

RENAULT NEWS

89
Fall
2008



The Best of France & Italy 2008

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Renault Owners Club of North America

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New Members

US\$15 for 1 year online membership: worldwide
US\$20 for 1 year postal membership:
U.S., Mexico & Canada only
Join online at www.renaultclub.us/join
Or send payment, along with details about your cars to:
Ray Dietz, 1250 Lanier Rd., Martinsville, VA 24112-5212
Tel: 276 638-8563

Renewals-Registry Information and Address Changes

Renew online or mail payment to:
Jacques Lynn, 13839 Hwy 8 Bus., El Cajon, CA 92021
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Classified Ads

Place ads online at www.renaultclub.us/marketplace
Or mail brief ads to:
Kurt Triffet, 3333 San Luis St., Ventura, CA 93003
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Marketplace display ads available

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NEW! Order back issues on CD online at club website.

Issues 1 to 57

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www.RenaultClub.us

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Crosby, Michael	Miller, Herbert
Dixon, Gary	Moskowitz, Terry
Dufour, Max	Peters, Gary
Duran, Pedro	Rapoport, Jed
Erne, Robert	Sahli, Theodore
Etamad-Moghadam, Cyrus	Schulz, David
Evans, Richard	Smith, Carl
Hacker, Geoffrey	Snead, Parker
Hynd, Richard	Sorrels, Kenneth
Jackson, Kern	Sy, Phillip
Keenly, Mike	Villalba, Jorge
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September 2008, Renewals

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Lingafelter, Larry	Sparks, Carl
Lohman, Carl	Story, Paul
Marrese, Damian	Toda, Fran
Polak, Donald	

October 2008, New Postal Members

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October 2008, Renewals

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Einhouse, James	Symonds, Chester
Hines, Walter	Wheeler, Ralph
Miller, Ashl	Zimmerman, Michael
Payton, J.T.	

Treasurer's Report

By Sharon Desplaines

January 1, 2008 to July 31, 2008:

Beginning Balance:

Checking account	2699.74
Savings account	6096.75
Total	8796.49

Income:

Postal dues	1024.34
PayPal dues	2489.51
Back issues	20.00
Donation	45.00
Advertising	0.00
Interest income	91.26
Total	3670.11

Outlay:

Postage	966.02
---------	--------

Printing	131.65
Copying	6.70
Supplies	138.39
Advertisements	514.00
Other	324.37
Website	494.85
Reimbursements (members)	125.00
Newsletter	1785.00
Car Shows (Carlisle)	703.43
Total	6369.41

Ending Balance:

Checking account	< 92.66>
Savings account	6189.85
Total	6097.19

Income Less Outlay

Ending Balance Less Beginning Balance <2699.30>

Renault Club in Hemmings Motors News


By Marvin McFalls

2008 has been the year of Renault in Hemmings. As many of you know the club has run an ad in the magazine for years. Back at Carlisle, the Hemmings crew was on the site and they interviewed Les Woods and took several photos of his R16. We were surprised when the August 2008 issue came out and the club's banner and tent were featured in a story about the Import, Kit, and Replicar Nationals. Showing the club display, they also featured Les' R 16 and Lloyd Mathis' Black GTA Alliance.

If this wasn't enough, the club was also featured in the current issue of Hemmings Sports and Exotic Cars. In

the magazine is a story about the Alpine 310. Also featured in the issue, as well as in Hemmings Motor News, is Brad Stevens, a longtime member of our club. Brad won best French Car at the recent Hemmings East Coast meet and one of his five Alpines was featured in the magazine.

If you aren't already a subscriber to Hemmings Motor News or Hemmings Sports and Exotic Cars give them a try. You can get a free trial issue at:

Hemmings.com. 



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Renault Club of America

By Marvin McFalls

I recently received a packet of materials from our Vice President, Jesse Patton. It included many articles and original ads from the late 50's and early 60's. These materials came from Road and Track with which I was familiar, and also Sports Car Graphic, which I don't seem to have any materials from in my collection. Needless to say, you can look forward to several interesting stories in future issues.

Along with all these great stories and ads, Jesse also clipped out a few of the Renault related classifieds from the back of the magazines. One was for a special air scoop that would keep your Dauphine from overheating at \$9.50. If it did anything it would have been a bargain! Another was for a Judson Super Charger that would fit a 1959 or 60 Dauphine. At \$100 it seemed reasonable, but the most intriguing ad was from the Renault Club of America. The

ad read as follows: RENAULT Club of America invites owners to join Le Club. Meetings, fun, free parts, discounts, newsletter with pictures, how to articles and more. Annual dues \$20. Renault Club of America, Box 8568, Rockville, MD 20856

While I am familiar with several of the clubs that preceded ours like George Holt's club from New York and the Deeks' club from Orange County, CA, this one I have no information on. If you were a member of this club or know anything about it let me know, I think it would make a good story to do a history of all the Renault clubs there have been in America over the years. If anyone has one of these old newsletters, it would be helpful in piecing this puzzle together. ☺

Renault Club 2008-2009 Event Schedule

By Marvin McFalls

Date	Event	Location	Contact
Nov 2, 2008	Best of F&I at Woodley	Van Nuys, CA	Sharon Desplaines, hummer5@cox.net
Apr 2009	Huixquilucan	Mexico City	francisco.miranda@estudio19.com.mx
May 15-17	Import & Kit Car Nat.	Carlisle, PA	John Vogler,, 717-249-9541
June 2009	European Auto Show	St. Louis, MO	Lloyd Mathis, ldmglass@aol.com
July 18-19	Pittsburgh Grand Prix	Pittsburgh, PA	Ken Gladyszewski, it045@yahoo.com
August 15	Woodward Dream Cruise	Detroit, Mi	Marvin McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net
Sept 18-20	Road America Vint. Races	Elkhart Lake, WI	Brad Stevens, bahnzai@hotmail.com
Aug 21-22	The Micro/Mini Car	Chrystal Lake	Marvin McFalls, 865-387-1004
2010	World Meet 2010	Illinois	Marvin McFalls, moose01@earthlink.net

Lady Gets A Bath Every Day

By Mary Ann Henning Vitelleone

We love our 1985 Renault Encore LS hatchback. She is a 4 cylinder, 16 horse power, with a 1.76 Liter Engine.

She is Garnet Red with 85,507 miles. Her name is Lady and is named after our German Shepard, Lady. She was brand new in 1987, and had only 24 miles when we bought our Renault. Her birth date is May 13, 1985, the day she came off the assembly line.

The Renault is the sweetest car in the entire world. They are loyal and are like a thorough bred champion race horse.

Thank you for being there. We are looking forward to being a part of the

Renault Owner Lovers Club.

—Mary Ann Henning Vitelleone, Family and Children, Maplewood Missouri

P.S.: We give our car a water bath everyday and dry her with two large bath towels. She is our very best friend, our heart and soul and the love of our lives.



Best of France and Italy 2008

By Marvin McFalls

Wow! Where to start? I guess we awoke around 6 AM. Jacques Lynn, Sharon Desplaines, and I packed up and Dene and Pat Barrett arrived around 6:30 AM. We moved down the street to Shin Yoshikawa house, where Brent Bartley, Jonathan Burnette, and Bob Baker were getting ready to go. Shin wasn't feeling well, so we said good-bye and were on the road by 7 AM. We were on our way to Jerry's Deli on Ventura Bl. We arrived a couple minutes after 8 AM, Chris Davidson and Mike Heather were waiting for us in the parking lot. A few minutes later Kurt Triffet pulled up so we headed in to eat. It wasn't long before Jim Miller and his friends arrived. The only regular not to make it was Joe Hernandez, we figured he must have been out of the country.



After a good breakfast and a lot of car talk, we headed over to Woodley Park. It had rained earlier that morning and the field was kind of a mess. Due to a big mud hole in our normal spot they moved us across the field near the registration tent. This separated us from the Citroens, Facel Vegas, Bugattis, and other exotic French models. At first I was disappointed, but it turned out to be a very good spot. We had some large trees for shade and a nice opening to set up our canopy and banner. We set up a couple of tables and spread out our club literature. We were ready for business.



Considering the bad weather we had a good turnout of cars. All told, we had four 4cvs, two R8s, one R10, Four R5s, (including a R5 Turbo, Lectric Leopard, Black Beauty, and an early European model) one Fuego and a Renault Sport Spider. With Joe a no show and Kurt having trouble with his brake switch we had no Caravelles, and for the third year in a row no Dauphines. Many people who came by the booth asked, "Where are the Dauphines?" I asked Jacques if he still sells Dauphine parts in Southern California, and he said yes, they are his most common model. So all you Dauphine owners out there; your presence is requested at next year's show.



During the day the booth was very busy, we actually ran out of applications. Luckily I had a few old ones that had already been filled out and I gave them out also. We had one new member sign up at the show. Shakib Alanoori had driven his nicely restored 1963 R8 over from Encino. It was also nice seeing Chris Davidson. For those who are newer to the club, he served as our President for most of

the Nineties and Edited the Newsletter for a while as well. Chris is looking for a AMC era Renault (Alliance, Encore, GTA, etc.), with an Automatic transmission, so let him know if you have one you are willing to part with. We also saw Milt Simon. While he doesn't currently own a Renault; hopefully he will get the bug again.

Around noon we had the unveiling of Sharon's nicely restored 4cv. While the car still didn't have all its chrome installed, and wasn't as clean and shiny as we would like due to the rain, we figured it was ready for the public. Jonathan did a wonderful job with the car. The upgrade to a 900cc engine made the car powerful enough to drive on the freeway, but it is still a bit unstable over 60 mph. The car was definitely an eye catcher, as Sharon was invited to bring her car to next years Desert Classic Concours d'Elegance. If that wasn't a big enough compliment, even Jay Leno told her it was a very nice car.

After lunch we had our crack panel of judges, that would be Jonathan, Brent, and Chris, select the winners of our car show. With the collection of cars on hand, I am glad I didn't have to decide. The award for Best Sport went to Jack Darwichian's Renault Sport Spider. Best Classic was awarded to Maurice Kleiman for his nicely restored 4cv. Not surprisingly, Best All Around was awarded to Sharon Desplaines for her 4cv.

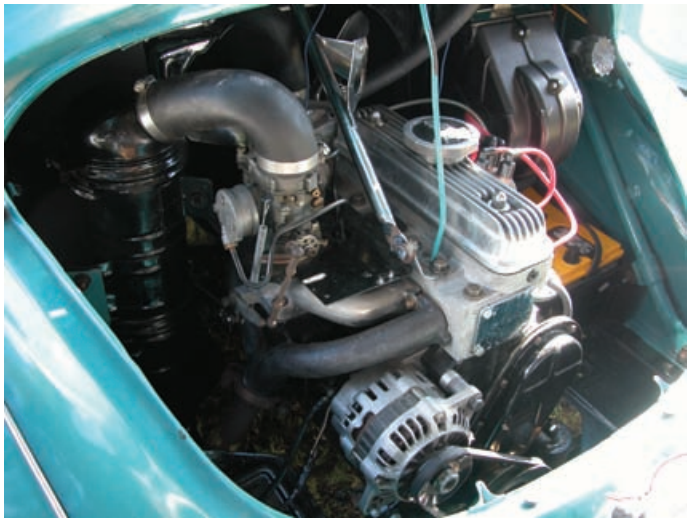
As usual, the show began to break up around 1 PM. During the day we saw a crew from Speed Channel's My Classic Car filming. As we began to pack up around 2 PM, Dennis Gage himself came over. He and his crew set up a shot, so look for some of our Renaults on Speed Channel.

By 2:30 PM we were on the road again. One of the bugs that still needs to be worked out with Sharon's car is the gas gauge, this came back to bite us as we ran out of gas in San Juan Capistrano. As Brent and I were somehow in the lead in the support vehicle, we had to bring back some gas. So we pulled off the freeway, filled up our gas can and made our way back to them. After a quick fill up, we were back on the road again. By the time we made it to San Clemente, the muffler fell off Sharon's car. Jonathan had them take it down to a shop to be welded prior to leaving for the show, but they welded it in the wrong place. The only thing that kept it from falling completely off the car was a small spring Jonathan had added to secure the dipstick. We decided to let the muffler cool off and have some dinner.

After eating we loaded the muffler in the Fuego and we were back on the road again. By 7 PM, we made it back to Sharon's house. It had been another great Best of France & Italy. If you can ever make it out to California in November, come and join us. The event is free to attend, nominal charge to show and there are a lot of marques represented. 🍷













Correction—"American Racer" Article

By Marvin McFalls

In the last issue of Renault News we featured a story titled "The American Renault Racer" about John Limberopoulos, who in 1967, began to race 1300cc Gordini 4CV's in the mini-stock half and third mile oval tracks and ended up winning a total of five California championships in 1967, 70, 71, 73 and 1974; the last two were NASCAR sanctioned series. This was an incredible accomplishment for both John and Renault.

This story was written by member Pat Minx and the photos she included were misplaced and were not included with the article. Here are the photos and again we are sorry for the mixup. Please continue to send in your stories and photos 🗨️



Love at First Sight: Berlineta Willys Interlagos

By Renan Uflacker

The Willys Interlagos entered the history of the Brazilian automotive industry, as the first sports car ever to be produced in the country. It was also very successful in the race tracks for most part of the 1960's, with the yellow and green cars of the Willys Racing Team. Pilots such as Emerson Fittipaldi, Wilson Fittipaldi Jr., José Carlos Pace, Luiz Pereira Bueno, Bird Clemente, all of national fame and some of international success in the Formula I circuit, all started competing seriously with the Berlineta Willys Interlagos. Bird Clemente was invincible with the Willys Interlagos, taking advantage of the larger slip angle at the rear, or oversteer, due to the disproportional weight distribution with the rear engine.



Business competition was fierce and "Volkswagen of Brasil," announced in the late 1959 their intention to bring and assemble the German produced body of the Karmann-Ghia on the Brazilian made shortened Beetle platform. The Karmann-Ghia was supposed to become the first sports car made in Brazil. At that time, Brazil had a fluorescent automotive industry already with a large percentage of components made locally, but mostly based on imported designs adapted to the local conditions. Volkswagen was not fast enough and in 1961, Willys-Overland of Brasil's (WOB) president, the American Max Pearce, arrived from Europe with a contract to produce locally under license, the French car Renault Alpine A108. The A108 was developed and built by the independent French carmaker Jean Rédélé in 1956, based on the Renault Dauphine platform, but with a special steel backbone type chassis. The Renault Dauphine cars had been produced in Brazil since 1959 by WOB and all the mechanical components were available. Those were times of bold decisions and fast entrepreneurial performances and by the end of 1962, 131 cars inspired in the A108 were produced. The car was called Berlineta Willys Interlagos, and officially presented at the III Brazilian Automotive Industry Show in São Paulo. The date: December, 1962.



When the Willys Interlagos was introduced, the automotive industry had already a long presence in Brazil. In 1919, the Ford Motor Company started a Brazilian operation and established an assembly line in Sao Paulo. A couple of years later, Kristian Orberg was sent from Argentina to expand the enterprise, and soon 25,000 Brazilian assembled Ford cars were produced every year. In 1925, GM also made a significant investment in Brazil and by 1927 it was assembling 25 new Chevrolets daily. The cars were imported as "completely knocked-down" (CKD) vehicles and assembled in Brazil. The

first locally designed vehicles were sold in 1932 by GM. It was a wooden bus, developed for public transportation. Following the interlude of World War II, production of both companies resumed in 1945. In 1948, GM manufactured the first Brazilian designed steel body bus. The 1950's were years of great expansion for the automotive industry operations in Brazil and new plants were built. At that time, a government executive group was created to attract foreign technology and investments to develop an indigenous automotive industry, targeting the production of vehicles with 96 percent of locally made parts in five years. Generous tax incentives and cheap real estate were offered in exchange for long-term commitments from the automakers. The incentive would include also a protected market for the automakers similar to a cartel. Several American and European car manufacturers jumped on the bandwagon looking into the future revenues of a growing protected market. In addition to Willys Overland, since 1953 part of Kaiser Motors assembling American and French products, other companies (French Simca, the American automakers Ford and GM, the German Volkswagen and Mercedes Benz [trucks only]) invested in the project.. A couple of national industries were incorporated to produce European cars under license, DKW-Vemag and the state owned Fabrica Nacional de Motores, known as FNM, assembling Alfa Romeo products such as the Alfa Romeo Berlina 2000 under the name JK (after the Brazilian president Juscelino Kubitschek).

In 1953, following a merging between two declining car manufacturers in the United States, Kaiser-Willys Corporation was created,. That same year, the new company decided to make a move to Argentina (Industria Kaiser Argentina, IKA) and Brazil. It started to assemble the CKD Jeep and the Willys utility wagon under the name Willys-Overland do Brasil. In 1958, to enjoy the government incentives, the company very competently decided to expand and in 1960 started to produce locally the obsolete Aero-Willys sedan. The model 1955, which eventually underwent significant improvements and updates over a period of several years, ended its miraculous life span in 1971. The local market demanded smaller and more economic cars and a deal was struck to build the Renault Dauphine under license, which started in 1959. At the time the French company had a small equity in WOB and IKA, which facilitated the deal.

Following the licensing contract for Jean R d l 's Alpine in 1961, WOB moved fast and improvised the production of the Brazilian Alpine A108 in a warehouse in the Jurubatuba neighborhood, close to the Interlagos Racing Track (hence the name Willys Interlagos, by suggestion of the automotive journalist Mario Salles). The track is now known as Aut dromo Jos  Carlos Pace, in S o Paulo. The car components were initially imported and rapidly reproduced locally. The body was molded in polyester reinforced with glass-fiber, obviating the use of the heavy stamping machines. The chassis was very simple, with a strong round tubular steel backbone connecting the front and rear axles. This provided mechanical strength for connection of the drive train, engine and suspension. The car was developed around the Renault

Dauphine's components. The engine was located behind the rear axle, with rear-wheel drive. The engine and drive train were bolted to a square frame attached at the rear end of the backbone chassis. The chassis was designed by R d l  and his cousin Roger Prieur. They decided to tie the front and rear structures together with a simple high-strength tube without significantly increasing the weight but providing stiffness. The monocoque body was built on the steel backbone chassis with the crossmember at the front to support the front suspension and the rear engine square frame, all sandwiched by the glass-fibre. Technology similar to the one used in Chapman's Lotus Esprit, Elan Mk II, and more recently the TVR. The combination of the glass-fiber body with the backbone chassis provided lightweight and rigidity to the berlineta and as a result the car weighed only 535 kg (1177 lbs). The cabriolet and coupe weighed around 570 kg due to necessary reinforcements.

The car was offered in three versions of body works: Coupe, Berlineta and cabriolet. The cabriolet was originally designed by Giovanni Michelotti, commissioned by Alpine. However, the berlineta version which was much more successful, was R d l 's own creation. Due to lack of resources to pay the designer, he and a small group developed the more stylish closed version introducing a hard top and the fast back shape characteristic of the car. It was fitted with the Dauphine power train, later improved on by Am d  Gordini, introducing the aluminum cylinder head. The Brazilian Berlineta had an 845 cc Gordini engine with 40 HP output, with maximum speed of 130 km/h. A 904 cc and a 998 cc engine version were available with special cam shafts, double carburetors and 10.5:1 compression ratio, producing 70 HP at 6,500 rpm, and reaching 166 km/h. In 1966, the last year, the company limited the production of the car to the berlineta version with a 1093 (998 cc) engine producing 42 HP. The engine was cast iron with independent cylinder liners. The cylinder head was in aluminum alloy with push rods and rocking arms. The valve cover was in aluminum alloy with fins for cooling, but only available in the berlineta version. The steel oil pan would carry 2.5 L of oil but there was an optional aluminum oil pan, able to load 4.0 L of oil. The gearbox was made in aluminum alloy and had four gears with synchromesh on 2nd, 3rd and 4th gears, positioned ahead of the engine with the differential in between.

The radiator was located ahead of the engine surrounded by a shroud of metal and cardboard funneling the air through the radiator to improve cooling. There were two side air-inlets behind the car doors and a large chromed grill in the rear end of the car for ventilation and cooling of the engine. Overheating was a constant in the life of the Willys Interlagos' drivers and a number of cars eventually got an after market electric fan fit to the radiator to improve cooling. The frontal radiator solution was eventually abandoned by R d l , in the evolution of the Alpine A108, with the creation of the A110 in 1962. In the Alpine A110 and subsequent versions, the radiator was positioned behind the engine for better cooling as it was updated with the R8 and other power trains. The A110,

with different versions of Renault engines, achieved fame as a victorious rally car in Europe during the late 1960's and 1970's. The Alpine A110 was also produced under license in Mexico, Bulgaria, and most successfully in Spain.

The rear axle of the Willys Interlagos was a swing axle suspension, similar to the early Porsche 356 and Mercedes 300SL Gullwing. The rear suspension, in addition to the spring coils and shock absorber had a pneumatic rubber cushioning (Aerostable system) attached to the chassis to minimize possible impact of the swing axle into the chassis structure. The rear axle was also attached to the chassis by two longitudinal arms carried on rubber supports, designed to transmit the direct stresses along the axis of the vehicle. The swing axle was limited in excursion by rebound straps, one on each side. The front suspension of the Interlagos was independent double wishbone with a stabilizer bar. Brakes were hydraulic self-centering drum brakes in the four wheels with two brake shoes in each wheel.

The glass-fiber body of the car had two doors, was reasonably well finished, and could be purchased in the colors red, gray, white, metallic blue, maroon, and silver. The rear window was made in light clear Plexiglas material instead of glass. The interior was finished in leather, in the colors black or red, and had only two seats. The dashboard was in oak and leather, the steering wheel was Nardi look-alike and the instruments were large but simple. There was space for a small luggage behind the seats, in the trunk upfront where the spare tire was located, shared space with the small 12 V battery. The tires supplied with the car were Pirelli Cinturato 145-15, radial type.

At the end of 1966 the company decided to stop the production of the Willys Interlagos, after five years of intense activities, racing and advertisement. The total estimated production of the Willys Interlagos in 1962 was 131 cars. In 1963, 153 cars were produced. In 1964 approximately 203 cars were produced, and some cosmetic changes in the head lights, front fenders, and in the interior design were introduced. 1965 was the last production year for the coupe and convertible versions, a total of 149 units were sold. A number of cosmetic improvements were introduced in the dashboard, gauges, seats, in the oak wood interior finishing, locking latch for the engine hood, and other minor details. 1966 was the last year of Interlagos production, and 108 berlineta units were sold with only one engine option. Additional minor cosmetic improvements were offered and additional colors were available, including beige, cooper, gold, and a dark red metallic (maroon).

Willys-Overland do Brasil, with the product line broadened by the license-built Renaults, dominated the Brazilian car market up to 1962. The introduction of the sporty Interla-

gos in 1962 with an intensive racing campaign was one last attempt to keep the lead in this South American market. However, the undercapitalization of the American headquarters precluded adequate retooling and further adventures. In 1967, Henry Kaiser's son Edgar and his Brazilian partners sold the whole operation to Ford Motor Company for US\$40 million, getting out of the automotive industry in Brazil with some profit.

Ford launched the Galaxie 500 sedan in 1967, based on the 1966 American model, kept the Jeep (under the Ford brand), the modified and updated Aero-Willys sedan and the Willys utility wagon line under the name Ford Rural. They eliminated almost all the residues of the Renault product line except for the very successful locally designed Renault R12-derived car called Corcel, with a 1300 cc engine introduced in 1968.

Owner's Story:

The Willys Interlagos is an icon among the sports and exotic cars of the 1960's in France and in Brazil. Only a handful of Renault Alpine A108s, were produced in France and approximately 744 cars were manufactured and sold in Brazil. It is believed that only 20% of the original cars are still in circulation or in hands of car collectors. Recently, a number of cars were exported to France, due to growing interest in the model. I drove a friend's 1964 Berlineta Willys Interlagos for the first time when I was 16 years old and could never forget that car. The car was attractive, small, light, aerodynamic, and was very fast for the size and power of the engine. A low center of gravity allowed fast cornering, despite the rear wheel drive/rear engine combination and the result-

ing excessive oversteer. The ground clearance was 14 cm (5.5 inches) and the total height was only 116 cm (3.76 feet). At that time I could not afford one, and of course my father would not buy one for me. The car progressively faded from the competitions and from the public view in the 1970's and 1980's, being preserved only by a few car collectors and destroyed by backyard mechanics which installed Volkswagen drive train in a number of the remaining cars. Fortunately, in the 1990's the appreciation for old and exotic cars in Brazil increased and a number of Interlagos were restored to original or close to original condition using some of the still available Dauphine and Gordini parts, and the prices began to

increase. In 2003 I approached a known collector and restorer of Interlagos in Brazil, interested to buy a yellow convertible, but a deal was not possible. Finally in 2005 I negotiated the purchase of a 1966 Berlineta Willys Interlagos undergoing restoration which was finished in the fall of 2006. The car was originally bought in Rio de Janeiro in 1966 by a physician and has had at least four known owners. In 2007, the vehicle was imported to Charleston, SC where I live and drive the car. It is supposed to be the only Willys Interlagos in the United States. 🟡



Manoir de l'Automobile – Loheac, France Museum Visit

By John Waterhouse

Loheac is a small town in Normandy, not far from Caen, Bayeux and the World War II invasion beaches. None of us would have heard of it but for a little known but excellent car museum, with an associated racing circuit. The museum has many fascinating exhibits (for example, where would the rear-engined enthusiasts go to see Tatra 603 and 613 models?). For Renault folk it is noteworthy for a wonderful selection of Alpine-Renaults, from the A106 to the A310, with a number of the Le Mans cars that competed for class victories (such as Index of Thermal Efficiency). The Alpine Renault that won Le Mans outright is not represented (but Renault Histoire let it out for exercise from time to time).

Luckily, a French car friend in Perth used to have a very original Alpine A110, and he visited Loheac some years ago, returning home to Western Australia weak at the knees! His stories of the museum were duly filed, awaiting an opportunity for the Waterhouses to visit when (and if) we next visited France.

Recently we had a holiday in Europe, to see family in Hungary and friends in France, to visit a couple of coal mines and, of course, to see various other places we had always wanted to visit. Loheac is near Carelles, a Normandy village, where we were staying with a Citroen friend from England so that we could go together to the Le Mans 24-hour race. What a holiday! We French car folk end up with contacts in many places if we are lucky!

We had driven from Switzerland to Normandy in a long 900 km day and arrived late (9 pm), had an even later dinner followed by much catch-up talking. The following day we drove to Loheac, arriving 10 minutes before the museum closed for lunch. Ah, France! We had forgotten! We bought the museum catalogues and left for an hour, easily finding a lovely little restaurant for lunch. Again, France! The meal was not helped by me leaving my VISA card somewhere unknown, and it turned up when two stressed Waterhouses returned to the museum and found it sitting on the front counter, where I had left it when buying that catalogue! Much relief.

The museum is divided into many parts, with everything from models, reproduced old workshops, horse-drawn carriages to Formula 1 cars and memorabilia. The main part of the collection is an amazingly diverse range of saloons and sports cars, including some important rally cars (including some 1980s World Championship models such as Audi Quattro and Peugeot 205). The entrance is through a small doorway through which two 1920s alligator-bonnet Type NN Renaults are the first cars in view. A really evocative start to a memorable tour.

Being a rear-engined Renault person, the highlights



Tantalising sign – promise of things to come



Entrance view to Manoir de l'Automobile, Loheac



Brissonneau et Lotz 4CV of 1957

were, without question, the amazing collection of Alpines, the 4CV special coupés (Autobleu and Brissonneau et Lotz) and the group of R8 Gordinis. There would be few places in the world which has a collection ranging from the A106 coupé, through A108 and A110 to the later A310 and a selection of Le Mans cars.

The museum has a diverse and fascinating range of classic cars of interest to everyone with a knowledge of automobiles. The selection includes such rare machines as Tattras, rear-engined Simcas, all the usual suspects such as Ferraris, Astons, Lamborghinis and many, many others.

The room of models and dioramas is quite remarkable, the 1926 40CV shown below typical of a diverse range of quite superbly executed scenes from famous events, or evocative examples of particular situations.

How to summarise? If anyone reading this manages to get to France, try to travel to Normandy, see the D-day beaches, the Bayeux Tapestry and, near Rennes, the little village of Loheac and its incomparable car collection. We did, and it is worth the effort. 🇫🇷



Model of 1926 Monthléry Renault 40CV– 173.5 km/h average for 24 hours!



1906 French Grand Prix diorama



Autobleu 4CV coupé of 1955



A110 chassis



R8 Gordini trio



A106 to A108 range



R5 turbo of 1980



Alpine A110 line-up



Alpine A106 – 1957



Alpine A210 Le Mans 1966



R12 Gordini 1971

Memories of the R5 Turbo

By Frederick S. Graves



I recently read the article about the R5 Turbo in the June issue of "Sports and Exotic Car" magazine. It really brought back some neat memories.

Back in the 80's, I remember having some French neighbors in our neighborhood. The woman was very friendly and was quite attractive. The little goofy kid-hey, I was goofy too – his name was Fabrice. The man's name I forgot, but I definitely remember the two cars he had in his garage. He had an original Porsche 911 Turbo 3.3 and a Renault R5 Turbo. Often I would visit them just to look at the two cars.

Even before the French neighbors had moved in, I was familiar with European cars. I was fortunate to have relatives in Europe, so we traveled often for the summer to Germany and Austria. Ever since I can remember, Renault caught my attention. I became a big fan of Renault cars and even trucks even when most people couldn't understand especially when compared to German cars. Of course, German cars were better engineered and better built, but French cars had a certain character.

In the late 1970's, I became a fan of Renault's F1 cars and their daring experiment with turbo engines. I remained a Renault motor sports fan for a long time. I remember attending some F1 races in Germany back in the early 80's. I would buy Renault patches from the souvenir stands. Today, the European Renault Formula is one of my favorite racing series.

Also, while in Germany, I would visit the local Renault dealership to look at the new cars and collect the brochures. Even today, I still have brochures from the R5 Turbo and A310. My grandfather had a Renault 30TS. Rest of the family picked on him, telling him that for the same money he paid for the big luxury Renault with the V6 the same basic engine as in the A310-he could have bought a Mercedes. But he kept his Renault and was proud of it, a reward after years

of long hard work. It was a nice car and I remember it well.

During our usual summer vacations in Germany, I always enjoyed looking at all the different cars. It didn't matter if they were German, Italian or French, basic or exotic; all the cars were interesting to me.

One day, while on a shopping tour with my parents in downtown Frankfurt, I waited on the street while the rest of my family was inside a boutique. I notice a new R5 Turbo parked in front of one of the many large banks. Eventually an attractive businesswoman came out of the bank and just like that asked me if I liked her car and if I wanted a ride. So, without even bothering to ask my parent's permission, I accepted her offer and she took me for a ride around the block. We returned before my parents had finished their shopping and when they finally came out of the store, they were no wiser that I had a ride in a stranger's car. But of course, it wasn't just "a car". It was a R5 Turbo. Even today, I believe my parents still don't know that I took that ride.

I've always desired an A310. I remember seeing a few grey market A310's in Houston during the 80's. I wonder how many are available in the U.S. Eventually I might return to Europe to live, and if I settle in France it will be a must that I have an A310 in the barn. If not, an all original R4 will do just fine as well.

En vous remerciant d'avance, je vous prie d'agreer, Mesdames, Messieurs, mes salutations les meilleures.

P.S. I don't understand how the owner of the R5 Turbo featured in "Sports and Exotic Car", describes the basic R5 as ugly. Even when compared with its European contemporaries, the performance oriented R5 Alpine was quite a nice looking car. It never was ugly. 🍷

Alberto Gironella's Collection

By Marvin McFalls

Over the years Francisco has sent me thousands of photos from Renault and Alpine events he attended, and every now and again I would see an interesting car. I would ask him who the owner is, and the answer more often than not was Alberto Gironella. So over the years I became more and more familiar with his collection. When he purchased the Etoile Filante (or Shooting Star), the famous Renault land speed record race car, I was able to assist him in obtaining some literature as well as blue print of the car. Once the word started to spread about Alberto's crown jewel, everywhere I travelled around the world meeting Renault enthusiasts would ask me about the mysterious Renault collector in Mexico.

When finally we began making plans to travel to Mexico City, my first request was an invitation to Alberto's garage. Luckily for us he was available, and graciously invited us to stop in Friday evening before Huixquilucan. So off we went with making our way to Santa Fe, the trendy new part of Mexico City. As we were driving down the freeway we were passed by another Renault Scenic just like the one we were riding in, it even had the same Alpine club decal on the rear hatch. Francisco said there were only three Scenics in Mexico City that had an Alpine club logo. So we decided to speed up and see who was driving. This was not possible, as the driver was driving at such a high rate of speed that we could hardly keep them in sight, let alone catch them.

As we exited the freeway, Francisco navigated us through several miles of city streets until we finally reached Alberto's garage. Without Francisco's directions we could never have found the place. If somehow we had found the street, we would have driven right by as there weren't any signs and like many places we visited in Mexico City it was surrounded by residences and small shops. As soon as Alberto met us at the door we knew that we had arrived. After brief introductions, we were like kids in a candy factory, wondering what to look at first. The first two cars we encountered were Clios. But as with all of Alberto's cars, they were not ordinary Clios. First was his daily driver Clio Renault Sport, and the other was a Clio V6. Both cars were French Racing blue and they seemed to fit right in with the blue R8 Gordini, three A110s, and the Shooting Star.

If French Racing Blue isn't your color, there are some other hues in Alberto's Collection. Besides the white R5 Turbo or the red R5 Alpine, there was the blue, white and red A110 Tour de Corse that he brought to Huixquilucan. He also has A110s in grey, white, and yellow, as well as another R5 turbo in black. If the cars weren't enough, he also showed us an Alpine twin cam race engine that he had, along with several five speed gearboxes. Once we were finally able to quit drooling he invited us up stairs where he had one of most extensive collection of Renault literature, videos, and miniatures.



As we reached the top of the loft several of Alberto's friends were waiting for our arrival. We were introduced to Alfonso Martinez, a retired airline pilot, Jose Miguel Diaz Goñi whose R5 Turbo II and white A110 were also in Alberto's shop, as well as Mario Carranza and Christian Chabre. As we all became acquainted, Alberto's wife Monica and his two children joined us. As we soon discovered it was Monica who had flown past us on the highway in the Scenic. After picking on Monica and her lead foot we continued to socialize and the tequila flowed. Before we knew it, it was after 10PM, and we still hadn't checked into our hotel. So we unfortunately had to break up the party. We bid our new friends good night and look forward to seeing them at the show.

If Alberto's collection wasn't impressive enough, he has recently added another jewel. For all of you Renault F1 fans out there you will enjoy the 2007 R25 race chassis. It is one of the 8 chassis made and after racing it was used as show car, so it has no electronics or engine. As you can see in the photos it seems right at home with all of Alberto's other Renaults. I am sure the Alpine Club will schedule an unveiling for Alberto's latest addition very soon. 🍷







Summer Event Update

By Marvin McFalls

We had several exciting regional events scheduled for this summer. I recently received some photos from club members Phil Ross and Ken Gladyszewski from the 2008 Ypsilanti Orphan Car Show. They reported large numbers of Plymouths and DeSotos at the show, almost turning the event into a Mopar meet. But the two Renophiles still had a good time and hope more members will turn out for next year's meet. Please send in photos from meets you attended this summer.

"Hi Marvin, We took these pictures just for you- I must have forgotten to send them! Now that we have a contact at PVGP, I'll pursue it with Joe and see what is involved- the key is that if the club springs for a tent- it would be nice if there were more club members there than just you and me! Do you have any Email addresses of any members in western PA, eastern OH, northern KY that I could contact?- I don't think it's too late to let anyone know about the event this year- maybe in preparation for next year with some actual vehicles. I think the key is to have members attend first and they will see how neat it is! Just a refresher- this event consists of two parts- a road race on a closed course around a beautiful golf course and a car show on the golf course itself with a separate section for domestic and foreign cars. There are FREE shuttle buses taking people among the various areas and watching the road race from various vantage points is also fun. Some of these participants have old vintage race cars and live for the chance to take them out once a year. They have various classes for the cars according to displacement but some classes are devoted to specific brands such as old MG's and Mini Coopers- it is not uncommon to see Abarths and Morgans. Too bad that I did not think of this earlier but I could write a review of the race or just "steal" some copy from their website and have it published in the newsletter next year before the event- the same goes for The Orphan Car Show in Ypsilanti. I have not decided for sure about coming down in Oct. but would really like too especially since I had a bit of input setting it up in the first place! Regards, Ken"



Sheep in Wolf's Clothing
1958 Renault Floride
 Precision Die-Cast Replica

Includes Both Boot and Soft Top

Features Opening Hood, Trunk and Doors

1:18 Scale
 9" Long

Trunk Located Engine is Wired and Plumb

Renault Can be Displayed with Top Up or Down

Interior Includes Working Steering System and Carpeting

Long, Colorful History
 Few car makers have as interesting a history as France's Renault. First started in 1898 by 21-yr. old Louis Renault, it grew to be France's largest automaker. During WWII, Louis Renault was given the impossible choice by the Germans of either collaboration or destruction of his company. Because he chose collaboration the Allies destroyed his factories and he was imprisoned for treason. Charles DeGaulle nationalized the company in 1945.

France's Answer to the Karmann Ghia
 In the mid-1950's, Renault Head Pierre Dryfus toured the U.S. to see about increasing sales here. What he found was a great demand for an inexpensive small convertible. VW's Karmann Ghia was doing very well and Renault wanted a share of this market. Using a design collaboration between Dryfus' friend Virgil Exner Jr. and the Italian design company Ghia, the Floride was born. Shown here first at the 1959 NY Auto Show, 1300 were ordered. Unfortunately the Floride used the Dauphine's slow 35 horsepower engine, which despite the 85 mph. top end still earned the nickname of a "Sheep in Wolf's Clothing".

CALL TOLL FREE
1-888-215-6468
 Monday-Friday, 9am-8pm, Eastern Time

One 1958 Renault Floride only \$79.98
 1958 Renault Floride—Item #185175

67

This ad was sent in recently by a member. I ordered one of these - it's a very high-quality Norev -detail is beautiful - Kurt Triffet

Return of Jesse's Corner: Chopped Alliance Revisited

By Jesse Patton

Back in the August, 1997 issue of the Renault News, I did a story on a chap named Fausto Fabbro. The Alliance and Encore had been kicking around some fourteen years and Fausto ran a repair business catering strictly to the upkeep of these vehicles. Brown's Jeep-Eagle in Shirley, New York would regularly turn over all of their Renault auto repairs to this Francophile. When I arrived at Fausto's shop back in 1997, it was hard from me to take in all the different makes of Renaults (more than thirty) that sat upon little more than one acre of property. I was in Heaven.

The inside of Fausto's shop revealed even more. All kinds of motors, interiors, transmissions, mechanical parts and glass were there. Sadly, in a few months time this was all to disappear. Everything (just about) was to be hauled away to the wreckers on the orders of the town of Brookhaven, NY. Fausto had been in this line of work for many years. He started out as a Service Manager and later a General Manager, at a Fiat dealership. For close to ten years he had specialized in Renaults and was very successful at it like Sam Stuckey in Knoxville, TN.

At on point in our conversation, Fausto led me to the corner of his shop to show me a particular Alliance Convertible which he referred to as the axed Alliance, or "Chopped Alliance." It turned out some fellow down the street from Fausto owned this convertible but was entirely ignorant of its mechanical requirements. Try as he might he could not time the vehicle and in a rage he took an axe to his lovely ragtop chopping away at the body and glass. After he regained his senses he arrived at Fausto's to tell him he was giving the car to him. After ascertaining the damage and needs of this poor ragtop one of Fausto's mechanics rebuilt the motor, transmission and window motors, then they were informed the buisness was to be vacated.

Fast forward to August 2008, and I chance to meet up with Mr. Fabbro once again at a Kiwanis club charity car show. He informed me that he still has the Chopped Alliance. Several weeks later, I spoke to him on the phone. He is moving to West Palm Beach, Florida and he wants to give me the victim. I arrived at his place in Mastic, NY and found the property gate opened and there before me was the Alliance and not much changed from the day I saw it's mangled sheet metal back in '97. Well this old girl had been sitting more than decade, no back seat, timing cover off as well as the air cleaner with a myriad of other parts in the trunk. The chop marks were still there, Fausto had put off repairing the body, as he never found the time, due to his starting a restaurant when he lost his shop.

Never look a gift horse in the mouth. I brought the car back and have it now stored away, but it won't be here long. It is going up to Kunkletown, PA to Johnny Shuler's

place to be parted out by him. Unfortunately, the Alliance sat too long, but it will make a fine donor and should yield many valuable parts. So ends this tale. Fausto my friend, I wish you and you wonderful wife all the good fortune and luck that can be had down there in Sunny Florida - Bon Voyage. 🍷



Renault F1 News

By Marvin McFalls

While the return of Fernando Alonso hasn't worked out as many had hoped, We have seen some overall improvement in the car. Especially when it comes to qualifying, where Alonso's skill has placed him well ahead of his younger teammate, Nelson Piquet Jr. Coming into the latest event, Renault found itself well down in the Constructor's Standings. With former World Champion Fernando Alonso only being able to muster 13 points and teammate Piquet with only two points gained in France at Renault's home Grand Prix.

Prior to the French Grand Prix, Piquet was told that his job was now on the line and if he didn't improve his performance he would probably be replaced. This was exactly what the young Brazilian needed as his performance has improved, scoring points and beating teammate Fernando Alonso for the first time. He then followed it up with a decent performance in the rain in England before beaching his car in the gravels late in the event.

Coming to Germany, it looked to be business as usual for Renault at the Hockenheimring. Fernando Alonso qualified fifth ahead of one of the Ferraris, while Piquet was a disappointing 17th, claiming he had been held up by several back markers. As the race began, Alonso was in a battle with Jarno Trulli in the Toyota, and Kimi Raikkonen's Ferrari. Meanwhile Pole sitter Lewis Hamilton drove away from the rest of field. Back in the back Nelson Piquet was cruising around, not making much progress.

As all the cars made their first pit stops, it became clear that only Piquet was on a one-stop strategy. However it didn't seem that it was that effective as he had only worked his way up to twelfth place. However all this changed when Piquet headed in for his only stop. As the Renault mechanics were servicing his car, Timo Glock in the second Toyota had his suspension fail, causing the track to be covered with debris from his crash.

This brought out the safety car, giving young Piquet time to race around to catch the rest of the field behind the safety car. When the leaders pitted, Piquet found himself in third position, with leader Lewis Hamilton and Nick Heidfeld in the BMW just ahead. However, unlike the cars ahead of Piquet, he had enough fuel to reach the conclusion of the race. As the old saying goes, some time it pays to be in the right place at the right time, for Piquet with his racing future in F1 on the line this safety car couldn't have come at a better time.

As the laps began to wind down first Hamilton pitted and then Heidfeld, and for the first time in his career, Nelson Piquet Junior was leading a Grand Prix. On top of this he was running his fastest times of the day. Could Renault's nearly two-year drought from the winner's circle come to an end?

After Hamilton pitted, he rejoined the race in fifth position behind his teammate and former Renault driver, Heikki Kovalainen. Unfortunately for Piquet, the slower Kovalainen didn't



hold up Hamilton for long. The next challenge for Hamilton was Felipe Massa in the second Ferrari. He gave Hamilton all he could handle but he was no match for the faster McLaren, as he forced the Ferrari off the preferred driving line. With Heidfeld making his final stop, now Piquet was all that stood between Hamilton and victory.

At this point it would be much more dramatic if I told you the rookie Renault driver drove brilliantly holding off the much quicker Mercedes. In reality, he wasn't much of a challenge and Hamilton drove right by on his way to another victory, increasing his lead in the Driver's standings. But for Piquet, who started the day wondering if he would have a job by the time they reached the next Grand Prix in Hungary, a second place finish was as good as win. For the Renault team a Podium finish was exactly what the doctor ordered. Moving the team in striking distance of Toyota and their customers at Red Bull Renault in the Constructor's Standings.

The next stop on the circuit was Hungary, and Renault (and especially Piquet) wanted to expand on their success in Germany. In qualifying, Alonso was seventh while Piquet was a much-improved 10th. Up front it was Lewis Hamilton and the surprising Heikki Kovalainen in the McLarens followed by Felipe Massa in the Ferrari. Starting fifth was Timo Glock in the Toyota. Being that Renault is competing directly with Toyota for fourth place in the Constructor's Standings Renault hoped that the young German driver wouldn't be able to hold off their challenge.

As the race began Felipe Massa made an incredible start, passing both of the McLarens. It became quite clear that Massa's Ferrari was the head of the class. Meanwhile, his teammate Kimi Raikkonen found himself behind Fernando Alonso and no matter what he tried he wasn't able to pass the slower Renault on the tight Hungarian Circuit. While he was battling Raikkonen, Glock's Toyota was able to pull away and a build a lead on the Renault.

Following the first round of pit stops, Raikkonen was finally able to clear Alonso, but there was trouble up ahead for Lewis Hamilton. He cut a tire and had to carefully nurse his car back around to the pits. By the time he rejoined the field, he was well down in the standings and scoring anything more than a point or two didn't look possible. Massa was out for a Sunday drive, nearly a minute ahead of Kovalainen the second McLaren.

Meanwhile, Glock remained in front of Raikkonen and Alonso in third position hoping for his first career podium.

After the final pit stops Hamilton had moved into Sixth position between Fernando Alonso and the charging Nelson Piquet. Everything would change with only three laps left when Felipe Massa, who was cruising to an easy victory and a lead in the Driver's standings, when his motor unexpectedly expired. It was a devastating result for the young Brazilian that may ultimately cost him the championship.

However, one man's loss is another man's gain. In this case, many men. First was Hekki Kovalainen with his first career win, next Tim Glock with his first career podium. Kimi Raikkonen finished third while disappointing, with the kind of day he had stuck in traffic he had to have pleased. Finally Lewis Hamilton after the tire problems, he had to be pleased with a fifth place finish.

Meanwhile it was another good result for Renault with Alonso placing fourth and Piquet in sixth. Unfortunately, Toyota did gain a couple points with second and seventh place finishes, but it looks to be the end of the fight for Red Bull Renault.

The next event was the European Grand Prix, one I am sure the team would like to forget. This event was in Valencia, Spain where Fernando Alonso looked to put on a good show for the home crowd. All hopes were dashed when Alonso was crashed from behind at the start of the race. Nelson Piquet started the day fifteenth and by the days end the best result he could muster was eleventh. Meanwhile, Jarno Trulli and Timo Glock finished fifth and seventh respectively for Toyota stretching their lead to ten points over Renault, and Felipe Massa won for Ferrari making the Constructors and Drivers standings even tighter.

Renault fortunes improved at Spa in the Belgian Grand Prix. Fernando Alonso brought his Renault home in fourth position. It was an interesting day for Lewis Hamilton in the McLaren, as he came from behind in dramatic fashion to pass Kimi Raikkonen in the Ferrari to win the race, only to be penalized 25 seconds for cutting a corner when he passed Raikkonen and having to settle for a third place finish. As for Renault chief rival Toyota, it was a bad day as the best they were able to do was a 9th place finish just out of the points. Their lead was sliced in half to five points.

Out of nowhere the second Red Bull team known as Toro Rosso with their Ferrari powered chassis have entered the mix. Finishing fifth and seventh Sebastian Vettel and his teammate Sebastien Bourdais are making a late run to get in the mix with Toyota and Renault.

Following their success at Spa and with a little help from the weather, Sebastian Vettel shook up the racing world, winning the pole for the Italian Grand Prix at Monza. At only twenty-one years of age this made him the youngest driver to ever win a pole replacing Fernando Alonso. On race day the bad weather persisted and Vettel was more than happy to start the race

on full wet tires. With a clear track ahead of him he was able to build a significant lead on the rest of the field who had to deal with all the spray from other competitors' tires. Fernando Alonso was also able to use the bad weather to his advantage, moving up from his eighth starting position. Meanwhile, both Ferraris and Lewis Hamilton's McLaren tried to work their way thru traffic. As the race neared its completion, the track began to dry Vettel and Alonso as well as the two BMW drivers Kubica and Heidfeld switched to intermediate tires. This would work out well as Vettel would become the youngest winner, again replacing Alonso, but for Alonso it was second consecutive fourth place finish.

For Toyota it was another disappointing day as they went with full wets on their second stop and finished out of the points again. With five more point from Alonso, Renault and Toyota were tied with 41 points each going into the first ever night race in Singapore. The upstart Toro Rosso team moved passed Red Bull Renault. With 27 points they still have a chance in the fourth place battle.

Renault started out Friday practice well with Fernando Alonso finishing first on the time sheets ahead of McLaren and Ferrari. For the first time in two years the Renault car seems to be the best on the Bridgestone tires provided for the race. He followed Friday practice with another fast Saturday morning session, but it turned sour in Qualifying. As Fernando went out for Q2 his car stalled on the course due to a fuel problem. He would be forced to start 15th. Unfortunately Piquet was right behind him in 16th. What looked like Renault's best chance to win a race had slipped away.

As the race began Alonso was able to move up to twelveth position, but Jarno Trulli was ahead on the circuit and it appeared he was on a one stop strategy as his car was about two seconds slower than everyone else. With Trulli holding him up, Alonso decided to short pit, as it turned out this was a terrific decision. Shortly after his pit, teammate Nelson Piquet had a horrible crash, which brought out the safety car. As Alonso had already pitted he was able to pass the leaders as they entered the pits. After two more penalties for pitting with the pit lane closed Alonso moved in the lead of the race.

Once Alonso took the lead of the race he couldn't be caught. As the laps began to tick off, it became apparent the drought was about to end. It had been nearly two years since the last Renault victory in China 2006, as well as Alonso's first win since Monza last season. When the checkered flag finally came, the celebration was on.

While overall it quite disappointing that a battle for fourth is the best the two time champs can muster, but it is a far improvement from what we have seen much of the last two seasons from a competitive standpoint. Currently Renault leads Toyota by five points. Renault has only three races remaining with upcoming races in Japan, China, and Brazil. If Renault can hold on fourth place, Alonso will return to Renault next season. Hopefully this will lead to a great 2009 season. 🍀



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