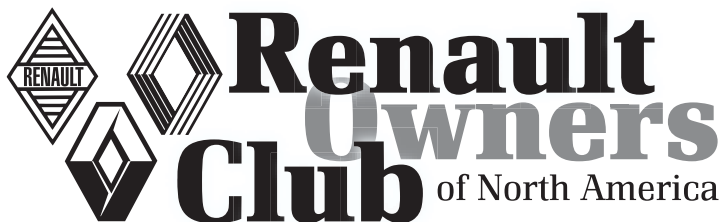


Renault News 63



1st Quarter 2002

January - February

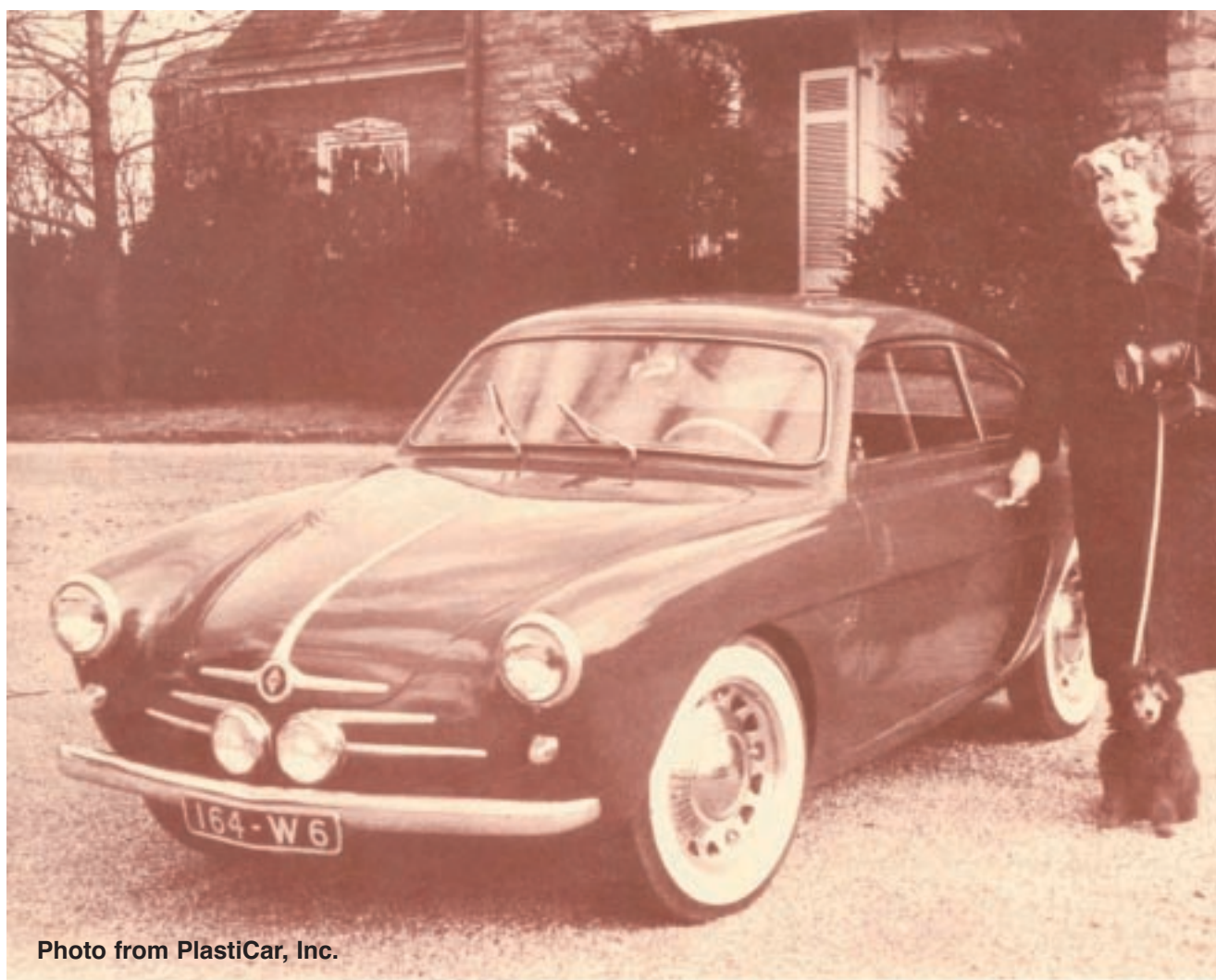


Photo from PlastiCar, Inc.

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Renault Owner's Club of North America

www.renaultownersclub.org

email: info@renaultownersclub.org

Established in May, 1991, La Jolla, California, USA

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Premier (Eagle)	Chris Davidson

"Renault News" is the newsletter of the Renault Owner's Club of North America. This newsletter is published quarterly, along with the monthly "Marketplace" ads. We are a non-profit, all-volunteer club. Our purpose is to help one another keep our Renaults in shape and on the road. Club publications will closely parallel the collective input of members.

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New Members: Send dues of US\$ 20 for the USA; US\$ 26 for Canada/México; or US\$ 30 for all other countries; as well as details of cars to the New Member Secretary:

Marvin McFalls, (865) 376-1056; 411 Dogwood Valley Rd, Kingston, TN 37763 newmembership@renaultownersclub.org

Renewals-Address Corrections: Send dues (as above) to **Jacques Lynn, (619) 561-6687;** 13839 Old Highway 80, El Cajon, CA 92021. membership@renaultownersclub.org

Page 2

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Editor's Notes

Issue #63 came together quite nicely. As usual I have received plenty of assistance from club members. I want to thank **Jacques Lynn, Brad Stevens, Mike Deak, John Smeaton, Francisco Miranda, and Hank Pinckney**, for submitting articles, photos, and other materials used in this issue. Finally I want to thank everyone who sent in e-mails and letters to the editor. Please continue to send them in so we can keep this feature going. Now I need to mention an omission that has recently been brought to my attention by former New Members Secretary, Harold Cooke. In issue #61, there is a photo of James Turner's Alliance convertible, but his name was accidentally omitted from the list of new members. So I want to formally welcome James to the club and apologize for the error.

Kurt has been working very hard on three new CDs that are now available to Members-Only. The three CDs features technical information, repair manuals, original ads, photos, owner's manuals and other information about the 4CV, Caravelle, and Dauphine. Each CD is free to members, but there is a \$5 shipping and handling charge per CD to cover expenses. To make payment easier there is a link in the Downloads page where you can pay for the CDs with your Visa/Mastercard, or you can send a check to: Kurt Triffet, 7418 Collett Avenue, Van Nuys, CA91406. We hope these CDs will be helpful when making repairs as well as a way to remember the glory days of the rear-engine Renault.

We are getting close to announcing several events for this year. I have spoke with Don McLaughlin and the Carlisle event is coming along, see page 5. Brent Bartley and I are working on the Orphan Car event in Dayton Ohio, for September. I am disappointed that I am not going to be able to go to the F1 races in Montreal, but I hope that everyone who attends can have a Renault/Alpine get together. Club Member, Jeff Schira also has brought to my attention that the Microcar and Minicar club is holding its national event in Dallas, September 27-29. So we thought we would see if there would be some interest in a regional Renault event tied with the Micro/Mini car show. If you would be interested in attending this event, contact Jeff, his information is available in the Upcoming Events section on the website. Looking forward to seeing many of you at this summer's events.

With all the additional services the club is starting to offer we are in need of more volunteers and professional advisors. I know these days everyone is quite busy, but if you could donate one to two hours a month or even just a one-time project then we could use your help. Please contact me about opportunities at editor@renaultownersclub.org

Letters and e-mail

From: "renaultlover" <kmtallant@ameritech.net>
To: RenaultOwnersClubofNorthAmerica@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Renault in México
Hello all,

I was wondering if is anyone is here from the Gordini Club who can tell us about Renault's first year back in the Mexican Market? For Instance: How many models are they offering there? What are your Opinions on the vehicles, so far? Can you tell us what the dealerships are like and how good or bad their service is? I'm just curious, I suppose. A chart that I saw recently in the publication 'Automotive News' shows that through the end of October of 2001 that they had sold a little over 2,000 vehicles in total, which includes 750 Mégane Scénics. Probably not too bad since this is still only their first year back and will probably increase much more next year after the Clio begins production there in '02. By comparison, Peugeot appears to be experiencing a very large increase in México for '01, with their sales being close to 4,700 automobiles for the same period this year.
Sincerely, Kevin Tallant

From: "Francisco Miranda / Estudio 19" <estudio19@avantel.net>
To: RenaultOwnersClubofNorthAmerica@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: Renault in México
Hello all:

A few weeks ago I was talking with the general accountant for Renault de México and he told me they have sold the expected number vehicles, although I do not know the numbers now, but I will ask him next year, as they are on vacation now. He seemed very confident and happy for their penetration of the market. Even though this has not been a very good year in general here in México, as the economic growth has been almost 0%. I am no financial person, but for me it means not much business is going on. We have seen the introduction of the Scénic and then the Mégane. I am starting to see them regularly on the streets everywhere, not only Mexico City, but in other states I have visited recently also. Today I just drove a 1600 cc Clio, already made in the Nissan plant of Aguascalientes, México. It is a very nice car and the price sounds very competitive for its class range and definitely does not compare, as this is a much better designed and equipped car. Clios will be on sale starting early next year. Also I saw the Laguna and the Laguna break, expected to be on sale by mid 2002. On the market already is the Clio RS, 2000cc. These cars are imported from Dieppe, where the Alpines were made. Already a couple of members of the Gordini Club are proud and happy owners of such a beautiful car.

Renault has been offering a special promotion of 0% interest for 2001 vehicles and for 2002 cars, they offer you a cash back bonus, depending on the credit plan you choose

for the month of December. As far as I have heard from other friends, the dealers are giving very good service.

Changing the subject, I would like to take the opportunity to wish all of the ROCoNA's members a Merry Christmas and very Happy New Year. May God bless your homes.

Regards, Francisco Miranda

From: rpalacios@colegiobolivar.edu.co **To:** editor@renaultownersclub.org
Subject: Renaults in Columbia
Hello

I am a Renault fanatic from Cali, Colombia South America. I have had Renaults (my family) since I was 11 years old. Our first car was a 1974 Renault 4, then we change it for a 1981 Renault 6 and a 1986 Renault 9. All were bought brand new. My mother still has the Renault 9. It has around 300000 kms and its still runs fine. I had a 1982 Renault 6 (my first car), which was bought in 1989. I had it for 9 years and then I changed it for a 1990 Renault 9 (TXE 1600 cm) I bought it in 1998 and I just traded it for a 2002 Twingo.

Colombia is the land of Renault, apart from France. We have an assembly plant, which began building Renault 4 in 1970. It now makes and exports Renaults to Ecuador, and Venezuela. Its website is www.sofasa.com.co

I wish you luck, Roman



From: editor@renaultownersclub.org
To: rpalacios@colegiobolivar.edu.co
Subject: Re: Renault in Columbia
Roman

Good to hear from another Renault fan. Renault never sold R4s or R6s in the US but the R9 was very popular here. Renault referred to them as Alliances rather than R9s in the US. I am a fan of the smaller Renaults myself. I have owned Dauphines and R5s over the years and I am currently a big fan of the Clio and Twingo. Enjoy your new Twingo, and check out our website at: www.renaultownersclub.org

Happy Holidays, Marvin, Newsletter Editor ROCoNA

From: khonka@uiah.fi **To:** editor@renaultownersclub.org
Subject: Owners Manuals
Hi!

I'm interested of some Renault import U.S. models and I'm asking an advice from you for that. I have a bit difficult question what I would like ask from you. I try to start a research (as my thesis/ graduation work in University Of Industrial Arts Helsinki) and I'm looking for material for that. It is about finding differences between European car models what are modified and imported to States and the same but basic (European) models in Europe. And the owner's manuals role in this work is what I'm going to make my findings in this research through these books.

I was thinking of choosing Renault models for one of my cases because I have had Twingo in years 1994-2000 and some other models; R9 (Alliance), R11 (Encore), R18 and R25 (Premier) are familiar for me through the years also. When I was thinking about buying these manuals from States, I realized that it is quite difficult to find just these items. I have some European versions of manuals already.

Well, unfortunately for me, I don't know what to do at the moment... Would you have any possibility to help me to get some material for that? I'm not looking any model in particular, but bigger models might be a little more usable because normally they have richer equipments in cabin (control panel etc.) But whatever manuals would be fine, also second hand is very usable. There might not be any Renault made instructions of (possible existed) "car computers" (these digital driver's control panels/ centers) what are very common in some U.S. manufactured cars?

Ok, thanks a lot of reading my text. Everyone interested who can help me somehow gets information of the final results of my work (about after a year or less).

Best wishes, Yours sincerely, Kari Honka (khonka@uiah.fi)
Finland

Kari, It is good to hear from you. I will see what I have available in Renault manuals. I should have Fuego, 18i, Alliance/Encore, and maybe a Medallion or Premier. I will just have to look in the cars. Maybe some of our club members may be able to assist you as well. I may have few items that you would be interested in as well. I actually have a factory repair manual that describes how to work on the US model digital instrument cluster for the Alliance/Encore. I will get back with you when I search thru some of my old cars.

Marvin, Newsletter Editor, ROCoNA

Welcome New Members

January 2002

Rynders, Donald G. 868 Adams Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550, January 2002
H-925-447-6177, E-mail: drynd3702@aol.com
1967 Dauphine, Blue, 104k miles

Hagel, Michael P. 15910 Jones Circle, Omaha, NE 68118, January 2002
W-402-691-8682, E-mail: hagel682@aol.com

Schick, Scott M. 105 Lacey Court, Lebanon, IN 46052-1353, January 2002
H-765-482-4602, E-mail: r5racer@earthlink.net
1978 R5 Alpine, Blue, GT5 racecar

Gardiner, Kevin J. 2229 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, January 2002

H-415-552-3246, W-415-974-5352 E-mail: gardiner3@aol.com
1978 LeCar, Blue, 85k miles, new interior

Boulet, Robert, 2980 Del Fosse Street, Montreal, Quebec, CA, H1Y 1B8, January 2002
H-514-374-6387, E-mail: rboulet@westcliff-group.com

Grover, Stephen, PO Box 216, Mount Brydges, ON, CA, N0L 1W0
1970 R16 TA, Gray, Automatic Transmission

Hale, Robert C. 3803 G Road, Palisade, CO 84525-9346, January 2002
H-970-464-7856, W-970-464-7856, E-mail: yard87birds@aol.com
1976 R17 Gordini, Yellow, 68k miles, original owner

Import & Replicar Nationals May 17-19, 2002 at Carlisle

CARLISLE
Events

(717) 243-7855

www.carsatcarlisle.com

1000 Bryn Mawr Road, Carlisle, PA 17013-1588

FAX: (717) 243-0255

PA Hotel/Motel call toll free (888) 560-7666

November 2001

Harding, William C. 7524 Comet Road, Richmond, VA 23294, November 2002
H-804-217-9306, F-804-217-9307
1959 Alpine A106, Blue, 1959 Dauphine parts car

Peterson, Gale O. 1782 Richard Circle, West Saint Paul, MN 55118, November 2002
H-651-451-2571, W-952-933-2885, E-mail: gale@bimoyle.com
1985 Alliance Convertible, Brown, 130k miles

Tolsa, Carlos A. 840 East Grant Road, Tucson, AZ 85719, November 2002
H-520-622-6239, W-520-620-6303, E-mail: Tolsa@aol.com
1959 Dauphine, Blue, 1962 Dauphine, White, 57k miles, 1982 Fuego Turbo, White, 136k miles

October 2001

Spurlock, Shannon, 1343 High St. #10, Denver, CO 80218, October 2002
H-303-399-3891, W-303-370-8360, E-mail: shannonspurlock@yahoo.com
1960 Dauphine, Grey, 38k miles

Martin, Joseph B.1 Boxwood Lane, Roslyn Heights, NY 11577, October 2002
H-631-621-8567 W- 631-632-9680 E-mail: jbmartin@notes.cc.sunysb.edu
1988 Medallion Wagon, 108k miles

Feltes, Angela, 140 South Reno Street Apt #222, Los Angeles, CA 90057, October 2002
H-213-487-5675 E-mail: spork_spelunking@hotmail.com
1987 Alliance, Blue, 145k miles



The Marquis by PlastiCar, Inc. of Doylestown, Penna.

Renault News

From around the world

Dateline Romania:

Since July 1st Renault Romania, the new subsidiary of Renault S.A., took over the business of importing and distributing Renault vehicles in the country. The Goal is to boost Renault's presence in Romania, with a target of 10,000 unit sales in 2003, and to improve the quality of customer service. IPSO, the Renault importer since 1996, is continuing its work as a dealer and has joined the automakers sales network of 20 outlets spread all over the country. As the leading imported in Romania since 2000, Renault is ranked third in the total market with an eight percent market share behind Daewoo and Dacia.

Recently sixty-three trucks were used to transport 10 stamping presses weighing between 400 and 800 tons from Sandouville in Northern France to the Dacia plant in Romania. The equipment will be the backbone of the two stamping lines due to come on line in February 2002. Delivery of the presses is part of the development and modernization program in which millions will be invested over the next year.

Treasurer's Report

Jan 1, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2001

Beginning Balance:	Checking account	1316.70
	Savings account	2809.92
	Total	4126.62
Income		
Membership dues (72 new, 145 renew)		4435.00
Back issues		35.00
Donations		73.00
Advertising		0.00
Interest income		<u>63.77</u>
Total		4606.77
Outlay		
Postage		2094.92
Printing		1170.93
Copying		87.98
Supplies		385.96
Advertisements		304.46
Other		<u>110.80</u>
Total		4155.05
Ending Balance:	Checking account	1704.65
	Savings account	<u>2873.69</u>
	Total	4578.34
Income less outlay		451.72
Ending Balance less beginning balance		451.72
Dene Barrett, Treasurer		

Renault, A Partner of the Film Festival Circuit

In late August and early September 2001, ten Renault Lagunas and five Avantimes drove stars such as Julianne Moore, Andy Garcia, Haley Joel Osment (from the "Sixth Sense" and "AI"), Burt Reynolds and Johnny Depp around Deauville in elegant style. As exclusive automobile partners for the film festivals in Paris, Cabourg, and Cannes, Renault also lends its support to the French film industry by loaning out its vehicles. Renault cars had parts to play in 19 full-length features last year including "Kiss of the Dragon" and "Dude, Where's my car?" and can be seen in legendary films such as "Titanic".

Photo from Global Renault #7



UBLO, A Scooter of the Third Kind

At the International Two-Wheeler Show in Paris, Renault unveiled its first "concept bike", the result of cooperation between Renault Design and Renault Sport Technologies. Named Ublo, the prototype offers an innovative alternative to the conventional scooter. The company set out to meet the demands of motorists who were tempted to try travel on two wheels but were held back by what they felt was inadequate safety. Renault's answer was a three-wheeler that makes a strong case for active safety, protection, and storage space.

From Renault publicity



The Most Recent Alpine Arrival

Text and Photos By Steven Durighello

My first contact with Alpine came in 1971 while living in Paris, a neighbor living just up the road had one of the very first A310s. As a car-crazy pre-teen I fell in love with the car immediately and had my non-car-loving father bring me to Paris car show in 1972 and 1973 to see the Alpine display. I vowed that I would buy one once I got my drivers license. Returning to Canada, I lost sight of the Alpines and was disappointed in 1982 upon my first return to Europe to see the Clumsier-looking four-headlight V6 version. I still maintained my desire to become an owner. My first test-drive, in a V6 version came in 1986 when I moved to Belgium. Having a company car and no garage, I decided against buying one. Four years later, in late 1990 then living in Germany, I again looked into getting an Alpine. I looked at a 1986 GTA, this time it was the purse strings that blocked the purchase. In 1991 then living in Italy, I began the search for the right car at the right price. I considered a few cars including an A108 Cabriolet, a few A310 V6s and an A110 1300. While none of these cars were right I continued my search.

Finally, I purchased my 1974 A310 in October of 1994 from a Renault dealer just outside Milan, Italy. At the time, the car, then painted red was in reasonably good shape apart from some rotting rubber. In fact, on my maiden voyage from the dealership back to my home in Vicenza, I lost the gears due to a rotten hose. The same was to happen a few weeks later with the brakes. After replacing all the questionable hoses and seals, the car turned out to be reliable everyday transportation for the next three years. As my drive to work was only about 2 miles, most of mileage was completed on weekends and on the motorways to and from Venice and Milan airports. I did however get the chance to do some high speed testing on late night motorway drives in Italy and Germany, clocking an optimistic indicated 215km/h (130+mph) top speed

I am the third owner. The first owner lived in Bologna, the second in Como in the Northern Lakes District just south of the Swiss border. I believe that one of the two had used the car for racing and removed the fuel injection for the more dependable Weber carbs. This



appears to have been very common at the time, as there are very few Italian cars ever to have been driven in anger that retain the fuel injection. The passenger's seat was also welded in place and the dash had all the niceties such as the lighter, ashtray, radio, seatbelt warning light, etc. had been removed. The gear lever was cut down and the front ride height was ever so slightly lowered to accommodate different tires. The car also carried a factory-installed air dam and widened rear wheel fenders for wider rear wheels/track.

Upon my purchase of the car, to be able to pass the Italian state inspection requirements, I had the original wheels, tire size and ride height reinstalled. It now rides on Michelin 165 HR 13 front tires and 185 HR 13 rear tires. Prior to my departure from Italy, I installed a Sabelt racing seat on the driver's side and had the car repainted Modena Yellow after removing the front air dam (it was so low that I had already smashed it five times).

To import the car was very simple given that it is over 25 years old. It is therefore exempt from the EPA emission rules and DOT bumper and safety regulations. The problems only came about when I went for title registration and the New Jersey state inspection. For the title I was told to pay state sales tax. As I was dealing with bureaucrats, I gave up trying to impress upon them that as the long-standing owner of the car, I had already paid sales tax on the car and had not recently bought it. I ended up paying the tax on the 1974 sales price level, making for sales tax due of just over \$100. At the inspection, I was told that I was indeed exempt from the EPA emission requirements but needed to pass the state emission level for 1974 cars. It turned out that this level was the same as the current EPA standards. At this point I could have tried to get the car to meet this level but instead I decided to take advantage of the historic registration process. It features cheaper insurance, no inspections, and still enough drivable miles to not cramp my desire.



Renault Laguna in Canada

By Ken McRae

The ultimate Renault is now in North America, Toronto, Canada to be exact. Our car is a 1998 Williams Renault Laguna Super Tourer. I just thought your members might be interested to know. Just returned home from racing. We are actually competing in a series for GT1 cars. Most of the cars have between 500 - 850 bhp, we have 315 (bit of a compromise). But the chance to drive and own such a unique piece of history is worth some of the compromises. The race fans simply love the car. We have turned into the crowd favorites every week-end. There's always a crowd of people looking at our cars. Were somewhat unique because we let people get right up close to the cars and many times let them sit in it. I think most of them get a kick out of it.

The car is a 1998 Williams Renault Laguna. Renault hired Williams to run their touring car effort. The cars were built and developed with virtually an unlimited budget. It was estimated that each car in 98 was built at a cost of well over \$1,000,000.00. Not to mention the development costs from prior seasons. The teams' annual operating budget was around \$20,000,000.00.



The cars basic specs are as follows:

Chassis: Steel shell with integrated roll cage (ultra rigid), high down force aero package, tons of carbon fiber.

Suspension: Struts up front, multi link in the rear, cockpit adjustable roll bars

Brakes: fronts, 15" disk, squeezed by 6 pot liquid cooled calipers, rears are 11" with 4 pot calipers

Engine: 2 litre, produces 315 bhp @ 8500, developed by Sodemo Moteurs

Gearbox: 6 speed sequential, quick-change ratios, full power shift

Wheels: 19" x 9" OZ forged magnesium alloy racing wheels

Electronics: Full data system similar to the system Williams uses on their F1 car, measures everything.

Driving impressions of the car are it's simply amazing. The car handles like a single seater. Gearbox is incredible, simply pull the lever to shift up, push to shift down. When shifting up you leave your foot on the gas. The lever sends a message to the ECU and shuts it down for a split second. Braking is awesome. Overall the car is a complete joy.



Dinalpin Cabrio:

A "Special Specimen"

Text and Photos By Alfredo "Doc" Sevilla

Once when I went to Alberto Pedroza's (President, of Club Renault Gordini Sport Mexico) workshop and I saw a very cute Dinalpin Cabriolet that belonged to my friend Pablo Alcocer, painted in silver I must admit that I felt somewhat envious, but let us say, it was a "positive" envy, because another Dinalpin was being restored as well, and the history of the Mexican Alpines remains. That was the main reason that made me try to get one for myself; and so the search for the Cabriolet was my main goal.

The Dinalpin Cabriolet is a very rare and special car; as a matter of fact, it was a very short production run, this is the reason why not many people know about its existence (How many in the world: ???), even in México being one of the countries where the Alpine was produced under license of Renault. The name Dinalpin came about because of territorial patents of the name Alpine so, given by the combination of the



first two letters of the factory that manufactured Renaults from the early 60's, Diesel NAcional, the "e" was dropped off of "Alpine" and the name DINALPIN was created.

The production of the Dinalpin Cabriolets lasted from 1965 to 1967. During that short period of time only 67 Dinalpin Cabriolet were produced. For whatever reasons, there were very few units of this exceptional car that shares the same sport line of his brother the Berlinette, but with the essence of the cabrio. Taking this into account, I decided that I could have both elements combined in the same car - It would be perfect to have a Dinalpin Cabriolet - (I must mention that I own a unique Dinalpin Berlinette A 110 model 1974, with only 12,700 kms on the odometer, fully original, never restored, but more on this subject in another story.

As a general information, a couple of years ago I began writing a database about Dinalpins; this work took me to the city of Monterrey México, located about 800 kilometers north of my hometown, Mexico City. A friend of mine, who also owns a Berlinette, e- mailed me saying that he saw in the Auto-Museum of Monterrey, a Cabriolet in pretty good condition, but he did not know if it was for sale.

With this information my search started and took me a couple of days to find the owner: Mr. Pablo Gonzalez (another Pablo), which is also a fan of the Dinalpins and proud owner of a very respectable collec-



tion of assorted cars. Well, E-mails came and went and at the end, we reached a sale agreement, but I had to check the car personally. On a sunny day during spring 2000, I took a plane to Monterrey and Pablo picked me up at the airport in a BEAUTIFUL Jaguar, we went to see the car! When I saw it, I couldn't believe that I would be the owner of such a beauty - a very clean 1966 Dinalpin Cabriolet painted in a plumb color. Pablo is an extraordinary gentleman; it was no difficult to get an agreement on the price. I bought the car and brought it to Mexico City with his kind help.

The car just needed a "minor" restoration work, It was running very well (with a 1100 cc original engine) as Pablo sent it to a general check up before selling it, but still, the car needed a new paint and chrome jobs. I decide to paint



it with the same color as Pablo Alcocer's car - original factory shiny silver. Gosh! This "minor" restoration took a long, long year. After removing the paint, some fiberglass restoration was obvious and that only took a couple of weeks. However, the paint job was a "long and winding road". First, the painter that began the job quit his job and the owner of the workshop spent too much time finding a replacement, as it was Christmas time. Then, when he finally found a new painter, this person suffered an accident and left the job. By the end of the saga, and we are talking 10 months later, I was able to see the car totally painted, but it still needed to reassemble the windows mechanism, chrome, badges, rubbers and an endless list of more than 60 things to do (not exaggerating), including a new carpet. Having spent so much time uncovered, also a new convertible top was needed.

Dinalpin Cabrio

Meanwhile, car shows and swap meets came and went, and the time was due to participate in the most important car show in Latin America, The Jaguar's Club Concourse d'Elegance that is held in Huixquilucan. I struggled hard to unveil the car at this event and finally all my efforts were rewarded, as I was able to take the car over to this competition. Zaida, my girlfriend, drove the Cabrio and I drove my beloved Berlinette for the competition. I could reassure my initial feelings about this special car, with its personality and the fun of the Cabrio, feeling the wind in the face and the sun over the head. The Cabrio was exhibited and got the second place in its category. Not bad for a rookie!



Now the Dinalpin Cabriolet is my favorite car, I use it for weekend trips along with other friends; we enjoy driving our classic cars through the Mexican highways. I am very proud of the Cabriolet and more over, to be the owner of two of the greatest cars worldwide, the Dinalpin Cabriolet and the Dinalpin Berlinette, both proudly made in Mexico.

If you have a Dinalpin or you have a Cabriolet, please let me know, as I will appreciate it to enrich the database. Thanks. You can contact me at

asevill@netservice.com.mx



Say Goodbye to Two and Hello to Another

Text and Photos By Marvin McFalls

Trying to keep Renaults on the road is sometimes a very difficult task. Last year I sold my four-door LeCar to a mechanic friend named Curtis. He fixed it up a bit and started driving it. The car had only 32,000 miles on it when I sold it to him. It ran like a dream but looked like a rusty bucket. Unfortunately, the car originally came out of New York and it had lots of rust along the bottom of the fenders and doors and underneath. After trying to fix up the body without much success, he found a Black LeCar Sport that hadn't run in about ten years.

In order to get the LeCar Sport on the road he took all the good parts off of the four-door and put them on the Sport. In theory this was a good idea, but it would eventually backfire. After spending a week changing out parts Curtis was able to get it running. But most of the hoses, rubber bushings, and mounts were all dry rotted from sitting. About the time he worked out most of the bugs, he was driving it a little too hard and the motor gave out. At that point, Curtis considered changing



everything back over to the four-door but he had a family emergency and decided to sell it to someone else and let them fix it. After tearing the motor out of the Sport model the new owner lost interest and eventually sold both cars back to us. Now both cars are at the Renault Farm where most Renaults go when their owners lose interest.

While that story didn't turn out for the best, the next one went a little better. My friend Marty recently brought his Mom's White Alliance GTA back from the scrap heap. She had gotten the car so hot that it actually cracked the head. After sitting for almost a year Marty finally decided to fix it. Sam and I put a head together for him and Marty brought it back to life. Once he got it running, then he had to replace a clogged catalyst, a couple bad transmission mounts and do some brake work. After a much-needed bath it is back on the road. Sometimes it amazes me what retires a Renault. I have seen one person spend \$1000 to fix a \$200 car, and another give up on a good looking Renault rather than spending \$200 to get it back on the road. One of these days I may figure it out. At least the cars that end up on the Farm are used to help keep other Renaults on the road, and you never know when someone will come rescue one and bring it back to life.



The World's First Rear Engine Fiberglass Sports Car

By Marvin McFalls



I am sure that many of you are expecting to hear the story of Alpine, but that isn't exactly the case. This story begins in 1950 when Jean Rédélé began racing his 4CV in local events. Over the next three years he had incredible success with his little Renault winning the Monte Carlo Rally and Tour De France and placing third in class at the 24 hours of LeMans. These successes lead Rédélé to dream of building a French production sports car that would use standard spare parts from the 4CV. Rédélé hired a designer named Michelotti to build his first prototype. This car was the start of the Alpine legend winning the Dieppe Rally, it was followed by a second prototype that Rédélé raced and won The 1000-mile race in 1955.

That same year the third prototype called the Marquis was built; this is the car that would be used to build the first rear engine fiberglass sports car. However the car was not built at the Alpine factory in Dieppe but rather in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Rédélé had sold the Marquis prototype to an American businessman, and PlastiCar Incorporated was born.

The Marquis was equipped with a 4CV/Rédélé 750cc-racing engine, which had a top speed of almost 100mph. The car came standard with a standard 4CV three-speed gearbox, but an optional five-speed transmission was



PlastiCar Marquis (top right).
Marquis rear view (above). Images from PlastiCar, Inc.



engine offered with the Marquis was optional. Wire wheels were also an option with the convertible.

Well at this point I guess you wonder what became of the Rogue and Marquis, and PlastiCar Incorporated? Unfortunately, I don't have many answers for you. In the history of Alpine, the Marquis is a footnote, it mentions the car was sold to an American company but the project was a failure. Somehow Allan Meyer has come across an original brochure for the cars, and it has a dealership stamp for Hughes Motor Co. in Washington D.C. But I don't know if any of the cars actually made it to dealership, or what ever became of the prototypes. If anyone knows anything about these interesting Renault powered cars or PlastiCar Inc. please contact me. Maybe one of these days we can actually find one of these cars.

also available. The car also featured a four-shock rear suspension that later became famous in the early Alpines and then the R8 Gordini. PlastiCar Inc. version of the Marquis replaced the fiberglass body with an all aluminum body on a steel ladder-type frame. However they planned to produce an all fiberglass in the future.

Besides the Marquis, PlastiCar also built an all fiberglass body convertible from the Marquis/ 4CV platform. This car was known as the Rogue. The Rogue was a very sleek car with very small bug screens in front of the drivers and passenger seats. However if I ever found myself behind the wheel I would wear the old leather helmet and goggles. The Rogue featured a standard 4CV drive train, with the 24hp engine and a three-speed gear-box with a top speed of 60mph. However the racing



Marquis interior (top left).
 Rogue cockpit (above).
 Rogue (left) Rogue rear view (below left).
 Rogue trunk space (below). Images from PlastiCar, Inc.



A Love Affair with French Cars

By John Smeaton

This is the age of trucks and other cookie-cutter transportation devices but those of us with Renaults of any vintage can, at least now and then, escape this boring hegemony. From the time the horseless carriage appeared on the roads of France her cars have had character, a certain *je ne sais quoi* charm. Less so in the 30's when Louis Renault was infatuated with American cars and attempted to emulate them. This was possibly the least innovative time in the history of this great company but it wasn't the saddest. History records that Louis was not renowned for his integrity and his alleged cooperation with the Nazis during the war years may have helped his enterprise survive but it lead to his own downfall and tragic death.

Fortunately for all of us who admire the 4CV, the German supervisors of the Renault factories during the fateful final years of the occupation of France turned a blind eye to the shenanigans going on, often in the dead of the night, inside Renault's engineering and development shop. The resulting petite voiture, the 4CV was, for its time, brilliant and its genes were passed on to Dauphine, Floride (Caravelle), R8, and R10 and arguably by going from *traction en arriere* to *en avant*, the R4, R5 and even R12, and R16.

André Citroën admired American automobiles as much as his archrival Renault in those same 1930s, but he aspired to more than riches and power; he was driven to excel. His engineers understood and translated his demands into vehicles which demonstrated the sometimes bizarre practicality that we associate with the most memorable of *les voitures Françaises*.

My first French Car was a gold 1969 Citroën DS21 Pallas. As the journalist George Bennet said after driving a 20 year-old example, "God what a beautiful car". It was eccentric, yes, but far in advance of its time. The acceleration with its semi-automatic 4-speed transmission was 'adequate' by modern standards but it would cruise serenely, undisturbed by road conditions or side winds at 90 mph. It was economical too and could keep up, on winding unpaved roads, with all but the most exotic sports cars. This was not

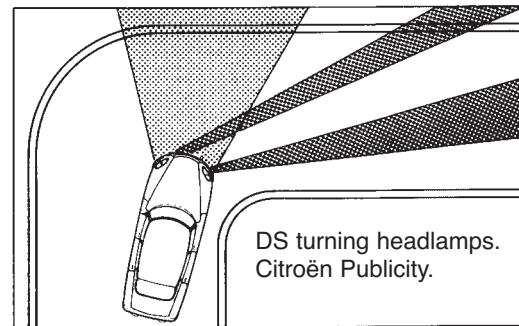
Citroën DS23. Citroën Publicity.



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its forte though and I wondered how long its big Michelin X tires, good for at least 80k miles would last, if one did much of such heroic driving.

A tiny button on the floor controlled the brakes and took a little getting used to as it moved not whit when pressed, sensing pressure, not travel. Once mastered, the brakes were marvelously controllable and with big discs in front, exceptionally powerful. A large single spoke wheel steered the car with the precision, which only rack and pinion can offer, and hydraulically powered like everything else on the car, it was effortless. Gear changing was easy too, requiring just a fingertip pressure on the little lever behind the steering wheel, the normal gearbox and clutch disc activated by the same pump as raised the suspension, energized the brakes and assisted steering. There was, of course, no clutch pedal.



The headlights were with out a doubt the best in the world, always aimed level and connected to the steering to anticipate where you wanted to look, like around a corner. American regulations may have mandated the 1940 technology sealed beams for cars sold in the USA but French cars sold in Canada were, at the time, much like their European sisters. The seats, a French specialty back then, were both soft and supportive.

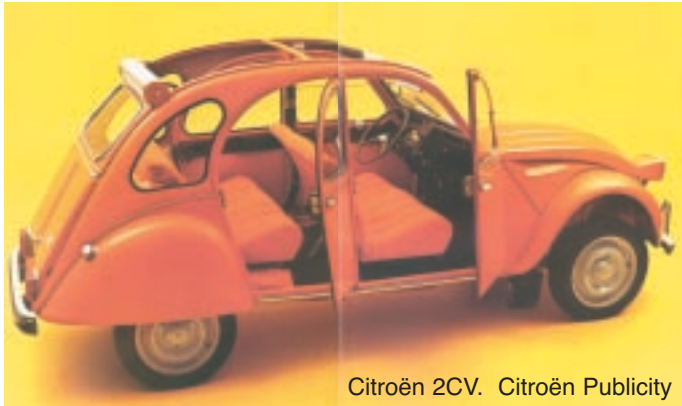
My second French Car was a Citroën DS also: this time a DS23, one of only two imported into Canada with manual five-speed transmission and Bosch fuel injection. It was a better performer and even a better long distance cruiser but it lacked the magic of the first car. Something like making a Camaro out of a Cadillac. You can do it, but would you want to? After five years and 90,000 miles of service its hydraulic lines, which ran underneath the car, succumbed to the rust worm so prevalent in Eastern Canada, so I garaged it until I could find time (and money!) for a total restoration. The sad end to this beautiful car came when it was stolen and crashed, protecting the young joy riders from serious injury but doing irreparable damage to it.

Bumper standards brought an end to Citroën in Canada and the US and needing something economical I settled on an R12 Renault. For a smallish car it rode well and was reliable to a fault. It wasn't a great highway cruiser but practical, cheap to run and easy to maintain,



Renault 12
Renault Publicity

but after the Citroëns it was just too "Plain Jane". I dallied briefly with a used Citroën 2CV which had bags of character, was utterly charming and practical too, at least around town, but by this time I had fallen in love with the Renault 5.



Citroën 2CV. Citroën Publicity

The 1979 R5 GTL sold in Canada was almost the same as the French version with rectangular headlamps and the European spec. engine. Unburdened with what the factory perceived to be American tastes and regulations, the revvy 1289cc power plant developed 64 horsepower, some 25% more than what was provided to buyers south of the border. It was lively; even when loaded with four adults with four bicycles on the roof. It charged up Vermont hills and down the autoroutes with lots of buzz but little other sign of strain. One time, challenged by a Camaro at a stoplight, the little R5 beat its rival to a blocking line of parked cars which made the Camaro's driver so angry that when he caught up at the next light he kicked in the Renault's door, hurting his foot (as well as his pocket book when the police caught up with him).



Renault Publicity.

I did the routine maintenance and repairs, such as there were, myself. To what extent this accounts for the car's reliability in the first 50k miles I cannot say. The only repairs required were replacement of the miniscule plastic bushings in the gearshift, a tailpipe and muffler and the lower suspension ball joints. Owners I spoke to loved their R5s, at least until major repairs were required, but mechanics, especially those used to big cars, hated them. Try changing a clutch or starter motor and you will understand why. It was perky and feisty, reliable and loaded with charm and it broke my heart when rust, the bane of French and Italian cars of the period on salt laden Ontario roads attacked it.



Renault Publicity.

When the time came for the R5 to be relegated to second car status I purchased a 1985 Fuego with 2.2 litre engine and folding roof. Some people, comparing it to a Mustang, considered it a bit of a 'poseur' but I found it to be what its appearance suggested, stylish, untiring for long distance travel, amazingly economical, and with its hatchback, very versatile. With comfortable velour covered seats and quiet unstressed engine it reminded me of the big Citroëns and wafting along, roof open to the stars on a cool summer night, it provided a romantic experience no rough riding muscle car could equal. My Fuego served for seven years, but unlike my other Renaults not trouble-free. Loaded with Bosch not-so-wizardry and the typical Renault seemingly random out-sourcing of components from this or that supplier, compatible maybe in theory, the engine management system (ECU) had to be gone at twice. Even at that it had a mind of its own. The extremely complicated cruise control failed beyond economical repair and was replaced by a simple American made after-market item, which worked perfectly. The Renault manufactured basics were fault free and the car, when running right, was charming. In 1993 when we parted company there were sweet memories but only a little regret and no tears.

That was the last of my romances with French cars. Almost. The R5 is with me still, metamorphosed into the Encord roadster (Renault News Issue #58). When I think of my French cars, like Edith Piaf, singing of her lost love, *je ne regrette rein*. But I do regret that back in the fifties, when the 4CV was *la belle* and *au courant*, I never made her acquaintance.

Frankfurt Motor Show

Every year the automotive community makes their annual trip to Frankfurt Germany for the motor show. Being the event is held in Germany you obviously expect to see all the latest models Mercedes, BMW, Audi, and VW, and even smaller German Automakers like Opel, but there is also good selection of French, Japanese, and even American manufactures represented in Frankfurt. Besides finding the newest models that will soon be in your local showroom you will also find concept cars. In the past these cars were built, shown at all the big shows, and then discarded because they were too outrageous, many looked more like space ships than cars, or they were just too costly to mass produce.

In recent years, many concept cars have gone from the Auto Show circuit to the road. Renault's Vel Satis (Sat-E) is one of these vehicles. The production version was shown in Frankfurt and it will be arriving in dealerships all over Europe any day now. It is a top of the line sedan that will replace the Safrane. The models shown featured two different versions of V6 engines. One was gas and the other is Diesel. As well as about every possible amenity you can think of for a top of the range luxury sedan, along with a large amount of interior space. Instead of a key it features the Renault Card. Which besides unlocking the doors and starting the car, it also can be used to customize various features such as A/C, seat adjustment, rear view mirrors and radio settings. A six-speed manual transmission is also offered as an option for those who like comfort of luxury car, but also the performance of sports car. Needless to say it is a quite impressive car.

Besides the new flagship sedan, Renault also showed their latest concept vehicle a real businessman's special. The Trafic Dataspace is a specially designed Traffic van that resembles a VIP lounge. It features a semi-circular bench in the rear that will seat four passengers and give them access to an array of innovative communication technologies. Occupants can send and receive e-mail, prepare or present documents or even download information through the on board satellite navigation system. It is basically like, an entire office on wheels.

After seeing all the latest models it is becoming clear that cars seem to be becoming taller. Another trend is that today's "small" cars are almost as long as compact sedans of previous generations. What's more, they are just as well equipped nowadays as bigger models. This has left manufacturers no choice but to pack in a host of leading-edge technologies in top of the line models such as the aforementioned Vel Satis. High-end buyers should look forward to more technologically advanced vehicles with even more features and accessories.

The information for this article came from the Global Renault issue #7 from October 11, 2001.



Cars in the Caribbean

Text and Photos By Marvin McFalls

My friend Marty and I recently took a much-needed vacation and went on Caribbean Cruise. Besides enjoying the beautiful scenery, wonderful people, and the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea, I also checked out the local automobiles. I guess being a car guys no matter where we go automobiles seem to catch our eyes. I must say that we saw many interesting vehicles, and each stop was better than the last.

The first stop on our trip was San Juan, Puerto Rico. I must say Puerto Rico is very much like the US in many ways, and cars are no exception. Actually there may have been more American cars in Puerto Rico than here. Most of the taxis are Ford or Chevy minivans. SUVs seemed to be quite popular as well as sports cars; both U.S. and many Japanese makes were well represented. I didn't see many European cars, a few Mercedes and VWs here and there, but not much else. The biggest surprise came as I was walking down one of the narrow side streets in Old San Juan and saw a beautiful yellow Ferrari. Besides the \$180,000 exotic Italian sports car, we were really impressed by some electric mini cars that they used at the Fort San Cristobal.



Mercedes A 160 (above), Peugeot 206 (below) Toyota Van (right). Suzuki Carry (top right).



The Next port of call was the island of St. Kitts. Mitsubishi was obviously the biggest player on the small island. Suzuki, Isuzu, and Mazda were also represented and Nissan and Toyota were the Lincoln and Cadillac of the area. They had some extra small versions of the economy cars. With names like Towny and Sunny they were little more than basic transportation. The most interesting vehicles were the pick-ups and vans. Many of them were tiny in size, making even our Renaults seem large. They were so small I wondered how practical they are as commercial vehicles, but man are they cute!

The third stop on our tour was the island of St. Lucia. The French originally colonized the port city of Castries, and we had our first taste of cars built in France. Unfortunately, it appeared that French cars hadn't been imported to St. Lucia in many years. It seemed like most of the cars were broken down. However, it appears that they had a better variety of cars than we had in the U.S. I saw Peugeot 205s and 305s along with 505s. They also had the Citroën BX to go along with the CX model. Finally they had Euro-style R9/R11s rather than the Alliance/Encores.

We took a driving tour of the Island of St Lucia, and were introduced to the full-size Toyota van. Let me tell you there is a reason why they aren't sold in the U.S.





The van we were on is very similar to the fourteen-passenger van built by Ford, Chevy, and Dodge, but they also had a twenty-passenger tour bus as well. The van is a bit smaller and you are packed in a little tighter than U.S. counterparts, but the Toyota only weights 3200 pounds. Toyota included a five-speed transmission that made it much easier pulling the steep hills of the island with the air conditioning running on high. It also handled quite well in the hairpin mountain curves. My guess is if they sold these here you local church, school, or daycare would buy them rather than what the "Big Three" is offering.

Our final stop was in Bridgetown, Barbados. Like on the other islands Japanese cars were common, but they weren't the only cars available. It seems like every European car sold here was available, along with many more that we haven't seen in many years or never including Rover, Opel, and Vauxall. We also saw many European models not sold in the US including Mercedes full-size van and the A190. The biggest surprise though would have to be that Peugeot still has a dealership in Barbados. We saw many 206s, 306s, 309s, and even a few old 405s and 505s. Much to our surprise we also saw many Peugeot delivery vans and a few passenger vans as well. The Peugeot Partner a smaller van (similar in size to the Renault Kangoo) and the larger Peugeot Boxer (in the same class as the Renault Master) were quite common in Barbados.



As Marty and I were walking down the main highway in Bridgetown he and I both noticed a small blue car that looked quite familiar. As we came closer it became quite clear that it was a Renault. It was an original Clio, a 1995 model to be exact. We spoke with the driver and he told us it was his sister's car. She had recently imported it from England. It was a "Plain Jane" model with a 1.2 litre engine. The driver said that both he and his sister enjoyed driving the little Renault, and he could wait to tell her that we had asked about the car.

The Caribbean is a great place to visit, and I look forward to going back as soon as I can. While I didn't expect to see many interesting cars on my trip, as usual I was quite surprised. I really enjoyed all the cars but driving on the left side of the road is kind of tricky. If you ever have a chance to go you won't be disappointed.



Peugeot Partner (above), 1995 Renault Clio (below left), Citroën BX 14 E, (below). Top right, Mercedes large vans.



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Vintage Races at Watkins Glen

By Brad Stevens, Photos by Mike Deak

It was the Friday night before the races at Watkins Glen, and I returned home to find Mike Deak's GTA Turbo parked in my driveway. Upon closer inspection I found Mike sleeping in the car. He had driven in from Boston earlier and was catching up on some much need rest. Since it was getting late in the day I decided to wake him up and we headed into town for a quick bite.

We had a late start to the Glen due to us washing our Alpines in my driveway. I had advance sale tickets, so we could take our time and drive the back winding roads South to Watkins Glen. Upon Arrival, we blew through the gate and headed up to the show car parking area. However, the show cars were making their way onto the circuit, so we followed being the last two cars out. Mike and I had more fun being late. Maybe it was because we were the last cars on the track or just because we had the only two Alpines at the Glen that day

After touring the track we headed back to the show car corral where we parked with our Italian cousins. At the end of the day we headed to Seneca Lake and checked out one of the many Wineries' located on it shores. If you ever plan on attending the Vintage races at Watkins Glen, be sure you have your tickets well in advance and always allow an extra day for the events on Friday in the village. There are concurs, rallies, and all sorts of cars parked in the streets.



47th Acapulco Rally

Text and Photos By Francisco Miranda

Finally the time came to participate once again on the "Annual Party", as the President of the Gordini Sport, Alberto Pedroza, calls it "The Acapulco Rally". This year was not an event of the Jaguar Club as in previous years, but nevertheless we participated and surely had big fun doing so. It seems this year was a bit more commercially oriented with a TV network' soap opera sponsoring, but the essence of the rally was not lost. Twenty-three crews from the Renault Gordini Sport Club participated, out of approximately 75 of the classic and Group 6 categories.

As last year, the starting line was on Metepec, Estado de México, some 70 kilometres from Mexico City, so we took



off the night before to be ready for our start up at 10 AM the next day. As usual, we had a nice dinner with some friends and we retired to have a nice rest. The start-up was somewhat messy as some of our friends had to remind the “judge” time was almost ready (or already passed) to give them the Start-up flag. But off we went all with high spirits and in a good mood. Waiting for the first regularity to be over, the first car to break down, a Dinalpin A110 from Arakelian/ Cuadros, started with a fault that seemed to be a point problem, and it actually forced them to quit later on. Our GT4 also presented a problem, with the generator out of work. From then on, we had to save on electricity, which forced us not to use the electric fan fitted to the radiator, so when the temperature started to rise, we had to open the heater to help reduce the temperature, the only problem was that the outside temperature was on the high 20’s Celsius (low 80’s Fahrenheit)! A moving sauna sometimes!

The roads were in a very good shape, so we had no problems on that, only every now and then we had to ride very slow because of heavy trucks or a slow moving vehicle in front of us slowing everybody (in turn) down. After about 5 hours of driving fun, we stopped for a very fast lunch in the beautiful colonial town of Taxco, Guerrero. The town’s hospitality was very well appreciated. A lot of cars took advantage of this stop for minor repairs; we recharged our battery to continue the ride. The Arakelian/ Cuadros A110 finally quitted on this stop, as well as the R12 #124 with a Gordini engine with overheating problems because of leaking hoses. The next stop was in Chilpancingo, where the co-pilot of the R12 #127, decided to join the girls dancing to “stretch his legs”. A very friendly mood among the racers is always present. Our friend Fernando Roldán in his R8 #120 already had problems with a slippery clutch as the R8 #126 of Cacheux/ Rodriguez, which also had electric problems, with a faulty regulator. After drinking fresh apple juice or a cold beer offered by the city’s government, we were ready to hit the road once again.

One more hour and we were approaching the Port of Acapulco, and we were facing a little difficulty to drive without headlamps, but we were lucky to have our good friends Miguel Garza and Memo Acosta, this year in Memo’s BMW, who kindly overtook us to light the

So the following Wednesday, the results were given and the results are as follows:

Category: Classic Expert

1. Guillermo Acosta/ Miguel Garza	1976 BMW
2. Jorge Escobedo/ Luis Escobedo	1972 Dinalpin Berlinette
3. Camarena/ Collinnon	1954 Porsche
4. Schiavon/ Schiavon	Renault 12TS
5. Eric Sarrag/ Jesús Dominguez	1969 Dinalpin Berlinette
6. Ruth Brenes/ Raúl Ruiz	1985 Renault 18
7. Calatayud/ Calatayud	Porsche 914
8. Ubeda/ Martinez	1960 Karman Ghia

Category: Classic Novice

1. Pablo Alcocer/ Mireya Bautista	1969 Dinalpin Cabriolet
2. Felipe González/ Cue	1958 Alfa Romeo
3. Francisco Miranda/ Yuriria Robles	1972 Dinalpin GT4
4. J.L. Alvarez/ C.A. Dávila	1966 Dinalpin Berlinette
5. Alejandro Marín/ Tomás Marín	1966 Dinalpin Berlinette
6. Fernando Roldán/ Eric Roldán	1970 Renault R8
7. Martin Berthelot/ Sergio Becerril	Renault R12 Routier
8. Mauricio Ortíz/ Carlos Cadena	1970 Dinalpin Berlinette

In the very expert National Rally, the results were:

Category D 1600 cc

1. Alberto Pedroza/ Lizbeth González	2000 Renault Clio
2. Someone	VW Golf
3. Jose Luis Gutierrez/ Tere Vasquez	2000 Renault Clio

Category B 2000cc

1. Patrick Silve	2001 Renault Clio
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Acceleration kilometre:

Experts:

5th	Sarrag/ Dominguez	A110 Berlinette
7th	Acosta/ Garza	BMW

Novice:

1st	Brenes/ Ruiz	Renault R18
3rd	Alcocer/ Bautista	A110 Cabriolet
4th	Escobedo/ Escobedo	A110 Berlinette
5th	Mena/ Cadena	A110 Berlinette
8th	Miranda/ Miranda	A110 GT4
11th	Berthelot/ Becerril	Renault R12 Routier
14th	Cacheux/ Rodriguez	Renault R8 1400cc
16th	Roldán/ Roldán	Renault R8S

As you can see from the results, Renault gets the top positions once and again, competing against Porsche, BMW, Alfa Romeo, Mercedes Benz, VW, Nissan, MG, etc.



way. Thanks Again! A few kilometres and we were hitting the final stages, which unfortunately was with very heavy traffic. But we all were very lucky to reach the goal safe and sound and enjoyed chatting about the highlights of the rally with the other crews. We then were ready to get to the hotel to take a long shower and get ready for a celebration. Some of us continued to have a nice time on Saturday, buying spares or repairing what was needed and of course took advantage once again of the great restaurants with magnificent food and especially the views of the Acapulco Bay.



On Sunday we had a long breakfast and said goodbye to our friends and along with our friends the Marin brothers, before heading back to Mexico City. With minor problems we reached the city some 4 ? hours later. Along the way we saw the R12 with a major problem now, as the head was already warped and the A110 #125 also had a broken engine. On the way back we had our own "private race" along with Alcocer's A110 cabriolet, Roldan's R8, a 1957 Chevy and us in the Dinalpin GT4 all along the way on the coast road. That was also fun!

Once again we had big fun, and as always a great time to enjoy our cars in such a long ride and the best of all, the company of our co-pilots (which in my case is my wife), and that of all of our friends. We look forward for next year event. We'll keep you posted when the subscriptions open!



Here Comes The Automatic Transmission

By Marvin McFalls

Back in the 1950's cars were becoming very popular, but with only standard shift transmissions they still weren't reaching the entire market. During this time many companies were working on different types of so-called automatic transmissions. Jacob Rainbow of Chicago, Illinois was one of these pioneers. Eaton Manufacturing of Cleveland, Ohio bought the rights to Rainbow's invention and patented them. However, they sold the rights to S. Smith and Sons of Whitney, England to develop it outside of North America.

Smith and Sons devoted considerable time, energy, and money to Rainbow's idea. So by now you are wondering what was this idea? Rainbow discovered that drive could be transmitted from one rotating member to another by means of magnetic powder enclosed in an annular space between the two members. From this idea transmission coupling was developed. Over in France, a name you might know was working on a similar device. The Jaeger people were working on their own coupler, which had the same characteristics as the Smith and Sons. So at this point that Jaeger decided they could use this system they had to make a deal with the Smiths to produce it. If you ever look closely at an old Jaeger Coupler you will see the words "license Smiths" right under Jaeger's name.

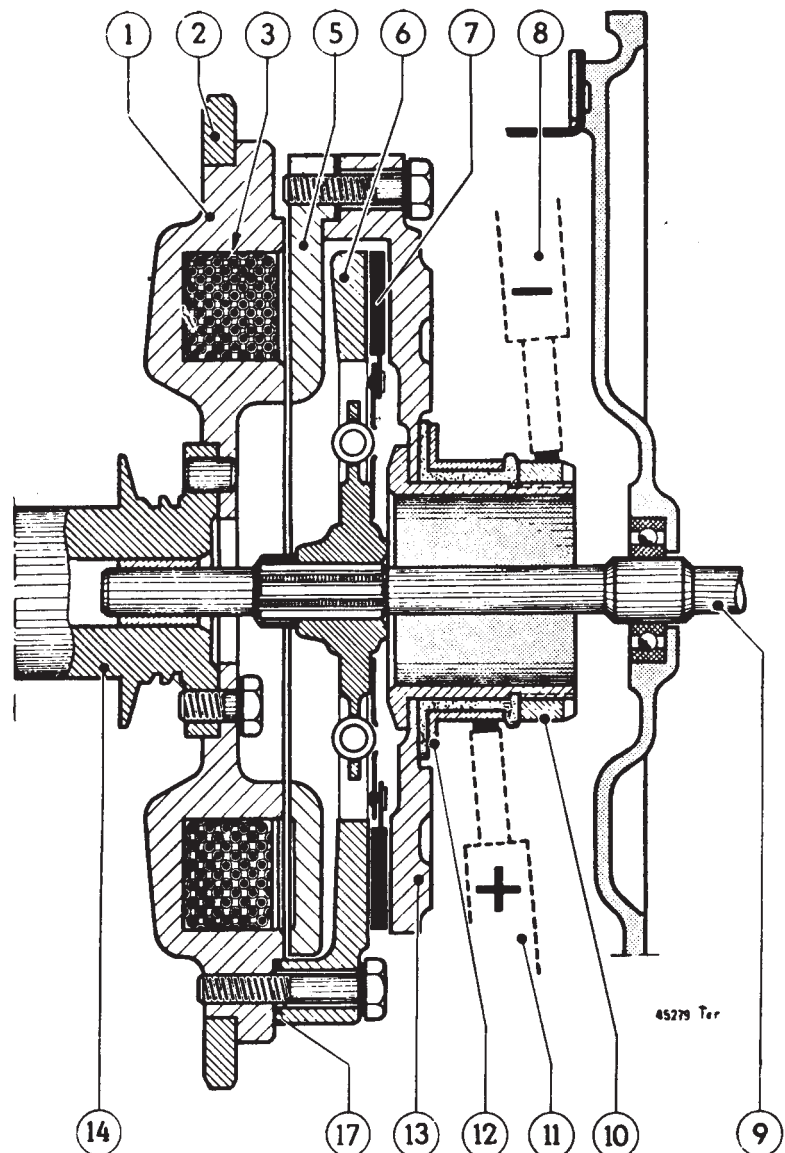
With the licensing taken care of it was time to put the new system in a car. The 1960 Panhard Dyna was the first car to receive a magnetic coupled transmission. With the Panhard system, it still had a clutch and shifter but once they put it in gear and take off then the system known as the Autoselectric takes over. The Jaeger/Panhard engineers claim that the coupler will need no maintenance for the life of the car other than current conductor (brushes); also fuel mileage is only reduced 3-5 percent because the acceleration of the engine is held in check. Also due to the fact the car has a manual transmission, it can be rolled off at 10mph in an emergency.

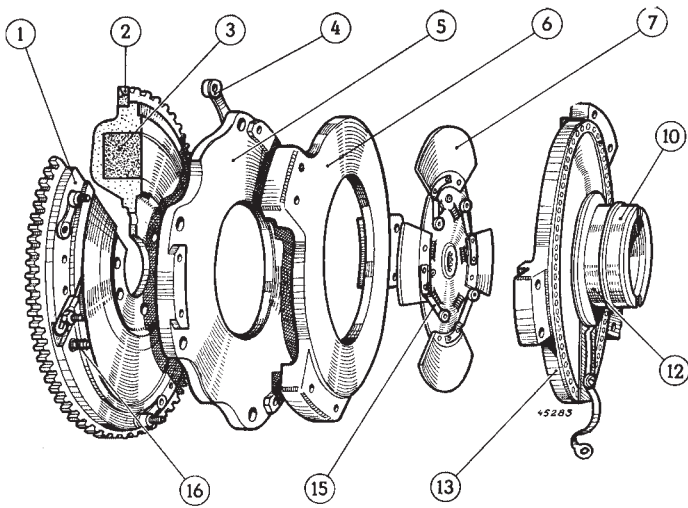
While the Panhard/Jaeger system was impressive, Renault took it one step further with the invention of the Ferlec automatic clutch. This eliminated the clutch pedal by electro magnetically operating the friction disc of the clutch instead of using springs. The earliest version still used a gear shifter but it was soon replaced by a push-button system. Driving technique was quite simple. All you have to do is drive like you have a clutch. Put it in first gear step on the accelerator and when it is time to shift into the next gear, let off the gas pedal and push it into the next gear. If you don't let off the gas a relay will cut off the current and release the clutch, which can cause a scary situation.

Renault engineers advised periodic inspections and suggest that an adjustment may be necessary after 9,000 miles to compensate for lining wear in the clutch. Also before 20,000 miles the brushes should be checked for wear. Neither of these procedures was extremely difficult or expensive.

The Smith's system was used on Renault, Peugeot, Panhard, Hillman and Singer back in the early 60's. Renault used this system on the Dauphine, R8 and R10 here in the U.S. While the system didn't become standard, it was a stepping stone towards today's modern automatic transmissions. They were real popular as a

- 6 Volt Ferlec Clutch Mechanism
- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Magnet head | 9. Gearbox primary shaft |
| 2. Ring gear | 10. Commutator ring (-) |
| 3. Coil | 11. Positive brush holder |
| 4. Driving lug | 12. Commutator ring (+) |
| 5. Armature | 13. Pressure plate |
| 6. Intermediate plate | 14. Crankshaft |
| 7. Friction unit | 15. Friction lugs |
| 8. Negative brush holder | 16. Retracting spring |
| | 17. Adjusting shims |

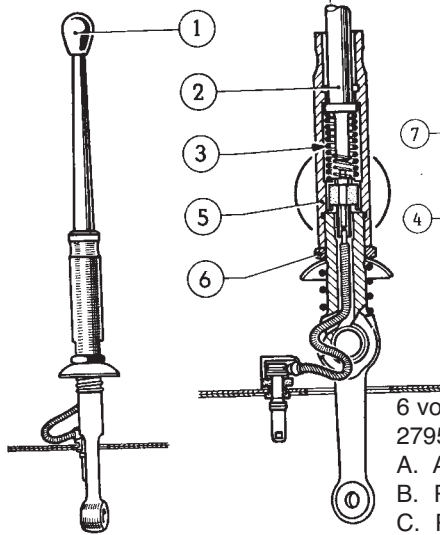




6 Volt Ferlec Clutch Mechanism (above)

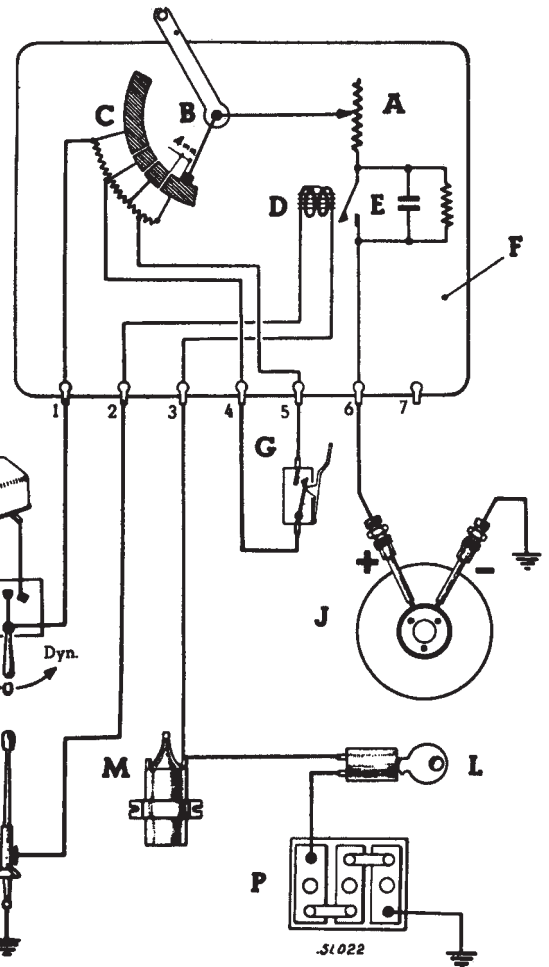
1. Magnet head
2. Ring gear
3. Coil
4. Driving lug
5. Armature
6. Intermediate plate
7. Friction unit
10. Commutator ring (-)
12. Commutator ring (+)
13. Pressure plate
15. Friction lugs
16. Retracting spring
17. Adjusting shims

9—(Ferlec Clutch)



6 volt Ferlec gear lever (above)

1. Lever ball
2. Lever and bush assembly
3. Thrust spring
5. Bush
6. Check nut



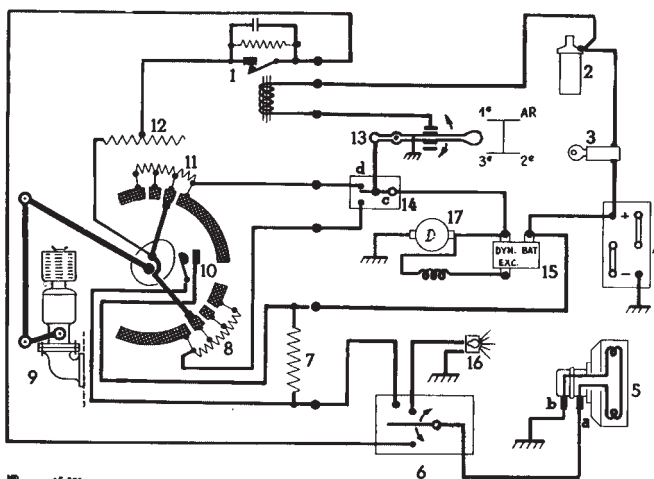
6 volt Ferlec (above) cars AFTER 279507—single rheostat

- A. Adjusting resistance
- B. Rotating contact
- C. Rheostat
- D. Clutch release relay
- E. Condenser
- F. Ferlec control box
- G. Minute switch
- H. Regulator
- J. Ferlec clutch

- K. Bi-polar switch on dash
 - L. Ignition switch
 - M. Ignition coil
 - N. Gear lever
 - P. Battery
- Wire colors

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Pink | 2. Black |
| 3. Red | 4. Green |
| 5. Yellow | 6. Purple |
- From H (bat) to K- white
From H (dyn) to K- blue

6 Volt Ferlec diagram (left) cars BEFORE number 279507 Dual Rheostat



1. Clutch disengaging relay with condenser and protecting resistance for relay contacts (in Ferlec case)
2. Ignition coil
3. Ignition switch
4. Battery (6 volt)
5. Clutch mechanism and driven plate
- 5A. Positive current supply brush
- 5B. Ground current supply brush
6. Bi-polar switch for battery or regulator operation.
7. Stationary or Parking resistance (in Ferlec case)
8. Rheostat for 1st and Reverse speed operation (in Ferlec case)

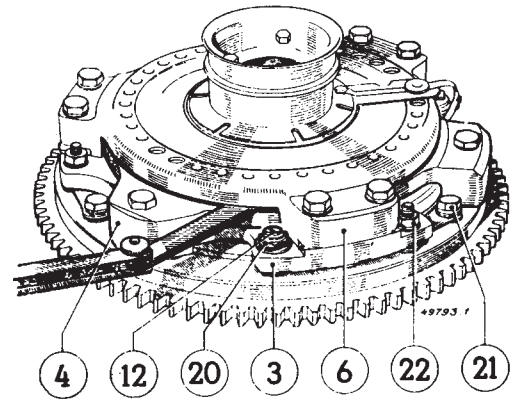
9. Ferlec case control linkage and carburetor

10. Parking resistance short-circuiting switch (in Ferlec case)
11. Rheostat for 2nd and 3rd speed operation
12. Adjustable resistance for wear compensation (in Ferlec case)
13. Gearshift lever and contacts
14. Minute switch for current distribution to the rheostats
- 14C. Position of switch for current supply to 1st and Reverse rheostat
- 14D. Position of switch for current supply to 2nd and 3rd rheostat
15. Regulator
16. Pilot lamp for operation check with "Battery"
17. Generator

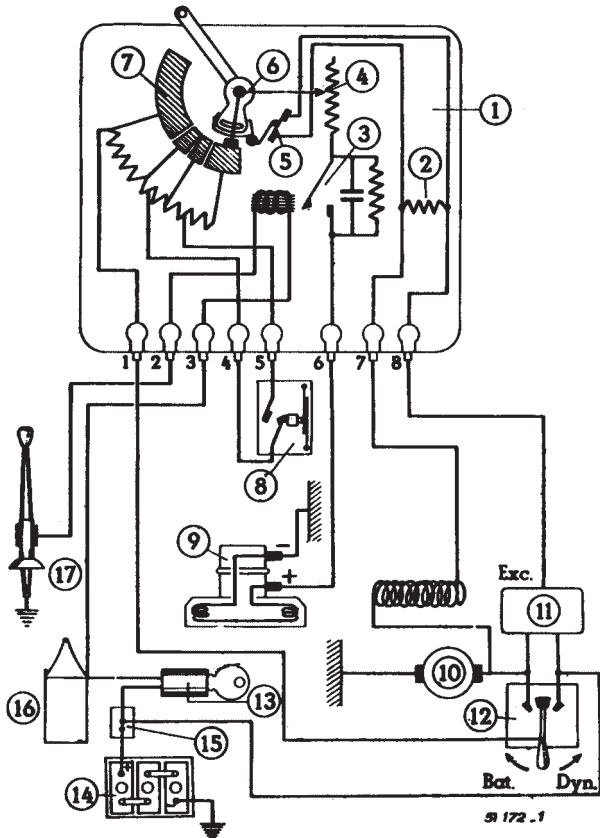
families' second car, and often marketed to mothers and young drivers. Over the years other companies have used electro-magnetic systems, but they have never caught on.

They tend to work well for a while but from my experience after 60-70k miles they tend to quit working properly, mainly due to improper use and lack of maintenance. Many Renault owners would then convert them back into three-speed manuals, or just replace them with a regular four-speed gearbox. However if you ever have an opportunity to ride in one that works properly you will be quite amazed, it does turns a manual transmission into an automatic. Jacob Rainbow was a pretty smart guy.

Special thanks to Club Member, Hank Pinckney for sending me information I used to write this story. Diagrams from Allan Meyer.



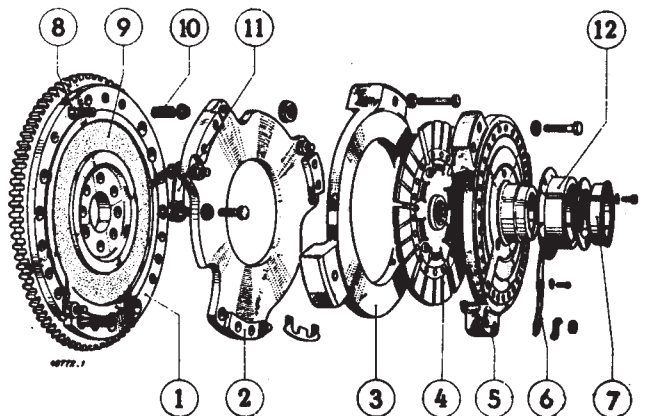
- 12 Volt Ferlec (above)
- 3. Armature
- 4. Intermediate plate
- 6. Pressure plate
- 12. Slotted bolt
- 20. Nut for slotted bolt
- 21. Bolt in drive plate
- 22. Drive plate bolt nut



- 12 Volt Ferlec circuit (left)
1. Ferlec case
 2. Generator field resistance
 3. Clutch release relay
 4. Adjusting resistance
 5. Minute switch (field adjustment)
 6. Cam integral with rheostat slide
 7. Rheostat
 8. Minute switch
 9. Coil
 10. Generator
 11. Voltage regulator
 12. Polarity switch
 13. Starting switch
 14. Battery
 15. Terminal plate
 16. Ignition coil
 17. Gear shift lever

- Wire color at terminals:
- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Pink | 2. Black |
| 3. Red | 4. Green |
| 5. Yellow | 6. Purple |
| 7. Green | 8. Green |

- 12 Volt Ferlec clutch mechanism (right)
- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Yoke | 6. Connector strip |
| 2. Armature | 7. Negative slip ring |
| 3. Intermediate Plate | 8. Bolt |
| 4. Friction disc | 9. Coil |
| 5. Pressure plate | 10. Spring |
| | 11. Drive plates |
| | 12. Positive slip ring |



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