

# RENAULT NEWS

**79**  
Spring  
2006



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## **Fifteen Years of the ROCoNA**

*By Marvin McFalls*

**I**t is hard to believe that our club is reaching another milestone. When I was recently in San Diego I had hoped to meet Howard Singer and along Jacques talk about how the club had started back in 1991, but Howard was out of town so that story will have to wait for a later day. Since I couldn't write the story I had planned Jacques and I came up with an idea to re-run some vintage story's from past issues. Jacques recommend some of the technical articles from the early issues would be good, because most of the members have never read them.

So I have been digging thru back issues of the Renault News looking interesting stories, and I believe I have found possibly the oldest story ever published in the Renault News. This article was written by Herb Deeks. To know Herb you need to go back more than twenty years as he was the President of the Renault Owners Club of California. That club predated ours and was based in Orange County. I once had an AMC corporate newsletter that had a picture of Herb and his wife standing next to an Alliance Cup car but I don't seem to have it anymore, maybe Allan has it and can print it with this story.

For our fifteenth anniversary each issue on 2006 will contain a reprinted story. So if there is any particular story or just a story about a particular model you would like to see reprinted please let me know. If this column is well received we may continue to do for years to come. ●

## **4CV Floorboard Replacement**

*By Herb Deeks*

**T**his is the continuing saga of the rebuild/restoration of a 4cv. My particular project has been slowed to a halt by other projects, but I have done enough to get you started. Let us presume you have the 4cv home in all its unglorious diamond in the rough appearance. I will go over the approach I have taken with my car. I am going after a showy but usable restoration, making it as nice as possible. This means just about complete disassembly of the car.

I began with an overall look-see at the car, starting with the body and trim to see damage and get an idea of what it might need. My car has a steel sliding sunroof that was left open for about four years, along with a broken driver's window, so all the elements had been lat at the interior of the vehicle. My car's floor had about half an inch of water so the floorboards were very rusty. The rest of the car was solid.

I started by bailing out the interior, then removed all interior trim. Be very careful removing the panels, you will need them for patterns later or, if you are lucky they may clean up and be reusable. Store all the pieces where they

will stay dry. Watch out for rubber floor mats they get very brittle with age.

Now comes the fun part. Remove all the jute and fiber-board flooring. You might be able to save the fiberboard, but mine was water logged and hopeless, and so went into the trash. Use a flat putty knife to scrape off the leftovers. What a mess! By now the metal is exposed and you are starting to see what's what. In my car it was rust. Let the mess dry out in the sun for a few days, then remove the gearshift and hand brake assemblies. Soak all the bolts with rust penetrant and crawl under the car to remove the tunnel cover, as all the linkage runs through the center tunnel. You would have to remove it later anyway.

Now that you have the floorboards stripped of all hardware, and everything is dry, get out the wire brush and scraper and go to it. Get right down to the metal that's left. Even if your car not rusty, now is a good time to prevent anything that might happen later. Rust is a big enemy for a unibody car like the 4cv, so a thorough restoration or even and fix-up demands this attention. Nine out of then 4cvs are rusty, almost always in the rear foot wells. You will also not that there are several exposed holes in the frame box, look inside to see if there is any rust.

With the surface rust now taken care of, clean the area using a compressor and blow gun. Get out all the scales of dirt; you are then ready to protect the floorboards. I used a product called extend as a primer, then cover it with black Sears anti-rust enamel paint. If applied carefully, it will flow and look sprayed on. The next step is not really necessary but it is a good idea: I sprayed a petroleum-based rust preventative inside all the panels and through every hole I could find. The next and final step is to use black silicone caulk into a gun to cover all the areas that were caulked by the factory, sealing all those holes you unplugged on the floorboards and anything else you see that might need protection. This stuff is good to have around for automotive projects.

I know all this sounds like a lot of work and believe me, it is, but just take your time and be methodical. The finished product will be well worth the effort. I had to some panel replacement and reinforcement on my car, and we will go into that subject in a future article.

Until next time, have fun!

*This article originally appeared in the December 1984 newsletter of the Renault Owners Club of California and was reprinted in issue #11 of the ROCoSC Newsletter in July 1992. At that time the club had 76 members in 17 states and 1 Province. ●*



# The 4cv: 60 Years Old, and Still the Darling of the People

By Jean Michel Normand

On the verge of profitability again under the leadership of Carlos Ghosn, Renault has decided to a compassionate digression by celebrating the 60th anniversary of the 4cv, the car that wrote the most splendid pages of the history of that French company. At the Paris Motor Show (Retromobile), held from Feb 10 to 19th at the Paris Exposition Hall at the Porte of Versailles, the diamond trade-mark revived the glorious past when the 4cv was called "La Cherie du populo" (The darling of the people).

Enthroned on the Renault display were ten models of the 4cv, including a rebuilt 1942 Prototype, and charming Brissonneau & Lotz convertible, a stylish Autobleu coupe, and a exotic Japanese Hino version. So much the worse for the Dauphine and for the glorious experimental record breaking Etoile Filante (Shooting Star) both born in 1956 but whose 50th anniversaries will pass almost unnoticed.

Only the 4cv, 15 years in production and one million cars manufactured, can be said to symbolize France in the 1940's and 1950's. It was designed during the German occupation, but was kept hidden from Louis Renault, who preferred the bigger models like the 11cv, by two 'progressive' designers, Charles-Edmond Serre and Fernand Picard. In the words of the historian Jean-Pierre Rioux, "The 4cv was almost another part of the Resistance, designed, conceived, finagled with, and tested in hiding."

It was greatly inspired by the Volkswagen KDF of 1939 four seats, rear engine, independent suspension. In the spring of 1946, on the initiative of the Communist Minister of Industrial Production, Marcel Paul, Ferdinand Porsche, the German creator of the "People's Car" was brought to France to validate the production. But Billancourt did







it was called "Butter Pat" because of its roly-poly silhouette and its pale yellow color (the Regie had seized a large supply of camouflage paint from the defeated German Africa Corps.)

The 4cv is a true modern automobile: featherweight, excellent interior space, four doors, four wheel independent suspension, rack and pinion steering and a spirited four cylinder 750cc engine that has excellent fuel economy. Even today it still is surprisingly road worthy, and one is surprised by the comfort of its suspension, the ease of steering, and the easy shifting of its three-speed transmission. It has aged better than the Citroen 2cv, whose road handling was always, shall we say, "Colorful."

As France was reconstructed after the war, and Frenchmen again were able to purchase goods, the 4cv appealed to working people proud to go out weekends with the entire family. In 1954 on third of its buyers were from the working class. Simple and virtuous, it was in its own category. It's only stylish additions were small accessories, and it changed very little right up to the end of its production run in 1961.

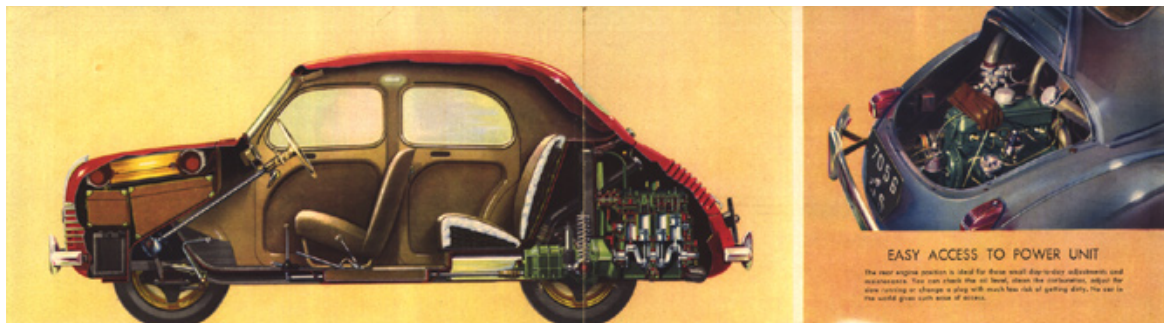


In 1966, at the time of its 50th Anniversary, Renault unveiled a concept car baptized "Fiftie" at the Geneva Auto Show. This ravishing modernistic re-make of the 4cv, with an aluminum chassis, fiberglass body, linen seat covers, brass door panels, and a linoleum floor, led to speculation that a new 4cv would soon join the new Beetle and the new Mini. A silly hope: the working class doesn't believe in reincarnation. The true successor of the 4cv is the Logan, the Renault automobile that is now democratizing Romania, India, and Russia.



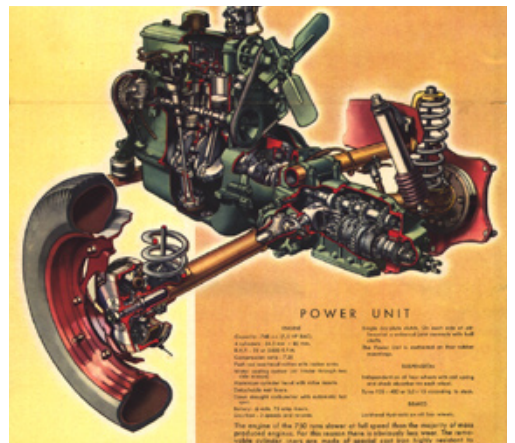
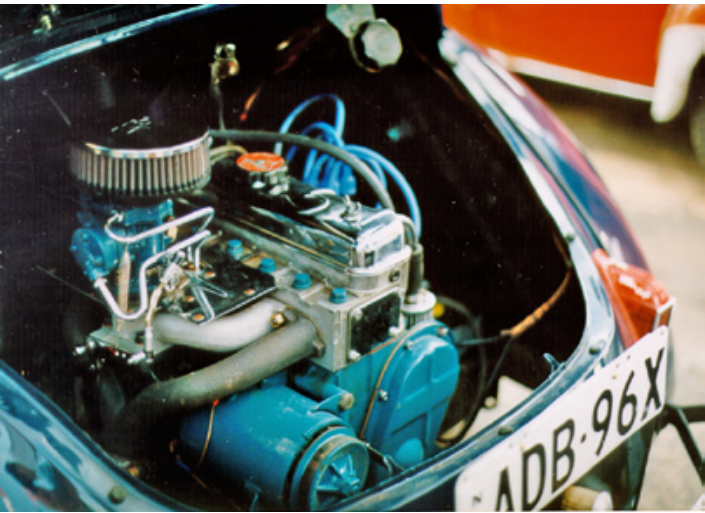
*Editor's Notes: Due to a scheduling conflict I wasn't able to travel to Retromobile this year, but we were lucky to have Bob Baker represent the club. Bob took the time to translate the article for us and he sent some photos from Retromobile that will appear with this article.*

*Speaking of this article, it originally appeared in Le Monde, which is a very liberal, political, newspaper in Paris. Where I am fairly certain Louis Schweitzer, the former President of Renault wasn't well liked, as Renault has been profitable for more than a decade. Where they get the idea that Carlos Ghosn has turned the company around, I am not sure. ●*





Detta är den nya Renault 4CV..





# Renault Etoile Filante

By Francisco Miranda

The 1950s was a time full of research and development within the automobile industry worldwide. Just coming out of the Second World War, it was necessary to find new technologies or apply the existing ones out of the military industry to have more energy efficient, faster and comfortable automobiles. In 1954, Renault started experimenting with turbines and that was the reason why they approached the company Turbomeca, experts in the matter, so they could supply them with the most advanced technologies of the time and therefore, they could build a very fast car in order to break the world speed record.

Pierre Lefauchaux, CEO of the Regie National de Usines Renault, appointed as head of the project to the engineer Fernad Picard; as Chief Product Designer to Albert Lory and to Jean Hebert, as engineer and driver. The result of this investigation/ project was the marvelous Etoile Filante or Shooting Star. The gas turbine used was the Turbomeca Turmo, with a centrifugal supercharger, flux converter and the turbine connected to the supercharger, centrifugal fuel injection system, capable of 270 HP @ 28000 rpm. No gearbox was used, but instead a three position revolution reducer to deliver 2500 rpm at the wheels. Disk brakes were fitted to all 4 wheels. The chassis was structured on a molybdenum chrome longitudinal parallelogram for the front axis and was divided at the rear end of the car. The body was made of stratified polyester and carefully studied at the Eiffel laboratories' wind tunnel. The outside dimensions are 4.84 meters long, 1.815 meters wide and a 0.99 meter height. Weight is only 950 Kilograms.

Many tests were conducted at the Monthlery race track and in other venues as well. Pierre Lefauchaux unfortunately suffered a fatal accident in 11 February 1955 and could not see his project completed and it was in 1956 when the car was ready for public appearance. Pierre Dreyfus, his successor, continued with all the important projects already underway, like the launch of the Dauphine in the United States of North America. For that matter, he thought of sending the Etoile to the USA to establish the new speed world record at Bonneville, Salt Lake City in Utah. This could be a great opportunity to promote the Dauphine in such an important market.

On September the 5th of the same year, the Etoile established the following speed records for a gas turbine powered vehicle: 1 kilometer run with an average speed of 306.9 km/hr; 1 mile run at 307.7 km/hr; 5 kilometer run at 308.8 km/Hr. Three new world records were established! The next day the Etoile made 322 km/hr and Jean Hebert was sure she was capable of reaching 330 km/hr. Unfortunately, due to a corporate decisions, that was never







achieved.

To our best knowledge, these records were kept for many years, until 1997 that Bruce Linsmeyer from the USA, grabbed them with his Linsmeyer Streamliner #912.

After establishing those speed records for a gas turbine vehicle, the research of this power source was abandoned by Renault to date. After the success, the Etoile toured many countries displaying her advanced technology and unique stylish design. One of the two vehicles ever constructed, now in the possession of our friend Alberto Gironella, was in Mexico City and was reintroduced to the public in 2002 at the Classic Motor Show in the Hippodrome of this city. I remember being the happiest man at the show for getting the opportunity to meet one of the legends of the automobile world and one of my personal favorites as I remember as a kid playing with my 1:43 scale model being one of my favorites.

Alberto's Etoile does not have any mechanical elements installed, excepting for the wheels mounting hardware and the instrument panel. This was the car showed to the International Press at Monthelery, Reims and Monza circuits. Then, the mechanical elements were dismantled and the second car was put together and sent to Bonneville to established the above mentioned records.

Mr. Gironella's car was displayed at the 1958 Auto Shows of Frankfurt, New York and Mexico City, where it stayed to be displayed at several events as a promotion tool for the other Renault vehicles of the time. After spending many years in promotional tours, it was kept locked for many decades in several Renault dealer's offices and when Renault left the country back in mid 80's, the Etoile was sent to Rimex, a Renault owned engine factory in Agusalientes, where many years later was bought by Mr. Gironella.

Now it is completely restored (except for the mechanic elements, of course), taking care of the most minute details, like the gold foil used originally in the star. Alberto sent the car to France last February and was briefly displayed in an exhibition, at the LeMans Automobile Museum.

The other vehicle is owned by Renault Histoire et Collection, and was totally restored in the mid 90's by the Billiancourt team and is completely functional. A couple of years ago was shown at the Festival of Speed at Goodwood, England. 2003 was a special year for the Etoile as it was the main attraction at the Retromobile show in Paris and later in LeMans and other cities in France.

This year we celebrate the Shooting Star's 50th Anniversary, so we wish this well styled lady, a Happy Birthday! ●

# The Renault-Nissan Alliance Ranks Among the Top Four Global Automakers

By Marvin McFalls

**R**enault and Nissan announced that the two companies sold a combined 6,129,254 cars in 2005, up 6.0% over 2004. Nissan and Renault sold a total of 3,597,748 and 2,531,506 vehicles, respectively. The Renault-Nissan Alliance global market share came to 9.8% (4.04% for the Renault group and 5.74% for Nissan), ranking them number four in global sales

The future looks very bright for the Alliance with plans for expansion in most markets. While the big three American manufacturers have recently announced plans to produce few cars and streamline operations, if this trend continues by the end of this decade we should see Toyota move up to number one and Renault Nissan overtaking Ford and nipping at the heels of GM for number two.

What a turnaround, in less than twenty years since leaving the US Market. Getting out of debt and gaining independence from the French Government, becoming the number one car company in Europe. Winning the World Championship, Topping 2.5 million in annual sales, and combining with Nissan to earn Billions. At this point the only accomplishment left for Renault is to return to the US Market. All the pieces are in place with established Nissan plants in both the US and Mexico, and a entire network of dealerships.

With Chinese manufacturers Chery and Geely both making plans to enter the US market in the next two years Renault already has a superior product in this market. These cheap Chinese cars would be no competition for the Logan, While the Twingo could compete well against the rest of the Korean low end models, and I am certain that both the Clio and Megane could win their fair share of convertees. I also feel that their lineup of mini vans could compete for market share. Especially the Scenic which has very few cars sold in this market with even half its versatility, and the Espace with its 3.5 litre Nissan engine wouldn't be that tough a sell either. Sprinkle in a few imports like the unique Utility vehicle the Kangoo and the limited production Clio and Megane Renault Sports and they would have a strong lineup.

While I don't think there would be much interest in the higher end Renault cars the Laguna or the Vel Satis, At the same time not selling these top of the line sedans would help as they wouldn't compete against Alliance partner Nissan's bread and butter the Altima and Maxima. At the same time if Nissan has a weakness in the US is that it smaller model the Sentra has never been very successful, and is no where near the class of car of its competitors especially with some of the higher end Korean Cars in the

same price range. Mixing in Renaults smaller car lineup with Nissan higher end sedan, SUVs, and Trucks would make it nearly impossible for a customer to leave the dealership without a big smile on their face. It isn't like this formula hasn't been successful, everywhere one brand was strong and the other was weak the combining of the two lines on one lot has lead to improved sales of both lines let alone the reduction of overhead.

In many ways Renault and Nissan have been very cautious, I believe when it comes to entering the hybrid car market this is about to pay off. At the end of 2006 diesel fuel will be comparable to European diesel fuel, around 15 parts per million of low sulfur, instead of the 300ppm that is currently in Americas diesel fuel. This will allow Europeans to bring more diesel engines into the United States. Diesels get about 25 percent better mpg, and 65 % better torque. Diesel engines cost about \$2,500 more than their gas counterpart, but when you compare that to \$5,000 or more for a hybrid, diesels look pretty good. With higher fuel prices becoming a way of life in the US, Diesels should become more popular and Renault is the king of diesel automobiles in Europe. So go ahead and add this to the reasons why they should return.

The only question now is Renault willing to take the sizable risk ? The smell of the Big Three's blood is in the air, the time to pounce is now. No matter how successful Renault is selling cars, they are never going to receive the notoriety they have earned until they return to world's largest automotive market. At this point it doesn't really matter if they only gain a one or two percent penetration, just to be in the game is the key. As long as they are committed to stay in the market and provide proper service for their customers.

At the same time Nissan appears to be scared to let the US market know they even have a strategic alliance with Renault as well as in Japan where Renaults make up only .1 percent of the market. If Nissan ever plans to step out from the shadows of Toyota and Honda it needs to embrace this alliance in all markets just not where it is profitable. The same can be said for Renault since the Alliance Nissan has taken a lesser role in Europe where Renault is number one. Both company's need to quit worrying about how sales look at home, and to start focusing on the global market. It is amazing to see how far Renault and Nissan have come in a little more than six years, but if they could fully commit to each other, there is no limit to where it could take them. ●



# The 50th Anniversary of “La Dauphine”

By Francisco Miranda

**W**e had the idea of celebrating the 50 years of “La Dauphine” but unfortunately, very little time to prepare something really nice, but we just could not miss the opportunity of the Gala Internacional del Automovil, which was taking place the weekend of March 4 & 5. What a better date to celebrate the Anniversary, as the original launch date was March 6, 1956

Time was passing real fast and we had our time covered with our daily occupations but if we wanted to do something, we had to do it right away, as La Gala was only a week away.

The first step was to know how many cars we could count on. We had my three cars and we called Miguel Garza, who lives in Germany, but his cars are here in Mexico, and asked him if we could take his cars to the event, which he gladly accepted. That was the start, and at least 5 cars were in great condition for the show. Next step, another enthusiast Jose Ramos, joined us for the preparations. He is the owner of the black Ondine. Miguel Cacheux started calling other Dauphine owners and we managed to get 10 cars for the show. (Unfortunately, one of them never made it to the show).

It was time to get in touch with the organizers of La Gala. They were very interested in taking our display and celebration, as long as we could get it together quickly. As you may know, this event is in its third year of existence and the previous years have been a good success, so this year they were expecting better public assistance. They had already signed 650 cars. They were inviting collector cars from other parts of the country, like Guadalajara, Aguascalientes, San Luis Potosí, etc. At the show, they had a little more than 500 cars on display. Most of them in superb condition. A great frame for our Dauphines.

We prepared a sign, two big Dauphine cakes, and a couple of posters with the history of the car. That was going to be the frame for our event. However, the main display were the cars themselves. On Saturday March 4th we arrived early to the event grounds. We found out the organizers assigned us a great spot, along with the Alpine Club and the Renault Gordini Sport Club. It was nice to be surrounded by those beautiful Renaults: the R8S, R8 Gordini, Fuego, Alpine Berlinette, Cabriolet and GT4. Very close to our stand another Renault club was showing the R4F4, a Berlinette an R4L and a R8S just finished restoration and unveiled for the Gala (Very nice cars indeed.)

After fitting our posters and sign, we invited other club presidents to pay us a visit. By now, some folks were calling





us the "Dauphine Club" which we had to specify we are not a club, just a bunch of Dauphine fans gathered for the occasion. Televisa, the big Mexican television company, was at our stand with an interviewer and a camera!. They broadcasted the edited interview on the Monday morning news, (prime time), and there they were, the shining Dauphines on TV!

Saturday was very slow on public attendance, so now much happened, but on Sunday, La Gala was expecting our cars on the main stage, so we parked all nine cars for about half an hour so people could admire them "on stage"

We had time to give a small speech about the history, different versions and derivatives. We invited the public to celebrate with us at our tent with a slice of "Dauphine" chocolate and strawberries cakes. Delicious!

Maybe we will be putting together another celebration for the Huixquilucan Concours D'Elégance that the Jaguar Club organizes, as the president of the club and one of the main organizers of the event paid us a visit at the Gala and they seemed to be very interested that we take the cars and celebrate with them on May 13 & 14. Already we are thinking of what to do to make a different show this time. It is just a year we have to celebrate the Dauphine in any way we can. We have even taken it to the streets where we live and put up a sign with the 50th Anniversary on it.

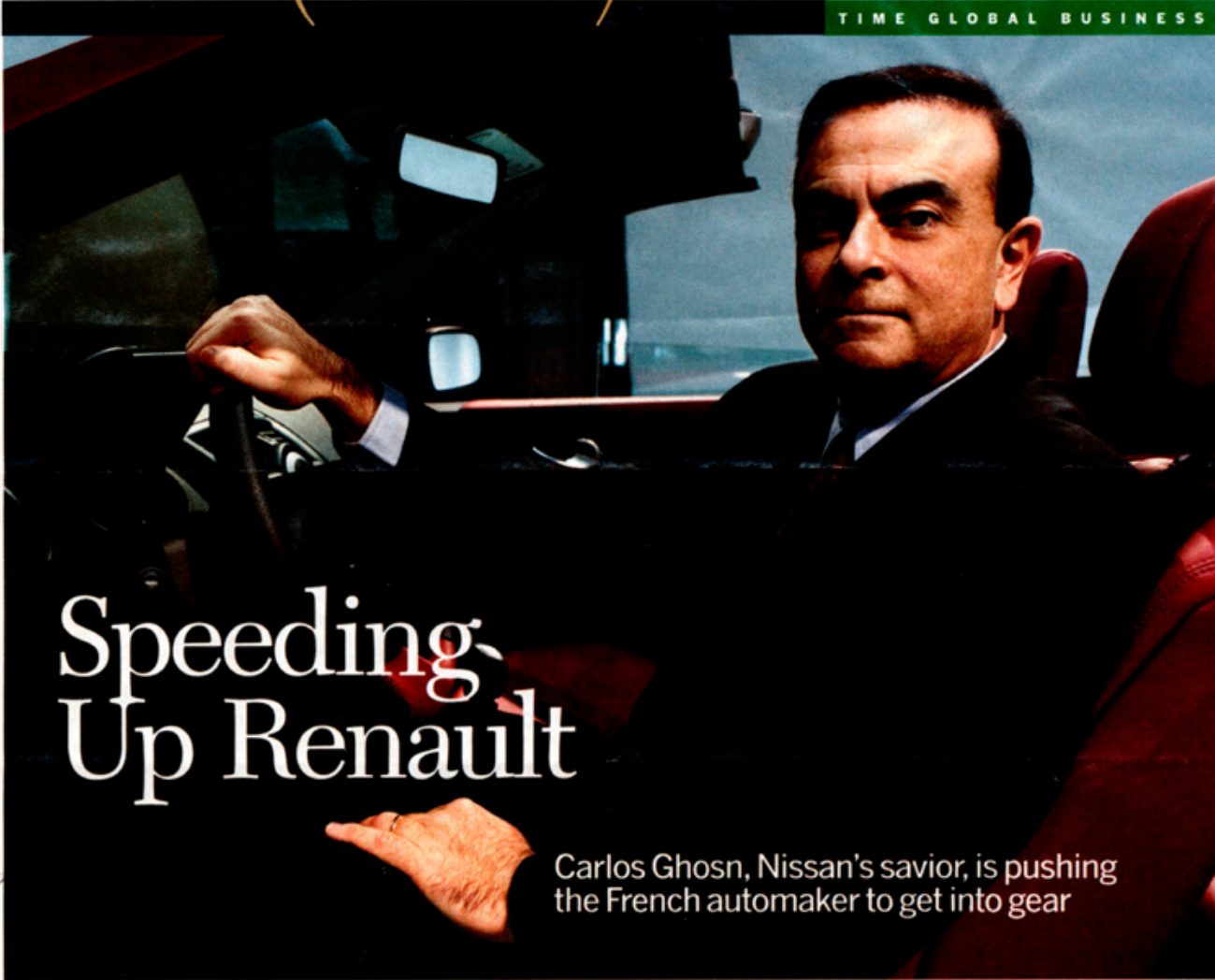
Happy Birthday! ●





( change agent )

TIME GLOBAL BUSINESS



# Speeding Up Renault

Carlos Ghosn, Nissan's savior, is pushing the French automaker to get into gear

CATHERINE CABROL-COMBIS

BY BRUCE CRUMLEY PARIS

**S**MILING BROADLY AND LOOKING DAPPER IN A POWDER BLUE SHIRT, PIN-striped suit and bright red tie, Renault CEO Carlos Ghosn doesn't look like your typical corporate hatchet man. Back in 1999, however, Ghosn was dubbed the "samurai" and "cost killer" at Nissan Motor in Japan. As the newly appointed president, he began closing plants, slashing more than \$20 billion in debt and eliminating 20,000-plus jobs to return

the moribund company to profitability. Many observers—especially France's sometimes intractable unions—expected similar tough love in early February, when Ghosn unveiled his ambitious four-year plan for the European auto giant, which has had an increasingly close joint partnership with Nissan since 1999. But, *quelle surprise*, so far Ghosn's quality-enhancing, production-boosting, profit-focused project has avoided layoffs. "Renault is not in

the same critical situation Nissan was, so the methods we're using to improve things are different," says Ghosn during an interview at Renault's Boulogne-Billancourt headquarters on the southwestern edge of Paris. "We're confident this plan will be successful. But if not, we'll assume the consequences. Everyone knows exactly what's at stake."

In the auto industry in particular—still the bellwether for a globally successful

manufacturing sector in many European countries—managers have had to make tough choices that have proved politically controversial. In Europe, unions still have considerable political power, not to mention seats at the board of directors table. DaimlerChrysler has said it is looking for a reduction of 14,500 jobs at Mercedes, while Volkswagen in February announced 20,000 job cuts. In such an environment, Renault appears to be defying gravity by promising ambitious results without the pain of slashing labor costs. Indeed, Ghosn is pledging to increase annual car sales by 800,000 units by 2009, double operating profit margins and improve product and brand quality. "The lesson of the Nissan revival plan was, What's vital is the result, not the precise means of attaining it," says Ghosn, 52. "We've analyzed the opportunities and potentials at Renault and made clear commitments on the results we'll deliver."



(change agent)

The end result, he predicts, will be the "most profitable European volume car company."

Ironically, that will mean shifting away from the European market. Renault, founded in 1898 and beloved by the French for its innovative designs and reliable cars, remains profitable with a 2005 net income of \$5.39 billion, making it the third largest car manufacturer in Europe. But when Ghosn was named CEO last April, he inherited slowing European car markets, dated production and management systems and some dud car models such as the Vel Satis luxury car. With Renault sales in Western Europe dropping 7.3% in the second half of 2005, group operating profit margin shrank from 5.2% to 3.2%. Ghosn was forced to issue profit warnings for 2006 and indicated that 2007 would be slow too.

In response, Ghosn spent nine months looking at the company's international offices, assembly lines and even dealerships to map out a new business plan for Renault. He wants to lift operating profit margin to 6%, increase annual Renault car sales from the current 2.5 million to 3.3 million, relaunch 13 existing brands and roll out 13 new models. Ghosn also plans to step up Renault's activity in luxury, SUV and crossover categories and exploit its effervescent markets outside Western Europe, where two-thirds of the extra 800,000 cars are expected to be sold.

The additional activity is scheduled to improve factory utilization rates from a current 60% of capacity to 75%, which is still nothing to write home about. Ghosn is also demanding extensive collaboration among international executives from different departments on crucial development, production and marketing decisions. "You can't have marketing managers discovering a car



**▲ WINNER**  
The popular Mégane accounts for a big chunk of Renault's sales. The latest version is a sporty coupe



**▶ LOSER**  
The Vel Satis, introduced as a luxury car, got the same reception as VW's luxury car. Drivers didn't buy

## Revvving Renault

The company plans to overhaul 13 current models and introduce 13 new ones

they are supposed to sell as it's rolling out," says Ghosn, who last year delayed the launch of a disappointingly redesigned Twingo model, at the cost of a reported \$104 million. "More people and more debate must go into development. Twingo is an example. It was generating resistance within the company as it was going to market. How can you ask a customer to buy a car if even people at Renault don't like it?"

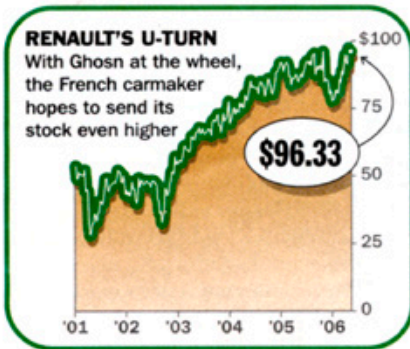
Blunt talk like that is rare in corporate France, but Ghosn is used to breaking molds. Born in Brazil to Lebanese parents and raised in Beirut, he studied in Paris and graduated from the elite Ecole Polytechnique. In 1978 he went to work for tire-maker Michelin, eventually heading the group's South American operations, based in Brazil, before taking over the North American operations. Recruited to the money-losing Renault in 1996, Ghosn undertook a three-year cost-cutting campaign, ultimately saving the company more than \$5.2 billion—and allowing it to take its controlling stake of Nissan in 1999.

As he remolded the company, Ghosn became a business hero and media superstar in Japan. Now spending "about 10 days a month in Japan"—where his wife Rita still owns the My Lebanon restaurant in Tokyo—and two weeks in Paris, Ghosn says he gets the "best of both worlds." The rest of his time is mostly spent overseeing Nissan's struggling U.S. business. Renault pulled out of the U.S. market in 1997, and Ghosn says

it won't return "until we can dedicate all our mind, heart, guts and soul—and even then [we may] not be assured of success."

Almost everything about his plan is a gamble. Waiting until 2009 for full results means that the market may be dominated by "disappointing business news that Ghosn himself has warned of," says Christophe Laborde, an auto-industry analyst for ING in Paris. That could undermine Renault's share price, Laborde continues, and force Ghosn to respond with wider job cuts such as rivals have made. Meanwhile, Philippe Martinez, head of the automotive sector at the General Confederation of Labor, France's labor union, is pleased that the plan has avoided firings. But he would also like to see "significant numbers of new workers" hired, "to allow us to produce so many new cars at higher quality standards within the tight deadlines the plan requires."

The French state still owns 15.7% of its former property Renault, so no past CEO has expected an entirely free hand. If Ghosn is forced to renege on his promise to avoid layoffs, Renault's fortunes could become a political issue in the 2007 presidential elections. But Ghosn suggests that times—and France—have changed. He's the first Renault president selected purely for his business record, rather than for his political contacts. "If they'd wanted a yes-man at Renault," he says, "I wouldn't have been named CEO."





# Little Bastard

By Verner Joe Mahler

**M**y 4cv has always resided in the state of Florida, where it was purchased new in 1961. I bought the car about 12 years ago, with 14k miles from the original owner. While it was a nice car, 28 horsepower just wasn't enough so I gutted it and installed a narrowed (10 inch=26cm ) front adjustable height VW axle beam, and a Mazda Miata complete rear suspension (also narrowed 11 inch), Once these minor adjustments were made I was then able to weld the VW motor and tranny mounts in it.

The car has 4 -wheel disc brakes, a tricked VW tranny (3rd and 4th gears are from a 65 VW van and a 3.88 ring and pinion to make the engine run in lower RPM. Also the engine has a Brazilian VW GOL shroud, with an alternator and forward fan.

The body was all stripped, primed and in the total, 22 coats of paint were applied, giving it a very deep look. The interior was redone with Porsche 914 seats, rear seat was modified as I built a battery and tool box under)and a Renault LeCar sun roof was added. Speedometer is a VW with gas gauge built in and a special housing was built to accommodate it on the dash. Wheels are 15 inch, by 6.5 inch wide, with 50 series tires, and the bolt pattern is 4x100mm.

It rides very nice, but I still have to make some front end adjustments as I cut the front suspension blades, the front end is very stiff, but I am getting there.

The car was entirely built by me in my spare time over the period of ten years (yes 10 years).

*Editor's Note: As you can see in the title of the article and the photos I believe it has been appropriately named. It is my second all time favorite Renault car name after "Whoredini", for a Dauphine with a Volvo engine that once appeared at Woodley for the BOFI meet. ●*





# Awards Ceremony: Clio III: Car of the Year 2006

**O**n Friday, January 27, Renault President and CEO Carlos Ghosn was officially handed the Car of the Year 2006 award for Clio III by the President of the Car of the Year Jury, Ray Hutton. The Car of the Year 2006 prize-giving ceremony for Renault Clio III was held on January 27, 2006 at the Palazzo Albergati, in Bologna, Italy. Clio is the first repeat winner of the award in its 43 year history. The first generation Clio was also named European Car of the Year in 1991. ●



## Greetings from Indonesia!

*From Ismeth Osman, Jakarta, Indonesia:*

Surprise!!! and thanks for the response to our Renault club here.

I am attaching pictures of our club members on the occasion of our colleague's wedding in Bandung West Java , Indonesia. (also a picture of me & my R5)

Club: Jakarta Renault Club Indonesia (JRCI)  
email: JRCI@yahoogroups.com  
web: Komunitas\_Renault\_Indonesia@yahoogroups.com ●



## Renault Caravelle Photo from 1960 DC AutoShow

*From Bob Stout <r.j.stout@comcast.net>*

**D**idn't know if you would be interested, but here is photo I took of the new Renault Caravelle at the Washington DC Auto Show in 1960. A beautiful car! (but, I bought a Sunbeam Alpine). ●





# Renault F1 Early Season Review

By Marvin McFalls

With two rounds completed in this year's campaign, Renault couldn't be doing much better. So far the team has two victories, and a second place finish. After Giancarlo Fisichella dominating victory in Malaysia and Fernando Alonso's equally if not more impressive win in Bahrain. Malaysia was the first One, Two finish for Renault since 1983. The Renault team next will travel to Australia where it will continue to defend its title.

As for the competition, it appears Ferrari is back in the hunt with Michael Schumacher finishing second in Bahrain and both Ferraris scored points in Malaysia. However just as last year it seems the biggest challenge to Renault repeating as champions are McLaren Mercedes. However just like last year Raikkonen and Montoya are very fast, but their cars are suffering from reliability issues. Raikkonen suffered a suspension failure during qualifying in Bahrain, and had to start last on the grid, but he was able to finish the race in third. While his teammate Juan Pablo Montoya has scored points in each event.

The next level of competitors appears to be lead by Honda. With Jenson Button and Rubens Barichello they have plenty of experience behind the wheel. Button was able to use all that experience to drive a fairly competitive car to a third place podium finish in Malaysia. While Rubens seems to be struggling after driving a Ferrari for many, I am sure he will come along and begin to score points regularly.

Well below Honda, are Williams Cosworth, Toyota, Sauber BMW and Red Bull. All of these team feature excellent pilots, but the Williams team seems to be short on reliability and Toyota seems to lack the pace of some of the other teams. While Jacques Villeneuve was able to score a couple of points in Malaysia I don't see the new combo scoring many podiums this season. Finally Red Bull has Ferrari engines making them powerful, but their car isn't that impressive. Keep an eye on Nico Rosberg in the Williams, he looks to be the most talented of the new drivers.

The have not's of F1 include MF1 Toyota formerly Jordan, the all new Super Aguri Honda team, and the Toro Rosso Cosworth team formerly Minardi. Of these three teams the most impressive has to be Toro Rosso or Red Bull in Italian. For the first time in thirteen years an American is back in Formula 1, as Scott Speed is one of the pilots for Toro Rosso. While they are using de-tuned V-10s from last year they are much more competitive than Honda and Toyota developmental teams.

Much like last year Renault has come out of the gate very quick and fairly reliable, it will only be a matter of time before we see if the competition can make up enough ground to compete for the championship. Currently Renault leads

McLaren and Ferarri by the thirteen points. As Renault has scored 28 points and their two closest competitors have only been able to muster fifteen. Next in the standings comes Honda with eleven points and Williams with five.

In the Driver's Standings, Fernando Alonso is again on top scoring 18 points in the first two events, followed by Jenson Button and Michael Schumacher with eleven points each. Next comes Giancarlo Fisichella with ten points and Juan Pablo Montoya with nine points followed by last season's runner-up Kimi Raikkonen with six points.

While I don't believe Renault is invincible, if the competition doesn't step up to the challenge soon, they may build a big enough lead to hold off a late season charge much like last season. ●





# Tips and Tricks: Whitewalls on a 135 or 145-15 Tire?

By Kurt Triffet

The tires in my 1967 Renault Caravelle ([www.renault-caravelle.com](http://www.renault-caravelle.com)) page photo are using Porta-walls.

I haven't come across a whitewall tire anywhere in the States in the 135-15 or 145-15 size. I have 145s on mine. 135s used to be popular as front tires on VW bugs, so it's a possibility they can still be found.

*Footnote: Radial whitewall tires can currently be found from one of our club vendors, but they aren't cheap.*

I was buying my Porta-walls from a tire company in Long Beach, CA:

Lucas Automotive  
tel: 800 952-4333.

About a year ago, I did some research for an alternative after Lucas ran out of stock and was waiting for a new shipment (they apparently come from Pakistan and Lucas was the only source in the US that I could find that sold them).

I looked into an idea posted in a couple automotive discussion groups: A paint that would work well on the rubber to simulate the look.

Prior to this, I had researched online and I found that all the kits specifically designed for painting whitewalls, and sold online at a few automotive accessory places, do not work well at all. Some companies were hesitant to even endorse selling one to me.

Then someone suggested the Krylon spray paint specifically designed for use on white plastic patio furniture. -It apparently has very high adhesion properties, which makes sense if you think about how paint needs to stick to weather that glossy white molded furniture.

I ended up trying Rustoleum's version of it (I could not find the Krylon version locally), but to avoid the shiny look of gloss, I only used the white primer for more of a matte finish. It also had higher adhesion properties than their final coat paint.

*Footnote: my tires have never had Armorall or any tire dressing on them, so I would think that you'd want the tire's surface as clean as possible before painting. I also kept my tires on the rim when I did this. Only took about 5 hours to complete all 5 (one spare) tires.*

The steps I took:

1) Thoroughly clean area to be painted with solvent like





paint thinner. I'd also lightly wire-brush the area to be painted.

- 2) Hopefully, your tires have a marked outer circle line molded into the tire. My French tires did. And my Portawalls came right up to that line. If you don't have a marking to work with, you'll have to make a compass and get it as accurate as possible.
- 3) Tear small strips of wide masking tape (not painters tape- you need the sticky stuff) and overlay them very tightly along the tire's whitewall edge so you get as smooth an arc as possible. I found this method far superior to trying to either use a liquid frisket or to try and cut a radius in the tape. The process actually goes quite fast, and you can burnish down the tape as you go. Then mask off your rim.
- 4) A few coats of the primer should do the trick. I would get two cans. In my test, I wish I'd applied the third coat a bit heavier.

The results? Nearly a year after doing this, my tires look great. I had a few tiny areas lift immediately within a couple days of driving around, but none after that. I attribute this to not have cleaned the tire thoroughly enough- I'm thinking that I should have taken a light wirebrushing to the areas painted).

I do not drive my car much, but still, the paint has weathered quite well. It has barely shown any discoloration (though not as bright white as the day they were painted), unlike Porta-walls, which need to be changed frequently (the outer edges yellow heavily, and they become brittle and break) if you drive your car a lot. There is some minor fine-crazing closer to the rim, but not enough to warrant a re-spray just yet. ●



## Racing Season is Finally Here

By Marvin McFalls

**I**t is hard to believe that the first Solo II race of the season was on March 5th. I had hoped to attend so I could get back together with Marty McKee, and the rest of the guys from the Dodge Shelby Club of Lenoir City. While I wasn't able to attend, Grant from the Shelby Club drove my Alliance to victory over Marty's Dodge Charger Rampage Pick-up and Curtis McKee's Shelby Omni GLH. All this reminiscing about seasons past, brought me back to the very first Renault Alliance Cup races. I remembered reading an article many years ago. After some searching I found it in an old issue of Road and Track. Man, it looked like a whole lot of fun! Hopefully I will be able to get the old Alliance Cup on a circuit later this season. I am hoping to bring the racer

as well as my GTA Convertible to Carlisle in May. ●





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