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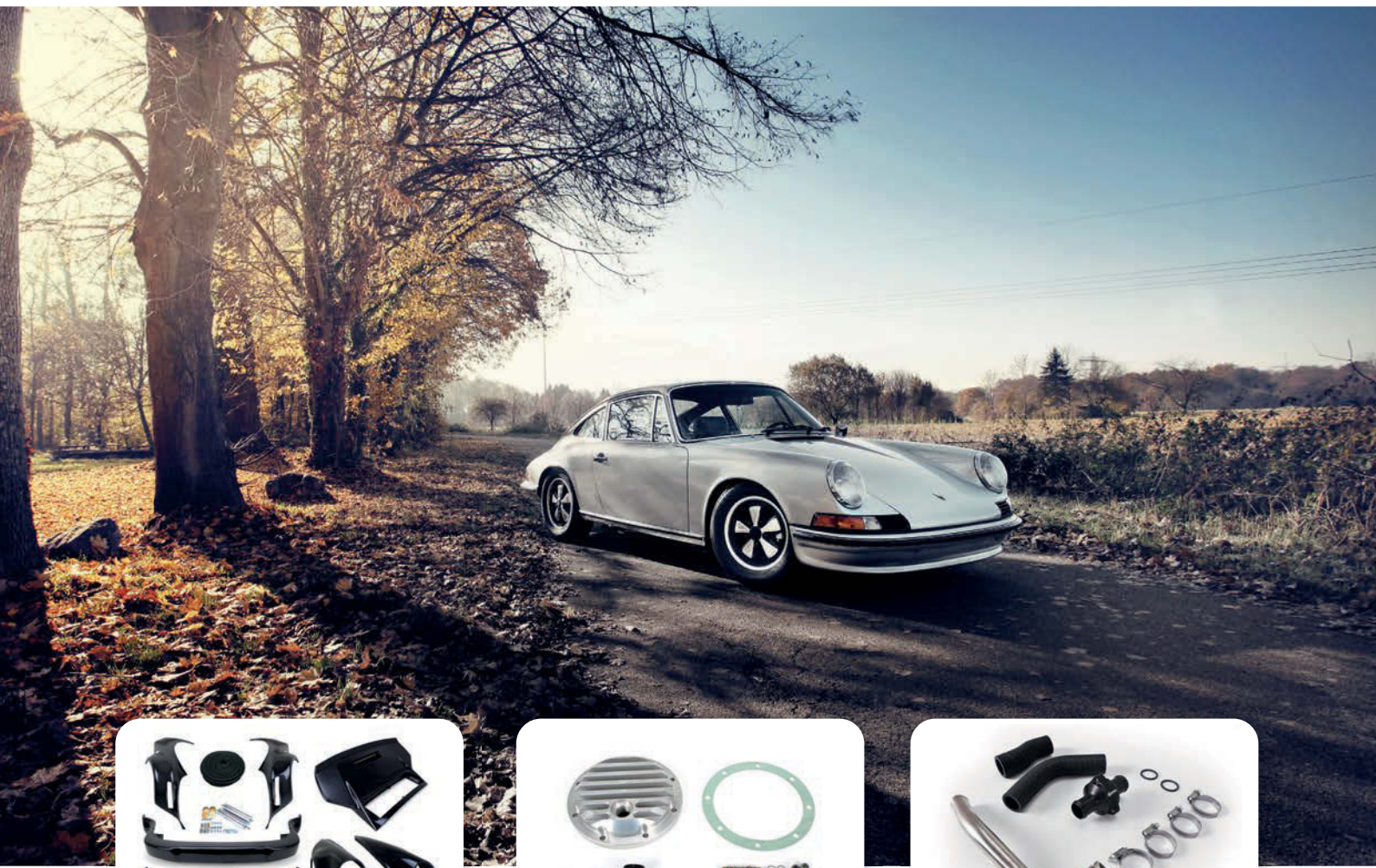


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Classic PORSCHE

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CULT OF PERSONALITY



One of the many things making the classic Porsche scene so attractive is the rich variety of cars included within. From standard to massively modified, there's an air-cooled Stuttgart-crested car to suit every automotive taste.

This issue of *Classic Porsche* features a fantastic selection of Zuffenhausen machines in various states of tune, from a completely standard 356 Pre-A (quite possibly the oldest surviving right-hand drive example of its kind) through to a highly personalised 911 SC. Along the way, we sample a 911 R tribute, a 356 B project and a fantastic pair of 912s, one of which has been fully restored, the other a case of 'no fuss, OEM-plus'. Each of the cars featured is a fantastic Porsche in its own right, and each appeals to a different demographic of marque enthusiast. An eclectic mix, for sure.

Of course, the nature of the job I do means I

have to be open-minded when it comes to tuning and modifying. The rule I apply is to consider the quality of the work involved – a car doesn't have to be to my personal taste, but I can appreciate the work invested in developing the look and performance of an updated classic Porsche.

Ultimately, the manufacturer has modified and tuned its cars way beyond standard specification since day one. While this may have been done for specific applications, not least motorsport, this enthusiasm for altering the make-up of a car has been embraced by many private owners and restorers who have changed their Porsches to reflect their individual personalities. A modified Porsche is, essentially, a mirror of its owner's character.

For my part, I love Porsches of all persuasions, from standard through to significantly altered. My own stable features a trio of lightly modified Porsches, a kind of 'best of both worlds' scenario, retaining most of the factory prescription, but gently enhancing with carefully considered upgrades. Each to their own, as the saying goes. Whatever your Porsche preference, I'd love to hear about it. Drop me a line and maybe we'll be showcasing your car in these pages? Enjoy the magazine.



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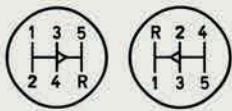
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FEATURES

08 FROG CHORUS
We test a Viper Green 911 SC Outlaw.

36 BASIC INSTINCT
Celebrating the brilliance of the 912.

48 KNIGHTS OF THE ROAD
A father and son's 356 B project.

60 SWISS CHALLENGE
Sbarro's Porsche-powered Challenge.

70 METAL GURUS
North Devon Metalcraft's 550 Spyder builds.

78 A FEISTY RIGHT HOOK
Is this the oldest surviving RHD 356 Pre-A?

90 DREAM MACHINE
Gaspere Fasulo's self-built 911 R tribute.

100 TRADE SECRET
Porsche's little-known 911 SC-L upgrade.

108 SUBSCRIPTION DEALS
Get *Classic Porsche* delivered to your door.

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Shop for your next air-cooled classic.

114 NEXT ISSUE PREVIEW
A beautifully restored 1974 911 2.7 Targa.

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08



36



78

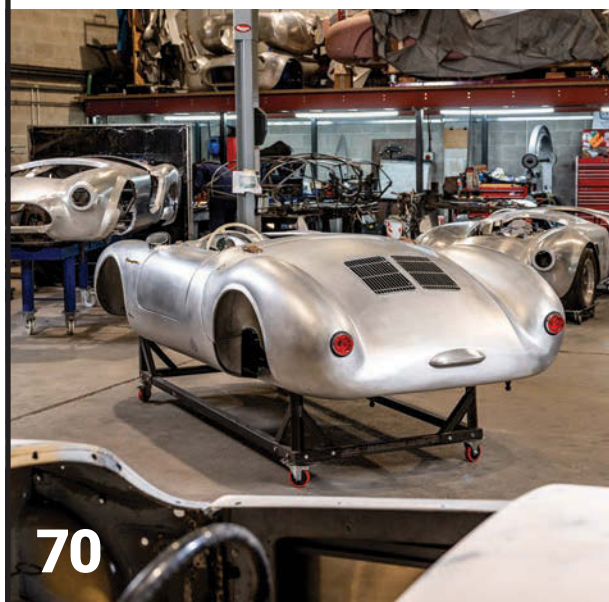
CONTENTS

REGULARS

18 **LIVEWIRE**
The final 934/5 comes to auction.

24 **PORSCHE PRODUCTS**
New gear for you and your classic Porsche.

32 **GUEST SPEAKERS**
Our contributors get on their soapbox.



70



24



90

FROG CHORUS

Eye candy comes in curious hues, especially when it's channelling the early 1970s. This Viper Green 911 SC Outlaw reminds us of no one else but Kermit the Frog. We splashed out on a visit to PIE Performance to check out the amphibian...

Words Johnny Tipler Photography Dan Sherwood







Readers of a certain vintage will doubtless recall *The Muppet Show* and, quite likely, *Sesame Street*. I couldn't possibly comment, but because I'm writing this in the midst of panto season, allow me to indulge a bit of slapstick. I'm proposing what we have here is the vehicular incarnation of one Kermit the Frog (the 'voice of the people' in both TV productions). We find him manifest as a 911.

Our Kermit is based on a 1981 911 SC, whereas Kermit himself started life almost three decades earlier. My proposal to you, however, is that the transformation wrought on this unsuspecting Californian import is a manifestation of what our wild and wacky vociferous amphibian would be, were he to be reborn in Zuffenhausen. How so? Well, look, Kermit had a wry, mischievous sense of humour, an incisive wit and could deliver a verdict on a situation with pinpoint accuracy. Is it too contrived to attribute these characteristics to a motor car? Bear with. As we know, cars, especially Porsches, are endowed with multiple character traits and foibles. When you opt for a standard 911 in a bid to alter its disposition — let's face it, there's no 911 more stock-stoical than an SC — you're going to amplify those qualities.

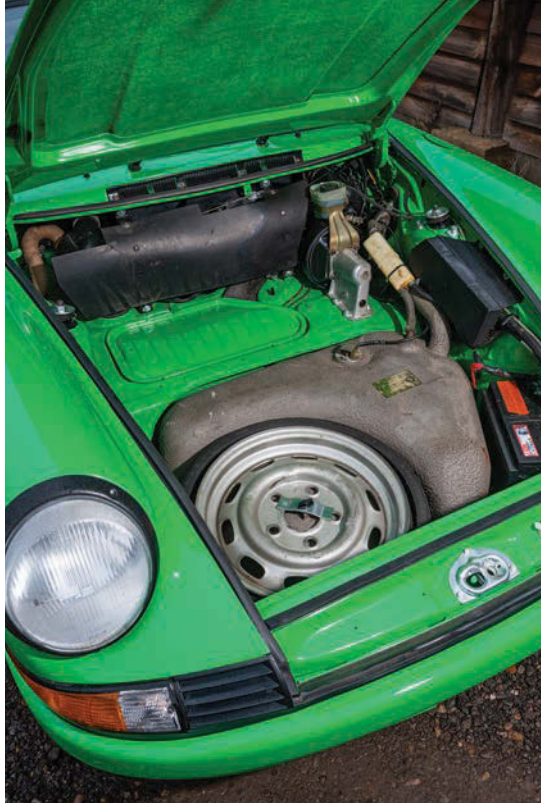
Let's take a look at what happened to this Kermit 911 in the backdating bog. It helps inform proceedings if the subject car has already been leant on a bit, in this case for a spot of on-track action in the USA before relocation to GB. To be precise, into the clutches of the alteration experts at Pro-9, whose speciality is bespoke Porsche builds. Pro-9 has been providing everything from regular

maintenance and crash repairs to full restorations and backdates for the past thirty years, carrying out work from the firm's base in Redditch, Worcestershire. The father and son team of Simon and Bret Evans is responsible for a fair few conversions, then.

"When doing a completely bespoke Outlaw build, it's important to start with the best donor vehicle possible," Simon explains. "This one arrived from the US West Coast with a nice, clean shell and, most importantly, it was rot-free. It's got the original steel wings, rather than lightweight aluminium, though there's a fibreglass front lid. We painted the car Viper Green and it now sits on Fuchs wheels with a Brembo brake conversion. The engine has been recommissioned and the interior has

Above Built by Pro-9 and subsequently fettled by the team at PIE Performance, this Viper Green SC was beige when imported from the USA





Right Cockpit is a comfortable place to be, punctuated by a classic APS Imola three-spoke

Below Three-litre flat-six makes itself known through modified exhaust system making use of race headers

had a new headliner and carpet set. We made sure this 911 also has the correct front slam panel for a long-bonnet car. The front lid fits perfectly. This can't be said of most other backdates."

As we will soon discover, the list of mods is far more extensive than what's highlighted here, although I can't help thinking Frog Green would be more apt than Viper Green as reference to this particular colour. In fact, Pro-9 simultaneously spawned a sibling for Kermit — for a while, there were two virtually identical lean, green backdates on the company's premises.

Historically, the Carrera RS 2.7 introduced a radical change in Porsche's palette, ushering in fabulous psychedelic hues, including the Viper Green seen here, as well as Bahia Red and Signal Orange, though any colour on the paint chart could be specified. Talking of the 2.7, during the backdating process, this SC also received an RS-style airdam.

Kermit is currently stationed at PIE Performance in rural Suffolk, not far from picturesque Lavenham, complete with its cantilevered Tudor beams and

targeted plasterwork. Tasked with selling the car, PIE proprietor, Chris Lansbury, gives me chapter and verse from his perspective. "We market all the 911s built at Pro-9. Simon and Bret buy the base cars mostly from California, thereby ensuring rust-free shells, or as close as possible. American origins also explain why this particular backdate is left-hand drive." There's no immediate evidence of this car having been in the US, though. Even the headlamp bezels have been replaced with European-spec parts, finished in black.

FLYING COLOURS

The Kermit 911 was beige when it arrived in the UK, somewhat more subtle in tone than the green seen here. "The car was completely stripped and rebuilt before the application of Viper Green, top and bottom, meaning the underside and inside the shell were painted," Chris continues. "All work was taken care of at Pro-9. The only things we've done at PIE Performance are to tidy up the engine bay, fit a new alternator, sort a few other electrical gremlins and wire in a couple of dash gauges. We've also done a small amount of work to the gear selector, but it could do with a bit more attention, just to refine shifting. It feels okay, but then everything's a little bit stiff due to lack of use and wants freeing up a bit, which, of course, would happen out on the road."

Much of the running gear has been renewed, and thus needs running in. The three-litre engine has been similarly overhauled — detailing includes race headers, a new stainless back box (two pipes in, two pipes out), a modified airbox and a K&N air filter. Chris is censorious. "Although this is what I describe as a 'soft conversion', it probably cost more to complete than the asking price." He recites an inventory of further changes to specification. "The car makes use of 911 R-style rear lights, which back in the day, would have been sourced from the contemporary NSU 1000 TT parts bin. The suspension's been lowered and benefits from 930 torsion bars. All suspension components are powdercoated or zinc-plated, plus there's polyurethane





bushes and Bilstein dampers, bolstered by a 930 steering rack and new arms.”

The car has also been equipped with a PIE Performance Brembo front brake conversion, which utilises Goodridge brake hoses, cross-drilled discs and bigger calipers, which are actually off a Boxster. They’re colour-coded to the body, which Chris admits isn’t to his taste. The thing about the uprated brake kit is, it fits behind the fifteen-inch Fuchs wheels, a unique characteristic of this particular package, which is readily available to order direct from the PIE Performance Tuning website. The wheels themselves (staggered with seven inches of width at the front and eight at the rear) are fitted with Toyo Proxes T1-R tyres.

Nothing too radical, then, and these are potentially jobs you might perform on your own classic 911 over time, but here, they’re handed to you on a plate, all stacking up nicely as decent, worthwhile modifications

to make to a period Porsche, and helping, in this case, to justify the Outlaw backdate.

From my perspective, the only Porsche I haven’t modified in some way is my current 987 Boxster S. I’ve kept it standard because its value lies in its exalted factory specification and (reluctantly) needs to be kept

that way. Every other Porsche I’ve owned had has been fair game for mechanical tweaks and bodywork shape-shifting, including a ducktail here and there.

Where’s the ducktail here? Frogtail will have to do! In any case, Kermit should be right up my street... or duckpond. Am I convinced? I don’t mind admitting, I wonder if the restomod concept isn’t a bit dated now? Perhaps originality counts for more in the world of classic 911s? Let’s take stock.

This SC looks the frog’s togs, but as I fire up the flat-six and shuffle around PIE Performance’s farmyard surroundings for Snapper Dan’s benefit, certain issues

Above This Kermit-coloured SC was originally registered in 1983 and is currently available to purchase direct from PIE Performance

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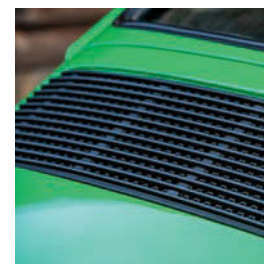
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Above A PIE Performance Tuning (PPT) Brembo brake kit upgrade gives this SC serious stopping power

Right Out on the road, the car demonstrates fantastic grip and cornering abilities

to do with the harmony of the basic controls present themselves. For example, I'm immediately aware of the importance of ratcheting the seat base into a secure position close to the wheel — and hence the pedals — as I press on the powerfully sprung clutch and feel the seat trying to slide backwards. Also, the PPT Brembo conversion is so potent, the merest graze of the brake pedal elicits sudden response. I'm reminded of the nature of this particular Porsche, not to mention the point of fitting bigger brakes, accepting the effect as a positive, but it takes a bit of getting used to.

In its favour, this is a left-hooker, of course, which I personally prefer in a 911, because your legs are straight ahead of you, rather than jinked to the left as they are in a right-hooker (the pedals being in the correct orientation in the left-hand drive configuration).

By the time the car is warmed up and we're out on the road taking care of tracking shots, the shift proves itself stiff, though Chris has already acknowledged the selector needs further tweaking. Further chassis tuning would

also be of benefit, dialling in geometry more suited to the modifications. There, I've said it. I've given you the downsides. And, of course, all these fiddly niggles will doubtless have been fixed by the time you read this article, but they did rather cloud my impression of a car I wanted to like, because it's a project I would have loved to have done myself. It looks right, it sounds right, but you want it to feel and to go right, and it ain't quite there yet.

BACK TO BASICS

Having said that, we need to give Kermit a chance. Given the refreshed three-litre powerplant and early 1970s stance, we'd be forgiven for expecting a 911 akin to a Carrera RS 2.7, or even a three-litre RS. Sure, this Porsche is raw — wilfully so, given the stripped-out, pared down cabin, decorated as it is with its RS door pulls. They make electric windows something of an anachronism, but we'll let them go. Same for the electric sunroof. I suppose, if you're bent on going for the early 1970s Carrera look, you'd toss out the electrical goodies in a bid to save weight, but that's a choice for the next owner to make.

The corduroy-cushioned leather bucket seats are stylish and of the period. They're comfy enough, a tad soft even, when firm would be more applicable for a track-focused 911. Four-point harnesses can be a pain if you're not doing a trackday or heading out on a long run, but these Willans belts aren't too much of an impediment. Other work within the cabin runs to a new headlining, new carpets, RS door cards, rear seat delete and that very nice APS Imola steering wheel.

Out on the Suffolk backroads, it's a matter of taking Kermit by the scruff of his neck and being a little brutal — a means of overcoming the flaws in shift and tendency to yaw left. The car accelerates smartly enough, accompanied by a sublime flat-six snarl emanating from the modified exhaust system, taking no prisoners when slotting through the shift-gate. Like all classic 911s, this redeveloped SC demands a firm hand — none of the





wishy-washy, effete pinky, gentle touch so often the way with modern motoring. In fact, I'm reminded of the very first 911 I ever drove: a 2.2-litre S from Autofarm, back when the company was based in Amersham. It was a raw *sauvage* — a wild animal — in contrast to the plucky, benign-mannered Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV I was accustomed to in the early 1980s. No other

description fitted at the time. Here on dampish country lanes, I'm a bit tally-ho, just to make sense of things.

Through corners, I get braking done early, taking it gently in order to avoid pedal-pressure neck-jerk. I steer into the apexes with a little more lock than required, taking it off as the car turns in, gradually applying the throttle so it powers out delightfully, with no body roll evident. Lift-off understeer and throttle-on oversteer fine-tunes directional control through the twisty bits. All in all, this is a very good chassis, and there's plenty of grip, with the right amount of sensory feedback through wheel and backside. With the minor details mentioned earlier dealt with, this *good* car will become a *great* car. Oh, and maybe the next owner could invest in a set of taller tyres? My Carrera 3.2 wore the same fifteen-inch Fuchs wheels, but was shod with taller-sidewall Continentals, which gave a much nicer, more period ride than what's on offer here. That said, I wasn't into the backdating or modifying game back then.

Never mind the chaotic limb-flailing, Kermit the actual frog was a free spirit, soul of the party and usually spot on with his observations and comments. And I think that's what we've got going on here. *Sauvage* and sophisticated.

To return to the image projected by our Kermit car,

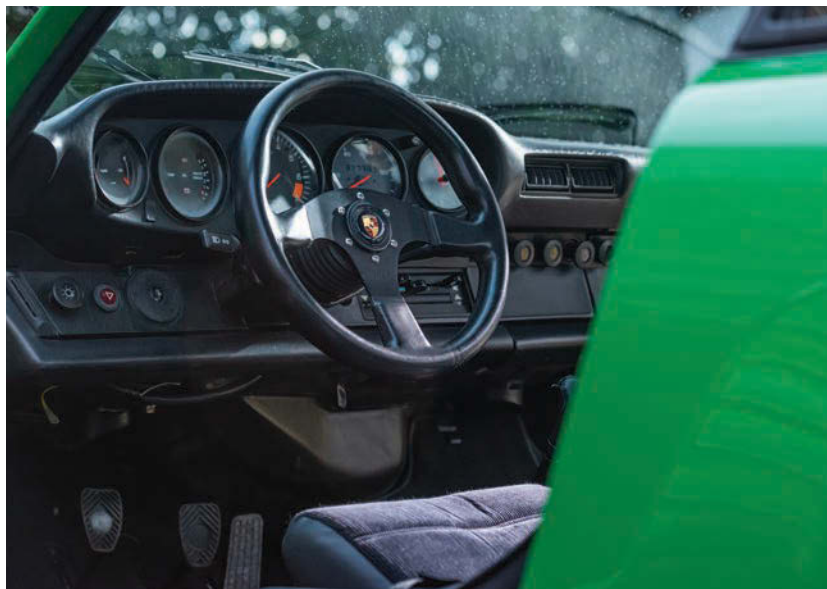
the absence of the ducktail rear spoiler points to a channelling of 911 T/R or ST, the forerunners of the Carrera RS 2.7 and 2.8-litre race car. The 911 T/R designation had a double meaning: either T-Racing, or

T-Rally, because when you placed your order, you could specify a race or a rally package. The subsequent 911 ST from 1970 was based on the 2.2-litre 911, with a second series

constructed on the 1972 2.4-litre 911. Still no ducktail. Whichever the case, our friend Kermit provides you with almost a litre of extra engine capacity, thanks to his SC flat-six. And if it is the RS you want to emulate, no problem — hop off and get a ducktail lid fitted. **CP**

Above 911 Turbo steering rack and torsion bars give a helping hand when it comes to turn-in response

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LAST OF TEN FACTORY-BUILT 934/5s HEADS TO AMELIA ISLAND AUCTIONS

Just as we were about to send this issue of *Classic Porsche* to print, leading international auction house, Gooding & Company, announced the inclusion of the last-ever factory-built 934/5 in its Amelia Island sale, scheduled to take place across the weekend of March 2nd/3rd.

As the model's name suggests, Porsche took key equipment from the 934 and 935 race cars to produce a new sports prototype for Group 4 of 1977's International Motor Sport Association (IMSA) championship. Among other components, the chassis, engine and wheels of the 934 were combined with the tyres and rear wing of the 935, but the resulting 934/5 was banned by IMSA's governing body before its first scheduled race, leading Brumos owner and racing driver, Peter Gregg, to enter his 934/5 (chassis 9307700952) into the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA)'s rival Trans-Am series.

The 934/5's flat-six was equipped with a single turbocharger, capable of pushing power to 590bhp, but partly due to the IMSA ban, the model was short-lived, resulting in only ten cars built. Even so, the 934/5 won all six of the SCCA Trans-Am rounds it entered in 1977.

PERFECT TEN

Pictured is the Gooding & Company sales car, delivered new to Czech racing driver, Vasek Polak, and campaigned in Trans-Am by Ron Brown in mid-1977 before being paired with Cliff Kearns, the driver most associated with the Porsche, which carries chassis number 9307700960. Kearns – supported by a cast of co-pilots, including Milt Minter, Stephen Behr and Gianpiero Moretti – raced the car in IMSA's GT class in the latter part of 1977 and throughout 1978, taking in Sears Point, Daytona, Sebring and Road Atlanta, among other iconic circuits.

Under the Desperado Racing banner, Kearns earned numerous top ten finishes and a podium in the 1979 season, but didn't have the resources to compete in a full calendar of IMSA racing. Consequently, Marty Hinze bought the car in 1980. His first race was in Group 5 at Watkins Glen, sharing the driving with Dale Whittington, winner of the previous year's 24 Hours of Le Mans in the Kremer K3-specification 935. Transmission failure at Watkins Glen encouraged Hinze to upgrade to K3 trim, at which point 9307700960 was treated to a 3.2-litre twin-turbocharged flat-six, inverse transmission, titanium driveshafts, 935 suspension and 935 brakes. Then, in November 1980, Hinze recruited Gary Belcher for the Daytona Finale. The pair finished fifth overall.

Hinze owned and raced 9307700960 for the rest of its IMSA career, including the 1981 12 Hours of Sebring, where Hinze, Minter and Bill Whittington finished third overall. T-Bird Swap Shop owner, Preston Henn, also drove the car, which he sponsored, hence Swap Shop's famous livery decorating 9307700960's bodywork during the 1982 and 1983 seasons.

With the introduction of the GTP class, 935s were bundled with ground-effect prototypes, making it difficult to achieve a win. Hinze did, however, finish fifteenth at Sebring in 1985, when the car was painted yellow.

Now fully restored to original specification and with Kearns' famous Desperado graphics reinstated, 9307700960 is listed with an estimate of between \$800k and \$1.1m. To register for bidding and to find out more about this historically important Porsche, visit goodingco.com.



MOTORSPORT WORLD MOURNS THE PASSING OF RACE ENGINEER, WIET HUIDEKOPER

With great sadness, the family of Louis 'Wiet' Huidekoper announced his passing on Saturday 7th January. Born in Bussum, the Netherlands, on the 29th October 1953, he was a talented creator, always drawing and making the things he needed. This skill was no more evident than with his moped, which should have been limited to a top speed of 40 km/h, but after some serious weight reduction and streamlining measures, the young Wiet was able to coax the two-wheeler up to a speed of 90 km/h.

His love of all things motoring began shortly after his sixth birthday, when he was allowed to steer the Huidekoper family car along his grandparent's long driveway. By the time of his twelfth birthday, Wiet could drive, and so the hunger to know more about the mechanical workings of automobiles continued to grow. He attended the 1970 Dutch Grand Prix and witnessed the untimely death of Piers Courage first-hand, but his overriding memories of that race concerned the speed of the Formula One machines he witnessed.

In 1982, he built his own Formula Ford, the Chinell FF1600, which achieved notable successes in the 1983 season. As a result, Wiet spent the next few years contracted to Royale and Reynard before being commissioned to design and build a Sports 2000 racer for a Dutch team. Wiet's Vector Sports 2000 achieved a maiden victory and many more race wins in 1985.

He followed these accomplishments with several years of race engineering, helping numerous teams to improve their cars. In 1989, for example, he helped Chamberlain Racing to win the Group C2 title with their Spice SE89C, an achievement leading to Wiet designing and building the Lola T9210, which entered Group C in 1992. The lure of creating another Formula Ford racer with good friend, Chris Fox, resulted in the TF93, and after a promising season in 1993, the car won the 1994 championship.

HIS ABILITY TO ANALYSE A PROBLEM AND TO COME UP WITH A SOLUTION UNDER PRESSURE IS WHAT SET HIM APART FROM MANY IN THE PADDOCK

With his reputation growing, Wiet was approached by Porsche to help with preparation of the controversial Dauer 962 GT LM, which won the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1994. Further work with Porsche resulted in another Le Mans victory in 1998, when the number twenty-six 911 GT1-98 took top honours with Laurent Aiello, Allan McNish and Stéphane Ortelli sharing driving duties.

As the new millennium dawned, Wiet returned to what he enjoyed doing best: race engineering and designing. Projects included the redesign of the Marcos LM600 Evo, Dallara Chrysler LMP1 and further work for Lola on a track day car. Away from the circuit, he loved classic sports cars and spent much time touring in his Austin-Healey 100 and his Jaguar E-Type. In his later years, he designed and developed a lightweight-but-robust carbon-fibre racing wheel rim.

Always one of the first to arrive on the job and the last to leave at night, Wiet's ability to analyse a problem and to come up with a solution under pressure is what set him apart from many in the paddock. Despite preferring to remain somewhat in the background, he touched the lives of many and was quick to commend someone when they did well.

At the time of his death, brought on by complications arising from a stroke in 2018 and an irreversible infection caught at the start of this year, Wiet was in the process of working with his established foundation (Foundation Wiet Design) in compiling a biography of his life and achievements. His loss will be deeply felt, but the work to complete this project will continue in his honour.

Wiet will be sorely missed by his family and friends, and the racing paddock is all the poorer for his passing. Everybody at *Classic Porsche* wishes his loved ones and colleagues comfort at this difficult time.



PETER AUTO 2.0L CUP SET FOR NEW SEASON OF RACING IN THE 911'S SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

2023 marks the legendary 911's sixtieth anniversary. Since 2018, historic motorsport organiser, Peter Auto, has been paying tribute to this iconic sports car by hosting a series dedicated to what many consider the purest incarnation of the flagship Porsche product: the two-litre short-wheelbase 911. The resulting single-make 2.0L Cup is a first for historic racing. Let's have a look at the history of this series, what you can expect from 2023 events, plus the changes Peter Auto has introduced to race regulations for the new season.

Created in partnership with renowned air-cooled 911 restoration specialist, Lee Maxted-Page, and James Turner (founder of classic sports car sales and storage business, Sports Purpose), the 2.0L Cup grid is the only single-make series hosted by Peter Auto. The competition is reserved for pre-1966 FIA-specification two-litre short-wheelbase 911s. The difference on track isn't the cars — everybody races on equal terms, putting emphasis on the drivers to deliver in an environment where sliding has become something of an art form.

With the aim of controlling preparation costs, which many participants have seen spiral skyward in recent years, Peter Auto is adjusting its 2.0L Cup sporting and technical regulations for the 2023 season. The first update consists of organising the events of this grid over two days

LIMITING COMPETITORS TO NO MORE THAN FIVE NEW TYRES PER EVENT, WITHOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF REMOULDING

instead of three, while maintaining the same number of sessions, which includes a free practice session of thirty minutes, a qualifying session of forty minutes and a race of ninety minutes. Of course, a day less on-site means significantly reduced costs for teams and drivers. The second adjustment concerns the technical regulations themselves — they are now fixed for the next three seasons, preventing any expensive developments, which are counter to the spirit of historic racing.

The last regulation change aims to reduce tyre expenses by limiting competitors to no more than five new tyres per event, without the possibility of remoulding. These new tyres, marked with a specific sticker, will have to be used from the qualifying session onward, including the entire duration of the race, thereby introducing tyre management strategy (per endurance racing and top-flight motorsport) to the 2.0L Cup paddock for the very first time.

Since its inception five years ago, this special competition has proved hugely popular with fans of historic motorsport, who will be thrilled to discover the 2023 season's races will be held on some of Europe's best-loved circuits as part of Peter Auto's growing portfolio of high-profile historic racing events. Test days are scheduled to take place on the Paul Ricard Circuit in France across 15th and 16th March, with rounds subsequently scheduled for the Mugello Classic at Mugello Circuit in Italy (21st March until 2nd April), the Spa Classic at Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium (12th-14th May), a return to France for the Grand Prix de l'Age d'Or at Dijon-Prenois Circuit (2nd-4th June) and the Dix Mille Tours at Paul Richard Circuit (1st-3rd September), plus a trip to Portugal for the highly anticipated Estoril Classics event at Circuito do Estoril (6th-8th October).

Visit the Peter Auto website at peterauto.fr for series technical notes, a full calendar of the year's events (including the Le Mans Classic), ticketing offers and to register your interest in competing in the 2.0L Cup.



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DEATH OF GYMKHANA AND RALLY STAR, KEN BLOCK

Not long before this issue of *Classic Porsche* went to press, the motorsport world was shocked by the news of Ken Block's passing. The rally driver, gymkhana star and 'Head Hoonigan in Charge' died in a snowmobile accident near his ranch in Woodland, Utah. He was fifty-five years old.

Block co-founded skateboarding and snowboarding footwear and apparel brand, DC Shoes, in 1994 and used his fortune to realise a long-held ambition to compete in international rallying. His driving career kicked off in earnest in 2005, when he competed in a specially prepared Group N Subaru WRX STi. Block's best finish would come eight years later, when he scored seventh overall at the Rally México.

Though his rally career didn't hit the dizzy heights he'd hoped for, he achieved greater success in rallycross, both in the USA and mainland Europe. This led to the development of his now legendary Gymkhana series of films, combining elements of racing, rallying and drifting in flamboyant style with eye-popping stunts, including jumps, 360° spins, parking boxes, figure-eights and other advanced manoeuvres. It was this series of films, running from 2008 to 2018, which gained Block much wider recognition for his skills behind the wheel, helped by increasingly lavish production values, best exemplified by Gymkhana Four, filmed on the Universal Studio backlot.

After a decade of producing Gymkhana films, Block switched his attention to Climbkhana, where he once again wowed audiences (primarily on YouTube) by taking on some of

the world's most challenging hill climbs, such as Tianmen Mountain (China's most dangerous road) and Pikes Peak. Though he spent most of his career heavily associated with the Subaru and Ford brands — as demonstrated by the various Impreza, Fiesta, Escort, F-150 and Mustang Gymkhana machines custom-built to his specification — he recently forged an association with Porsche products, not least through the build of Hoonipigasus, a 1,400bhp hill climber, which started life as a 912.

Built by the team at BBi Autosport in Huntington Beach, California, specifically for Block's 2022 attempt to conquer *The Race to the Clouds*, the car came hot on the heels of Block's participation in the 2022 East African Rally, where he partnered with 911 rally car preparation outfit, Tuthill Porsche.

As founder of the Monster Rally Team, Block also devised Gymkhana GRiD, an annual single-weekend competition — each time hosted in a different country — inviting winners and runners-up of the FIA World Rally Championship, Formula G, various drift championships and rallycross competitions to go head-to-head in an outlandish Gymkhana contest broadcast live on YouTube.

Most recently, after a billion views across ten wildly successful Gymkhana films (setting the current bar for automotive action movies), Block returned to the series driving an entirely bespoke machine developed and built by Audi. Armed with the 800-volt, twin-motor, all-wheel drive S1 Hoonitron EV, Block's team arranged to shut down large areas of Las Vegas for filming. In the wake of his death, as a mark of respect, the number forty-three will be retired from this season's World Rally Championship.

AS A MARK OF RESPECT, THE NUMBER FORTY-THREE WILL BE RETIRED FROM THIS SEASON'S WRC



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Sale commences 12 noon

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LN ENGINEERING ALUMINIUM CHAIN BOXES

These new chain box cases for air-cooled 911 engines (from early two-litre units through to 3.2-litre flat-sixes) are machined from a solid billet of aluminium. From the workshop of precision Porsche component manufacturer, LN Engineering, each pair of chain boxes is designed to be a direct bolt-on matching the aesthetic of the original parts as closely as possible, but because the new items are made from 6061-T6 aluminium, they won't corrode or oxidise like the standard Porsche parts. Choose from a range of anodised finishes, including 'bright dip' (looks like raw machined aluminium), matte clear, black, blue, red, green, gold, orange, purple, copper, penny and gunmetal. Each purchase includes both left and right chain boxes, which can be used on 911 Turbo (930) engines, as well as normally aspirated units.

Price: \$4,199

lnengineering.com or call +1 815 472 2939



STUTTGART CLASSICA REAR WINDOW RESTRAINTS FOR 911/912

There are plenty of circuit dwellers who can attest to air pressure difference causing the rear screen of their classic 911 to pop out of its seal/opening, especially if the car is spinning or heading backwards at pace. Designed for all air-cooled 911s, including the 964 and 993, plus the 912, these CNC-bent rear window restraints from Porsche accessories specialist, Stuttgart Classica, are the solution to this age-old problem. Laser-cut from aluminium, they're lightweight, though if using on a glass window, Stuttgart Classica recommends applying a thin layer of foam between the restraints and screen to avoid marring.

Price: £149

stuttgart-classica.co.uk or call 01386 701437



PPT BRAKE KIT FOR G-SERIES 911

Tuning isn't just about making your Porsche travel faster — bringing the car to a safe, swift halt is equally important. This fact hasn't escaped the team at marque indie, PIE Performance, as highlighted by the firm's recently launched four-piston brake kit upgrade for G-series 911s (1974-1989). Using a specific combination of OEM Porsche calipers, OEM vented discs and pads, a new replacement master cylinder, new brake hoses and bespoke PIE Performance Tuning (PPT) mounting hardware, your classic 911's stopping power will be vastly improved, with the added bonus of increased heat dissipation and notably reduced brake fade, even during the most spirited of road or track use. The kit has been designed to fit behind fifteen-inch Fuchs wheels, allowing owners to keep the standard look of their 911. The included discs are 282x24mm vented items, while the calipers are offered in black, though can be finished in a colour of your choosing.

Price: £2,012.80

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NEW TREUHAF 356 SPINDLE ASSEMBLIES

Exclusive from EMPI are these 356 spindle assemblies from Treuhaft. Forged like the originals, Treuhaft's spindles are dimensionally accurate, a result of being based on computer-aided design modelling from original Porsche samples. Naturally, this means you should have no concerns regarding fitting and seamless operation. Developed in partnership with world-famous 356 restoration and tuning firm, Emory Motorsports, these spindles address the need for replacement parts no longer offered by Porsche. Pre-loaded and complete with supporting bow assemblies, each spindle is precision assembled on CNC jigs to exact tolerances, ensuring the suspension and steering feel of the host 356 is as it was when the car was new. Exclusive to EMPI dealers worldwide, the spindles are sold separately (search for part number 22-3024-0 when looking for the left assembly, 22-3025-0 for the right). From the street to the drag strip, from desert to dunes, there's every chance enthusiast-owned historic Volkswagens and Porsche sports cars are making use of EMPI componentry. Trusted since 1954, the EMPI family of iconic brands continues to grow and includes Auto Haus, BugPack, JayCee, Race-Trim, Treuhaft and recent acquisition, PMO.

Price: POA

empius.com or call +1 800 666 3674



NEW GAZ SHOCKS CHARGED DAMPERS

Just as we went to print with this issue of *Classic Porsche*, GAZ Shocks announced a new range of fully adjustable coilover suspension kits. Branded GAZ Charged, these dampers are based on the British manufacturer's highly successful GHA and Gold product lines, but are upgraded with the benefits of nitrogen gas and 'helper' springs above the main suspension springs. The nitrogen minimises the aeration of the hydraulic fluid/oil under normal use by compressing the air bubbles inside the damper. Of course, all the current features of the GHA and Gold ranges are included in the GAZ Charged line-up, including adjustable damper rate and ride height (up to sixty millimetres). Each GAZ Charged damper is tested before leaving the factory and is covered by a two-year warranty. It's worth noting, for some applications, customers will need to supply donor front struts for GAZ to refurbish and machine the lower cast stub axle in order to incorporate it into the new front struts. If in doubt, give the team a call to discuss your requirements.

Price: £150 over the cost of equivalent GHA or Gold kit
gazshocks.com or call 01268 724585



CLARKE PG2500A EURO5 2.2kVA FOUR-STROKE 5.6HP PETROL GENERATOR FOR GARAGES AND WORKSHOPS

The Clarke PG2500A EURO5 2.2kVA 230V Petrol Generator provides a reliable source of power for leisure, DIY and light trade use, making it ideal for many different applications. Automatic Voltage Regulation (AVR) enables the use of sensitive electrical equipment, such as laptops, televisions and tablet computers. The PG2500A produces 2.2kVA of power from a four-stroke, 5.6hp engine with a large fifteen litre fuel tank, providing 10.6 hours of power when running at three-quarter load. The attractively priced unit, which offers maximum output of 2,200W and continuous output of 2,000W, is encased in a protective steel frame and features a volt meter, fuel level gauge, low oil cut-out and two 230V 13A domestic sockets. Handy 12V DC output can be used for battery charging.

Price: £286.80

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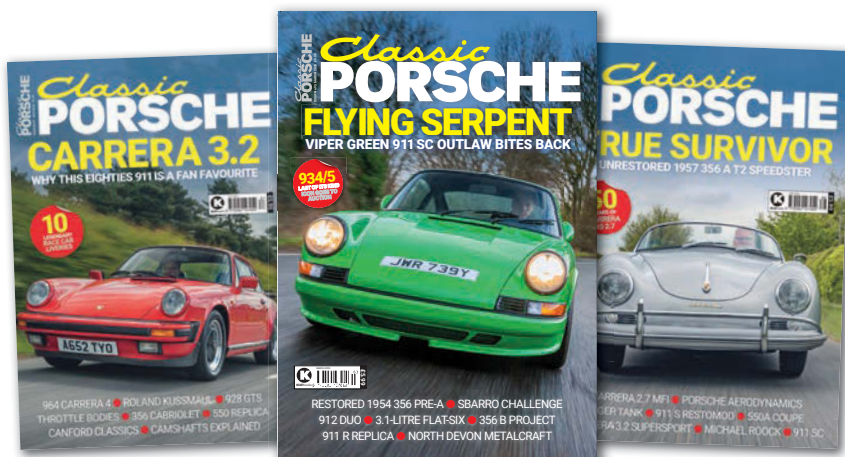
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RINDT VEHICLE DESIGN LEATHER KEY FOBS FOR CLASSIC PORSCHE

Regular readers will be familiar with the output of Rindt Vehicle Design, incorporated in 2017 and subsequently establishing itself as one of the UK's fastest-growing classic Porsche sales and restoration specialists. We'll be featuring more of the company's cars throughout 2023, though we appreciate not everybody is in a position to own an air-cooled classic fully overhauled by the firm's talented team. Is this branded leather key fob the next best thing?! Yep, you're looking at the first offering from Rindt Vehicle Design's newly launched online merchandise store. At the time of writing, additional available products include a Rindt-branded premium indoor car cover, a Rindt beanie, protective seat covers, hoodies and a protective wing cover for when working on a classic Porsche at home. Recorded delivery for keyfobs attracts an additional £2.95.

Price: £19.95

rindtvehicledesign.sumupstore.com



NEW MAXILITE 5.5x15-INCH STEEL WHEELS FOR 911/912/914/944/924 TURBO

Furthering its reputation as one of the leading lights in the manufacturing of OEM-style wheels for a variety of classic cars, Maxilite has expanded its range of wheels for Porsches with a 5.5x15-inch slotted steelie (PCD 4x130, with offsets available as ET25 and ET34) for the 914. For other classic Porsches, including the 356, 911 (1963-1989), 912, 924 Turbo and 944, this beautiful classic-style steel wheel is also available with a PCD of 5x130 in 4.5x15-inch, 5.5x15-inch, 6x15-inch and 7x15-inch fitments. Original Porsche hub caps and wheel nuts can continue to be used. Reassuringly, each Maxilite wheel design is tested and certified by Germany's TÜV, the toughest wheel test in the world. Additionally, under the slogan *We Love Classics*, and through well-known former British brand, Berazzi, the Swiss company is now offering bespoke magnesium wheels for Formula cars and (other competition machines) from the 1960s and 1970s. Owners of racers from Chevron, Lola, March and Brabham will be pleased to learn of the availability of these wheels. Their construction offers a flexible and cost-effective solution for the individual requirements of each car and makes it possible to cover a wide range of previously uncatered-for bolt circles and widths. "Our stock of 25,000 wheels has made us the market leader in Europe, especially in Germany. Now it's time to take the next step and open up another market with bespoke magnesium wheels," says Norbert Frohner, Maxilite co-owner.

Price: Steel wheels for Porsche €99 each

maxilite.ch or call +49 234 935 1414



AUTOMOTION

New parts for your Porsche

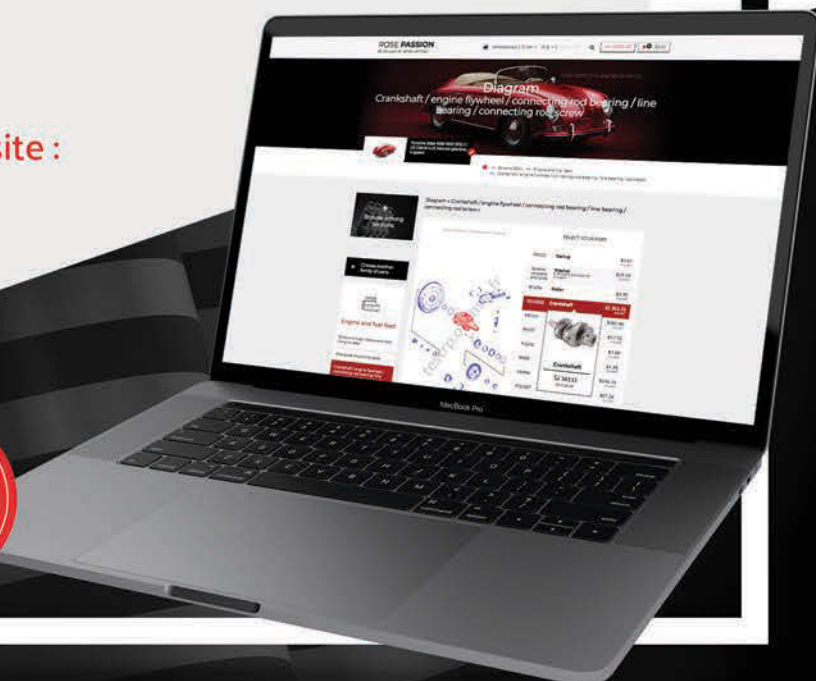
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DRAPER BUNKER ROLLER TOOL CABINETS

Are your tools safely stored, organised and easy to find? If not, it could be time for a storage upgrade to give you a garage to be proud of. As we've highlighted in recent issues of *Classic Porsche*, the Bunker range from Draper Tools is a popular collection of modular workshop storage solutions built to protect. It now includes a stunning range of roller tool cabinets, each made from premium quality steel and finished with a hardwood worktop. The soft-close, foam-lined drawers will help keep every tool in your collection perfectly in place. Plus, there are strong, sturdy wheels allowing the cabinets to move easily, ensuring you'll always have what you need to hand. There are eleven different Bunker roller cabinets to choose from, ranging from a forty-one-inch, seven-drawer model, through to a seventy-two-inch unit with fifteen drawers. The collection also includes a fifty-six-inch cabinet boasting ten drawers, two cupboards, two shelves, a worktop, parts tray and pegboards, providing a vast amount of versatile storage space. To view the full catalogue of what's on offer, and to locate your nearest stockist, visit the Bunker pages on the official Draper Tools website, which you can find at drapertools.com/bunker.

Price: From £840

drapertools.com/bunker or call 02380 494333



GEMINI PVM SECURE VEHICLE TRANSPORT

Based in Swaffham, Cambridgeshire, but serving all of the UK and mainland Europe, Gemini Premium Vehicle Movers (PVM) offers professional, fully insured transportation to owners of cherished sports cars, as well as proprietors of premium dealerships, including Official Porsche Centres. Whether you have just purchased a vehicle, are attending an event, moving house or simply need your car relocating, Gemini PVM offers a first-class service tailored to your requirements. Company boss, Nick Ewers, knows efficiency and discretion are extremely important qualities Porsche owners look for when their cars are being carried between locations, but he also recognises every job needs to be handled personally, hence the highest possible care given to every car his team transports. Rest assured your Porsche will be in safe hands.

Price: Varies

geminipvm.com or call 07968 543457

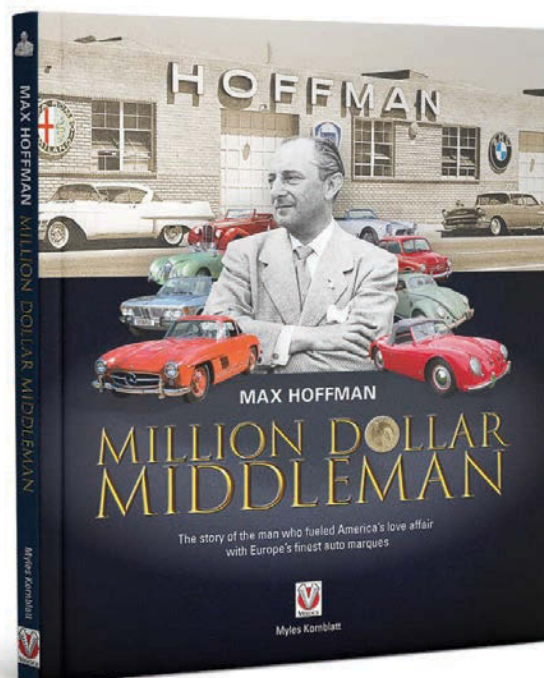


MAX HOFFMAN: MILLION DOLLAR MIDDLEMAN

Myles Kornblatt's lifelong passion for automobiles has led him to search the globe for interesting cars. Once a museum curator, his written work has appeared in *Top Gear*, *GQ*, *Classic Cars*, *Classic Cars Weekly*, *Hemmings Daily* and *Octane* magazines. His latest work takes the form of a hardback charting the extraordinary career of Max Hoffman, the New York-based sports car dealer. During the decades following the second World War, Hoffman represented Jaguar, Porsche, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, Fiat, Lancia, BMW and many other European car makers. He pushed for distinguished now-classics, including the Mercedes-Benz W190 300 SL 'Gullwing', the Porsche 356 Speedster, BMW 507 and Alfa Romeo Giulietta Spider. The Austrian-born dealer built a solid reputation for being an effective middleman, but as the car companies he traded for became more successful, the less they needed their go-between. When it was inevitably time to say goodbye to 'Maxie', he showed his teeth with everything from lawsuits to threatening automobile executives with a mob hit. Hoffman good reason to be defensive — he understood the American market and pushed manufacturers to produce cars which would strike a chord with the public and make everybody involved richer. Hoffman was sometimes the hero, sometimes the villain, but more often than not, he was the hidden puppet master behind some of today's best-loved classics. Explore his story in this richly illustrated 160pp 21.67x1.37x25.04cm coffee table tome.

Price: £30

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Steel wheel

Design: OE look steel - colour: silver**Dealer enquiries are welcome****15"- Steel rim**

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all steel wheels with ECE number



Steel wheel

Design: OE look steel - colour: silver**Dealer enquiries are welcome****16"- Steel rim**

5,5 x 16 ET 15	259,00 €
------------------	----------

all steel wheels with ECE number



STEVE NORTON

If you've bought this magazine because you're considering a restoration project, but are unsure whether to buy a Porsche or a sports car manufactured by a different brand, consider the huge amount of support owners of air-cooled 911s get from both the original maker of these cars and the aftermarket...

Steve Norton's mission is to help you build the car of your dreams. He founded Cape International three decades ago and is now forging a path delivering first-class 911 mechanical and restomod work. Visit cape-international.com



Since 1993, Cape International has been building classic cars designed to work in the real world — intelligently specified and exquisitely detailed. Concerned with Austin-Healeys for many years, our objective has always been to exceed a client's expectations. This focus is now expanding beyond the Austin-Healey brand — as highlighted in last month's issue of *Classic Porsche*, Cape Sport International has opened its doors to welcome owners of air-cooled 911s.

Our senior Porsche technician began his career with these great cars in the mid-1980s. During that time, he worked for leading Porsche specialists across the UK and in the Far East. As you'd expect, he knows classic 911s inside out. What his wealth of knowledge highlights is how fortunate

Porsche owners and restorers are to be so well looked after by the original manufacturer of these cars. The strength of the aftermarket is also something to celebrate. We certainly don't enjoy anything like this level of support when working on Austin-Healeys — a relaxed attitude to what's available, the efficiency of the supply chain and the quality

of the supplied product is, sadly, the order of things. I'm not saying Porsche parts jump out of a box and fit themselves, but with Austin-Healeys, we have to be self-sufficient and manufacture as much as we can in-house. It is for this reason Cape International became the biggest stockist of rare original parts and a manufacturer of upgrade kits, making the cars we look after and restore much safer, more reliable and able to deliver increased performance.

We have a reputation for assembling the best Austin-Healeys in the world — our finished builds win concours competitions and are displayed by respected museums. We insist on the highest standards, but regardless of perfect panel gaps and paintwork, our cars are designed to be driven and enjoyed. Needless to say, the Cape International team's

artisan skills are perfectly at home within the classic Porsche scene, as demonstrated by the launch of our first air-cooled build, the Cape Sport 911, and our second restomod project, a 3.4-litre Neunelfer featured in the previous issue of *Classic Porsche*. Our third 911 is now in progress.

The core of the Porsche brand is incredibly solid — these cars are as popular today as they've ever been. Moreover, movement in the market is good, encouraging specialists to invest heavily in the support of classic Porsches (both in terms of technician training and infrastructure) safe in the knowledge an old 911, 356 or any other air-cooled model enjoys massive popularity with successive generations of automotive enthusiasts. In other words, the customer base remains perpetually strong.

The long-standing relationships between Porsche and its OEM

suppliers is also something to celebrate — buying a fuel pump, ignition component or any other part for a classic 911 and it landing from the same manufacturer (often Bosch, but also chassis equipment from Koni, Bilstein and others) as it would have done when these cars were new is nothing short of fantastic. To put this into perspective, many of the replacement



parts a Porsche owner might take for granted have to be custom manufactured in bulk when the same items are required for the output produced by many other marques, such as discontinued British brands,

including (yes, you guessed it!) Austin-Healey.

Expanding our business to cater for owners and enthusiasts of classic 911s (chiefly those in need of engine rebuilds, transmission

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PORSCHE AND ITS OEM SUPPLIERS IS SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE

work and, of course, customers interested in our bespoke Cape Sport 911s) was an obvious and logical progression. With decades spent turning out award-winning restorations, and with a team of highly skilled fabricators and engine specialists, our ability to deliver class-leading work has never been in doubt, but we now get to share it with a much wider group of enthusiasts. I couldn't be happier. CP



911 GT2RS (997)

Jet Black • Black Half-Leather Carbon Bucket Seats • 19" Centre Lock Wheels Porsche Ceramic Composite Brakes Rear Roll Cage • No. 159 of 500 Cars Produced • 8,802 miles • 2010 (60)

£299,995



911 Turbo (993)

Arena Red • Black Leather Sports Seats 18" Turbo Wheels • Electric Sunroof Full Leather Interior • Air Conditioning Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon 62,139 miles • 1996 (P)

£154,995



911 GT3 (991.2)

Crayon • Black Leather 918 Bucket Seats Manual Gearbox • Clubsport Package Porsche Ceramic Composite Brakes Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon 13,826 miles • 2018 (18)

£151,995



911 GT2 (996)

Polar Silver • Black Leather Sports Seats 18" GT2 Wheels • Porsche Ceramic Composite Brakes • Carbon Interior Package • Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon • 21,836 miles • 2003 (03)

£134,995



911 Carrera 4 GTS Targa (991.2)

Jet Black Metallic • Black Half-Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox • 20" GTS Centre Lock Wheels • Switchable Sports Exhaust • Sport Chrono • 9,122 miles 2018 (18)

£109,995



911 Carrera 2 S (992)

Guards Red • Black Leather Sports Seats PDK Gearbox • 20/21" Carrera S Wheels Touchscreen Satellite Navigation Switchable Sports Exhaust • Sport Chrono • 7,605 miles • 2019 (69)

£95,995



911 Carrera 2 GTS (991)

Guards Red • Black Half-Leather Bucket Seats • Manual Gearbox 20" Centre Lock Wheels • Sport Chrono Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon 6,939 miles • 2015 (65)

£92,995



911 Carrera 2 GTS (991)

Agate Grey • Black Half-Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox • 20" GTS Centre Lock Wheels • Touchscreen Satellite Navigation • Switchable Sports Exhaust Sport Chrono • 10,792 miles • 2015 (65)

£87,995



911 Carrera 2 GTS (997)

Aqua Blue • Black Half-Leather Sports Seats • Manual Gearbox • 19" GTS Centre Lock Wheels • Switchable Sports Exhaust • Sport Chrono 13,956 miles • 2011 (61)

£84,995



911 Carrera 2 (997.2)

Carrera White • Black Leather Sports Seats • Manual Gearbox • 19" Carrera S Wheels • Heated Seats • Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon 20,294 miles • 2010 (59)

£51,995



Boxster 718

Guards Red • Black Leather Sports Seats PDK Gearbox • 20" Black Carrera S Wheels • Heated Seats & Steering Wheel Serviced by Paragon since New 20,878 miles • 2017 (17)

£44,995



Boxster (981)

Carrera White • Black Leather Sports Seats • PDK Gearbox • 20" Carrera Classic Wheels • Rear Parking Sensors Previously Sold & Serviced by Paragon 35,893 miles • 2013 (13)

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Alex Manos is owner of Beverly Hills Car Club, sourcing and selling some of the world's most beautiful and unique vintage automobiles, including a wide range of air-cooled Porsches. View the firm's inventory at beverlyhillscarclub.com



There is often an interesting back-story to why people sell cars. All human life is there! For example, I recently bought a 964 in tremendous mechanical condition. But if that was the case, why was the paintwork so scruffy? Because it was the product of a divorce, that's why. The wife had enjoyed the car as her daily driver, but she knew that come the final divorce settlement, she wouldn't be able to hang on to her prize Porsche. Her response to this situation was to leave the car unwashed in direct sunlight every day, a decision involving a large amount of 'raising the middle finger'. In every other regard, the car was in fantastic shape.

The 964 in question was an America Roadster, a US-only drop-top variant of the Carrera 2. It's thought only 250 of this model was produced between 1992 and 1993. The America Roadster had the same mechanicals as the

event organisers, Patrick Long and Howie Idelson, have staged several Luftgekühlt meetings. At first, their intention was to bring together a few fans of vintage Porsches, but the idea quickly grew — by the third event, more than 450 classic Porsches were on display, amounting to the biggest air-cooled Porsche show in the United States. A true Porsche happening, a blend of art and life, Luftgekühlt is a conceptual car culture event centred around a curated list of historically significant or interesting vehicles, both road and race. Think Burning Man and you'll be somewhere near the target.

All air-cooled Porsches are tremendous cars. Every time you get behind the wheel, you can feel solidity of construction and a certainty about chassis dynamics. And then there's the engine. Of course, air-cooled engines have advantages over water-cooled units. For a start, an air-cooled powerplant is lighter and simpler in design. With no radiator or water pump,



Carrera 2, but its fender flares, brakes, suspension and wheels were Turbo-spec, delivering a distinctly wider body than most other normally aspirated 964s. The stance of the car commanded attention.

I like to think I'm good at what I do at Beverly Hills Car Club — no time for false modesty in these circumstances, I believe. I have to attribute this as the reason why, in recent weeks, I have had five America Roadsters in my showroom. In a world where modern classics have become extremely collectible, these vehicles represent a fantastic opportunity for acquisition. Of course, they're also fine examples of the air-cooled 911. As we know, there is an almost cult-like adoration of these cars, crystallised by Luftgekühlt, an annual celebration of Porsche's air-cooled history. The name literally translates as 'air-cooled'. To date,

there are fewer parts prone to failure. Such raw simplicity, combined with impressive build quality, is part of the appeal, especially as far as very early Porsche cars are concerned. These are basic automobiles — it's just the

driver, engine, transmission, steering wheel and brakes. Not a lot else, and all packaged into a vehicle which is very small by today's standards.

Naturally, there are marque enthusiasts who will always

define a 'true' Porsche as being air-cooled. I'd go as far as to say no engine has quite as much character, distinctive sound or history as varied as a Porsche flat-six. Any time a pair of Porsches come together, even in a supermarket car park, there's bound to be an interesting exchange of sound and energies. It's like a mini-Luftgekühlt, except you have to remember to pay for your shopping. Time to hit the road, friends. **CP**

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1985 Porsche Carrera Coupe Turbo Look M491 #14637

This rare limited production 1985 Porsche Carrera Coupe Turbo Look M491 featured with matching numbers and 29,182 miles on the odometer is available in its factory color code #700 black with a black interior. The vehicle comes equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 3.2-liter engine, air conditioning, automatic speed control, limited-slip differential, central locking system, steering wheel with raised hub, sports seats, power windows, sunroof, 4-wheel disc brakes, Fuchs wheels, and spare tire. Also included are receipts copies totaling over \$3,000 which included a major service done on September 2, 2021, at a cost of \$2,595. An excellent opportunity to jump into the ownership of this original California car. An extremely collectible and well-equipped factory Turbo Look Porsche that is mechanically sound. **For \$135,000**



1969 Porsche 911 T Targa #15896

This rare 1969 Porsche 911 T Targa is featured with matching numbers and finished in its factory color Oasi Blue (6803) complemented with a black interior. This Longhood is equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, 2.0-liter Weber carbureted engine, four-wheel disc brakes, single exhaust outlet, VDO instruments, chrome headlight rings, removable black Targa roof panel, Targa bar, wraparound rear glass window, chrome bumpers/trim, four-spoke steering wheel, Michelin tires, solid wheels, chromed hub caps, jack, tool roll, and a full-size spare tire fitted in the front trunk. Amenities include a fender-mounted antenna, glove compartment, driver-side mirror, door pockets, manual-crank windows, vent windows, sun visors, analog clock, AM/FM radio, and a dashboard cigar lighter with an ashtray. In addition to the equipment, this highly desirable example comes with the owner's manual booklet, maintenance booklet with stamps dating from the 60s and manufacturer's literature. An extremely coveted 911 T Targa that is currently not running and is an exciting opportunity to be a part of a select few to own a piece of German automotive history. **For \$49,950**



1982 Porsche 911SC Coupe #15047

Presenting this 1982 Porsche 911SC Coupe featured with matching numbers and finished in Guards Red combined with a black interior. Equipped with a five-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 3.0-liter engine, four-wheel disc brakes, single exhaust outlet, sunroof, VDO instruments, Hella branded headlights, three-spoke steering wheel, rear rubber bumperettes, Fuchs wheels with Extensa tires, and spare tire fitted in the front trunk. Amenities include cruise control, air conditioning, analog clock, Alpine radio, an ashtray, glove compartment, dual-side mirrors, door pockets, and sun visors with a vanity mirror on the passenger side. In addition to the equipment, this 1980s comes with a maintenance booklet with stamps and service receipt copies. A well-priced 911SC that has been with the same owner since 1988 and is mechanically sound. **For \$38,500**



1986 Porsche 930 Turbo Coupe #15396

Presenting this stylish 1986 Porsche 930 Turbo Coupe featured with matching numbers and 98,100 miles on the odometer. This 1980s classic is finished in a color scheme of Grand Prix White combined with a tan interior. Equipped with a 4-speed manual transmission, 3.3-liter engine, four ventilated disc brakes, dual exhaust outlets, sunroof, five-spoke steering wheel, Gemballa Avalanche aftermarket body style kit, pop-up headlights, salvage title, chrome wheels with Porsche Stuttgart wheel center caps, Michelin tires, jack, tool roll, and a spare tire fitted in the front trunk. Amenities include climate control, power-adjustable sport seats, power mirrors, VDO Quartz-Zeit analog clock, JVC radio, sun visors with vanity mirrors, door pockets, and a locking glove compartment. An eye-catching 930 Turbo that is running and driving, however, it will benefit from some current servicing to be roadworthy. **For \$59,950**



1989 Porsche 930 Turbo Coupe #15289

Presenting this highly collectible 1989 Porsche 930 Turbo Coupe featured with matching numbers and 56,517 miles on the odometer. Finished in its factory color scheme of Black (A1) over a black leather interior. This Porsche 930 Turbo is equipped with a 650 5-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 3.3-liter engine, four ventilated disc brakes, dual exhaust outlets, VDO dash gauges, fog lights, three-spoke steering wheel, ducktail spoiler, rear bumperettes, rear window wiper, Porsche-branded floor mats, Fuchs wheels with Starline tires, and a spare tire fitted in the front trunk. Amenities include air conditioning, sport front seats with electric height adjustable, power sunroof, AM/FM radio, door pockets, dashboard ashtray, lockable glove compartment, and sun visors with vanity mirrors. In addition to the equipment, this car comes with the owner's manual booklet, a maintenance booklet with stamps dating from the 1980s, manufacturer's literature, a copy of the Certificate of Authenticity, and service receipt copies totaling over \$38,300 dating from May 1988 through April 2008. This example that was previously owned by a PCA member (Porsche Club of America) also comes with a clean Carfax report. The color code and options sticker are both still in place under the hood. Do not miss your opportunity to get behind the wheel of this astonishing 1989 930 Turbo that is ready to be enjoyed and is mechanically sound. **For \$179,500**



1975 Porsche 911S Sunroof Coupe #15112

Presenting this 1975 Porsche 911S Sunroof Coupe that is available in its factory color code #936 Silver Metallic with a black interior. The vehicle comes equipped with a manual transmission, upgraded with a 1975 Flat 6 Cylinder 2.7-liter Carrera engine, power windows, sunroof, 4-wheel disc brakes, and spare tire. An original blue plate California car that is mechanically sound. **For \$49,950**



1976 Porsche 911S Targa #14868

Presenting this 1976 Porsche 911S Targa is available in its factory color code #936 Silver Metallic with a black interior. The 911S comes equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 2.4-liter engine, 4-wheel disc brakes, Fuchs wheels, jack, and spare tire. Also includes the original Owner's Manual, Warranty/Maintenance booklet, Window Sticker copy as well as service documents and receipts copies totaling over \$10,000. A very presentable air-cooled Porsche that is mechanically sound. **For \$56,500**



1977 Porsche 911S Coupe #14342

Presenting this matching numbers 1977 Porsche 911S Coupe that is available in its factory color code #266 Ice Green Metallic with a black interior. The vehicle comes equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 2.7-liter engine, air conditioning, power windows, sunroof, 4-wheel disc brakes, Fuchs wheels, and spare tire. An extremely desirable and beautiful color combination 911S Coupe that is mechanically sound. **For \$54,500**



1981 Porsche 911SC Coupe Euro-Spec #14614

Presenting this Euro-Spec 1981 Porsche 911SC Coupe featured with matching numbers is available in its factory color code #655 Platinum Metallic with a brown interior. The 911SC comes with a clean Carfax and is equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 3.0-liter engine, power windows, sunroof, 4-wheel disc brakes, Fuchs wheels, and spare tire. Also includes service documents and receipts copies totaling over \$31,000. A well-maintained air-cooled Porsche that is mechanically sound. **For \$54,500**



1973 Porsche 911E Targa #12666

Here is a recently discovered 1973 Porsche 911E Targa featured here with matching numbers is available in its factory color code #117 Light Yellow with a black interior. It comes equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, 4-wheel disc brakes, G28 Group options: 5 trim, heated rear glass, sway bars, 3 instrument, air conditioning, and Fuchs wheels. This is an extremely original Porsche 911E (please review paint meter reading photos). A very sought-after original blue plate California car that is an excellent addition to any Porsche enthusiast. Don't miss your chance to acquire this original 911 that is mechanically sound. **For \$89,950**



1978 Porsche 911SC Coupe #15088

This matching numbers 1978 Porsche 911SC Coupe featured with 70,774 miles on the odometer and is available in its factory color code #027 Guards Red with a black interior. The vehicle comes equipped with a 5-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 3.0-liter engine, sunroof, 4-wheel disc brakes, Cookie Cutter wheels, spare tire, tool kit, and jack. Also includes the original Owner's Manual, Warranty/Maintenance booklet, Window Sticker copy as well as service documents and receipts copies totaling over \$10,000. An excellent original California car with lots of history, documentation, and a fantastic addition to any collection. Do not miss your chance to jump into the ownership of this 911SC Coupe that is mechanically sound. **For \$59,950**



1996 Porsche 993 Turbo #15340

Presenting this 1996 Porsche 993 Turbo Coupe featured with 37,613 on the odometer and finished in a gorgeous color combination of Polar Silver Metallic with a black interior. Equipped with a 6-speed manual transmission, Flat 6 Cylinder 3.6-liter engine, 4 vented disc brakes, air conditioning, power side mirrors, power windows, front seats w/electric height, automatic speed control, sunroof, Porsche Twist wheels with Bridgestone tires, tool kit, air compressor, Alpine radio, Quartz VDO clock, and a spare tire. Also includes the owner's manual booklet and warranty booklet. An extremely sought-after and well-equipped air-cooled 993 Turbo that is mechanically sound. **For \$208,500**



2005 Porsche 911 Carrera Coupe 6-Speed #15187

Presenting this elegant 2005 Porsche 911 Carrera Coupe 6-Speed featured with 52,680 miles on the odometer and is available in its factory color code #041 black with a black interior. The vehicle comes equipped with a 6-speed manual transmission, heated front seats, air conditioning, power windows, Bi-Xenon headlamp package, Power seat package, power steering, Bose high-end sound package, sunroof, Michelin tires, and 4-wheel disc brakes. A well-equipped 911 Carrera Coupe that is mechanically sound. **For \$49,950**

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BASIC INSTINCT

Perceived wisdom suggests the four-cylinder 912 was just a budget 911 — all show, but not a lot of go. Truth is, the 912 comprehensively outsold the 911 during its three-year lifespan, but is only now getting the recognition it so richly deserves...

Words **Steve Bennett** Photography **Dan Sherwood**







Was the 912 the car that saved the 911? Well, not quite, but it played a vital role in supporting the 911 in its early launch years, when Porsche enthusiasts were getting their heads around the huge leap forward the six-cylinder model represented over the outgoing 356. And while that huge leap forward in performance and modernity was obviously welcome, the price was a slightly different matter. The problem? In Germany the 'old' 356 1600 SC cost DM16,450, whereas the new 911 was listed at an ambitious DM22,900, almost half as much again. Ouch.

This dramatic increase wasn't lost on Porsche's marketing department, aware as always of the company's humble Volkswagen origins. There needed to be an entry-level event to support the 911, at least while a suitable model range was developed. Enter, then, the 912. For all intents and purposes, it was a four-cylinder 'budget' version of the 911, but as we will see, it was also much more.

The first entry-level Porsche? A gateway drug, in modern speak. Certainly, but one which would introduce a new audience to the Porsche way of life — buyers who might progress to the brand's more aspirational/expensive models. This blueprint has worked miracles for Porsche's bottom line and image over the years. The 912 set the template for the 914, after all, followed by the 924 and, much later, the Boxster. Huge sellers one and all. And while it's unlikely Porsche will ever build a contemporary 912, the modern equivalent would be putting the turbocharged B4 flat-four from the 718 Boxster/Cayman twins into a new 911. Food for thought.

In this regard, the 912 was a something of a bargain. At DM17,000 it was just DM550 more than the outgoing 356 SC, while offering all the style, sophistication and

dynamics of the new and substantially more expensive 911. The sacrifice? Two-cylinders, 400cc and 40bhp.

While the 911's new two-litre, quad-cam, 130bhp flat-six provided the sting in the tail, when planning the 912, Porsche pragmatically decided to make use of what it already had in its power unit cupboard, and so installed the 90bhp, OHV flat-four from the 356 SC. Performance figures? The 912 cruises to 60mph in 13.5 seconds, as opposed to the 911's rather sprightlier 9.1 seconds. Flat-out, it's 115mph versus 130mph.

While this might sound like short change in the present, the 912 was a massive and instant success, a fact proved by Porsche's sales figures. In its first nine months of production — to the end of 1965 — some 6,401 912s were produced, either by Porsche in Stuttgart or the Karmann Karosserie in Osnabrück.

By way of comparison, just 3,390 911s were sold

Above Originally delivered to Brumos Porsche in Jacksonville, Florida, John's 912 subsequently made its way to Sweden, where it was recommissioned by the previous owner





Above and below Tactico Racing Atelier Viceroy steering wheel may be one of only fifty-nine examples made, but it is the second to grace a *Classic Porsche* feature car in recent months

during the same period. The story was much the same the following year, with 3,730 911s produced against 9,090 912s. It would be 1968 (the final full year of 912 production) before sales of the 911 overtook those of its 'budget' brother. Perhaps, then, it was a case of 'job done' for the 912, particularly since the base 911 T was only twenty ponies up on the four-cylinder model, delivering 110bhp from its flat-six.

Was the 912 really that close to the 911? The power sacrifice was a given, but the answer is in the affirmative. Granted, the standard 912 made use of a four-speed version of the 901 gearbox, but many buyers opted for the five-speed unit. Otherwise, it was the very same bodysell, with the same 2,211mm wheelbase. The same disc brakes and rack-and-pinion steering, too, rather than

the 356's rather vague ZF steering box. Very early 912s had a three-dial dash, but soon adopted the full-five. Standard rubber floor mats were usually substituted

for better-quality, square-weave carpet. Seats were the same flat and bouncy perches found in the 911. They seem almost comical today — the 911 of the 1960s

INTEREST IN THE 912 IS STRONG RIGHT NOW, BOTH FOR ORIGINALITY AND HOT RODDING, TO WHICH THE MODEL LENDS ITSELF

could never be described as in anyway luxurious. The 912 was no different.

Little surprise the 912 was a massive hit in the North American market, building on California's passion for the 356, its Speedster variant and a culture ideally suited to the more laidback performance of the 'baby 911'. In total, some twenty thousand 912s were exported the USA, two-thirds of the entire production run. Volkswagen enthusiasts also took to the 912, it's flat-four being a direct link to the Beetle's charismatic off-beat powerplant. And, of course, the 912 was available in Targa form, which suited the West Coast vibe perfectly.

Meanwhile, in grey and drab Blighty, the 912 was a very rare sight indeed, rather like the 911 and the 356 before it. While leftie 912s are relatively plentiful worldwide, a right-of-centre example is a very rare beast. Relatively plentiful, we say? Well, yes, but to qualify this statement, we should point out how the 912 is a substantially rarer machine than its contemporary 911. While both ended up selling in big numbers, the 912 was dramatically culled as it slid down the Porsche food chain. Remember, there was a time when even early 911s were pretty worthless and subject to all sorts of indignities. The same befell the 912, but only worse, to the point these cars were seemingly not worth saving. As you'd expect, US-destined examples fared rather better, which proved useful when the resurgence in 912 interest came around — the North American market stepped in to satisfy demand.





Interest in the 912 is very strong right now, both for originality and hot rodding, to which the model lends itself so well. Not that a 912 is particularly 'budget' these days. Those £7,000 cars of twenty years ago are more 'POA' today, and it costs as much to restore a 912 as it does a same-age 911. Well, it would really, wouldn't it?! Sure, you might save a bit on the engine work, but you'll be looking at over six-figures to the job properly, even if a nicely presented 912 sourced from America. That's the current world of the classic

Porsche, where there's absolutely no room for the bodgery of the past and restoration is a hand-crafted artisan pursuit, up there with the finest.

Then again, we know all this, don't we?! What about the 912 driving experience and the oft talked about weight factor, which gives the 912 a very different feel to the 911? The flat-four is, you see, substantially lighter than the two-litre flat-six. As a consequence, the weight distribution of the 912 is 44/56 front/rear, compared with

41/59 for the 911. Overall, the 912 weighs in at 970kg. Compare this to 1,080kg for an early 911. The difference might not sound significant, but it really does alter driving dynamics.

Modest performance, maybe, but modest weight to punt around. A 912 feels light, too. Perched upright behind the thin-rimmed wheel, progress at first feels

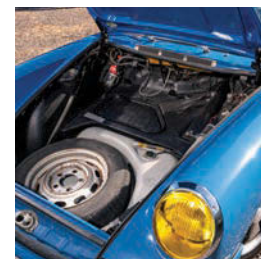
vague, but you soon realise the meaty steering associated with later 911s isn't there. The thinner tyres react immediately to inputs, but thanks to a much reduced footprint and front

end weight, the feedback is delicate and detailed, rather than heavy with grip and kick-back from wider rubber. There's a similar poise to the ride quality — a 912 drifts over broken surfaces, with a deftness coming from a light body, low unsprung weight and tyres with an unfashionable profile.

And the weight balance when compared to a 911? Yes, you do feel it. Light though a 912's steering maybe in isolation, it's actually more *feel/some* than that of

Above Rebuilt flat-four gives plenty of poke for twisty British back roads

THE CAR WAS DELIVERED TO BRUMOS, A FACT CAPABLE OF EXCITING EVEN THE MOST CASUAL OF PORSCHE ENTHUSIASTS



Above John organises regular Porsche meets at the Podium Café in Newbury — check out his Insta feed at @myblue912 to find out when the next gathering is taking place

Below Ride height was lowered as part of a suspension makeover

a 911, the weight bias of the bigger-engined Porsche making itself known. Likewise, the 912 delivers less of a pronounced swing at the rear. The numbers don't lie — this four-cylinder Porsche has a balance all of its own. Performance, too. The pushrod flat-four isn't an engine taking too kindly to being extended, but 90bhp is still meaty enough. Typically, it feels strong in the mid-range, which is exactly where you want your grunt on the road. And, remember, this brilliant boxer only has to propel 970kg. You learn to carry the speed and make the most of the torque. It's a different kind of progress, not entirely different to contemporary British roadsters (think MGB with a 90bhp pushrod B-series), but with a beat all of its own. Overall, it is more relaxing, more of a cruiser, than a flat-six screamer.

In the end, the 912 just made it to the 1969 model year. With it came an extended wheelbase, achieved by lengthening the rear suspension trailing arms and slightly modifying the rear arches, per the 911. This was Porsche's first stab at improving the occasionally

wayward handling of its cars. Funnily enough, the weight distribution of the 911 was then 43/57 front/rear, making it almost the same as the 912.

BACK FROM THE DEAD

There was a short-lived 912 resurrection in 1976. The subject of another story altogether, the curious case of the G-series 912 E certainly has resonance, conceived once again as an entry-level Porsche to fill the gap between the canned 914 and the not-quite-ready 924. Unlike its predecessor, the 912 E featured not a pukka Porsche engine, but a two-litre Volkswagen flat-four, which previously called the 914 home. And like the original 912, the E-badged variant produced a not especially heady 90bhp. While Porsche might have been able to get away with this level of output in 1965, the 912 E was given a sound kicking by just about anyone with an opinion and lasted barely a year in production. Fair? Maybe it's time to revisit, but not today, for we have two prime examples of early 912 goodness gathered at Rindt Vehicle Design, each car rather neatly representing the two overriding facets of 912 enthusiasm, which is to say the Volkswagen-inspired hot rod vibe and full restoration. Each of our star cars is dressed in a colour suiting its purpose. Or should that be 'Sports Purpose'? This is how John McDonald describes the look of his Golf Blau (code 6605 for Porsche paint pervs) beauty.

John is your classic Volkswagen-turned-Porsche fan. As surely as night follows day, he moved from a Beetle to a split panel van, to a 914 and, finally, his dream 912. "I did all the VW shows, including Bug Jam, Run to the Sun and more. There was always a few 356s and Speedsters in attendance, as well as 914s and, of course, the occasional 911. I always had an affinity with the four-cylinder cars, though."

These days, buying a car takes into consideration vehicles spread across the globe — we now take advantage of a worldwide digital marketplace. John kept an eye on all the machinations of the 912 scene via





various platforms, including the very simple expedient of Instagram and the #912 hashtag. "I thought I'd probably missed the 912 boat, but this car came up for sale in Stockholm, Sweden. I'd seen it before. I'd actually 'liked' photographs of the car on social media, so it was fitting to see it reappear on Instagram with a note saying it was available for purchase."

First registered in September 1965, the car was delivered to Brumos Porsche in Florida, a fact capable of exciting even the most casual of Porsche enthusiasts, given the legendary status of the Florida dealership and race team, not to mention the Brumos Porsche museum. Oh, and this 912 is a 'five on the floor', as its target US audience would say.

John bought the car back in 2019. "I can't claim to have had much or any influence on how it looks," he admits. "Having said that, it looks and is specified just how I wanted it. All credit must really go to Jesse Willstedt." 912 fans may well have heard of Jesse. He's renowned in 912 circles and restored John's car some ten years ago, taking the shell back to bare metal and replacing the floor pans, front suspension pan and attending to any rot, not that there was much to contend with — being from sunny climes, the car's metalwork wasn't too bad.

Jesse gave the '65 a mild hot rod makeover,

comprising lowered suspension, Koni shocks, Elephant Racing bushes and six-inch Fuchs. He also treated the car to an engine refresh with valves lapped and shimmed to correct heights. The Solex carbs were serviced with new seals and floats, while the accelerator pumps were set to factory specification. The original 022-dizzy was rebuilt, and a sports exhaust was fitted for a more aggressive noise. This isn't a concours Porsche and the engine isn't the original, but none of this matters for a

car wearing its patina with pride.

"I knew this was the 912 for me and I knew I needed to get over to Stockholm quickly," John recalls. "I jumped on to Skyscanner and got

a flight for £39. It was almost surreal. I left home on the Wednesday, saw the car on the Thursday and was back at work on the Friday." He who dares and all that! "It's not a fast Porsche, but then again, I don't want a fast Porsche. When you've grown up around air-cooled VWs, then fast isn't really on the radar! For me, this car is about style. That said, it goes well, but its more than a cruiser. It's the perfect 'cars and coffee' machine, a great excuse to get out and meet other Porsche and VW fans." Handy that, not least because John runs his own events at the Podium Café in Newbury. Check out his Instagram page (which you can find at [@myblue912](#)) for advanced warning of 2023 meets, of which there will be many. In fact, you should get along to the next one, scheduled

Above Classic black-on-black is a superb finish for this immaculately restored 912, though Rindt Vehicle Design head, Brian Richardson, confirms black it isn't the easiest colour to paint

THERE'S ALWAYS THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN, WHICH IS TO REFERENCE THE OTHER 912 IN THIS DYNAMIC DUO



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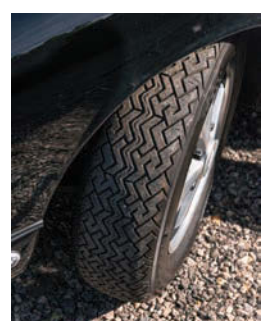
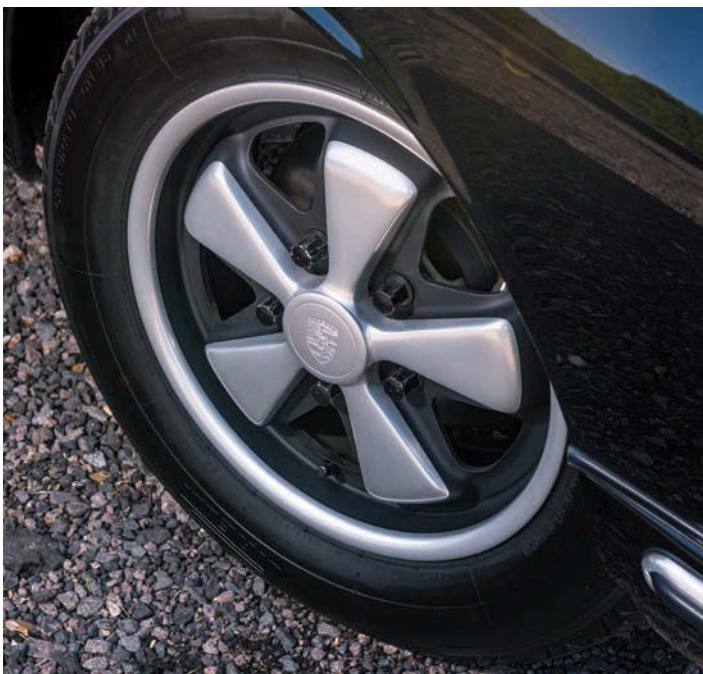
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Above Four-cylinder boxer has been rebuilt and has consequently regained poke

Facing page and below Brian says this 912 is his favourite Rindt Vehicle Design restoration and is the one customers talk about more than any other of the firm's recently finished projects

to take place Sunday 26th February and promising a plethora of air-cooled classics to drool over.

There are plenty of neat touches to his car. We love the hot rod sticker collection on the rear windows and, inside, a Tactico Racing Atelier Viceroy, one of just fifty-nine examples manufactured. Penned by graphic designer, Glenn Cordle, the design caught the eye of Sung Kang, best known for playing the character, Han, in the *Fast & Furious* movies. Kang helped bring the design to reality exclusively for Tactico. Fitted to a removable boss and individually numbered, the wheel is 380mm in diameter, allowing clear view of the dash gauges in classic Porsche fashion. A laminated white ash back provides warmth and gives the Viceroy a unique look when viewed from different angles, while the rim is expertly trimmed in full-grain Italian leather with white stitching. It makes a nice change from the usual MOMO Prototipo.

Any future plans? "Not really," John smiles. "This car is pretty much exactly how I want it. I don't want concours. Moreover, I wouldn't use concours. I suppose I'd like

some bucket seats on account of the originals being a bit flat and not very comfortable, but otherwise, I'm happy to simply drive and maintain this Porsche as is."

DIFFERENT STROKES

We get it. This is exactly the sort of 912 we love. Not too precious and perfectly usable. There's always the other side of the coin, though, which is to reference the other 912 in this dynamic duo. It's the reason that we have chosen Rindt Vehicle Design to host this 912 tribute.

The 'other side' is a concours 912. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged as one of the best around. In black and chrome, this four-cylinder stunner is as near perfect as you will ever see a 912 and is just one of many rolling testimonies to the talent on tap at Rindt, something we saw for ourselves when *Classic Porsche* dropped in to visit the firm's workshops in advance of the company profile we ran in our December 2022 issue.

Rindt was conceived by former professional golfer and Porsche fanatic, Brian Richardson, and is managed by him and Rindt customer-turned-director, Trevor Ward. These guys oversee an in-house team of professionals that between them can turn a hand to every facet of restoration, modification (including electrification) and race car preparation. Nothing here is outsourced — every stage of every build is accounted for at Rindt's sprawling Twyford base.

Tellingly, perhaps, of all the classic Porsches the team has built, this 912 is, for Brian, the pinnacle, his favourite. "It is just perfect," he beams. "It's my favourite Rindt car and is by far the most talked about. I took it to the Bicester Heritage Scramble in December and people just loved it. Besides, black is the best colour for these early Porsches, even if it is a nightmare to paint."

Being one of a handful of UK-registered, right-hand drive 912s sold through AFN Chiswick in 1968, it's a rare Porsche, too. And, amazingly, while it's easy to think there's no more barn finds or rarities to be found, this one popped up on eBay. "It was almost scrap," recalls Brian.





"It was in boxes and boxes of bits." Ask whether restoring a 912 is really worth the expense, especially when the car in question is so far gone, and he rightly points out how, in terms of investment and profit, very few restorations are actually worth doing. The heart rules the head. The reward is a car to keep, enjoy and pass on to future generations.

Even so, to a degree, the numbers still need to stack up. Fortunately, the value of air-cooled Porsches in the present means

even the worst of the worst is worth saving and, mercifully, all parts are available to do achieve as much. And where an item isn't listed

by Porsche Classic, it can be recreated. "These were hand-built cars, and they still are," Brian reasons. "Even a genuine Porsche body panel has to be hand-finished into position. There aren't many old Porsches that haven't been restored by now. Those that haven't are all likely to be in pretty poor shape, even if they hail from the West Coast of America."

Back to black. This is pretty much a standard 912, right down to the four-speed gearbox, save for a few choice customer requests. Full Connolly leather, green dials and silver badges stand out, as opposed to the more blingy gold body decoration of the same-age 911. Better braking materials make a big difference, while more recently, the engine has been gently and sympathetically tweaked.

"We rebuilt the flat-four with new pistons, bigger valves and bigger downdraught Webers. It's more peppy now, with improved drivability, but it's important to note these cars aren't really about power. A 912 is just a lovely, relaxed Porsche to drive."

While John represents the Volkswagen-to-Porsche hot rod connection, Brian and Trevor at Rindt are seeing, perhaps, a different kind of customer through their doors. "We're getting a lot of classic 911 owners asking

about 912s," Trevor confirms. "Today's marque enthusiasts see the 912 as a very much part of the 911 story. And, of course, there's the 356 connection."

As for all the barn finds and unrestored cars drying up, the Rindt team has just discovered another right-hand drive 912. "It's waiting for a customer to come along and commission a restoration," Trevor reveals, inviting us to take the plunge. Whoever ends up with this car, they certainly won't be disappointed — the 912 deserves its moment in the sun, a reappraisal, if you like.

Ask most folk about the model's position in the Porsche pantheon and the concept of a four-cylinder 911 lookalike, we're pretty sure the response would be a shrug and something along the lines of 'poor man's 911', but know this: the 912's star shone bright and did its bit to smooth the path of the early 911, while comprehensively outselling it along the way. Hardly the underdog. **CP**

Above Mildly modified or standard specification? Which 912 would you be driving home?

AS FOR ALL THE BARN FINDS DRYING UP, THE RINDT TEAM HAS JUST DISCOVERED ANOTHER RIGHT-HAND DRIVE 912

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KNIGHTS OF THE ROAD

Tantamount to the apocryphal barn find, Bob Knight lucked into an unblemished 356 B stashed away since 1973. Replete with a few carefully considered upgrades, the car is now on sale at air-cooled Porsche specialist, Karmann Konnection...

Words Johnny Tipler Photography Paul Knight







There's a pleasing symmetry about synergy over a car shared between father and son. Even when it's a possibility, there's a multitude of reasons (one man's meat, lack of funds, motivation, possessiveness or whatever) why such a collaboration might not work. Happily, in this case, we're looking at a 356 B amounting to a joint venture between Bob Knight and his boy, Paul. Knight the Elder was running a car body repair shop in Basildon, Essex, when he purchased this four-cylinder Porsche. At the same time, Paul was serving — as he still does — as editor of popular Volkswagen magazines. Both men, then, were admirably qualified to contemplate the 'barn find' and elect what to do for the best.

They deemed to perform full restoration on a car not in need of such drastic work would be tantamount to sacrilege. In contrast, judicious cleaning and measured fettling would do the Porsche justice as a 'survivor'. According to Paul, Luke Theochari of Terry's Beetle Services in Hanwell, West London, had kept the car in storage for many years. "I used to visit regularly, picking up parts for my many VW projects," says Knight Jr. "One day, Luke told me about an old Porsche he kept in a former dairy building. Intrigued, I asked him to show me the car. And there it was!"

Paul was told the car had been imported from Canada in 1968 and was subsequently UK road registered on a 1969 G-plate. The then owner used the diminutive Stuttgart sports machine for three or four years before parking it in a safe space and heading away on business. The car was never used again. "It was absolutely filthy, totally dirty!" Paul laughs, recalling his encounter with

the car in Hanwell. "It hadn't been touched for about ten years, but I could tell it was a lovely thing, with only about forty-five thousand miles on the clock. I told Luke I was interested in buying it, but he said it wasn't for sale."

Two years later, contrary to what he'd been told previously, Paul received a call from Luke offering him the 356. "He contacted me out of the blue and told me the car was available for purchase. Unfortunately, I didn't have sufficient funds, but I told my dad about the Porsche and he was keen to take it on, having my assurance it was a good example of a 356 in need of little more than recommissioning."

Bob ran Bob's Paint and Bodywork in Basildon. It was here Paul had learned his mechanical skills, working

Above If ever a 356 could be described as 'a family affair', then this imported B is surely it, such is its rich history with the Knight clan

Below How the car was when Paul first laid eyes on it





Above and below Interior was retrimmed from original black to green leather, though the shade is so dark, it looks black in most lights

alongside his dad, repairing and restoring mainly classic Volkswagens, plus the occasional Porsche. "I'd just equipped a Beetle with a 356 engine," he recalls. "I suppose you could say we were on a bit of a Porsche roll — we'd not long built an Apal Speedster replica, which made use of genuine 356 parts. This project really got us excited about early Porsches, which is why dad was keen to get hold of an original 356 coupé."

Evidently, Luke had kept the car in good running order, starting it once a month and rolling it backwards and forwards to keep the mechanicals from seizing up. It wasn't a going concern, though — the car required proper recommissioning. "It was running, but the brakes were non-existent, typical for an old Porsche left standing for so many years," Paul recalls. "I wanted to leave its cosmetic condition as was, fix the mechanicals and drive it as we found it, but dad disagreed. He saw this 356 very much as a keeper and committed to stripping

it down with the intention of a rebuild. I jumped on the mechanical side of things while he was dealing with the bodywork. We soon discovered there was a tonne of underseal to contend with. It had been applied very thick, presumably to ward off Canadian winters. We eventually removed three dustbin loads of the stuff!"

TAKE THE FLOOR

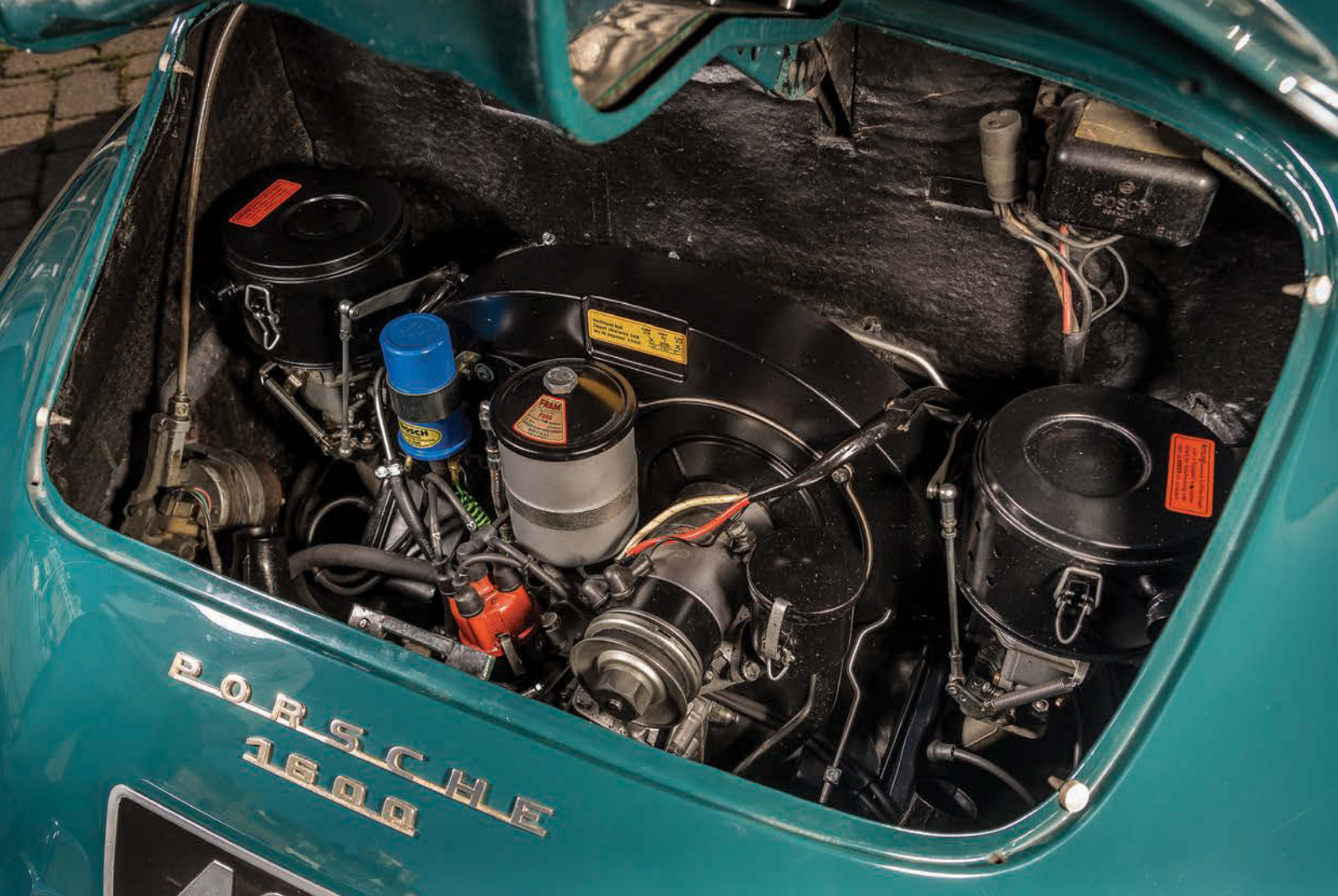
Bob and Paul employed a character known as Country Mike, whose job was to chip away every bit of underseal. When he'd finished, they could see the floorpan was in good shape. "The product had done its job. As you'd expect, the metalwork needed minor attention, but we were really only having to contend with a few previous repair patches in the wings, plus a couple on the floor. We didn't buy any new panels, though. Country Mike fabricated what we needed and welded it in."

Overall, the car's appearance was extremely good, with no corrosion, dents or crash damage to speak of, just a few little age-related marks to rectify. Indeed, Paul declared he wanted to go as far as he and his father could without subjecting the car to a full rebuild. "We're into preservation and conservation, rather than restoration," he tells us. With this in mind, the pair resolved to try and limit the exterior corrective work to a simple repaint.

Paul is proud of the job he did getting the Blaupunkt radio working. It's a unit retro-fitted underneath the dashboard early on in the car's life. There's a cassette player, too. At first, Paul thought it was a vintage eight-track device, but he now reckons it is, in fact, an early example of the very first in-car cassette player released by Philips in 1967. In its day, this was a hot hi-fi.

As far as the mechanicals were concerned, everything worked, though the clutch was slipping because the master cylinder was leaking. In the course of rectifying this complaint, Paul pulled the engine out. After a fierce debate about whether he should rebuild it, he decided to replace only the clutch, reasoning the flat-four was running reasonably well. "I used a Beetle 180mm heavy-





duty clutch, costing just over £1,500. It worked really well, but then I had to replace the accelerator pump because it fell to pieces." Logically, Paul also attended to the brakes. He was hoping to take advantage of a few spare drums stockpiled from various other projects. "I was planning to have them skimmed, but they weren't in as good condition as I thought. Instead, a local engineering shop remanufactured the parts for me, but we still had trouble with the fronts — we broke a couple. The work was beginning to get expensive!"

It was at this point a change of plan came into being: the 356 would be converted to run disc brakes. There's nothing too radical about such a switch, not least because the follow-on 356 C made use of discs as standard equipment. Even so, aficionados will tell you the drums on the late-model 356 B are perfectly adequate. Paul made the call to Custom & Speed Parts Autoteile (also known as CSP Shop), a company supplying disc brake conversions for air-cooled Volkswagen and Porsche cars since 1987. "The firm had just released a new disc brake kit," Paul remembers. "It was brilliantly made. CSP supplied the whole conversion kit, as well as a new master cylinder. The cost was about £1,200, but the upgrade made such a positive difference. The brakes on this car are now nothing short of amazing."

As far as the exterior is concerned, Bob painted the car in a lick of Fjord Green, replicating the original colour, which is a fairly unusual hue. The interior, meanwhile, was in a condition commensurate with a car that had covered so few miles, meaning it needed little more than a good clean.

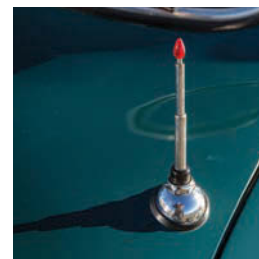
The next significant step was lowering the front

suspension. A visit to Karmann Konnection led to a run out in a 356 Carrera, the competition-focused version of the 356 line-up. Paul immediately decided the Fjord Green machine needed a nose as low as that of the racier Porsche. Now, the 356 already has adjusters in the front torsion bars. Paul noticed they are basically the same as those found on the Beetle, which he had vast experience of tweaking. "I decided to do for the 356 what I'd done to plenty of Beetles over the years," he shrugs. "I took the front suspension apart, concentrating on the adjuster blocks, and sanded those down as low as I could get them. Height was then down about an inch. I wanted a bit more, though, which is why I grabbed my Dremel and extended the slots on each of the bars. Eventually, I was able to reduce ride height by around two-and-a-half inches." The look was as he wanted it, but how had lowering just the front end affected ride and handling? No worries on that score. "It drove lovely thereafter. It handled exactly as I'd hoped. As for the looks, when you walk around the car, it simply looks more purposeful."

Unusually, this 356 also features a mounting for a rear windscreen wiper. "When we got the car, we talked about getting rid of this feature, but obviously someone had thought to add it to original specification," Paul confirms. "Ultimately, we fitted a new wiper." It's gone now, but could easily be recommissioned at Karmann Konnection, where the car is currently being offered for sale. "Oh, there's one more thing I'd like to point out," Paul urges. "The Venetian blind in the rear window is from an Australian-manufactured 1961 Beetle."

That's about as far as the mods go. Paul had the steel wheels sand-blasted and Bob repainted them to look as

Above Flat-four was fully rebuilt and oversized to 1.7 litres at Prill Porsche Classics



Above Paul's dad gave the car a full respray in Fjord Green, though a subsequent owner had the car painted again after accruing a number of nasty bodywork scratches

Below Venetian blind is from an Aussie-built 1961 Beetle

if they were standard originals. He also acquired fresh hubcaps, while Paul found a set of new-old-stock Pirelli XAF 165s. "I'm a bit of a tyre geek," he confesses. "This is exactly what I was after, complete with the check tread pattern. You can really throw a 356 around on this rubber."

This is pretty much how the car was when it ended its tenure with the Knights, by which time the clock had moved forward to 2008. Not long after, Bob closed his workshop, effectively retiring, while Paul focused on his journalistic and publishing activities. He is currently editor of *Volksworld*.

To get things in context, briefly, let's talk about the evolution of the 356. Launched in 1948, the first Porsche was effectively a mid-engined 356 Speedster — the flat-

four was located in front of the rear axle, per the later 550 Spyders and, much later, the Boxster family. The first 356 coupé was completed in July 1948, with rear-mounted 40bhp 1,131cc Volkswagen engine. Beware oversteer!

Bodies were made either in-house at the Porsche workshop in Gmünd or by Beutler and Reutter. Porsche relocated to Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen in 1949 and, later that year, ordered five hundred

bodies from Reutter Karosserie, setting the seal on the majority of 356 body supply for the duration of the model.

Deliveries to customers began in April 1950, with sales totalling thirty-three cars per month. In 1951, engine capacity rose to 1,286cc, with a 1,488cc unit available later in the year. Stylistically, the major advance came in 1952 with the introduction of a one-piece windshield in place of the two-pane screen. Inside, there was a folding rear seat, the spare wheel positioned upright for better luggage stowage, and bigger drum brakes were fitted. Significantly, the archetypal Porsche crest was also designed. By 1954, a host of model designations based on coupé, cabriolet and Speedster bodies were in play. The five-thousandth 356 rolled off the line in March 1954.

The 356 A appeared in October 1955 for the 1956 model year, flagging up improvements to mechanicals, suspension, steering and instrumentation. The 1500 GS Carrera (as featured in last month's issue of *Classic Porsche*) was the ultimate variant, though four other engine options were available. Myriad evolutions and upgrades were regularly introduced, such as vertical bumper guards, Zenith carburettors, a Haussermann diaphragm clutch and ZF steering box.

At the 1959 Frankfurt Show, the 356 B was unveiled for the 1960 model year. This new(ish) Porsche for a new decade featured raised bumpers front and rear — this

A COMPANY SUPPLYING DISC BRAKE CONVERSIONS FOR AIR-COOLED VOLKSWAGEN AND PORSCHE CARS SINCE 1987





Above The car, imported from Canada in 1969, is currently at Karmann Konnection patiently awaiting its next owner

was as radical a step as the belled impact bumpers imposed on the 911 in 1974. The 356's headlights were raised to the top of the front wing-line, with protruding parking lights above the bumper. Air intake grilles for brake cooling were inset below.

The front lid's leading edge was rounded off and the hubcaps now had raised centres. Cast aluminium brake drums had seventy-two radial fins and Alfin cast-iron liners. Larger oil pumps were installed in 1960, along with

further improvements to engine componentry. There were opening vent wings in the side windows and, in the cabin, the rear seats were lowered, with split seat backs to provide more accommodation in the back. Three kids, anyone?

In 1961, Koni dampers were introduced, with slightly smaller rear torsion bars and a transverse leaf, known as a camber compensator, to reduce rear roll stiffness. Open-top bodies were built by Drauz (the Convertible D) and D'leteren (Roadster), with Karmann making the notchback coupé. In 1962, the 356 B received two grilles in its engine lid, and the coupé got a bigger rear window, plus a trapdoor for the fuel filler in the right-hand front wing. The fuel tank itself was now a flatter unit filling more of the floor (or the front compartment), while the battery was relocated to the right-hand side.

The two-litre Carrera model was released in September 1961 for the 1962 model year, and, in 1963, Porsche acquired Reutter and thus effectively brought body construction in-house, leaving the seat manufacturing

side of the business as an independent company (Recaro). This move paved the way for the 356 C, launched in July 1963. The major innovation was disc brakes, supplied by Ate under licence from Dunlop. Minor modifications instituted annually contrived to improve drivability, handling, comfort and ease of maintenance,

whilst at the same time, a host of subtle yet beneficial modifications were made to the 1600 (1,582cc) engines at the behest of Hans Mezger, Porsche's engineering design

PAUL TOOK A CALL FROM THE RAYLEIGH GARAGE AND WAS INFORMED SOMEONE HAD MADE AN OFFER

wizard from 1956 to 1985. Production of the 356 C ended in September 1965, marking a total of 76,303 examples of the 356 during a fruitful fifteen-year run.

Going back to our feature car, then, a little more history is in order. During Bob Knight's ownership, this gorgeous green 356 didn't venture far. According to Paul, "to be honest, he was one of those guys for whom it was all about the build. He recommissioned, restored and modified cars, but never really drove them. I'm the opposite. Any car I own, I just want to drive the crap out of it, every chance I get. Dad drove the 356 to Norfolk a couple of times, but his hobby was fishing. He'd put his rods in the Porsche and drive over to the local fishing lake. I thought the car deserved better than being left in a muddy field while its owner went fishing! He had grand intentions of taking it to the Le Mans Classic, but he ended up attending the event with a friend in a Jaguar XK120. I'm sure the Porsche would have been more fun, but they probably had a bit more room in the Jag. It's safe to say I did more miles in the Porsche than he ever did."



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Above and facing page

The Knights preferred preservation over restoration, resulting in a wonderfully original classic Porsche

Father and son were nothing if not prolific petrolheads. "At one point we had about twenty-seven cars between us, but the 356 was the only one he kept hold of," Paul reminisces. "All the others went. He kept the Porsche for a few years, but by the time he retired, the only person using it was me.

A friend of his owned a classic car sales garage in Rayleigh, Essex, and invited him to park the Porsche in the sales showroom,

reasoning everybody loves a good 356 — visibility would equate to good publicity and, potentially, a higher rate of customer footfall. Incidentally, the same dealer sold the Apal Speedster we built. It went to a museum in Austria."

It was only a matter of time before a buyer emerged for the Fjord Green 356 B. Indeed, Paul took a call from the Rayleigh garage and was informed someone had made an offer. Bob conceded it was time for the car to head to pastures new.

FRIENDS REUNITED

Time passed, but somewhat inevitably, Porsche paths crossed — Paul saw his dad's old 356 at a classic car sale in 2021. "I walked up and spoke to the owner. I told him I'd carried out a lot of work on the car. To my surprise, he didn't know much of the history behind it, having bought the Porsche blind. It has stayed in Southend and the surrounding area, but has changed hands a few times over the years."

Paul next saw this 356 up close when he came to take the photos you see on these pages. He captured them at Karmann Konnection, where the car is currently advertised for sale. "Since parting with this car all those years ago, I hadn't seen it in detail until *Classic Porsche* editor, Dan Furr, asked me to photograph it for

inclusion in the magazine. I was shocked to discover how, somewhere along the line, someone had re-covered the seats. This is a real shame because they were in tip-top condition and original to the car. That said, the team at Karmann Konnection advised me the seller didn't like

the black upholstery, hence commissioning a retrim in dark green. Truth be told, photographing the car was an emotional experience. Many memories came flooding back."

THE ENGINE WAS HANDED TO PRILL PORSCHE CLASSICS FOR A FULLY DOCUMENTED REBUILD AND UPGRADED TO 1,720CC

This Porsche is currently waiting for its next owner at Karmann Konnection's base in Prittlewell, Southend-on-Sea, doyenne of the Essex Riviera. Patron, Ritchie King, gives us the lowdown from his perspective. "The car has never been fully restored, meaning it possesses an honest *feel*. The paint is holding up well, tribute to the fact the body was subjected to another respray after a previous owner scratched one of the panels. There's slight bubbling to the lower skin on the right-hand-side door and there are signs of age inside the car, but in November 2018, the engine, which is a non-matching numbers boxer from 1962, was handed to Prill Porsche Classics for a fully documented rebuild. While the work was carried out, the unit was upgraded to 1,720cc using 86mm pistons and liners." That's the bonus windfall in the story. Rest assured the invoice for this work is included in the car's accompanying documentation.

As Paul Boosey at Karmann Konnection sums up, "this is a great 356 in a rare factory colour. It drives brilliantly and comes with optional rear wiper. Included in the sale is a very rare under-the-dash panel housing an additional Blaupunkt pre-set radio unit, plus a rare mid-1960s Phillips cassette player." A real gem, then, adheres nicely to its original specification. Well, what are you waiting for?! **CP**

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SWISS CHALLENGE

In the mid-1980s, Swiss entrepreneur, Franco Sbarro, turned to Porsche power to underpin production of a spectacular car conceived to prove to the world Switzerland could innovate in automobile design...

Words **Karl Ludvigsen** Photography **Louwman Museum and Ludvigsen Partners**

Since the end of the 1960s, no Geneva Salon has been complete without a dramatic launch of a spectacular new car — or several — from the Neuchâtel eyrie of Franco Sbarro. Be it styling, mechanics or concept, Sbarro's creations are sure to astonish with their imagination and impetuosity. The man himself is as subdued as his automobiles are audacious. He speaks quietly, conspiratorially about his ideas and inventions, but his creations betray a vivid imagination, a desire to exploit Switzerland's famed neutrality, surrounded as it is by squabbling nations. And, it should be noted, more than one automobile company executive has been startled to open a trade publication only to discover Sbarro has ripped-off the design of a treasured classic icon. Ford, for example, learned in 1982 how Sbarro's shop was turning out replicas of the GT40. Moreover, he was presenting these cars as the real deal. At that year's Geneva Salon, a Ford executive (me) confronted the resourceful creator, telling him it wasn't kosher to pretend his replicas were originals. "Oh, it's

alright," Sbarro replied. "I have original chassis plates for the GT40s. I simply assign their numbers to these new cars." Swiss GT40 production subsided thereafter.

Sbarro likes a 'challenge', which is why you see the car on these pages. He built it, he said, because he read a review of the 1984 Geneva Salon that said there was "nothing new in Geneva". During a month and a half thereafter, he worked day and night on the design of a car nobody could say resembled any other four-wheeler in existence. This included his previous designs, which were usually modified production cars or imitations thereof.

The result was an automobile that was neither "three-volume" nor "two-volume". It had to be considered "one-volume", with its radical sloping nose blending into a low-slung cockpit and access to the cabin via scissor-action doors. Sbarro made a one-fifth-sized model of his vision and caddied time in Citroën's wind tunnel to evaluate drag. The result, said the French experts, was a coefficient of $C_d=0.16$, as low as had been measured for any road car at the time. Encouraged, Sbarro reckoned the drag of the series version of the car would be nearer



Above Though the 'scissor' doors opened widely, agility was still needed to duck under them and over the high door sills when venturing into the Challenge interior



Cd=0.25 — still low by 1980s standards. This validated the shape of the car he named Challenge, responding as he was to external opinion amounting to the Swiss event lacking novelty. “The lines of the Challenge are so personal that it does not resemble anything known,” said one press account. “It is a real tour de force, so unusual and yet so simple. It completely broke with the usual stereotypes of car production at the time.”

CROSS COUNTRY

The man who took up this ‘challenge’ was born Francesco Zefferino Sbarro on February 27th 1939 in the Apulian town of Presicce, located in the province of Lecce on the heel of Italy. Though of farming stock, he studied practical techniques in the province’s eponymous capital. In 1957, already obsessed by automobiles, Sbarro headed north to exploit his fabrication skills and interest. He found a berth as a machinist at a Borgward dealer in Neuchâtel before progressing to a BMW agency, where he served as technician.

His boss was the father of Georges-Henry Rossetti, the man who was to become Lamborghini’s largest shareholder.

“I then had an offer to join Scuderia Filipinetti,” Sbarro told motoring scribe, Richard Heseltine. “The job was based at Georges Filipinetti’s Chateau de Grandson. This was more in line with what I wanted to do. I was the chief mechanic or, to put it another way, the only mechanic! I did everything from fabrication to driving the race transporter. All I learned with the team was valuable experience for when I went into business for myself. While I was with Filipinetti, during the off season, I built a couple of VW-based sports cars, which Filipinetti helped sponsor, but that wasn’t enough. I needed to be my own boss. I loved motor racing. We had some success with Ferraris, GT40s, Cobras, Corvettes and so on, but I wanted to create cars of my own.”

Sbarro built his first automobiles in a workshop in the courtyard of Filipinetti’s stately manor house at Grandson,

ten miles from the French border on the south-west tip of Lake Neuchâtel. His debut design was a two-seater coupe prototype with tubular frame, five-litre Ford engine and fibreglass bodywork. In 1967, making his break, he bought a three-story former cigarette factory in Les Tuileries near Grandson, where with the assistance of four employees, he began his activity as a car manufacturer. In April 1968, he founded Ateliers d’études de Construction Automobiles Sàrl (ACA).

After delivering a car to England, Sbarro visited Eric Broadley’s Lola race car manufactory. “Without really thinking it through,” he related, “I announced my idea to convert a T70 coupe for road use. Eric was receptive and instructed me to have something ready for the Racing Car Show, which was only a few months away. I made some alterations to the doors to make the car easier to get into. I also added a larger rear screen. The cabin was trimmed in full leather, very luxurious. The car looked great. Eric and his American distributor, Carl Haas, thought there might be a market for a mad ‘race car for the road’, but nothing came of the project.” Independently (and somewhat predictably), Sbarro produced a dozen Lola-like coupes.

Realising he needed an emblem of his own (one to recognise him as a car maker), after long cogitation, he hit on an African greyhound of ancient extraction. This was the Sbarro mascot, leaping across his badges with verve. His first specialty was production of replicas of classic models. “It wasn’t something I had ever really thought about doing,” he recalled. “I was still part of the motorsport world, after all. I built several race cars, but they were not particularly successful. My customers tended to be ‘gentleman drivers’, meaning they were never likely to win. In truth, I started to lose interest in competition cars, which is why I was keen to produce more road cars. Then, in 1974, I was asked to make a

copy of a BMW 328.”

Launched at Geneva that year, the faux Bimmer became a money-spinner. In fact, Sbarro made 138 of these replica roadsters, each using BMW

IN WENT A TYPE 930 3.3-LITRE TURBOCHARGED AIR-COOLED FLAT-SIX, BRINGING 300BHP AT 5,500RPM

2002 components. He made fifteen more incorporating comparatively exotic design, such as wide bodies and turbochargers. “I stopped making the 328s while there was still demand,” said Sbarro. “My interest has always been in coming up with an idea and working things through. By the time a car is finished, I am already thinking about the next one. I don’t mind people associating me with replicas, but I am more interested in original design.”

Where “original design” is required, it would be difficult to surpass the unique profile of the Challenge. Car styling expert, Giancarlo Perini, assessed its emergence in the following manner. “The Challenge provides possibly the first and doubtless the most meaningful expression of what the controversial Swiss constructor himself considers to be the ultimate in performance, technology,

Above Franco Sbarro invested a month and a half in his conception of the Challenge, a car that would show what the Swiss could do to advance the art of car design



design, gadgetry and innovation. In short, the best car in the world, Sbarro-style."

With the Challenge, Sbarro broke free from the requirements of clients. This was his creation, his idea. He underpinned the seminal 1985 version with his own chassis, using motorsport-style suspension front and rear from a frame further stiffened by elements of the drivetrain. Mounted just forward of the rear wheels, the engine drove to a BorgWarner transfer case from a Jeep

Cherokee. Torque was distributed to all four wheels. Differentials at both ends provided a forty-five percent locking quotient. Sbarro kept the American off-roader's ultra-low gear. "The buyers of my cars don't just use them on the Autobahn," he explained. "They can have 6,000rpm up to 80mph, which together with four-wheel drive, gives exceptional acceleration."

Honouring a fellow Swiss entrepreneur, Sbarro fitted his creation with the ultra-wide sixteen-inch JJD wheels created by Jaroslav 'Jerry' Juhan, each of which carried two narrow tyres. The Czech émigré reckoned this gave better grip in all weathers and eliminated the need for a spare wheel because a blowout would affect only one of a wheel's tyres.

Integrated with a four-speed automatic transmission, Challenge's power source was a five-litre Mercedes-Benz V8 fed by two IHI turbochargers. Reaching half an atmosphere of boost at 2,500rpm, the twin turbos raised the V8's power from 231bhp to some 350bhp. The Audi Quattro's complete cooling system was adopted, with the radiator positioned behind the engine. Thus powered, covered by a fabric simulation of the final design, the 499kg chassis of the first Challenge took to the roads around Grandson for shakedown in the autumn of 1984.

Next came exacting work in the medium of fibreglass, with which Sbarro and his team were by now extremely competent. The Challenge's unique design demanded fresh interpretations everywhere. Especially 'challenging' was the tail section, where fine horizontal ribbing not only concealed running lamps, but also served to cool

the V8. Split ducts in the body's flanks delivered cooling air. Moreover, a Perspex panel was needed for a camera to provide rear vision to two screens in the cockpit. The

system not only had zoom and focus functions, but could also screen VHS videos (in the few lands where this was permissible). To add to the complexity, two roof sections rose to provide added stability and enhanced braking. An electro-pneumatic system could raise one 16.5x47-

Above Sbarro, an Italian who made good in Switzerland, pictured with a scale model of the Challenge, as he hoped to realise the car

Below On display at its permanent home, the Louwman Museum in The Hague, Netherlands, the original Challenge flaunts its scissor doors and seldom-seen rear wheel fairings

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Top In addition to its rear-view camera (above the nearside light cluster), the first Sbarro Challenge featured two electrically powered spoilers hinged from its roof, each helping with braking

Above In 1985, Sbarro's team made a conceptual body while the Challenge production panels were being manufactured from fibreglass

Left Striking livery was a key feature of the Challenge II, showing significant refinement from the original and adding rear seat space



Above Least fully resolved was the nose of the Challenge, seen here in version II guise

Below Geneva in 1986 was the venue for the appearance of the Porsche-powered 2+2 Challenge II, pictured accompanied by the Baby Challenge, a similar Sbarro running a Honda engine

inch panel to a twenty-degree angle, the other to sixteen degrees. They reacted automatically to application of the brakes. A sixteen-degree angle was enough to increase rear downforce by more than 362kg at 125mph for a car weighing 1,406kg. When required, the panels could be switched on to enhance stability, such as in wet weather.

Silentbloc attachments united body and chassis with foam-rubber cushioning. Encompassing the curved side windows, the Challenge's swing-up doors needed and received good hinges. Its subtly curved windshield was forty-four inches wide and forty-nine inches tall. It was so steeply inclined, it could be mounted in tracks allowing the screen to slide forward electrically almost sixteen inches, enough to provide a welcome sunroof effect. Occupants could cause a tinted overhead Perspex shade to slide almost a yard forward, leaving only the forward vision unobstructed. Stored out of view, the screen wiper was a rotary design.

Tubular structures in the Challenge's nose served to

give the necessary crash-energy absorption. Lifting the long lid showed space for a normal spare wheel and the fuel tank. Perspex covers protected deeply sunken headlamps. The driver used electric controls to adjust the pedal array distance, steering wheel distance and height. Seats were also adjustable, using the then new System Recaro to inject air into cushions, thereby giving the desired softness and support.

READING THE FUTURE

In such an exotic car, advanced in so many respects, observers were pleased to note the Challenge featured digital instruments. These were housed in a binnacle viewable through the steering wheel. Below them were controls and rows of warning lamps. Atop a deep divider between the seats was the transmission controller, complete with its short travel. The white Challenge was handsomely complemented by a Connolly caramel leather interior highlighted by burl walnut.

At the 1985 Salon in Geneva, Sbarro was coy about the price of such an exotic extravagance. He waved off the assumption the Challenge could be owned by nobody but an Arabian sheik. "There are many Sbarros in Japan, as well as in the United States," he said. About prices, he added, "I don't know them myself. By this, I mean I know at what price each car was invoiced, but I don't know how much money came back to me in profit. To know this, I would need oversight of all the components and all the working hours. Ipso facto, my prices would rise by fifteen percent. We would have to pay someone to take care of all the accounting." He did say, however, that for a Challenge as equipped as the Geneva show car, the price would be around \$125,000. For the series of ten cars he was planning, he thought the cost likely nearer \$100,000.

At the 1986 Geneva Salon, Sbarro unveiled his strategy. Though the car displayed looked externally identical to the Challenge of 1985, it had two seats squeezed in to make it a 2+2. His aim, so he told the press, was to commit to the plan of building ten such cars, a series branded Challenge





II. Sbarro's scheme was to power this newer Challenge in a completely different manner to that of its predecessor, thereby making room for the extra seating. Changing his loyalty from one Stuttgart brand to another, he turned to Porsche for a powerplant. In went a Type 930 3.3-litre turbocharged air-cooled flat-six, bringing 300bhp at 5,500rpm, but Sbarro wanted to preserve the abbreviated tail of his creation, which endowed it with considerable character. He came up with a typically ingenious solution: he shifted the engine-transaxle assembly a couple of feet forward from its usual position, thus clearing it away from the tail area. The half-shafts from the transaxle extended outward to the pivots of two fabricated cases containing sprockets to chains driving the rear wheels. Swinging from bearings in the car's frame, the cases also acted as the principal radius arms suspending the rear wheels. The flat-six nestled comfortably between the trailing arms.

Impressing with its livery, which transitioned from a metallic grey at the front to crimson at the rear, the Challenge II had an all-red interior and essentially Porsche instrumentation, compatible as it was with the powertrain. A Porsche-sourced steering wheel was also easily identifiable. Changes in the roof to give rear-seat headroom eliminated one of the hinged spoilers, the remaining one controlled electrically from the cockpit.

Challenge II was the third car built by Sbarro in the genre, which continued to draw crowds at motor shows. The fourth was a pearl-white Challenge II that featured on the Sbarro stand at Geneva in 1987, together with an all-new Challenge III. This third incarnation of the Challenge was created to deal with the severe constraints

on automobile features keeping the Challenge II from being approved for use in Switzerland and Germany. The solution, so Sbarro considered, was to build Challenge III on the chassis of an already approved vehicle, namely the contemporary 911 Turbo Cabriolet.

Adapting the Challenge concept to this more compact platform required exceptional skill. Instead of the 1985/1986 Challenge's 107-inch wheelbase, the new version's spacing was 89.4 inches. Front track went from 61.0 to 56.4 inches, while the rear shrank from 65.0 to 58.7 inches, these changes ruling out the original car's ultra-wide wheels and tyres.

BRING UP THE REAR

Making the Challenge III's wheelbase shorter by one-and-a-half feet was a test for Sbarro and his team, one to which they rose gallantly. Length was lost behind the doors, retaining but shortening the air-inlet scoops. The doors were slightly shorter, but their windows extended to their forward edges. The nose was shorter, while the tail was lengthened to house the Porsche powerplant, now in its usual outboard position.

Overall, the resulting car was a smoother, sleeker sports machine that lost little of its path-breaking charisma. It was altogether a more fully realised automobile. And it was practically all Porsche. This had several benefits. For starters, the original instrument panel and minor controls could be left in position to be surrounded by more lavish accoutrements. Also, the view under the front deck was the same as the donor Porsche, with its spare wheel and tyre, fuel tank and space for luggage.

Above The four tailpipes roaring from the air-cooled and turbocharged Porsche flat-six are certainly dramatic on this backside view of a Sbarro Challenge III



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The definitive Porsche-based Challenge III rolled on super-wide Pirelli P7 tyres (225/50 VR 15 on ten-inch aluminium rims at the front and 285/50 VR 15 on twelve-inch rims at the rear). Although not accepted in Germany or Switzerland (much to Sbarro's frustration), the show car made full use of Blaupunkt's rear-facing video camera and cockpit monitor.

The change to a fibreglass body meant less contribution to frame stiffness by the lower sheet metal, which is why Sbarro had to strengthen the platform along the door sills. With additional features, this meant the Challenge III weighed 1,352kg, some 136kg more than its donor Porsche, but some forty-five kilos less than the Challenge II. Smooth lines and less frontal area (thanks to its height being ten inches less than the Porsche, though an additional eight inches of width) contributed to the Challenge III's top speed of 175mph against the Porsche Turbo's 160mph. Zero to 60mph acceleration was in the six-second bracket.

Soon after 1987's Geneva Salon, Germany's Wolfgang Scholz had a chance to test the Challenge III show car. Finished in black with white interior accents, it was liveried according to the taste of its new owner, a Swiss discotheque proprietor. "Grumbling softly," Scholz wrote, "the black wedge glides through the sleepy little town on the banks of the Swiss Lac de Neuchâtel. A UFO seems to have landed amidst the old town houses, but scarcely any Swiss turns around. The residents of Grandson are used to it. Local dream car designer, Franco Sbarro, always tests his new creations like this."

"The high side sills make getting in and out an acrobatic affair," Scholz continued. "Then there is the unusual seating position and the very heavily tinted windows. Though occupants are comfortable in the standard Porsche seats, tall people almost touch the glass dome behind the back rests. The side windows extend exceptionally low. To some extent, this allows a greater amount of traffic to be observed, though the Perspex, bent almost at right angles, somewhat distorts the view. If you're looking for more contact with the

environment, you have to open the doors — the windows are fixed. The Challenge III drives just like the complete 911 Turbo convertible concealed under the fibreglass body. It pulls along easily on narrow country roads with tight curves. Partly rain-soaked ground accounts for typical 911 behaviour. From neutral handling, the black wedge pushes moderately over the front wheels, but beware if the driver steps on the gas pedal too boldly. With little notice, the tail of the vehicle thrusts outward. The steering helps — it's light and pretty direct."

"Porsche's chassis tuning remains unchanged," Scholz added. "Though the Challenge III looks sporty, it's not uncomfortable. Short bumps show little harshness. After a period of getting used to things, this dream car can even be driven in narrow streets and reverse-parked, if necessary."

THIRD TIME UNLUCKY

Though the most practical of the Challenge series, the III was destined not to be emulated in its original form. One more Challenge II was completed in 1991, built on a 911 Turbo chassis stretched to a 96.2-inch wheelbase, the result of a concentrated two-year effort by two of Sbarro's team. It was the seventh and last of the Challenge line. The cars were dispersed as far as Japan, America, Singapore, Spain and France, with at least one staying home in Switzerland.

When queried about the Challenge in the twenty-first century, Sbarro was dismissive. "It was a great concept," he avowed, "but the Challenge didn't turn out how I had imagined." Having lost money on all of the seven examples he completed, he vowed not to continue their production. They've since become collector cars, not that they appear on the open market frequently.

Although the Franco Sbarro saga has many high points, the Challenge is one of the highest. It brought Sbarro and Switzerland world-wide publicity and established him as expert in the creation of adventurous, outlandish and enjoyable sports cars. It convincingly met its 'challenge', aided greatly by its Porsche underpinnings. **CP**

Above To accommodate its turbocharged Porsche engine, the tail of the not-repeated Challenge III was lengthened

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METAL GURUS

To the South West of England we head, where 550 Spyders are being built from the ground up to exacting factory specification. It's a remarkable achievement and testament to what goes on behind North Devon Metalcraft's shuttered, industrial unit doors...

Words **Steve Bennett** Photography **Andy Saunders**



Another town, another unremarkable industrial estate, yet behind the roller doors, amazing things are happening. This is true not just of where we find ourselves on this wintry day in Devon, but all over the UK. Forget the big stuff. We are, at heart, a nation of small businesses fuelled by passion, where traditions and skills are preserved, not to mention batons passed, often behind an unremarkable company identity.

We're in Barnstaple, home to North Devon Metalcraft. The 'craft' bit of the name might give you a hint regarding what happens here. Equally, 'light' and 'bushel' spring to mind – within the firm's unassuming workshop, a small but perfectly formed team of metal gurus are handcrafting, beating, tapping, shaping and cajoling steel and aluminium. The resulting bodysells are faithful artisanal reproductions of sports cars from an era when this type of vehicle was renowned for style and beauty – curves in all the right places. Think AC Cobra, Jaguar C-Type, Ferrari 275, Triumph TR2 and even the classic Bentley Continental.

When Jaguar Heritage wanted a complete aluminium body to recreate its stillborn 1960s Le Mans XJ13 prototype, it commissioned North Devon Metalcraft to deliver the goods. And now there's a 550 Spyder to drool over, too. More on the Porsche in good time. There is, after all, a back story here – specialists with a reputation as solid as that of North Devon Metalcraft don't just pop up overnight.

The company is headed by John Evans and his brother, Paul. John is our tour guide and has the ability to

make the skills he has grown up with sound as though they're nothing special. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth, as our pictures testify.

The brothers have their father, Brian, to thank for leading them to the work they find themselves doing, although as is so often the case when it comes to dads and their boys, they were once blissfully unaware of his talents, as John explains. "I left school at sixteen and didn't know what to do with my life. At the time, I didn't realise Dad had these skills. I started to take an interest in his work and couldn't believe what I was seeing. As a child, I didn't taken any much notice, but as a

Above All manner of mechanical and cosmetic work is carried out by Stuttgart Classica, from bolt-on upgrades to full restomod projects

Below The 550 Spyder at the 1955 24 Hours of Le Mans





Above Old-school skills and supremely analogue equipment amounts to authentic, hand-built continuation sports cars

Below North Devon Metalcraft is well versed in the art of restoring air-cooled classics, acting as service supplier to some of the best-known historic Porsche specialists

teenager, I was amazed to see him making cars. It didn't take long for me to decide that's what I wanted to do for a living."

Brian worked at Carbodies, a Coventry-based coachbuilder of some repute, established by jobbing coachbuilder, Bobby Jones, in the 1920s. In the days of separate chassis and bodies, a coachbuilder was an intrinsic part of the car building business. Carbodies supplied many makes, including MG, Alvis, Invicta and Railton. The 1930s were good to the company, but like many of the UK's industrial manufacturers, Carbodies was eventually drafted in to assist with the war effort, which saw activity switch to

the production of aircraft fuselage components.

Carbodies went through various iterations and changes of ownership, but from the mid-1940s to the present day, the one constant has been the assembly of

taxis. The firm took on production of the Austin FX3, which became the FX4 (what most people think of when bringing to mind a London black cab), to which Carbodies acquired

A FAMILY MOVE TO BARNSTAPLE IN THE LATE 1970s LED TO THE FORMATION OF NORTH DEVON METALCRAFT IN 1980

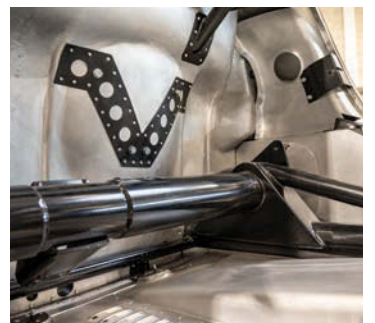
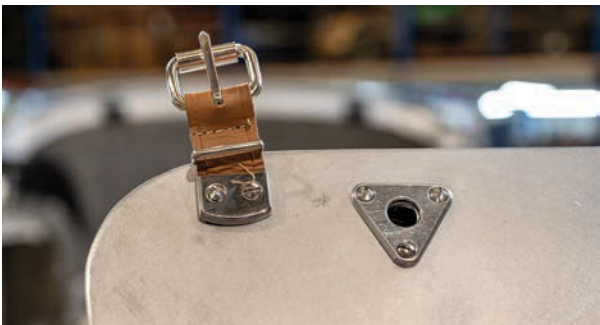
the rights from British Leyland. Sadly, the Carbodies name is no more, having been rebranded as London Taxis International in 2010, before being placed into administration in 2012. It lives on, however, thanks to many of its assets being acquired by China's Geely holding group to form the London EV Company, a business responsible for the electrification of the capital's black cabs.

Granted, taxi manufacturing isn't the most exciting form of automotive production, but Carbodies was also responsible for quirky work, including cabriolet conversions in Ford Capri and Cortina form, an estate version of the Rover SD1, plus the Range Rover Unitruck. All were hand-built by a skilled workforce.

A family move to Barnstaple in the late 1970s led to the formation of North Devon Metalcraft in 1980. Initially, the company was led by Brian, ably assisted by John and, latterly, Paul, a trained toolmaker. "To get the business going, we repaired pretty much any car we could lay our hands on," John recalls, "but it didn't take long for us to find a niche by producing TR panels. We started supplying Moss and others in the Triumph scene. This led to the manufacturing of replacement panels and complete bodysells for Jaguars, mainly the C-Type."

Things really took off thanks to an Anglo-American alliance with Shelby Automobiles and accreditation







Facing page The business was founded by John and Paul's father, Brian, who spent many years working at respected coachbuilder, Carbodies

Below The first 550 Spyder produced by North Devon Metalcraft (on instruction by 502 Motorworks in the USA) took twelve months, though John confirms a 550 order today will be completed in under half the time

as an Authorised Cobra Coachworks supplier, building complete Cobra chassis and bodysells in aluminium to full FIA continuation specification. Is there a shape more suited to aluminium craft than the Cobra? A car hand-built in period as it is now, with bodies formed on a buck and the curves shaped on one of the biggest English wheels we've ever seen, augmented by more up-to-date artillery, such as the Swiss-manufactured Eckold metal forming machine. TIG welding equipment and technology has also progressed.

"Despite these being the old ways of doing things, there are still developments in terms of equipment and machinery," says John. And people who want to learn the art of forming and working with metal? "Absolutely. Get involved. Maybe it's something to do with living in this part of the world, but people in Britain like working with their hands. Put it this way, we have no trouble finding apprentices, training them and keeping hold of them." That said, John drops into conversation North

Devon Metalcraft's enthusiastic use of computer-aided design in its car creation process. And why not? Porsche would have done the same if the technology had been available.

STATESIDE INFLUENCE

Every day is a learning day, as they say — John didn't acquire his knowledge from his father alone. "Back in the 1990s," he continues, "I spent time in the USA working for legendary hot-rodder, Boyd Coddington, star of Discovery's *American Hot Rod* television series. I learned a huge amount shadowing him. In fact, the time I spent working for Boyd is when I became familiar with vintage Porsches." Which kind of brings us to why we're in Barnstaple. As appealing as Cobras, Jaguars, Triumphs and Bentleys may be, we are Porscheophiles, after all.

In another Anglo-American connection, renowned Kentucky-located Speedster shop, 502 Motorworks, chose to collaborate with North Devon Metalcraft in recreating the 550 Spyder. "We produced an aluminium TR2 body for 502 Motorworks," John confirms. "This led the company's Chief Operating Officer, Wade Lewis, to ask if we could manufacture a 550 replica. Porsches, and 550s in particular, aren't entirely new to us as a business. We've done a lot of work for Prill Porsche Classics over the years, but we'd never created an exact 550 body and chassis, but then neither had 502 Motorworks."

'Exact' is exactly what this is all about. North Devon Metalcraft's experience in developing continuity versions of classic competition cars to factory specification using original blueprints was the expertise 502 Motorworks needed to tap into. Not just for a one-off, but for what could become multiples of, if demand proved strong enough. And let's face it, demand in the classic Porsche world is never less than strong for the right product. Oh, and this first collaboration with 502 Motorworks had to be spot-on for FIA approval — the resulting car was destined to compete in the Le Mans Classic.

For this reason, the team at 502 Motorworks decided





to base the build on a specific 1955 550 Spyder (chassis 050-060) and purchased the authentic factory blueprints, plus a dimensionally correct, original aluminium body and tubular chassis, all of which made the Atlantic crossing to North Devon Metalcraft. The blueprints were digitally scanned to create a parts inventory which could be replicated. From the bodyshell, a fibreglass buck was created, as was a jig for the chassis.

And so began the journey into period Porsche build and production techniques, which is to say the wrapping of an aluminium

body around a three-inch tube chassis. Advanced stuff for its day and no less so even now. "It was an eye opener," says John. "Very labour intensive. The way Porsche did things was very different. Whereas most sports cars of the era made use of a separate body and chassis, the 550's body is integrated *into* its chassis. These cars were definitely ahead of their time. They were so light, but also so stiff. A 550 Spyder certainly makes an AC Cobra look primitive by comparison."

TIME WELL SPENT

The initial build took twelve months and, even now, a 550 Spyder body and chassis at North Devon Metalcraft is a five-month journey. Hardly surprising, though, considering there is absolutely no automation involved, not to mention the small matter of 1,200 individual rivets. And in case you were wondering, this perfect replica can be built complete or to just to the level of body and chassis, ready for fit and finish by the owner or commissioning third-party. As far as the original 550 build for 502 Motorworks is concerned, the completed body and chassis made its way to Kentucky to be fitted out.

Currently in build and photographed here is a 550 Spyder commissioned by Martin Pedersen, the owner of JP Group, parent company of Porsche parts producer, Dansk (profiled in the November 2022 issue of *Classic Porsche*). This is a man who knows a thing or two about Porsche panels and metalwork. Additionally, Pedersen owns one of the best private Porsche collections in

Europe — you can be sure a North Devon Metalcraft 550 is worthy of inclusion. Very worthy, in fact, what with it being on the receiving end of a Type 547 four-cam flat-four when it

leaves Devon and makes its way to Pedersen's base in Viborg, Denmark.

It is a thing of great beauty — and an almost 'pinch yourself' moment — to witness the 550 Spyder being built again to factory racing specification, some sixty-eight years into the future, albeit in Barnstaple rather than Stuttgart. As we said earlier, it's amazing what goes on behind the UK's closed, roller shutter doors. **CP**

Above and below Next time you're passing closed roller doors on a faceless industrial estate, imagine what might be going on behind them

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A FEISTY RIGHT HOOK

Purportedly the oldest surviving right-hand drive 356 Pre-A has recently emerged from a four-year restoration. And, thanks to its impending sale, this stunning Porsche could soon be yours...

Words Johnny Tipler Photography Historics Auctioneers







Having just undergone comprehensive restoration, within and without, mechanicals included, this 356 looks absolutely amazing. It's shortly going under the hammer at the London Classic Car Show, to be held on 25th

February at the Olympia exhibition hall in Kensington, where the Porsche will be offered as star lot in the highly anticipated Historics Auctioneers sale. As what's thought to be the oldest surviving right-hand drive Pre-A, we wait with bated breath to see what its final sale price will be.

Chassis 51847, complete with matching engine 32797/1500, was assembled in 1954, confirmed by Porsche's own Certificate of Authenticity. If you want to know what an early Porsche looked like when it left the production line, here's a very fine example. Don't overlook the fact the company was barely six years old when our star car was built.

To set the Pre-A in historical context, as well as its specification in 356 chronology, the name refers to cars built between the 356's inception in 1949 up to 1956, when the centre-bend windscreen was superseded by what was, by then, considered normal: curved panoramic glass. It's easy enough to recognise an original Pre-A by its two-piece windscreen, divided by a central bar, a system replaced by the single-piece centre-bend screen for the 1952 model year. For clarification, check the photographs on these pages and notice the slight angle top-centre of our feature car's front glass.

Early 356 bodysells were crafted in steel (as opposed to the original aluminium) by Reutter. Until Porsche's Zuffenhausen factory premises was handed back by the occupying US military in 1955, post-Gmünd 356s were

assembled in workshops leased from the coachbuilder. Stylistic as well as practical evolutions saw the bumpers, previously flush with the body, become detached and sporting overriders in 1953. Rectangular rear lights changed to round ones, along with indicators front and back. A year later, the front indicators were integrated in the horn grilles, brake lights were integrated in the rear lights, while the chrome numberplate light module was mounted above the number plate itself.

Six engine options were available in 1954, including 1,100cc, 1,300cc and 1,500cc units. The smaller capacity

Above Thought to be the oldest surviving right-hand drive 356 Pre-A, this 1954 build was originally used as a demonstrator for Porsche's UK concessionaire, AFN





Above and below Every inch of this 356 has been fully restored, though virtually all of the car's original components have been salvaged and reused

flat-fours weren't offered in the USA, where cubic inches mattered. The 1500 Super (marketed as the Continental Coupe in the USA until 1956, when the Continental epithet was dropped in deference to homegrown Lincoln) was the all-singing, all-dancing model, replete with radio, aluminium wheel trims, passenger sun visor, adjustable passenger seat back and folding rears, all of which have to be seen as deluxe items, especially when compared with standard utility fare, such as the contemporary split-screen Morris Minor, in which you were lucky to be able to call upon two windscreen wipers. The 1956 model-year 356 bore the suffix 'A'.

Crucially, as far as provenance is concerned, the Porsche you see here is thought to be the oldest surviving example of all right-hand drive Pre-A 356s, as owner, Dave Marriott, explains. "As far as I am aware, it's the earliest right-hand drive Pre-A to make it to the present day, unless someone's got an even older

example hiding somewhere. Porsche manufactured only nineteen 356s with right-hand drive in 1954. I believe this was the fourth to come into the UK through AFN, then Porsche's British sales outpost."

FORCE OF NUMBERS

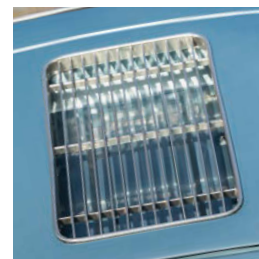
Almost nine hundred left-hand drive 356s were produced during the same year, a number highlighting how unusual — and rare — a right-hand drive Porsche was back then. Needless to say, it's not just the comprehensive restoration, but also the 'scarcity factor' that's made it very hard to pinpoint the value of the car. Of course, with recent auction prices to take note of, it's easy enough to assess the value of a left-hand drive Pre-A in the current climate, but there hasn't been a right-hand drive Pre-A on the market for some time, let alone one restored to this level, with good history and carrying 'matching numbers'. Even so, Historics Auctioneers has set the estimate between £340,000 and £370,000. Let's look at the restoration carried out on this particular Porsche.

When you run a bodyshop, you have a head start. Dave does just that, operating Marriott Coachworks in Milton Keynes. He has an intimate lifeline to a classic Porsche hotspot, namely Export 56, located in close-by Cranfield. "We do a lot of the bodywork on Export 56's cars," Dave tells us. "Company boss, Mick Pacey, decided he wanted a Pre-A and sourced two examples. He kept one and I bought the other, which he found at Lux Classics at Great Leighs in Essex." The four-year restoration commenced.

"We did the complete bodyshell," said Dave, "which, to be fair, didn't need too much attention, certainly in terms of corrosion. It had been colour-changed to a lighter blue, but there was no rust to be found. We replaced the two floor pans, purely for cosmetic reasons on account of the fact they were dented where previous owners or mechanics had raised the car on jacks incorrectly. While we were attending to the floor, we also replaced the outer longitudinals, outer sills and heater tubes, just because that's part and parcel of changing the floor pans on a 356. The remainder of the bodyshell was panel-







Above and facing page
Original colour was uncovered by carefully scraping away grey paint applied to the dashboard at the original owner's request

beaten and lead-loaded, just as it would have been on the production line back in the day."

Given the car's seven-decade lifespan, it's amazing to learn Dave's team wasn't dealing with lots of rust, not to mention the fact he didn't find much in the way of previous damage or repairs in need of rectification. Consequently, the restoration was light, though when it came to the paint job, returning the original hue proved taxing, as we shall discover shortly.

"We've got a fair amount of paperwork supporting the full history of the car, as well as various letters and emails from archivists. We know it came into the country in April 1954 and was subsequently used as AFN's demonstrator." Remarkably, only three previous owners

THE CAR WAS DISPATCHED TO CLASSIC PROJECT SHOP FOR MECHANICAL WORK, ASSEMBLY AND TRIMMING

were listed before the car came into Dave's possession, though it passed through the hands of noted 356 specialist, Roger Bray, in 2012. "I've got various emails from Roger confirming the Porsche was in his custody

and highlighting the authenticity of the vehicle, which moved from him to a collector. The guy bought the car because of its rarity, but with three Speedster projects

on the go at the same time, this Pre-A coupe was sold to fund the trio of restorations. That was in 2018, when I took ownership."

The bodyshell restoration took from then until early 2020. The car was subsequently dispatched to Bicester-based Classic Project Shop for mechanical work, assembly and trimming. "The Classic Project Shop team built the car up using ninety-five percent of the original parts, which Mick Pacey confirmed were authentic at the point of inspection at Lux Classics. We always prefer restoring parts, rather than replacing them. Pretty much everything on the car is original, bar a few incidental items, but make no mistake, the dials, the dash knobs, the majority of the glass, all exterior trim, the brightwork, the bumpers, the over-riders and many more parts are original to this Porsche. What's more, they benefit from expert restoration. This is a totally authentic 356 Pre-A."

Gorgeous it looks, too. What about the finish? "We discovered it's a special Porsche colour named Adria Blue," Dave explains. "Porsche used two different blues at the time of production. The one most people know is a fair bit darker than the paint on this car." Confusingly, there were also two shades of Adria Blue in use. "It's very hard to find the original formula. In 1954, the whole bodyshell would have been painted in 509 Adria Blue, inside and out, including the interior of the metal





dashboard. When a 356 was sold, however, a buyer might have kept the dashboard as was, or had it colour-coded to their choice of upholstery, which is what the original owner of this car did. Essentially, they had the dashboard painted grey to match the vinyl interior. And so, in order to find the original body colour, we carefully disassembled the dashboard and excavated the original blue paint from *beneath* the grey paint. We literally removed all the grey, bit by bit, which took about three or four days." Digression alert: I am reminded of a time when, in another life, I spent many long, dark days perched on rickety scaffolding, my face inches away from cold church walls, picking layers of flaky lime-wash off medieval frescoes, using only dentistry tools. Painstaking stuff.

EXCAVATION PROJECT

"After revealing the original layer of paint, we spent a further eight days colour-sampling to get an exact match," Dave continues. "The whole car was then repainted accordingly. We're fully confident we have applied the correct shade, corresponding with the original, exactly as it appeared when this 356 left the factory in 1954." Decorating the bodywork, the lights are all original, albeit with new original-specification glass lenses for the headlamps. The engine lid grille is also, as are the badges and bumpers, all of them restored. Save for the windscreen, the glass is original to the car. Even the number plates are restored originals. The

door handles have been restored, as has the bonnet lid handle. Likewise, the wiper arms are original and restored, but the rear number-plate light and rear reflectors are replacement parts.

The cabin interior has been totally refurbished, with new carpets fitted and new grey vinyl seat upholstery

and door cards installed. All gauges and instruments were fully reconditioned, using all new old-stock (NOS) parts. The steering wheel is original. New rear

luggage straps have been fitted and the sun visors were remanufactured to match the factory parts. Under the front bonnet lives the original date-stamped (4/53) spare wheel, a new replacement wheel strap and the original (now restored) fuel tank. The date-stamped wheel caps (also 4/53) are original, but have also been restored.

The engine was completely rebuilt using entirely new parts, but retains the original casings. The cylinder barrel liners were re-plated to factory specification, while all fasteners were treated to the appropriate coatings. Likewise, the gearbox was fully stripped and rebuilt with new seals and sprockets. All the running gear, including suspension, brakes and linkages, are all original but fully rebuilt, incorporating new bushes. Obviously, the original six-volt electrics remain in place.

Some flat-four parts proved hard to get hold of, primarily because the Pre-A has a different engine design to the subsequent 356 A. "Different carbs, different casings. Pretty much everything is different in the Pre-A's 1500 engine," Dave points out. Many of the required

Above Engine parts proved difficult to get hold of, but help from marque specialists both in the UK and USA enabled the flat-four to be rebuilt to original specification at Classic Project Shop in Bicester

THE ENGINE WAS COMPLETELY REBUILT USING ENTIRELY NEW PARTS, BUT RETAINS THE ORIGINAL CASINGS

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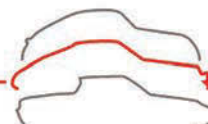
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Above and facing page

Historics will be offering this 356 as a star lot at its London Classic Car Show auction, where the four-cylinder Porsche will be offered alongside a selection of tasty air-cooled 911s

components were sourced from Roger Bray Restoration and the Sierra Madre Collection in California. Classic Project Shop had the cylinder liners re-plated — they've now got a coating featuring tiny little dimples, which retain a little bit of oil. "Authentic coatings were applied to every nut and bolt on the engine,"

Dave confirms. "Some are zinc, but there are different anodised coatings throughout, even on the carburettors. There are three different coatings on the various nuts and bolts, all exactly as applied by Porsche in period. A lot of research has gone into this aspect of the restoration — it's difficult to find original images documenting Pre-A assembly in the 1950s. A lot of the material we relied upon takes the form of illustrations, or grainy black and white photographs."

As Dave enthusiastically endorses, "one way or another, every single nut and bolt has been re-worked and re-coated. In fact, every aspect of this Pre-A has been attended to. The seats, for instance, were stripped down to the frames, the frames themselves were repaired and painted, the many chrome seat components were re-plated and then fresh vinyl was fitted. We brought in an interior kit from America. It was supplied specifically for a right-hand drive Pre-A. The same was true of the wiring, which was a brand-new right-hand-drive-specific loom, rather than one adapted from a left-hand drive loom. The wiring, as well as the interior, was installed at Classic Project Shop." Though there are a number of respectable 356 interior trim specialists in the US (including Stoddard and K&H), it's worth noting PRS 356, Design 911 and FVD Brombacher are good sources of trim and upholstery for Porsches of all ages in the UK and mainland Europe. Incidentally, FVD Brombacher has a USA sales base, too.

The lower sales estimate listed by Historics Auctioneers for this Pre-A is around £100,000 more than an equivalent left-hand drive Porsche might be, but

reflects this 356's rarity and restoration. Dave is upbeat. "I know there's a bigger market for left-hand drive 356s, but this Pre-A should appeal to any collector looking for an early right-hand

drive, four-cylinder Porsche in superb condition. I guess we'll find out on the day of sale just how much interest there is."

FEAST FOR THE EYES

Since the restoration was completed, this 356 obviously hasn't gone very far. Indeed, you could eat your dinner off the inner wheel arches. They really are that clean! "We displayed the car at a couple of shows in the summer," Dave reflects. "Additionally, Classic Project Shop had it on the company's stand at a recent Bicester Scramble event, but it has been in storage since. I estimate this Porsche has covered only five hundred miles following completion of the rebuild, the mileage accrued simply for run-in purposes and to highlight any niggles we needed to attend to prior to preparing the car for its next owner."

We're guessing the final sale price will be way beyond the budgets most of us can play with, but we're interested to see just how much this brilliant blue Pre-A will fetch on the day of auction. Will this 356 spark a bidding war? Pop along to the London Classic Car Show and see for yourself.

Oh, and if you're interested in buying the car, visit historics.co.uk, where you can register to bid in the room, online or by telephone. Perhaps you'll soon be the custodian of this rare, historically significant Porsche? It's an aesthetic delight in its own right. **CP**

WE'RE INTERESTED TO SEE JUST HOW MUCH THIS BRILLIANT BLUE PRE-A WILL FETCH ON THE DAY OF AUCTION



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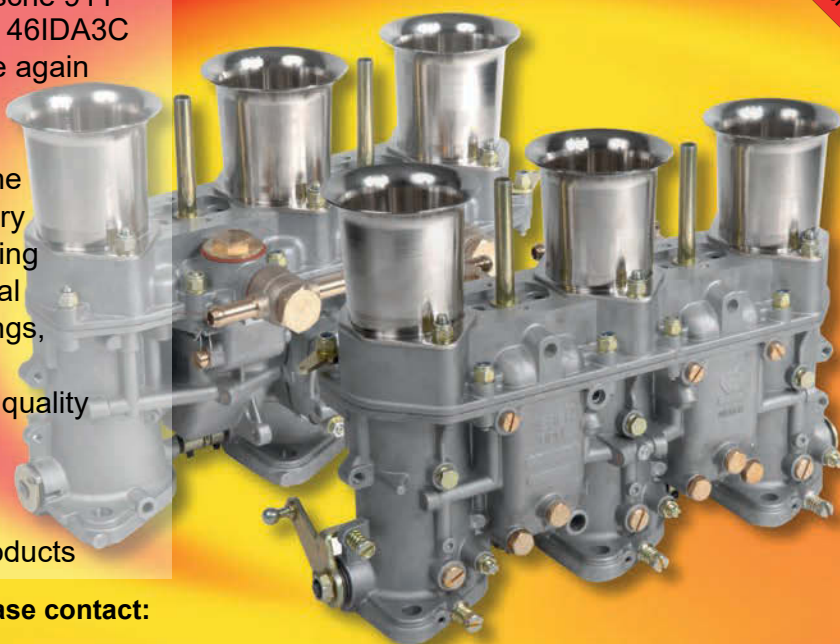
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DREAM MACHINE

Gaswerks Garage is renowned for its work on iconic classic Porsches, hence our excitement at this 911 R tribute, the latest creation from the New Jersey company's master restoration and service technician, Gaspare Fasulo...

Words **Johnny Tipler** Photography **Sean Smith**







There are plenty of backdates, pastiches and restomods just as well-presented as the original model they represent. In this case, however, the end product is undoubtedly better finished than its progenitor. It is a recreation of the 911 R, the Porsche competition department's very first offering of a purpose-built racing 911. We'll take tour of the replica in a moment, but first, here's a bit of detail on the factory motorsport machine.

Dating from 1967, the 911 R was a tad rough-and-ready, a bit thrown-together, as a lot of race cars tended to be back then. Like most other manufacturers with a competitive bent, Porsche was developing its competition metal at breathless pace, hoovering up outright wins in the Targa Florio road race in Sicily, as well as routine class wins at the 24 Hours of Le Mans and other big-league endurance events. Even so, despite the 911 being in production since 1964, Porsche had not been disposed to offer a competition version. Things changed with the 911 R.

The model lasted just a couple of years. Twenty-five units were made during this time. The 911 R's race debut was at Mugello, where 'Quick' Vic Elford and Gijs van Lennep finished the 500km race in third place on the 66km road circuit. Elford and David Stone placed their 911 R third on the 1967 Tour de Corse, putting the 911 on the map as a rally car, too. At the 1967 Marathon de la Route (a gruelling eighty-four hours around the Nürburgring Nordschleife), Elford, together with Hans Herrmann and Jochen Neerpasch, eased into a convincing victory, all the more impressive when you consider the fact their 911 R was equipped with

Sportomatic semi-automatic transmission. Well done with that, boys!

Privateer, Karl von Wendt, won the 1967 European Touring Car Championship in the brief window the 911 R was homologated as a touring car. Later in the year, one of the works team's 911 Rs was used for a record-breaking attempt at Monza, with Jo Siffert, Rico Steinemann, Dieter Spoerry and Charles Vogele taking turns at the wheel, averaging 130mph over ninety-six hours. That's four days of constant running! Privately entered Rs were active on the international race scene,

Above Gaspare was keen to use a 911 as the starting point for the project, as opposed to kicking things off with a less costly 912





Above and below This has been a real labour of love for a man who spends his days restoring and repairing other people's Porsches

but in the big league, despite Dieter Spoerry and Ben Pon finishing third in the Mugello 500kms in 1968, Gérard Larrousse was the star, winning the 1969 Tour de France. And that was about it. Done. The 911 R had served its purpose as the harbinger of significant and sustained competition success for its 911 descendants.

What made the 911 R so special was not so much its achievements, but its specification, though the former certainly got the ball rolling for the 911 as a race car. The ultra-light, short-wheelbase R used the 906 prototype's two-litre 220bhp flat-six engine, featuring a host of special modifications, including uprated valvetrain, camshafts, ported heads, pistons and titanium connecting rods, accompanied by a 901 gearbox bolstered by a lightened flywheel, beefier clutch, limited-slip differential and Nadella driveshafts. The triple Weber carbs had their own little flat roof over the trumpets to stop rain ingress from the engine lid intake going down

the barrels, while a twin-spark distributor doubled up on the cables in the engine bay. Oil coolers lived within each front wing.

FLEET OF FOOT

A hundred-litre long-range anti-surge fuel tank with dual pumps could be specified. The exhaust system was served by beautiful serpentine exhaust manifolds. Just as crucially, the R was lightened to within an inch of its life – fibreglass wings (fenders) featured front and rear, made by Karl Baur in Stuttgart and joined by fibreglass bumper panels, front and back lids, minuscule Hella sidelights and indicators sourced from the unsuspecting NSU Prinz parts bin. Door handles were plastic and windows were thin (four-millimetre glass for the windscreen, two-millimetre Plexiglass for the sides, the rear three-quarter windows distinctively louvred to aid ventilation and assembled complete with drip trays). Even the badging consisted of vinyl stickers.

In the cockpit, austerity reigned. Minimal Scheel buckets were banded by Britax race harnesses ahead of the simplest of rollover hoops, braced from the rear seat mounts. There were no door cards, roof lining, certainly no radio, ciggie lighter or glove compartment. Thongs propped up the side windows, while a T-pull door opener acted directly on the lock mechanisms. There was next to no carpeting on the sills, while a drilled plywood footrest was afforded to the co-driver and a welded-on footrest for the driver. The 911 R weighed less than eight hundred kilos, while a regular 911 tipped the scales at 1,030kg. That said, the R cost privateers DM45,000, twice as much as a standard 911.

After 1967, the FIA rejected the 911 R's homologation and, unlike, say, the 911 S and 911 T, the R was obliged to run with works prototypes, such as the 906's successors, the 910, 907 and 908. Porsche therefore needed to field a less extreme machine in the Group 3 GT category. When the FIA reclassified the 911 T into the same class as the 911 S in 1968, the factory competition department created the T/R. This 911 didn't possess as radical





specification as the 911 R, and only thirty-six examples were assembled. The 911 S/T (twelve cars) followed in 1971. Finally, the Carrera RS 2.7 and RSR 2.8 further consolidated the marque's burgeoning reputation on race track and rally stage.

CALM THE WATER

And so, to our feature car. Located in New Jersey, the opposite side of the Hudson River to New York City, Gaswerks Garage is a repair and restoration shop specialising in classic Porsches and vintage Volkswagens, with focus on especially rare and collectible models. The maintenance team is headed by air-cooled Porsche and Volkswagen expert, Gaspare Fasulo. With more than thirty year's Porsche experience, there's nothing he doesn't know about retro machines from Zuffenhausen, and since joining Gaswerks Garage in 2016, he has assembled a formidable team of technicians and artisans, whose specialties cover the mechanical and cosmetic restoration of both air-cooled and water-cooled sports cars from Stuttgart, with engines ranging from the 356's 1.1-litre flat-four and Type 547 'Fuhrmann' four-cam through to full-on modern flat-sixes in competition specification.

Gaspare always wanted a 911 R, but due to their scarcity and attendant value, he was never in a position to buy one. Pragmatically, then, he decided to build one himself. Of course, he could have started with a 912 to

save cash, but he was adamant his build should carry a 911 VIN number. Consequently, Gaspare's amazing 911 R is based on a solid, original 1967 short-wheelbase 911 sourced from a seller in Colorado. It was even painted Light Ivory, just like the original 911 R.

The car arrived at the Gaswerks Garage workshop and was fully inspected before being stripped down to the bare bones and gradually built up again, endowed with all the lightweight panels and trick bits gracing the 911 it apes. Almost. I chatted about the car's specification with Gaswerks Garage Service Manager, Vincent Cavallaro. "The engine is a two-litre twin-plug unit," he says. "It's built on a 1969 magnesium case and fed by Weber 46 IDA3C carburettors. The transmission is stock, from the 1967 donor car."

The two-litre flat-six was constructed to 906 specification, necessitating the appointment of a new crankshaft, cylinders, connecting rods, crankcase modifications and higher compression pistons. Gaspare added twin-plug heads and ignition, ported the manifolds and overhauled the valvetrain, bringing output to a healthy 220bhp, though he is sure there's more to come from further tuning. The redline is set at 7,800rpm, explored by a 901 gearbox benefiting from a rebuilt linkage and an R-style shift lever providing precise gear changes.

"The body panels were sourced from Rothsport Racing in Oregon, as well as EB Motorsport in the UK," Vincent

Above With so few 911 Rs manufactured in period, not to mention the astronomical cost of acquiring a surviving example today, Gaspare reasoned he would build his own street-legal version



Above and below 911 race car office with added comfort in a build weighing just 837kg

reveals. "The EB Motorsport team recently completed its own 911 R replica, which gave us confidence in the accuracy of the parts purchased. To be honest, from past experience of EB Motorsport products, we knew the pieces would be a perfect fit." Most of the running gear came from the 911 SC parts bin, while the Fuchs-alikes are replicas from Group 4

Wheels, each five-leaf wrapped in Continental rubber. The steering wheel and its hub are MOMO items, while the Hockenheim seats are from GTS Classics, run by Stefan Schleissing. "For a lot of mechanical parts, we generally use our local Porsche Centre or SSF Automotive in California," Vincent confirms.

BETTER TO HAVE STURDY STEEL PROTECTING YOU IN THE EVENT OF IMPACT, RATHER THAN FRAGILE FIBREGLASS

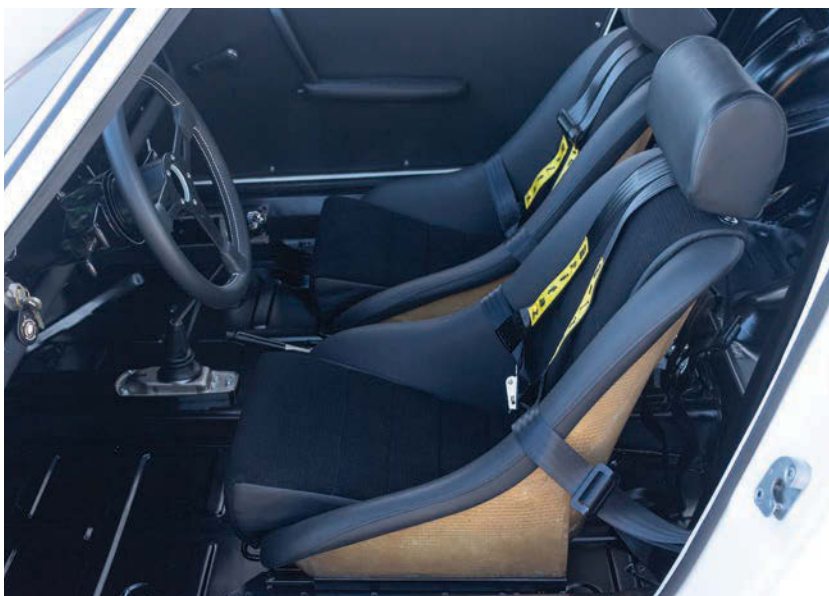
Weight saving was taken very seriously, as illustrated by the use of aluminium door hinges. Indeed, the only panels not swapped out for fibreglass were the car's original doors. There was safety to consider, after all

— Gaspare's tribute would see a lot of street use. Better to have sturdy steel protecting you in the event of impact, rather than fragile fibreglass.

The build took approximately

fourteen months and, on completion, tipped scales at an astonishingly low 837kg, little more than the original Weissach-built 911 R. Gaspare gave his finished 911 a shakedown at the (relatively) local Monticello Motor Club in Sullivan County, New York State, seventy-seven miles northwest of his Paramus base. "With snow on the infield, it certainly wasn't the perfect day to test the limits of this fresh build," he told our photographer, Sean Smith, "but when you have four miles of Monticello Motor Club circuit all to yourself, who am I to argue?!" There was little chance Gaspare would get heat into the car's tyres, meaning it was prone to moving sideways, but even in these tricky conditions, he was fast able to ascertain how his bespoke 911 felt much stiffer and immediately quicker.

I've driven a few of examples of the 911 R with fairly exalted provenance (including 016 R, La Ronde Cévenole 1968 and 1969 car, as well as the no.96 R from the 1967 Tour de Corse). My time behind the wheel has notably been in Belgium and France, but I've a good feeling about Gaspare's creation. In my experience, the Type 901/22 two-litre flat-six takes a bit of deft footwork on the throttle, coinciding with deploying the ignition, to make it fire up. The barely silenced exhaust note is deafening — like an aural orgasm. It needs the accelerator pedal to be continuously blipped to maintain running mode. Once





Above Gaspare's build is powered by a two-litre flat-six assembled along the lines of the unit found in the 906

warmed up (make that ten minutes) there's dog-leg first, a sharp clutch, followed by vivid acceleration, aggressive snarl on the overrun, revs soaring to 7,000rpm in each gear. Perfectly weighted steering, sharp turn-in on relatively narrow tyres and a tip-toe balancing act through zig-zag bends. Make note, the 911 R was a quick car in its day, taking just 5.9 seconds to reach 62mph from rest, with the standing kilometre despatched in 24.2 seconds, a full second faster than the 904 and five seconds faster than a contemporary Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GTA.

Coincidentally, I've also visited Monticello Motor Club, where Gaspare conducted the shakedown of his 911 R tribute and where our photoshoot took place. I was on a road trip and took time out to drive a quasi-race Lotus 2-Eleven around the circuit. Monticello opened in 2008

as a members-only venue. Located in the south of the picturesque Catskill Hills, it's only a couple of hours from Manhattan, which makes it a cert for any moneyed New England enthusiast wanting to indulge their passion for legalised speed. With extensive run-off areas, barriers and fencing, safety is paramount, given the clientele, who may not be experienced track drivers.

Designed by Lancastrian racing legend and former Porsche works driver, Brian Redman, Monticello Motor Club is laid out on the site of the famous Kutchscher's Hotel, the former holiday camp which provided inspiration for *Dirty Dancing*'s Kellerman's resort. All that ephemera so popular with post-war holidaying New

Yorkers has almost gone — Monticello Motor Club is not to be confused with the gaming and equestrian track of a similar name a few miles away. This is an invitation-only haven for enthusiasts wishing to house their automotive pride-and-joy at a dedicated circuit, where they can enjoy virtually unlimited track time.

They're in for a treat. Monticello is as fine a stretch of blacktop as you could wish for, snaking away over a gentle hillside with conifer shelter belt, a blend of long straights, twenty sweeping cojones-testing high speed curves, with a couple of seemingly impossibly tight hairpins thrown in. Redman, who lifted the World Sportscar Championship for Porsche in 1969, dug deep

for inspiration from his experiences at the world's wilder tracks, chiefly the Nürburgring Nordschleife, Watkins Glen, the Targa Florio, Brands Hatch. Here and

GENTLE HILLSIDE WITH CONIFER SHELTER BELT, A BLEND OF LONG STRAIGHTS AND SWEEPING HIGH SPEED CURVES

there, you can spot elements of each in his design.

"Now we've got not only one of the finest tracks in North America, but also one of the finest in the world. This isn't a race circuit like Lime Rock Park," he cautioned, citing the fabulous track a hundred miles northeast in Connecticut, though there are certain similarities in the topography. "Lime Rock is primarily for sanctioned motorsport events. Monticello is really a country club, but instead of polo ponies, a golf course and lakes, this is a race track," he added

With around 100ft of elevation change from the highest to lowest points on the circuit, Monticello Motor Club is surrounded by woodland, four hundred acres



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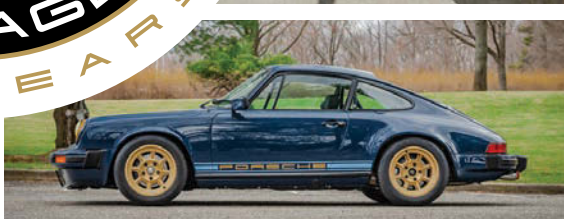
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of which is owned by the club, with a sizeable infield garage and apartment complex within the main circuit's 650-acre site. The members' pavilion is on the north side, incorporating a timing tower at its centre. There are two storeys with classrooms, dining area, bathrooms, showers, locker rooms and a large reception space. There's a deck overlooking the track for prime viewing, with pit garages underneath. Overlooking the track, blocks of private residences incorporate twelve-car garages on the ground floor, with living space above, a scenario close to nirvana for many car buffs.

CHALLENGING CIRCUIT

There's just over four miles of track, and the longest circuit configuration is three-and-a-half miles. It can be split into multiple configurations, allowing different events to be run at the same time. The south course is about 1.7 miles, the north course is a 1.9-mile configuration. In other words, half of this track is longer than the whole of Lime Rock. It's more technical, too. You have increasing and decreasing radius turns rewarding precision, meaning you really have to put your car in exactly the right place.

TWO DIFFERENT CARS IN ONE, ALLOWING MORE SEDATE DRIVING IN THE LOWER REV RANGE, USEFUL FOR THE STREET

Much of what's on offer is pure Nürburgring. Redman really did design an exhilarating circuit. As 1978 Formula One champ, Mario Andretti, said when he opened the venue in July 2008, "it's the ultimate playground for the car enthusiast. It's got lots of blind spots where you can

overdo things. It would probably take me a year before I could let my hair down here. It's got plenty of what I call the 'pucker factor'."

Even though Gaspare's 911 is

propelled by a two-litre flat-six emulating the powerplant found in a 906, the unit only lets you know the scale of its might between 3,700rpm and 7,800rpm, when it comes on cam. In effect, this gives him two different cars in one, allowing more sedate driving to take place in the lower rev range, which is super-useful for the street.

Therein lies the major difference between the factory car and what's seen here, but who cares? This is clearly a very fine homage to an air-cooled motorsport icon whose heyday coincided with both Redman and Andretti hitting the big time. Gaspare's creation wouldn't embarrass either superstar in a track-driving context, and, just as importantly, it will turn heads whenever he drives it on New Jersey's upstate highways. We can't wait to see Gaspare's next air-cooled restomod take shape. **CP**

Above Monticello is the perfect playground for this personalised Porsche

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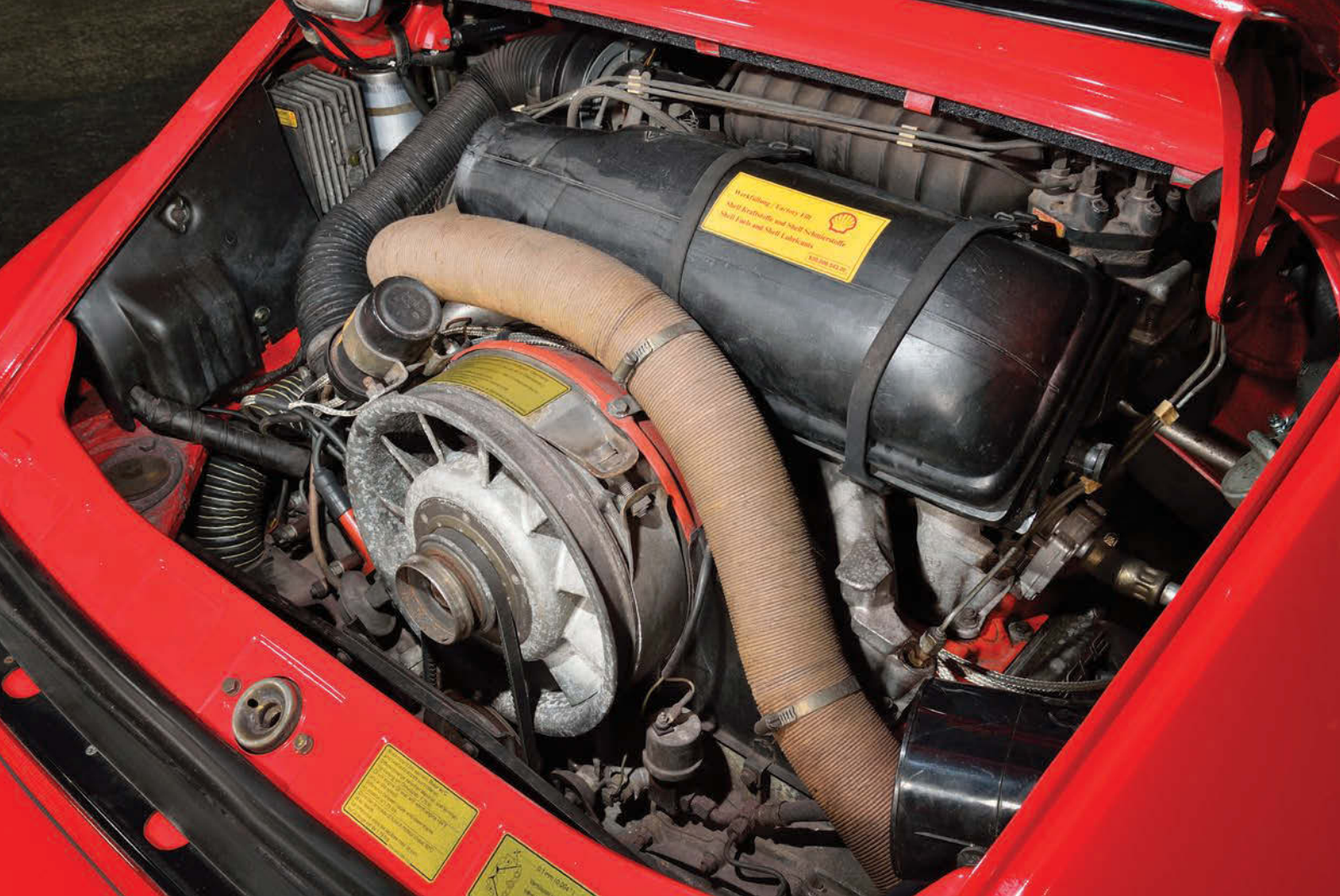
TRADE SECRET

Factory sanctioned Porsche power packages are commonplace in the present, but things were decidedly different in the late 1970s, when Zuffenhausen's 3.1-litre 911 SC-L upgrade was offered in hushed tones...

Words **Kieron Fennelly** Photography **Matt Woods**







In the sixty-year history of the 911, each successive model has almost always boasted more power and performance than its predecessor. Sometimes, this was symbolic, such as the step up from the 964 to the 993, but on other occasions, there was an appreciable difference in performance. The 996, for example, benefited from an entirely new engine and could show its forebears a distinctly clean pair of heels. In the 1970s, however, a decade into the 911's career, there were two occasions when the new kid on the block had a lower power rating than what came before.

The first was forced upon Porsche by the initial wave of emissions regulations. This effectively killed off mechanical fuel injection, which tended to over-fuel engines, resulting in large amounts of unburnt hydrocarbons. The last 911 to feature mechanical fuel injection was the top-of-the-range Carrera 2.7 of 1976, producing 210bhp. Its short-lived successor, the Carrera 3.0 of 1976-77, was equipped with Bosch K-Jetronic injection. By now, Porsche had some experience of electronic injection on the flat-six – the three-litre model's 200bhp represented a relatively minor sacrifice, especially when torque was improved, though this came mostly from the increased cubic capacity. Ferraris, Maseratis and Lamborghinis, to name but three topflight competitors, would lose far more horsepower in the early years of the switch from carburettors or mechanical injection to electronic fuel injection systems.

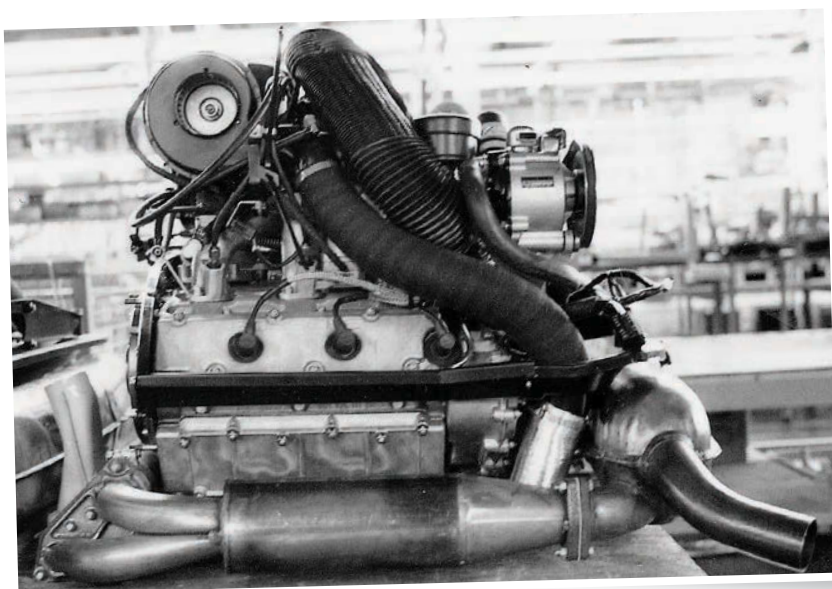
For the 1978 model year, the Carrera 3.0 was replaced by the SC, said by some to signify 'Super Carrera' per the same-badged 356, though Porsche never confirmed as

much. On the face of it barely changed, the SC inherited the Carrera 3.0's 95x70.4mm bore and stroke and its 8.5:1 compression ratio, but there was much internal reworking to improve efficiency, if not outright power.

The SC used the thicker crankshaft and main bearings of the 3.3-litre 911 Turbo (930), but adopted thinner connecting rods. The 930's breaker-less ignition – instead of traditional points – and electronic (rather than mechanical) cut-out for the rev limiter brought both greater precision and economy. The emphasis was to improve drivability, and although nominally less powerful than the 200bhp Carrera 3.0, testers found the SC seemed to go just as well despite its stated maximum

Above Standard three-litre flat-six, which could be upgraded to 3.1 litres by way of the SC-L package, something of a reaction to the work of RUF and Max Moritz in period

Below Side view of the three-litre flat-six in 1978, complete with K-Jetronic fuel injection





Above The SC was a 911 sales smash in coupe and Targa trim, but early adopters of the first 'people's Porsche' were presented with a car down on power when compared to what came before

power of 'only' 180bhp at 5,500rpm. Maximum torque was better than that of the Carrera 3.0, with the period's motoring magazines all agreeing the newer flat-six was noticeably smoother in operation.

With the introduction of the SC, Porsche was clearly rationalising its range. At the top of the pile was the 3.3-litre 911 Turbo, rated at 300bhp. Below it came the 240bhp 928, the car then Porsche boss, Ernst Fuhrmann, saw as the future of the company. Lower down the pecking order sat the 911 SC. Sensing more than a mere marketing exercise, seasoned Porsche observers thought politics was also at play — much like the way Porsche meticulously ensured the

AS A PORSCHE OWNER IN GERMANY, IF YOU ASKED AROUND, IT WASN'T DIFFICULT TO UNEARTH A 911 TUNER

Cayman wouldn't trespass on 911 levels of performance for the first decade of the mid-engined model's lifespan, the company also sought to show there was a tangible step-up in rated horsepower between the 911 and the

928. Whatever the official figures, the two models offered very similar levels of performance, though weighing almost 250kg more than the SC, the 928 would have needed at least

a 60bhp margin. Moreover, if, as most believed, the 911 SC's 180bhp was somewhat understated, the 928 could not claim the same.

Power 'demotion' notwithstanding, the SC sailed through 1978-9 as a hugely popular Porsche, but this didn't stop 911 die-hards grumbling. In the land of tuning, there were soon aftermarket offerings for owners who wanted more power. Among the better-known purveyors was Max Moritz, a Reutlingen dealer with a strong reputation for racing 911s. Another was an ambitious fellow by the name of Alois Ruf Jr, who had turned his father's Pfaffenhausen general car service business into a specialist Porsche shop. Ruf had already made something of a name for himself with a modified 930. The opportunity to uprate the 911 SC was too good to miss. Like Moritz, Ruf bored out the three-litre flat-six from 95mm to 98mm. With polished ports and different camshafts, both tuners obtained well in excess of two hundred horsepower. Specifically, Ruf claimed 215bhp for his 3,185cc conversion.

This work was relatively discreet and the volumes were barely significant, but as a Porsche owner in Germany, if you asked around, it wasn't difficult to unearth a 911 tuner. Nevertheless, practically until the end of Wendelin Wiedeking's time in charge of Porsche, the brand was always very sensitive about what some of







Above and below The 911 SC went through numerous changes during its fruitful lifecycle on Porsche's production lines, resulting in a 204bhp flat-six, effectively reducing demand for the additional power provided by the SC-L 3.1-litre conversion

the higher profile tuners were up to. Thomas Behringer of TechArt in Leonberg, for one, can point to injunctions served on him by Porsche to block projects those in Zuffenhausen didn't take kindly. In the 1970s, however, Porsche reacted to outside fettling of its products by developing its own tuning kit, though this wasn't quite as straightforward as it might once have been.

Ernst Fuhrmann's ban on further 911 development (except for regulation conformity), which also encompassed competition activity, led to a certain amount of subterfuge by Porsche employees who felt it was essential to maintain support for the 911. Customer racing manager, Jürgen Barth, for example, funnelled both parts and considerable assistance to the Almérás Brothers in Montpellier in order to help them build the 911 with which Jean Pierre Nicholas was able to win the 1978 Monte Carlo Rally. Porsche's SC tuning kit had, by necessity, to be a similarly 'under the counter' operation.

Technically, the upgrade was not so demanding.

Porsche already had the advantage of a 97mm bore in-house (used for the 3.3-litre 911 Turbo). Coupling these cylinders with the stock three-litre flat-six's stroke of 70.4mm would result in a capacity of 3,122cc. Non-standard pistons would come from Mahle, but otherwise, the modifications would be a classic parts bin effort.

STRAIGHT TO THE TOP

Given this scheme contravened Fuhrmann's policy of winding down the 911, approval had to be sought from Ferry Porsche himself. Mr Porsche was sympathetic. By his conspicuous absence from the 1978 European Car of the Year prize-giving, awarded to the 928 (the only sports car to have ever won the competition, an indication of how advanced the 'land shark' was for its day), he had already shown his disapproval of the direction in which Fuhrmann was leading the company bearing the family name. Ferry assented to the 911 SC upgrade on condition it remained an extremely discreet modification, invisible to the uninitiated.

To counter the efforts of independent tuners, Porsche sought to match the output of the earlier 1973-76 2.7-litre flat-six at 210bhp, which had, of course, the advantage of mechanical fuel injection. Besides a larger bore, compression ratio was increased from 8.6:1 to 9.5:1 (requiring 98 RON fuel). Changes included the cylinder cooling fins of the 3.3-litre 911 Turbo and, bolted the head to the block on the exhaust side, twelve Dilavar studs less prone to thermal expansion than the standard steel items.

The use of Dilavar, a nickel alloy, would become Porsche practice on the later SC. For the 3.1-litre upgrade, K Jetronic fuel injection was as standard, but with a higher-pressure fuel pump. A larger oil radiator was positioned inside the front wing (the same would later be fitted to the Carrera 3.2) and, in the interests of increased top speed, the 915 gearbox was kitted-out with a higher fifth gear, another modification which Porsche would later make standard.





The upgrade was never marketed as such, and no sales literature was ever issued. Porsche relied on word of mouth to communicate to dealers how, should a customer ask, the Werkstatt (the still at Werk 1 in Zuffenhausen)

would supply and fit the kit to a new SC. 911s so delivered were referred to in their documents as an SC-L model. An accompanying letter confirmed

this was indeed a factory 3.1-litre conversion. Jürgen Barth, who usually has very reliable production figures for air-cooled Porsches, says there were no records for the SC-L, simply because it wasn't a production model and Porsche management didn't want to shout about the upgrade's existence.

PUMP UP THE VOLUME

For his part, the late Rolf Sprenger, then manager of the Werkstatt, reckoned between two and three hundred SCs were modified to SC-L trim. Alois Ruf Jr's figures suggest his RUF Automobile 3.1-litre offering exceeded four hundred units, although at DM6,000, it was DM1,500 cheaper than the Porsche SC-L. Moritz is thought to have modified about a hundred SCs to 3.1-litre specification.

Demand fell in 1980. When the 911 SC cost DM54,000 (circa £14,000) these upgrades were in any case an expensive addition. With the advent of a higher compression 911 SC, which, when aided by 98 RON (now more widely available in Germany) was rated at 188bhp, interest waned. The 'facelift' SC, which appeared in 1981 after Fuhrmann left his post at Porsche, sported 204bhp at a racier 5,900rpm. *Auto Motor & Sport* clocked 240kph against 228kph for the earlier SC and knocked half a second off the zero to 100kph sprint time.

Enthusiast, Cengez Teken from Antwerp, is a typical

owner. He acquired his SC-L in 2011 from a dealer who wasn't aware it was anything other than a basic SC. Teken says the oversized engine makes an interesting comparison with that of his Carrera 3.0 Targa. "Last

summer, I drove the Targa two thousand kilometres on the Tour Amical, from Venice to St Tropez. The main difference I feel with the SC-L is its enhanced torque. Subjectively,

both cars are about the same in acceleration, but you feel pick-up earlier with the SC-L, from about 2,800rpm. With the standard three-litre flat-six, you wait until 3,300rpm for the same effect. That said, the three-litre engine warms up quicker than the SC-L's 3.1-litre due to the latter's larger oil cooler."

Like other externally undetectable, factory-modified 911s — another example is the 3.8-litre conversion for the 993 — the 3.1 conversion adds a fascinating footnote to an endlessly rich air-cooled 911 story. **CP**

ROLF SPRENGER, MANAGER OF THE WERKSTATT, RECKONED BETWEEN TWO AND THREE HUNDRED SCs WERE MODIFIED TO SC-L TRIM

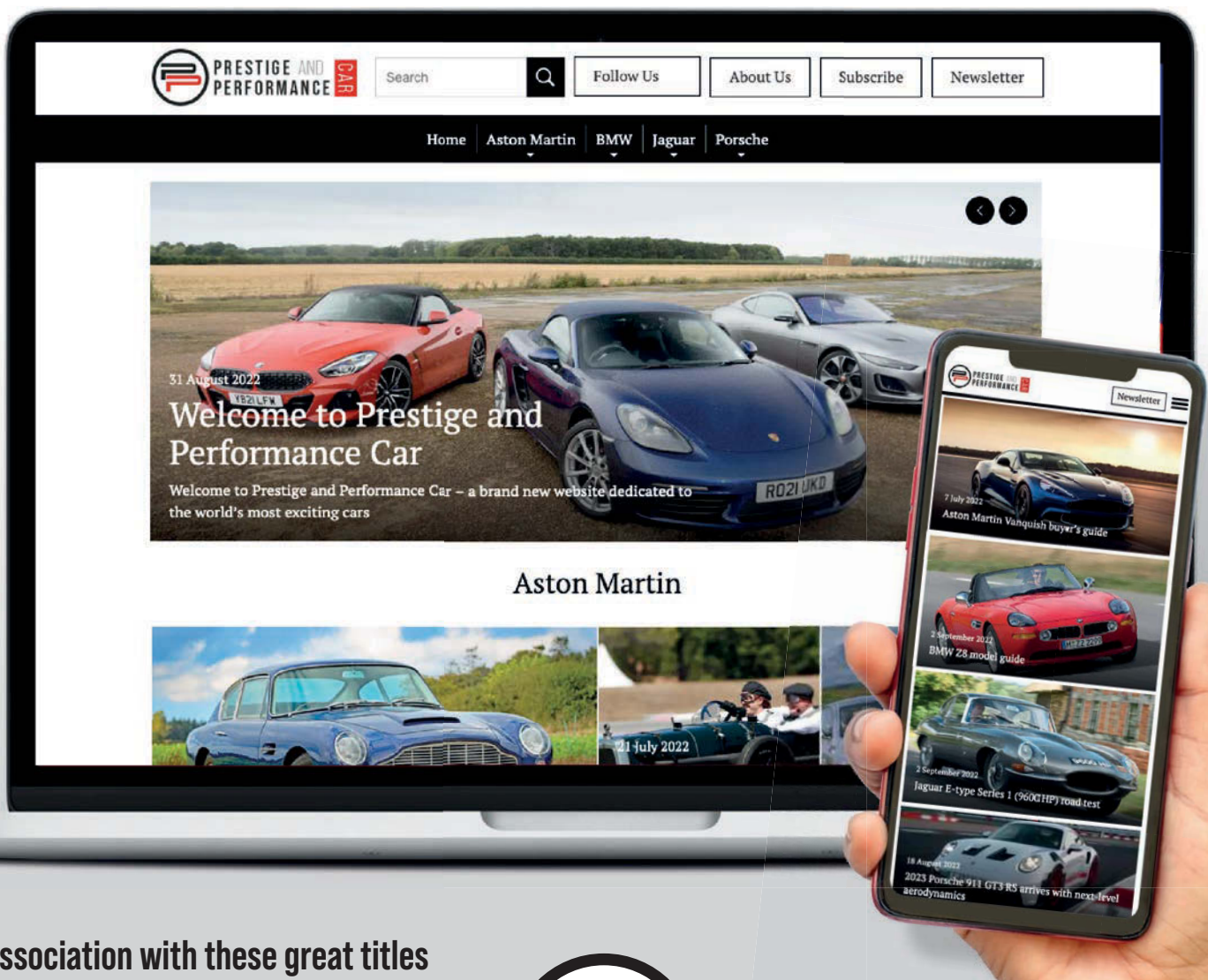
Above and below The SC was hugely popular, but the SC-L upgrade wasn't advertised by Porsche and therefore few buyers took advantage of the offer when available



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1990, 72000 miles, £42,000. We are very pleased to offer this stunning and rare 928GT. One of just 38 right-hand drive and manual gearbox 928 GTs and finished in the highly desirable Guards Red with Linen Leather. Please call 01765 609798, Yorkshire and the Humber. (T)

117274

PORSCHE 928



110000 miles, £29,999. coupe (pre-S- model). auto, a very desirable car light blue metallic with royal blue leather, full-service history, Porsche UK authentication certificate. Please call 01452 731289, South West.

110220

PORSCHE 944



1990, 133000 miles, £12,950. 944S2 Cabriolet, Guards red, black interior. Lovely condition, total 3 owners, dotting last one for 29 years. Every document for that period. Serviced at Northway Porsche, always garaged. MOT to February 2023. Please call 07711703542, South East.

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113444

PORSCHE 944



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110586

PORSCHE 944



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113141

PORSCHE 944



1991, 16999 miles, £16,999. 944 3.0 Cabriolet S2. 5 speed manual, 92k miles, service history, 4 keepers, fully specification. Please call 01452 731289, South West.

110219

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2003, 66000 miles, £57,000. Registered new in May 2003 as a Porsche Boxster 986 2.7, this particular car was transformed into this homage of the original 356 Speedster by Iconic Autobody. With its retro bespoke coachwork there is still the modern drivetrain and chassis of the original Boxster. Please call 07577 575770, South East. (T)

117360

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117789

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ADVERTISING INDEX

356 Panels	89	Lux Sports Cars	85
Art Wheels SAS	88	Mittelmotor	43
Automotion	29	North Devon Metalcraft	77
Benton Performance	59	Paragon GB	33
Beverly Hills Car Club	35	Patrick Motorsports	77
Car Bone	59	Perma-Tune	69
Coco Mats	55	PIE Performance	17
D'Eser Vintage Sports	43	Prestige and	
Dansk	116	Performance Car	107
Design 911	25	Reap Automotive Design	89
Early 911S Registry	97	Restoration Design Europe	63
EB Equipment	99	Rindt Vehicle Design	115
Elephant Racing	47	Roger Bray Restoration	85
EMPI	13	Sportwagen Eckert	31
Export 56	4	Stoddard	27
FVD Brombacher	2	Stomski Racing	5
Gaswerks Garage	97	Tandler Precision	4
Go Classic	77	Webcon UK	89
Gooding & Company	21		
GTS Classics	97	Classifieds	
Historics Classic and		Classic Passion 911	
Sports Car Auctions	23	Eisenbrandt	
Jaz	69	Lancaster Insurance	
John McDonald	43	Maxilite AG	
Joma-Parts.com	69	Revival Cars	
Karmann Konnection	59	Rose Passion	
Kelsey Future Classics	113		
Longstone Tyres	67		

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