head of special projects in Dearborn, has 'discovered' the modular engine in the engineering division and secured its birthright. It is, apparently, an expanded version of the Lincoln's V8 which suggests a capacity of 6.9 litres.

The interweaving of Ford, Jaguar and Aston Martin Lagonda is getting stronger all the time. In recent months Nicholas Scheele, Jaguar's managing director, Tom Walkinshaw and Jackie Stewart have all been appointed





to Aston Martin's main board.

Hayes, always remembered as the 'father' of the Ford-Cosworth DFV engine, the most successful unit ever in the history of Grand Prix racing with more than 150 victories, is the architect of all these things. It was he, at the side of Henry Ford II (and his biographer), who added Aston Martin, AC Cars and Jaguar to Ford's empire in 1987-88.

AC Cars has gone back to private ownership, somewhat acrimoniously, but Jaguar and Aston Martin Lagonda are prestige names which have cost Ford dear, in monetary terms. When the recession ends these marques are nicely placed to start repaying their debt, and certainly the spirit in Newport Pagnell is as high as ever as the Lagonda name sits on the brink of yet another comeback.

At present we cannot divulge the full details of the exciting new project, but suffice it to say that Aston Martin Lagonda is developing four-door saloon and estate car derivatives of the Aston Martin Virage, which will bear the badging of Wilbur Gunn's original creation. **MLC/DJT**

The rest is easy. The Vignale glides away, and if the 4.6-litre Ford V8 protests rather loudly about getting this gargantuan into motion, you have to close your ears and imagine how nicely a seven-litre V12 would do the job.

The ride, of course, is boulevard smooth, and at the modest speeds allowed in this priceless prototype the handling was quite impressive. You have to allow that this is a mobile studio, and forgive minor imperfections such as tyres binding on the arches near full lock.

The trouble with a 'blob' is that the extremities cannot be seen. Everything beyond the base of the windscreen, or the rear window, had to be guessed at... and there's an awful lot of guessing to be done in such a vehicle!

But never mind. A competent driver should soon gain in confidence, and the Vignale becomes very satisfying. It is extremely quiet (though not silent), comfortable and habitable. The white-faced instruments with black and green figuring look clear and interesting, although non-functioning at the prototype stage.

Will Lagonda ever make the car?

Although AML chairman Walter Hayes said at the Geneva Show that there is no capacity at Newport Pagnell, this does not rule out a low volume production starting in 1997. Between 100 and 150 units could be produced comfortably each year, with bodies made by Ghia's Vignale subsidiary in Turin.

A production car, if it were to be made, would have a unique perimeter frame chassis of extruded aluminium, which is considered ideal for low-volume production. This method was favoured by Pininfarina for the Ethos 2, and by BMW for the Z13, and is certain to be adopted by other specialist manufacturers in the future.

It is well known that the Scottish brothers, Ian and Moray Callum, respectively designed the Aston Martin DB7 and the Lagonda Vignale; Ian was working for TWR Design in Kidlington, Moray for Vignale in Turin.

So strong is their agreement not to "talk shop" that, despite spending last Christmas together, they had no idea that they were both working on sister projects for Aston Martin Lagonda until told, by Calton, in February! **MLC**



# Unreal thing



**B**ack in 1991, BMW launched a much-hyped coupé to replace the elegant, outgoing M635CSi. Whilst the superseded model rapidly acquired 'classic' status, the newcomer didn't exactly roll into its wheeltracks with a blaze of glory.

In many people's eyes, the BMW 850i simply didn't *look* quite right. Despite its copious external dimensions, you could barely call it a two-plus-two. In terms of packaging, it was a cross between a Routemaster bus and a Mini. It did not prove to be a winner for BMW in the same way that the XJ-S had proved to be for Jaguar or the 500

SEC for Mercedes.

Needless to say, it was also extremely expensive and, while it had to be considered as 'a fast car' in the overall scheme of things, its speed was hardly supercar material.

BMW sensibly decided that the Motorsport division, responsible for such greats as the M3 and M5, should wave its magic wand by adding a couple of letters to the bootlid. The new 850 CSi has an altogether different character to its rather soulless, progenitor. It seems puzzling that this subsidiary wasn't entrusted with the 850's

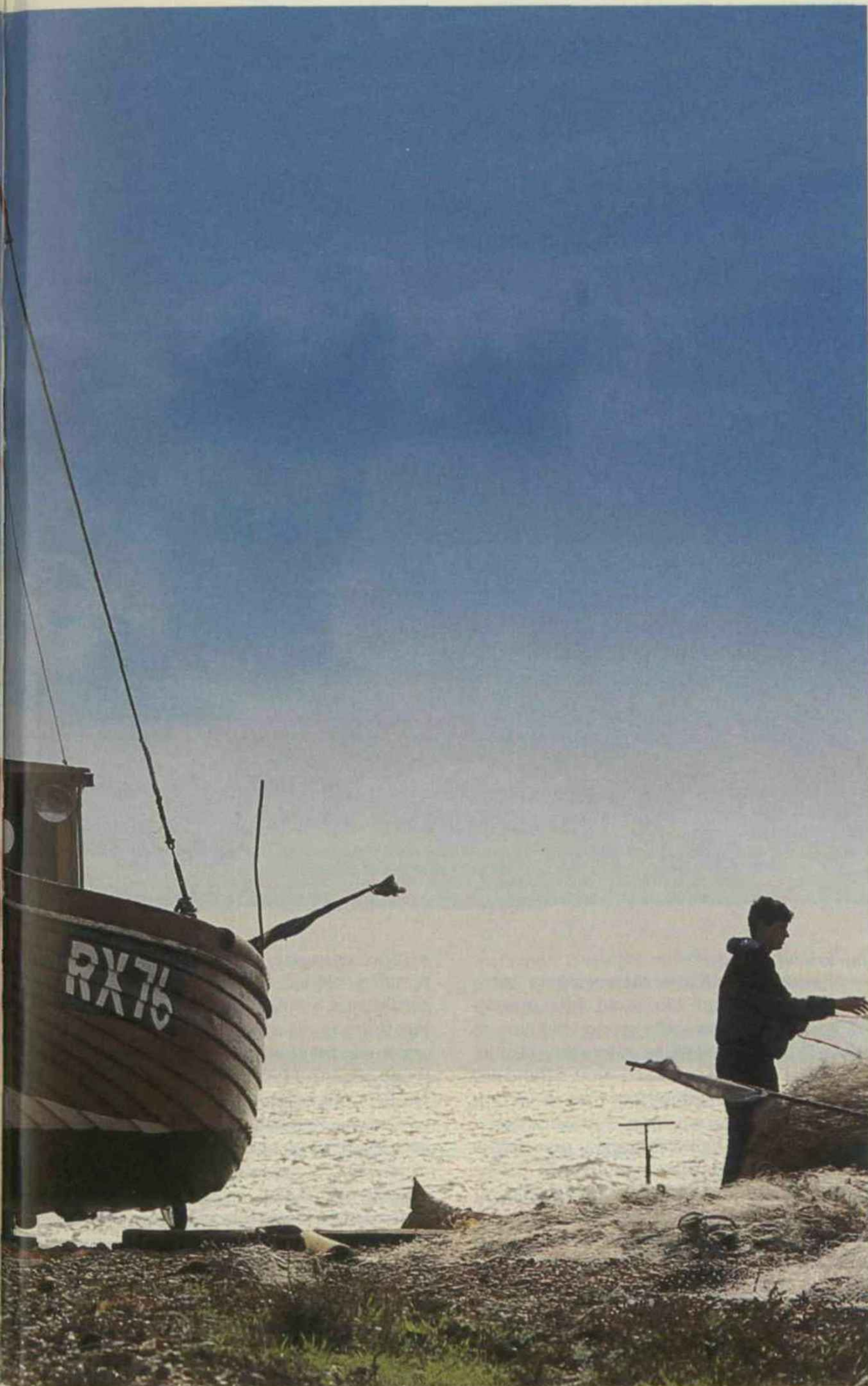
development in the first instance.

Better late than never – though the sheer competence of certain rivals meant that the 850's dynamics required a re-think as a matter of urgency.

At the time of its launch, cash buyers would have needed to approach their BMW showroom armed with £59,000. The intervening two years have raised the ante by £18,000 if you want a CSi, though the 'entry level' model, if you can call the Ci that, is available for just over £67,000.

In the case of the former, what do you get for the best part of £80,000? Well, the same





heavy-looking, wedge-shaped, pillarless body (but for a deeper front spoiler) remains perched on its long wheelbase, but beneath lurks a bigger, more predatory engine, active suspension, a limited slip differential with traction control and larger brakes. There are detail changes both inside and out... BMW claims that the result is, arguably, the most technically advanced production car in the world: Formula One thinking for everyday road users.

On paper, it does indeed look impressive.

If ever there was a car that combined the looks of an RAF Tornado with the perform-

ance of the QE2 it was the 850i, an embarrassment to all who sailed in her. Its five-litre V12 simply wasn't enough to enliven a two-ton coupé, and there were many 'lesser' cars which could offer more to those who enjoy driving for driving's sake. The original 850 boasted 170 bhp per ton: acceptable, but in this case insufficient at speeds below those which are likely to earn your licence a trip to the shredder.

The solution?

To the basic recipe, add half a litre or so (5.6-litre V12), raise the compression ratio (9.8:1) and remap the electronic manage-

ment. The gains are substantial. Power is up from 300 bhp to 380 (at 5500 rpm), and torque has increased by a massive 22 per cent, to 406 lb ft (at an unstressed 4000 rpm). It is actually possible to pull away smoothly in *any* gear from below 1000 rpm, and you can do so in third or fourth with surprising élan.

The final benefit, although unlikely to be of the remotest concern to those who can afford an 850 CSI, is, potentially, marginally better fuel efficiency than the five-litre... The tank will swallow 90 litres of unleaded fuel, so expect pit stops to cost in excess of £40. If most of your driving is around town, these may be as frequent as you light up a new, fat cigar. A fuel check on a typical commuter journey into and out of London revealed a return of under 10 mpg.

What sets the CSI's engine apart is a world first on BMW's part. We're used to banks of switches in Bavarian cabins, allowing drivers to change all manner of things, from gear ratios (on automatics) to damper settings (all models). The CSI features EML, which adjusts the engine mapping system and you are given the choice between 'sport' or 'comfort'. In the latter mode, the throttle (a fly-by-wire system, devoid of mechanical links) responds in a gentle manner, and promotes improved fuel economy. It also makes life smoother in stop-go urban traffic. Flick the switch to 'sport' and you are rewarded with vigorous urgency. Throttle response is instant, though be warned that the fuel gauge needle will dip almost as quickly as the revs rise. And if that doesn't satisfy your hunger for hi-tech, the rev limiter cuts in progressively earlier as you move up through the gears. In other words, there are more rpm available in first gear than there are in sixth if you wish to optimise your forward progress.

Subtle changes have also been wrought to the manifold and catalytic converter, to improve both outright performance and efficiency.

The upshot is that the 850 CSI will accelerate from 0-60 mph in under six seconds - about one second faster than the original - which is phenomenal for an ocean liner. It is also faster through the gears, all the way to its electronically governed, and artificial, 155 mph maximum.

BMW Motorsport's active, multi-link suspension (AHK) reacts according to your speed, and steers the rear wheels slightly countering some of the waywardness that characterised earlier 850s. This has been fine-tuned to work harmoniously with the direct Servotronic assisted steering and firm suspension.

Just in case your ambition exceeds this combination of speed and balance, BMW provides a hooligan deterrent in the form of ASC+T (Automatic Stability Control & Traction). Comprising a 25 per cent lockable diff and traction control, this is yet another device activated by a convenient cockpit switch.

This plethora of technology ought, on paper, to elevate the art of driving onto hitherto unconquered planes. It *should* feel great behind the wheel. Remember though, the advent

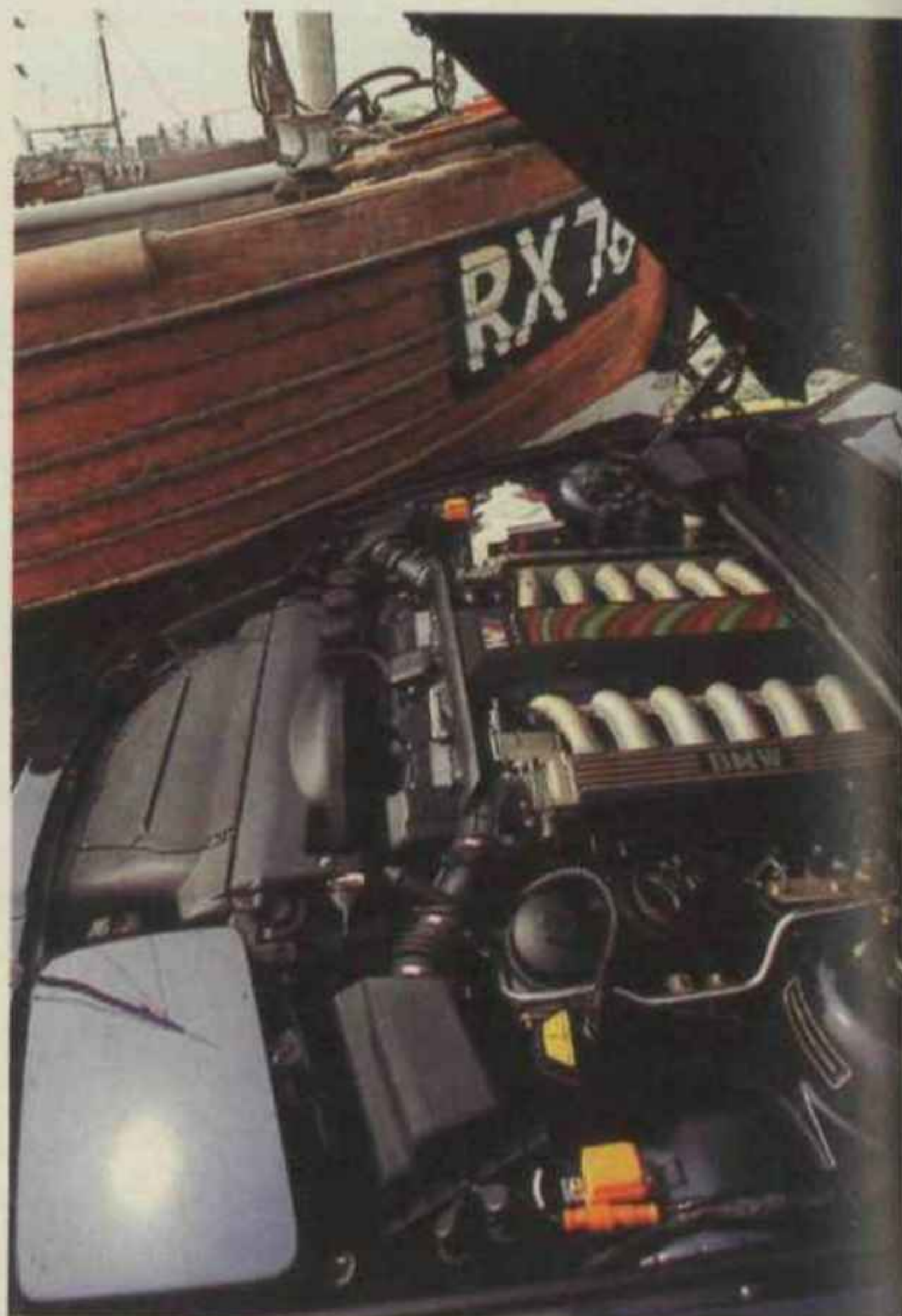




Everything you need, except enough space. An interior fashioned from buffalo hide will deprive your wallet of an extra £975 above standard price.



BMW has the knack of making its engine bays the 'hands off' variety. If anything goes wrong, you daren't touch it, though you may fill the windscreen washer bottle and polish the cam covers.



of traction control and active suspension sent many a Formula One fan reaching for the 'off' button on their TV set.

As in any car, it is imperative to be comfortable in the CSi to get the best out of your driving. This can take time, as nothing is manually adjustable. Even the steering column is electrically manoeuvred, and the motors are all painfully slow. A programmable memory is available once you've eventually set everything just so, and this does help.

The car wraps its driver in cool grey shades that started life as cattle and once you've adjusted everything to your liking, it really *is* comfortable. The seats are firm and supportive in all the right places, and the controls are fairly light (even the clutch, which is surprising in a car of this type).

The V12 thrum is subdued behind masses of sound-deadening materials, though not quite a match for Jaguar's silkiest efforts. On the move the CSi can be as docile as a dozing infant, though carelessness needs to be avoided around town, simply because of its size. Visibility is OK, but could present problems for the vertically challenged. The tip of the long, sloping bonnet is not only invisible, it also protrudes beyond the edge of the bumper. It is one place where fitment of BMW's optional sonic parking sensors, one of the greatest extravagances yet created by

man, might actually be justified.

Although the 850's extraordinary tractability means that you could drive around all day in one gear if the mood took you, it doesn't take many miles of country tarmac to realise that the gearbox is not the car's stong suit. The change from first to second is slow, and that from second to third can be obstructive. Its light, springy action deters from the car's sporting ambiance.

Although there are unquestionably faster cars, the CSi has sufficient heart to be considered a true performance car. It is particularly impressive accelerating from around 100 mph in fifth, for instance, when momentum takes over, and the penalty of excess weight matters less.

The flat torque curve enables the 850 to pull like Popeye on steroids. All the way from below 1000 rpm to the red line, it remains potent and smooth.

Such awesome flexibility would be spoilt if the chassis couldn't contain it, but it can. Switch off the ASC+T and it's easy to overcome the 850's tractive limits. In medium-to-fast bends it turns in neutrally and can thereafter be balanced in mild oversteer on the throttle without any need to saw frantically at the wheel, which retains a small degree of feel despite the Servotronic presence.

In tighter bends, more care is required, for the switch from inherent understeer to irretrievable oversteer may be sudden. With

ASC+T engaged, of course, the car always remains settled. It may not inspire the confidence of lighter, nimbler supercars, but there is no question that the combination of driver-friendly devices will keep those whose bank balance exceeds their intellect out of serious trouble.

You can feel the ASC+T pulsing as the 850 argues with the established principles of physics. At times with the device's continual on/off phases, progress round a bend is not as flowing as it could be, and you may find yourself making constant adjustments with the steering wheel.

Impressive though the CSi's conception and execution may be, such aids unquestionably detract from overall driving pleasure. It's just a little less involving, and thus not rewarding enough.

Having said all that, there is no electronic gadget on earth that will prevent a two-ton coupé from careering off the road if it is poorly driven. If it happens with the traction control switched on, the car will probably start and finish its accident in different time zones . . .

Good brakes are at least as important as the various aids on such a fast car, and BMW has complied by fitting the largest available discs in production. Quite simply, they're as powerful as their specification suggests they should be. There's no evidence of fade, and the ABS is unobtrusive, even on wet roads. You do, however, need to give the pedal a stout





**Airbag on steering wheel is compact. Instruments are not normal BMW style, but still clear. Switches for the 'clever bits' are on the centre console.**

push on its lengthy travel to haul down such bulk from high speeds.

Ultimately, the BMW 850 CSi provides perhaps the ultimate blend of safety, luxury and performance. It's still hard to justify the £77,000 price ticket though, particularly when you look at the vast expanse of plastic that comprises the dashboard (even if BMW long ago mastered the art of disguising plastic as a quality material).

If you're a family man, even your toddlers won't appreciate being compressed into the absurdly cramped rear seats, which, frankly, are superfluous. In any case, gadget-minded youngsters will prefer the battery of electronics at the front, including a computer that can tell you just about anything short of the best time to make a coffee stop.

Despite the computer's presence, the facia is a paragon of functional neatness, in the true BMW idiom. Instrumentation is crisp and clear, and glows a warm red at night. The same is true of the stereo system, efficient operation of which isn't immediately obvious. The air conditioning, conversely, is as simple to use as it is welcome. One ludicrous excess is the electronic rear blind. How many motors can a car take? That said, maybe it isn't such a bad idea, bearing in mind that manual operation would require a PhD in contortionism...

Two up, the 850 is soothing and comfortable. Add passengers into the equation and it'll be a strain, particularly if there's luggage

involved. There's barely space to stow an atlas, and the pointlessly small, elasticated door pockets will just about contain a tube of Smarties. Boot space, however, is reasonable, as well it should be in a car 188 inches long.

### Verdict

Prior to its launch, there was a long waiting list for the 850, but the car's purpose sailed over the heads of most motoring journalists. The CSi features most of the missing ingredients. It's faster, handles better and is, potentially, safer. In short, it's an impeccable long-distance tourer, as much at home off motorways as it is on them. In that respect, it is massively different to the original. It isn't as refined as an XJ-S, but the latter could never keep up with a well driven CSi.

It looks fantastic, and turns heads like a streaker would running through your local Sainsburys.

Still, the exorbitant price nags at you: can it *really* be worth £77,000? The test car was also adorned with a fistful of options, including buffalo hide upholstery (£975) and heated front seats (£260).

What BMW has created with the 850 CSi is a symbol of power, and a statement of supreme technical accomplishment.

It is by no means the misguided missile that was the fledgling 850i, but one can't help feeling that its creators aren't totally in touch with reality.

**R R B**

## BMW 850 CSi

### ENGINE

Location	longitudinally front-mounted
Cylinders	V12
Bore × stroke	86.0 × 80.0 mm
Capacity	5576 cc
Compression ratio	9.8:1
Valve gear	dohc, two valves per cylinder
Power	380 bhp/5300 rpm
Torque	406 lb ft/4000 rpm
Fuel	unleaded, 95 RON

### TRANSMISSION

Type	six-speed, rear-wheel drive
------	-----------------------------

### GEARBOX

Gear	ratio	mph/ 1000 rpm
First	4.25:1	n/a
Second	2.53:1	n/a
Third	1.68:1	n/a
Fourth	1.24:1	n/a
Fifth	1.00:1	n/a
Sixth	0.83:1	n/a

### SUSPENSION

Front	double-pivot spring struts, anti-roll bar
Rear	multi-dimensional suspension on five track control arms, anti-roll bar, active rear axle
Wheels	forged aluminium, 8J × 17/9J × 19
Tyres, f/r	235/45 ZR17 / 265/40 ZR17

### BRAKES

Front/Rear	ventilated discs, ABS
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### STEERING

Type	ball and nut, Servotronic assistance
Turning circle	10.6 metres

### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	2684 mm
Front/Rear track	1554/1562 mm
Overall length	4780 mm
Overall width	1855 mm
Overall height	1330 mm
Kerb weight	1865 kg
Fuel tank	19.8 gallons

### PERFORMANCE

0-62 mph	6.0s
Maximum speed	155 mph, electronically restricted

*Figures supplied by BMW GB*

### FUEL CONSUMPTION

Average for test	14.1 mpg
Government figures:	
Urban	14.3mpg
56 mph	33.2mpg
75 mph	27.7mpg

<b>LIST PRICE</b>	<b>£77,500</b>
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# Invisible touches



**M**ore of a muscle-tone than a face-lift, Alfa's revisions to its executive flyer are significant, but almost invisible. Added side protection which you can't see, new bumpers which you won't notice, different headlamps if you peer at them, and a revitalised V6 engine concealed behind that heart-shaped grille. You can't see that, either — but you can hear it. A strident, musical wail, electrifying and utterly Italian, announcing that one of the nicest engines around has just got even better.

That V6 has seen several guises — carbs or injection, 2.5- or three-litre — and all of them were delightful. Now it's changed from a two-cam 12-valve to a four-cam 24-valve layout, packing either 210 (on the 164 Super which replaces the Lusso) or 230 bhp of silky muscle from the same three-litre package. We drove the more powerful 152 mph Cloverleaf, and revelled in the fluid pulling power from low engine speeds, where the big displacement compensates for the usual poor gas flow in four-valve heads, coupled to the effortless climb to a heady 7800 rpm red-line. Torque peaks at 5000, but the 207lb ft is only a slight swelling in an impressively broad-chested curve. It's smooth and willing all the way, and it sounds terrific when working hard, hitting 60mph in 7.5 seconds. Sadly, the interior is generally so hushed that at normal speeds only pedestrians get the aural benefit. Bosch MI.7 engine management and coil-per-plug sparking mean no maintenance for 60,000 miles, and the well-spaced five-ratio 'box

now has synchro on reverse.

Alfa has tried strongly to differentiate the luxury Super from the sporting Cloverleaf in the new range. Larger, softer bumpers extend the Super by 11cm, and are now body-coloured making the elegant shape look cleaner; our top model retained the previous slimmer grey ones. New polyellipsoidal headlamps are fractionally slimmer, but more effective: the beam is even and well-defined, especially on dip. Larger door mirrors now flip inwards by push-button for close parking, and on the Super you can have an auto-dim interior mirror, too. Inside, the previous battery of fascia push-buttons has been replaced by a battery of push-keys; it looks grand, but you can't easily find the right one by feel. Wide-spaced main dials are partly obscured by the wheel, and there is little oddment stowage: a huge glove-box lid conceals only a small locker, almost entirely filled with an absurdly bulky owners' handbook.

But the ventilation is excellent, the Automatic Climate Control stuck rigidly to the set temperature as we swapped August London rain for blazing Scottish sunshine, and there is a power sun-roof as well. All-electric seats and two-way column adjustment allow a bewildering variety of seating positions — luckily there is also a two-person memory — but the optional Recaros are over-hard for the Cloverleaf's taut ride. Alfa's own seats have gained improved lumbar support, and would be my choice. On the Cloverleaf, electronic damper control lets you choose

Sport mode, which really is firm, or Auto, which decides between Comfort and Sport according to how hard you are pushing; I thought it did a good job and left it on all the time.

Tyre size goes up from 195 to 205/55 ZR on new 6½" 16in alloy rims, which makes the CL look a little meaner, but it is still afflicted with awful add-on skirts which are utterly out of sympathy with the quality image Alfa wants, and deserves, for the 164. A shame, as in other respects the Cloverleaf, boosted by an *eight-year* corrosion warranty, is an alluring alternative to respected executives such as BMW 5-series and Audi 100. The spec is very high, with ABS, remote anti-theft system, boot-mounted CD changer and sun-blinds on top of the all-electric frills, and the chassis, aided by revisions to cut torque-steer, has a poise and precision which will shame many rear-drive machines. But at £28,100 it is no longer the bargain it was; it's good value if character, chassis dynamics and engine bravura matter to you, but it's not cheap. Financially, this is leaving Rover, Saab and Audi territory and dipping a toe in Jaguar-land. If 210bhp is enough, or if you want an auto, go for the Super at £3000 less. If you want a snip, though, Alfa can offer that too: the base 164 Twin Spark, with its dohc four enlarged to give 146bhp, slips in at £16,850. Mix and match your own extras to outpoint the German rivals. What you won't get is the blood-stirring wail of perhaps the best engine not made in Modena. **G C**



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## Happy memories

**D**oes this number plate mean anything to you? RDU 93... The caller hadn't finished before I interrupted him. "That's my old Jaguar! Series III! Brown, manual transmission, 3000rpm at 100mph in top..."

My reaction when reader Tony Slayford 'phoned Standard House may temporarily have taken him aback, but RDU 934W is the sort of car that inspired great enthusiasm, and was in my charge from November 1982 until we replaced it early in 1986 with a BMW 528i (Jaguar had run out of manual cars by then).

It came to us via David Boole at the factory after I'd pestered him to let me know if a manual ex-press car ever came on to the market. Now Tony is putting it up for sale again and had just wanted to chat about it. I think we paid £8900 for it back then and it had a similar mileage figure on the clock. It had a reasonable pedigree, too. RDU 931W was the V12-powered Firechase used by Project Thrust in its successful Land Speed Record quest in the early '80s, and RDU 933W was Mike Baldwin's Daimler Double Six in Coronation Street! RDU 934W had also been *Autocar's* road test car, and shortly after I acquired it Mike Scarlett and I did a brief swap - I lent him the car and he handed over his test V12 - so that he could take some final photographs for the feature the magazine did on driving it from Land's End to John O'Groats in top gear. It was one of those officially observed runs and, if memory serves me correctly, the car performed perfectly.

That may have accounted in mid-1985 for the need for a new set of gearbox bearings (the car was already on its second transmission after an early failure as a factory test model) but apart from that, and a silly spate of three punctures in two weeks in the summer of '83, it was superbly reliable.

I always loved the Series III XJ6. I'd owned 3.8 MkII's since I was 20, then a 4.2 Series J, but the III was, and still is to my mind, one of

the few production cars you look at on which you wouldn't change a thing. The only other one I can currently think of as being in the same class is Aston Martin's new DB7. The lines were that perfect, and make the current range of Jags look like dowdy dowagers. The Series III corrected the few line faults of the Series IIs, but beneath the reskin were also serious improvements. The Series IIs had become flabby shadows of their former selves, but the Series IIIs had more power and markedly better quality. More than that, they were seminal models for Jaguar, for they brought back the company's pride and self-belief.

RDU 934W was a splendid advertisement for the marque. It fired up instantly throughout its time with us, and the Lucas-Bosch L-Jetronic fuel injected 4.2 was the best road-going version of the XK engine I've experienced. *Autocar* tested the car at a genuine 131mph, and from rest to 60mph it would match the 3.8 MkII's 8.6s time even though it weighed considerably more. It would indeed lope along at only 3000rpm at an indicated 100, which made it perfect for the long hauls down to Le Mans each year (where once it was 'stolen' by former racer Bob Evans who couldn't resist a quick run). One of the best trips I ever had was speeding back to Calais in company with a couple of Alpine Renaults, as my three passengers dozed peacefully. In good conditions it would return 18mpg or even over 20 if you were a good boy, while in town 14 was the norm. The twin tanks gave it a range around 300 miles, and balancing the handling with the fuel tank changeover switch was all part of the fun.

Indeed, the handling really was very forgiving, thanks in part to the long wheelbase, and though it was softly sprung the Series III was always courteous to its driver even in extremis. I took it round a track once and it was superb for a car weighing over 4000lbs, while on snowy roads it felt as stable as Thrust 2.

The gearbox evolved from the Rover 77mm unit, and though the clutch was pretty heavy and the lever movements notchy, it was so much better than the three-speed automatics then available from Browns Lane. That feature alone made me fall in love with the car. It had air-conditioning too, and one of those Philips radios that lets you flick from track to track on tape cassettes. A small luxury, but once you've had it and lost it, you really appreciate it.

I ran the car on Pirelli P6s, which had stiff enough sidewalls to sharpen the handling a mite, and the grip and feel was always excellent. People used to moan all the time about how light a Series III's excellent rack and pinion power-assisted steering was, but the car always faithfully relayed exactly what its front tyres were doing.

The only enduring problem I ever had with it concerned the boot. In those days I was silly enough to lend my cars to people, and my friend Alan Henry, at that time *Motoring News's* F1 correspondent and now fulfilling that role for *Carweek* and *The Guardian*, damaged the locking mechanism by slamming it. It was too late to explain that you didn't ever need to slam Jaguar boots or doors, and for months thereafter you could look in your rearview mirror and occasionally see the boot suddenly rise of its own accord...

The BMW was a totally different car, and one I enjoyed immensely in other ways. But I always had a soft spot for the Jaguar. I went to see it after Tony called, as he is planning to sell it. It's seen better days, because rust has eaten away at some panels and the engine is using oil. There are a lot more miles on the clock. But fundamentally it's the same car and it brought the old memories flooding back. It needs some care and attention, and Tony is desperately keen that it should go to a good home. Dammit, so am I. Sentimental attachments are strong. If you fancy a look, I'm sure he'd appreciate a call on 0799 513134 or 0371 831047. DJT

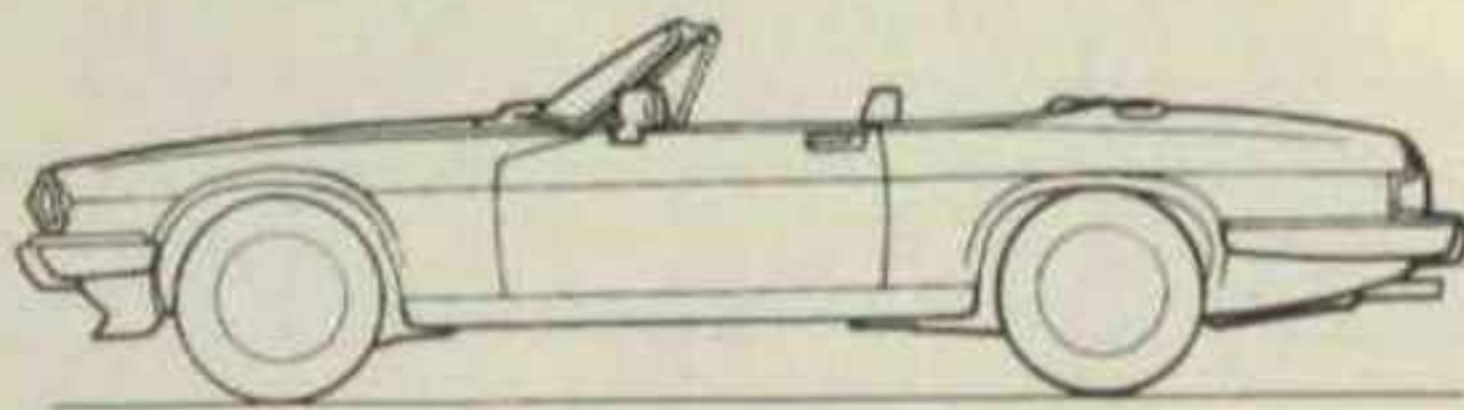


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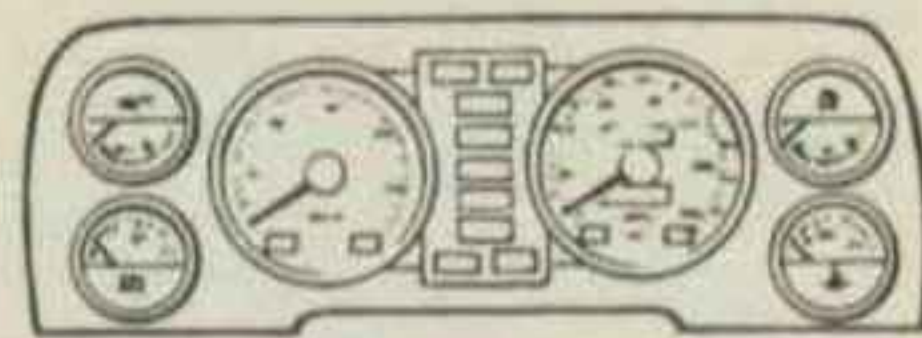
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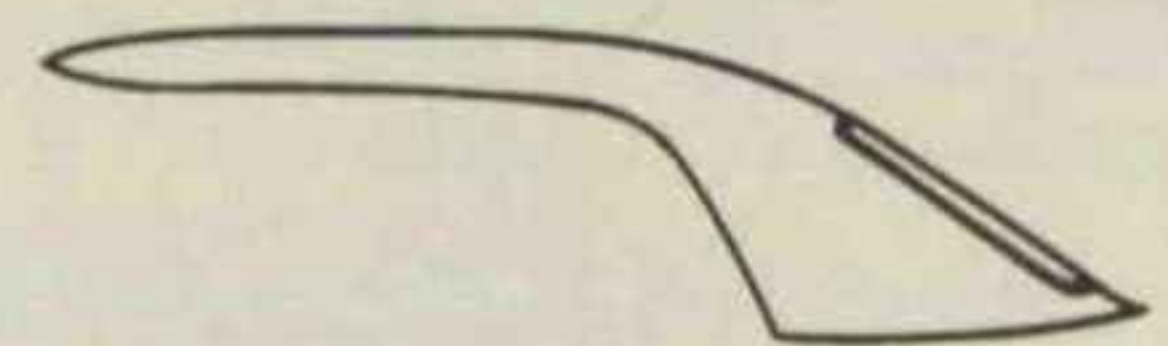
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**F**or its third running the MOTOR SPORT Trophy race for Historic F1 cars at the HSCC Championship Finals at Silverstone attracted an entry of superb quality, spanning 16 seasons from 1970.

Following two inclement qualifying sessions, the front row was shared by Geoff Farmer (Theodore N183, 64.72s) and Steve Pontin-Warltier, who matched Farmer's time with his Arrows A5. Behind sat John Fenning's Williams FW06 and Mike Freeman's Tyrrell 007.

Although the rain had stopped by the time the first attempt to start the race came around, the circuit was still treacherous off-line, and there were different interpretations on the subject of tyre choice. Start one was aborted when Fenning tangled with the front-row occupants, necessitating the red flag.

For attempt number two, only Farmer made the restart.

This time, Freeman's wet-shod Tyrrell set

the pace, until lap two – when the red flag came out again. Farmer, on slicks, was once more involved, spinning at Copse and being collected by Tony Trimmer's March 811 as he waited to rejoin.

The now much depleted field assembled for a third time, for a race reduced from 15 laps to 10.

Yet again, Freeman – now on slicks – led away, relentlessly pursued by the impressive Paul Smith, who had threaded his Ensign N177 through from his original mid-grid position. Smith was never more than a length or two in arrears, and he took the lead at Luffield on the penultimate lap. Freeman attempted to retaliate at Brooklands on the final tour, but his enthusiasm took him onto the wet part of the circuit, from where he gyrated onto the grass, which not only guaranteed Smith victory but also promoted Alain Filhol (Hesketh 308E) and Simon Hadfield (Lotus 72).

It vindicated Smith's late decision to

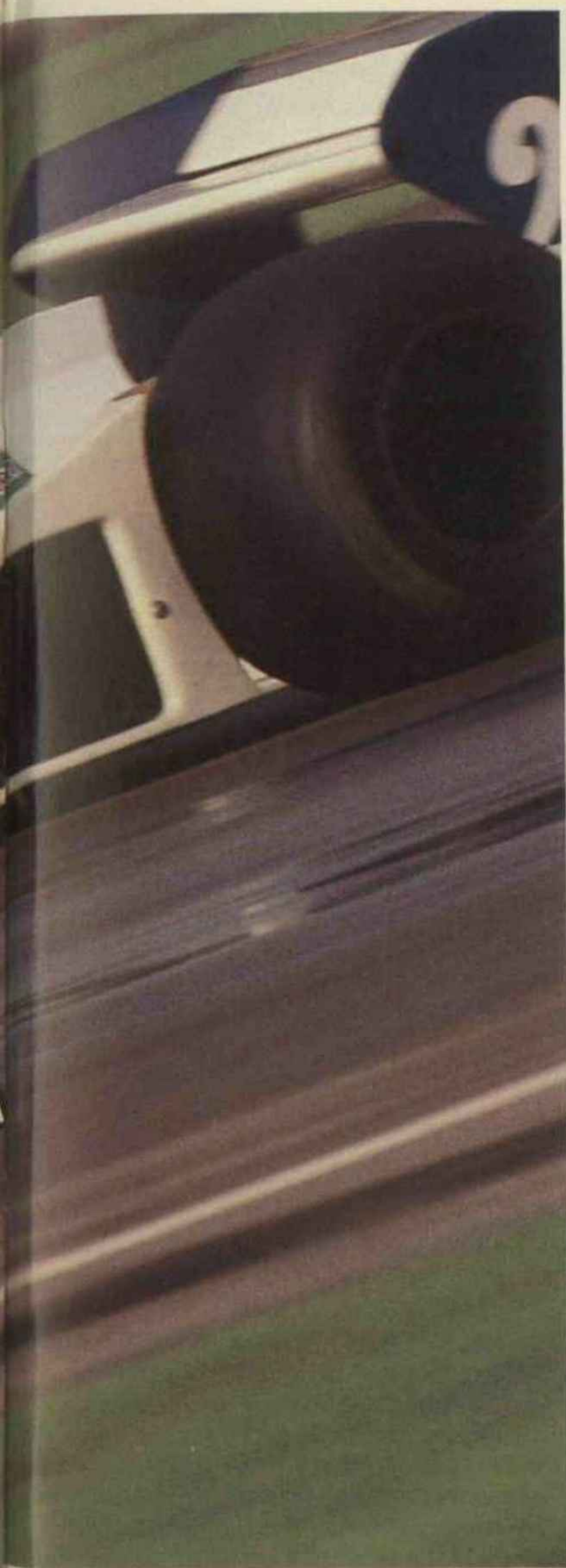
remain on wets, though he might have been challenged by Mike Littlewood, had the latter not gambled on slicks after the first warm-up lap, when he was forced to stop anyway to have a loose wheel tightened. As it transpired, Littlewood spun out of contention on lap two, though he recovered to finish sixth, behind Ian Giles (Tyrrell 012). Giles claimed fastest lap, in 58.27s.

Elsewhere on the programme, Rod Jolley was unchallenged in the Historic Car Championship. His ex-Brabham Cooper T51 had 30s in hand over Chris Drake's Lotus 16 and Adrian Hall's AC Ace (!), which was able to close up through the complex every lap, though it lacked the necessary grunt where it mattered – down the straights.

John Brown's lead in the Historic FF1600/Formula Junior race was short-lived; he spun his Merlyn, and handed the race to Mike Whatley (Crossle 20F). Allan McGregor's Cooper T59 was the first FJ car home.

Richard Parnell (Marcos) was a reasona-





**Mike Freeman and Paul Smith dispute the lead of the Motor Sport F1 Trophy; the Tyrrell driver spun off on the final lap, dropping to fourth.**



**Pat Britten's Aston Martin DB4 GT was voted most interesting car in the Motor Sport Concours d'Élégance.**

**Alain Filhol's Hesketh (left) inherited second in the F1 Trophy race.**



**Overall winner of the Concours d'Élégance was Nick Cartwright, with his immaculate Ferrari Dino.**

bly comfortable winner of the Improved Road Sports event, ahead of Bruce Orton's similar car. There was another Marcos 1-2 in the Classic Sports Car race, David Methley holding off Roy Eaton in the closest finish of the day. Simon Hadfield backed up his third place in the feature event by stroking his Lotus 72 to victory in the Historic Formula Racing Championship, ahead of Mike Whatley's Surtees TS8. Ronnie Farmer's main obstacles overcame themselves in the Standard Road Sports/QED Lotus 7 race. Farmer's familiar TVR Griffith triumphed after John Catt (TVR Tuscan) and Michael Steele (Lotus 7) had spun off, the former hitting the barriers at Luffield.

The meeting was rounded off by the Chairman's Challenge for pre '60 Sports Cars, David Pennell winning for the first time in his ex-Drake D-type after Jim Woodley's challenge culminated in a spin on the final lap.

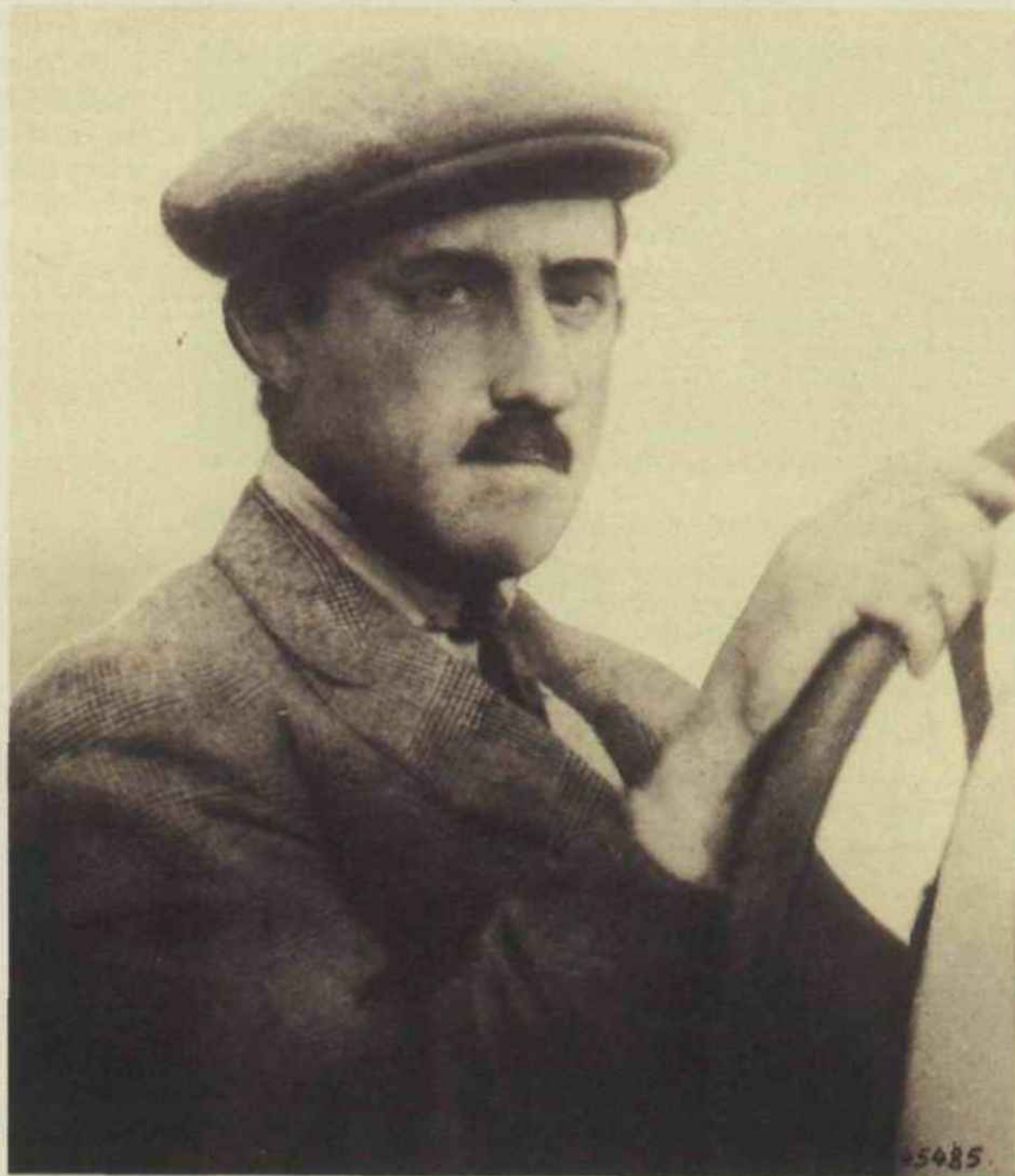
**ASDC**



**Hugo Spowers ran his 1948 Olson Special in the Historic Car event.**



# What killed



## Zborowski?

At one time I was reticent about publishing photographs of fatal motor racing accidents in my books or in *MOTOR SPORT*. It seemed rather distasteful and even disrespectful. However, since William Court's interestingly morbid *Grand Prix Requiem* (Patrick Stephens 1992, £20) has been published and a contemporary magazine has used pictures of the horrible crash at Brooklands when Joseph Paul (*not* Hall, ) lost control of his Delage and ran into the spectators, feelings seem to have changed.

So, with Chitty-Bang-Bang-like aero-engined motor-cars in the news again, perhaps it may not be considered unseemly to investigate what may have ended the career of Count Louis Zborowski in the Italian Grand Prix at Monza in September 1924.

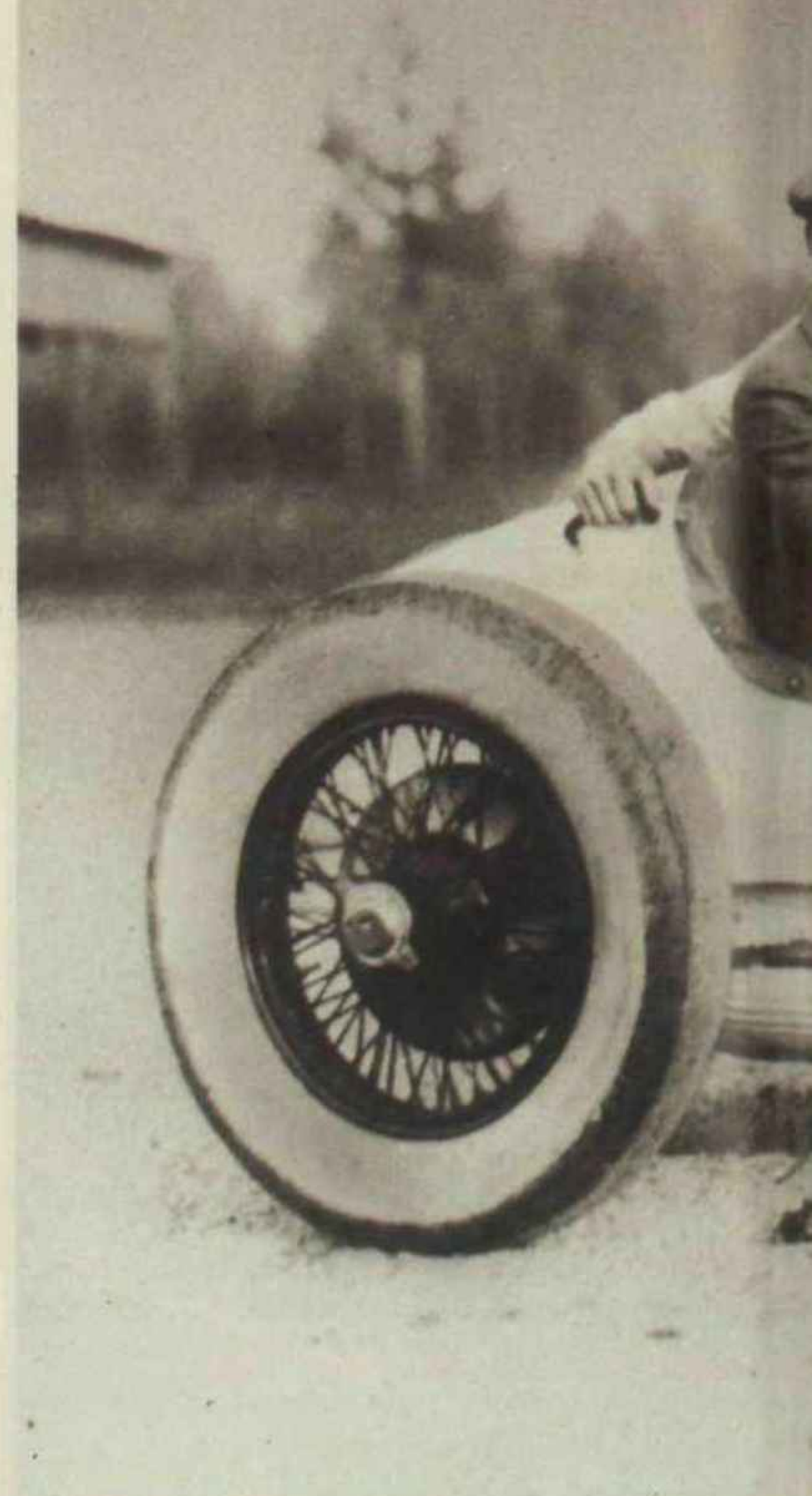
The mercurial Count had ambitions to drive in Grand Prix races as well as achieve wins at Brooklands with his outrageously big cars. To this end he had financed the struggling Aston Martin company run by enthusiast Lionel Martin, so that he could have suitable road racing cars built in the form of this marque's twin-cam machines, even though they were half-a-litre under the size of the current GP entries. Having by 1924 achieved quite a number of successes with these Aston-Martins and ventured to run his quite unsuitable two-litre straight-

eight Miller, with SCH Davis as his brave passenger, in the classic French Grand Prix at Lyon, Mercedes offered Zborowski a drive in one of its new works cars in the Italian GP at Monza.

Why Mercedes did so is subject to conjecture. It may have been because it was forming a fresh GP team and had a vacancy in a fourth car. It may have been because the Count, whose father had been killed in his new Mercedes Sixty at the 1903 La Turbie hillclimb, had from a young age been, as was his sport-loving parent, a staunch user of Mercedes cars. Or was it that Mercedes saw in the wealthy Count Zborowski a useful means of regaining favour after the war with a British public who knew of the skill, bravery and success of Zborowski at Brooklands and in other English speed events?

Whatever, one of the team of four Ferdinand Porsche-designed two-litre, straight-eight, Roots-supercharged Mercedes was allocated to Zborowski, then 29. The other drivers were veteran Christian Werner, Italian Targa Florio victor Count Giulio Masetti and Alfred Neubauer, who in 1926 decided he preferred running a racing team to driving and was, of course, to become one of the greatest managers of a racing department of all time, architect of the dominant Mercedes-Benz victories of the

Count Louis Zborowski of "Chitty-Bang-Bang" fame, left, who was killed in the 1924 Monza GP driving a straight-eight Mercedes. Below, the Count in the works Mercedes — note the cigarette. Inset, Zborowski's pit-stop during the race.

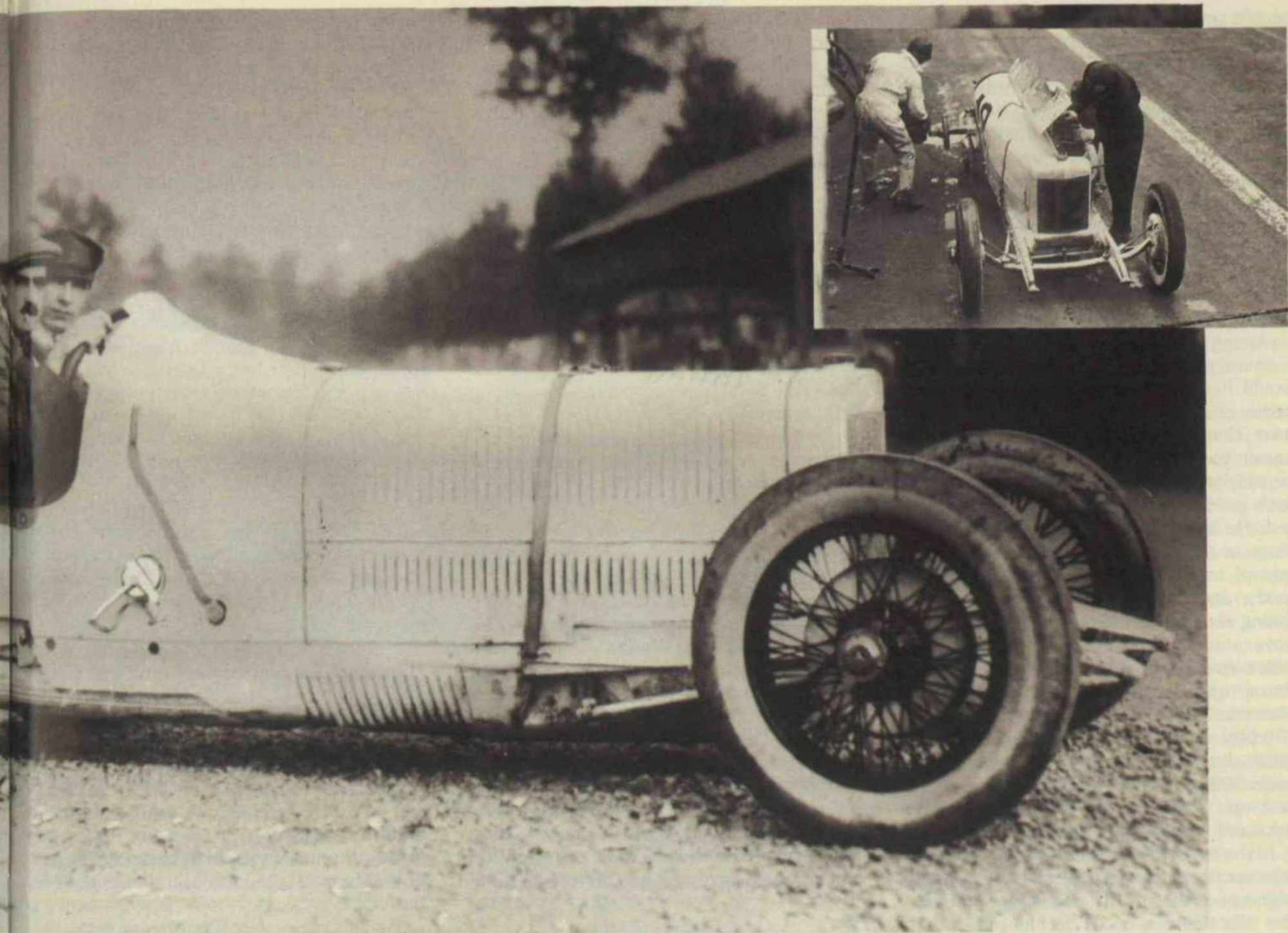


immediate pre-WW2 period and beyond. The heavyweight Otto Metz and new-boy Rudi Caracciola were there as reserves.

In September, the Mercedes racers traversed the Alps from Stuttgart, but after Werner had done one lap of the Monza Autodrome his car overheated, and they were all returned hastily to headquarters for a redesign.

This caused the 1924 Italian GP to be postponed, because Fiat had withdrawn its team of cars and, without Mercedes, this would have reduced the entry to the four-car P2 Alfa Romeo team and a few insignificant also-rans. So it was not until October 19 that the Italian GP got going. Zborowski had endured a disappointing 200 Mile Race with an 1100cc Salmson before he went out to Italy for his first Grand Prix drive in a works car. The race was over 497 miles of the combined track and road circuit. The Mercedes arrived on Continental tyres but, to raise the gear ratios, Pirellis were fitted before the race. On the opening lap Masetti was second to the leading Alfa Romeo, but soon dropped back to fourth place before retiring on lap 43 with a reported severed fuel pipe. Werner was going well until he had to stop on his 17th lap for fresh sparking plugs. Neubauer had the same trouble and handed his car to Metz, Caracciola being reluctant to fill this place. Metz then had





more plug trouble.

So what of Zborowski, from England, in his first works drive for Mercedes?

He had been delayed at the start because of a sticking clutch, necessitating a push. The eight-cylinder Mercedes engines had proved to be reluctant to fire up, to the extent that ether had to be fed from a small tank under the scuttle to the carburettors to induce them to start. Werner had also been delayed on the line when the flag fell at 10 am.

After Zborowski had started, he had to stop to change tyres but got away again, only to crash fatally on lap 44. News of this did not reach the Mercedes pits until Antonio Ascari was being flagged home as the winner, his Alfa Romeo having averaged 98.79 mph. Ascari's team-mates Wagner and Campari/Presenti were second and third, with Minoia fourth.

Zborowski's accident happened at the fast Lesmo curve. Early reports suggested that the Mercedes had run wide and collided with a tree (no Armco then, of course) and that the car had then skidded back across the road and struck another one head on. Len Martin, the Count's riding mechanic, was not too badly injured but Zborowski died soon afterwards. On hearing of the accident, Max Sailer had Werner and Metz flagged in.

Sammy Davis told how he heard of the death of his friend after "... the loud-speaker of my set was switched on and ... confirmed my worst fears."

This is interesting as well as sad, because it suggests that at this still experimental stage in wireless broadcasts, Davis must have had a pretty powerful set if he received the transmission direct from Italy. But maybe he heard the announcement on 2LO, which, if it was in Sunday evening action as early as 1924, could have had the news from Reuters and transmitted it, as Zborowski was so well known and liked in this country.

Perhaps a radio buff can tell me?

Lt-Col Clive Gallop, with whom I travelled to see Fred Ellis's restoration of a twin-cam Aston-Martin similar to that the Count raced when Gallop was Zborowski's engineer, told me, 23 years after the accident, that not only did the Monza Autodrome authorities hold a three-day inquiry into the crash, but that he was ordered to attend a similar investigation by Daimler Motoren Gesellschaft. Gallop had the dismal task of conveying the Count's body to his home at Higham, in Kent, the coffin being carried from Dover to the house on Zborowski's aged Mercedes truck, on which his racing cars had been transported to European circuits. In sympathy with the occasion, I have heard that it expired on the house

drive with a seized-up steering column, the bushes thereof being made of poor wartime material...

First accounts of the accident suggested that a seized cable on one of the Mercedes' front brakes had prevented the driver from releasing the brake after sliding on oil on the corner (as early disc brakes did when used on the sports/racing Jaguars). This theory was given some credence because Masetti's four-cylinder Mercedes, with similar brakes, had crashed three weeks earlier at San Sebastian for this very reason. In practice Neubauer had lost his Mercedes at the same Lesmo corner, causing the car to spin round on the wet road and hit a bank; Neubauer and his mechanic Hemmingway were uninjured. But the Mercedes investigation found nothing wrong with either car. Caracciola's biography, however, suggests that immediately after Zborowski's pit stop a tyre deflated, causing the crash. It is true that in a photograph of the wrecked car one front tyre is clearly flat, but this could have been caused by the impact. As the axle appears to have been torn from the chassis it is difficult to decide whether it was the near- or offside tyre that punctured.

Zborowski was known to have lit a cigarette during his stop. This may seem odd, especially as refuelling was required. But it should be remembered that many



people smoked in those days and the Count was often seen to be doing so. It may be that, as his multi-plate clutch was still inoperative and he knew how difficult the Mercedes' engine was to start, he contemplated a long stop. He threw away the fag after getting going again, in spite of the 'solid' clutch. By now the race must have looked hopeless to Zborowski. The four Alfa Romeos were well ahead, Ascari having a lead of 20 minutes. In the end the fifth-place Schmid was 10 laps in arrears of the winning P2. It had been a hard race, Campari needing his reserve driver and Metz replacing Neubauer.

Isn't it possible, even then, that Zborowski would have wanted to show that his Mercedes could do something, as other drivers have done in very recent races? He was known to be fearless, even impetuous, and he may well have been on the limit of his car's road-holding when the accident occurred. He may also have been tired at this stage of the race. Although Zborowski had lots of track racing experience, at Brooklands, Indianapolis and Sitges, his road racing experience, practice apart, could not have amounted to much more than 1000 miles. And most of that was in his 55 bhp Aston, whereas the Type 218 engine of the Mercedes in which he was killed developed 170 bhp at 7000 rpm (and would run up to 8000), but the power did not come in until some 5000. A three-speed gearbox rendered pick-up slow, which would not have appealed to the Count's temperament!

In the outcome, the cause of the accident was ascribed to oil at the slightly banked, high-speed Lesmo. It was suggested that the Alfa Romeos had a catch tank in their tails, which became overfilled after the lubrication systems had been replenished at the pits because at first the scavenge pumps could not cope and that they thus put oil on the course — and I have never seen a refutation of this from Alfa Romeo. It was also suggested that oil to supply the superchargers of any of blown cars, the Mercedes included, might pass into the exhaust systems and onto the track.

That apart, it would seem that the *real* cause of Zborowski's death was probably the poor handling of the eight-cylinder Mercedes. After Mercedes GB had one of these cars brought to England for Raymond Mays to drive in 1927, he said that during a test run on a private road he braked for a corner and locked over the steering wheel, and the car's tail spun round in a flash. In an uncontrollable broadside he went off the road. Mays described the roadholding as "appalling" — and the German mechanics who had accompanied the car agreed. Mays bravely raced it at Brooklands, lapping at 116.91 mph and claiming 130 down the Railway straight, which was about the top speed at Monza. He was second in his race to Eyston's 1½-litre Bugatti but found the Mercedes "all but unmanageable". It is said that Segrave told him, after watching the race, that he was "damn lucky to be alive", and advised him not to race it again.

Mays never did.

Lady Dorothy Paget then bought the car

from T&Ts for a large sum of money for Sir Henry Birkin to race, after big Hartford shock absorbers and a TNT steering damper had been fitted in a bid to tame it. However, Birkin abandoned the idea after using it in one Mountain-circuit race at Brooklands in 1931.

After that, this 1924 Mercedes languished at T&Ts until it was acquired by J A Peck, who had a garage in Staines, just before the war. (When Mays used it the starting trouble had not been cured. He said the mechanics kept the revs to 6000 from a cold start, as otherwise the engine would stall, and even when warm he found it would stop if the speed became too slow. At Brooklands Mays saw 7400 rpm in top gear, but getting to this speed "took entirely too long".) These Mercedes later gained a number of successes in hillclimbs and speed trials, and Caracciola won the 1926 German GP in one of them, on the smooth Avus track, running it as a stripped 'sports car', with Eugen Salzer squeezed in beside him. Its handling was now perhaps a little better, thanks to relocation of the fuel tank. Even so Rudi stalled at the start and had to be push-started. Team-mate Rosenberger, using ether as at Monza, started cleanly but later ran off the wet track into a timekeepers' box, killing three of the occupants. How wise Caracciola had been to refuse to drive at Monza two years earlier . . .

It does seem fairly conclusive that the poor handling was the cause of Zborowski's fatal accident, coupled with poor steering geometry, to which Peck drew our attention when I took Gallop to see his car in 1948,

saying he was surprised that Porsche and T&Ts failed to notice it. Karl Ludvigsen comments, in his great work on Mercedes and Benz racing cars, the standard reference work on the subject, that the angularity of the long drag-link encouraged steering kick-back with suspension movement, and the hard springing probably altered the castor action, which was designed into the axle, through which the springs passed, the hubs off-set to the rear of the kingpins.

But Mercedes GB would have nothing of this! It told the press that it had been concluded that "the accident was due totally to the car being oversteered (interesting that this now universal term was used so early) when leaving a curve." They said that Len Martin's confirming statement, as the riding mechanic, "was beyond any doubt". This incurred bitter criticism from Zborowski supporters here. I have tried to obtain a copy of Mercedes' report, but I have been unable to do so, though Mercedes-Benz UK's PR Sue Colby provided an eye-witness account from the Daimler-Benz museum (see panel).

It is an unhappy thought that had Zborowski abandoned the Grand Prix when told the night before of his Mercedes' clutch trouble, or had Len Martin not been able to push-start the car either at the beginning of the event or after the tyre stop, the Count would have returned the Lancia Lambda lent to him by the Monza authorities and lived to race again.

Alas, there is no place in motor racing for ifs and buts . . .

WB

## Eye-witness account of the accident



The wrecked Mercedes after the accident at Lesmo corner.

Only a few spectators witnessed the accident, which happened at lightning speed as Zborowski left the Lesmo bend and was about to go into the straight before the easier bend. The Mercedes suddenly snaked and then spun across the road, as if something had happened to the brakes. (The DBG investigation later refuted this — WB.) The car careered against two posts and ended up against a tree.

The Mercedes was facing in the opposite direction from which it had come and neither occupant was moving. First to reach it were two *carabinieri* and two young soldiers. Zborowski was lying a metre in front of the car, the mechanic Martini (Len Martin) beside and almost under it. The latter, with help, was able to walk away.

(Some gory details follow — WB.)

"Prior to examination of the wrecked car the cause of the crash can only be based on what witnesses said. They reported a spin the driver could not control and a seizure of the brakes, which had just been used. (See above — WB.)

"Some said that Zborowski had left the pits with his cigarette alight and had been seen to throw it away absent-mindedly, taking his right hand from the steering wheel and leaning from the car as the spin commenced. At the pit stop for fuel, fresh plugs and wheels, Zborowski helped Martin. He had refused a glass of water and a liqueur but asked for a cigarette."

— From the Daimler-Benz archives, Stuttgart.



# Red Flag



**A small step: the Brighton Run celebrates what was actually only a small improvement in motoring law.**

**T**here is a generally mistaken impression that the so-called Emancipation Run, which took place from London to Brighton, on November 14, 1896, was organised not only to try to show that the horseless-carriage had become a practical proposition, but to celebrate the rescinding of the notorious "Red Flag Act", which had seriously hampered the everyday utilisation of the new form of transport — the motor car.

In fact, although many historians still adhere to this theory and it will probably surface again this month, when the RAC/VCC Brighton Run takes place on November 7, it is untrue. The facts are that what this 1896 Run marked was the establishment of the coming into force of the

Locomotives on Highways Act (the term "locomotives" showed that Parliament was still thinking in terms of traction-engines and steam-rollers, not of cars). This new Act replaced the Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act of 1878, which had rescinded the previous proviso that a person carrying a red flag had to walk in front of any moving mechanically-propelled vehicles which ventured onto public roads.

Although this change in the laws relating to road vehicles was a small step towards rendering the motor-car a useable form of transport, it still imposed severe restrictions. For instance, the speed limit of such road vehicles was lifted, but only to 14 mph, and there was provision for local Government boards to reduce this to 12 mph, or in

some cases, it appears, to even less. This is illustrated in a report in a leading Kentish newspaper about what had happened to Mr William Arnold (later to make the Arnold Motor Carriages, one of which survives and has competed in the recent Brighton Runs) when he was driving the Benz which he had imported from Germany, the first car to be seen in Kent. On January 20, 1896, PC Heard of Paddock Wood was looking through a window of his cottage that faced on to the Maidstone Road, when he saw this horseless carriage go past at what he said was about eight mph, with two people riding on it. When it got to the bridge over the railway "a large quantity of steam and smoke issued from beneath it".

The conscientious Constable immediately went in pursuit — on his bicycle presumably — and half-an-hour later caught up with the Benz on the Maidstone Road, "where the carriage was going at a fast rate". He held up his hand and it stopped. He told Mr Arnold, "who was on the vehicle", that it was a case coming within the meaning of the Locomotive Act (surely that was for a Court to decide?) and when asked if his name was on the car Mr Arnold said it wasn't, but produced his Inland Revenue Licence permitting him to use a four-wheeled carriage. The Constable said three persons should have been in charge, one walking in front of the carriage — but no mention of the need for a red flag so the policeman apparently knew the Law. On the first charge Mr Arnold was fined 5/- (25p) and £2.11/- costs, on three other summonses over the affair 1/- (5p) and 9/- (45p) costs on each — interesting how the legal charges are much greater than the fines!

So this pioneer motor ride cost the unfortunate Benz owner over £4 when a sovereign was wealth indeed. We have troubles as car owners in 1993 but perhaps those who drive out of Hyde Park on November 7 should take heart and rejoice that they are unlikely to be charged under the Locomotive Acts of 1878 or 1896! **W B**

## V-C Miscellany

**T**he Brooklands Museum Trust has a new idea for raising finance; which revives the thought that the Government or British Heritage or someone should long ago have saved the World's first motor course from destruction. When H F Locke King built Brooklands at his own expense in 1906/7, he provided right from the start 75 covered bays in the Paddock for the shelter of racing cars and their owners. These historic shelters were destroyed in the 1950s and 1960s. Now the Museum Trust has the idea of erecting replicas of them, putting up a series of 25 or 30, and is looking for donations of £500 per bay to cover the expense of putting up, as a start, 20 of these simple structures, adjacent to the refurbished Press Office, for which the *Daily Mail* found the money.

Those who buy a bay would have their names inscribed above it, but the scheme

also provides for renting advertising space thereon. In addition, it would reserve the new bays on non-event days for use by members of the Museum Trust and Brooklands Club — no provision apparently for members of the Brooklands Society which pre-dates both organisations. Quite how this would be achieved with other club members and their cars using the Paddock area I cannot visualise. But good luck, I say. What did appeal to me was the photograph used to advertise this new project. It shows the two twin-cam 3-litre sports Sunbeams that ran in the 1927 Essex MC Six Hour Race at the Track, with their drivers, George Duller in No. 4, Segrave in the other car. Duller covered the greatest distance, 386 miles at 64.3 mph, but Segrave ran out of fuel, some said deliberately, from boredom. Both the Sunbeams had run with touring-type mudguards and running boards, instead of the more usual cycle-type front wings, and the same applied to Skelton's privately-entered twin-cam 3-litre Sunbeam in the same race in 1928. Perhaps it

was thought in 1927 that six hours on Brooklands would have shaken off the standard cycle-wings and maybe Skelton had one of the 1927 works cars for the next year's race, or had been similarly advised to use touring mudguards, which anyway he did. Whatever, I recall going to the 1928 race, aged 15, and being very worried because I thought from this that the Sunbeam might be a push-rod 20/60 and a poor match for the Bentleys.

I was reassured to find that Skelton was driving a twin-cam 3-litre, but in the end the 4½-litre Bentleys finished in the first three places, Birkin's averaging 72.27 mph. But Skelton in his touring-looking Sunbeam finished third in his class, behind an Alfa Romeo and an Austro-Daimler, having averaged 59.37 mph for the half-around of the clock.

**F**irst prizes in the Sunbeam MCC's 10th Welsh-Week Run went to a 1912 Ariel, a 1927 Brough Superior and a 1927 Morgan three wheeler. **W B**





## Morgan memories

Some time ago the proud owner of the Morgan Plus-4, KAB 303, reintroduced me to it, reminding me that I had run it as editorial transport in the early 1950s. KAB 303 has more recently changed hands again and its present owner has asked what I remember about it. Too many memories crowd back to put in a letter, so I thought I would write about it here on a sort of "now it can be told" basis. I have been asked to do a classic piece anyway — and I suppose Morgans are now classics — so here you have it . . .

Before this Plus-4 I had a 4/4, PPB 184. New cars were difficult to get after the war but the Morgan Motor Company could supply one with no delays. It seemed appropriate to have a sports car when working for MOTOR SPORT. So, armed with new Bluemels number plates — which in my excitement I left on the train to Malvern — and a cheque for £556, I arrived at the Morgan factory. I was staying at a local hotel overnight, ready to report the RAC Championship Trial the next day. It was freezing, so I asked if there was anti-freeze in the radiator of my brand-new motor car, to be told no, and they didn't have any! I just caught the Morgan agents down the road before they shut and at the kerbside the radiator was flushed out and refilled. Before driving from the works gates I had noticed that the mileometer read almost zero. "How nice," I remarked to the gateman, "that they zero the trip after road-testing is over." "No sir," he said, "it's you who are doing the testing. It's never been on the road; that 0.2 miles is the distance from the sheds to the gate . . ."

At first the 4/4 seemed a good idea. The push-rod Standard Ten engine in the 14½ cwt Moggy gave a cruising speed of 50 to 60 mph, with a maximum of about 70 mph, and it averaged 34½ mpg of petrol, which in 1950 cost 3/7½d a gallon (34p), but it pinked on the 7 to 1 c.r. I accepted draining the sump every 4000 miles and greasing the i f s sliders every 500 miles. The brakes were adjusted at 2000-mile intervals. So for 6200 miles I motored happily, with only minor maladies. Then, calamity! The constant-mesh third gear shed some teeth. Archers of Aldershot hadn't a spare gearbox and implied I wouldn't find one. Rumour, which must be quite wrong, suggested that Peter Morgan had been at the Moss works planning future Morgan transmissions, when he saw a pile of gearboxes in a corner. They had been suspected of having a machining error. But in those post-war years supplies were difficult to obtain and, so the story goes, he bought them, as a reserve of spares. It seems one of these gearboxes had gone into PPB 184 and I was stranded. The solution was for some more money to be offered and the stricken 4/4 to be towed to Malvern Link and exchanged for a new Plus-4, KAB 303.

I had no objection to that, for the Standard Vanguard 2088 cc engine would produce more poke, even if it was a universal power-unit, with tractor associations. So it proved. Not only was the Plus-4 an improvement on the 4/4 — 65/70 mph cruising, 80 in the 4.1 to 1 top gear, the Moss box now beyond reproach (the 3½-litre Jaguar also used one), but it had a

more spacious body, bigger tyres, better brakes, Lucas double-dip headlamps, and twin spot-lamps — the latter stolen while I was at Silverstone. In third gear (5.4 to 1) 60 mph was possible and a contemporary timed a road test Plus-4 at 86.7 mph in top. We still had Pool petrol in 1951, which I laced with Redex or Carburol. I got an average of 24½ mpg with the middle setting of the Solex carburettor but Jow Lowrey achieved 38.6 from one of these Morgans on a economy rally. The 6.7 to 1 c.r. caused very little pinking. Oil-thirst was about 1200 mpg of Castrol XL. No longer did one need to grease the i f s; every 500 miles, if you remembered, you pressed a foot-button and engine oil was fed to it, and onto the front tyres! (Oil pressure momentarily dropped from 50/75 lb/sq in to 25, as you attended to this chore).

The vintage aspect of the Morgan, which in my view makes it far more acceptable than modern imitations of vintage cars, and this holds good in 1993, was evident in the unfaired headlamps of the 1950 model, the retention of a separate gearbox, an 11-gallon slab-tank, the steering's 1¾-turns lock-to-lock, and a fold-flat windscreen. So we motored happily about in the Plus-4, sometimes with our youngest daughter in her carry-cot on the back seat — which seems to have ensured that by her teens she was, and remains, a fast and fearless driver who, if I may boast a little, included also, for a time, delayed-drop parachuting among her hobbies. People used to say to me "Of course, you presumably drive very slowly when you have the baby on board?" Fran-





David Harrison (left) takes WB for some laps of Silverstone. Below right; KAB 303 awaiting judging in the Motor Sport concours.

kly, I didn't, because I try to drive safely at my normal speeds. It was fun, but we had troubles, with the car I mean.

At 1350 miles the clutch wouldn't free and I had to go down to Malvern to have the engine removed for a stronger lever to be fitted, which took six hours. At 1750 miles the o/s steering damper broke, followed 250 miles later by the n/s one. The steering had little castor-action and to absorb wheel shimmy the pivots were encircled by bronze bushes. If a damper broke and you hit a pothole fierce wheel wobble was apt to set in, which could not be cured even by bracing the steering wheel with one's thighs. I lived with this until, driving along the Embankment from the office to Hampshire one evening, I saw the drain that would promote this shimmy, as one damper had broken, but could not stop, as I was in heavy traffic. I also noted five motorcycle cops outside Scotland Yard. As my front wheels began their antics these policemen simultaneously kick-started their machines and made a formation loop-turn to my side of the road, pulling me over. You sit low in a Morgan, and the leading cop glared down at me; he asked if I had made the thing myself, which was not calculated to please me! They let me go, warning me to get the steering repaired at the nearest garage.

Needless to say, I continued home. Morgan's solution was to issue a simple mod. The bronze dampering was connected to the side members by flat strips of steel and the shimmy intruded when the up and down flexing with suspension movements cracked these and they broke. To cure this

had meant dismantling the entire i f s. Now the factory came up with a section of strip steel which could be unbolted between bush and chassis if it broke, and a new piece inserted! Before I was issued with this wonderful mod, Archers had replaced the faulty original steel strips and a broken n/s rebound spring — at a cost of £2 and 1½ car-less days. On the whole, and for other reasons, the steering was not the Plus-4's best feature... The Irish rally driver C S Porter had this damper problem three times, before he replaced the strip steel with Balata flat belting.

Other troubles arose. The radiator, wracked by that shimmy, sprang a leak. The new n/s steering damper broke again, at 7970 miles, but the other one would just about control the wheel wobble if its bolts were kept tight and you avoided the worst of the pot-holes. Alpine Rally driver Dave Price experienced this infuriating trouble until a French garage cut him new strips of saw-steel. Steering kick-back was induced by the Morgan's weak scuttle and horrific free-play developed at the wheel-rim, five inches after a year's driving — no MoTs then, however... And the drop-arm almost detached itself from the steering box. After 15,645 miles both the tyres then used as

urge was acceptable from this two-litre 16½ cwt car, but some experts thought it should have had a higher top gear. I never got more than an 80 mph speedometer reading out of mine.

The next disaster was my fault. I was driving in the early morning to the 1951 London MC's Gloucester Trial in wintry conditions when I saw some girls waiting for a bus and thought they might like to see a demonstration of how drivers like Ascari and Fangio took corners. By now the Plus-4 was on rather bald tyres and as I accelerated hard it spun, was almost corrected, then slid across the road on black ice into a parked lorry. Not content, it then slid round the side of the truck on the rebound and attacked it again, immobilising its brake gear. My gloved left hand had flattened the Ruby A7-like ignition-key but I managed to switch off, spat out a broken tooth, and got out. The village bobby arrived and was commendably sympathetic — even to turning a blind eye when I presented him with an unsigned driving licence. The lorry driver, too, bore no malice. "Ice formed there, it was known then to be a dangerous corner." The policeman even accompanied me to the village bus stop, the Morgan being a write-off, in



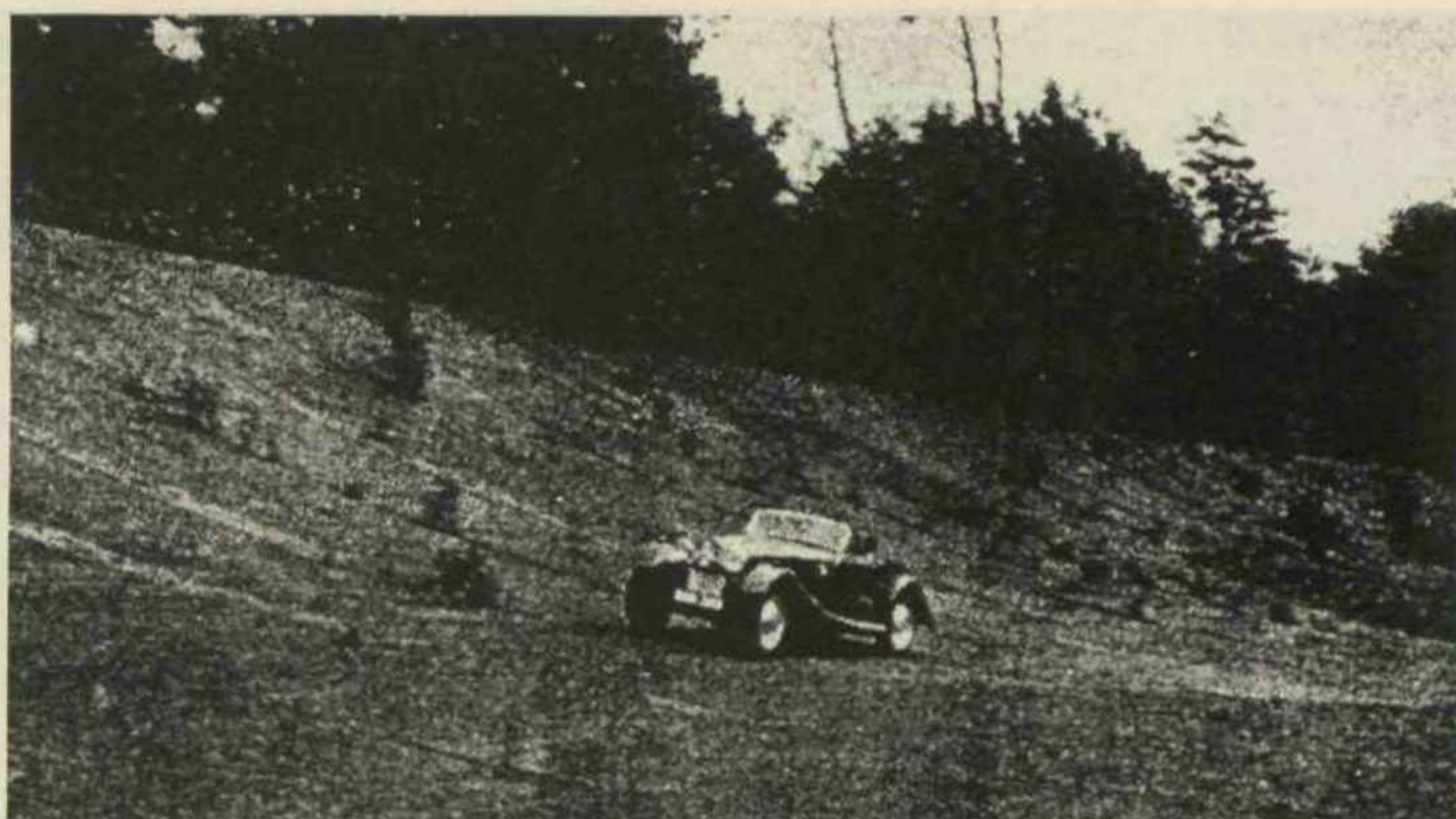
spares were bald, the other four not too badly worn.

I had noticed that 10.5 miles showed on the odometer when the car was new, so that was presumably the extent of a newly-introduced road test! I was told to decarbonise the engine after 5000 miles, which although a duffer with tools, I did myself. But at 9800 miles the head gasket blew. Oh, and the too-flexible rubber engine-mounts would slide the flexible exhaust piping adrift at awkward moments. One good aspect though was the reliability of the Champion L10 plugs. A few other items gave trouble but on the whole I enjoyed dashing about on MOTOR SPORT business in the Morgan, which was then the least expensive sports-car on the British market, until the MG TD undercut its £535 by less than a fiver. The

case I fainted before the Gloucester bus arrived! A train eventually got me to Reading, where I felt a bit exhausted, having not eaten all day. Told that the last bus for Fleet had gone, I just managed to scramble aboard a service bus, taking drivers and conductors there, and they very decently let me ride with them. A long walk, and I was home.

There is a sequel. We offered the insurance rebuild to Morgan, who said "yes please". Many weeks later I was told the Plus-4 was ready. Train to Malvern, to find them putting the engine back in. When the car was finally ready I was sorry to see that the smooth tyres had not been changed and even that bent ignition-key had been hammered flat and used again — is penny-pinching the term? However, my Morgan was back. I continued to use it until chang-





ing it for a black VW Beetle in 1954. Having to hire a Morris 8 when, 11,200 miles after the rebuild that followed my prang, the shaft between Vanguard engine and Moss gearbox sheared, was just too much and the Morgan had to go.

Looking back, I remember my Morgans with quite a degree of nostalgia. Had the Plus-4 not "folded up" readily when it hit that lorry head-on I might have suffered more than just a cracked fountain pen that was in my breast pocket and three weeks with a bruised chest, although the many clothes I was wearing for that winter drive probably also absorbed the impact. And after KAB 303 had been passed on I used to visit Peter Morgan at each London Show to congratulate him on refusing to "modernise" his splendidly individual sports cars. New engines, more power and a few desi-

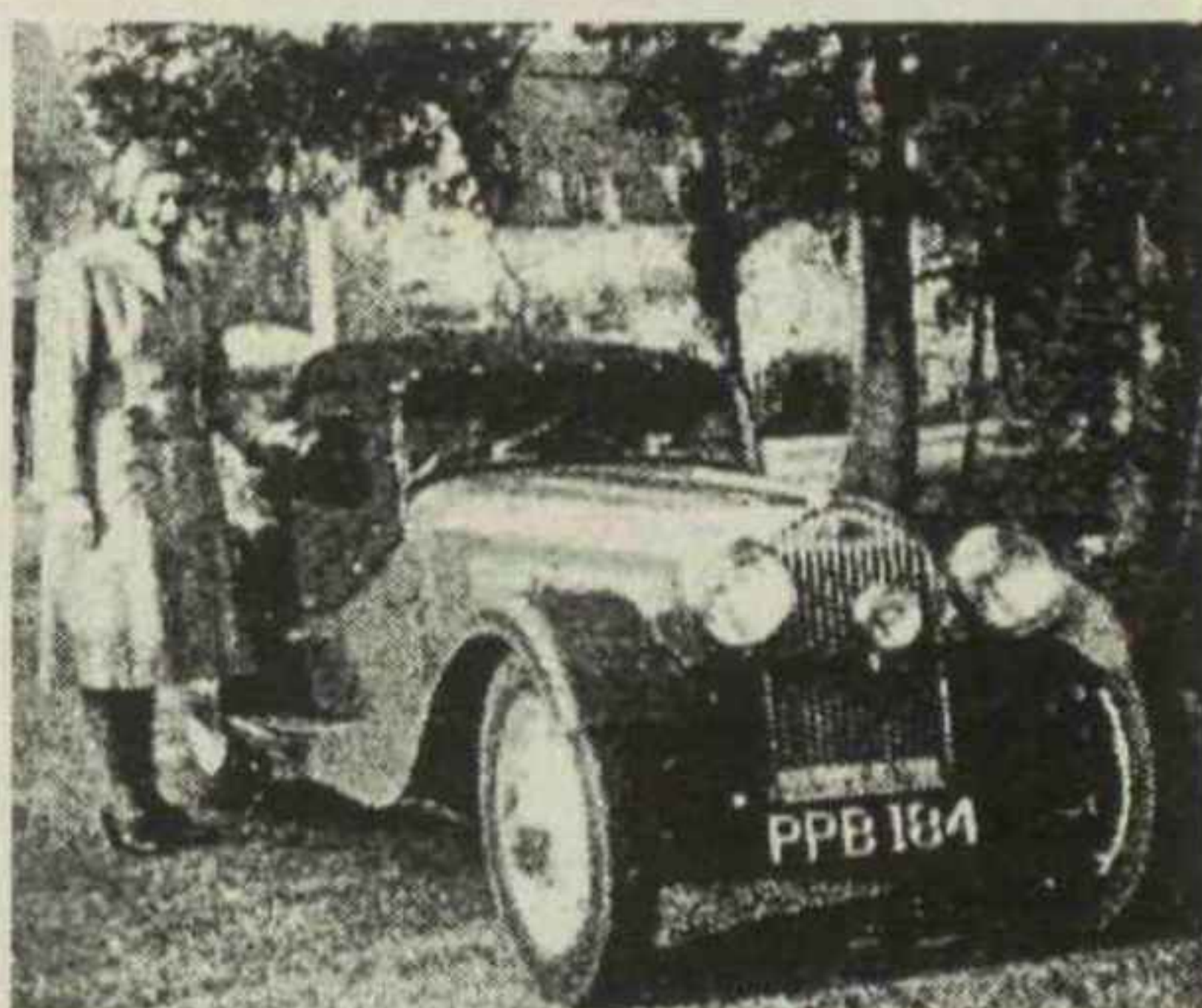
nable refinements along the years, but always, as it has to this day, the original concept stood firm. (I recall being slightly sorry to see faired-in headlamps, perhaps necessitated because Lucas was not keen on continuing to make "vintage" lamps, but adjustable seats were another matter — both my Moggys had fixed slab-seats, the cushion supported by a slender wood crossbar and while the driving position was excellent for me, I wondered how six-foot customers fared; the floorboards were unpainted planks, and on the 4/4 you had to unscrew those in the boot to expose the battery...)

It was also fun to look over the little factory at Malvern Link, more or less unchanged from the three-wheeler days and find Peter Morgan in his modest office, making cars for enthusiasts as his father

had done before him and enjoying driving his Ferrari when he was not driving his Morgans, and his nice country house — a far cry from those tycoons who battled to run vast corporations such as British Leyland, amid all the hassle, anxiety, and ulcer-production of that very different life-style.

Recently I was able to enjoy two laps of the Silverstone Club circuit in KAB 303 with David Harrison who had entered it for the MOTOR SPORT Concours d'Elegance at the HSCC Race Meeting there on September 25. In sparkling condition, the car is not quite as I remembered it, because a previous owner had endowed it with a Triumph TR competition engine, a new twill hood and stoneguards over the headlamps. But how nice to know that this once-ill-fated Morgan has survived and is still appreciated. WB

**KAB 303 (above) posing on the Brookland banking, before the Brooklands Society cleared war-time plant life. This picture caused WB to be accused of racing the car, and so causing some of his problems.**



**Left, the Morgan 4/4 which preceded WB's Plus-4.**

**KAB 303 (below) with the Motor Sport Jowett Jupiter at Silverstone for an MCC race meeting.**





# Marrakesh express



The winning Lotus Cortina of Ignacio Sunsdugui/Dave Nicholson checks into a time control.

Driving a David Sutton-prepared Lotus Cortina, Spaniard Ignacio Sunsdugui and Briton Dave Nicholson overcame gearbox problems to score a convincing win on the 6th Classic Marathon to Marrakesh. Irishman Frank Fennell, partnered by Colin Francis, took his Volvo 122S to second spot, Ron Gammons having crashed out on the final day.

The organisers took a few risks, not only shifting the event from summer to autumn but also revamping the route. Ignoring the Dolomites on this occasion, the cars were directed through the Pyrenees to Spain, thence to Morocco and the Atlas mountains. The lack of a major sponsor coincided with an absence of media 'personalities', but the overall outcome of all these changes was a

better event.

The 61 starters in the main event (there were another eight in the 'touring' category) set off for a night navigation section from the Palais de Versailles on September 25. By the time the field had reached San Sebastien that evening, the event had lost two of its favourite ladies. Anne Hall/Val Morley were stranded 50 km from the Spanish border when their MGA broke a halfshaft. Oddly enough, Don Dixon was also forced to retire with a broken gearbox in his Ford Falcon – the very same car Hall had driven on the '64 Monte!

The first challenging night section and eight regularities through Spain kept navigators on their toes and also proved to be a great leveller. The huge MkX Jaguar of John/Sharon Halfpenny shared the lead with the Fennell/

Francis Volvo at Tangier.

Once into Morocco, three terrific selectives provided some serious motoring – which left some wondering just what *might* have been. Marc Tipping/Tony Jolly were quickest on two of the three selectives, and second to Colin Anderson's E-type on the other. Tipping had been delayed for two hours on the first night, however, when a non-competing Frenchman stuck his car in a ditch.

The off-road desert test evened things out for the less powerful cars, the MkII Zodiac of Peter Marshall/John Vipond/Linda Brook posting fourth fastest time with Mike Cornwell's Zephyr eighth. Mark Dixon was similarly impressive in his Rover 2000.

With Gammons trying to catch Sunsdugui, the final test up the Tizzi was expected to be spectacular. Sadly, the former didn't reach it, colliding with a non-competing car en route. That left Fennell to take second, ahead of Anderson.

The 6th Classic Marathon was certainly one of the toughest yet. There is place for an event which makes true adventure possible and, relatively speaking, the Classic Marathon is accessible. In the past, there have been complaints that the pure grunt cars will always win. This year, the balance was redressed, and less potent cars were able to impress, if well driven.

The top three all won their class, as did fourth-placed Bart Rietbergen/Herman Schipper (Mini Cooper). Other class wins went to John Dresser/Ian Bond (Triumph TR3A), Chris Green/John Hampshire (MGA), Peter/Sue Noble (Bentley Continental S1) and, in the touring category, Macko Laquer/Rob Nolet (Bugatti T46). **I G M S**

## VSCC Avon sprint



When its Weston-super-Mare sprint had to be abandoned due to a lack of modern entries for the Burnham MC's section of the event, the VSCC toiled prodigiously to transfer the meeting to Avon Park, near Stratford, Warwickshire.

Wonderful – there was fine weather, no spectators, plenty of room and the whole thing was run expeditiously in two hours, using a quarter-mile drag strip rather than the half-kilometre of the original seaside venue.

Reporting a sprint devoid of drama and mechanical mayhem is every bit as impossible as covering DTs. Suffice it to say that ERAs, Lord Raglan's fast T51 and Dean's 4.7-litre T59 Bugattis, the quick Bentleys, MacMaster's accelerative 328 FN-BMW, the P3 Alfa Romeo and others were impressive to watch.

Yates was sampling Owen's effective Morris-JAP, the vee-twin engine of which is taken to 4500 rpm and will stand 500 more. Dr Gray's 1927 Aero-Family Morgan contrasted with Shotton's racing version, and much interest was displayed in the needle-match between Moore's 21-litre Metallurgique-Maybach with T-head engine and three-seater body, driven from Cambridge, and Roger Collings' 1907/16 19-litre Mercedes-Maybach, not yet taxed, which thus arrived in state, trailed behind a Vauxhall Cavalier. The latter has an epicyclic gearbox installed ahead of its normal 'box and a six-chain final drive. Collings clocked 18.33s, going through the speed trap at 80 mph (600 rpm), compared to Moore's 17.95s/79 mph. On handicap, the winner was J Williamson's 1908



Jonty Williamson's Itala (above left) won the Edwardian section on handicap, but B Moore (Metallurgique, above) took overall class honours.

12-litre Itala, with a rousing 18.85s.

Collings was taking his monster to use as a trials car in the VSCC's Welsh event the following weekend, a full report of which will follow next month. **W B**

**FTD:** B Spollon (ERA R8C), 12.61s (114 mph).  
**Class winners:** SJ Roberts (Frazer Nash), 16.75s (81) – vintage, idem; DS Green (Invicta), 16.74s (82) – B Collings (Bentley), 17.11s (82); RH Drewitt (Riley), 16.15s (84) – NA Yates (Morris-JAP), 18.66s (71); RJ Burrell (Bentley-Royce), 13.97s (104) – E Goldsmith (Bentley), 16.68s (83); M Dowley (MG), 15.74s (89) – C Temple (Amilcar), 18.23s (76); T. Watson (Riley), 16.35s (80) – GC Shotton (Morgan), 18.11s (81); Spollon – T Llewellyn (Bentley), 13.85s; B Moore (Metallurgique-Maybach), 17.95s (79).

## Edinburgh & Exeter Trials

The MCC ran its *Edinburgh* (not Exeter, as we suggested in last month's fixture guide) Trial on October 2, with an entry of 270 competitors. The club is now all set for the 66th Exeter Trial and Touring Assembly, which takes place on January 7/8. Entries, which closed on October 17, were limited to 300 cars and motorcycles. Another excellent event is anticipated, for both spectators and competitors. **W B**



# Party pieces



David Sewell's Bébé Peugeot 'Joujou' at the Black Bess party, accompanied by one of the Bugattis present.

Competition events apart, another fun aspect of the vintage-car movement is the private party to commemorate, even celebrate, some occasion in the career of a particular motor car. One would have to delve far back into automotive history to discover who first organised such an occasion. The Emancipation Run from London to Brighton, to mark the lifting of some of the more onerous restrictions which had been imposed on the newly developing horseless-carriages, perhaps? That, however, involved a pretty strenuous run in 1896 in fog and over poor roads. What I am thinking of is the static gathering of cars and those who enjoy them in a more private capacity. I have no idea when the first such meeting to see and appreciate an individual motor car occurred to its owner. There was a bit of a function after Louis Coatalen's 3-litre side-valve Coupe de *L'Auto* Sunbeams had finished 1-2-3 in that race in 1912 at Dieppe.

Nor was this gaiety confined to Sunbeams. The victorious 12/50 Alvis returned to the factory in Coventry on a horse-drawn dray so that the workers who had built it could greet the car with which C M Harvey had just won the 1923 200-mile race at Brooklands — as the 12/50 Register remembered and again celebrated at Prescott and elsewhere this year. Of other get-togethers for a much-appreciated car, I recall Anthony Heal having such a party for his 1919 racing straight-eight Ballot just after the war, and, much later, another for his well-used twin-cam 3-litre sports Sunbeam. Before that Sam Clutton gave the 1908 GP Itala a birthday treat at Silverstone. And so on...

Then there have been more recent firing-up parties for rebuilt vintage cars, Angus-Sanderson, Austin Twenty, Austin 7 Ulster, Mercedes-Maybach, and Newton-Ceirano, for example. A similar happy gathering took place at Ivan Dutton's place in the pictures-

que Oxfordshire village of Ixford on September 18, to mark the 80th anniversary of David Heimann's 1913 5-litre Bugatti "Black Bess" being delivered to the French airman Roland Garros.

The centre of attraction was "Black Bess" herself, looking as immaculate as I hope she did when Garros first stepped into her all those long years ago — so immaculate that no-one ventured to drive her. This rare Bugatti was backed up by a breathtaking display of smaller Bugattis in Ivan's pristine workshop, mostly GP models, and the road-equipped Type 59 which caused much interest at Prescott recently. There were other cars, too, including a £50 bog-standard Ford Escort (but with locked axle) to drive round a large field, and clay-pigeon shooting for those addicted to it. Lord Raglan's Type 51 Bugatti was on its trailer, because with keeper Mark Garfitt and others it was off afterwards to Hethel, where another party was being organised to underline the take-over of Lotus by the new Bugatti Company.

David Sewell, who has set himself up as a consultant on Bugatti information and history, was on his way to the VSCC Light Car Section Driving Tests on the morrow with the delectable ex-Kent Karslake Bébé Peugeot "Joujou".

As an afterthought, "Black Bess" was delivered to the aviator Garros in 1913 and in 1924 another pilot, F/O W M Plenderleith, who accompanied Squadron Leader MacLaren on an attempted round-the-world flight, bought a four-seater Brescia Bugatti with the pear-shaped radiator, from Auto Auctions in Westminster, SW1.

## Tyres

Silencers, shock-absorbers and tyres constitute expendable items on the most durable of cars. A big industry and

retail trade revolves around this, a thought which came to me when the notably dependable editorial Ford Sierra 4x4 EFi, while not needing a new silencer or shockers (it's going strong after 45,000 miles), was found at its last service to have all but illegal Pirelli P600s at the front. A patch on one was apparently due to faulty tracking. The rears were but 0.4 mm over the legal tread limit.

The solution was to pay another visit to Kwik-Fit, Hereford, where a new set of 'boots' was fitted with commendable speed (the spare, a Dunlop SP Sport, was barely used, and was left alone). The wheels were balanced and the steering retracked. The P600s had lasted 25,220 miles; whether or not they had been swapped around in that time I don't know.

For replacements, I was given the latest Michelin STL MXV Pilot tyres, and I'm quite happy to be riding again with the blessing of Mr Bibendum. Michelin says of these tyres that they are intended for the long-distance, high-speed driver (flattery, in my case) and that the MXV low-profile radial (tubeless) ensures "outstanding braking, precision handling and excellent grip, with rapid water dispersal to prevent aquaplaning".

Well, that was reassuring, which was just as well, remembering that each of these Pilots cost over £150. They have an 8 mm tread depth and are safe for 150 mph.

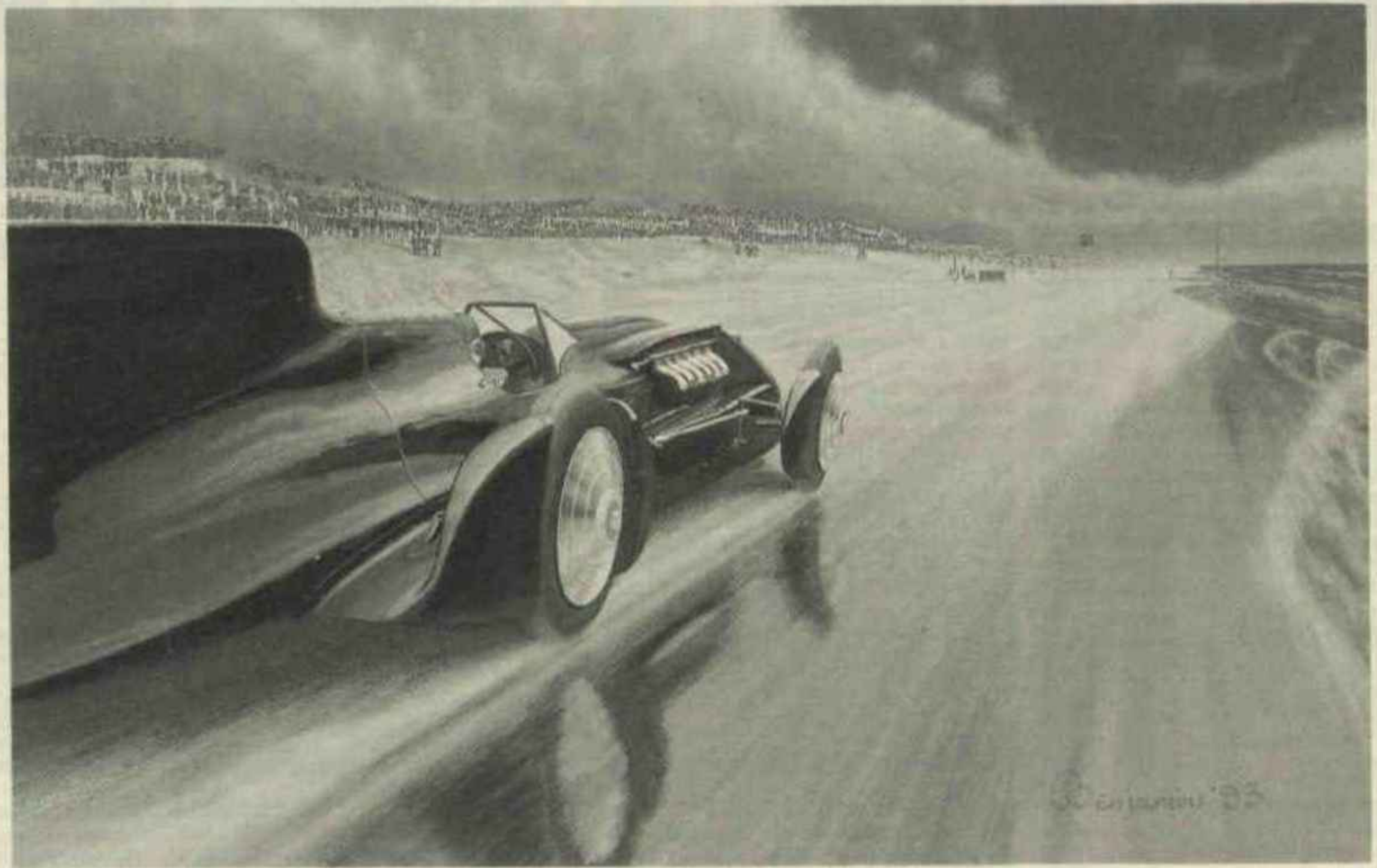
My first impression of these 195 x 60 V14 covers is that they feel softer than the Pirellis, causing a mild wandering sensation when the steering is in the straight-ahead position. Maybe they just require running in.

Never mind. New tyres are beautiful things, and give a driver the impression that he can approach any police roadside check with immunity (at least in that department). At one time, car owners were continually writing letters to motoring journals about their tyre experiences. You seldom see such comments now, so satisfactory, it seems, are today's products.

WB



# Benjamins on the Beach



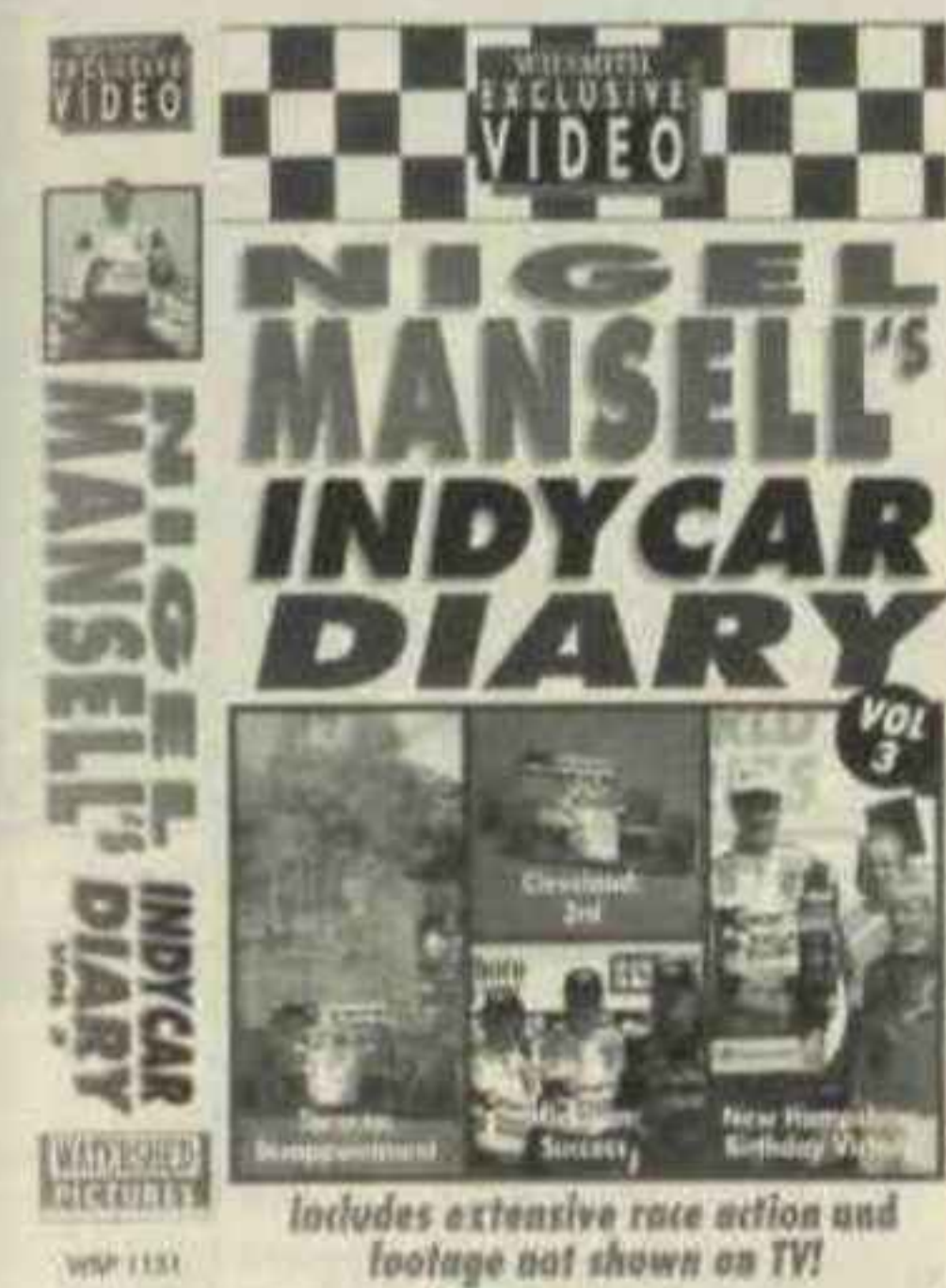
OUT IN time for Christmas, this is artist Arthur Benjamins' latest quality colour print themed around the Land Speed Record. Entitled 'One Hell of a Job', it depicts Sir Malcolm Campbell achieving 272.108mph in the Rolls-Royce-engined Bluebird at Daytona Beach on February 22 1933, despite vicious wheelspin. Campbell described it as the harshest ride he had ever experienced and said that it was one hell of a job to keep the car on course, hence the title.

The print run will be limited to 500, and the size is approximately 24in by 19. Unsigned copies are £10.95 plus £2.25 postage in the UK. European postage is £3.25, worldwide £7.50. Prints signed and numbered by Benjamins are available for £29.95, at the same postage rates.

Cheques should be made payable to Blue Bird Publications and sent to 3 Treebourne Road, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent TN16 3QW. Benjamins can be contacted on 0959 574414.

relating the tale of just one Molsheim car, the 1913 chain-drive machine known as Black Bess. Its history has been well recorded since it was brought to Britain by Louis Coatalen after WWI, and WB details the known facts back to its original purchase by French aviator Roland Garros. WB is especially qualified to report on it, as it was he who rediscovered the neglected car in the 1930s, and he has known many of its owners. But despite Black Bess's thorough chronicling, the origins of the five-litre 'Garros' cars remains obscure, to the point where the purpose, number built and even the type-number is doubtful.

Colour and mono photographs, drawings and facsimiles of letters from Col Giles, Bugatti and Garros illustrate the text, and David Sewell contributes a list of the seven known 'Type 18' cars, of which two (plus one resurrection) survive, though Boddy speculates on several more having been built. Thorough, but expensive at £29.95 plus £3.50 P&P from Aries Press, 2 Charles St, London W1X 7HA. G C



Nigel Mansell's IndyCar Diary. Columbia Tristar/W H Smith, £10.99.

These four videos are based on the late-night ITV *Nigel Mansell's IndyCar* programmes, which in the beginning at least had a tendency to concentrate hysterically on "our Nige"; but the tapes include much other material, giving a better overview. Race photography is good, the pits-to-car radio conversations can be interesting, when they are comprehensible, and Mansell talks generously to the camera, including interviewing teammate Andretti. But be ready to Fast Forward through seven or eight replays of his Phoenix shunt, and a long look at his X-rays. It takes four 90-minute tapes to cover the season, so it will cost you £44 to get the whole story, only from W H Smith. The 500 gets a whole tape to itself which includes some nice historic stuff including the Peugeot win in 1914 and some pre-war in-car footage.

Good though the race action is, Mansell fans will welcome the extras — special constable Mansell's day out with the Clearwater police force (Vol 3), his long-suffering autograph sessions in endless K-Mart supermarkets, and most revealingly in Vol 1 an interlude at Surfer's Paradise where he swims with dolphins. He emerges babbling with an excitement we never see after a race and declares that it was far better than winning a Grand Prix. Hmmm... G C

**Black Bess – The Story of an Edwardian Bugatti, by William Boddy. Aries Press, £29.95.**

This 96-page monograph extends the Bugatti canon by



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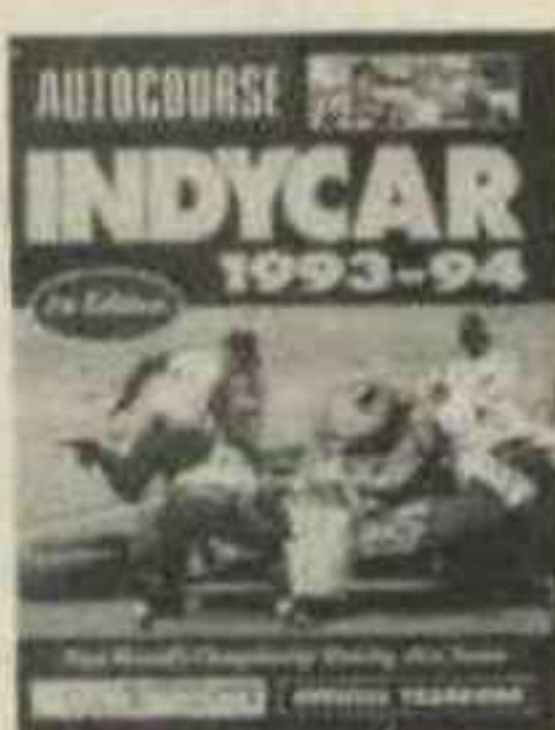
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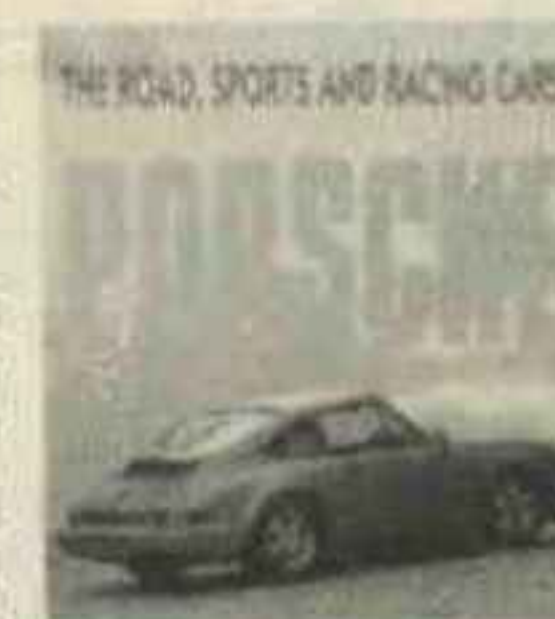
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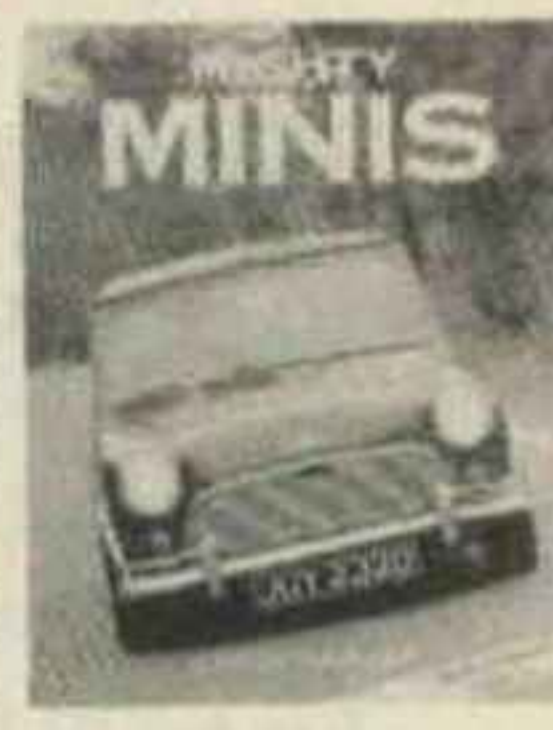
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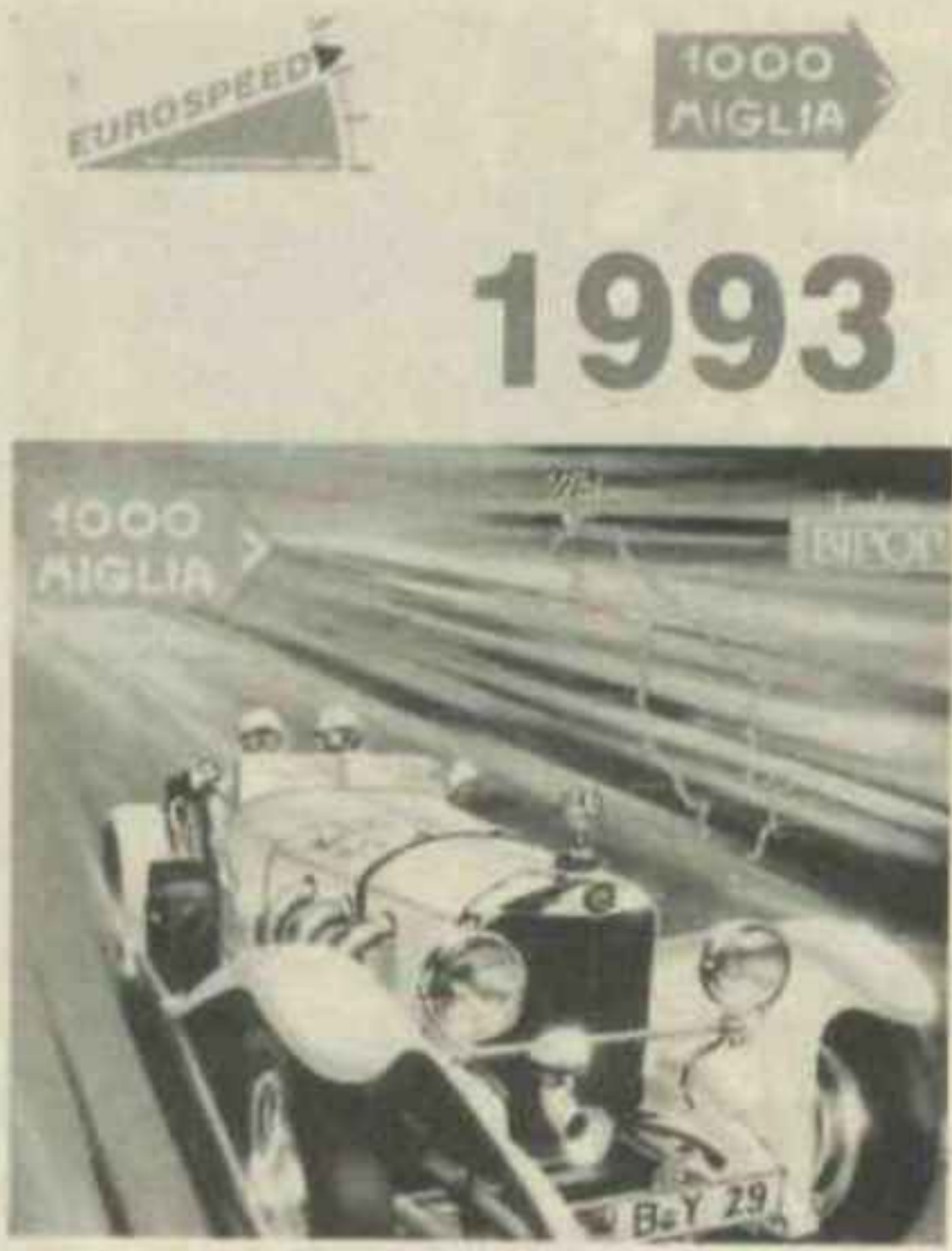
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**Mille Miglia 1993, Porter Productions, £14.99.**

There's not much you can do to make one year's MM retro-run look different from another, nor is there any competitive element to add drama. This is a German production (for TV, surprisingly, given the variable camera-work) with an English commentary added; it tends to follow the Mercedes entries, and the interviews are with German crews, translated in the third-person by the same commentator. The result is a bit flat, though the cars and the scenery are as beautiful as ever. **G C**

**Standard & Standard-Triumph, by Brian Long. Veloce Publishing, £19.99.**

The history of the Standard Motor Co was well provided for by JR Davy 26 years ago (for 15/-, or 75p) but there is room for this large format refresher.

I liked this new coverage, with its good pictures (no colour, for a change), a chapter on the Triumph connection, others on specialist coachbuilders, Standard commercial vehicles and on Jensen, Avon and home-built specials using Standard parts. Even Ferguson tractor variations are explained. Good stuff!

Clubs are listed but the Standard Register, formed in 1959 by Davy, isn't mentioned. **W B**

**Vintage Style — The Story of Cross & Ellis, by Gillian Bardsley, £9.95.**

It is rare to have a book about a particular coachbuilder, but this is what Gillian Bardsley has produced. If the

text does not dig deep, it does include many interviews with C & E workers, about how these bodies were made. This will interest Alvis folk, and almost all the cars depicted in the large illustrations are of this make. A picture of a racing Alvis is wrongly captioned as the 1923 200 Mile Race winner, whereas it is one of the 1924 cars, but apparently a 12/50 sales-leaflet contained the same error.

Body drawings, factory interior shots, and lists of materials are included and this soft cover, A4-size monograph contains worthwhile history snippets. From it we learn that as the business grew Mr Cross and Mr Ellis changed their Triumph sidecar outfits for a bullnose Morris and then Alvis cars. It is available for £9.95 post free, from AG Bruce, 1 Arlington Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwicks, CV32 5UA. **W B**

**Rover P6, by James Taylor. MRP, £19.95.**

Anyone who wants full

information on the Rover P6 models from 1963 to 1977, including the 2000, 2200 and 3500s, will get it in this thoroughly comprehensive and well-illustrated work.

This follow-up to the same author's *The Classic Rovers — 1934 to 1977*, also by MRP, is both welcome and, for those who have used these fine cars when they were far more representative of British engineering than is now the case, nostalgic. **W B**

● Some good news is that MRP has published two more of its essentially useful *Collector's Guide* series (aside from the point that one hopes there is more than one collector to purchase them!) of reference books, dealing with Lotus cars. Namely, Volume 1, about the Elite, Eclat, Excel and Elan, Volume 2 on the Esprit, Etna- and V8-engined cars. The main title is *Lotus Since the 70s*. Each is by Graham Robson and costs £13.99. In short, something that Lotus aficionados should relish, for this series is packed with information. **W B**

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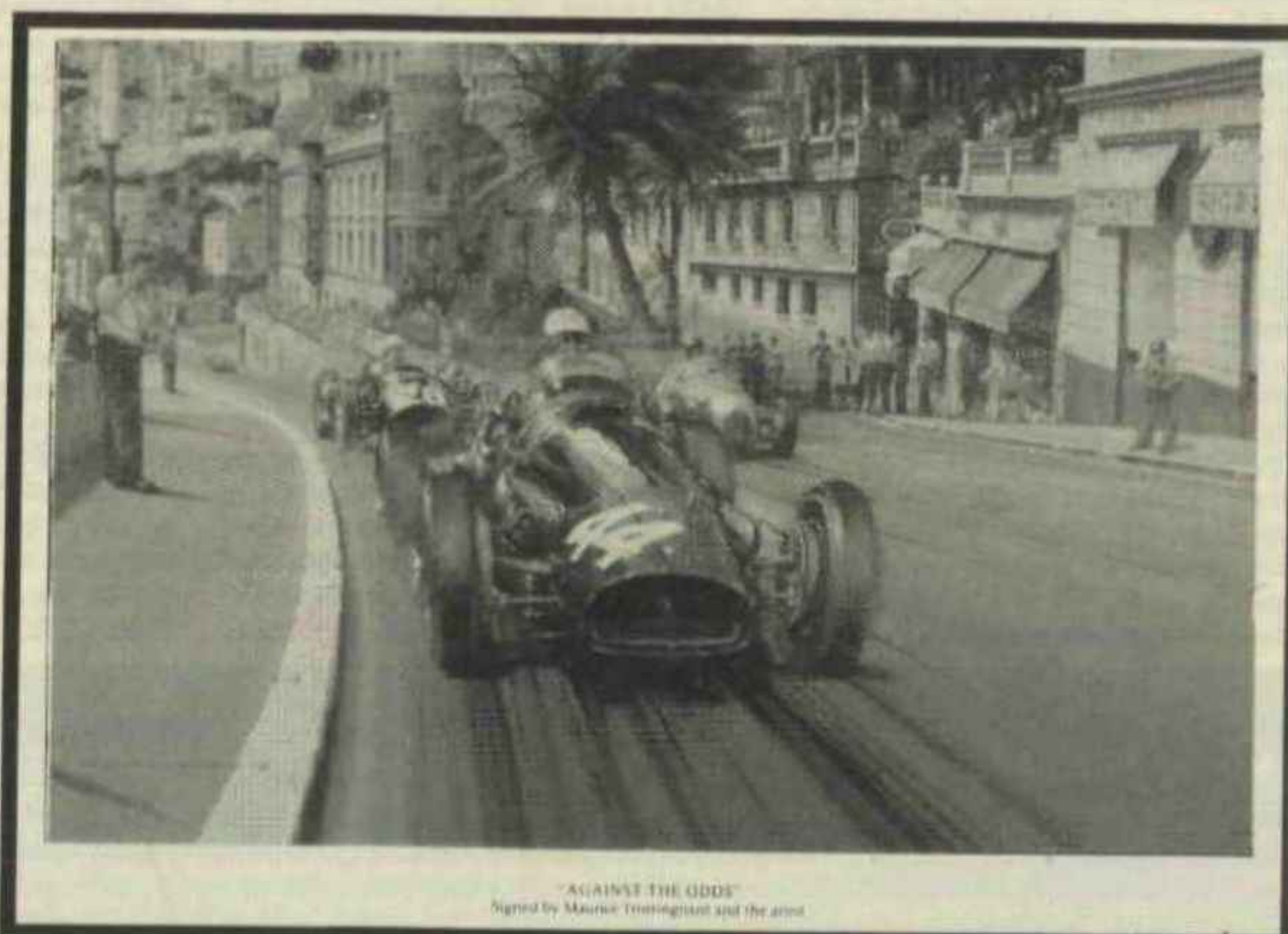
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**Mini retro**

Sir,  
I have just enjoyed this month's MOTOR SPORT as usual, in particular the pieces on Jabby Crombac and François Cevert.

As a Jim Clark devotee I was extremely interested in Jabby's comments and in that photograph of Jimmy at Monza. Although M Crombac is more interested in the technical side of things, a lot of us are more interested in the human element - particularly where Jim Clark is concerned.

I have been a follower of the sport for nearly 30 years (my first race was at Crystal Palace in 1964) and a Jim Clark fan since the 1965 Race of Champions, I never got to meet the man and lament for that. Although I still love motor racing, a large part of my enthusiasm disappeared that bleak day in April 1968.

Continuing further, I have just caught the news that Alain Prost is retiring at the end of the season.

Honestly, Frank, what do you do?

First it was Jones, then Reutemann, Mansell and now Prost. I suppose this means Senna will retire as champion at the end of 1994?

Incidentally, Ayrton may possess the skill of a great but he will never ever be one for his blatant disregard for common sense. I mean, could you see Ascari, Rangio, Clark, or Stewart carving people up as Senna does?

Of course not.

**Chris Brooke,  
London SE20.**

**Amazing grace**

Sir,  
Sad though I will be that Alain Prost isn't racing in 1994, isn't it nice to see one of the sport's greats bowing out gracefully while he's still at the peak of his powers?

All too often, in my opinion, drivers continue in Formula One long after they have passed their sell-by date. Can't blame them, I suppose, if teams keep selecting them in preference to hungry Formula 3000 graduates, but Prost's

decision leaves me with two fervent hopes. Firstly, that he has a happy and fruitful retirement; secondly, that other members of F1's senior citizens' club will see the sense of the world champion's actions, and step aside to make way for some much-needed new blood.

I very much look forward to seeing some exciting new names in F1 next season.

**Paul Barron,  
Moston,  
Manchester.**

**French lesson**

Sir,  
Alain Prost's decision to retire from Formula One at the top is just another indication that he is, and always has been, a class act.

**Tom Pascoe,  
Stourbridge.**

**Horseplay**

Sir,  
Why do some car manufacturers still quote the power of

their engines in the archaic German units of Pferdestärke (PS), which not one person in a thousand understands?

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**JF Holford,  
Farnham,  
Surrey.**

**Sennaphobe**

Sir,  
I keep reading that Frank Williams isn't the only man who wants Ayrton Senna in one of his cars next year, but that the governing body thinks such a thing is good for the sport.

Surely this contradicts their stated aim of tightening up the competition?

Ayrton Senna in a Williams? The words '1994', 'world' and 'champion' spring readily to mind, and we haven't finished 1993 yet . . .

**Chris Forbes,  
Aylesbury,  
Bucks.**

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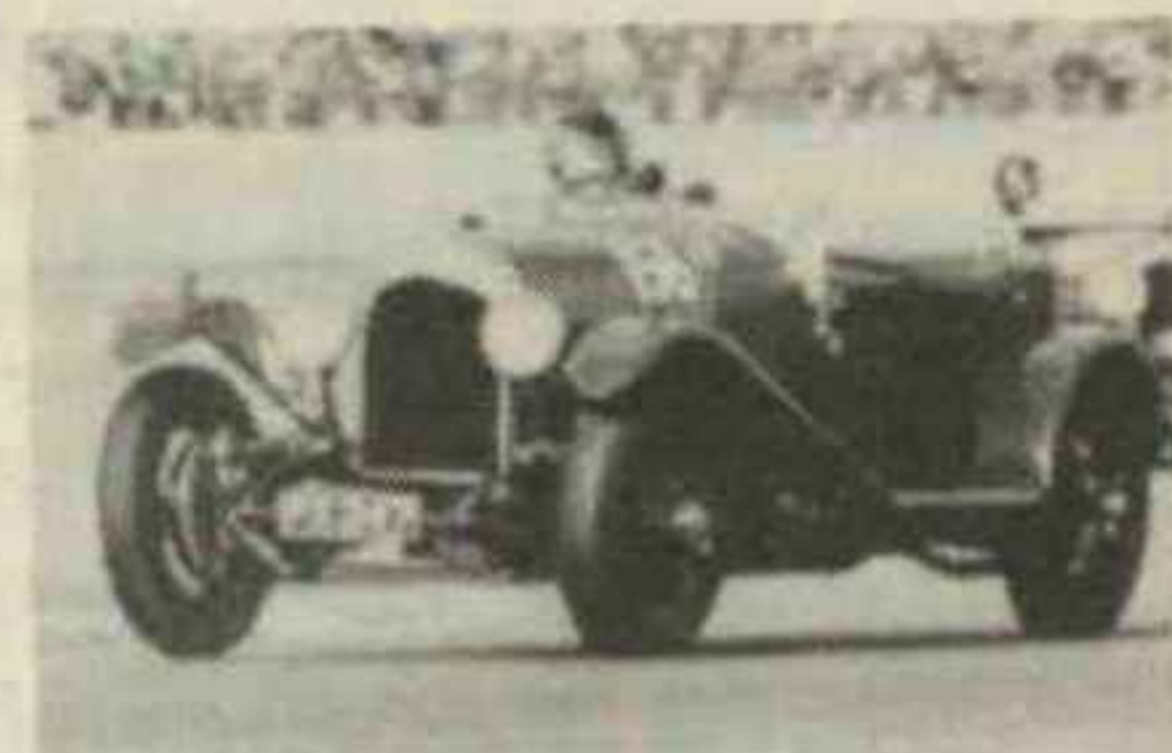
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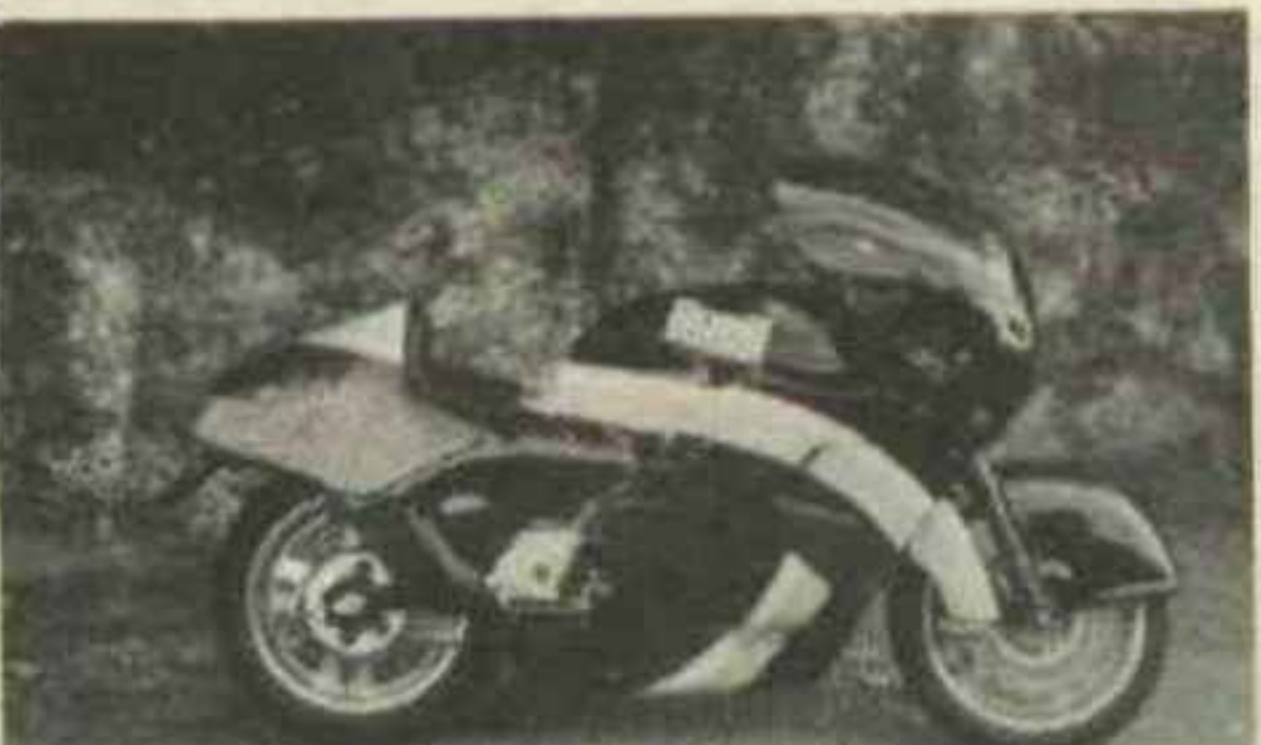
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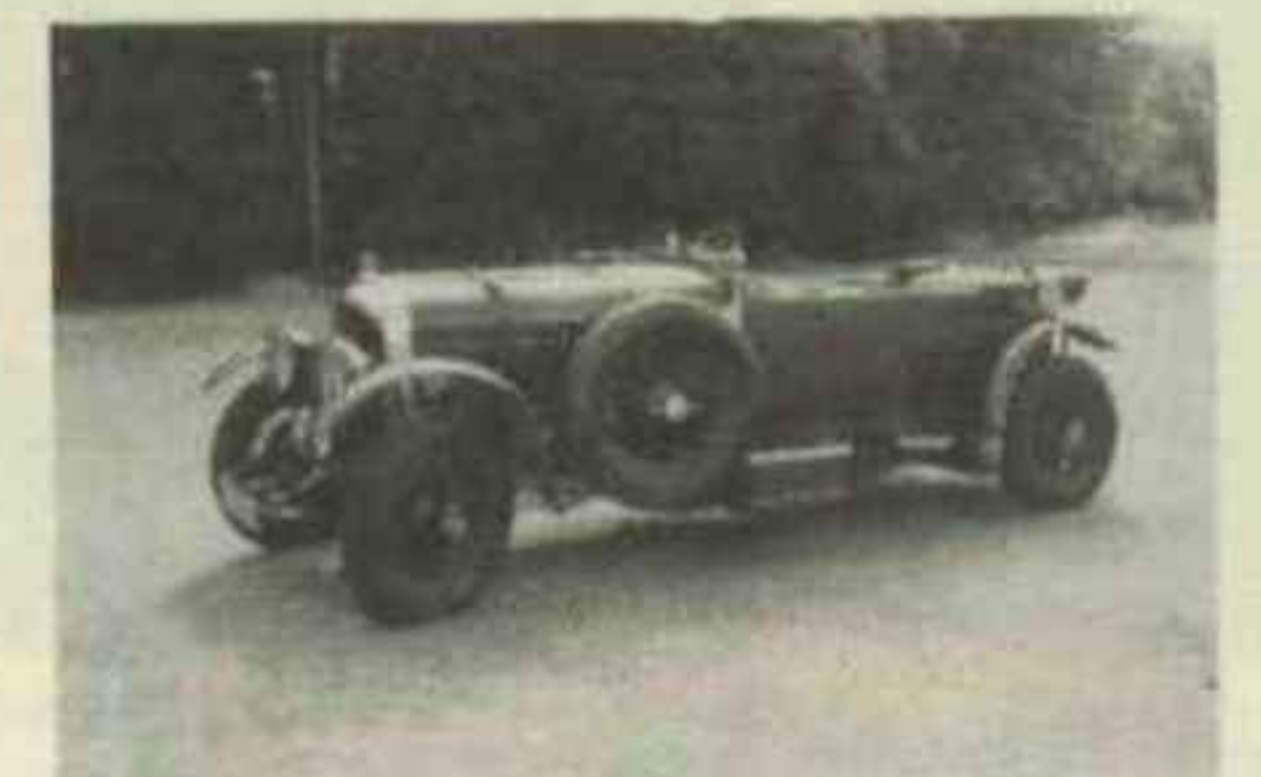
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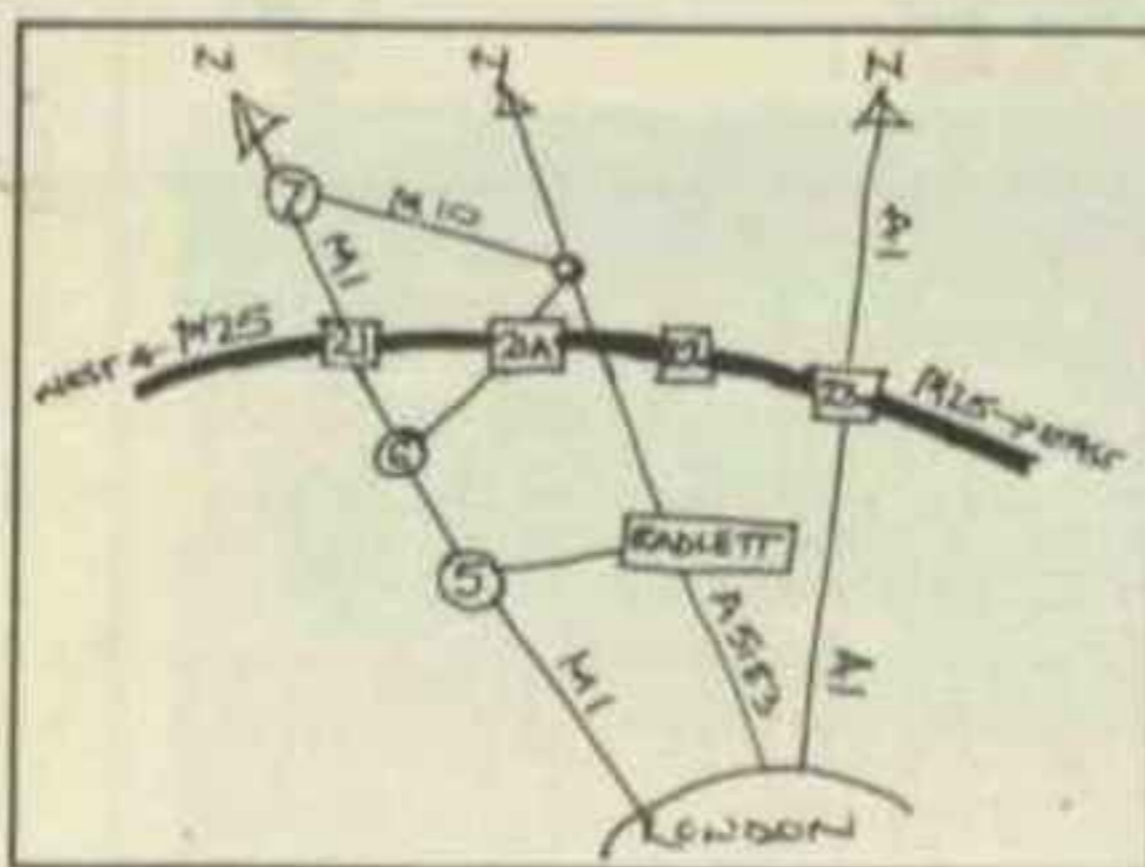
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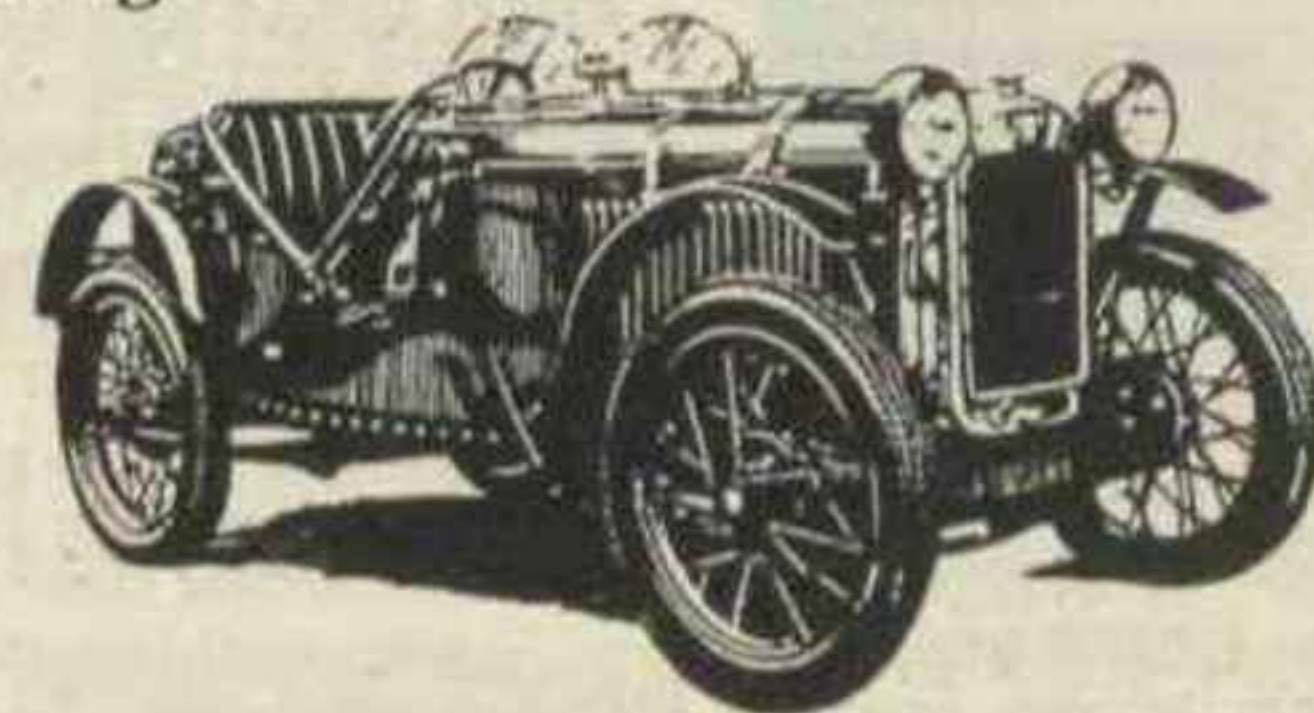
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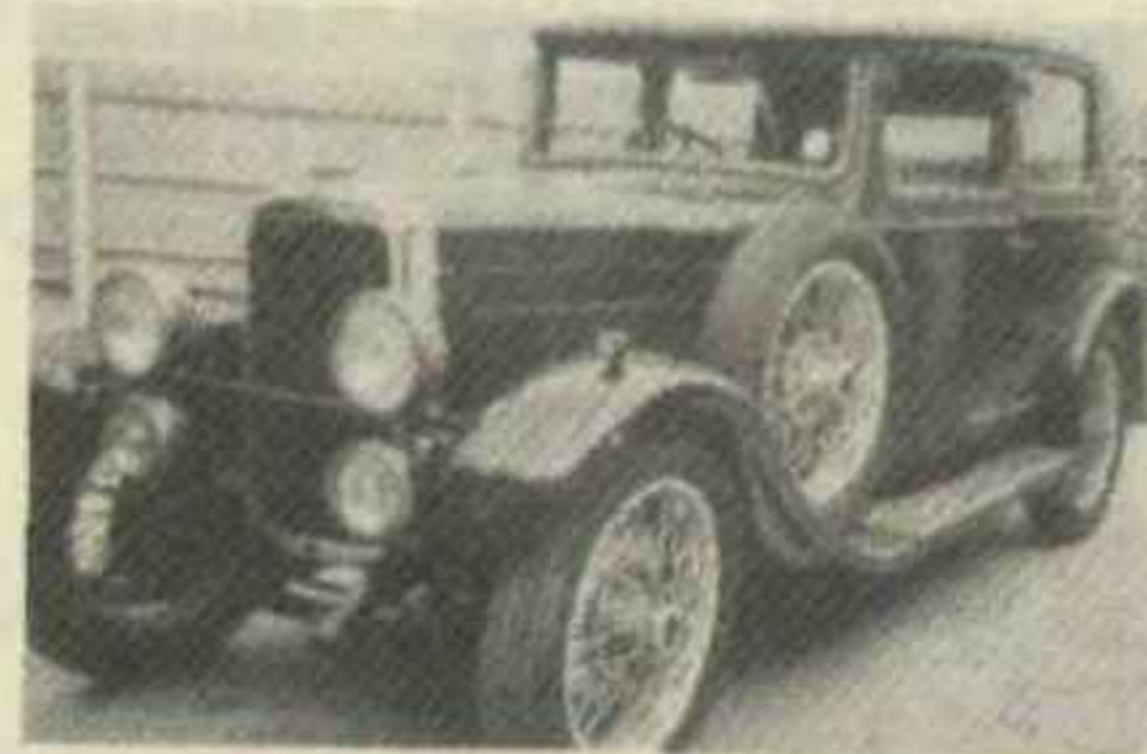
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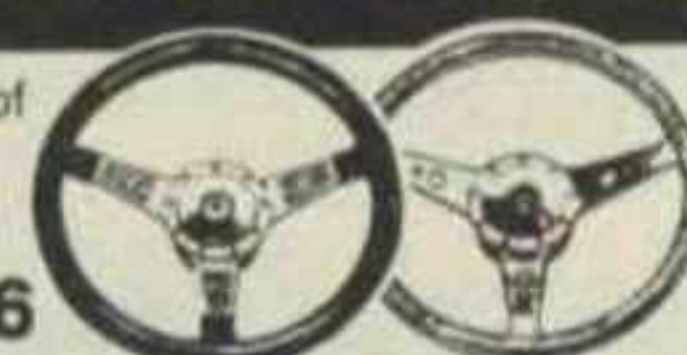


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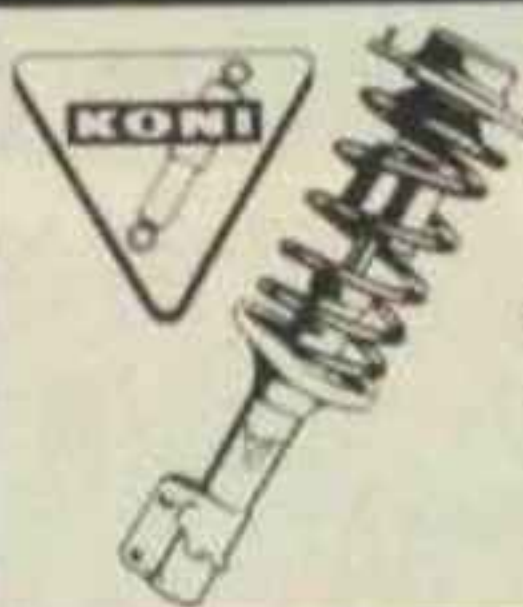
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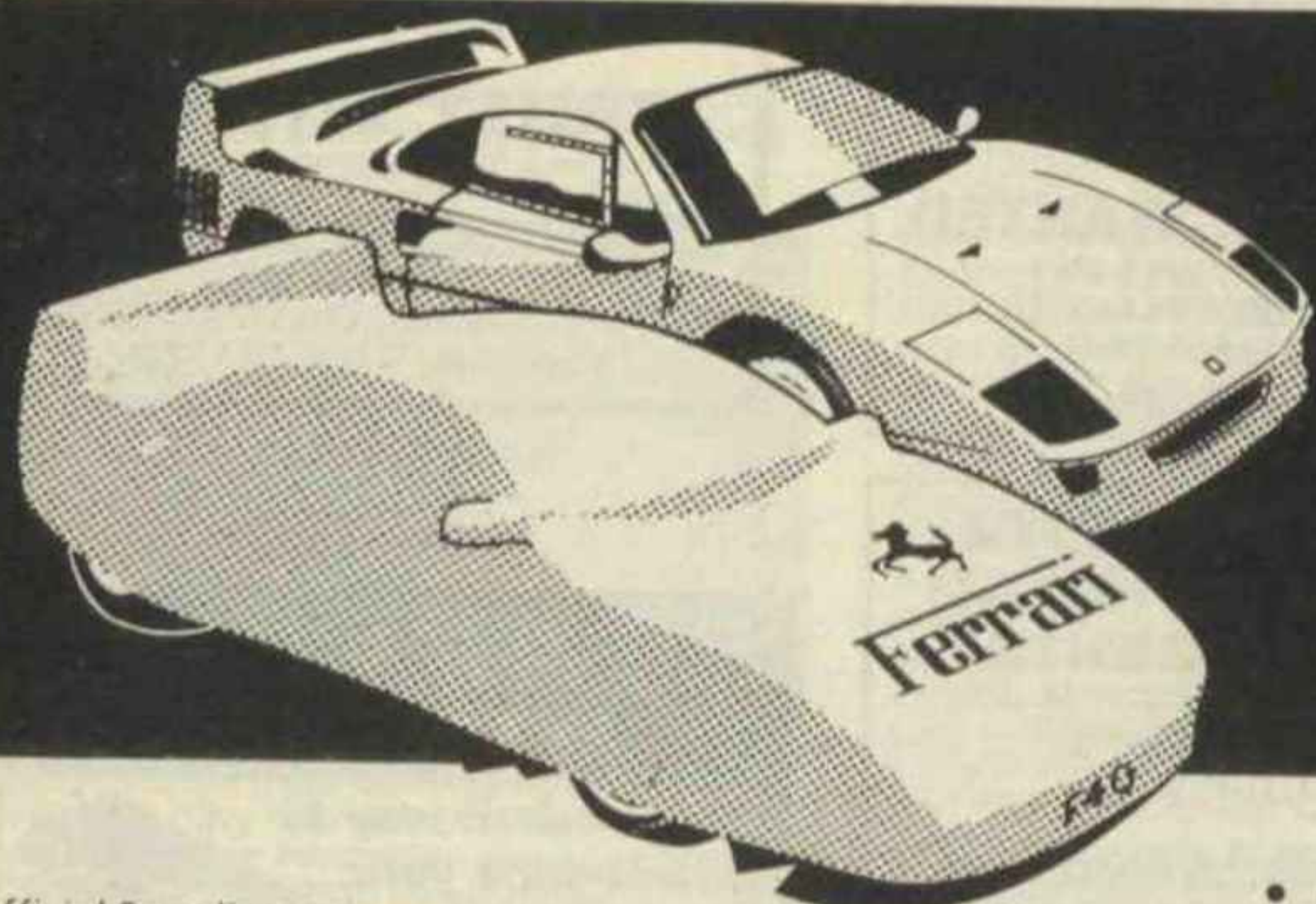
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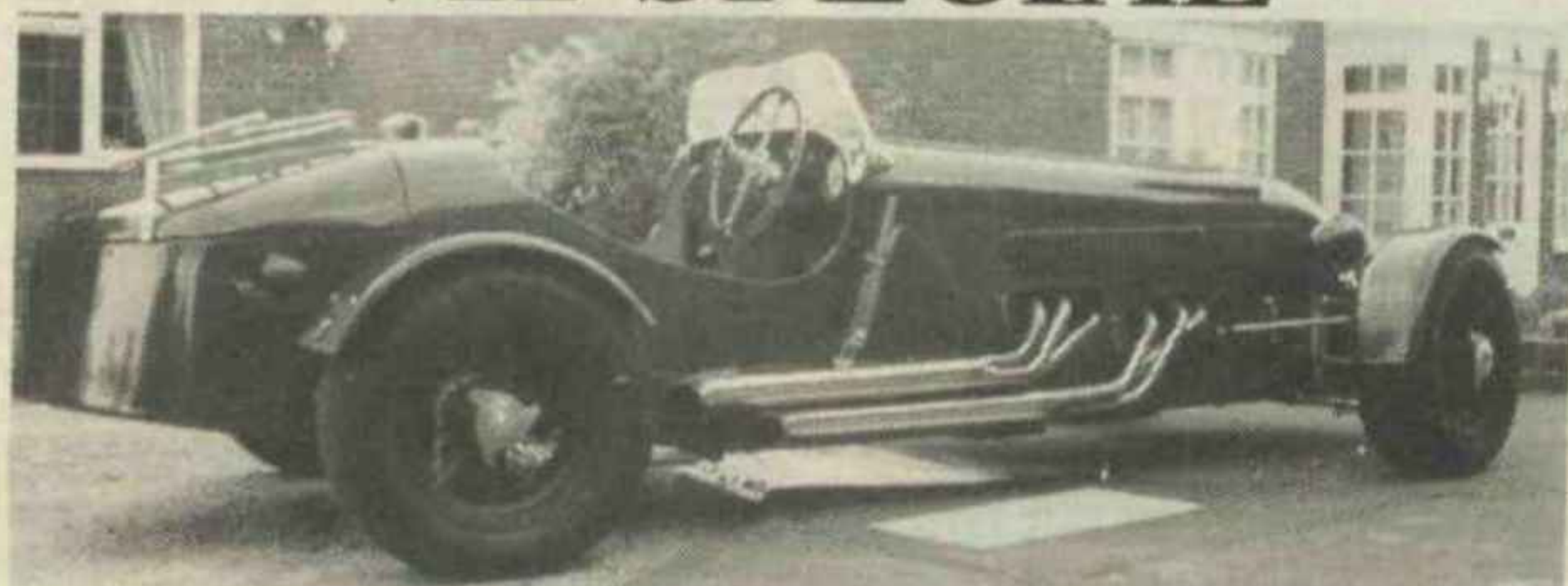
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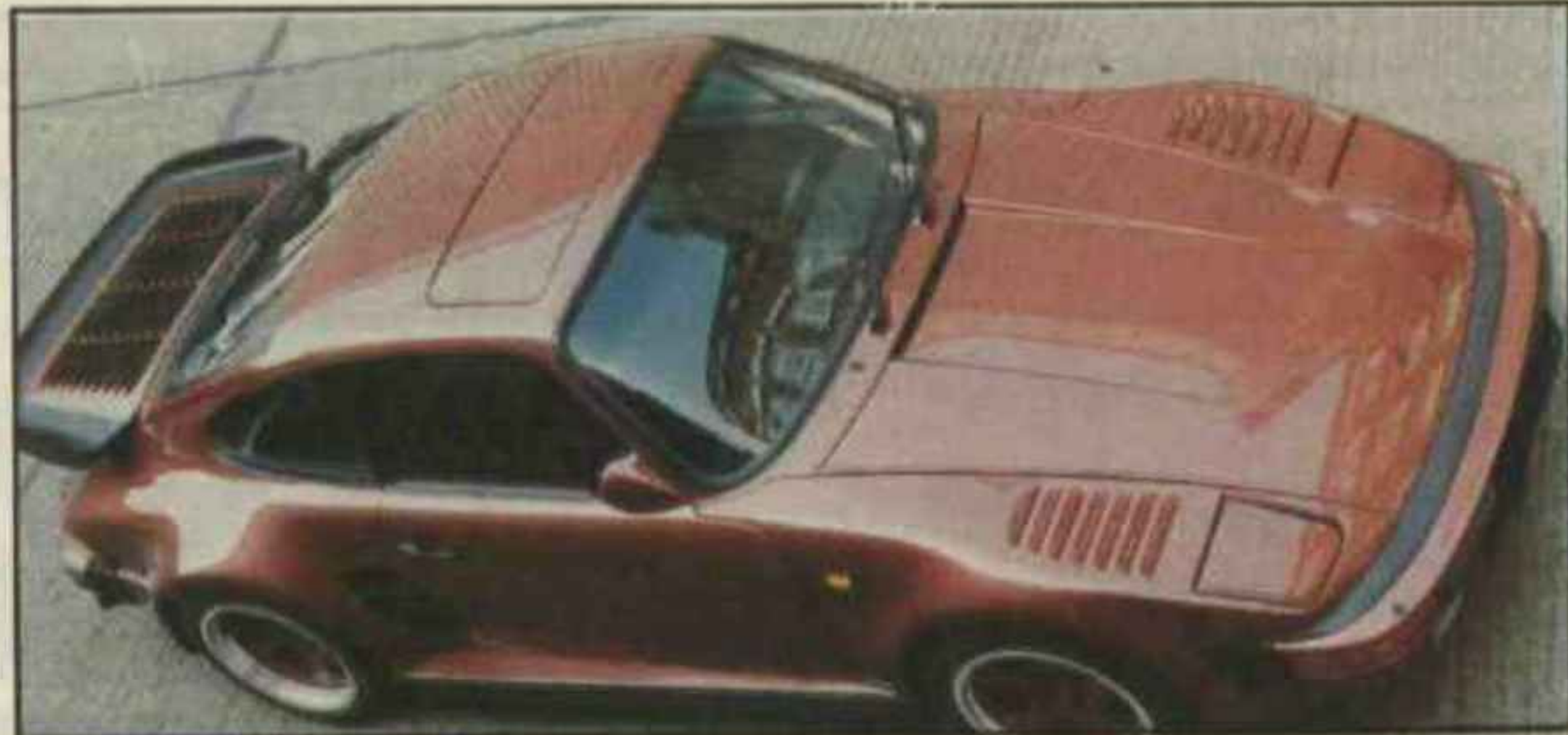
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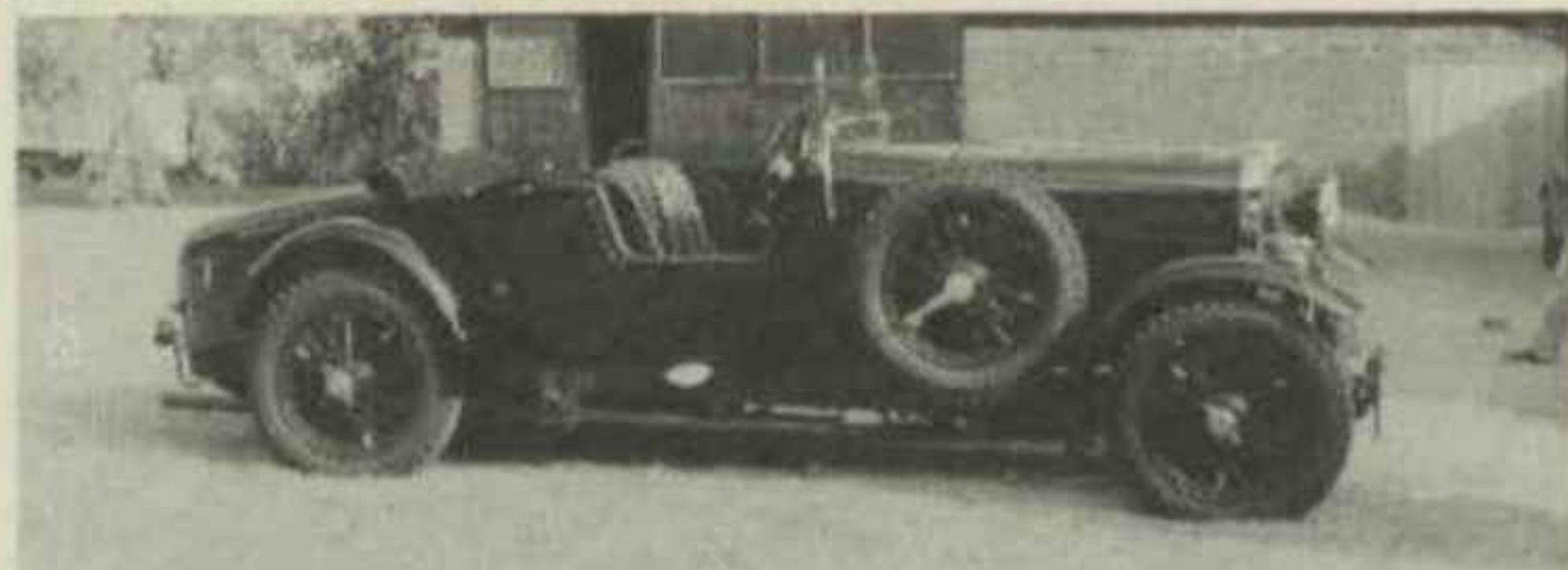
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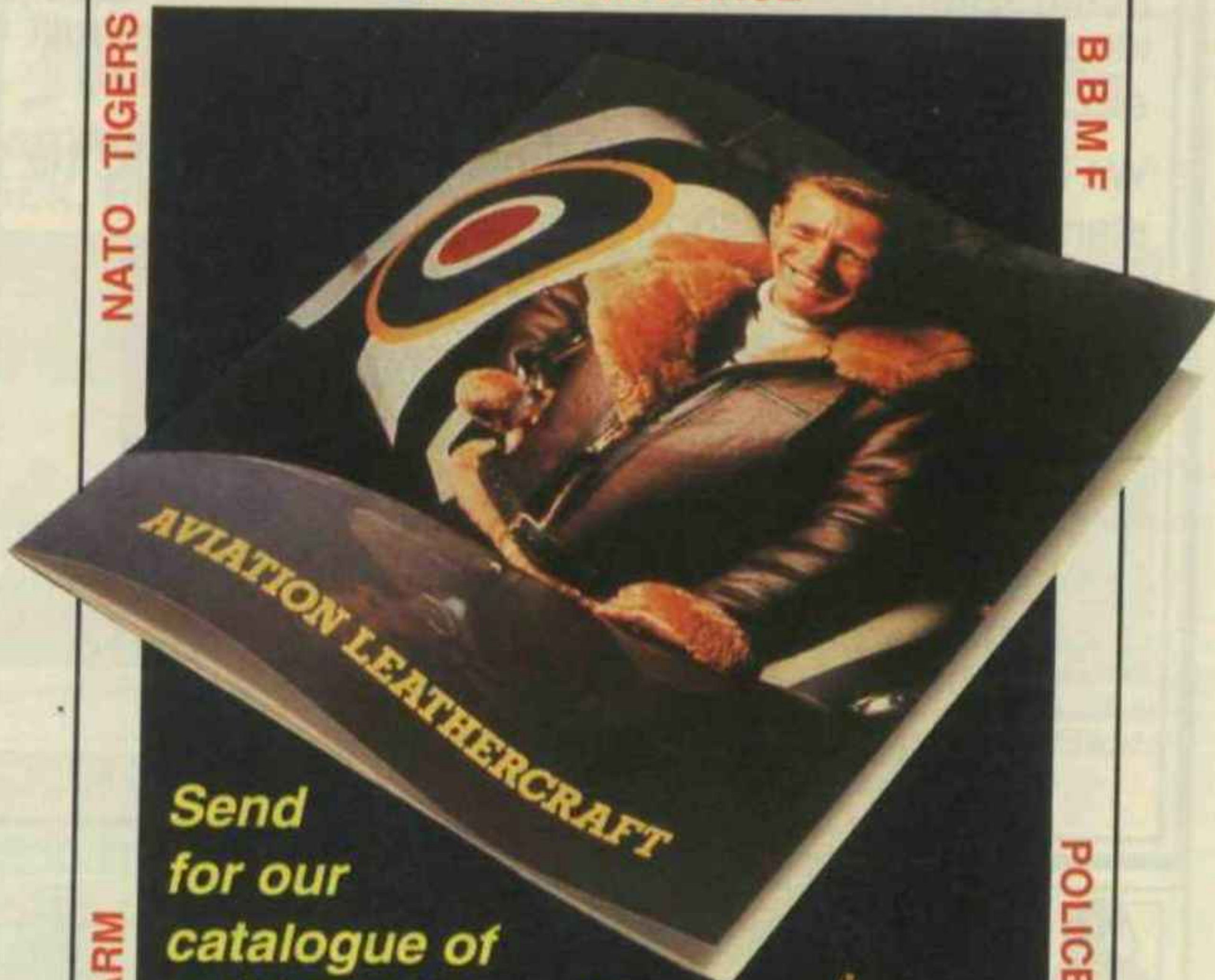
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1989 Testarossa	Red	9,000m
1991 348 TS	Red	5,000m
1989 328 GTS	Red	10,000m
1987 328 GTS	Red	28,000m
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1967 275 GTB/4 Cam	Silver	19,000m
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1981 Boxer 512 BB	Red	22,000m
1979 Boxer 512 BB	Red	41,000m
1979 Boxer 512 BB	Red	15,000m
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1984 Mondial QV	Black	52,000m
1983 400i	Silver	37,000m
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1973 Dino 246 GT	Sable	23,000m

1973 Dino 246 GT	Red	28,000m
1973 Dino 246 GT	Red	49,000m
1972 Dino 246 GT	Blue	46,000m
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1985 Countach 5000 QV	Red	14,000m
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1962 E-Type 3.8 Roadster	White	52,000m
1969 E-TYPE 4.2 Roadster	Burgundy	65,000m
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1958 XK150S 3.8 Roadster	Red	60,000m

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1990 911 Carrera 2 Cabriolet	Red	42,000m
1990 911 Carrera 2 Coupe	Red	28,000m
1990 911 Carrera 4 Coupe	Red	41,000m
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1989 911 Carrera SE Cabriolet	White	38,000m
1989 911 Carrera SE Coupe	White	38,000m
1989 911 Carrera SE Coupe	Red	45,000m
1988 911 Carrera SE Coupe	White	59,000m
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1987 911 Carrera SE Cabriolet	Blue	36,000m
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1973 911 Carrera RS	White, LHD	
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Aston Martin Lagonda Limousine. LHD by Tickford.  
Aston Martin V8 Volante 1979 Red/mag.  
Aston Martin V8 Volante '87E'. 35,000 miles. Graphite.  
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Bentley Turbo 'R'. 1988 model. Georgian Silver.  
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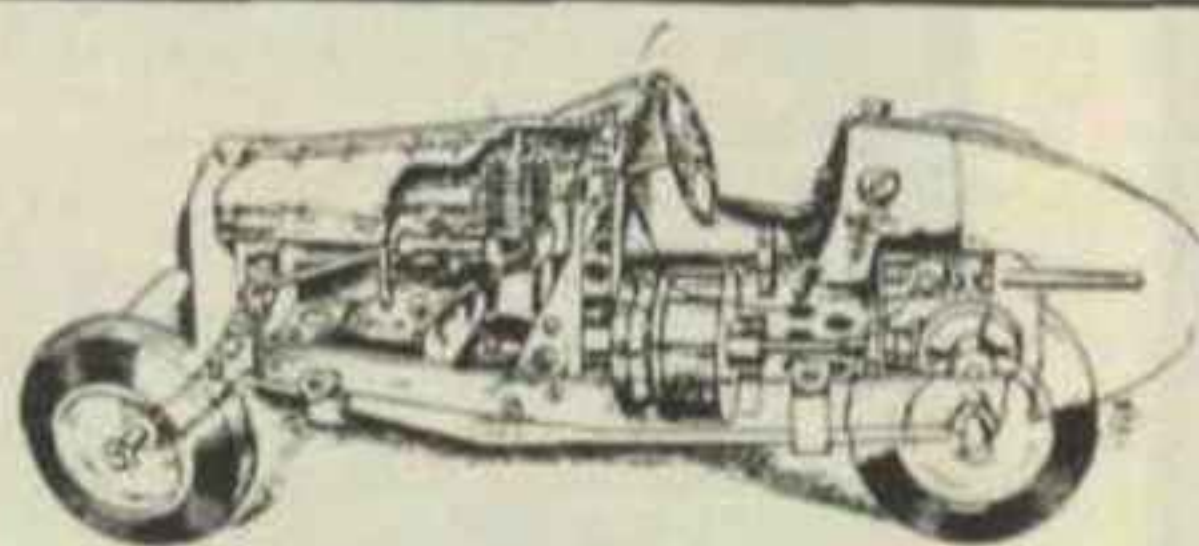
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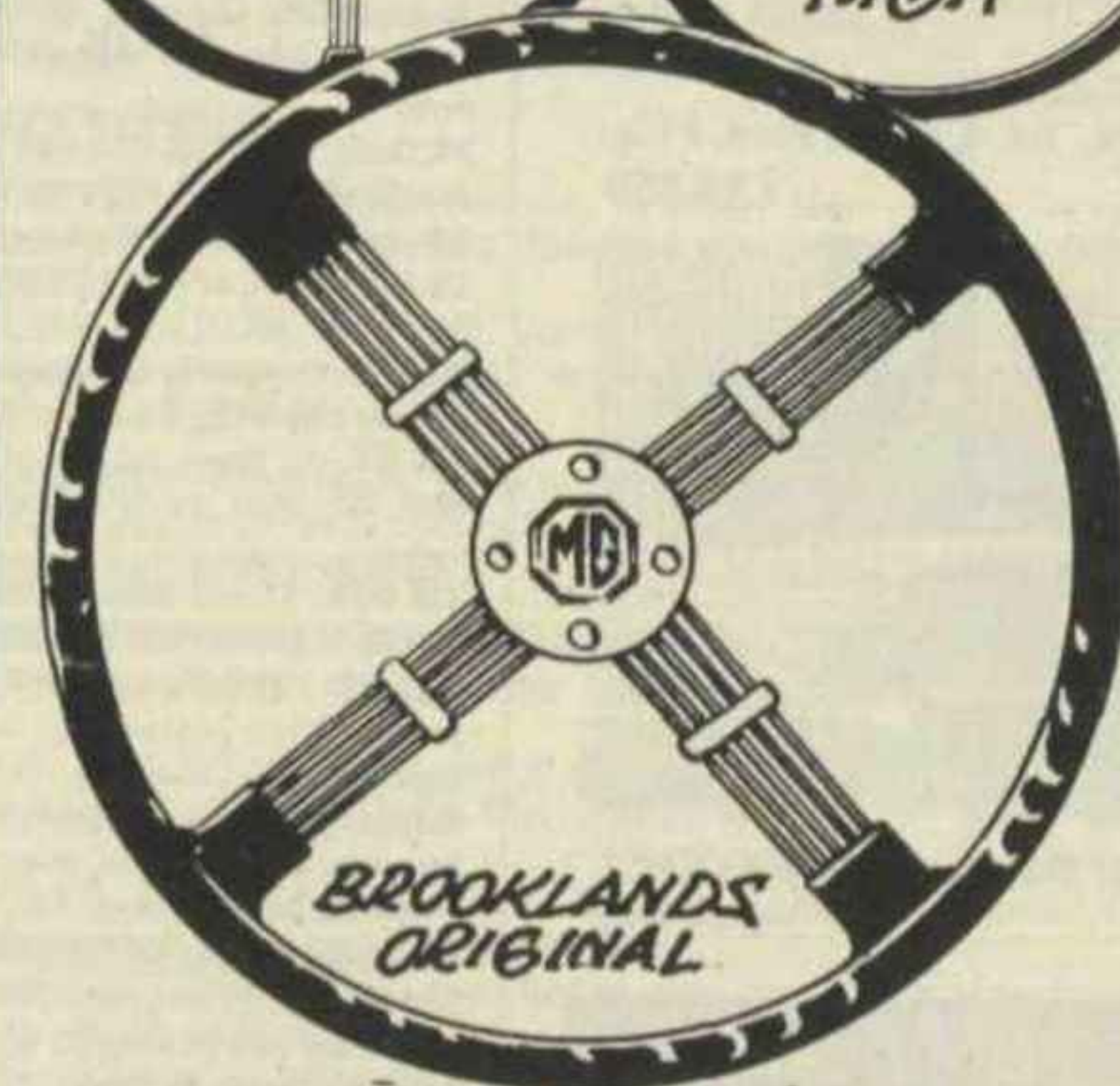
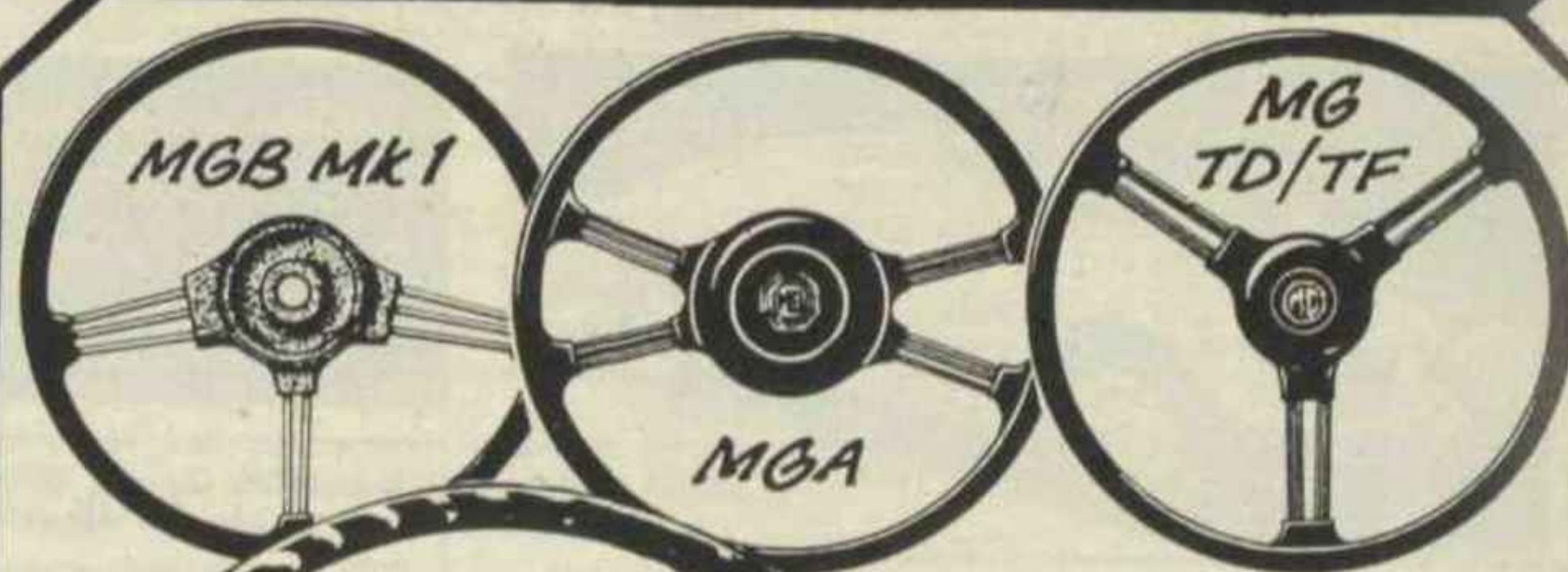
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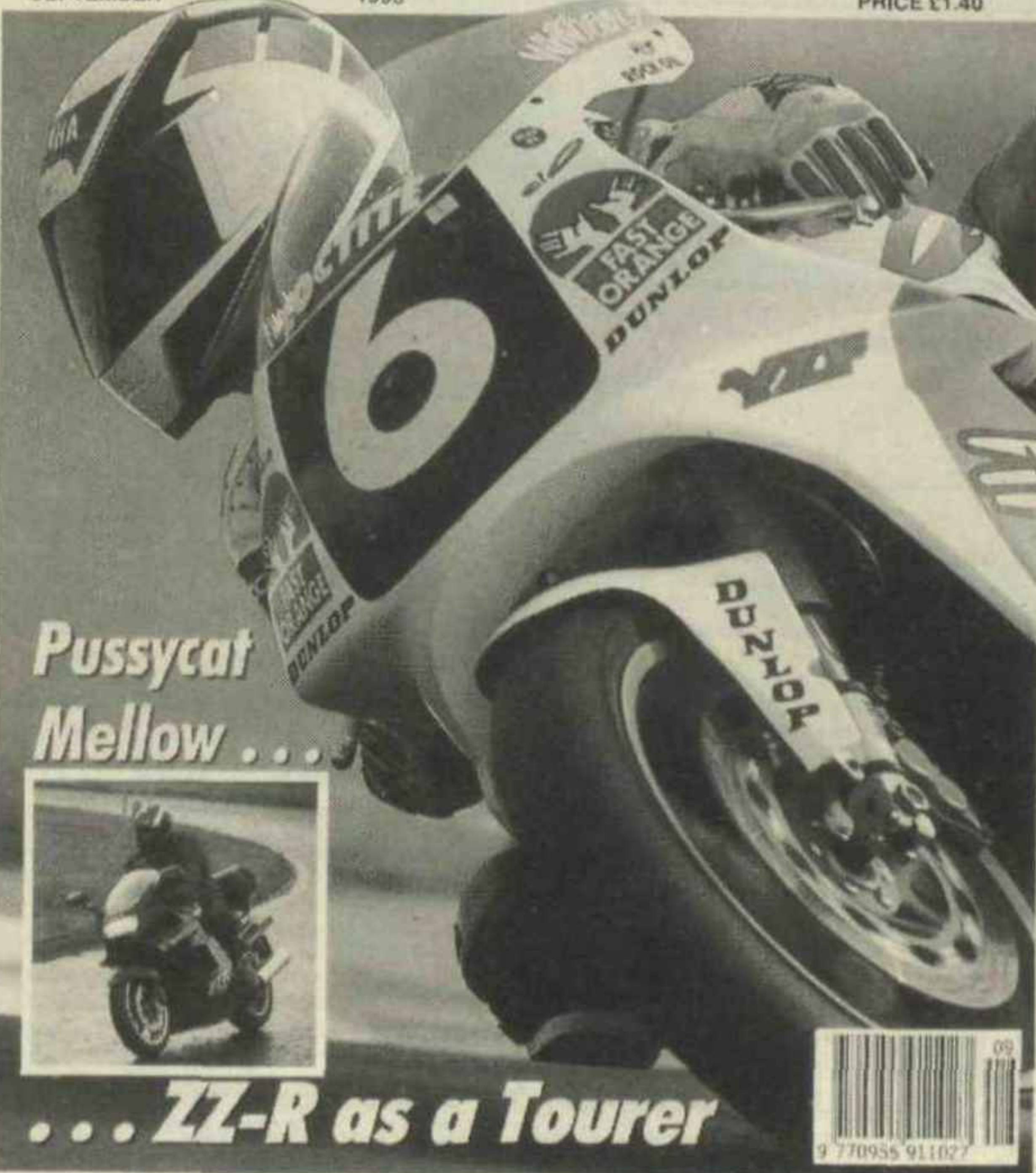
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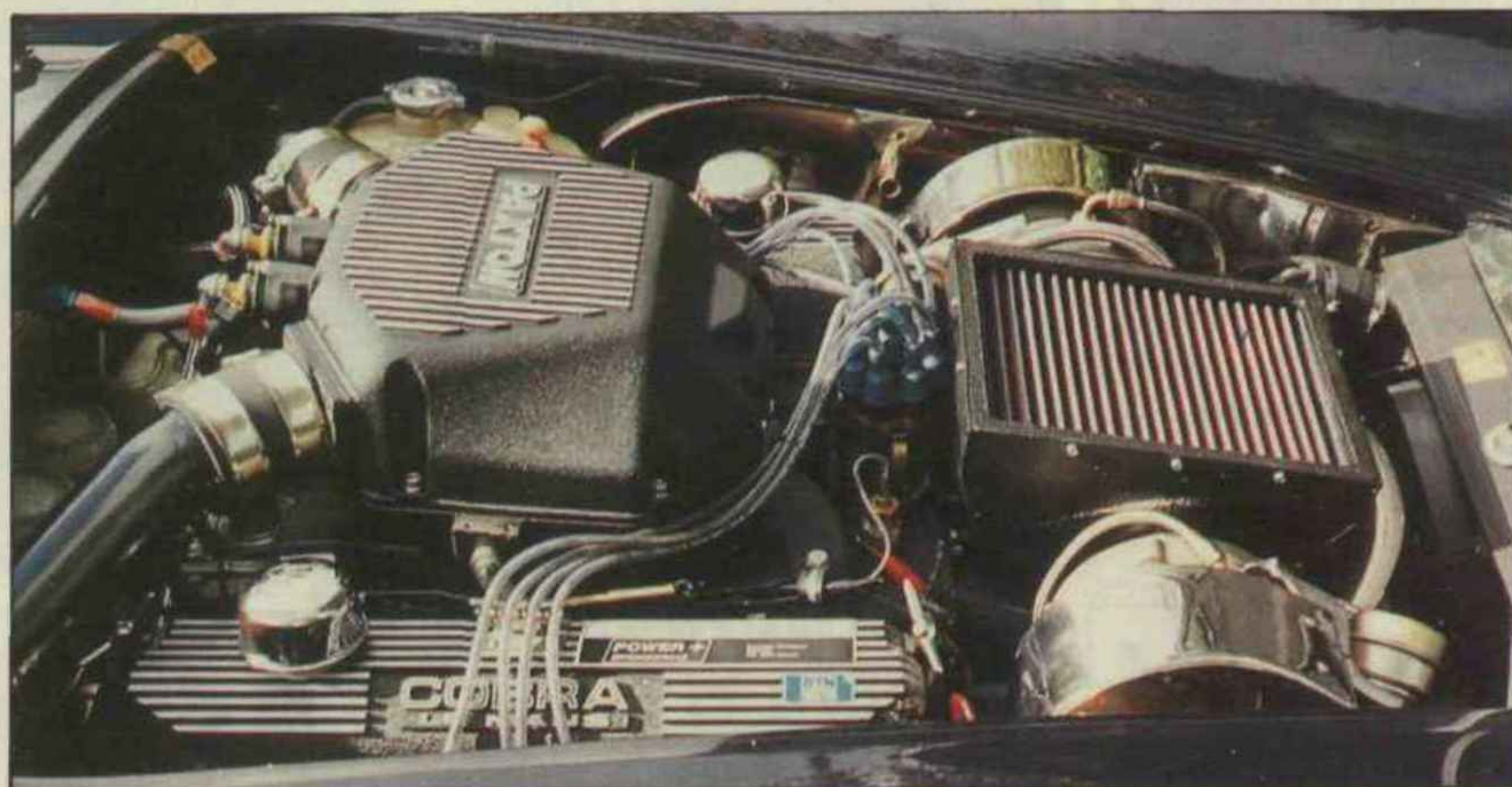
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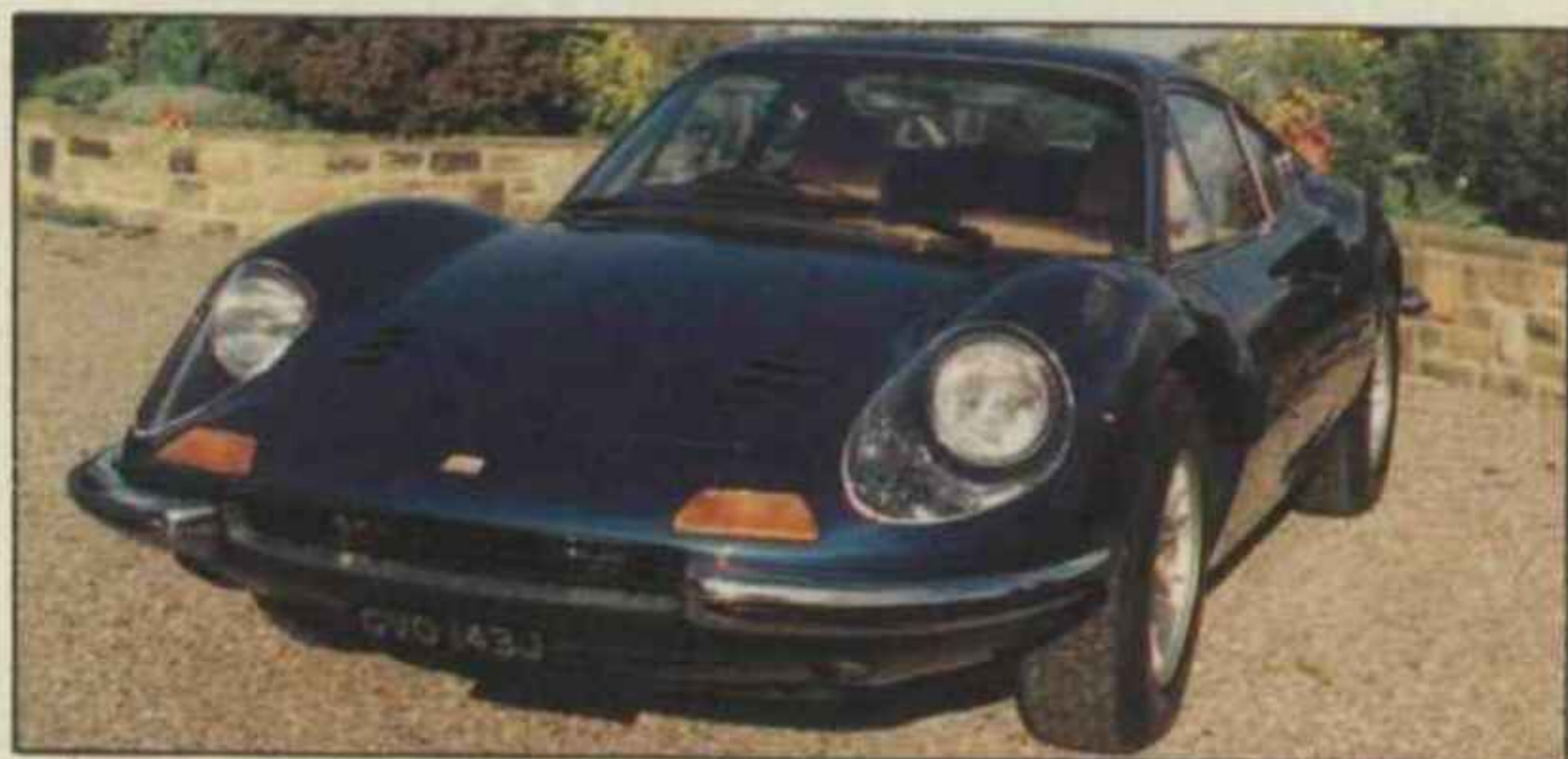
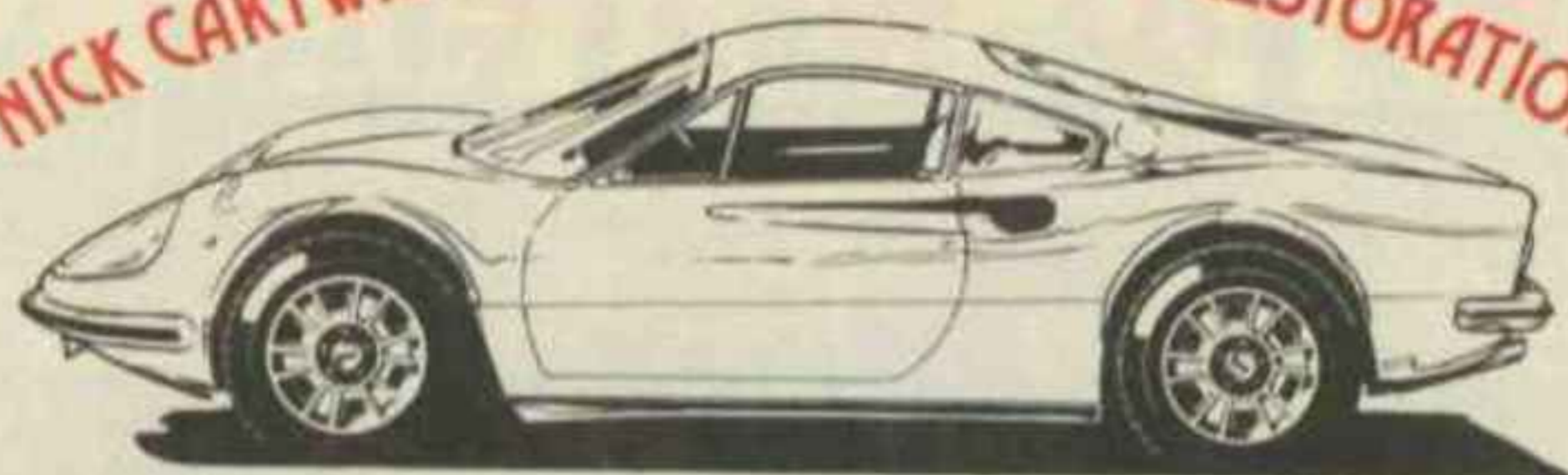
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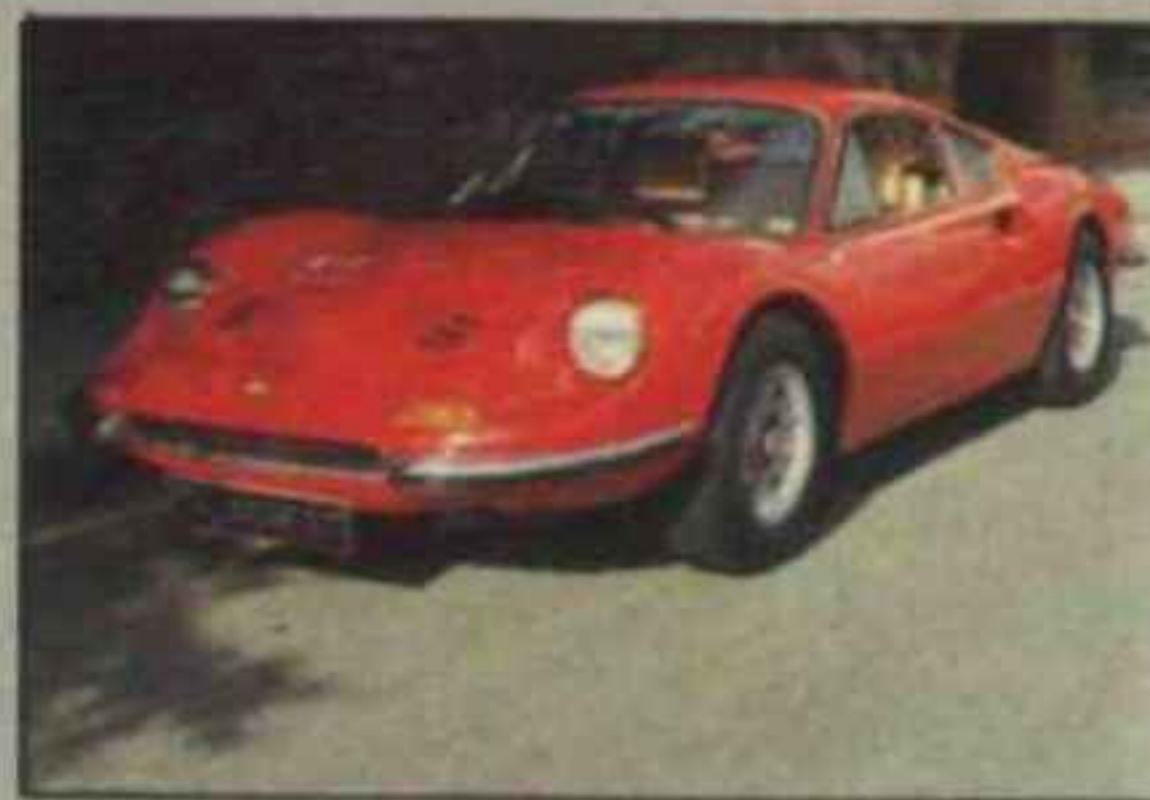
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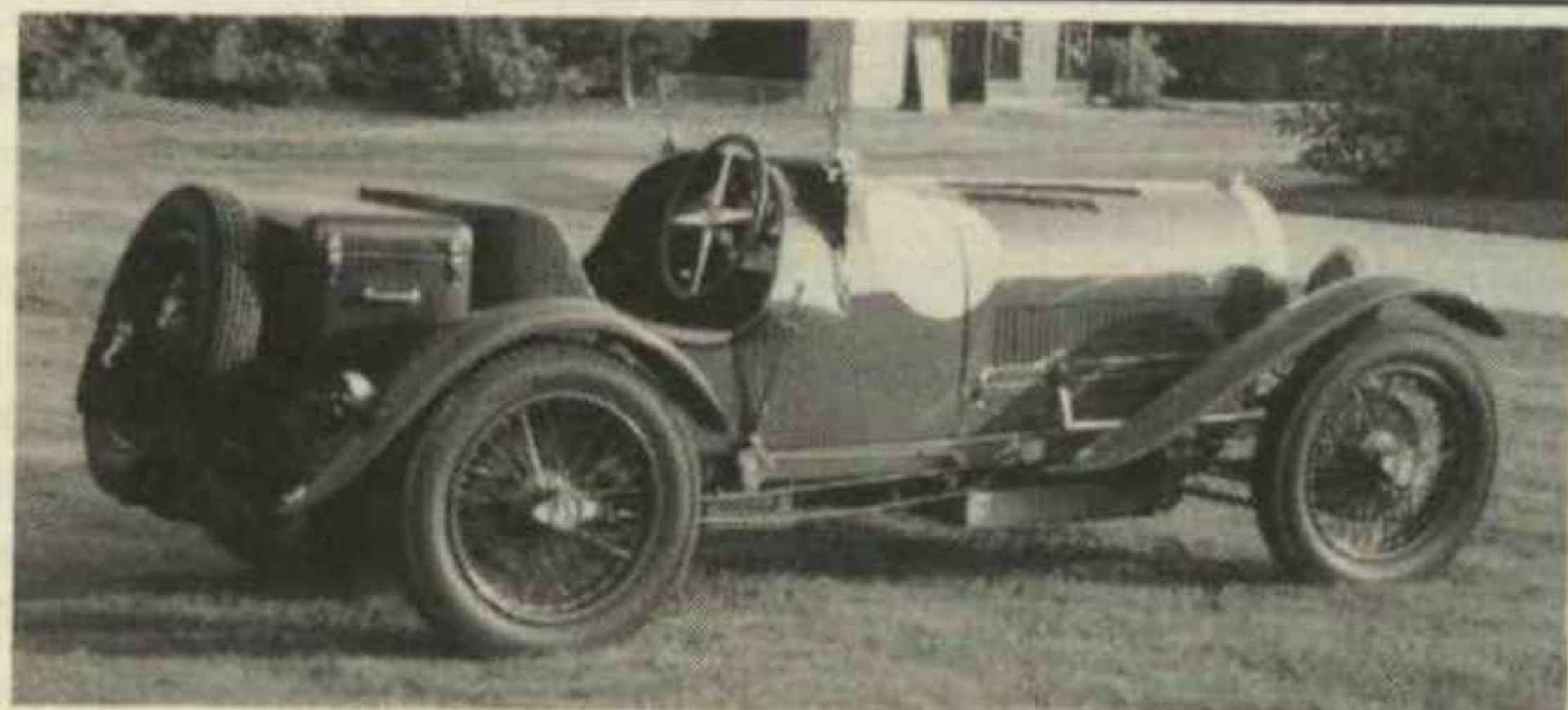


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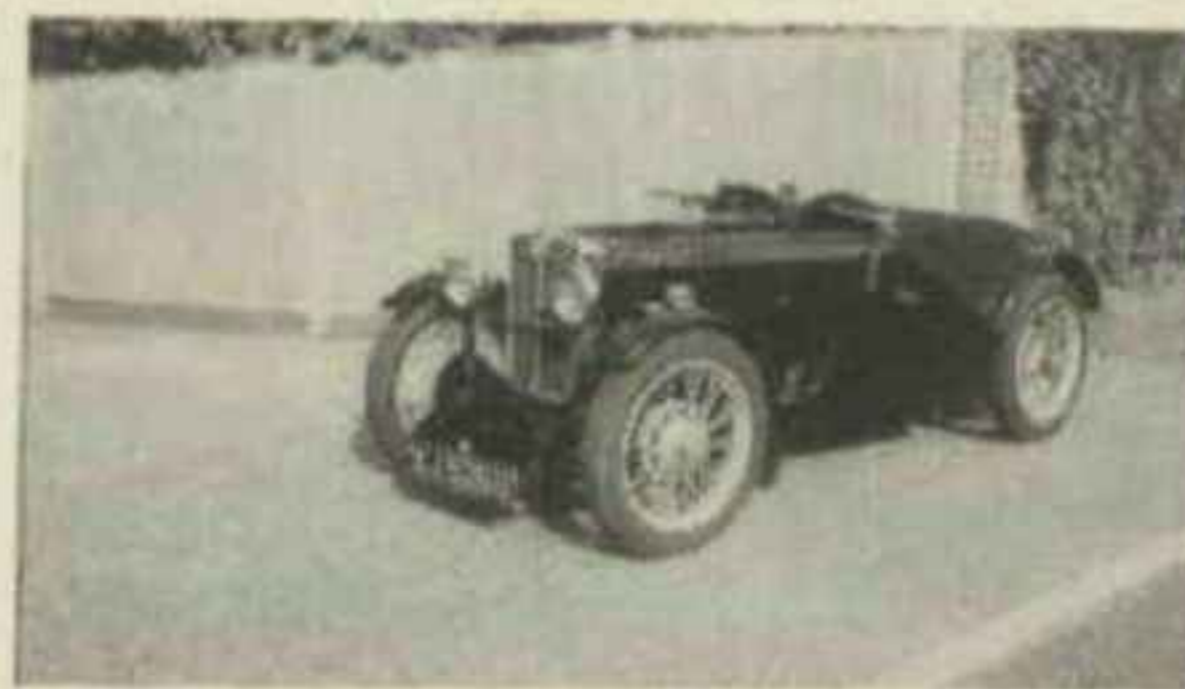
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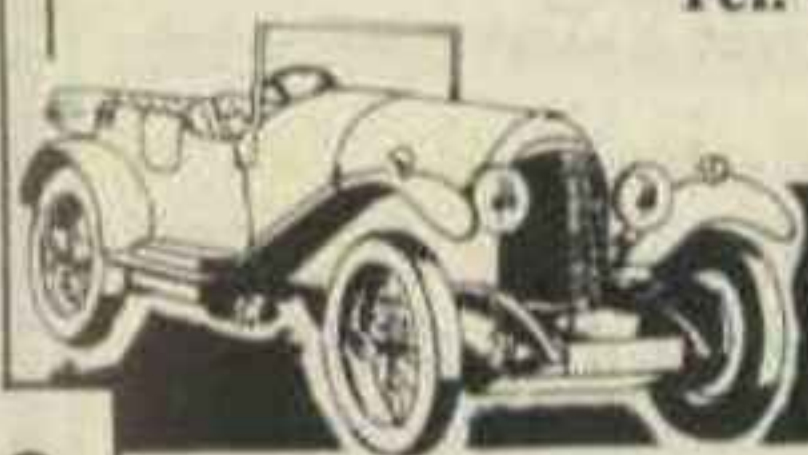
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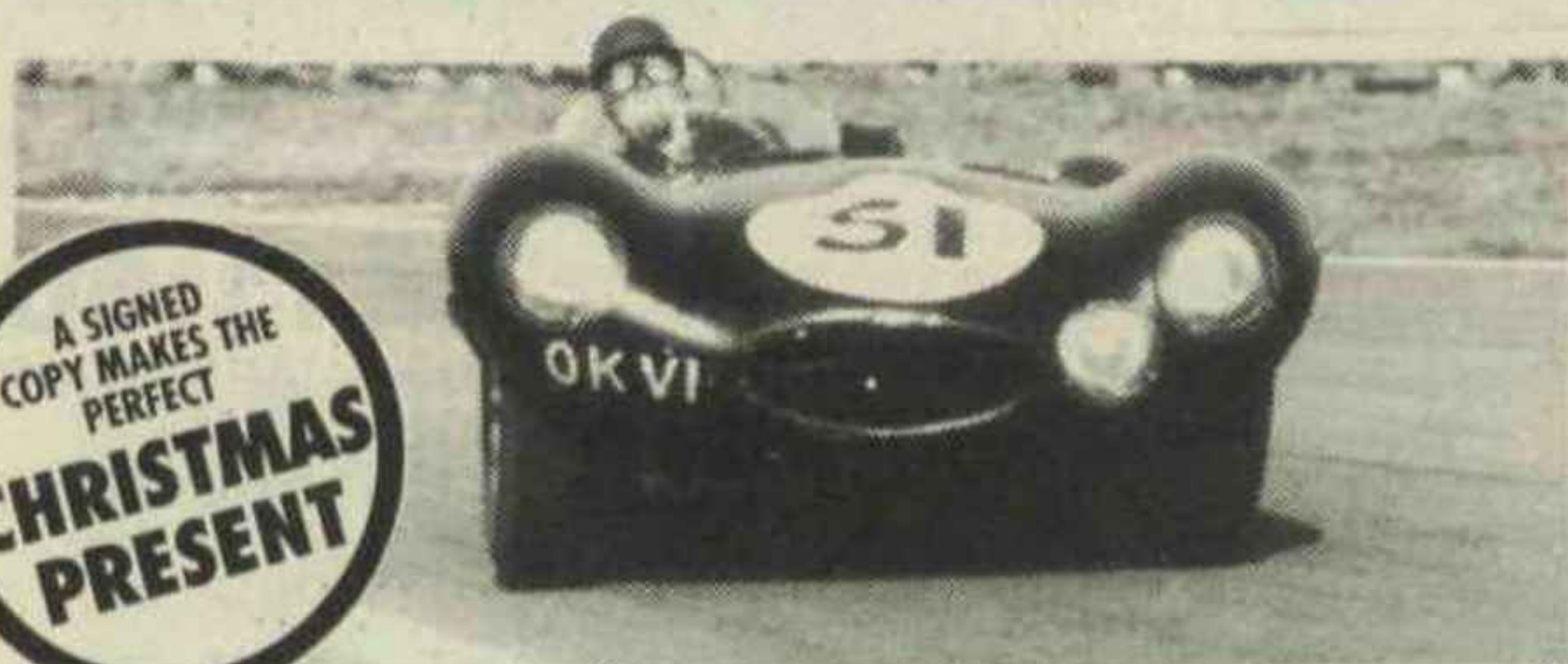


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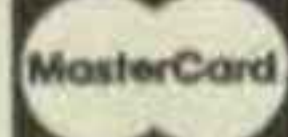
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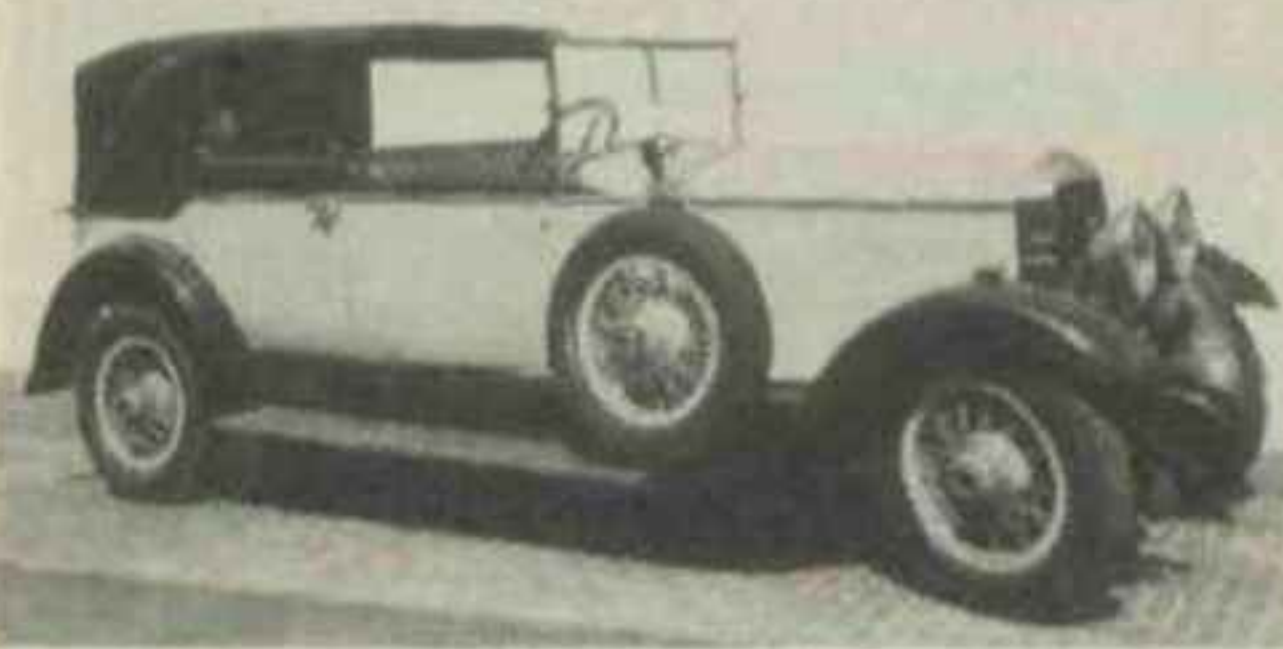
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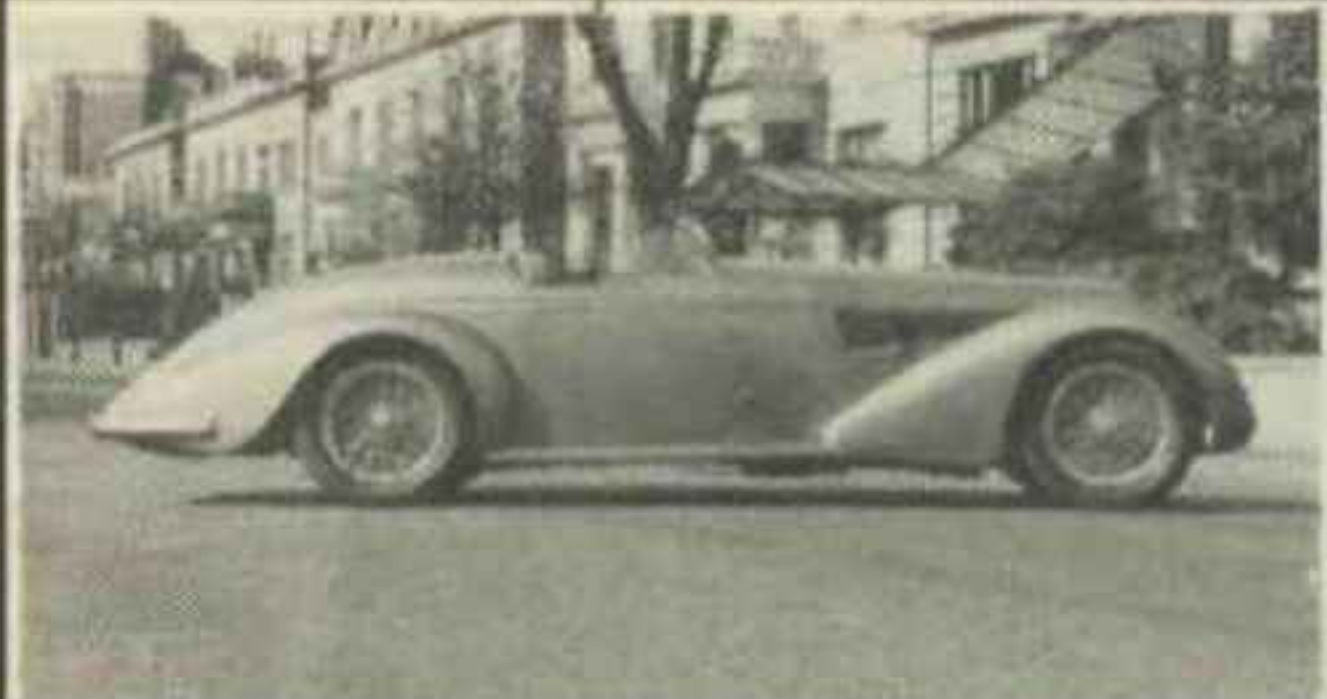
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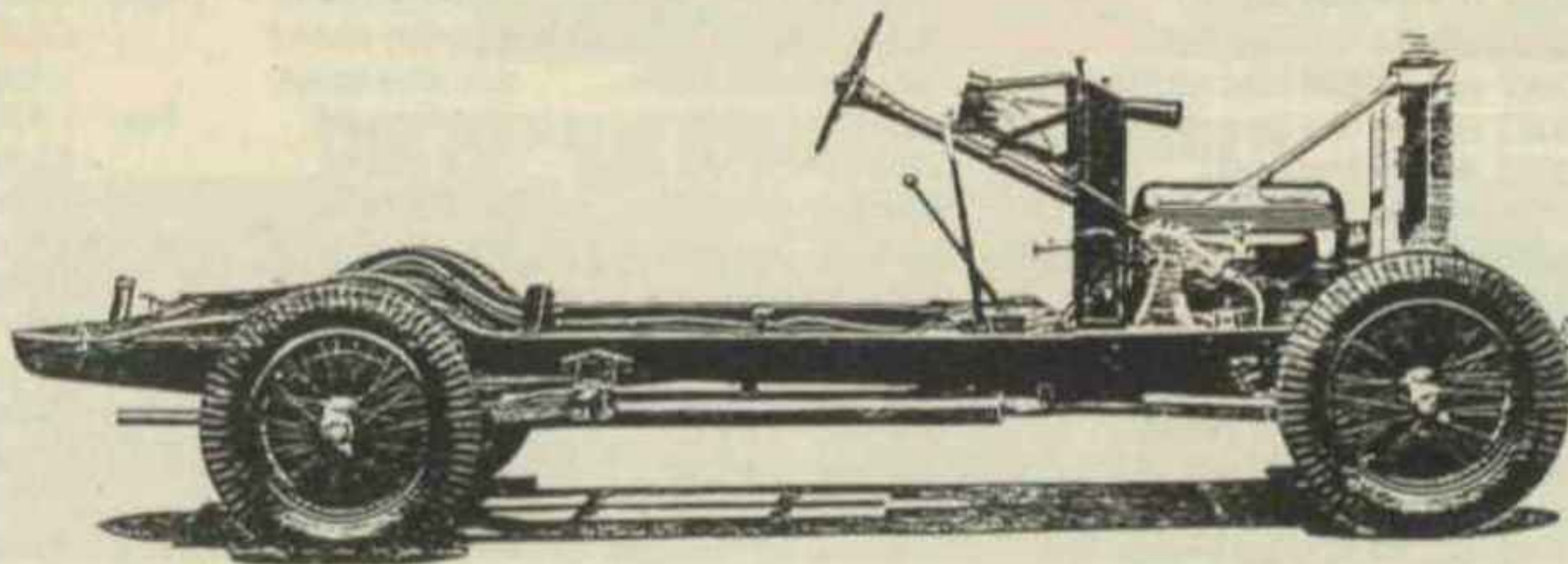
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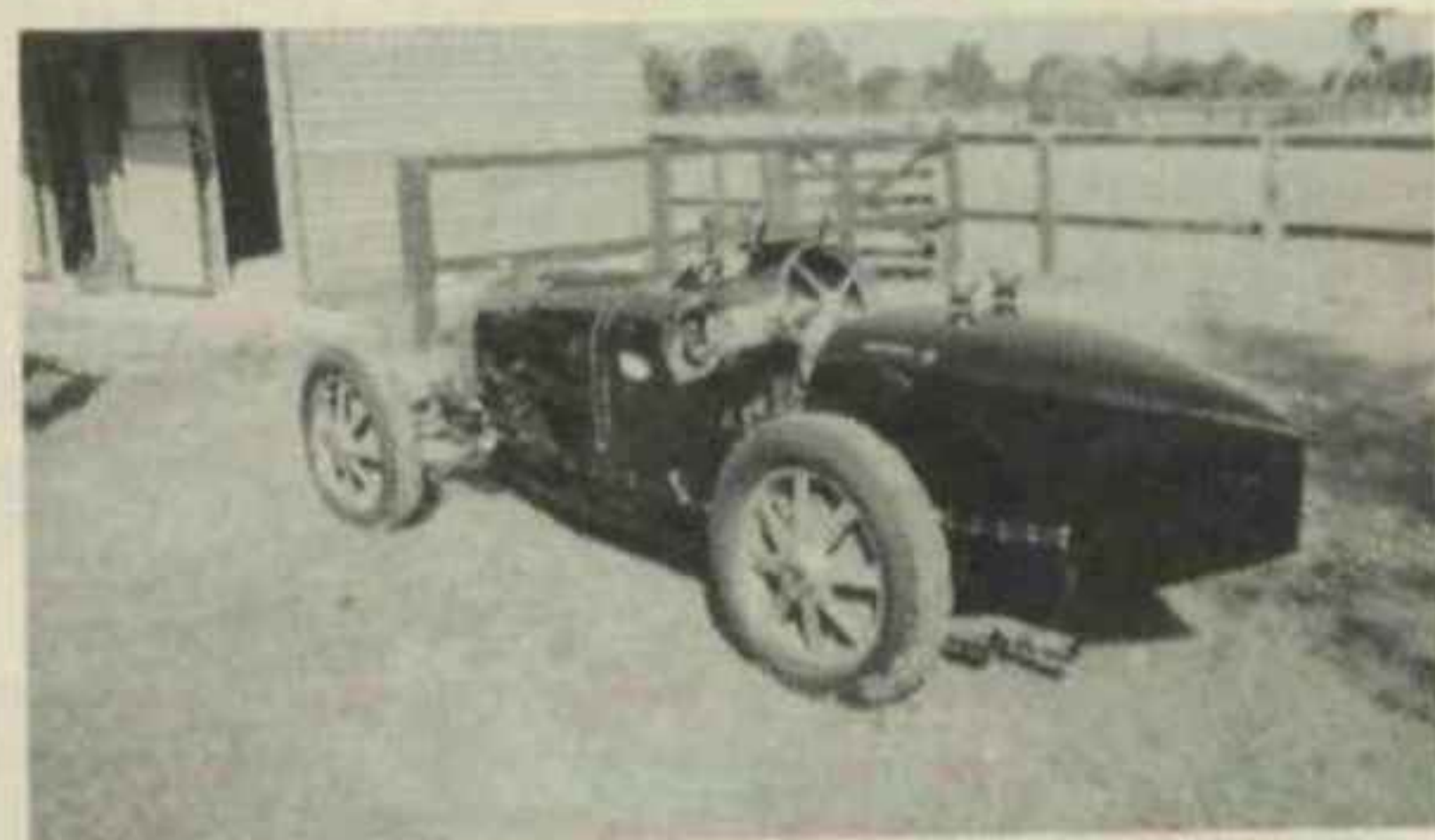
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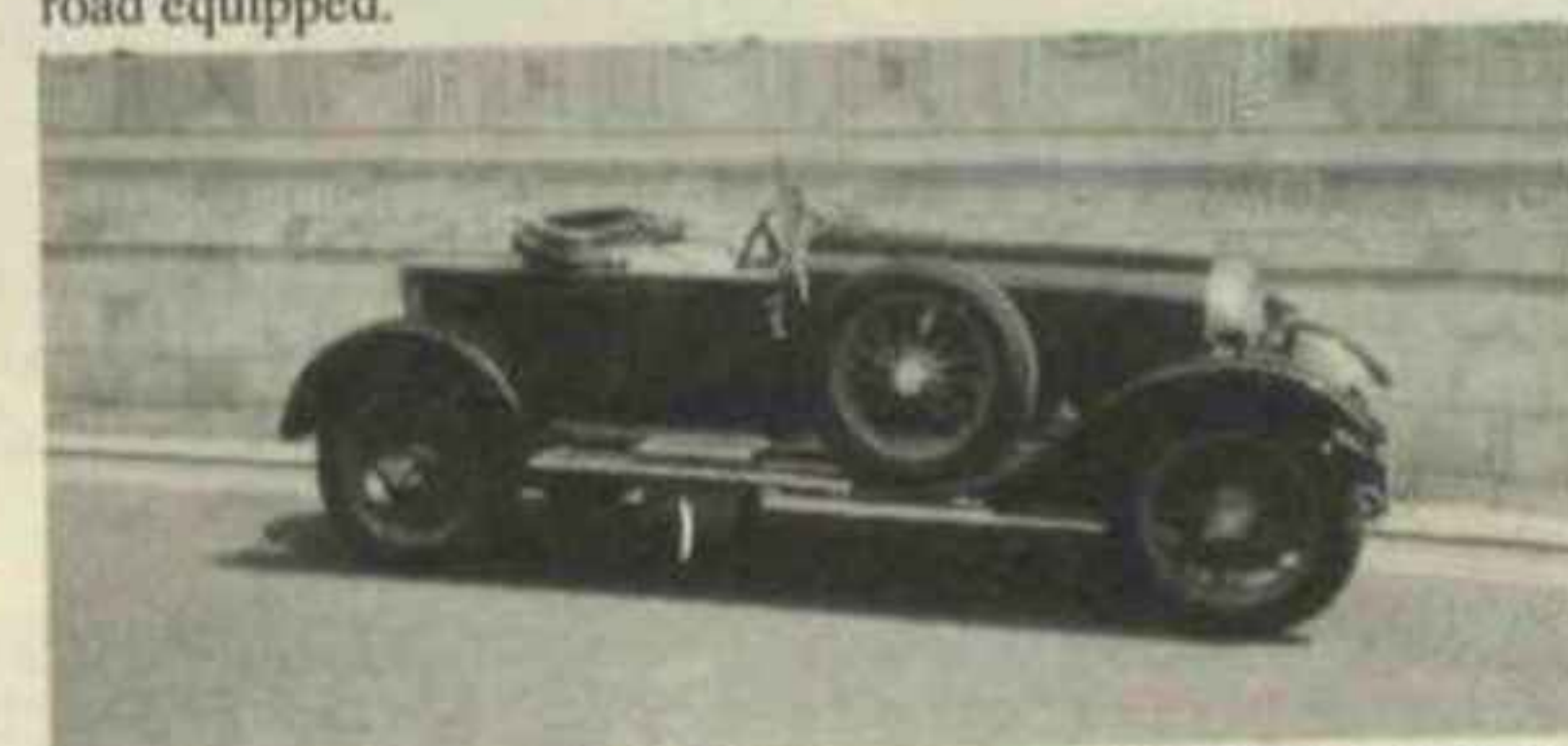
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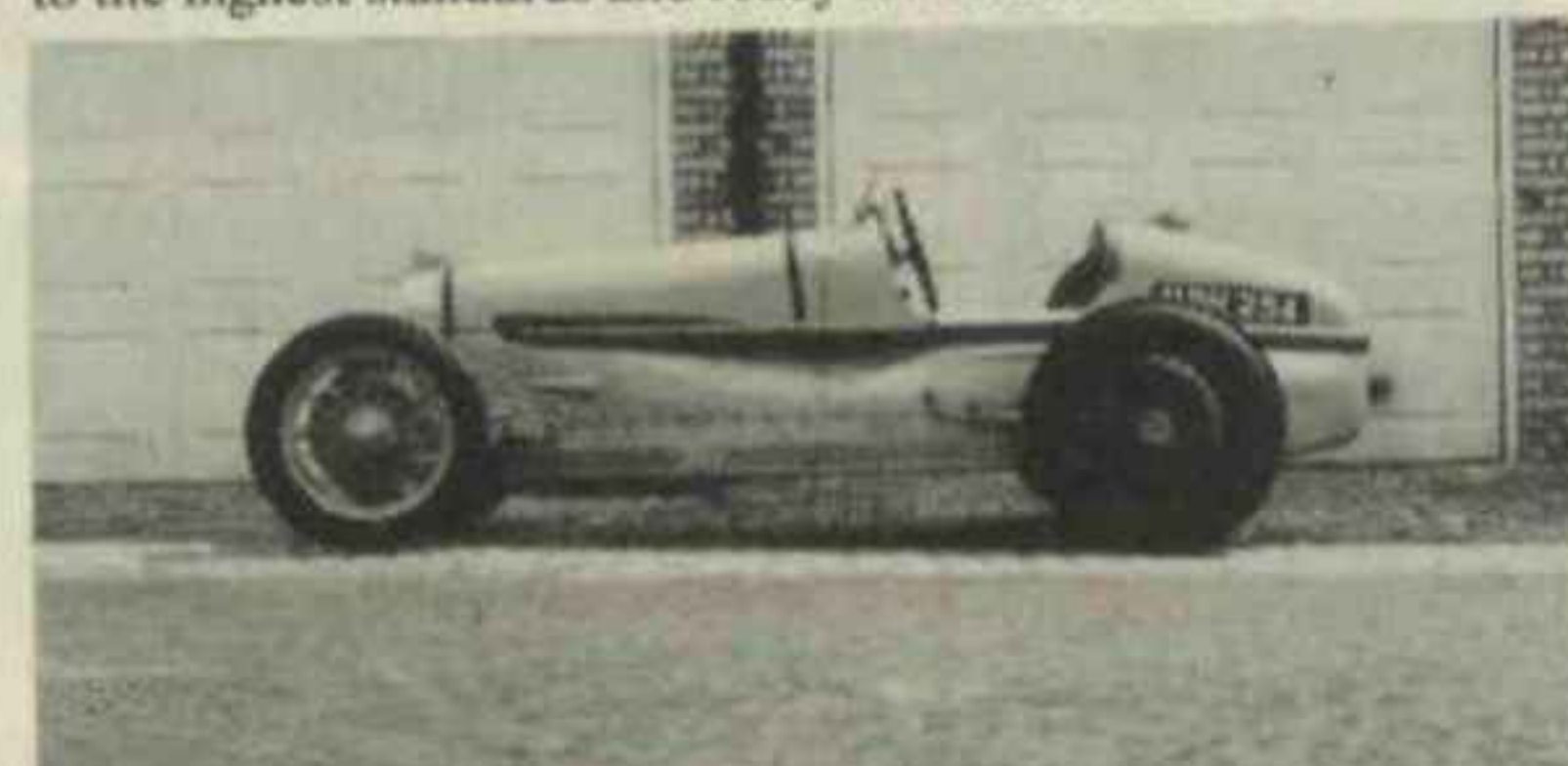
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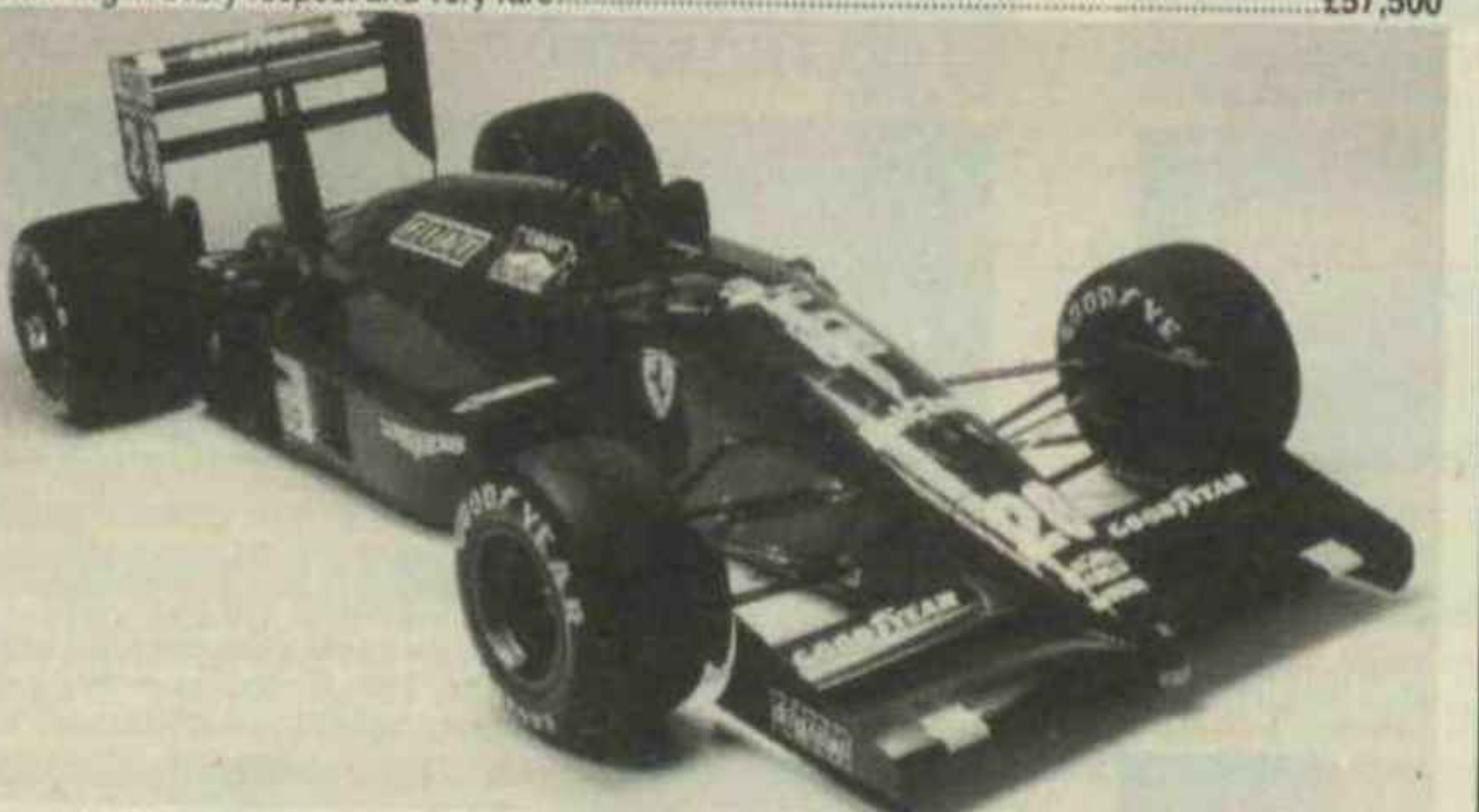
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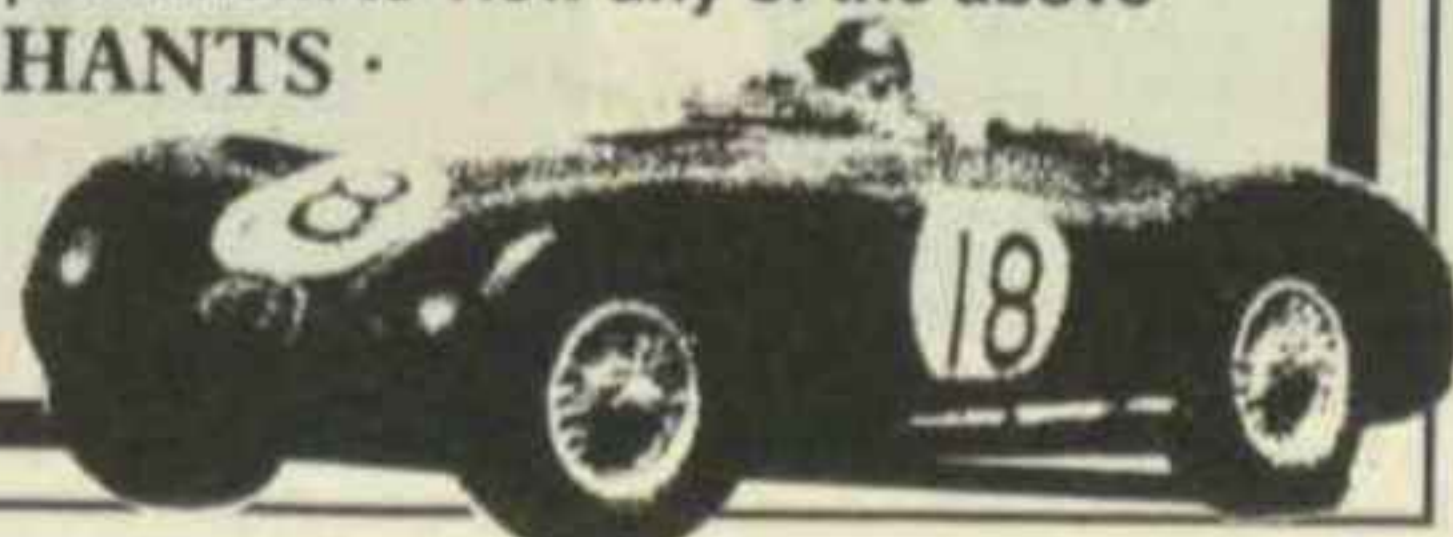
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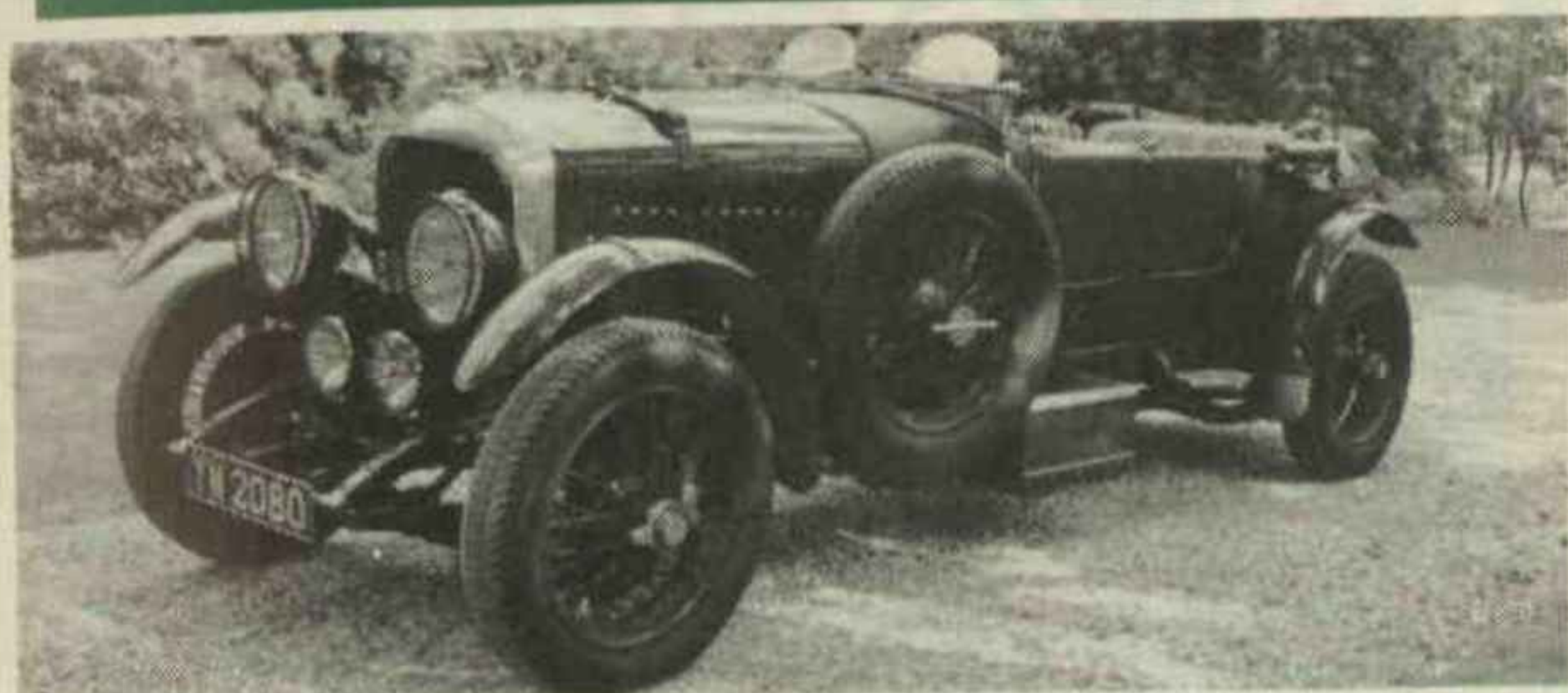
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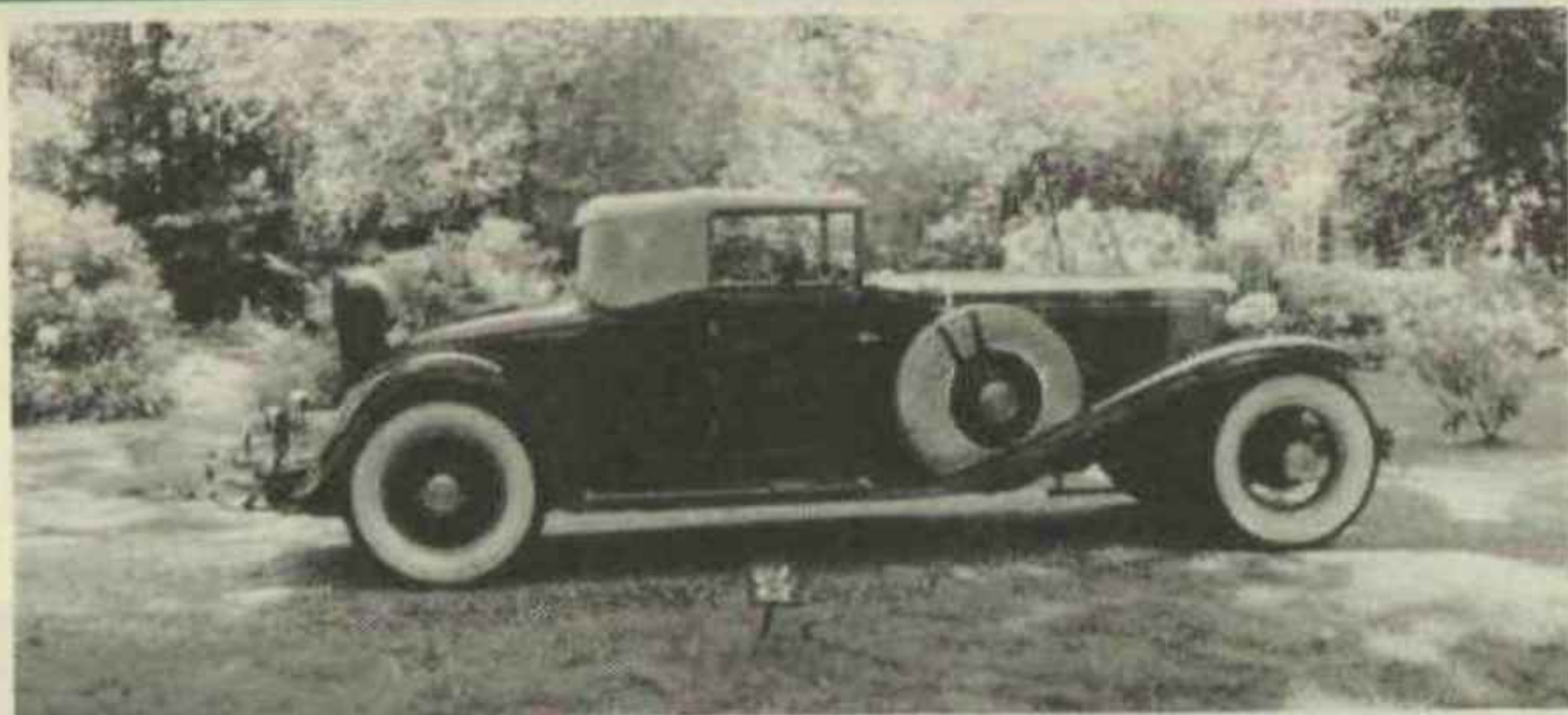
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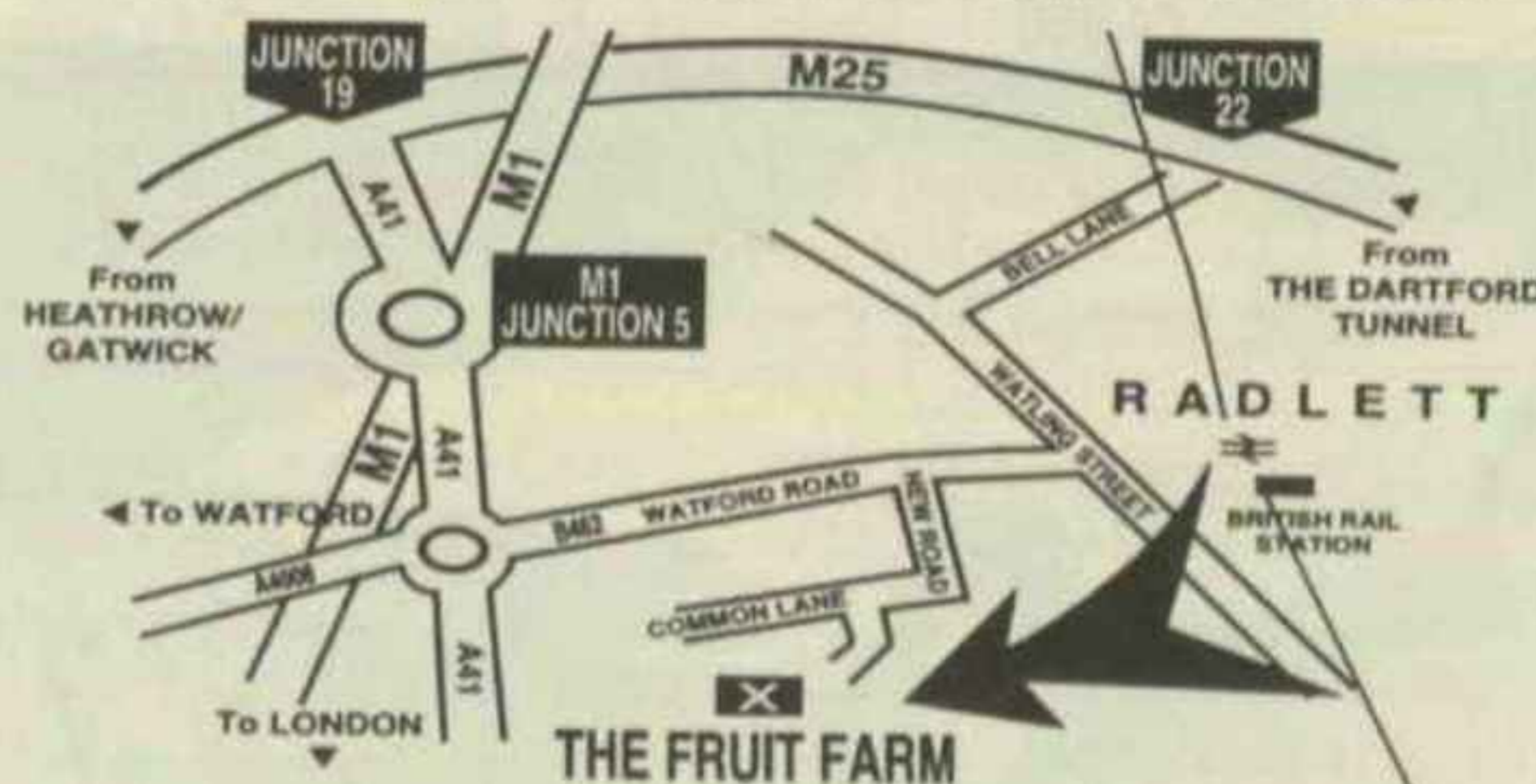
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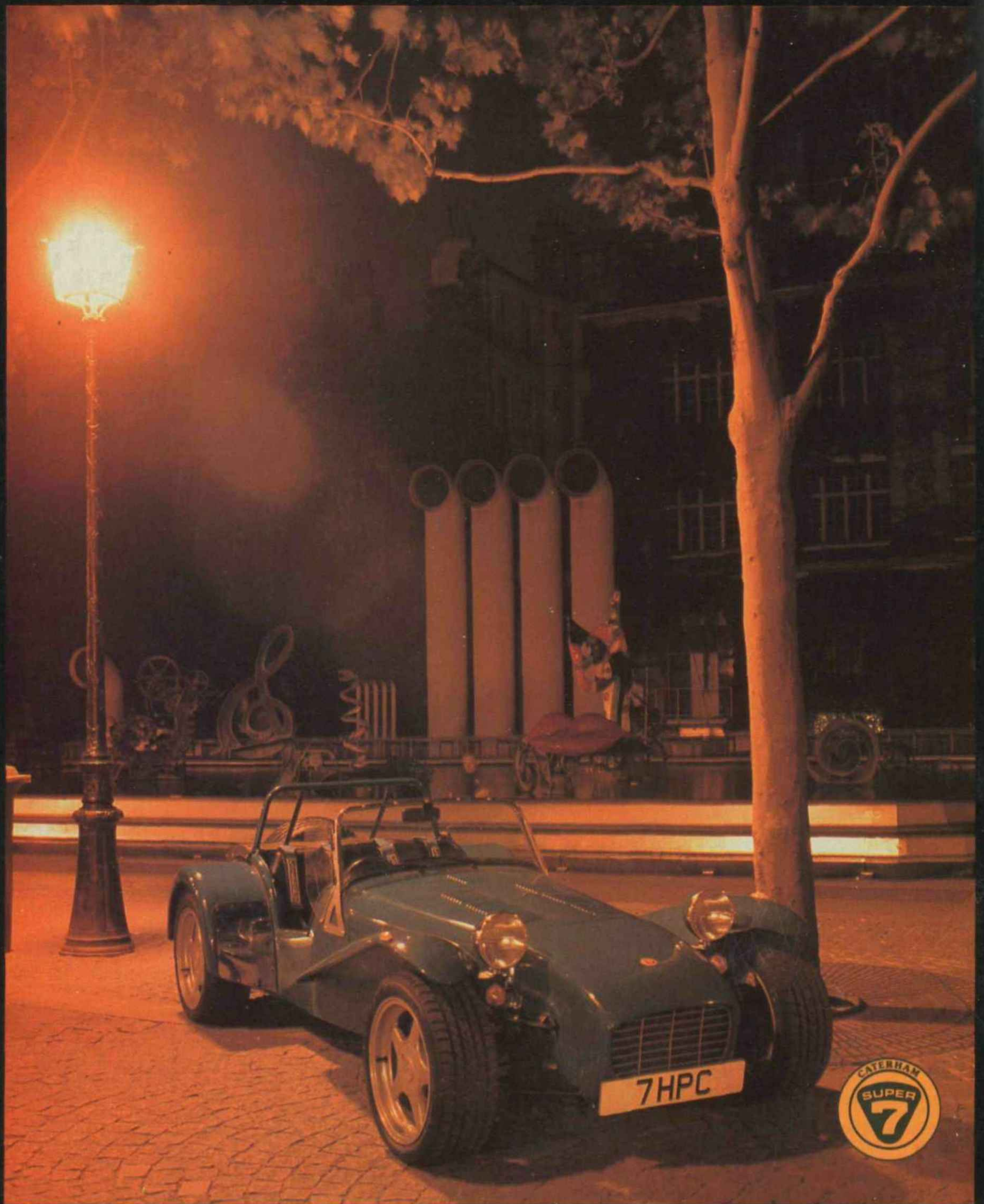
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