

# Renault News 70



4th Quarter 2003

November - December



Photo by A. Meyer

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# Renault Owner's Club of North America

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

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"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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## Editor's Notes:

Issue #70 shaped up nicely. I want to thank Jesse Patton, Francisco Miranda, Claude Campas, as well as Keith Johnson. Allan Meyer has also come through with a few more stories from his recent visit to France and Italy.

The password on the Members-Only Section of the website will change again in December. The Username will return to: renault and the password will be: eighteen. If you forget this password or discard the e-mail you will need to contact the e-mail list editor and he will have to confirm that your e-mail address is on our membership list and then he will send the new password. If you are planning to change your e-mail address the Update My Club Info form is available at the club website "<http://www.renaultownersclub.org>"

[www.renaultownersclub.org](http://www.renaultownersclub.org)  
In California, at the recent Best of France and Italy meet the idea of attending Retromobile in Paris was brought up as a possible club meet. After a brief investigation, a four-day, three-night Hotel and Air package on Air France from the Eastern U.S. ranging from \$350 to \$800 depending where you depart from and the class of hotel you select. Retromobile runs from February 13th through the 22nd, so if you are interested in attending the largest classic car show in France, contact me soon. Reservations must be made by December 31st, 2003 for the above package. I am sure that similar rates are also available from the West Coast.

I hope everyone enjoys the latest issue and have a wonderful Holiday Season.

## July 2003 Members

Ross Maser, PO Box 410, 899 Nearman Road, Au Gres, MI 48703

email: [rmaser@centurytel.net](mailto:rmaser@centurytel.net)

1985 R5 White; 1982 LeCar, silver, aftermarket turbo

Mike Alexander, 39108 Greenbay Rd, Waukegan, IL 60087

Phone: 847-746-8466; email, [amtcoinc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:amtcoinc@sbcglobal.net)

1984 Encore, red, Comptech-built tube frame for SCCA racing.

Paul Schoen, PO Box 524, Glenbrook, NV, 89413

## August

Michael P. Byrnes, 709 front St, Apt #6, Catassauqua, PA, 18032-2308

Phone: 610-231-3732

Robert D. Wilson, Jr.

PMB 1003, 700 E. 1st St, Number 751, Alamogordo, NM 88310

Phone: 915-727-2177; email, [WILLSON\\_MandR@msn.com](mailto:WILLSON_MandR@msn.com)

1983 R18i blue, alloy wheels, direct hits ignition components, original owner.

Mrs. Christie Dotson, 807 E. Commercial Ave, Anaconda, MT 56711

Phone: (h)406-563-3863; (o) 406-563-3863; email, [4tr\\_1@msn.com](mailto:4tr_1@msn.com)

## September

Nevis George, 9306 Kaufman Pl, Brooklyn, NY 11236

Phone: 212-850-1349; email, [georgeen@jwseligman.com](mailto:georgeen@jwseligman.com)

1985 Encore, #2JH280, MB1 Transaxle, 1.7l, gold, 75,000 mi.

Fred Eassey, 87 Winnview Dr, Dallas, GA 30157

Phone: 770-445-1200; email, [dEASSEY2@aol.com](mailto:dEASSEY2@aol.com) (?)

1963 R8 R1131 Caravelle S, #22656, engine 689-02, white, 75,662 mi.

Michael Anick, 122 Middle Forest Dr, Kerrville, TX, 78028

Phone: 830-257-7132; email [2an6@omniglobal.net](mailto:2an6@omniglobal.net)

1963 Caravelle R1131 #23254, 688-02 engine #664303, rusty-needs total restoration.

## September 2003 New Online Members

Harkins, Kent and Joanne,

2002 Parvin Road, Colfax, WA 99111,

H - 509-335-5548, E-mail: [deerfield@colfax.com](mailto:deerfield@colfax.com),

1982 Fuego Turbo, Black, 1983 Fuego Turbo, Maroon, 1984

Encore S, Blue, 136k miles

Prue, Carter, 26 Barn Door Hills Road, Granby, CT 06035

H - 917-402-8099, E-mail: [cpservices@earthlink.net](mailto:cpservices@earthlink.net)

1983 LeCar, Blue, 43k miles, w/ Archer Engine and mods,

1985 R5 Turbo II Red 18k miles, Red leather interior done in

Italy. 210 Intercooler, header, Tour de corse gearbox

Hoskins, Paul, 4016 Norris Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95821

E-mail: [roscoecar@aol.com](mailto:roscoecar@aol.com)

Heutmaker, David

1203 E. Hemlock Street, Kent, WA 98030

H - 206-409-1268, E-mail: [dheutmaker@hotmail.com](mailto:dheutmaker@hotmail.com)

1969 A110 Berlinette 1300cc, French Racing Blue, 55k miles,

Imported from Holland

Coen, John, 200 Junipero Serra, San Francisco, CA 94127

E-mail: [john@sfeddit.com](mailto:john@sfeddit.com)

1972 R4, White, 77k miles

Hamilton, Matt, 1859 Mason #3, San Francisco, CA 94133

E-mail: [matt@function.com](mailto:matt@function.com)

## November New Members

Ken Randall

9500 SW Barber Blvd., Suite 300, Portland, OR 97219

Phone: 503-452-7228; E-mail --

1986 Turbo #Kooo909, engine #J001106

Craig Wehde  
349 Center Of Town Road, Plainfield, NH 03781  
Phone: 603-675-2623, E-mail:--  
1966 Dauphine, light blue, 64k miles

Brian Perkins  
5554 Link Avenue, Apt 1; Baltimore, MD 21227  
Phone: --; E-mail: jesbri eBay@aol.com  
1967 Europa S1, green, 51k mi, Gordini engine; 1967 green  
Europa, 100k mi, under restoration.

## November 2003 New Online Members

Cardaciotto, Nick, 150 Volusia Avenue, Hamilton, NJ 08610,  
E-mail: Renaultnic@aol.com

Larson, Dan, 1212 West Cedar Avenue, Denver, CO 80223,  
E-mail: dan.larson@earthlink.net

Timmins, Byron  
208 East Canal Street, Hummelstown, PA 17036-9225,  
E-mail: barrytimmins208@netscape.net

Malette, Mike, 554 County Route 8, Fulton, NY 13069,  
E-mail: mmmalette@msn.com

Mercaldo, Stephen  
320 Buttonwood Lane, Mifflinburg, PA 17844,  
E-mail: sjtmerc49@yahoo.com

## Renault Suffers Untimely Fate

Story and photo by Vincent Gerardi

Saturday's I have been working a job driving a tow truck for a busy scrap metal yard. I look forward to this one day a week job as it is fun for a car lover/owner like me. I was driving the tow truck down Sunrise Highway, when passing by a closed down Macys I noticed amongst a group of cars for sale, a car that was flipped onto its side. I pulled around to investigate. I discovered it was a Renault Encore, so I took down the phone number of the lot, and continued on my way to pick up a junk car. On the way I called the



dealer and negotiated for the thrashed Encore. The dealer was surprised to hear about its current position, and agreed to relinquish it to me for the sum of \$20. Twenty dollars seemed fair enough so the next Saturday I picked up the car.

After getting the car back on four wheels I hauled it home. Interestingly, the transmission, the one part I was really in need of for my Alliance convertible seems to be locked in park. Has anyone ever seen that happen? I disconnected the cable, too. Anyway the car ran very well with cold air for about one minute and then died. It has a great red interior if anyone needs it. It also has a good windshield and other stuff. Unfortunately, after the car was vandalized and flipped over it will not make it back on the road and it will soon have to be taken to the scrap yard to be cut up. Call if you need any of it, as I brought a little more of the junkyard back to my house. Again...

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## Renault 5 to Road America

By Marvin McFalls

After waiting almost a year, the time had finally arrived to attend the annual Renault meet. This was the sixth straight year we have had a event, and this one was possibly the farthest away of all the meets, at least it was for me. I had planned to drive a 2.2 litre Fuego that I picked up last fall, but it became very clear when I bought a fixer-upper house in May that I wasn't going to have the car ready by September. So I decided to drive the old reliable Green R5 which is nicknamed the "General". While it isn't much to look at, it has never let me down since putting it together with parts from other LeCars at the Renault Farm. However, before driving it nearly 2000 miles, I decided to invest in some essential new parts including a new pair of radiator hoses, brake pads, fuel filter and lines, spark plugs, rotor button, air filter, oil change, etc. All and all I spent a whopping \$50 on the car. Along with all the new parts Sam Stuckey and I adjusted the valves and carburetor and replaced the idle solenoid on the carb. It was now running like a champ, and as we were making our final adjustments, we discovered a problem. It turned out the cooling fan wasn't working. So after pulling out our handy wiring diagram, Sam figure out a quick solution to the problem and the old car was ready to travel.

With only three days before I planned to leave, Sam broke the bad news that he would not be attending the event with me. So at this point I was even more determined to make the run. So I devised a plan to cut down 1800-mile trip into five segments. As anyone who has ever ridden in an R5 knows they are not the most comfortable cars. So on Wednesday, September 17th I left my house in Knoxville, Tennessee just after 12:30 and traveled nearly 380 miles to Indianapolis in six hours. I had made very good time and



found out when I arrived that I was now on Central Time so it was only 5:30 PM. So I decided to take advantage of this extra time I had and repacked the car for what would not be the last time. After a good nights sleep, I awoke early and was on the road by 8:30 AM. However, when I had repacked the night before I found that I had forgotten a few things so it was off to the local Wal-Mart. After a mini-spending spree, I was back on the road on my way to Chicago.

By 2:00 I arrived at the home of fellow club member Terry Zabransky. However about an hour earlier I had received a disturbing call from Jonathan Burnette. He was driving his Matra dJet up from Texas, and he started experiencing a loss of oil pressure. He had just changed his oil and was in St. Louis wondering if he should turn back or continue on. After speaking to Terry, he continued on towards Chicago. While we waited for Jonathan, I took the opportunity to look at Terry's collection of Renaults close up. I also discovered that I had picked up a nail in my right front tire so Terry and I made a run to the local tire store to get it patched. After returning with the tire we had a wonderful meal that Terry's wife Judy had made while we were gone. We heard from Jonathan again and he said that he would arrive around 10PM, so we decided to get ready for bed and we would get up very early the next morning to figure out what to do with Jonathan's car.

At 5:30 AM Terry awoke us and we decided to ride together in the R5 and leave the Matra at Terry's House. So by 7 AM we had repacked the R5 and we were on our way to Road America. After driving nearly two hours, we stopped for gas before heading to the track. By 9:30 we had checked in and made our way to our tent located right in front of the starting grid. After a full day of watching practice and checking out the track we headed for Sheboygan where our hotel was located. It wasn't long before we were ready to retire after our early rise. I awoke early and went to check out the car and pick up a few things for the day ahead. After traveling more than 800 miles the oil stick still read full and all the other fluids were unchanged. So we headed back to the track for another day of exciting vintage racing. After a beautiful day of racing we headed back to Sheboygan, but instead of going back to the hotel we decided to go into town to try to find a good place to eat. After seeing most of the town we decided to eat at an Italian restaurant about a mile from our hotel.

On Sunday morning we packed the car again, and we made it to the track before 8:30 AM. Because of the long drive ahead we planned to leave the track around 2:30 but it was actually closer to three when said good-bye to Road America and all our Renault friends. On the way back to Chicago, we noticed the car started to miss a little and it seemed like the pick-up in the distributor may be starting to go out. However when we stopped in Chicago to pick up Jonathan's car, I had found the idle solenoid had loosened up so I screwed it back in and I was on my way again. Jonathan and I parted south of Chicago as I headed back to Indianapolis and he headed for St. Louis. This was the longest leg of the trip as I drove nearly 500 miles that day before arriving back in Indianapolis at 10:30 PM. It had rained a little the last hundred miles, but about the time I was settled in the hotel it came quite a downpour and it rained all night.

I had decided to sleep in, and when I awoke the next morning the rain had stopped, I packed the car one final time and was back on the road by 10:30 AM. It wasn't long before the car started missing again, instead of changing the distributor, as I was carrying a spare, I decided to take the longer but less mountainous route from Louisville to Nashville. I arrived in Nashville by 4 PM and after one last stop for gas, I continued on to Kingston where I had dinner with parents and then drove the last 25 miles back to where I had started.

While it had been quite an adventure and I made it home with no major problems, I wouldn't recommend jumping in a twenty year old Renault 5 and driving it on a long voyage. I had many people give me strange looks along the trip, and while I was at Road America, I heard the statement 'I haven't seen one of those in years' on more than one occasion. However I believe it drew as much attention as the much nicer and more expensive Renaults and Alpines it shared a tent with.

Needless to say the General has earned a much-deserved vacation. I plan to cover him up and let him spend the winter resting at the Renault Farm with his other brothers and sisters. But, don't be surprised if he turns up at a future Renault meet closer to home. Considering that car was just days from heading to the junkyard less than two years ago, it seems to have many more miles left in it. I bought another LeCar several months back as a replacement for the General when he finally does retire, but at this point the little green 5 now has 114k miles on it, and it may be several more years before the replacement is needed. All and all I am quite pleased with my investment of Dauphine parts that I traded for it.

# 6th Annual Renault Meet At Road America

Story and photos by Marvin McFalls

For many years Terry Zabransky has told us how Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin would be a great place to hold an event. After travelling to Blackhawk Farms a few years ago and seeing how much fun everyone had there we figured why not give it a try. The event takes place the third weekend in September each year and usually includes more than 400 vintage race cars plus hundreds more vintage street cars on display. This year's field of cars ranged in size from a less than 1000cc Austin mini to a Peugeot powered V10 Formula One car and about anything you could think of in between.



One of the featured makes during the weekend was Stutz. There were more than a dozen Stutz cars representing almost every model from the early



four cylinders to the 32 Valve straight eight which competed against Duesenberg in the golden days of racing. These cars were not museum pieces the owners actually drove the car on 100 mile tours each day, and two of them competed in the old timers class against a couple of Bugattis and whole bunch of MG TC. The other two featured makes in attendance during the weekend were both British. Rolls Royce, which we really only saw on Sunday and Lotus, which seemed to be taking part in almost every race.

We arrived at the track early on Friday morning, by then more than half of the racers had already arrived. Some cold air had come down out of Canada and it wasn't a very nice day, it



was apparent that summer had just ended in Wisconsin. As we made our way to our tent we found Jerry Gordon's beautiful A110 racecar parked under the large tent we had rented. Terry and Judy backed in their gorgeous R 5 Turbo II and A310. I put my homely little R5 down at the end of the row. Jerry hadn't arrived yet, but we were able to meet Lance McDonald. If the name sounds familiar Terry has mentioned

him in a story or two about his cars. Lance own Paradise Motorsports and he had built Jerry A110 racer. He was there to prepare the car for Jerry so he had a large car hauler and even a motorized cart for use in getting around the nearly four mile course. Lance had one more item of interest in the back of his truck. He had an old Renault dealer sign that he would like to sell and which also made a nice decoration with all the other flags and banners.

Jonathan and I decided to check out the paddock and make the most out of the lack of people to get some nice photographs. When we returned from our tour we saw a 328 Ferrari parked under the tent and we soon saw Jerry in his Renault race suit. He was getting ready to go out for his first warm-up laps of the weekend. While Jerry and Lance were busy getting the car ready Terry and Jonathan and I were able to use the cart to take a little tour around the track. We went down to turn five which features a sharp curve up a steep hill, much of the passing would take place there during the weekend. Next we traveled to the part of the track called Thunder Alley. It featured a large gravel trap and had an excellent observation point for taking photos. The final place where we would spend most of our time watching the racing would be down at the end of pit lane on a bridge that overlooked the front straightaway. All three of these places were excellent for watching the action and we would return to each of the many times over the three days.



Jerry had a second practice session that afternoon, and we had an opportunity to become acquainted before he went out. Jerry was very interested in the Renault Elf T-shirts I had and he bought two of them from me that day instead of waiting until the swap meet. By the end of the day we were tired and cold and ready to go to the motel to recharge for the next day. After checking in and getting cleaned up a bit we walked over next door to the restaurant. It was supposed to be a Pizza



and Sub place but it became pretty clear when we went inside and saw video games and lots of kids that we had probably come to the wrong place. We were so hungry and tired that we went ahead and ordered. By the time we finished we were very aware this wasn't the perfect ending to what had been a tough day. So we went back up to the room and retired early.

I awoke early the next morning, and it was like we were in a different place. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, while it was still cool that cold Canadian wind was gone as well. We made it to the track shortly after 9 AM and there were at least a hundred more racecars that weren't there when we had left the day before. Needless to say it was another busy day of checking out cars, watching qualifying, and waiting to see who else showed up. It wasn't long before Yves Boode came by. He was racing his Monoposto open-wheeled racer and had left his A110 at home for this event. I was disappointed he hadn't brought the Alpine but it was nice to see him again. Later that morning we were surprised with the arrival of Peter Taft. Peter was driving the U.S. Model Alpine GT V6 Turbo that was featured in one of our past issues. The fellow who had imported into Florida sold it to Peter more than a year ago so the car now resides in Evanston, IL. It was nice to finally get to see the car up close.

Right before lunch we had our final guest arrive. Jonathan and I were on the cart going to Thunder Alley when coming up the hill to the pad-

dock is a light blue Dauphine. Lloyd Mathis had driven his car up from St. Louis. I told Lloyd where we were located and when we returned from watching the race there was quite a crowd of current and former Renault Owners around Lloyd's car. Lunchtime means touring, so Jonathan, Lloyd and I all took turns riding with Terry and Judy around the fabulous old course. I believe we topped 110 mph on one of the hot laps I did with Terry in the R5 Turbo. Needless to say it was a fun ride.

After lunch we were able to talk to Lloyd more, and by 3PM it was time for the annual swap meet. Jonathan and I were the main vendors, but Lloyd also brought a few items to trade. Terry bought up all the LeCar/R5 Turbo door grommets I had gathered up, and I sold Lloyd a head set for his Dauphine. I was able to pick up a much-coveted Renault Sport Spider Brochure as well as some nice looking Renault pins. So when we packed up our wares we were a few dollars richer and had a little less to carry back home with us. I guess that new found wealth was burning a hole in our pockets because we decided to go out for



a nice dinner, and then stopped by the grocery store for provisions for the rest of trip. After that we returned to room and stayed up for a while making plans for the next day and talking about many of the neat cars we had seen.

Sunday would turn out to be the warmest day of three. We were the first Renault owners to arrive so we decided our first trip of the day was to go up on the top of hill and check out the cars there. We knew that Yves was up there and we hadn't seen his car yet. We quickly discovered that this was where most of the small open-wheelers were hiding out. We spoke to Yves and his friends and wished him good luck in his race. We decided to get back to our tent to see if anyone had arrived yet. Terry had arrived and Lance pulled in soon after, it wasn't much longer before everyone had arrive except for Lloyd. We started to worry about him but he arrived shortly before lunch. When touring time came Jerry, Terry, and Judy all went out so I decided to take some pictures of them rather than riding.

By the time the first feature race of the day started it was nearly 1PM. Yves was racing in this one, but unfortunately he took the green flag and he never came back around. After the race we found out he had broken a CV joint and had to wait to be towed back in after the race. There were two more features before we had to start for home and the second one was very interesting. It featured mainly American muscle cars like Corvette, Camaro, Mustang but there were also a few Porsche 911 and even one Jag. As the race started one Z28 Camaro pulled ahead of the rest followed closely by a Corvette. As the race continued it seemed the car with the best brakes was one of the 911s. He had passed many cars to move into third position. When the came out of the final turn Porsche attempted to pass the Corvette only to be blocked, then as the roared up the hill to flag stand the Corvette found a extra burst and passed the Camaro just before crossing the line. It had been a very entertaining race.

Jerry was going to race in the next event but it was nearly 3 PM so Jonathan and I decided to leave early and start the long trip back home. We said our good-byes to all our

friends, and we were back on the road again. It had been a very fun weekend just wish that more owners would have came out. So if you didn't make it this year, maybe we will see you at the Seventh Annual Renault Meet. We will let you know when and where sometime next spring.





# 30 days in a New Renault

Story and photos by Keith Johnson



During the planning of my June vacation with my wife, I was exploring the possibilities of renting a car for our 30-day stay when I happened to come upon Renault's Eurodrive lease program. This program allows American visitors to lease a new Renault for anything over 17 days at a very competitive rate, and includes liability insurance. I compared it to car rental, and once you add in the additional mileage charges I knew we would accrue, it was actually cheaper for us to lease the Renault than to rent a car. Plus, we could take the car with us on our 7-day cruise to the northernmost part of Norway, then proceed on our trip with the security of not having to rent a car on some small fishing or oil-mining village. The car lease also allowed us to drive anywhere in the EU and Norway (which isn't a member of the EU). Our trip was to start and end in Paris, which meant that there would be no delivery or pickup charges (another plus compared to the rental companies), and Renault's agents would pick us up at the airport and return us there at trip's end. How more convenient could it get?

I'm not a small person by any means, and it's been a long time and several pounds ago that I drove my LeCars, so I had some trepidation as to the cabin size of the vehicle we would choose. There was also 30 days of luggage to take into account. The Eurodrive website allows you to choose any or all of the models and engine choices, add your trip details, and then they give you quotes of each vehicles costs. I looked fondly at the pictures of the cute Kangoo, but after reading some reports (including ROCO-NA's newsletters), I chose the new Megane II 4-door hatchback. Although I had of course seen none of the new Renault models in the flesh, the Kangoo appeared to be an older model, narrower, and in some reports was described as a commercial model. It turns out that I was correct, because after our arrival the Kangoo appeared in every shape and form, but was most prevalent as a serviceman's "van." It certainly would have fit our needs space-wise, but in the end I'm glad we spent the extra \$50-100 for the much more luxurious Megane. Because we would be driving upwards of 8000 kilometers, we choose the 1.9l diesel.

The procedure for procuring the car is fairly simple, but some time is required simply due to the fact that the forms are mailed to your home, then you return them to Renault USA's offices in New York, who forwards them to Paris, who processes them and then returns them to you. You first reserve the vehicle with Renault



USA. They then sent us the information packet, including the lease form and all the procedural information we would need in a nicely bound manual. We returned the forms about a month before leaving and anxiously awaited their return. Perhaps 2 weeks later we received our completed lease agreement and final arrangements as to delivery of the vehicle. If you give them your flight details (or I suppose other arrival time), they ensure the time and place of your delivery. This entails calling Renault's agent upon your arrival. I presume this is so that they don't have to monitor flight arrivals' timeliness, but apparently the agents are local, so there wouldn't be a time delay. We arrived at Charles de Gaulle airport on May 23 and called TT Car, Renault's agent at the airport. They send a large Renault van over immediately, and we basically walked from the plane out to the parking lot, customs or immigration apparently nonexistent. The TT Car porter, for lack of a better term, was very friendly and loaded our bags into the van and took us to the TT Car parking lot. The TT Car lot was quite large. They also serve as Peugeot's agent, and I imagine that they are also a rental agent, because there were literally hundreds of new-looking cars in the lot. Our car was front and center and exactly the color I had hoped for, a metallic blue. We went inside the trailer and signed the delivery form, where upon the agent took us to the car and gave us a quick introduction.

Undoubtedly more savvy ROCoNA members know this, but the fact that the Megane requires no ignition key came as a surprise to us. There's what I call a "smart card," which looks like a cross between a credit card and that car lock remote thing we have in America. There's a slot on the dash below the radio that you slide the card into, then push in the clutch, and push the start button. The car starts immediately (unless it's cold, because the diesel preheaters take a second or so), and off you go. Of course the car comes with an owner's manual, but much to our chagrin it was in French, which I know only a few words from the days of poring over Citroën repair manuals. What "car guy" needs an owner's manual, though? Right. More on that later. The car was well equipped, with air conditioning and a 6 CD changer. The radio was FM, LW, and MW (AM), and the digital readout (on FM stations) had a feature called "AF" wherein the station's identity and whatever else the radio



station chose (including in one case advertising), would scroll across the little 10-character readout.

I have never been to Europe, and I'm sure those readers who have can share my initial fear (terror?) with a first attempt at European roads. Now I was a bus driver for 20 years, and I've heard of the roundabouts, but with my Michelin map and [viamichelin.com](http://viamichelin.com) directions, how could I go wrong? Well, there were a number of factors I had not considered. Number one was the fact that my Michelin map was on a scale of about 1" = 1000km, so to say that it wasn't very detailed would be an understatement. Number 2 was that European road signs care little about compass direction. The signs only tell you which exit takes you to which city. There's no reference to north, south, east or west. On US interstates, we're basically led by the nose by huge green road signs, helpfully telling us where to go. Having been a professional driver for so long, I didn't think about the fact that even in the US, once you're off the interstate, it helps to know where you're going before you get there. The local road signs only indicated local towns. Since our first stop was perhaps 100km away, this wasn't much help. We spent several minutes of feverish activity just outside the airport trying to figure out where the heck we were and where we were going. Looking back, I can't believe how naïve I was. 20 years of bus driving wasn't going to help me if the information I had was akin to a finding a grain of sand using a globe of the earth. I won't go into further descriptions of finding our way, except to say that it could have ended my marriage and that it did improve. While my wife's confidence in my navigation of roundabouts is still below average at best, I'm sure that had I a second chance, all would go much better. In the end it made up for some funny stories in our journal, and only a few shouting matches, mostly in London, where we hadn't planned on driving at all, except that we missed our exit and ended up in downtown London around 8 PM. That was a nightmare.



Back to the car. The Megane drove extremely well. The diesel accelerated briskly through its 6-speed gearbox, and didn't complain those frequent times when it found itself lugging up a hill in 5th or 6th gear after a missed gearchange. My only complaint would be that the transmission's shift linkage was rather close and indistinct. It was difficult to locate a gear once you missed your shift change. One could mark it down to several years of complacent driving of American automatic transmission land yachts. After this trip, I have decided that my next car will have a manual transmission, even if it turns out to be an old VW Transporter. The car's exterior and interior was finished quite nicely. The car, sharing its rear-end styling with the very nice Vel Satis (we saw one in Germany and were impressed with Renault's



bold new look). The rear window curves around the back of the car, but has little or no vertical curve. Although we never had any back seat passengers, this upright window certainly would have led to no lack of headroom for what in the States amounts to a medium-sized hatchback. The interior was a nice Grey cloth and vinyl, comfortably French yet with substantial support, although I would have liked more lower lumbar support. The steering column was also adjustable for height. The car was equipped with power windows, locks and mirrors, and the mirror adjustment had a position, which electrically folded the door mirrors against the car, which we found handy on some of the ferry crossings. Handling was very nice.

I won't pretend to have driven many enthusiast cars in the last 10 years, but I was impressed by the Megane's tight grip of the road. I was a little surprised at this, but one must remember that my experience with French cars are from those cars manufactured from the late 50's to the early 80's. In those days, it seems that French cars sacrificed roadholding for ride. My R10, R5s and especially my Citroëns, even the 2CVs, had riding comfort hard to equal in cars twice their size or price. In my opinion, the worst handling French car I owned was a Fuego, which purported to be a sporting car. I'm sure that upgrading the struts would have improved this, but I digress. The matter of the French owner's manual proved to be a minor discomfort. The first night, we couldn't figure out how to keep the doors locked. Every time we locked the doors, they would unlock once we tried the handle. Since our first night's stay was on the 3rd floor of a bed and breakfast in London, the prospect of hauling all of our bags upstairs because the damn car wouldn't stay locked was not something we looked forward to. Luckily we came upon the solution half by chance. While I was upstairs, my wife went down to speak to our hosts. She found that one of them spoke French, so she took the manual to her. At the same time, I suddenly came to the conclusion that perhaps it was that "smart card" that was foiling us. Could it be that if one had the card in one's possession, the car would automatically unlock, I wondered? My wife suddenly came upstairs and breathlessly told me that our host had solved the problem. Sure enough, if you had the "smart card" with you and were in a 3-4 foot radius of the car's doors or rear hatch, the doors would unlock if you tried a door or the hatch release. We of course had to go down and see this miracle in action.

I further tried another experiment. With the card in my pocket, I tried the starter button. Of course, she immediately fired to life. This feature proved to be of some amusement when we loaded our car on the Hurtigruten cruise ship in Bergen, Norway. This was the only time on 7 different ships that we were not allowed to bring the car on board ourselves. The ship's crew had

just loaded a Porsche Carrera 4 onto the ship and were all standing around it admiring it. They had parked it in a position with such care that it might have been on one of those revolving tables at the auto show. "Wonderful," I thought to myself. "My lowly Renault is gonna be packed somewhere in the back next to the pallets of dried cod." It turns out my fears were ungrounded. Although the crew didn't speak any English, they were charmed by the Renault's quirky ignition card. I mimed to them how I could have the card in my pocket and start the car. When it was the crewmember's turn, he made a dramatic and humorous show of putting the card in the imaginary pocket of his overalls, then started the car. The only remaining thing was that he didn't know how to shut the car off. He didn't read English either, so the fact that the start button also says, "stop" on it meant nothing to him. Looking back, I wonder why everything in the car was in French except for that button and the warning lights that say "stop" and "service."

There was only one black mark on our experience with the Megane. The car did break down on some unknown shepherding area north of Yorkshire, England. The "STOP" light came on the dash, followed by the stench of diesel fuel filling the cabin. Once we rolled to a stop smoke came out from under the hood quite nicely. I popped the hood and saw the injector feed leaking. I knew that all I need was a 12 or 13mm spanner, but...I didn't have one. We didn't know exactly where we were other than a) we knew what road we were on, and b) that we hadn't reached the town of Crook. Luckily, the Cellhire phone service offers a free cell phone for Renault Eurodrive customers (you pay for the calls; of course), so we called Renault's service number and they dispatched someone. Unfortunately, the first company they dispatched was not in the area (apparently there's two towns in the UK named Crook), but they quickly corrected that. It took a service company about 2 hours to arrive. We spent the time playing computer games (my wife) and pacing the shoulder enjoying the smell of whatever had died in the tall grass (me). Since there was collection fine ladies' underwear also in the grass, I chose not to investigate further. I'm going to proceed with the assumptions that the thing that died was an animal and that this was just a favorite parking spot for the local amorous teens. Once the mechanic arrived, he secured the offending high-pressure line and we were off in less than 5 minutes.

We put 8876 kilometers on the car in 30 days. We visited France, England, and Ireland, Scotland, back to England, Norway, and the border of Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Netherlands, back to Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium and returned to France. Fuel mileage was very good, although I didn't keep exact figures. Fuel was less than I expected, far less in some areas, so we came in under budget for car expenses. Driving the car was a joy, and driving in Europe was an experience I'll never forget. If we do it again (and I hope that we do only not right away), I'll be better prepared.

You may e-mail Keith if you have any questions about his trip at: keifer@ync.net



Classic Motor Show  
2003

## Classic Motor Show 2003

The BMW Club event of the year this year took place parallel to the CART races on the Autodromo de la Magdalena Mixuca infield's. So, on 10, 11, 12 October, we had the opportunity to meet with friends on another static exhibition.

Framed by this important race event, on Saturday we were invited two have a drive on the track. A couple of cars per club, as otherwise it would have been impossible to accommodate all of the displayed cars in such a short time available. For the Alpine Club the beautiful (and very appropriate for the occasion) racing Alpine A110 (2 liter engine with double Weber carburetors, electronic ignition, etc) property of Juan Antonio Calvillo and my A110L GT4 Dinalpin, as a classic sample of the club, took part. I have to admit that for me it was thrilling to drive the recently updated autodrome, with so many people sitting on the grads many of them cheering, clapping and enjoying the parade of the more or less 50 cars, most of them in great showroom condition. It was incredibly difficult to keep the foot off the accelerator in such a smooth pavement, so some of us had to break the line and at least had a little taste of speed. At some point, we reached 120 Km/hr (about 75 mph) but only for a short time, when it was absolutely safe to do so. After that, we returned to the show parking space and enjoyed the nice cars. As you might recall, this event main attraction is the "unveiling" of cars. This year was Carlos Cadena's turn to show us his A110 Dinalpin Berlinette with a new paint job. It seems Carlos is determined to keep his car in great showroom condition, as last May, at the Huixquilucan event, the car was in terrific shape! On display at our stand, we had Pepe Maqueo's 1400 cc R8G, Alfonso Gonzalez 1600cc A110 Berlinette, Mario Domenzai 1400cc A110 Berlinette, Carlos Cadena 1300cc A110 Berlinette, Juan Anto-

rio Calvillo 2000cc A110 Berlinette, my 1300cc A110L GT4 and a racing A110L GT4 fitted with a 1400cc engine, property of our good friends Luis and Jorge Escobedo. By the way, with this car they had won several "vintage races" in their category, and this year they want to keep the 1st place of the Campeonato Serial Vintage Jugos del Valle (del Valle Juices Vintage Serial Championship) just as last year's serial. As for the Grupo Auto Francés, it is a bit of a problem sometimes to accommodate so many cars of the different French makes. This year Lorenzo Sendra gathered as many places as possible, and he got 5 Citroën, 7 Peugeot and 5 Renaults: 1 R8, Alfredo Sevilla's Dinalpin Cabriolet and his Berlinette, and my R4L and Dauphine. For not already seen cars, a red GT4 was parked nearby with another club of assorted



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makes. I had a short talk with the owner and he told me he is in the process of restoration. Lets hope next time we see him he already has an advance in his car.

As exhibitors, we had the chance of watching the preliminaries and the races of the Cart. Also, on schedule was the Neon, the pickups and the Clio races. We went to see the Clio races and it was incredible. I am not a knowledgeable person on races, so I cannot tell you much. The Clios RS 2 liters are all stock engines and only minor modifications are allowed. Even the tires has to be of some make and kind. Renault de México is the only provider of spare parts and is responsible that all cars are according to the specifications. The engine has no modifications whatsoever. So all cars being exactly the same, is up to the pilots to win. It was really interesting to see all this Clios. We thank our friend Raul Pelaez, president of the BMW Club, for inviting us to the event.

## A Weekend in L.A.

Story: Marvin McFalls; Photos: author, A. Meyer, P. Gaspers

When you are taking a long trip it is best to get all the problems out of the way in the beginning rather than later. For me I had a smooth flight from Knoxville to Charlotte, and by the time I arrived at my gate for Los Angeles I knew something wasn't right. It turned out our plane was grounded due to a problem and we had to wait for a replacement. We finally boarded nearly an hour late. Once on board the captain let us know they were refueling the plane and it would be a while longer. Finally I arrived in L.A. two hours late. Luckily Brent was waiting for me outside the terminal, and we went to our hotel. He had to wait almost four hours for my arrival. We stayed on the top floor of the eighteen story Marriott. After a quick shower we went down to the sports bar where we had a surprisingly good meal. Then we headed back to the room, as it was nearly 2AM back home. Unfortunately someone forgot to tell my body we were in a new time zone as I woke up at my normal 6:30 AM, unfortunately it was 3:30 in the morning. I was to excited to sleep so I rested as much as possible and planned the day ahead.



Brent and I were up and ready to go by 7AM. We headed over to Marina Del Rey to pick up our Nissan 350Z. We had hoped that someone would arrive early and we could get all the paperwork and be on our way by 8AM. However they were right on time, and we didn't leave until quarter after. Everyone was waiting for us at Jerry's Deli near the park. Luckily there was no traffic and we made it from the Marina to Van Nuys in less than twenty minutes. In the parking lot was Jacques' 4cv, Dene's 2cv, Joe Hernandez's Gorgeous Caravelle, and a R10, as well as a Volkswagen Golf that I later found out was Jonathan's ride. After a nice breakfast and French Car talk, we were off to the park. However as



we came out of the restaurant, in the parking lot was a familiar car. It was Allan Meyer in his Citroën Visa. This is the famous hand me down that traveled 5600 miles to Amherst, Massachusetts and back last year.

After we arrived and took a quick look at the Renaults we decided to quickly hit the vendors. I found a nice set of pistons and liners for a dauphine but decided not to buy them. I told Jacques about them and it turned out the guy also had a brand new set of Caravelle lenses so Jacques had the find of the day. This doesn't happen very often at Woodley. However I had a small find myself. I found a very nice two line German Exempt tag like you might find on the rear of an A110 or even an American car so I had to have it. The price was a little high but the guy wouldn't budge so I went ahead and bought it. With the trading completed it was time to check out the cars. I must say I can't ever remember seeing so many top notch Italian cars.

However the French car display weren't bad either. Renault was the best represented with Eight R5 Turbos (I and II) One R5 Alpine Along with the other cars from the restaurant there was another R10, an Alliance GTA Convertible and a rusty R16 that was for sale for \$350. Club founder Howard Singer's R10 based Roadrunner Roadster was also on display, Lastly there was a beautiful yellow A110 and a Dinalpin GT4 in poor condition. All tolled 18 cars. Along with the Renaults were about as many Citroëns including the land speed SM that was in Amherst. The Peugeot's didn't have a good showing all tolled about five cars mainly 405 but a nice 504 wagon was displayed. Next up was Bugatti with two cars. The first was a typical open topped racer and the second was a very unusual design belonging to Jay Leno. Next there was a great looking Delahaye convertible; lastly was a original kind of rough looking but still running strong Simca Wagon.

Now for the Italian cars, like any Southern California meet it was dominated by later model Ferraris. During the afternoon there were probably a total of twenty of them. Unfortunately there was only one Lamborghini Diablo, but there was a nice collection of Maseratis from the 60s to the latest models. Overall Alfa Romeo was best represented although Fiat and Lancia had some nice cars on hand as well. There were a few gatecrashers including one American car. The Vector W8 Twin Turbo was briefly on display and I was able to talk to the owner. It features an all aluminum turbo charged Chevy V8. This was one of only eighteen built in Orange County, California. All tolled there were nearly 200 cars as well as about 20 motorcycles and scooter.



As 2:00 approached we said goodbye to Jonathan and hello to Kurt. Jonathan and his friend James headed back to Texas, and Kurt and his wife Carrie arrived from a weekend working in Sedona. He wasn't able to bring his Caravelle but he made an appearance. I would think this was the most club officers we had in one place at one time in many years. Now it was time for Allan, Brent and myself to make the pilgrimage to the Petersen Museum. Since we only had a two-seater I convinced Allan to take us downtown in his Visa.

While it was a bit scary doing 45 mph on the 405 we made it out of the valley and back across the hill onto Wilshire Blvd. A quick pass through Beverly Hills and we arrived at the Museum. The featured displays included 100 years of Rolls Royce, and a tribute to Carroll Shelby.





However other features included Star Cars, Hotrods, Duesenberg, Auburn, Cord dealership, History of motorcycles and a cool Hot Wheels display. It was a fabulous afternoon topped off by a visit to the gift shop. Where to my surprise we found a collection of black and white post cards put out by Renault. All tolled there were nearly twenty postcards featuring Renault racing from the early 1900s to the 1970s. Needless to say each of us bought a complete set.

Next we traveled back to Van Nuys to pick up our Z car, and head to Ventura. We thanked Allan for showing us around town and planned to meet up with him the next afternoon. Again we made excellent time and arrived in Ventura early, as we planned to go out to dinner with Kurt and his wife. Kurt had time to show off his Caravelle before heading to dinner. After another excellent meal we went back to their house for a tour. Before we knew it was after 10PM so we decided to call it a night and check into our hotel. This time we stayed in the harbor at the Sheraton with a great view of the marina from our window. As we were exhausted it wasn't very long before we were in bed, but again my body thought it was time to get up this time it was about 5AM local time. I took advantage of the early wakeup and headed for the lobby where I finally read the Sunday paper and then it was off to the hot tub. By 9AM I was recharged and we were ready to check out the sights.

We cruised along the ocean to Oxnard where we located the Pacific Coast Highway. Unfortunately it was anything but a typical Southern California day, as it had already rained and the temperature was still in the 50s. We were starting to get hungry but there didn't appear to be anywhere to eat, but it wasn't long before something caught our eyes. There were about a half dozen 60's model cars and



a bunch of trucks parked along the road. I told Brent it looks like they are shooting a movie, lets check it out. We talked to the security guard and he walked us up to the set, after a quick word with the director they gave us five minutes to take some photos. We continued toward Malibu looking for a place to eat, after a couple of near misses we finally found a nice French Cafe and had a wonderful meal. Next stop on the tour was Santa Monica and the world famous pier. There wasn't much happening that day other than another film crew in the carousel. The bad weather had even kept away the fishermen, as there were maybe a half-dozen people fishing.

By 1:00PM we made it back to town and decided to do a bit more sightseeing in Beverly Hills before we met up with Allan. We stopped by the Beverly Center, and the Hardrock Cafe before meeting up with Allan in West Hollywood. Since Brent wanted to see some celebrities we decided to go down to Hollywood. We checked out Grauman's Chinese Theatre and the new Kodak Theatre before we headed down the walk of fame to Vine. After making a few stops for souvenirs and photos we crossed the street and walked back the seven or eight blocks to where we had parked. We



then headed back to West Hollywood for a Mexican Dinner and one last opportunity to see exotic cars. There is a great dealership called Heritage Classics on Santa Monica Blvd. that sells mainly older models out of a renovated warehouse. I must say I was about as impressed of the collection of cars I saw there as I had seen at Woodley Park or the Petersen.

Well as quickly as our weekend had started it was now over. Allan drove us back to our car and we thanked him for a wonderful afternoon/ evening. It was 9PM and our flight would leave in a couple of hours. We had to gas up the car and return it to the LAX drop-off. A young attendant signaled us to pull into his check-in lane. As we waited for the shuttle we found out why as he was revving up the motor and he pulled over to a separate parking area. The shuttle dropped us off and I said goodbye to Brent, it had been an action packed weekend and I looked forward to sleeping on the plane ride home. By dawn we were back in Charlotte and shortly after 9:00 AM we were on the ground in Knoxville. While to many of you this may seem crazy to fly across the country to only spend a few days, as you can tell by the story you can do a whole lot in a short period of time with proper planning. I highly recommend the Best of France and Italy Car show to any Renault enthusiast. I look forward to going back in a few years hope to see you there.



## The Very Limited Edition Renault 5s

Story and images from Claude Campas

I collected most information for this history from the book: Renault 5 by Yann LeLay and Bernard Vermeylen. The first of the cars is the La Cacharelle. The dressmaker "Jean Cacharel" introduced in 1976 at the Paris auto show a Renault 5 "Cacharelle" developed by his friend Maurice Calka. The transformation price was equivalent to \$2000 U.S. in 1976. The show car is a Renault 5 TL of which the top was cut out and replaced by a total canvas top retaking the theme of a cacharel fabric. All the seats use the same theme fabric.

The transformation was available on the whole Renault 5 line and included some reinforcement body parts. 38 orders were grabbed at the auto show with money deposit. So a second model was built. Unfortunately the head of Renault production refused to honor the Renault warranty and refused to market the "Cacharelle". It was necessary to refund all the customers. However the "Cacharelle" did draw some interest from Renault because they borrowed the car for one week to examine and test it on Lardy track. Disappointed Jean Cacharel refused to associate his name to any car in the future.

The next model was called the Monte Carlo. To celebrate the success of Jean Ragnotti with the Renault 5 Alpine Groupe 2 in rally race, Renault decided to sell a special edition, the base is a Renault 5 TS named "Monte Carlo". All the "Monte-Carlo" consisted of was a sunflower yellow five with Renault 5 Alpine bumper painted in red, the bottom of the body and the rear bumper is also red. The roof is black like a Renault 5 Alpine Groupe 2. The steel wheels and the mirror are also the same than the very first R5 Alpine. This special edition was built in Flins in February and March 1978 and sold from the 25th. March 1978.

Everyone will recognize the next model. To celebrate the success of the Renault 5 on the American continent and by request from French customers, Renault introduces a new special edition in November 1978. This special edition was called "LeCar by Renault" like the U.S. model. 14 000 "LeCar by Renault" were built, 6000 for France, the remainder for the other Europe countries. The base is also the R5 TS. The cars featured a lot of the same details as the U.S. models making the buyer believe that they were buying the same car as the American people. It fea-



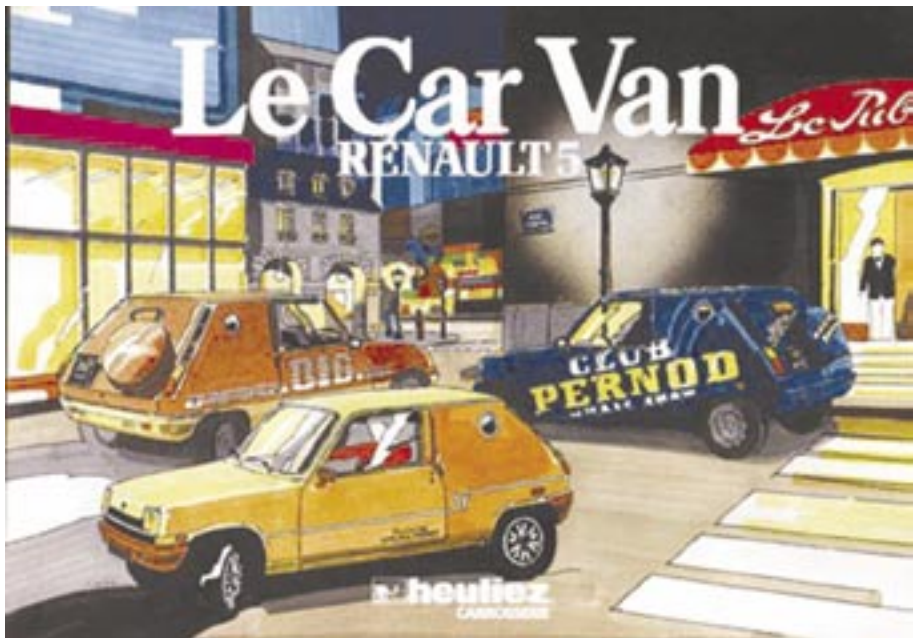
tured: AMIL aluminum wheels, stripping, black bumpers, lateral side marker, LeCar by Renault monogram on the trunk, and front Renault logo on the hood wipe out. The bumper, front lights and engine came from the European version. (R5 TS) Each of these 14 000 cars were equipped with a plate on the dashboard with the serial number engraved.

With the success of the LeCar, comes the LeCar Van. Produced in 1979, it's a limited edition from the limited edition "LeCar by Renault" French version....double limited... From an original idea of Francois Dumoulin, the company "HEULIEZ" built a rear sheet metal body equipped with side tint porthole. The spare wheel

was installed on the trunk. The license plate was moved on the left of the trunk. At the rear of the car there is no seat but a red foam mattress, the interior side was also covered with red upholstery stuffing. That's a real audacious shot from a company who habitually built utility and cattle cars. This audacious shot paid off because Renault accorded its warranty for this car and one model was exposed at the Renault Pub on the Champs Elysées.

At the end of year 1982 Renault offered the Renault 5 TX, that's the top of the line. (Excluding the R5 Alpine) In case some people think that the R5 TX is too "proletarian" they can find the "Renault 5 Laurence" by "Laurence Automobile". This company was created in January 1983 by "Antony Roland". The Renault 5 Laurence was improved in almost every area. The body was totally reworked, sandpapered and elimination of all the faults, no mastic (body filler) was used. A special clear coat was also added to protect the body from rust. Later the Laurence also included some models with retro paint jobs. The car was equipped with US bumper, US front lights and black tinted rear light. The dashboard, seats, door panel was garnished with leather. The instrumentation came from the R5 Alpine. An Alpine stereo was installed. A delivery model was proposed with 2 front seats and a wooden trunk. The cost of modification brought the total cost of the car to nearly 40,000 French Francs that was double the price of the R5 in 1983.

Well, that is the complete collection of very limited edition R5s. Obviously I didn't include the EBS R5 Cabriolet as it was just featured and actually inspired this story.



## U.S. R5 Limited Editions

The Lectric Leopard 952 (right) was produced from about 1978 to 1980 by the C.H. Waterman Industries. 16 6V batteries powering a motor through a 4-speed transmission gave a range of 75 miles with a top speed of 45 mph. Example shown belongs to Kaz Wysocki, Hackensack NJ.

The North American R5 was marketed as the Le Car for all trim levels, starting in the late 1970's. There was a special edition called Le Car "Black Beauty" sold for \$3895 featuring custom red pin striping, stereo radio, rear mount antenna, sport wheels, chrome exhaust tip, locking fuel cap, Sport steering wheel, etc. Optional extras were tinted glass, rear wash/wipe and sunroof. Total with all options was \$4725.90 The original Black Beauty was meant to be limited to 2500 examples.



Le Car models showing the two versions of North American trim upper 2 photos. Clockwise from above left, the Black Beauty for 1980, the original Black Beauty, all other photos.



Chrome Exhaust tip, red Le Car decals and striping, locking fuel cap, rear mount antenna. Sport steering wheel middle right.



## 2003 Solo II Nationals report

Story and photos by Greg Laws

The SCCA Solo II National Championships were held in Topeka, KS during the second week of September. 1240 entrants came from all over the United States and Canada to challenge their peers over two days on two different courses. This to determine who would be the NATIONAL CHAMPION of their class in 2003.

All that seriousness doesn't mean that we can't have some fun! Only two Renaults entered this year, both in the same class F/Street Prepared and both with two drivers each. The "co-driver" is there to warm the tires for the "driver" because each entrant has only three runs per course and warm tires stick better. It is an advantage to do all three runs on already warmed-up tires. Not surprisingly, it was the 'drivers' who invented this system where the co-driver goes first on cold tires! In this case the "drivers" were also the owners of the two Renaults. Dan Marx (Illinois) owns the blue 1982 LeCar that he has endowed with the elegant name "Leaker". The silver 1987 GTA belongs to Greg Laws (Kansas) and it jumps into action named "the Phrog."

Both cars have been modified to take advantage of the class rules that allow external-only engine modifications to induction & exhaust systems. There are also suspension changes, tire & wheel changes and more. Both cars remain street legal although they are purpose-built for competition, run on race tires and are trailered to events. The Leaker is lighter but the Phrog has more power. All the Renault entrants came intending to take a trophy home. Last year the Phrog carried the day – who will take the imaginary Renault Cup this year?

The two-day challenge began on Thursday, September 11th. Thursday brought the rain, and rain, and more rain. Ugh. The rain washed away the granite dust lines that had outlined the courses. This was bad enough on the South Course but for many the tighter, more complicated North Course became extremely difficult to navigate as its appearance changed dramatically. Guess what – F/SP ran the North Course on Thursday!

The North Course was a Roger (the Real) Johnson design and it is Roger's habit to use a minimum number of pointer cones or other directional guidance devices – the idea being that a good Solo driver shouldn't need such crutches and this IS the National Championship after all. That was fine until the rain came. Then the pavement became reflective & shiny, the lines went away and – for some – the pattern of the course dissolved into being a forest of unrelated cones. Adding to the confusion were several places where previous events had left heavy tire marks that tended to lead one's eye in incorrect directions. Many of the sport's top drivers (and lesser ones such as myself!) became confused on course and DNFs were rampant.

There were 34 entries in the class. At the start it appeared that the Leaker's team was in trouble. Dan Marx lost track





of where the course went and posted a DNF. Gary Patrick, co-driver of the Leaker, also posted a DNF. The Leaker camp was as blue as their car. The Phrog's team faired only slightly better as rookie co-driver Ryan Kilby (17) got his own DNF. Phrog owner Greg Laws staggered around the course in total confusion but managed to stay within the cones and posted a clean 75.951. The Phrog team's slight advantage quickly disappeared as Laws DNF'd on his second run in the rain. Kilby took the amphibian lead with a clean 78.352. Dan Marx posted a 72.979 but added a 2-sec penalty because he hit a cone for a 74.979. Then Leaker's co-driver Gary Patrick set the bar much lower with a clean 71.927!

The soggy teams did what they could during the waiting periods between runs to memorize the confusing course or make the car faster in some way. The Phrog team switched from the Azenis high-performance street tires that they had been using as rain tires to their full-race set of Hoosiers. The Leaker team stayed on their Khumo race tires from the start. All the tires stayed cold all day in the wet. The third set of Thursday's run were on a drying but still wet course. All four drivers posted their best runs of the day. Kilby @ 75.704, Laws @ 69.842, Patrick @ 69.538 and the day's Renault Cup winner was Dan Marx with a much quicker 68.383.

Friday was a different course and featured completely different weather. The South course was drawn in broad strokes – a big car course with several big sweepers. The pavement was dry and the sun was coming out. Both camps were eager to get it on! Kilby took out 3 cones on his first run but everyone else stayed clean. Marx set the pace with a 54.988 versus Laws @ 55.168 and Patrick @ 58.510 + 1 cone. Laws posted his best run of the day on the second try with a clean 54.506 but Marx did a 54.195 followed by a quicker 53.867 final run. Patrick came in third on Friday with a clean 55.547 followed by a DNF. Kilby got a clean 57.847 but killed two cones on his final run, reaching a raw time of 56.601 but adding a 4-second penalty.

That's the way it finished:

Driver	Car #	Class	Car ID	Finish
Dan Marx	21	F/SP	Blue '82 LeCar	19th
Greg Laws	165	F/SP	Silver '87 GTA	25th
Gary Patrick	21	F/SP	Blue '82 LeCar	27th
Ryan Kilby	65	F/SP	Silver '87 GTA	31st

Each team left with ideas for further modifications to their respective cars and each was eagerly looking forward to 2004. SCCA's own Howard Duncan came over to the Phrog's paddock to say that he really enjoyed seeing the two French teams there. Back in his salad days he had been a reporter for AutoX Magazine and had written an article comparing the GTA to the GTi and others – and he had loved the GTA's handling even then. He had encouraging words for both efforts.

Oh... did I mention that there were 30 other entries in this class? The excitement of the Renault Cup competition was such that we didn't really notice. Most of the others were quicker, I suppose, but none of them had more fun! And we even received a little credit. In Sports Car Magazine, the exact quote was "but a couple of competitors brought France into the mix with a pair of Renaults."

# Jesse's Corner

## Rear Axle Squeak

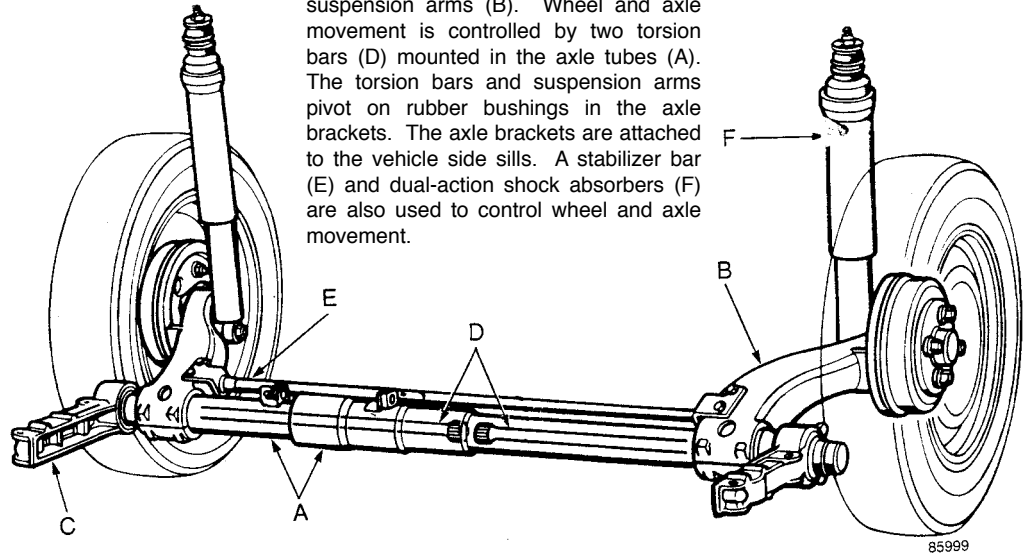
Story & photos by Jesse Patton

Some Alliance and Encore owners in our club will have at one time or another experienced an annoying and persistent squeak or grinding emanating from the rear axle tube supported by two metal rings or bushings of differing sizes and a seal (plastic) to back it up. After thousands of miles or as little as hundreds from what dealer mechanics have told me the grease within the axle dries up and the bushing frictionalizes causing the noise. Some have noticed that when it rains the moisture gathers within the axle and the noise ceases or lessens, but when the weather is hot or dry the squeak returns.

What dealerships would do to fix the problem and it was quite common was to remove the rear suspension arm and axle tube from the rear passenger side of the car and relubricate the bushings or for that matter replace the axle tube bushings and seal. This requires the use of two specialty tools that only dealerships had. Without these for help you would have to come up with your own concoction which many Renaultist have done over the years.

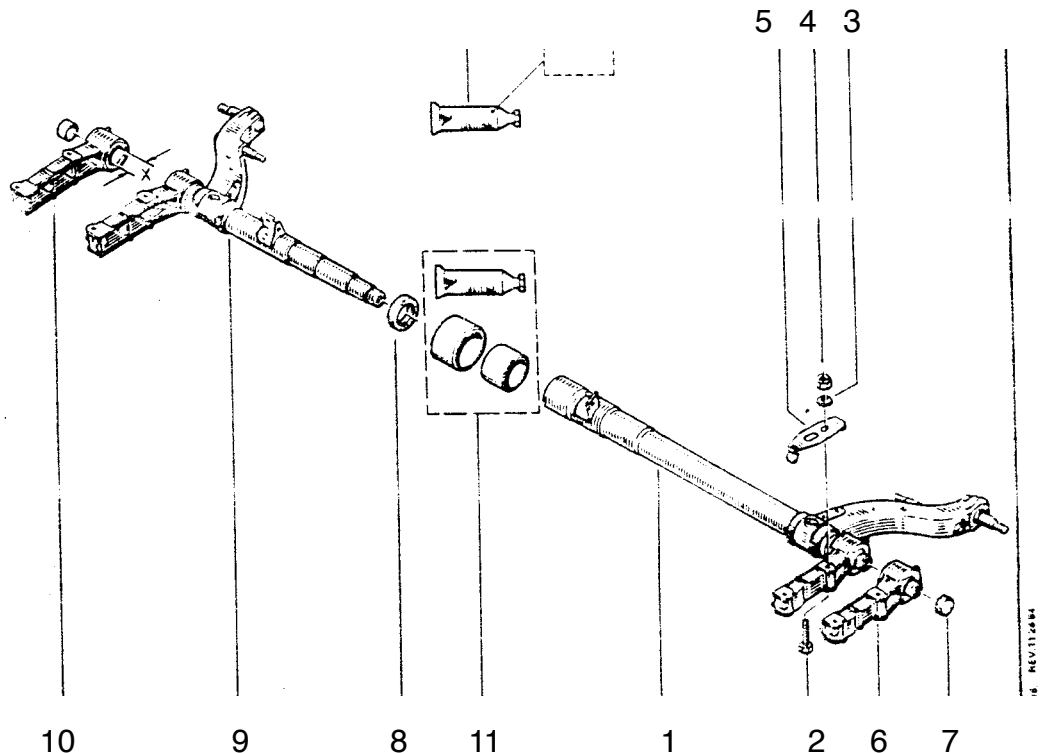
The design of the axle is essentially a male-female fit like a hand within a glove. You don't want to jack your Renault up on the axle and the manual from your glovebox reminds you not to, but I have seen it done and grimaced. Our own Tennessee Sam Stuckey has suggested that it is definitely easier to just exchange one axle tube for another rather than to change bushings and seal. It is a straightforward job and not to difficult, much easier, says Sam when you have to fight getting the old parts out of the tube itself. However, some axle kits are still available at the dealership in very limited quantities. The part

The rear axle assembly consists of a dual-tube assembly (A), suspension arms (B) and axle brackets (C). The rear wheel hubs and bearings are mounted on the suspension arms (B). Wheel and axle movement is controlled by two torsion bars (D) mounted in the axle tubes (A). The torsion bars and suspension arms pivot on rubber bushings in the axle brackets. The axle brackets are attached to the vehicle side sills. A stabilizer bar (E) and dual-action shock absorbers (F) are also used to control wheel and axle movement.



number is: T1463723, which lists for \$43.75 and the kit, consists of two circular rings of differing sizes and a tube of grease. The seal is made of white plastic and in the shape of a ring as well. It lists for \$7.25 and is part number: T4000674. These numbers are for the 1985 Alliance, but I am sure they will fit all year Alliance/Encore axles.

I have found through the grapevine that there is another method to deal with this problem. Get a 15/64" drill bit which is slightly smaller than a 1/2" and drill a hole through the first layer of the axle tube only! Remember this is a tube within a tube. Place the hole between the two bushings, which is in the middle of the larger and smaller diameters of the axle tube itself. Then insert one self-tapping 1/8" zerk grease fitting. Tighten, then pump in grease until you see it oozing out of the seal which is at the left



Parts above 8: T4000 674 Seal, 11: T1462 512 Bushing Kit

end of the axle tube at its largest section. This will tell you that the bushings are greased. Depending on how dry the bushings are, it may take time for the grease to work and the squeak to subside. You might be part of the ten percent that have to change the bushing or the tube itself if the noise persists.

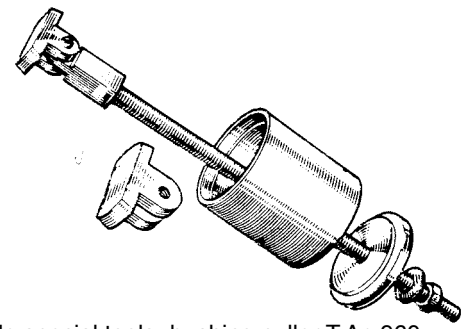
Note: the hole you drill should be facing the front of the car and just below the brake line that is mounted above the axle tube. Check the illustrations with this article and good luck. Luck is always an important part in owning a Renault. That and tender loving care.

Wishing our members a Wondrous Holiday.  
Jesse.

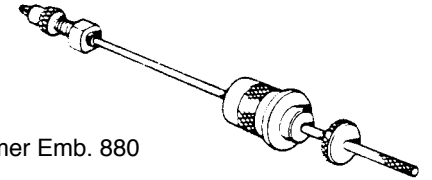


Pic 1: 15/64" drill bit introduced on a 45 degree angle. Drill through first layer of metal only. When performing this bit of work ideal temperature should be below 65 degrees F. Both bushings inside of axle will be contracted allowing grease to get all around them. 2: Zerk fitting threaded in ready for grease between large and small bushing in axle. When you see grease oozing from where axle is fitted, stop, axle is full.

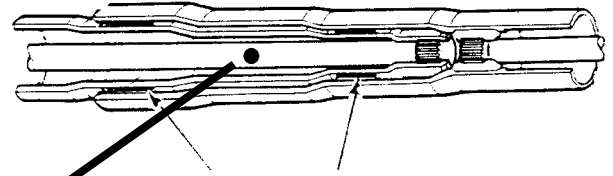
Below: rarely seen 1.7 - 2.0 liter cam clearance "pucks" (shim kit) #T1463196. 56 to a box, \$134 list, no longer available from AMC-Jeep. Voilà!



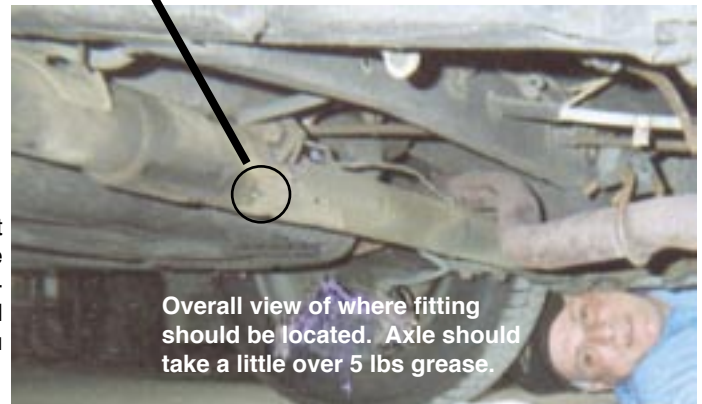
Rear Axle special tools- bushing puller T.Ar. 960



Slide hammer Emb. 880



Drill Hole- first layer ONLY, insert zerk fitting here, facing front of car.



Overall view of where fitting should be located. Axle should take a little over 5 lbs grease.



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