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DECEMBER
2014

*A Merry Christmas and a Happy New
Year to all our members*



www.fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk

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EVENTS COORDINATOR

I am very pleased to welcome Colin Smith as our Events Coordinator. Contact details on opposite page and on the web site.

Colin has come forward to fill the role that has been covered by a number of people during the past year on an informal basis and to have a member with such enthusiasm will be a big asset, so if you have an event to be included in the magazine, or need further event information beyond that given by the actual event organisers he will no doubt be willing to assist.

If you visit the website and view our facebook video of Colin's 1300cc 500 at Brooklands, you will see that he is not a man to stand around!

ALSO

As is normal with most Clubs, there will always be vacant roles just waiting to be filled by a willing volunteer, so if you feel that the time is right to step forward, (New Years Resolution?) have a skill that may be useful to the club or its members, or just think it's about time to 'join in' please ring!

J.J.

IN MEMORY OF CARL ALLEN

I am sure that all those who knew Carl will agree with me that he was a great figure head and leader as the long serving chairman of the 'Fiat 500 Club'.

His famous red 500 with its complementary 500 originated trailer was an instand source of recognition and to his constant credit was always presented in the very best of condition, it was a delight to see it at so many events around the country.

It was to our great pleasure when Carl and his attending club members agreed to join us at the 'Fiat 500 Enthusiast's Club's 5th Birthday Party at Brooklands, to share tea and cakes, and to continue inter club contacts on several later occasions.

We wish to send a heartfelt message of sympathy to Carl's family and all of his many friends in the fiat 500 community. He will be sorely missed.

John Jenkins

'TECH TORQUE'

Please note that the Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club advise caution if following any advice given on these pages as the club can accept no responsibility.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE AND LIFE OF ENGINE

Many years ago (and sadly, I do mean many) I worked at 'Radbourne Racing' in London under the guidance of the late, great Geoff Anstead, possibly the best boss that I ever had. One of the regular jobs was for a bunch of us to go over to (I think) Jack Barclay's, collect brand new 500s, drive them back to Bramber Road and then convert them into 'Radbourne 650N' pocket rockets, a job I really enjoyed. Whilst doing these conversions, I acquired a fair number of tips and ways of doing the job that improved the performance and life of the engine.

A. STRONGER EXHAUST MOUNTING

One of the normal problems with securing the exhaust mounting brackets to the crank-case is that the studs can pull out of the crank-case, and then you are faced with the problem of fitting oversize studs and drilling out the brackets to refit them. The trick is, whilst the sump is off and before the engine is rebuilt, to tap the thread on the TOP stud holes all the way through (they are not 'blind' as are the lower stud holes) and then fit a machine screw, of the required length and complete with flat washer, spring washer and loctited, from the INSIDE—and do it up REALLY TIGHT! This way all the load on the top mounting is taken by a bolt that can't pull out, rather than a short length of aluminium thread. If in doubt regarding the lower stud, a steel insert in the crank-case might be a wise move—a problem we didn't come across as we were usually dealing with brand new engines.

B. NEW-BUILD LUBRICATION

Very often when rebuilding your engine, it can be days, or even weeks before the rebuild is complete, and then some considerable time before the engine is installed and cranked into life; this can lead to an oil-drain-back situation with the engine being started with "dry" components—I have stripped brand-new engines with "collection only" mileage on them with scored bearings in them. I used to get round this problem by coating all moving and "in-contact" parts with a liberal coating of a "gloop" consisting of a 50/50 mix of STP and thin engine oil—the oil lubricated, and the STP held it all in place. I have actually got the "oil-pressure" light to go out by pushing a car down the road, with the plugs out, in gear. I usually made the mix up in a wide-mouthed container (Doritos Tortilla Chips "dip" jar is perfect - fairly shallow with a wide mouth), but remember, don't put the rest of the mix, or the STP, into the engine until it is well 'run in' because the STP will prevent it from becoming 'run-in'!

C. CLEANING ALUMINIUM COMPONENTS

Getting aluminium components really clean can be a very tedious job, but this chore is now alleviated by the system called "Aqua Blasting"---also known as "Vapour Blasting". In this system VERY fine glass beads are carried in water at high pressure. The beauty of this system is that, unlike with grit or sand blasting, you don't have to spend time masking off all the 'gasketed' surfaces as it leaves them clean, and unmarked. I have used this system myself and can vouch for its effectiveness - it brought up a gear-box bell-housing so well that my son thought that I had bought as new one! It is very good for cleaning carburettor parts, and often the people with this facility also have an 'ultra-sound' facility for cleaning out the very fine passages and orifices in carburettors.

Tom Montagu

ADVICE PLEASE

Seatbelts and Floor pans

Members may remember an article on 'Charming and Snow' from the August magazine. Since then Jaimie has sold 'Snow' and is starting work on 'Charming' the Giardiniera. He has asked for some advice. If you can help Jamie contact the editor who will pass on any tips and/or print any answers in the forthcoming magazine.

I started work on Charming the last week or so new floor pans on the way with sill etc., but not 100 percent sure where to start - remove floorpan put it in then sills inner and outer up to it? Also it is a 1972 Italian imported Giardiniera with no seatbelts, or place to put them from the look of it. Do any members know if I need to fit them or not, and if so, three point seat belt or lap belts ? Any help would be much appreciated.

A COUPLE OF USEFUL TIPS

Potential problem with alloy castings

One of the problems with alloy castings is that steel bolts/studs have a habit of seizing in, and when they are taken out, coming out with a fair bit of the casting's thread. The studs (or bolts) for the exhaust elbows (into the cylinder head) are notorious for doing just this. The answer is to fit steel inserts into the head. I use the 'Self Tapping Steel Inserts' as supplied by a company called MEMFAST. They have a good web-site and the inserts are available on-line. Follow the very clear fitting instructions and are a 'piece of cake' to fit. If you are re-building an old engine I would suggest you fit the inserts as a matter of course, and fit them for the rocker-shaft studs as well. The normal size is 8mmx1.25mm (internal measurement), but if the thread comes out with bolt/stud you will probably have to go up to 10mmx1.25mm. If this happens, it is wiser to fit 'stepped' studs to

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locate the exhaust elbows rather than drill out the 'elbow' holes (which leaves very thin hole walls).

Engine Cooling

The air-cooled engine uses the sump oil as a cooling medium much more than a water-cooled engine does. It is therefore important that if one tunes the 500/126 engine variants that a larger sump is fitted. For practically all road use the 3.5 litre sump is adequate---not only does it carry nearly a litre more oil than the standard sump, but being alloy and liberally finned, it dissipates the heat much better. When fitting the alloy sump use the 'ruberoid' gasket, not the cork variety. I use stainless-steel cap-head bolts with the original 'sprung' washers.

Topo Peloso

ADVICE PLEASE

Seat refurbishment

Can anyone advise Don Paesano about where to get his Fiat 500 seats refurbished. If you can recommend anyone please get in touch with the editor who will pass on any information

126'WORKHORSE'

In 1988 I was working for Coloni F1 Team based near Lago Trasimeno Perugia Italy. We were returning home from the Hungarian Gran Prix and was travelling with the race truck and arrived at the customs area of the Hungarian/Austria border. The truck driver went off to show his documentation while I was waiting in the truck. Then this Fiat 126 pulled up beside us, towing the trailer also waiting to go through customs as they were going on holiday. 4 people got out and I had to take a picture.

Don Paesano

Don apologises for the quality of the pictures which were damaged in his daughter's handbag!



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BROOKLANDS CLASSIC BREAKFAST,

26TH OCTOBER 2014

Evening All – “Smithy” again here, recalling this fun day at Brooklands where I finally met our illustrious Commander and Leader, First Officer and self-named Chief Cook and Bottle Washer – Namely, John Jenkins, Jennie and Vittorio Squillaci.

The day got off to an initially promising start when my tow car Discovery (now on its second engine following a fairly catastrophic melt down of the first one on my way to the Honnington Farm event a few weeks ago), actually made it to Brooklands. “Promising” then turned into “Slightly dodgy”, when the Brooklands Museum postcode turned out to be the back end of an industrial estate. I then found a Powder Blue Fiat 500 driving round in similar circles to me so I jumped out and introduced myself to the pilot(John) – who then guided us in the back way using local knowledge. My Fiat 500 was in the trailer because driving it 100 miles on a journey comprising mainly the M40 and M25 was a non-starter – my car has a straight-cut Quaife transmission which screams like a Banshee. For local fun trips, ear plugs are provided for driver and passenger as standard equipment and believe me – they are necessary.



I unloaded the Fiat and then met up with John, Jennie and Vittorio - parking my 500 with theirs under our club flag. After a good chat we headed off for the main event of the day – breakfast! Bit of a queue but a good full English at the other end and it made a great start to the day.

The other main reason I wanted to attend this event was to give my 500 a run up the Brooklands Test Hill, so after breakfast, Vittorio and I headed to the driver’s briefing which was all about “Are you sure you want to do this?, be

careful, etc....” and to sign an indemnity in case it all goes pear-shaped. There was no speed measurement or timing so the event was not a competition – just a crowd pleaser. There was conflicting information on the state of the hill surface and the contours of it so the thing to do was walk the hill before the car runs started. The surface was concrete sections with large sand-filled gaps of 2 to 3 inches in between them, running across the track. This was a concern for me because I was unsure how such a small car would behave if it were wheel-spinning across these gaps. The surface was of the same vintage as the rest of the Brooklands’ famous banked track – i.e. 100 year old concrete and not exactly smooth! The track was straight and about 3m wide – it started on a 1:8 gradient before rising to 1:5 and finally 1:4 – each transition being an instant change at one of the track gaps (each concrete section was flat). Total track length was about 150m with a sharp crest at the top back on to a level surface. Now this would have been fine had the surface not been loose gravel and the track then going sharp 90 right. If a car went straight on, in about 20m it would be inside a cunningly placed building (in fact in the briefing we were told of a Ferrari that did exactly that). A secondary risk was simply taking off and, since none of us were driving WRC Rally cars, breaking something significant upon landing. This hill had been constructed to allow cars to test their grade ability and hill start capability during their design and development – it was not a competition venue so, all things considered, the message was very clear – “This is not a race and you MUST slow down before you reach the crest at the top”.

I decided that I would watch a few cars go up the hill before I went up so I could get a feel for how best to drive it. The first batch of cars that went up included a Bentley Turbo R (graceful gliding affair with a little impertinent wheel spin at the start) and a Jaguar XJ40 (as above but without the wheel spin). A Peugeot 205 GTi, 1.9 (one of the best things ever to come out of France in my view) – lots of front wheel drive wheelspin and scrabbling for grip until he lifted, grabbed 2nd gear and then just drove to the top. There were a few fairly innocuous classic saloons, a few 60’s bikes (Triumph Bonneville, BSA’s etc.), all of whom put in “So, so” runs and then the car I had been waiting to see – a 250bhp (allegedly) Caterham 7. I thought “This ought to go quite well....” - unfortunately, it was all a bit of a let-down and the driver/car combination was less than thrilling. I was about to wander off to get my 500 when the best car of the day came up to the start line – Vittorio (with John Co-driving) in his Ferrari-red Fiat 500. The combination of high revs, no wheel spin, no resultant speed but chiefly the bouncing up and down of both occupants, shouting wildly “Come on!” was enough to whip the now fairly bored crowd into a frenzy! The little car made the hill fairly easily but I reckon he lifted near the top to create doubt (and even

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further drama and excitement) in the minds of the crowd. They loved it and it had to be the cue to get the Flying Flea onto the start line....

As some cars came around for a repeat run, I toddled off to the car park to get mine and, having warmed it up, I drove it up to the start line on tick over. I looked at some of the crowd who perked up and I thought I detected an expectancy on their faces along the lines of, "Here we go again – another hair dryer". When the start marshal waved me off I had already made my decision on how to drive the run (the options being sensibly or Harry Flatters). The decision was "Sensibly Harry Flatters" with a serious lift off before the top. To refresh readers' minds or just to make you aware, the Flying Flea weighs 600kg and has 180 bhp from a 1,300cc Suzuki Hayabusa motorcycle engine mounted amidships. 0-60 on the flat is around 4 seconds so I thought power should not be an issue. However, the biggest risk with these "Small" (sorry 500 owners) bike engines is that they have no flywheel or inertia, so getting them off the line takes a bit of doing including plenty of revs. Finally, having seen the highest speed attained on the hill up to now being about 25mph, my high first gear which gives me 60mph at the 11,000 rpm red line was also a consideration. The upshot of this lot was I had to get the wheels spinning and not produce the all-too-common fluff and stall (too embarrassing to even contemplate).

So here we go – revs up, dump the clutch and hang on.... The rear wheels lit up, smoked like crazy and ran at the speed dialled in by the accelerator. The car started to go a little sideways about 1/3rd the way up the hill so I lifted a little to allow it to straighten it up before re-applying the power to scamper up the rest of the hill. It turned out that the sand filled gaps mentioned earlier could be renamed "Wheel spin initiators" and off we went again on our way to the top. As I saw the "Top-of-hill" marshal's eyes beginning to widen, I dutifully and very sensibly lifted again and braked to reach the top crest at about 10 mph. I was very proud of my restraint and trundled off round the return route, which included a section of the Brooklands Banking.

I did not have time to see it but Jennie reported that the crowd seemed to enjoy the run and enjoyed the contrast to Vittorio's. For my part, there were two follow on occurrences:

1. I was called over by a marshal on the return road to say that the organisers would be grateful if I drove a little slower next time. Well, I had no intention of doing another run because the track was so rough – a far cry from the smooth tarmac of a Hill Climb or Sprint track, which is what the car has been built for, so I just thought "That'll do Flea".
2. I was surrounded by people in the car park all asking versions of the same

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question, namely, "What have you got in that?..." Again, I got the s a t i s f y i n g impression that they had enjoyed it.



Off I went to join the others and see what they thought – and this is what changed the plan for the day: It seems Vittorio and John were still in the queue of cars for a second run and missed mine. There was nothing for it – the flea had to go again. On the start line this time the 2 prominent thoughts were "Easy on the throttle and slower on the way up". In fact the easier throttle resulted in a lot less wheel spin but still enough to make much smoke. I lifted earlier to stop it but this resulted in much better traction and hence more speed up the hill at the top end when I re-applied the throttle. The slowing down for the top crest had to be correspondingly more enthusiastic this time but I did this very sensibly (I thought) to appease my wide-eyed friend at the top.

After this run, I found the rest of the "Team" suitably amused and impressed and we spent some time chatting to event-goers who were interested in our cars. It occurred to me that the FFEC had successfully provided the "Driving Bookends of performance" for the hill climb and certainly taken the overall award for crowd pleasing.

Jennie and Vittorio had to leave so John and I went for a coffee before setting about seeing the superb museum at Brooklands. The cars were displayed in period showroom or workshop environments, the latter being surrounded by tools, spares and general tat from the era (reminded me of my garage). My car-of-the-museum was the 24 litre Napier Railton Grand Prix car with a beautiful polished aluminium body. The car used to get 4 wheels off the ground on the "smooth" concrete banking of the Brooklands race track in the 1920's – what heroes must have driven cars like this?

There was a selection of later F1 cars from the Jim Clark/John Surtees/Graham Hill era, through to a 2013 McLaren. The museum also had a large number of aircraft displayed in a number of different hangars, housing aircraft from the beginnings of flight to WW2 bombers and a Hurricane.

The entry ticket of £12 was now feeling like pretty good value since it covered the



breakfast, messing about on the Test Hill and access to the whole museum.

And so the day came to a close and I loaded up the Flea back into its trailer for the 2 ½ hr haul home. A great day for me – I met some very nice and dedicated people who run our club, saw some great cars and had a noteworthy play on the test hill. Roll on the next event!

Colin Smith

For those intrigued by 'The Flea' more is revealed on page 21



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From the choosing your policy to the repair or replacement of your beloved Fiat, Andrew Misseldine from Lancaster Insurance, gives us a 'must know guide' to ensure it's properly covered, along with some 'do's and don'ts' to remember at scene of an accident.

THE MUST KNOW GUIDE

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Do's and Don'ts

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- *Stop your vehicle in a safe place (if driveable).*
- *Note down contact details of the driver, passengers and any witnesses.*
- *Note down the driver's insurance details.*
- *Dial 999 if anyone is injured.*
- *Provide your contact and insurance details to any third parties.*
- *Sketch and take photographs of the scene if possible.*
- *Notify the police if you've been unable to collect details from a third party.*
- *Contact your insurer's or broker's accident claims line.*

Don't:

- *Drive away from the scene without stopping.*
- *Admit liability, verbally or in writing. Your conscience may want to get the better of you but it's your insurer's responsibility to confirm or deny liability.*
- *Refuse to provide your insurance details to any third party involved - it's a legal requirement.*

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'ALFIE', 'BOOT', AND THE BRIGHTON SPEED TRIALS



Having finally managed to bring our Barchetta 595 'Alfie', into the UK just over a year ago and after getting through the new import procedures with HMRC and the DVLA we thought that it would fun to enter the Brighton National Speed this September 2014.

So with an entry in the Brighton & Hove motor club handicap and an entry in class 1 (up to 1400cc) accepted it was time to get 'Alfie' scrubbed up and fitted out with the appropriate white roundels and competition numbers.

On the morning (early) of 6th September 'Alfie' with co-driver 'Boot' the bear we set out for Madeira Drive, Brighton where the Speed Trials are held and have been held since starting in 1905 probably making it Britain's oldest motor sport event. After the formalities of "signing on" and MSA scrutineering of 'Alfie', helmet, overalls (and 'Boot') all we had to do was wait for the start of the event at 9 am. First out for the practice run 'Alfie' clocked 21.7 seconds at the end of the quarter mile course and was timed at 63 mph. Giving away at least two cylinders and a minimum of 600 cc's to other competitors the aspiration for 'Alfie' was not to take the slowest time of the day and to try and get under 20 seconds for the quarter mile.

Between runs 'Alfie' and 'Boot' posed for numerous photos with children, some young some not so young, and indeed some more mature folk who had owned 500's, 600's, Multiplas, Topolinos etc. The weather stayed dry which when you do not have a roof is more than just a kindness it makes the day!



So the call for the final run came, 'Alfie' moved up to the line and with the electronic timing eye in position and the start light on green, whizzed down the sea front course to set his best time of the day finally getting under the twenty second mark (19.86 seconds) and was timed at 67 mph in the process beating a 1928 4 litre Bentley.

A great time was had by all with the fastest time of the day being set by a Suzuki motorbike reaching 169 mph and taking 8.94 seconds to reach the end of the course!

John and Jane Wheeler



Co-driver Boot - maintaining his cool!

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A FIAT 500 WITH ATTITUDE

Evening All – “Smithy” here, a relatively new Fiat 500 owner and FFEC member. I bought the little Tyke described below as a nearly finished project about 2 years ago on the grounds it was the first car I have seen for about 20 years that was affordable and truly excited me. The car is a Fiat500 which was heavily modified as a road-legal hill climb car (along similar lines to Sheridan’s Fireblade car in a previous magazine) by a talented Engineer who has designed and built his own single seater hill-climb cars, including the carbon fibre tubs. He did this all in his garage at home and was a very engaging but modest character. The 500 was something of a side project that he had lost interest in and I duly purchased it although it had covered only 160 miles since he “completed the build” in 2006 so it needed a thorough going over before venturing onto the road, never mind the track.

Engine - The heart of the car is a Suzuki Hayabusa 1300cc engine, straight out one of the fastest motorcycles on the planet, producing 180bhp in standard trim and located behind the driver’s seat. To drive – the overall experience is nice and smooth, and even quite quick up to 6,000rpm, whereupon all hell breaks loose. The engine revs to about 12,000rpm and, in a car weighing in at 600kg (confirmed courtesy of 4 sets of Argos bathroom scales), this gives a 0-60 time of about 4 seconds. This is achieved in first gear and, if you pull off with a suitable amount of (unnecessary) enthusiasm, the wheels spin most of the way there.....

Body - The car retains the original steel shell and is externally unmodified but it does have fairly major mods under the skin in each corner for completely new double wishbone, race suspension pick up points. The car has a lowered ride height, negative camber on all the alloy wheels, and a few intake ducts to get some air into the radiators. A full roll cage is fitted inside the shell and a rather nice touch is a pair of Ferrari 430 black leather seats. During initial shake-down runs (after coaxing an MOT from a local understanding, if incredulous MOT Garage) the car had several major problems:

Cooling – if driven more than 5 miles with any enthusiasm, it overheated. The rad was in the front but had 2 issues – the motorcycle water pump was not powerful enough to circulate the required amount of water from the mid-mounted engine to the front rad and also there was insufficient cooling air passing through the rad. Whilst there was a new air intake grille on the front panel of the car, there was no exit for the hot air from the front bonnet compartment. The solutions to these 2 problems were an auxiliary electric water pump to boost the coolant circulation and raising the rear of the bonnet 50mm to allow hot air out over the windscreen (see above photo). The car now runs cool.



Transmission – The bike engine has a 6-speed gearbox which is what the car uses – clutchless upward changes are possible and are very effective going up the ‘box but the clutch is needed coming down (like a motorcycle). In between the bike engine/gearbox unit is a Quaife straight cut drop box with a ratio of around 2.2:1 to a Quaife torque-sensing LSD. This had a life of around 25 miles before the input shaft dissolved under the bike input torque and the alternating torque shocks of clutchless gear changes. A few calcs and a call to Quaife revealed that the input shaft was totally unsuitable for my application but the ‘box itself was designed for this power – all it needed was the correct input shaft. The new shaft was fitted and now the car goes like it should – about 1,000 miles and counting....

Suspension - The springs and dampers are 2" race "Coil-overs" and the dampers are adjustable – as is ride height, camber, castor and toe. I.e. – you can adjust just about everything to set the car up, in all 4 corners. The trouble was, I could not find anyone who had any experience of such a small, short, narrow and relatively high car and my first settings (which were based on a race Elise setup) were quite a way off. In fact, to be truthful – the car was virtually undriveable – the straight line stability was terrible and the turn-in to corners was very aggressive. This was (incredibly) tamed by an inspired recommendation of a mate to toe the front wheels out (a lot) – this was totally counter-intuitive to me but I did it. The effect was remarkable – suddenly the car was stable in a straight line and turn in was much more benign and manageable. (The technical explanation of why this worked is quite complicated but, trust me, it definitely did work). I



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have been told not to expect any great life out of the front tyres with this set up! I set the car up as best I could on the road – terrorising other motorists on local lanes and roundabouts (the latter being excellent for assessing power and lift-off handling). However, you cannot push as hard as you can on a track in safety and so I was keen to understand how the handling characteristics I THOUGHT I had would manifest themselves on the track. My conclusions from road set-up were:

- Brakes – a bit erratic in terms of grabbing left or right. Not confidence inspiring.
- Quite a sharp lift-off oversteer characteristic (as opposed to the desirable “Tuck-in” to tighten the line of a corner). This made the car a tad unstable but, crucially, if you met a hazard at speed – the natural instinct to lift off could end up in an instant oversteer, spin or even rolling the car.
- Power oversteer – not possible to assess safely on the roads (too much power and too small a vehicle, making it very twitchy).
- Tyre pressures – I started with an estimate of 22F, 24R for this 600kg, mid-engined, very short car. On the road these seemed to work OK and the pressures never rose by more than 1psi or so, even in hot weather and being worked fairly hard.

FIRST TRACK OUTING

On 15th May 2014, I headed up to Curborough Sprint Course in Lichfield, to a track day event with the new toy in the trailer to assess it on the track. As well as being an introduction to track driving for novices, this event is also very useful for assessing and setting up a car such as this. The track environment allows you to push the car in a way that is not possible on our Queen’s highways and the key thing is that you are the only car on the track at any time.

The driver’s briefing instructed that everyone should start gently and build the speed up during the day as they got used to the track and the amount of grip, etc. The briefing was intended to induce some caution in the novices present and prevent event stoppages for recovery or, perish the thought, injury. I did some track marshalling in the morning to help out the organisers and went onto the track in the afternoon.

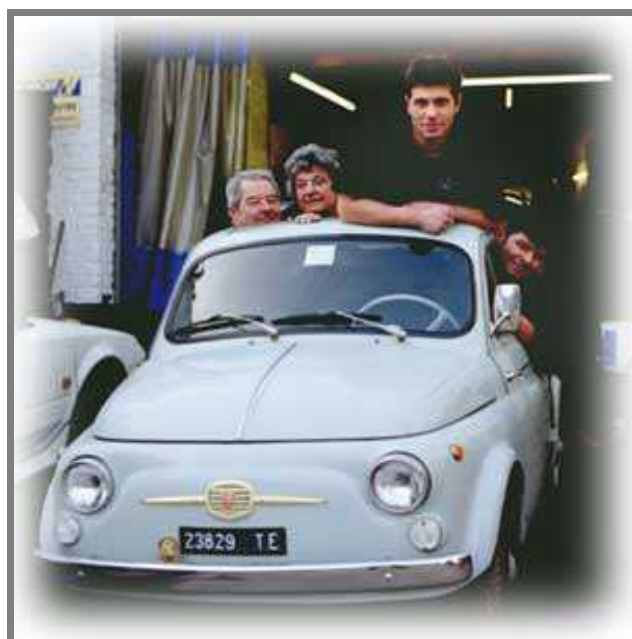
Everyone heeded the briefing words admirably and the morning went very smoothly with universal enjoyment of the excellent weather and a new, improved track layout.

However, after lunch, it all went a bit wayward when a certain Kawasaki-Green Fiat 500 lined up on the start line and charged off to spin on the first bend with 2 wheels in the air at one point. (That lift-off oversteer was much more severe on the limit.) I then proceeded to spin a further twice (and I hadn’t even completed

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my first lap) much to the enjoyment of the small but dedicated crowd of spectators. We were running a 3 laps-pe- run format and, to my credit, I only spun once on the third lap – a significant improvement over the first one (I thought).

After the run, trying to analyse what was going on and why the car was so twitchy was interesting. An instructor and a regular competitor at the track started by saying, “Well you had four wheels on the track some of the time.....” From the driving seat, all I could feel was TWITCHY! Power slides were not possible because the car kept changing attitude so quickly between understeer and oversteer. In fact, it was not until I saw some video taken by a dedicated marshal on the top bend (another mate - good old Steve) that I realised what was going on. Without going into the details, the fundamental set up of the car was miles away from ideal which no amount with fiddling with tyre pressures would sort. A massive increase in front suspension roll rate was prescribed and this upgrade is work-in-progress as we speak.

The photo below looks somewhat akin to a classic Jim Clarke Lotus Cortina Mk1 front-wheel-in-the-air attitude which, if it did this predictably all the time, would be fine (but it doesn't..... the little Tyke is jumping and twitching all over the place, lifting and dropping the front wheel every second or so).



By the end of the day I had learned how to drive around the problem and enjoy the challenge of keeping the little beggar in the track. However, the crucial thing was how much I learned from the driving and analysis of the video footage which enabled me to diagnose the problem and fix it before I take the



little chap hill climbing next year. My re-analysis of the car's characteristics were:

- Brakes – Being AP Racing items all round – all these needed was using in anger and they settled into a very effective system. This again highlights the difference between fast road driving and the track.
- Turn-in to bends – This was fine with the front toe-out setup.
- Quite a sharp lift-off oversteer characteristic (as opposed to the desirable “Tuck-in” to tighten the line of a corner) - This, turned out to be the most significant finding in that the car was fundamentally unstable and prone to spinning if you lifted off when cornering on or near the limit. A fundamental suspension redesign resulted from this.
- Power oversteer – not possible to assess safely on the roads and, as it turned out, not possible on the track either, due to the suspension issue above. The car has a Quaife torque-sensing LSD and this does not work if a rear wheel lifts (which mine did).
- Tyre pressures – I tried going up and down 2 psi each end but there was so much else going on (and wrong) with the handling that I could not feel any difference.

I thoroughly enjoyed my day at the track and I learned a lot about my unusual home-built car – I would recommend this type of event for anyone needing to set up a car in safety.

On the road - meanwhile, the Cinquecento is a great cue car and my favourite bait is BMW's and Audi's! Of equal pleasure is the universal reaction of people as you drive past them – always a smile! I always drive through villages and towns at speed limits which this has the added bonus of giving people more time to enjoy the car. It is seen as universally cute from kids to Grandparents – almost a Noddy car image (if only they knew....).

I hope the above drivvle has been of some interest and I look forward to meeting members of our club at an event soon or maybe at a hill climb next season.

Colin Smith



Two pictures of Tom Montagu's car now back on the road, lowered and tweaked (cruises at 60, tops out at just below 80--at the moment!). Tom is a regular contributor to Tech Torque and is currently living on a narrow boat somewhere in England - not sure where this lovely little car resides!

JS





COMPETITION

Where Am I?

Where am I?

You may remember the unsuccessful attempt to get anyone (except Martin bless you) to enter a previous competition to win this rather special model of a Fiat 600D. So the editor has come up with this (very amateurish) attempt to show a Fiat 500 in a landscape somewhere in the Northern Hemisphere.

To win the prize, very kindly donated by Peter Barnes, a member and collector of model cars, correctly guess: **a) The country b) The name of the locality c) The closest large town/city.**

To enter the competition you must be a member of the Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club

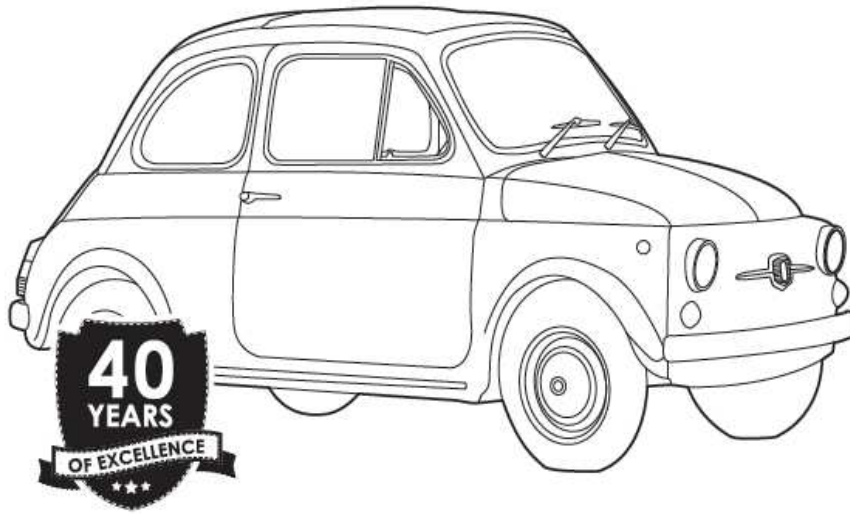


or an immediate family member. Answers by email or post to the editor (contact details pg 2) The winner will be the first correct answer out of the hat .

The Editor's decision is final

JS

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MEMBERS WANTED AND FOR SALE

Please note that the 500 Fiat Enthusiasts Club only offers free advertising in this column to private individuals who are paid up members and not to businesses or commercial enterprises. The 500 Fiat Enthusiasts Club advises those placing or responding to adverts to take reasonable care as the club cannot endorse or accept responsibility for any items listed for sale or for any subsequent transactions.



Photo: Courtesy of Fiat

FOR SALE FIAT ABARTH STAGE 1 CARBURETTOR KIT.

For 500s and 126, less camshaft. Excerpt from 78/79 leaflet (shown opposite) includes pictures of the equipment with associated text. Buyer collects.
£300 firm.

Reason for sale? My 500 (695) is fitted with an original stage 2 kit, a bit fierce and thirsty unlike the progressive twin choke stage 1.

Contact Peter Dixon Tel:
07854455412 or 02088 921103

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Too many to list individually but includes early Sidevalve and late Overhead Valve Engines, Gear Boxes, Running Gear Suspension etc.

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Fiat 500D, 500F, 500L, 500R, 126.
Replaces existing carburettor, camshaft and valve cover. Comprises twin-choke Weber, special Abarth camshaft and integral valve cover and inlet manifold.

STAGE II
226 K12
Provides replacement cylinder head with double ported inlet manifold, 40 DCOE V carburettor.
NB. Not available till Autumn 1978.

FOR SALE

FIAT 500D A rare opportunity to own an original Fiat 500 D (1964) with galvanised body fully restored to her optimum condition. No expense (or time) has been spared to bring her back to her former glory. This left hand drive classic Fiat 500 in ivory with red interior and original sunroof has been turned on her head to

power clean and rustproof the undercarriage, wheel arches, engine bay, bulkhead and bonnet areas. The interior floor pans have been fully rust proofed and treated, which are all solid. I would have no hesitation in eating my sandwiches off the undercarriage as it really is that clean.

Professionally primed and re-sprayed in late 2013 and kept in heated garage ever since I have owned the car from 2011.

The 499 cc engine has been removed, cleaned and serviced, replacing many parts such as fuel pump, points, condenser, spark plugs, carburettor, coil, distributor, oil seals, air filter, belt, HT leads and the timing has been checked.

The gearbox has been removed, fully cleaned, seals replaced, thrust bearing changed and replenished with new gearbox oil. Drive shafts have been cleaned, replaced boots, brake shoes/cylinders changed and new king pins.

This car has good tyres all round with white wall rims, lovely chrome work throughout, spare wheel and some tools, including an Owners Manual copy.

This little Fiat drove all the way back to the UK from Italy in 2007 and has been here ever since.

Please contact me to view in Surrey, close to M25, junction 5.

Mobile 07767 233 728

email retlaskram@aol.com

FOR SALE

I am selling my 1971 500L RH drive to facilitate the restoration of my 1960N. Olivia has a 45hp engine, new gearbox & clutch, disc brakes, coil over shock conversion, electronic ignition etc and has had a full restoration in and out with all new running gear. Receipts to over £14k

I welcome viewing (Devizes or Melksham in Wiltshire) and anticipate a price of around **£10k**. Please contact Chris on :Christopher.Walker@edwardsvacuum.com

FOR SALE

My RHD Fiat Giardinera. MOT Aug 2014. Original log book, instruction and service voucher books, and lots of history. Bills in excess of £4800. Engine, gearbox and clutch all good. New brake system all round, new tyres and much more. Not concours but not bad! **Offers in the region of £5500 ono**. For further information contact me at: martin-sewell@live.co.uk

FOR SALE
Reluctantly selling my Black Classic Fiat 500L 1969



I bought this lovely example of a classic Fiat 500L from its previous owner of 35 year's in Italy close to my wife's home town in Saronno, Italy. Unfortunately, due to work / family commitments I have not had the time and pleasure of taking GINA (that's what my wife and I called her) to any of the Fiat 500 enthusiasts club UK shows or even take her out for those summer day weekend spins that we said that we would do. I have taken her out to have her MOT'd May 2013 when I registered her here in the UK and again this May 2014 and on one other occasion here at the seaside, you should have seen the great looks and interest we got!

This is a very collectable Black original Fiat 500L model with 58K miles. The car was brought over by a transportation company and registered last year in April 2013, with a 1969 'G' plate, I have printed history of previous owner documents but DVLA required the original logbook, I now have the original V5 document for UK. The car for the last 36 years has been garaged and not seen rain.

I am really saddened to sell Gina, but the first to see will full in love with her as I did, I can say there are not that many examples of such a well kept Cinquecento, I will only be selling this to somebody that will look after her and preserve a piece of Italian history.

Her price is £9,500 ono. Should you wish to contact me regarding purchasing Gina, then please call me on **01268 571306 or mobile no. 07896711612.** Please NO timewasters!

EVENTS 2015

Brooklands New Year's Day Gathering

Thursday 1st January 10am-4pm

Brooklands Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0QN

All classic, vintage and veteran cars, motor cycles and commercial vehicles are welcome for possibly the largest New Year's gathering in the South East! Entry via the Campbell Gate off Brooklands Road for pre-1973 vehicles, whose occupants will receive a discount of £1 off our usual admission prices.

If you are interested in coming please contact Jenny Squillaci
magazine@fiat500enthusiasts.co.uk
 depending upon interest shown, we can book a club spot.

NEW EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR

I would also like to extend a welcome to Colin Smith, our new events co-ordinator (See page 3).

The committee will be meeting shortly to discuss next year's events programme. Meanwhile if you have any ideas regarding events, or would like to see a club presence near you, please contact Colin on events@fiat500enthusiasts.uk or telephone 07468 321009.

JS

NEW MEMBERS

The Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club extends a warm welcome to the following members who have recently joined our club

Daniel Burdett	Lancashire		
Gideon Hirsh	West Sussex	1972	500

**COPY FOR THE FEBRUARY MAGAZINE SHOULD BE WITH THE
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