

RENAULT NEWS

81
Fall
2006



Microcar Meet 2006

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Renault Owner's Club of North America

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US\$15 for 1 year online membership: worldwide

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New for 2007

By Marvin McFalls

To stay ahead of the competition in a segment Renault invented when they introduced the Scenic a decade ago, Renault is introducing its latest edition and it will be available in France on September 21st. My guess is that it will be a big hit at the Paris Auto Show a few days later. When you are number one, there is no reason for radical departures in styling, but rather subtle design changes to the front and rear of the car to give it a more modern look. While inside the cabin has been refined and all new fabrics and patterns are being introduced. There are now eight different engine packages available ranging from 85 to 150 horsepower.

With a base price of just under 19,000 Euros there are total of six different equipment levels ranging in price up to 32,000 Euro for the limited edition Carminat Version which will be available in the Scenic, Grand Scenic and Seven-Passenger Grand Scenic Versions. Renault feels that somewhere in that nearly 13,000 price range there should be a model that fits the needs of almost every potential customer.

With production totalling more than 500,000 cars since the model's launch in 1999, Clio three-box - which is sold in 64 countries and known as Thalia, Symbol, Clio Classic, and also the Nissan Platina depending on the market - has proven to be a genuine success story. Mainly sold outside of Western Europe the three-box is a four-door sedan Clio with a trunk. Most of the half-million models built to date were made in Turkey, but they are also built in Brazil, Argentina, Columbia and Mexico.

To continue on this momentum, Renault will launch a new evolution of the model in September 2006. In addition to its status-enhancing modern exterior styling similar to the new Clio. With addition powerplant choice and more option packages in many ways the three-box covers more than just one segment of the market. However its price is right in line with most of its competition. Hopefully this will lead to more sales against higher segment competitors.

Yes, 2007 looks to be another good year for Renault, maybe one day we will see some of these models here. ●



Renault in History

The Sarthe Grand Prix, 1906



In honor of the club's Fifteenth Anniversary along with reprinting stories from past Issues, I think it is also important to reflect on past events. While the most memorable event for me and probably for everyone who attended was our first meet in Tennessee that celebrated 100 Years of Renault. At that meet I met two of my best friends Brent Bartley and Jonathan Burnette, as well as more than a dozen other unforgettable Renault Owners, many of which are still members of the club today. Back in 1997 when I came up with the idea for the first meet East of the Mississippi it was unheard of. While the club had members all over the U.S. and even a few in Canada and Mexico, there had never been a meet outside of Southern California.

Since that first meet I have travelled coast to coast and even outside the U.S. for various shows. However, I must admit the first three or four meets we had are easily the most memorable. It was so amazing to me people that had similar passions and interests, even though we came from different places, and had much different backgrounds. With all the turmoil that was taking place within the club's leadership, these events kept me going. There was more than one occasion I considered breaking off and starting a new club, but then I would attend the annual meeting and return home more dedicated to get the club back on track. I want to thank each and every one of you that attended our early meets in Tennessee, North Carolina, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, without your support I am fairly certain the club would have taken a different path.

Recently Brent Bartley and I spent some time together and we started to talking about various meets that we had participated in and Blackhawk Farms came up. Then I received a story from Ted Horn about this years Micro and Mini National which was hosted by Ken Weger. During our trip to Blackhawk Brent paid a visit to Mr. Weger's unique collection. So once again Blackhawk was on my mind. After much thought I have to admit it was one of my favorite meets. Sam Stuckey and Myself drove more than 1500 miles for the show. It was the first time we ever met Terry Zabransky, Judy Napoleon, Yves Boode, Larry Claypool and his family. Jonathan Burnette made the trek up from Texas, Giff Kucsma came over from New Jersey and it was the last time we had the DaVaney Brothers attend a meet in their Canary Yellow R12. I took many photos during the weekend, as well as Giff and Brent's wife Pamela. While many of the photos were published in issue #57 of the Renault News, and one has been prominent on our Website ever since, I have many more so I figured I would print them six years later.

For those who were there I hope it will bring back fond memories, and for everyone else I hope it will bring you a glimpse of the fellowship we shared back at those first meets. I hope we can have more events like this one in the future. ●

**Blackhawk
Memories**





**Blackhawk
Memories**

Tech Session: Repairing a Wreck

By Sam Stuckey

I was recently contacted by a man who said he had a Medallion wagon that had been in an accident. He told me that he had taken it to a few repair shops but no one wanted to work on it. The closest parts he had been able to find were in Canada. I told him we had the parts to fix it, and to bring it by and I would take a look at it. He told me that it was leaking transmission fluid so it couldn't be driven. So I reluctantly told him to have it towed in. He brought it by one day and it had quite a lot of damage and a big kink in the left front corner.



Instead of telling him to take it home or sell it for junk I told him I would fix it. I found later that it was a major operation. I began by removing and cutting off all of the bent parts. Then I cut the matching parts off of another parts car Marvin had. This is when the problem began. The sheet metal is so thin on the uni-body that it is nearly impossible to weld on with an acetylene torch. Finally I was able to get it all welded together using a jewelers torch and coat hanger. Once I had the uni-body back together



then I had to cut out the radiator support and replace it. The engine pulleys caused this damage, where they had run the engine after the accident. Next I had to weld the left cradle mount and then sheet metal under the engine computer. This concluded the welding portion of this project.

Now I had to bring the wiring harness back thru the frame rail. I had originally pulled it thru the firewall under the brake pedal and attached a coat hanger so I would be able to pull it back out when I was ready. Because of the seam of the weld it didn't pull back thru like I had originally planned. I had to use conduit lube to ease it back thru the frame tube. Then I was able to reattach the computer and front harness.

I had used a white left fender, bumper cover, and nose-piece so I had to paint the inside edges before I could install them on the car. I went to Halls Auto Parts and Mike Berry was able to match the paint color perfectly by the paint code. Once the parts were installed, I was ready to start reassembling. I first put the nosepiece that goes in front of the hood to be able to align the fender, bumper and hood. When I put the fender on it didn't line up cor-





rectly and I then had to use body filler to compensate on the bumper cover. I then had to grind and sand my welds and use filler to make the frame rail look like it had never been in an accident.

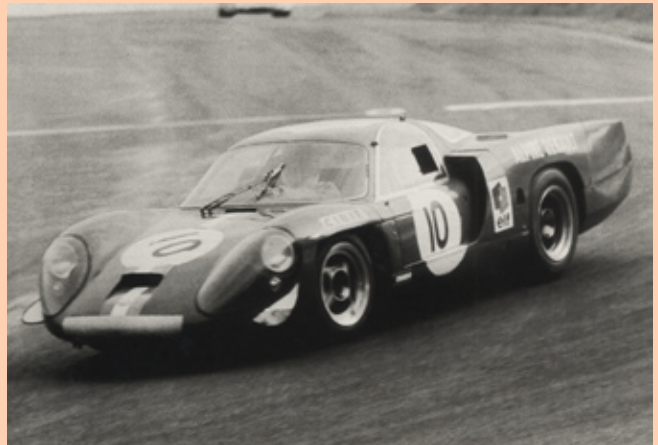
At this point I started sanding and filling minor imperfections on the installed parts. After many hours of sanding it was finally time to put some primer on replacement panels as well as the original hood and right fender. Then I sanded the primer back down and added glazing putty where sand scratches were. After sanding off the glazing putty and blocking everything it was ready to paint. I used Dupont acrylic enamel paint with hardener, instead of the original base coat/ clear coat system used by Renault. I did this because in the South the clear coat doesn't seem to hold up very well to the sun. By the time I had completed the painting of the front clip, I had used two quarts of paint. It should have been enough paint.

Following several mechanical repairs including the trans-



mission lines, and window regulators, as well as some other problems I didn't expect including the relays for the cooling fans as well as the fuse for the transmission computer. At this point the saga of the Medallion wagon is at an end. After all my years of experience repairing wrecked cars, this job proved to be an exceptional challenge. This will be my last lengthy body repair for a customer, I hope! ●

Renault in History



Alpine 3000 racing in 1969

The Micro and Mini Car Nationals 2006

By Ted Horn

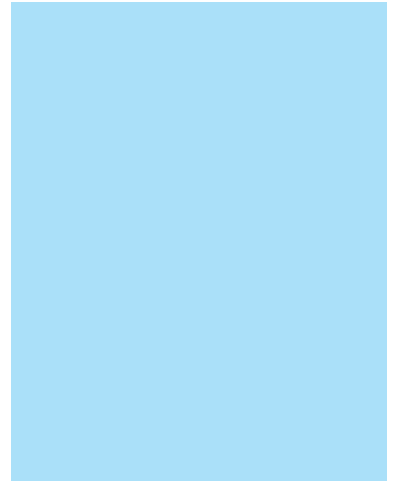
The national Microcar and Minicar meet was held on August 12th and 13th in Crystal Lake, Illinois. It was very interesting, fun, and well run. Ken and Sylvia Weger (former club members) hosted it at a very nice tree shaded site. Since the event was free and open to the public many people came by to see the unusual cars. There was very good feedback from everyone. Some exhibitors were giving rides in their autos to demonstrate how much fun small cars can be.

There were only two Renaults in attendance this year. Both were Dauphines. One was owned by our good friend Lloyd Mathis of Missouri who drove his really nice blue 1964 Dauphine (notice the optional chrome rear grill!). The other was a silver 1961 driven by Rick and Susan Crawley of Indiana.

I saw many other interesting cars at the show. The red BMW features a 2 cylinder motorcycle engine. The tiny car I am standing next to is an actual car and not some kind of toy, unfortunately I don't remember the model. There was also a large turnout of Citroën 2CVs. One of the attendees couldn't recall the last time there were that many ducks in attendance. If older mini cars didn't interest you there were a few late models as well. One of the most popular was the French built Smart car. I hear Daimler Chrysler are going to start importing them soon.

All and all there were 190 mini and micro cars at the show. This was about twice as many as they had last year, I wonder if higher gas prices have anything to do with it? ●





**2006
Micro and
Minicar Nationals**



Renault 18i A/C Installation

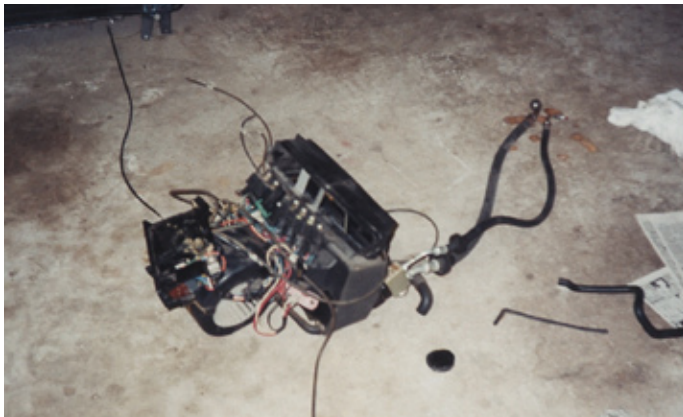
By Ray Dietz

Back in November of 1980, Nancy and I purchased this 18i new. It now has over 185,000 miles. This car didn't have air conditioning when we bought it so it was more or less not a summer car. Not so long ago a friend in Fredrick, MD called and said his wife's 1983 Fuego caught on fire under the hood. He decided that he just wanted to get rid of the car and he said that I could have it if I came and picked it up. Well I drove to Fredrick with a tow bar and I towed the Fuego home to Martinsville, VA with one of my other 18i wagons.



Everything taken out and ready for the A/C installation

Once at home I began looking to see what was salvageable and it looked like the A/C unit might fit into an 18i if one were patient enough to do a few modifications. So I took the entire A/C system out of the Fuego and began the installation into my 1981 18i wagon. I started by removing the small radiator and installing the much larger radiator, which is used with A/C. That part went well, along with the mounting of the bracket and compressor. The engine compartment wiring harness in my car already had the



A/C unit with hoses and wiring. Note the 6 relays where the wiring plugs in

wires, but they only went as far as the firewall. It didn't take long to put the rest of the wiring in place from the Fuego harness.

Keep in mind however with A/C there are two radiator cooling fans along with separate relays and circuit breakers. It took a little while to make everything look like factory installation. I even used the same filter/dryer unit, which has a high and low pressure cut off switch while the '81 harness is made for only a low pressure cut off switch. With the help of a Fuego wiring diagram this problem was easily solved.

The surprise came when I went to mount the cooling fans and condenser. That combination was too thick to fit into the 18i. This was remedied by modifying the radiator mounting and slanting the radiator back toward the engine as far as possible. It still wouldn't quite fit so I ground out some of the backside of the grille. That did the trick but it sure is a close fit. The next portion of the job was to remove the heater motor and heater core and replace the box with the one in the Fuego, which had the vacuum solenoid mounting platform as well as the proper air door cable mountings. The mountings are on the reverse side if you don't have A/C. Now I also needed a vacuum reservoir for the operation of the A/C control panel. This I ended up mounting next to the radiator coolant bottle up near the firewall.

The last thing to change under the hood is the throttle body. If you don't change this you won't have the A/C high idle vacuum diaphragm valve and electric solenoid. The two items receive a signal from the compressor and increase the idle air to maintain a steady idle and thus compensate for the compressor load. At that point the under the hood work was complete with the exception of the new A/C freon hoses. The hoses from the Fuego were not only burned but were the wrong shape to fit a 18i. Fortunately, one of our local auto parts shops custom make hoses and that is what I had done.

Now for the interesting part, which was under the dash. This required removing the entire console and dashboard. Be sure to follow the factory manual when doing this or you will break more than one plastic part. Believe it or not by following the instruction I didn't break any pieces and a lot of screws, nuts, and bolts all carefully labeled. My car had defrosters and air vents but they were different. So I had to replace them with those from the Fuego. The transition piece, which connects the in-dash vents with the defroster ducts and the blower, is totally different for the A/C system. I was lucky enough to have one of them on hand from another vehicle, as I had already towed the



About as far as you can strip down a dashboard



Dashboard with one of the insulated ducts in place

vehicle to Harrisonburg, VA and given it to club member Clayton Hoover.

The only way I can describe installing the under dash



Pumping down the system and loading freo. Note vacuum reservoir just to right of coolant bottle

part of the system was to say it was very frustrating figuring out the vacuum hose system and the wiring. It took me several days to get everything hooked up correctly and it is imperative to have a factory wiring diagram. There were no allowances for factory A/C wiring in cars which didn't have A/C except for the one compressor wire under the hood.

Finally with everything back in place it was time to try out the system. The pump down evacuation of the system went so smoothly that I suspected something must be wrong. However, after valving everything off and waiting two hours the vacuum held perfectly. The compressor was a rebuilt model, which I had purchased from Advance Auto Parts. Although it was supposed to have six ounces of oil already in it, I added two more and then metered in the refrigerant until I saw no bubble in the sight glass window.

Now came the problem. The vacuum system just wouldn't work properly. I replaced the push button panel to no



Two great wiring diagrams - one Fuego and one R18i

avail and even replaced the air solenoids under the dash. That didn't help either. Finally I found that the driver's side under dash solenoid hose wasn't attached to the nipple but was pushed between the nipple and the solenoid housing. It was a perfect fit and felt just like it was in the right place, but it is in a location where you cannot see it and it is essentially a Braille task to connect the vacuum line. How did I locate the problem? I had a small vacuum pump, which I used on each individual vacuum circuit until I found an open circuit. Even then I didn't find the real problem right away because it is so easy to push the hose in place and think it is hooked up correctly while in fact it is not on the nipple. Finally everything worked perfectly.

(Editor's Note: Ray and Nancy still drives this car all over the country. They have even won a few awards with it at various meets. I believe it has more than 250,000 miles on it now.) ●

Convertible Weather

By Marvin McFalls

I have mentioned in the last couple of Online Bulletins that it has been so hot this summer that there haven't been many convertible days. Luckily the weather finally broke around the first of September, so every day the temperature has been in the eighties rather than the nineties like most days in July and August. So the last two weeks almost everyday has been a convertible day. Meanwhile, in all the years I have done the newsletter I don't think I have ever had a picture of my family in the newsletter so here is a picture of my mother next to my GTA Convertible, I also figured I would include a picture of my new convertible and my favorite one, my Caravelle. I hope all of you that have convertibles are finally enjoying your cars. ●



The Silly Season

By Marvin McFalls

For those who aren't fans of motor racing, the Silly Season takes part near the end of each season. Various Drivers, Teams, and Sponsors are reported to be moving here or staying there. While it is very entertaining most of these reports are speculative and very few actually come to be. Since General Motors largest common share holder, Kirk Kerkorian suggested to the Board of Directors that they consider joining in a strategic alliance with Renault and Nissan, many of the world's largest automakers have started their own form of a Silly Season.

Since mid July, Renault, Nissan, and GM haven't had a word to say while they are looking into the possibility of an Alliance. They even went as far as making a joint statement, that until they complete their internal discussions we will not even field questions on the matter.

So just when you think the Silly Season is on hold, enter another name to this rumor mill, and were not just talking any name! Believe it or not Ford Motor Company, maybe next in line should a deal not be worked out with General Motors. The Wall Street Journal reported that Bill Ford has approached Carlos Ghosn, the chief executive of Renault SA and Nissan Motor Company about joining their global alliance should a deal between Renault-Nissan and General

Motors not come together.

If the Wall Street Journal isn't a good enough source to fuel this rumor, it has also been reported by Business Week Magazine that Ford is examining whether alliances with other companies may be beneficial and they are willing to consider all options. And if you are wondering about the source of this statement, it comes right from the Mustang's Mouth so to speak as, none other than Chairman and Chief Executive Bill Ford himself.

In other related news, Bill Ford told the Associated press last month that he was not contemplating taking the company private, However last week, the USA Today reported that the company is considering such a move, citing a "source with direct knowledge of the discussions." Ford's official response to this was "We wouldn't comment on such speculation"

So there you have it friends, the latest gossip out of Detroit, Paris, and Tokyo. Who ever would have thought the automotive rumor mill would become a regular feature? I guess until there are official announcements and press releases we will continue to speculate about a global alliance between Renault-Nissan and various other automakers. Needless to say, it makes for very entertaining copy. ●

Dr. Robert Countess

By Marvin McFalls

Wow, where to start. I met Dr. Bob many years ago on one of his many voyages he stopped by Lenoir City and we became acquainted. Every time I saw him, he was either smoking a pipe or had a pipe nearby. The tobacco's he smoked smelled like none I have ever smelled before or since. At that point I figured out he was a little out there, but nothing like a few years later when I went down to his house. At the time Bob had a large car collection mainly Pugeots, but at some point he had branched out to Renaults and he had a fairly good collection. Over the years we saw each other at various meets, and he even visit the Renault Farm once. A couple years ago I returned to Bob's home in Huntsville, Alabama and picked up an Alliance from him. That was the last time I saw or heard from him. Last March he passed away, and I had planned to write a story about, but it slipped my mind. Just today I was looking thru some photos and found some of Bob's Renaults so I figured I put together a tribute as it were to one of the strangest Renault owners I have ever met.

For those of you who don't know Bob here is a little Background: He was a University of Alabama Huntsville history professor and an ordained Presbyterian minister. He served as a U.S. Army chaplain from 1976 to 1984. He wrote dozens of published articles and book reviews, including the book *The Jehovah's Witness's New Testament*. Countess was also a prominent revisionist historian. He spoke out against popular conceptions of the Holocaust, as he believed that although Adolf Hitler wanted the Jews out of Europe he did not order their extermination. Countess once wore a shirt that read "NO HOLES? NO HOLOCAUST", referring to the holes on the gas-chamber roofs at Auschwitz where the Germans poured cyanide pellets over their victims.

After my first visit to Alabama I wondered how a man that controversial had managed to live as long as he had. In fact he appeared to be in good health and still played competitive ping pong even though he was over sixty years old. When I heard he had passed I though surely it was at the hand of someone he had offended, but it turned out to be natural causes. For most I am sure the news of his passing was reason for celebration, but I had mixed emotions. The man was fanatical about everything he did whether it be preaching, teaching, or his car collection. I am sure if I had become familiar with him thru one of his sermons or lectures I would have probably had a similar opinion, but meeting him away from his public life I must say he was intriguing.

Once he passed I thought I might hear from his family, but I never did. I wonder what become of his car collection? Dr. Robert Countess, Born: August 1937, Died: March 18, 2005. ●



Woodward Dream Cruise 2006

By Marvin McFalls

Unlike last year when I flew to Detroit, this year I decided to drive. I talked to my friend Brent Bartley a couple weeks prior to the show, and he was interesting in attending as well. So I planned to drive up to his house in Miamisburg, OH, and then I would ride with him to Detroit. Brent needed to pick-up a Speedway Mini Bike, in the Toledo area any way so it was only a couple hours further to Detroit. I arrived at Brent's house around 4:30PM on Friday August 18th. After a small hiccup (neither of us had the Barton's address or home phone), we headed over to Club Members, Chris and Dan Barton's house in historic Dayton for dinner. I let Brent drive my Mazda MX5 and he really liked it.

Once we arrived, Dan and Chris gave us a brief tour of their restored 19th century home, then we hung out in the kitchen and had some wonderful appetizers, and talked for an hour or so while Dan prepared the main course, Grilled Tuna and Scallops. With the food now prepared we moved to the dining room where along with the spectacular seafood we were treated to a traditional French platter of vegetables served cold. With a little wine and bread in the mix we had a wonderful dining experience.

If you are a car guy, there is no better way to follow up elegant dining, then with a trip to the garage. After checking out Dan's 1967 Caravelle, and Chris's 2005 Mini Cooper, we headed back into the house where we discussed the idea of possibly getting together in France in October. By now it was nearly 10PM, so Brent and I thanked our gracious hosts and headed back to his house to get some rest before our early departure for Detroit.

We had planned to get up at 5:30, and make a early start but we both actually woke up around 3:30. With no luck getting back to sleep we headed out around 6AM. After a stop for Breakfast and a little rain in Lima we were back on the road. By 10AM we were getting close to Detroit, but unfortunately the rain had caught back up to us again. By 10:30 we arrived at our friends from the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitor's Bureau Tent Party. The first people to greet us were Carrie Braxton and Bill Chapin. I had told Brent about Bill, and he was looking forward to meeting the Grandson of Harry Chapin, Founder of Hudson Motor Car. Brent is a member of the Hudson Owners Club, and it was interesting to see how many members of the club each knew.

Following our talk about Hudson we began to talk about Bill's time at AMC and Renault. We talked about the Renault Rambler and how that project eventually lead to Renault buying AMC. Finally we discussed the latest news of Renault and General Motors and even briefly of the latest rumor of Ford's interest. Bill believes that an alliance is more likely with Ford than GM.

As it was still early, Brent and I decided to walk down Wood-



ward Avenue, and see what was going on. The party was a couple blocks from 11 Mile Road so we headed north we made it past 12 Mile when we started to get hungry so we crossed the street and head back towards the party. We arrived just before 1:00PM and a few guests had started to arrive. By the time we finished eating, the Station Wagon Owners Association arrived. They had quite a interesting collection of cars from a Edsel Wagon to a late model Buick Roadmaster. If wagons weren't your bag how about early V8 Fords or a Ferrari Dino. As the afternoon progressed the rain finally ended, and the number of cars cruising up and down Woodward increased.

Dan Doyle, from the Visitor's Bureau finally arrived. So we had to talk cars for a while as well as a little baseball. Detroit is having a great year, and it turned out that they had a couple of extra tickets. They offered them to Brent and I, as well as a pass to the Tiger's Den. Dan highly recommend the buffet so Brent and I left the party around 5PM and headed down Woodward to Comerica Park. After parking and walking to the stadium we were ready to eat. Man, I have to give it to Dan that was one of the nicest Buffets I have ever been to. I highly recommend it if you are ever in Detroit for a game. We ate more than we should have, luckily we had a long walk to our seats. We made it to our seats by the bottom of the first inning, but their wasn't much action until the fourth when Texas had a home run, and then in the fifth they scored two more. Detroit was finally able to get on the board, but they lost 3-1.

Brent and I left the game and headed towards Toledo. We found a hotel in Southern Michigan only a few miles from where we were picking up the mini bike. Much to our surprise, they were having the NASCAR race at Brooklyn, MI the same weekend as the Dream Cruise. Just before Brent stepped up to the desk, someone had just called to cancel. Somehow we had found the last hotel room within fifty miles. With our new found luck, we retired to our room. We had no problem with sleeping after being up for nearly 20 hours. We awoke around 8AM and headed down stairs for breakfast and then we were off to pick up Brent's mini bike. The owner had an interesting collection including a Hemi Roadrunner and Hemi Cuda. His son had a Dodge Coronet Hemi with a 470ci engine with nearly 700 hp. He loves to take it out and race Japanese Tuners and other muscle cars. He was banned from the local dragway after running a 10.99 in the quarter mile.

Once we loaded up the basketcase Speedway we made our way back towards Dayton. We made good time and I left Brent's house before 2PM. After repacking my car, I was on the road again. I stopped north of Cincinnati and again in Kentucky finally making it home around 7:30PM. It had been very fun weekend, and I really appreciate Brent coming with me. Also let me again thank our friends Dan, Carrie, and Bill for a inviting us. I look forward to next year's Dream Cruise, hopefully we will be able to get some Renaults to attend. Maybe one of these years it won't rain the day of the cruise. ◉



Cars in the Park

By Phil Theunissen

On Sunday August 6th my daughter and I took my R8 Gordini down to Zwartkops Racetrack, in Pretoria, South Africa. The event was sponsored by the Old Motor Club of Pretoria. As you can see from the photos it was a beautiful day and there was a good turnout. Besides my Gordini there was also another very nice Gordini. If R8 Gordinis aren't your taste there was also a Caravelle, Dauphine, R16 as well as four-door Clio on display. It was great to see all the different car enthusiasts in attendance. I hope everyone in America enjoys the photos.

(Editor's Note: We need to find out a little more about Phil, as if you look closely he is wearing a Green Bay Packers cap in the photo.) ●



Renault in History



Paris-Madrid 1902, along the course

People's Choice 2006

By Francisco Miranda

Last October 1st, the People's Choice auto show took place. At the same location as in previous years, Plaza Cuicuilco, was the frame for this nice car event. Not as big though, as many clubs were not present, just like the Alpine Club that decided not to take part of the event this year, but I paid our good friends a visit to see their nice Renaults.

We could see many "new" cars not only from the usual clubs, but also from other makes' clubs or independents.

The Gordini Sport had a nice participation with 10 cars: R8s, Dinalpin, R10 and R5. The French Auto Group presented several cars as well, in pretty good shape. Most of this Renaults belong to the Renault Azteca Club (yet another club). So, you were watching all the cars, and you could see Renaults parked in several locations. I personally would have liked to see them together in the same area.

Because authorities opened the border for importing old cars paying very little tax, we could find several cars from the States mostly, but others from Europe as well just like the very odd DKW 1000SP in a superb state of conservation. These cars were never sold in Mexico, so they attract a big audience around them. ●



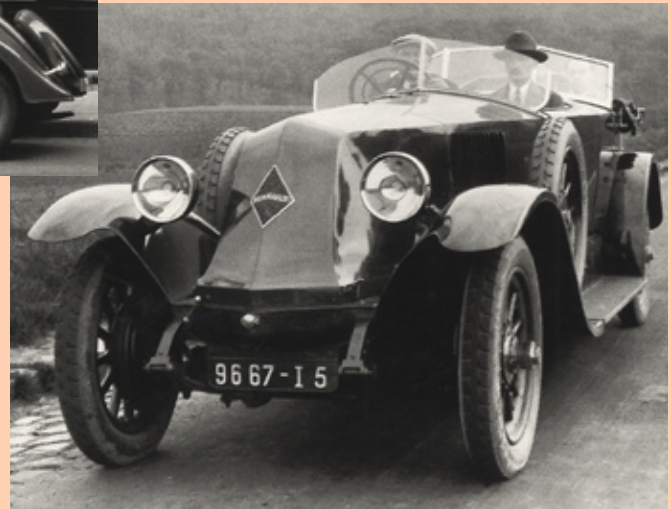


Renault in History

Mr. Lampel's car, 1935 Morocco rally



1934 24 CV Cabriolet



1924 6 cylinder 18 CV Torpedo

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