



Renault News

105
Spring
2013



photo by Francisco Miranda

Huixquilucan 2013

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Renault Owners Club of North America

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US\$60 International postal membership (including Mexico & Canada) Join online at <www.renaultclub.us/join.html>
Or send payment, along with details about your cars to:
Sharon Desplaines
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Password: europa

January 2013 Member Renewals

Alexander, Peter
Bartz, Wolfgang
Bonaime, Matt
Buddy Aldridge Welding
Chiulli, Roseanne
Cooper, Peter
Dyson, Peter
Garcia, Capriano
Green Wheels Center
Lee, Alexander
Lundin, Jorgen
McLaughlin, Donald
Mulholland, Mark
Purcell, Raymond
Reed, James
Reynolds, Charles
Root Engineering
Russell, Dominic
Showers, John
Smith, Denton
Snyder, William
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February 2013 Member Renewals

Goutal, Jean
Granheim, Bjorn
Gross, Thomas
Harding, David
Ketchpaw, William
Kucsma, Giff
Kutcher, Gary
Lotz, Christopher
Manuel, John
Melville, Kevin
Nicotera, Mark
Shoen, Paul
Stinson, James
Wicks, Frank

February 2013 New Online Members

Phoenix Race Cars, Inc., 25227 N 42nd Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85083, mattconrad@q.com

March 2013 Member Renewals

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Bieberbaum, Robert
Deroux, Anne-Sophia
Flynn, Tim
Hoover, Clayton
Konwiser, John
Lane Motor Museum
Lardani, Anthony
Martin, Dale
Masters, Danny
Nosaka, George
Pointon, Simon
Simaras, J. Jay
Simon, Milt
Stolstad, Ed
Struss, George

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2013 Renault Club Meet Schedule

By Marvin McFalls

Date	Event	Location	Contact
June 14-16	Rendezvous 2013	Saratoga, NY	Driveshesaid.com
June 28-29	CHEER's International Car Show	Georgetown, DE	Walt Koopman, rbdjet61@verizon.net
July 5-7	R4L International ??? (One or	Thenay, France	M. McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
July 20-21	Festival Renault ??? the other)	Montlhéry, France	M. McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
Aug 16-18	Monterey Motorsports Reunion	Monterey, CA	Mazda Laguna Seca Raceway
Sept 6-8	Road America Vintage Races	Elkhart Lake, WI	Brad Stevens, bahnzai@hotmail.com
Nov 1st	Best of F&I at Woodley	Van Nuys, CA	Jock Lynn, geezer.jock@aol.com
Nov ?	United States Grand Prix	Austin, TX	Mike Deak, deak.mihaly@gmail.com



Alpine's Return to Racing after 35 Years

Photos by Roy Smith

Alpine was rewarded with fourth place for its competitive debut at the 3 Hours of Silverstone with drivers Nelson Panciatici and Pierre Ragues. The opening round of the 2012 European Le Mans Series was interrupted after 2 hours and 20 minutes, including one hour behind the Safety Car after Race Control deemed the conditions to be too dangerous.

Nelson Panciatici celebrated the brand's return to racing by emerging in front thanks to an excellent start in the Alpine A450. Renault's Chief Operating Officer Carlos Tavares was at the race to support the Signatech-Alpine team and follow the Alpine A450's debut race. The competitive debut of the Alpine A450, 35 years after the brand's triumph at Le Mans in 1978, was marked by heavy rain.

The first Free Practice session saw Signatech-Alpine drivers Nelson Panciatici and Pierre Ragues top the timesheets as they worked with the team to adapt the new Alpine A450's set-up to the wet conditions. They were second fastest in Free Practice 2. Nelson Panciatici went on to qualify the Alpine A450 on the second row of the grid.

The track was dry when the field was flagged away for the start of the race itself, but a storm broke out during the formation lap. Nelson Panciatici and the Alpine A450 started from third on the grid on Michelin slick tyres and emerged from the opening corner in the lead before the Safety Car was dispatched at the end of Lap 1. At the end of Lap 5, Nelson pitted to fit 'intermediate' tires. After re-joining in ninth place, he started to carve his way back up through the field and was up to second before he handed the car over to Pierre Ragues. With the Alpine A450 now on rain tyres, Pierre rejoined in fifth place and soon moved up one position before the Safety Car was sent out for a second time.

The competition was neutralised for an hour because of the impressive amount of standing water on the track. Race Control ultimately decided to interrupt the race ahead of the scheduled three hours. The positions at that moment became the official result, just as Signatech-Alpine was about to take advantage of its offset strategy.

Philippe Sinault, Signatech-Alpine's Team Principal: "We worked very well to prepare for our first race of the year and it's just a shame that it turned out to be such a frustrating afternoon. Nelson Panciatici said: "I got away cleanly and managed to put the Alpine A450 in front. It was very difficult not to make any mistakes in the rain." Pierre Ragues Commented: "I believe we had the potential to finish on the podium, at the very least. We ran an offset strategy from the start. There was so much rain. I am disappointed because the car's potential was superior to our final finishing position." ●





4CV Restoration

By Jacques Lynn

I received this email from one of my customers. Thought I'd share the work he's done on his car:

Howdy Jacques,

Here are some pics of the 4CV, the real work has occurred since Christmas, after shoveling snow. The power train is FINALLY in place, runs and sounds good, even shifts with a short throw. I'm still looking for a rear wheel HUB to support the (neat) two-piece wheel and believe, IF you think the used one you have is good, I ought to purchase it. I have two good used R-8 rear hubs if there might be a useful trade available. I had to modify the rear axles from the R-8 trans to allow me to use these neat wheels. ☺



The Four Horses of Renault

By Marvin McFalls

During my recent trip to Australia there was a conversation about the four horse hood latch on club member, Col Redmond's 4cv. Several of our members have this same latch on their cars. One of the people attending the show asked Col the names of his four little horses. He jokingly said Iny, Meeny, Miny and Moe. Everyone had a good laugh. However it turned out a short time later that George Hames actually knew their real names. The names of the horses on the bonnet emblem are Adhemar, Anatole, Aniba & Arthur.

It turns out that Renault marketing had created a back story on each of the horses as part of the ad campaign. It obviously worked on George as he has been driving his 4cv for decades. Special thanks to Bob Grey for the great pictures of our equine friends, and also to Peter Olsen who is putting together this story for guys in Australia. ☺



Heir to the Throne

By Roberto Motta

The 1971 A310 four cylinder had not fulfilled the hopes of the Alpine. This car had not been able to replace the legendary Berlinetta A110 on the track or in the hearts of fans because Renault had not seen fit to grant it an engine powerful enough to meet the current challenges.

Five years later, on April 12, 1976, when the workshops of the 'Alpine Competition' of Dieppe and Renault in Billancourt merged to form a new company called 'Renault Sport' with sporting director Gerard Larrousse, the management finally decided to equip the A310 with the 2.6 liter V6 engine.

The initial idea was to set aside a disappointing A310 Group 4 project and implement a new car with the new V6 engine and create a small series of sports cars to be allocated to customers. The engineers opted to use the V6 engine block of 2644 cc already in production and which powered the Renault R30 TS. The engine was developed jointly by Peugeot, Renault and Volvo, and while considered petrol-hungry, it was strong with sports racing potential.

For the racing version, Alpine engineers fixed their sight on the Group 5 effort and modified the engine with a bore of 91mm, 73mm and stroke, a measurement that give a displacement of 2849 cc. The modifications also included a new crankshaft, new pistons, special camshafts and raising the compression ratio to 10.8:1. Powered by two downdraft Weber carburetors, the V6 was then capable of delivering 290 hp at 6000 rpm and developed a torque of 30 kgm at 3500 rpm. The engine retained a wet sump oil supply. The Renault transmission was the 5-speed ZF.

The car was equipped with Gotti wheels with Michelin tires, 9.5 x13" in front and 13 x12.5" at the rear. The A310 V6 Group 5 version had a weight of 1020 kg. The body of the A310 V6 was similar to the previous version with the 4-cylinder engine but more aerodynamic and aggressive.

On the track the A310 V6 proved so fast that the heads of Renault Sport became convinced that it was the ultimate weapon needed to beat the all-conquering Lancia Stratos.

During the development, the drivers discovered handling issues. The Alpine was capable of up to 220 km/h, a speed useless in a rally. What was needed was less speed and better handling. The car was a bit tricky because of the weight distribution was 32% and 68% on the rear.

It was the intention of Renault Sport that the Alpine A310 V6 should participate in the World Rally Championship in the 1977 with the Group 4 car. However, by the end of December '76 only 140 copies were made, so it was not possible to obtain approval. So they set their sights on Group 5.

For the A310 V6 '77 season was great. Guy Fréquelin and

Heir to the Throne: ALPINE A310 V6

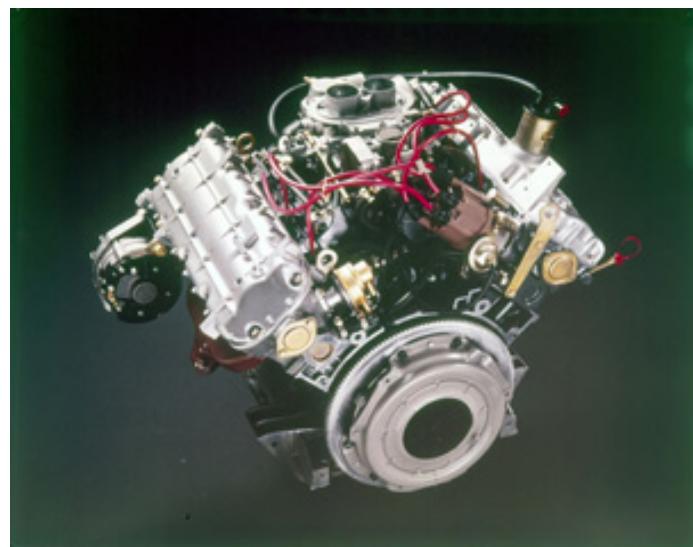


Jacques Delaval won the championship, securing 10 wins and a second place. Fréquelin won the title while runner-up, Bernard Darnirche, who alternated driving the Lancia Stratos and the Fiat 131 Abarth finished the championship in second.

In the second half of 1977, the A310 V6 was approved for Group 4. During the same season, a suitably modified A310 V6 for Michel and Bernard won the Rallycross championship with Jean Ragnotti Rally-Cross and the European Cup with Herbert Grüntiel. Despite the victories obtained by Fréquelin, Ragnotti and Grüntiel in their respective leagues, Renault's management decided to abandon the project because it considered it financially burdensome. They decided to direct some of the resources to the development of the R5 Alpine Group 2.

The A310 V6 factory program came to an end. At the same time, Renault Sport offered customers the conversion kit for the preparation of the cars in Group 4 but left them with the responsibility of preparation.

Renault and Calberson turned the page and left the splendid A310 V6 1978 to begin the season with the R5 Alpine Group 2 with cars assigned to Guy Fréquelin - Jacques Delaval, and Jean Ragnotti - Jean-Marc Andrie. ☺



Huixquilucan 2013

By Francisco Miranda

It is hard to believe another year has passed already and we were eager to go to the International Elegance Concours that the Jaguar Club in Mexico organizes every year at "Las Caballerizas" in Huixquilucan, Estado de México. Over 25000 visitors attended this year during the weekend of 13 - 14 April and some 500 classic cars were displayed.

This year, we missed Marvin McFalls, but Rex Parker came from the U.S. in representation of ROCoNA and he seemed was very happy looking at all the nice cars and especially almost 50 Renaults from different vintages, apart from sharing with us the nice conversations in English, French and Spanish languages (not to mention the occasional word in Portuguese), at some instances... at the same time! Jean-Luc Fournier, a French friend of Alberto Gironella spent some days in our country, learning the history behind the Dinalpin cars. Many of you will know him as the biographer of Jean Rèdèle and writer of several books on Alpine, and a very nice person which I enjoyed meeting quite a lot. Also our friend Pierre Vilalta visited us, so that's the reason of our Multi-language Renault Talks.

Barry Meguiar came down to Mexico to shoot for his "Car Crazy" TV show and he interviewed Rex Parker as a member of ROCoNA on the history of Alpine cars. This was the first time that he came over to Mexico, so it will be a very good promotion for the Alpine/ Dinalpin cars and for ROCoNA and Club Alpine!

- The Best Of The Show Award this year went for a 1956 Mercedes Benz 300 "Gullwing", worth mentioning that it is a different car from last year's winner.
- The 1941 Chrysler Saratoga was chosen the Best American Car.
- The visitor kids chose the Scootacar MK1 as the funniest car of the show.

The Alpine Club displayed a dozen Dinalpin/Alpine including a new restoration: A 1967 A110 red Cabriolet from Mauricio Peña. He tells us that he bought it in 2009 and when the restoration finally took place in 2011, he noticed the body and most mechanical parts were in very good condition, so minimal work underwent there. Suspension, steering, electrical systems, brakes and interior upholstery are kept as factory standard. Only the power plant was upgraded to the 1400 cc cross flow design with hemispherical (hemi) combustion chambers, with two Solex 40 carburetors, as used in the first 1100 cc Gordini engines and the 5 speed gearbox + reverse, prepared in England by Steve Swan. A very attractive and fast car indeed!

Awards of our club's cars were as follows:

- This year's distinction of making it to "The Corral" was for



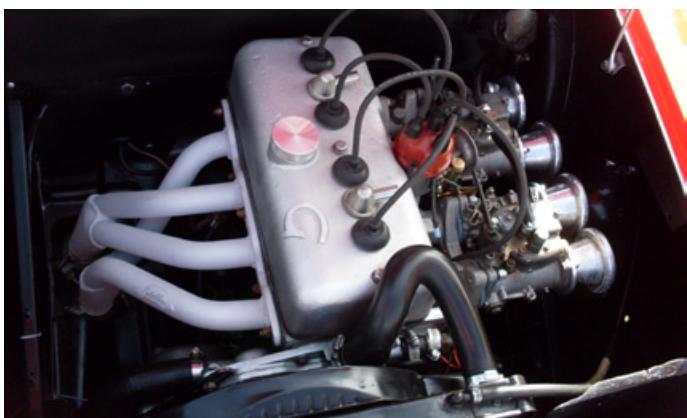
- Mauricio Peña's white 1970, A110L-GT4, 1100cc engine.
- In the originals category, Mauricio Peña's 1967 red Dinalpin Cabriolet; Adrian Duarte's 1969 gray A110 Berlinette.
 - The modified category, Blue 1969 Dinalpin A110 Berlinette with atmospheric 1400 cc engine, Alejandro Cortés; non-member Javier Oses' white Dinalpin, and Angel Espinosa's blue Berlinette.

The Renault México Club also displayed a dozen of very beautiful cars, standing out a very nice R12 Break, an R4F, and an R12 Routier, without discrediting the 4CV, R8, Floride and an A110 Berlinette.

The Renault Gordini Sport Club packed 25 cars in their area, putting together a display of most models sold in Mexico. They also unveiled an R8 previously owned by Alejandro Cortés and now owned by Jorge Mendoza; a restoration we saw some years back at the Gala del Automóvil. The other unveiling was this nice R5, the modest version that Renault sold usually as fleet cars, like the telephone company. This car is now owned by Alejandro Cortés. Congratulations to both!

Every year we have more and more pleasant surprises with new unveilings or restorations, but we are always lucky to enjoy very well maintained beautiful cars.

As every year, we thank our friends of the Jaguar Club as well as the organizers for inviting us to such an important event. ☺





The Friends of a Lotus Europa

By Dick Perryman

This story starts about 1972. By that time I had owned two Lotus Europas, a 1967 S1 from 1967 to 1970 and a 1970 S2, which is the subject of this article.

In 1967 I purchased a Triumph GT6 after a failed attempt to test drive a Jaguar XKE coupe. The Jaguar dealer refused to open the car door for me to sit in the car as he told me I was just a kid wasting his time. I had the Triumph for about 3-6 months and due to an incompetent warranty repair the transmission failed and there were no parts available in the United States to make a repair. I could not wait months for my daily driver and there was no relief in site from the dealership that had left me without a car, so off to look for another car, some help from my Dad and a good lawyer. My experience with foreign car dealerships was not going well.

I had seen a Lotus Europa at Watkins Glen and was very interested in the car but had never followed up to investigate Lotus. I decided to stop at the Pittsburgh Lotus dealership, then on Route 19 South of Pittsburgh to see if they might have a replacement for the Triumph. They had one Europa S1 in the show room and I loved the unusual look of the car and traded in my new Triumph. The salesman treated me well totally unplanned I then owned my first Renault powered Europa. This was the second car I had ever purchased and I was not prepared.

A young car buyer I never thought to ask the dealership if the car had a defroster or heater fan, it didn't and was darn cold. When I went back to the dealership to see what they might do to help their accountant shouted, "Give him a blanket" so I stopped my check and hoped that might get them to help. I ended up releasing the check as the salesman again stepped in and helped with some friendly advice. I bought a Ford heater fan and installed it in the car myself, problem solved in the first week of ownership. This would be a premonition of my future years of owning British cars.

I drove the car every day, often had problems but they were forgivable because I really loved the car. In 1970, my favorite driver fell to an accident with a somewhat tipsy driver, common in those days when the penalties were not so tough. The car was not repairable so I took the insurance money and found another, my Lotus S2, also with a Renault engine.

This car was considerably more civilized. You could roll up the electrically powered windows instead of popping them out and dropping them in the door and they were real glass. The seat was on rails and slides to adjust for leg length rather than molded into the body, like the previous S1. This Europa had a fan for heat and a heater! Wow! It had a real wood dashboard and a place for a radio as opposed to the aluminum dash of the S1 with no radio slot. Unfortunately, as with S1, the car overheated with any incentive to do so. Slow traffic; hot day, stop and go driving, etc. No one seemed to know



how to stop the overheating nor could anyone determine why it was overheating.

After exhausting every avenue I finally assumed it was a cracked block (it wasn't). I ordered a Renault crate motor from Franco American Motors in 1976. The crate motor had a slightly higher horsepower and hopefully wouldn't overheat. The motor was supposed to be a drop in but alas not to be. After about 3 weeks the new motor was installed after making frame modifications to clear the exhaust manifold. It was indeed quick and nimble and I loved driving it, but still faced occasional overheating.

My wife became pregnant with our oldest and I realized the writing was on the wall; I would have to retire the two seater. I put the Lotus in the garage, bought a station wagon and moved to suburbia. With a new son and daughter in the family and a challenging job I was just too busy to get it out for weekend runs and then there was the nagging overheating issue. It remained in the garage until 1996.

In the summer of 1996 my wife, my son and my daughter nagged at me long enough to get the car restored and I eventually caved in. All I remembered was the overheating, the interstate repairs in the rain, and the now tight fitting cockpit.

I took the car, disassembled by my son and a friend, to eastern Pennsylvania to get a price on the restoration and dropped off the parts and the car to get a price for the restoration.

I was shocked by what I heard when I returned in two weeks to get them started, the price was well above what I could afford. Four of us were there for this trip, my son Chris, and a two good friends, Monti Rae and Kevin Maehling who races Vintage Porsche now. We loaded up the parts, the engine and the car and decided to look in the local Yellow Pages to see if there was anyone between Reading, PA and Pittsburgh, PA that we could stop and talk to about the restoration on the way home with the car.

We found a company just a few miles away that specialized in MG restoration and racing preparation. After a phone call and after the owner indicated he had owned a Europa and would look at it, we were off to Reading, PA.

After arriving at a small two bay garage we met and he looked over the parts and pieces and we struck a deal. If I would allow him to work on the car when he wanted so as not to interfere with the racing seasons, he would take on the restoration of the car and motor. After a brief Pow Wow with my friends it was decided to let him have the car. Bill Shields at Carriage Craft would strip the Lotus to the frame and start over building the car with as many new parts as possible.

I also asked him to install a full roll cage, which was ordered from England and came without one word of instruc-

tion or drawings, a real challenge but they were up to it. The seat belts were reattached to the roll cage, the windshield was replaced, and the car was painted to match the scheme of a 47 racecar.

The car was reupholstered by one of the best men I have seen work on a car interiors. His main effort was directed towards Roger Penske so; again so long as I was willing to wait he agreed to work on the car. I didn't expect it to take as long as it did but the job was the best I had seen. A Ron Davis Racing all aluminum-radiator with fan was added with twice the cooling but in the same space as the original. Hopefully this would help with the overheating issues. A new high temperature coated exhaust was installed.

A lot of chrome was replated, new chrome lettering and parts were installed. New black Panasport wheels were installed with new tires. The Renault crate motor I purchased in 1972 was disassembled and rebuilt before installation. Even the car jack was blasted and repainted.

In 2012, the job was done. The car was delivered to my door and all was right with the world. Alas, that was not to be. Before I continue, the folks from Reading had a lot to do on this car and even with what I am about to describe I would go back to them again.

My son and I took the car for a quick spin near home and the alternator/battery was not taking a charge. In addition I drove the car to my daughter's home and left a trail of oil in her driveway. Back to the garage! I installed a new voltage regulator and that seemed to solve the problems with the electrical system.

I called my friends in, one in particular, Mark Maehling, Mark and I looked for the leaks and found a loose valve cover and a loose temperature sender. Probably not too big a deal, but it looked like the valve cover needed to be machined and for some reason the temperature sender could not be tightened enough to stop the leakage.

My friend Mark knew who and where to take the car. It was about an hour from Pittsburgh in Wampum, PA to a place that specialized in building racecars and doing automotive engineering. The shop was amazing. Very neat, all tools carefully located, floors you could eat off of and all. It is known as the Race Place. Bret, the owner, agreed to take the car because he had never seen a car with the water pump and alternator on the backside of the motor, or so he said.

I left him with three challenges, the first – fix the oil leaks. (I dumped 4-5 quarts of oil on my wife's car driving up to Wampum). The second was to fix the overheating which was still occurring, just while running the car in the garage. The third was to redesign and rebuild the clutch linkage, which was poorly designed by Lotus adding considerable effort to the job. I asked him to make any changes as invisible as possible.

The car was finally done last month. Several things were added in addition to the original list. A full fire suppression system was installed behind the dash and in the engine compartment. I am a lot slower getting out of the car than I used to be.

In addition the suspension installed in Reading was re-worked with no washers/ spacers. The advantage of a machine shop. The seat was still very unsteady and the slides were at fault. New slides were ordered and plates added to the car to reduce the flex of the fiberglass. Making several new cooling system pieces and redesigning the circulating system cured the overheating. Bret Moyer at Race Place new just what to do. By now my faith in USA automotive engineering skills was quickly being restored.

When the work seemed completed, we took the car for a test drive. Sure enough whenever the radiator fan, ventilation fan and lights were on the car was not charging adequately. When any one was on the charge was adequate. It was decided to discuss this with an expert in the field. I turned to a shop not far from Pittsburgh, Willard Generator and a man named Art Glass and brought him the car, now running cool and very quick and nimble. After about an hour he advised it was not the fan loads or any electrical loads or wiring it was the alternator, now where does one get a forty-year-old French built alternator? Much to my surprise he took my old alternator, stripped it down and installed a new single lead alternator inside the old French housing, wow! Looks 40 years old and acts like a new alternator, problem solved? Not to be again.

While checking the Lotus wiring he noticed some of the starter wires appeared to be melting. He covered them up with some insulation and suggested I tow the car back to the Race Place for a Titanium heat shield to be made. If he hadn't been so observant I might have lost the car. At this point I was determined to keep the car and drive it a little before the warm weather succumbed to snow and salt. I took the car home with an extra fire extinguisher, jacked it up and took a look. Not surprisingly the only wires I could see had a rubber jacket in addition to the wire insulation and the rubber was melting from the heat of the exhaust manifold. From above or below I couldn't get a view of the wires near the starter. I decided to feel my way down the wire and discovered they were resting up against the exhaust manifold, again if Art had missed this I could definitely have had a fire. I ordered some insulation from Summit Racing in Ohio and insulated the wires and the starter. I still plan on having the heat shield designed and built but it can wait until spring now that I can drive the car.

I really haven't had much opportunity to drive the car, but I believe it is finally done - with the exception of the heat shield and maybe a few new wires. I can now say for sure the car is safer, more powerful, better looking and more comfortable than it ever was. I hope to drive the car for a few more years and then pass it on to the younger generation.

I owe lots of thanks to a lot of people but especially my family and friends that put me in contact with great professionals. The job now seems done and the car is better built than Lotus ever dreamed, safer than anyone expected and drives like a dream. ☺



History of the Manic GT

By Glen Woodcock

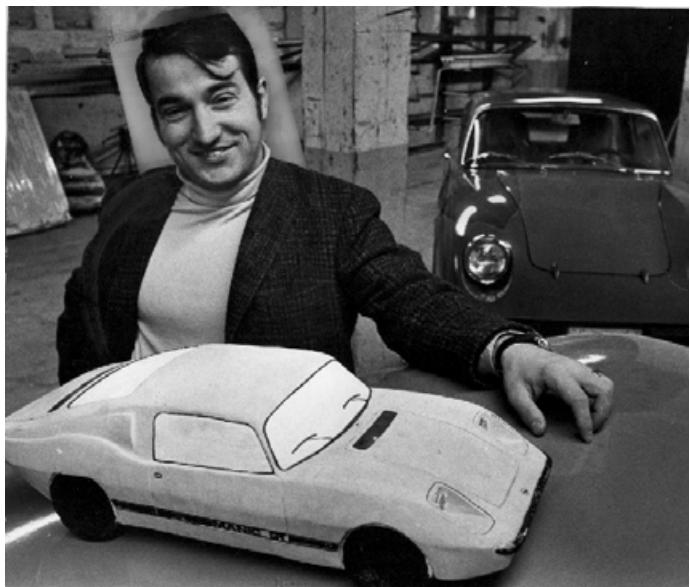
The Manic GT was the brainchild of 32-year-old Montrealer Jacques About, who as an employee of Renault Canada in the late 1960s was tasked with surveying Canadians to see if they would be interested in the French automaker's Alpine road/rally cars. The answer was affirmative, but Renault decided not to proceed with the project.

So About took it from there and with a group of young Quebecers he formed L'Ecurie Manic Inc. and the former sports writer and judo instructor began to realize his dream of building a Canadian sports car. One of the people he teamed up with was Serge Soumille, a young Frenchman who was in Canada accompanying his songstress wife while she was on tour. Soumille would design the Manic GT's body, made of fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) and stay with the company to the bitter end in 1971.

The fiberglass bodies are all but indestructible, but the same cannot be said of the Renault R8 unibody platforms to which they were attached. (As restorers have found, to their dismay, the body and its tubular steel cage are fiberglassed directly onto the frame, making it impossible to remove without cutting. It would have been so much easier if bolts had been used.) The Renault chassis proved to be the car's downfall - after five or six years in the Canadian climate it rusted away. Because the car had a reliable water-cooled Renault engine in the rear, it could be driven safely on snowy roads. But road salt gathered in the R8 platform's many nooks and crannies, creating perfect breeding spots for corrosion.

About and company set up business in rented premises in Terrebonne, near Montreal. There they produced a prototype, given the designation PA1. Originally, an 1108-cc Renault 4-cylinder engine was used, but most cars were built with the 1289-cc Renault "Sierra" engine that came in three versions. Base engine had 65 hp with a single barrel Solex downdraft carburetor. In the middle was an 80 hp version. The hot engine had an Autobleu exhaust, a side draft 2-barrel Weber DCOF carburetor and made 105 hp - not a lot even in those days, but enough to let the lightweight 1,450-lb. car reach speeds of 135 mph. That made the Manic GT one of the fastest production cars of its time. The base transmission was a Renault 4-speed manual with floor shifter. A 5-speed stick was offered as an extra-cost option, but I have never seen a Manic equipped with one as original equipment.

To get publicity for the new venture, L'Ecurie Manic Inc. obtained a French Formula C race car from GRAC (Group de Recherche de l'Automobile Competition) and got a license to build a Manic-GRAC, which raced with an Alfa Romeo engine and set a Formula C lap record on the track in St. Jovite, Quebec. This success attracted new backers, including the federal government, a Quebec government pension fund, the owners of the Steinberg supermarket chain and Placement Bombar-



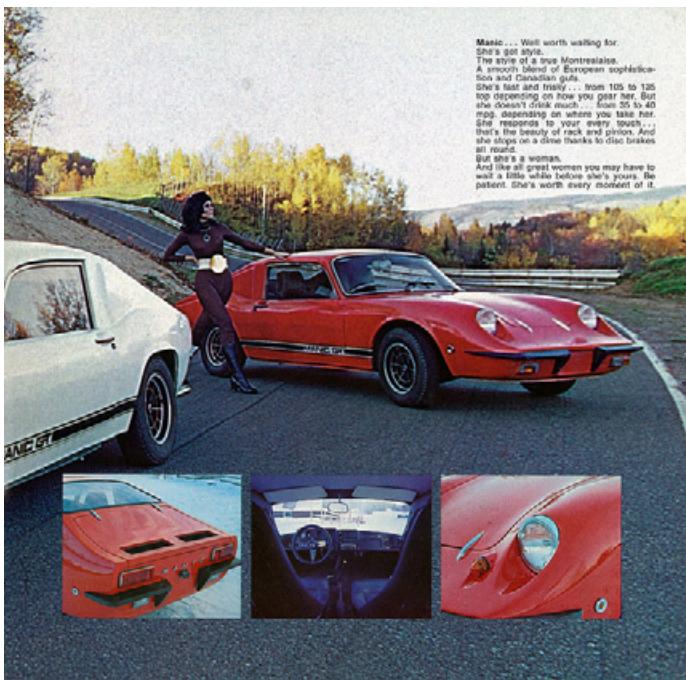
dier, inventors of the first snowmobile.

In late 1968, the company was renamed Les Automobiles Manic Inc. and, with \$1.5 million in financing, a 60,000 square foot factory was acquired in Granby, in Quebec's Eastern Townships. The size of the building shows just how grand the dream was. Development proceeded on the ground-hugging Manic GT. Overall length was 162.5", with a wheelbase of 89.25" and a turning circle of just over 30 feet. Colors were French Racing Blue, Belgian Racing Yellow, green, red, white and orange. Blue, red and orange models typically came with black vinyl interiors; yellow and green cars got persimmon vinyl and white cars, red.

The car was to be sold and serviced at Renault dealers across Canada. Despite a financial setback that caused the company to be reorganized as Les Automobiles Manic (1970) Ltée., the car was the hit of that year's auto salon in Montreal. And the following year production at the Granby assembly plant was finally up to several cars per day - although a far cry from the 15,000 cars per year About had predicted. The problem was with Renault. It was phasing out the R8 and R10 whose mechanicals, lighting, etc. were used in the Manic and parts delivery from France was hit and miss.

As About told a Canadian magazine after the company failed, "We bought parts from Spain, Mexico and dealers here. We just couldn't get them. Simple things like screws for the suspension. Your car is stopped for \$3 worth of parts. We lost \$300,000 just waiting for parts. We had 115 workers waiting; we didn't want to let them go. Renault was just getting organized about the time we closed." The black day came on May 20, 1971 after just 160 cars had been produced. Many unfinished bodies were sold by the trustee at the bankruptcy sale. Some of these still exist.

Ironically, the Manic GT had been shown at the 1971 New York Auto Show and About claimed to have in hand a contract from a U.S. distributor for 1,000 cars a year. But the backers voted against loaning the company another \$250,000 to keep going and that was the end of the dream - and of the last car ever to be designed and built in Canada. ●



4CV G

By Peter Davson-Galle

I met Marvin McFalls when he was recently in Australia at a rear-engined Renault meet. We talked about my 4CV and my Djet and the idea for this pair of articles grew out of that. In the first one, I'll give a little bit of the 4CV's and my history. In the second, I'll outline its modifications.

I have 4 toys: the heavily modified 1958 4CV that's my current focus, a modified 1966 R8 (bought new by my mother), a modified 1979 Mini Moke (bought new by me) and, a 2012 acquisition, a (mildly and reversibly modified) 1966 Matra Djet V (under 24,000 miles from new when bought). I bought the 4CV (in January 1968) from its original owner by the simple expedient of placing a note under a wiper saying: 'if you would like to sell me your 750, then I will pay you more than it is worth; my phone # is' He phoned and I bought (I still have the original handwritten receipt for it) and I have had it in various versions ever since. One attraction was that (being built in 1958) it is the later 3-stud wheel type - which I wanted, as wheels and tyres were to be modified. I had just become 4CV-less, a state not to be borne, so... It is my third 4CV.

My first 4CV (and first car) was a bog-standard spider-wheel one that a mate knew of; well, standard except for a Dauphine Gordini motor. It died - my fault. I got a spider-wheel shell from a wrecker and built another one up. Basically it was a Dauphine Gordini with a 4CV shell and some suspension modifications including some pure leading arm toe-control rods at the rear. It went well but a mate borrowed it and it died also - his fault (and he paid for it). So, third time lucky? Yes.

My current 4CV was immediately modified with bits from its predecessors except for the motor (reason? I had a buyer for it and, as a poor undergraduate, needed the money). It also got painted with some genuine R1134 Gordini blue paint (by me, using a vacuum cleaner - it worked but was a bit, um, textured - left me with a taste for matte, not gloss, finishes though). Mechanically, it acquired at various stages over the years: a Gordini motor again, a rear transverse leaf camber-compensator (much recommended), some R1130 R8 front discs (basically a bolt-on fit) and then a (cut and weld job) R10 front cross member and suspension, steering and discs. Wheels and tyres (and tyre pressure tuning of handling balance) were a matter of continuing interest and change.

But: my mechanic noticed that it had cracks in the longitudinal chassis rails where the rear cross member bolts on. Not surprising really, given its decades of being banged over dirt roads (and non-roads) and torsionally twisted on bitumen ones. Solution? Plate-reinforce and re-weld.

However this was then a time of thought. Why not do more than this? Let's do a major conversion. Hey, it might take a



year or two, but...

That was 1999. It was finally finished mid-2012 (although it has been on the road minus-Webers for a year before that). A longer process than anticipated then - but it was quite involved. The modifications were sufficiently radical to require formal submission of a proposal to the state registration authorities and then, once that proposal had been given "in principle" approval, the modifications had to be signed off by one of the 4 or 5 engineers around the state that the Department commissions for such "weirdo" certification work. Most of the work would be done by my mechanic but I hired various specialists, including the engineer, to do some of the trickier stuff. The modifications took so long that I had to re-apply under some new regulations but that was painless and it is now avec compliance plate attached to the "firewall". So, what is its current form? Details will be for next time but basically, all that remains of the original is the body shell so it's rather changed from how it was when first I owned it almost 45 years ago and I judge it to be absolutely "sorted" and delicious. I would have "killed" to have had it in this form back then but, quite possibly, it might have killed a younger, sillier driver.

Last time, I painted a bit of history; this time, I will outline the modifications to my "beastie". I'll group the changes.

The body was stripped, sandblasted, and had lots of rust removal, new metal, reinforcements and so on and much fish oil was sprayed in the cavities. It was then etch-primed and painted FRB (surprise!) with two white (tape) stripes in line with the driver. An R10 front cross-member was already welded in and an R10 floorpan cross-member was welded in to receive the front of the rear semi-trailing toe-control arms. The front was modified to receive a front radiator (BMW style inlet slots and fan shroud/tunnel to an exhaust slot beneath vehicle). Given the cracking mentioned last time, some rear X cross-bracing bars went in above the rear axle and a competition-spec roll hoop replaced the rear seat. The guards were widened front and rear to accommodate wheel and tyre changes.

The engine is basically a standard R5 Alpine (1397, hemi) engine but a few external mods have been done. An electric water pump has replaced the belt driven one (better flow and runs a bit after switch off) and the ignition is now Hot Spark pointless. Induction is via twin 40DCOE Webers breathing through a KandN panel filter in a custom fabricated cold air box. Main source of air is the slot in front of the right rear wheel. Squeezing it all in was hard and it involved a custom inlet manifold angling the side-draughts forward a bit. Also hard was getting the pipe length for the (ceramic coated stainless) 4:2:1 exhaust manifold and my solution was having the system completely circumnavigate the engine. It finally dyno-ed around 87bhp at the wheels so, assuming the 25 - near 30% loss that these set-ups seem to have, that would equate to around 115-120+ bhp

gross at the flywheel. This is a 30% increase on the standard (except for extractor and water pump) Alpine motor, which dyno-ed at around 67 bhp. That motor in standard fitment is listed as 93 bhp gross but I'm assuming that, even with some beneficial changes, mine was a bit down on that (otherwise it'd be a 38% loss).

Transmission is a standard (late R10) type 330 (out to the wheels). This is a source of concern as motors like these break standard diffs (although I'm gentle in first). I know of a nice fiddle involving a bearing supporting the inner end of the half shaft that might be advised; and stronger R16 internals in the R10 transaxle casing is a common fix that I may do. I'll wait until I break this diff though.

Brakes are R10 discs front and rear. I haven't done the usual fiddle of removing the rear compensating valve to limit front lock-up in the wet (I have done it in my R8 though and it's advised). This is because lockup is not a problem with all the weight that's been shifted to the front - so much weight indeed that I have fitted 130 mm alloy spacers on the coils (R8 Gordini and A110 rough road rallying gear) to raise the front.

Suspension is basically R10 and modifications have been handling orientated. Rear springs had one turn removed from the standard rear coils ($>3^\circ$ negative camber - good, lower C.G. - good, resultant stiffer spring rate, thus roll stiffness - bad; overall: worth it) with fronts left standard and R8 G "red" Koni dampers fitted all round (a bit of fiddling involved at each end). The rear also has shorter droop straps (335 mm long) and a transverse leaf camber compensator spring - long used and now with one extra half-length leaf. The path of the R10 semi-trailing toe-control arms entailed thought about fuel tank changes. The front was the obvious solution but, apart from a beneficial weight shift, I hate the idea. So, to allay my concerns, it's made out of 3mm steel plate and is around 40 litres.

Steering is one big change. Quick racks are not available in right hand drive and LHD ones don't fit. My solution is to use a Coleman Prolite 1.5:1 reduction "steering quickener" to reduce the R10 rack's turns from 3.7 to about 2.5. This is an in-steering-column reduction gearbox designed for American dirt oval racers and it's a great modification, transformative - the single best thing that I've done.

Wheels and tyres are a long-standing interest of mine. I like to retain delicacy of "feel" and have the car adjustable at the limit (and reach that limit on a public road where it's safe to do so). So: nothing too wide, don't have too much offset at the front (thus avoid 13" wheels), have a wheel and tyre size difference front to rear and choose tyres with wet grip as top priority. I've ended up with 4.5x14 and 165/65 front and 5.5x14 and 185/60 rear with a 4psi pressure difference (my R8 with identical suspension apart from uncut rear springs has equal pressures all round). Its behaviour is as close to neutral as I have had a

rear-engined Renault in 45 years of driving various versions. Some of the wheels use cut down 15s as centres and some use R16 ones. The latter are inherently stronger than the former and the R10 derived centres tend to crack at the stud holes under high lateral stress. My solution is to have spacer type rings made out of 3mm plate and welded to the inside of the wheel - they work well.

Some miscellaneous details are: the radiator is from a Mini and fits like it was made for the 4CV and instruments and column shroud and stalks come from an early R12 with spot-on speedo gearing given the near identical diameter of the R12's 155/80-13 and my 185/60-14 tyres (spare is, incidentally, a 145/65-15 which also has nearly the same diameter - a horrible Nankang but it's just a spare; the Djet and the R8 have somewhat better Conti spares in the same, early Smart front, size).

In closing, this is the culmination of 45 years of fettling fang-worthy 4CVs and I honestly can't think of a thing that I would change (within reason - after driving my Djet, I'd love a mid-engine and proper wishbone rear suspension but ...). Were it to be a race car, then things would be different but it's a road car. It goes, stops and handles nicely. For a rear-engined Renault with a short wheelbase, it is remarkably communicative, biddable and un-snappily adjustable at the limit - even in the wet and it is happy on uneven surfaces so long as I have clearance (exhaust! - and the camber compensator sits low; although it doesn't hurt anything if it gets a whack, as it simply swivels back). So, hereafter I foresee further fanging and not further fiddling - it's finished (unless of course it breaks something, like its diff.). I shall keep it until either it dies or I do (conceiv-

ably in the same, albeit unfortunate, event). Actually, come to think of it, I've not ever sold one of my cars (although I've killed one 4CV, had two R12s die of old age and given a Midget away as part of a divorce - the 4CV's Cibies come from it). ☺



Wanted: Articles/Pictures From Our Members

By Sharon Desplaines

This is your magazine and we want to hear from our members. Have you recently completed a restoration, modification to your Renault? Share your experiences with us. How did you become interested in Renaults? Did your parents, grandparents own one and you learned to drive in theirs? Maybe an unusual story of how you found your Renault, maybe in the old family barn under a lot of cobwebs with flat tires, rat eaten upholstery, steering wheel in the back seat? (Gee this sounds familiar to me) Let us know, we want to hear and share these articles with all our club members.

I know by talking to many of you, that there are a lot of you out there are just itching to pick up a pen and start writing or go to your computer. Well, let's get going!

For those who submit articles with or without pictures, who doesn't like pictures, and is printed in the Renault News you will receive a one year free online subscription. Now how about that?

Let's try to get enough articles/pictures in order to keep the Renault News full of member articles going for the next year or more.

Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, etc. because we have experts that I donate their time to look over all the articles we are going to receive and use.

You can email me with your articles and pictures to:
hummer5@cox.net
or mail directly to me:
Sharon Desplaines, Secretary/Treasurer ROCONA,
7467 Mission Gorge Rd.
Sp 81
Santee CA 92071

Waiting to hear from you. ☺

Renault Frères 2013

By Marvin McFalls

Since its inception in 2010, the Club Alpine Mexico has hosted the Renault-Frères in Mexico. The event has been held at Plaza Inbursa Cuicuilco for the past three years. The Plaza is on the site of an old paper factory converted into a shopping mall. In years past more than 70 cars participated in this event. However this year Renault of Mexico came on board as a corporate sponsor and moved the event to the upper level of the plaza. The Renault Owners Club of North America joined the Alpine Club as organizer and Gordini, Clio and Mexico Clubs as participating clubs.

In total, there were at least 300 Renaults and more than half were vintage models. This was the biggest gathering of Renault in Mexico in decades. My good friend Francisco Miranda was also in attendance, and he volunteered to provide the photos for this event, and he also showed one of his Dauphines, and Dinalpin GT4. I came to the event with Ben Becerra and my friends from Club R5 Mirage. I drove the White R12 of my friend Gustavo Becerra, as he was out of the country at the start of the show. We were told to arrive at 9AM on Saturday to line up our cars on the Plaza. However it was closer to 10:30 before the finishing touches were completed on the display and we were allowed in. We were finally able to line up our cars with the other classic Renaults in the middle of the plaza.

On the left side of the square was a large tent featuring a timeline of Renault in Mexico. At the start of the display was the oldest Renault in Mexico a 1905 type AX Taxi that has been owned by the same family for sixty years. It is the first time it has been displayed publicly in decades. Followed by Post-war models starting with the 4cv through the R9, and then followed up by some of the newest models offered by Renault of Mexico. Next came a display of Alberto Gironella's collection including the Shooting Star, Alpine Rally, and F1 Renaults.

To the Right of Square as you entered the event there was a large brick and rod iron looking entryway with the Renault Frères logo. Ahead was the event registration followed by another collection of new model Renaults. Then came the club tents, kids area, and VIP sections, along with the Renault Duster driving course along the back of plaza.

After getting everything set up, Francisco and I decided to grab some mid-morning refreshments we were joined by Alejandro Konstantonis and a few more members of the Alpine club. Now it was time for the opening ceremonies. I sat with other club presidents while Monica Perez from Renault of Mexico Marketing Department opened the event before turning it over to Alberto Gonzalez of Club Alpine Mexico and to Hector Perez of the Gordini Club.

With all the official business concluded we spent the rest



of the afternoon reconnecting with friends. During the day I ran in to club member, Carlos Luyando, who had made a ROCoNA window banner for me to display. I also ran into my good friend Ricardo Monroy Gamboa. Ricardo is a professor of Physics at the University. After checking out his beautiful Clio Renault Sport, we then ran into his wife Monica and her family.

With all the cars checked out I stopped by Gordini Club tent for a visit. President, Hector Perez gave me a gift of a new Gordini Club Fedora. Gordini Club members also joined us: Javier Gonzalez, Jorge Mendoza, Victor Perez, and newest member Pierre Vilalta, a recent arrival to the Mexican car scene from France. We spent much of the afternoon discussing Renaults and even a little politics. It had been a good first day, but we looked forward to Sunday's main event.

On Sunday, I travelled to the show with Ben and his family. After meeting up with Francisco we decided it was time for a long overdue meal. As everyone else seemed to be busy, just the two of us head to one of the restaurants along the plaza. Following a wonderful meal we returned to the Plaza to see how the show was progressing.

By then there were thousands of people in the Plaza. We headed back to the Alpine tent where we caught up with members: Mauricio Pena, Jose Miguel Diaz Goni, Angel Espinosa, and Alberto Gironella. Alberto and I were able to catch up, he had returned to Retromobile this year and I filled him in on my winter travels. Before leaving Alberto Gonzalez made sure to give me my new club shirt and jacket.

As it was getting late in the day, Gustavo Becerra had finally made it back to Mexico and came by the show with his family. So we had to make one more pass thru the plaza checking out all the cars. On our travels first we ran into good friend Alex San, and then Rodolfo Ortiz arrived. Ben and Raul Aguilera had affixed the Club Mirage banner between two R5s and we were joined by a few of the models from the Renault display for a photo

As we were starting to get hungry so Gustavo and I met his family for dinner back in the plaza. As we walked thru the parking lot we passed another beautiful R4 on the way to Gustavo's Megane. After a good meal we returned to the square to pick up Gustavo's white R12, by then they were tearing down the tents and loading up many of the cars on rollbacks. As we drove under the Renault Frères marque, I couldn't think of a better end to a perfect weekend. 





Targa Tasmania 2013

By Trevor Wise

As the season turns and the autumn leaves are at their best some of the best drivers in world make the long trek for TARGA TASMANIA for Australia's biggest road rally. This year's event was competed from April 16-21st, and featured a strong contingent of Renaults. Renault competed in the 2WD Showroom Category. The factory team featured: Grant Denyer & Dayle Moscatt in an RS Megane 265, also competing as privateers were Benjamin Noor & Lee Challoner-Miles, RS Megane 250, and Nick Strange / Ian Cudmore RS Megane 250. As the event unfolded, these three cars swept the top three spots in the class.

Grant Denyer, well known as a TV weatherman on the SUNRISE show in Australia, put in a great drive, claiming 7th fastest overall and 3rd fastest on the twisty Mt Arrowsmith stage on the West Coast. The Megane of Mike Sinclair also crossed the line but was out of contention after an off road excursion, unfortunately Adam Spence also went off road and rolled his car.

Renaults also competed in the Classic Competition. The Renault Car Club of Australia was well represented by Ted Merewether in the yellow Megane R26, Andrew Collier in the R5 Turbo and Ernst & Sonia Luthi in the red Alpine A110. While none of the classic Renaults were in the top of their class, everyone had Great fun!

Once again congratulations to The Megane RS 265 factory team for their win in the 2WD Showroom category and to SUNRISE TVs Grant Denyer - always a great PR coup - a TV personality who can drive fast as well!! ☺



The Curious Issue of R8 & R8 Gordini Front Shock Absorbers

By John Waterhouse

Well, I had a slight surprise under the R8 today. A while back I bought a pair of new front Konis for her, the ones on the car being 30+ years old and secondhand when fitted. There is a bit of rod pitting at the top but actually they feel OK, although new top rubbers are needed.

Anyway, the new ones were the correct R8 G ones (and only those indicated for R8 Gordini 1134-1135 are available in Koni) and are labelled 80 1743SP3. The corresponding rear ones are labelled 80 1744SP3.

A web search revealed that Spax in UK still offer R8/10 AND R8 Gordini adjustables with different part numbers, suggesting that something is different.

The R8 G was a bit lowered in the suspension compared with the standard R8 but I'd always understood that the only real difference was in shorter and stiffer coil springs. It turns out the new "R8 Gordini" Konis are 40 mm shorter than those on the car when fully extended. Using the end of the inside working parts of the shocker is not the way to limit suspension travel!

The old shockers, genuine Koni and taken off an R8 that I wrecked, have a part number 80B-1401 and had a big annular bump stop (shown below on the new 1743 but really from the old 1401).



Front Konis, old and new – 35-40 mm shorter for the Gordini

The obvious thing to do was to put the old ones back and forget the matter, as they seem to work properly, don't do much work anyway, and might last another 30 years! But that pitting and flaking on one of the rods does need fixing as it is starting to carve out the top rubber seal on one side.

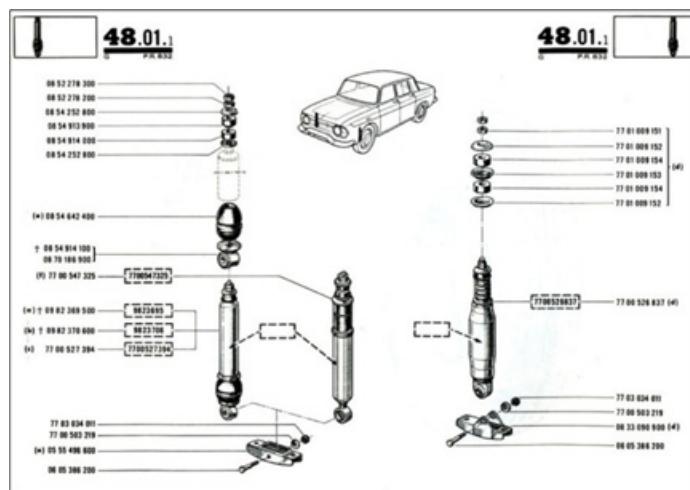
I could have fitted a much bigger "downward" bump stop and limited downward travel in the suspension to match the new shock absorber. Seemed a bad solution...

I decided to pursue the matter, starting with a few emails and a post on Aussiefrogs (and the thread had been read by 281 people at the time of writing).

I wasn't interested in new average shockers as that isn't an improvement over what I had.

The only logic I could come up with was to modify the lower mount so that the shock absorber was 25 mm or so higher and check that the shorter travel (80 mm) was sufficient. I decided that travel wasn't a huge issue given the large bump stops on the lower R8 wishbones.

There were hints of different lower mounts for R8 Gordinis but the breakthrough came from Bob Gray, some measurements from his expectedly ample supply of odd shock absorbers and a scan from a genuine Renault 10 parts book.



Renault 10 parts book showing early and late lower shock absorber mounts

In parallel, I'd been in touch with the extremely helpful Barry Brookes from Top Performance in Victoria (03 9873 1722, Toperformance-Koni, 8 Trade Place, Vermont 3133, and toper@toperformance.com.au). Barry was able to find old Koni parts books and give the following information about Koni numbers for different R8 years:

Year	Koni number – R8
62-64	80-1401 front, 80-1402 rear.
64-68	80-1401 front, 80-1747 rear
67-70	80-1401 front, 80-1974 rear
R8 Gordini	80 1743SP3 front, 80-1744SP3 rear

So my old ones were indeed the correct shock absorber for my R1130. I can't read the parts number on my rear Konis, which I bought new in the mid-1970s, but I imagine they are 80-1747 or 80-1974 as I'd upgraded to heavier R10 springs and bump stops early in our ownership.

None of the early Koni numbers are available for standard R8s, but the Gordini ones are readily available, thanks to

enthusiasm for the R8 Gordini and Alpine A110 models.

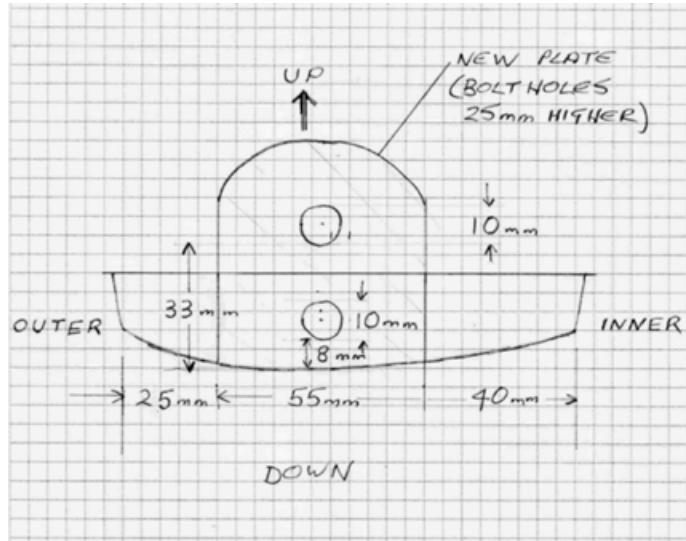
Back to our car. A careful check of those odd boxes of bits revealed, to my complete surprise, two brand new late model lower mounting brackets.



Front shocker mounts new (rear) and old (front)

The newer ones were duly fitted with the 80 1743SP3 shock absorbers with apparently complete success.

Dimensions for the plates you need to make and weld on to convert old to new, in order to fit new Konis to your R8 (or some R10 models I presume) are given in the sketch below.



On the new parts, there are two spot welds (visible on the photo) and the seam is welded along the bottom of the mounting (where the sketch indicates 55 mm). The total height is about 55 mm too and the holes are almost exactly 25 mm higher than standard, much as deduced when trying to work it out.

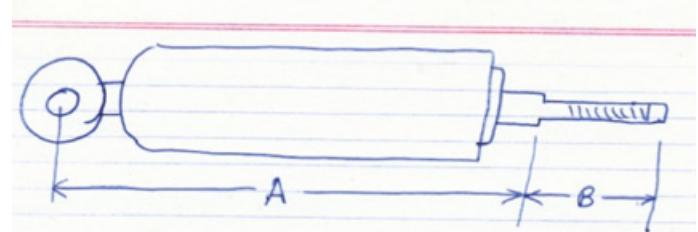
The extra plates are folded slightly so that the internal clearance for the lower shock absorber bush is the same as standard.

Finally, lengths as given by Bob Gray complete the story in case you have any old shockers sitting around and don't know what they fit.

Hi John,

These are the dimensions I posted on AF. I have added the total range in the R/H column.

Shock absorber type	Total Range (bush to pin)		
KONI 80-1974	A = 238 - 360	B = 55	293 - 415
BOGE 110-831			
(for R8/R10 front)	A = 215 - 325	B = 45	260 - 370
KONI 80-1401			DITTO
Monroe-Wylie A9			
823-706 (front)	A = 230 - 320	B = 52	282 - 372
Monroe-Wylie			
A8 555-542 (rear)	A = 235 - 360	B = 52	287 - 412
Armstrong			
62-0314 10 0	A = 233 - 367	B = 64	297 - 431
KONI 80 1743SP3			
(R8 Gordini front)			260 - 340 approx



So that seems to clear it up:

R8 front (standard) – about 260 – 370/380 mm and use standard lower mounts

R8 (Gordini) front – about 260 -340 mm and use extended lower mount.



Old Koni 1401 on old mount, new Koni 1743 on extended mount

All seem to use a 10 mm bolt with a long shank, a Nyloc nut and one thick flat washer under the nut.

Many ideas came forward for the reason for the change. No-one knows for sure. The two most plausible to me were:

- a short term change of the mount due to unavailability of the correct size, to keep the production line running
- mounting the base of the shock absorber higher to avoid damage to the fitting and difficulty changing them in a hurry.

Probably the rears are all the same length for R8 and R8 Gordini, extended and compressed. If anyone knows more, please write another short article.

Finally, to bring a smile, here's why you'd put Koni shock absorbers on an R8. 

Ah, 1970...

They'd have won 1971 too, but for a batch of defective Hewland differentials (should have stuck to original). ☺



Renault-1970 Australian rally champ by the widest margin ever





Bob Watson, 1970 Australian Rally driver

Of the five heats that decide the Australian Champion, the Renault finished second in the other. A very convincing win means that the title was secured by the team that it was achieved with cars right off the same assembly line as those seen on the showrooms around Australia. The anniversary Renaults you see here are the ones which won the toughest competition Australia can devise. A very convincing thought.

INDIVIDUAL SCORES	
MANUFACTURER'S AWARD	
R. WATSON	RENAULT 42
HOLDEN	24
DATSON	9
FORD	8

DRIVERS	
R. WATSON	RENAULT 42
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An 'anti-ordinary' feat from the 'Anti-ordinary'ones

RENAULT 

R 8, Then and Now in Australia

By Marvin McFalls

On Wednesday, 27 March 1963, the Renault R8 had its Australian launch to the press at the Warwick Farm circuit in New South Wales. This prestigious event was kicked off with a Q & A session where the features and highlights of the new model were demonstrated. This was followed by cocktails, then lunch where the charming R8 promotional film, Sand and Snow, was shown to a captive audience.

After lunch, a number of R8s were made available for the now loaded journalists to drive around the circuit. Also a gymkhana course had been set up on a grassed area for the assembled journalists to demonstrate their talents. The gymkhana was won by Lance Lowe of the Australian Motor Manual, who received a bottle of scotch (what else for a journo back then?) for his stellar effort, as well as a Renault scarf for his wife.

Assembled in Australia by Clyde Industries with 40% Australian content, the R8 was released to the Australian public on April 2, 1963. By which time the car had



been well covered in the motoring press, who praised the 4 wheel disc brakes, the seats, the "can't freeze or boil" sealed cooling system and the relative high performance of the vehicle for a 1 litre sedan. Wheels magazine were so taken with the R8, that they awarded their first Car of the Year award to the R8. The award being created to reward engineering excellence, advanced design, and value for cars assembled or built in Australia and introduced within the particular calendar year. The runners up for the 1963 award being the Volkswagen 1500, Ford Consul Cortina and the Peugeot 404.

The revised R8 1100 was introduced in July 1964, by which time Australian Renault assembly had transferred to Continental and General in West Heidelberg, in an effort to increase production and availability. The R8 1100 improved on the already well received R8, with an enlarged motor, full synchromesh gearbox, extra trim, different colors, and best of all, no change to the seats and no price increase! The R8 956 still being available at a slightly cheaper price. Australian R8 1100 production continued through until July 1966, when it was replaced by the revised and less controversially styled R10.

Fifty years on March 30th 2013 a reunion was held as part of the Junee Muster. In all there were 10 R8s took part in the event. There were three Gordinis owned by: Robert Billards, as well as Jason and Ben Emmelkamp of New South Wales, and Peter and Val Davis of Victoria. There were also six 1132 R8s owned by: Kevin Bryon and Keith Gaymer of NSW, Dave Hicks, Jo Naismith, and Phil and Sally Thompson all from South Australia, and Syd Middleton from Western Australia. Finally John and Alex Waterhouse brought their 1962 R1130 all the way from Perth in WA. What an incredible group of cars. ☺



The Back Page

Memories of my Estafette

I thought the members might like to see this picture of me in my twenties. The truckette had stood at a dealership on Lake Avenue in Rochester, NY, for a couple of years. I had to assure the eccentric owner several times that I really wanted it and he finally consented to sell it to me for \$200. He said the money wasn't important. I towed it home and had little trouble getting it running. I hauled my family around in it until, one day while driving home, I was surprised to see the front wheel go sailing past me. At that point, because of lack of available parts and the ravages of upstate rust, I cut it into pieces and sent it off to the junkyard. Wish I still had it!

*Simon Pontin, Webster, NY
(4CV under restoration)*



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