

NOTES FROM A NAVIGATING NOVICE

The Linwood Rally Season 2001

A couple of years before I met Bob he had hung up his driving boots after 22 years racing (1960 – 1982) in a variety of machinery from a home built Fairthorpe Zeta, through TVR, Chevrons etc to various Porsches. We retired (early!) in 1988 and spent 5 years wandering around the Mediterranean on a boat. Eventually we decided to come ashore and bought a house in the South of France a few miles back from the coast, planning to continue boating. That was until a rich Belgian made us an unsolicited offer for the boat which we couldn't refuse, so we changed our plan and sold it.

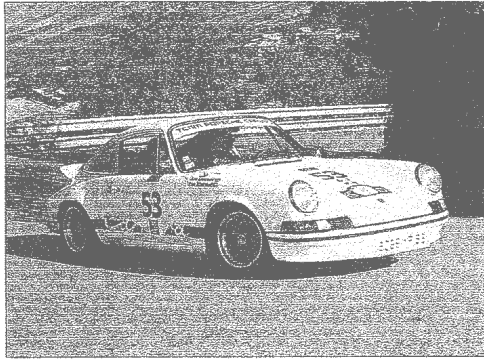
Luckily, our house has lots of garage space and with our one

car looking a bit lonely we started to collect a few classics. A 1971 Citroen SM (yes, really), a 1973 Porsche Carrera RS 2.7, a 1968 Maserati Ghibli Special to keep the Citroen Maserati company and a newish Porsche Carrera 4 for the RS. We started to do some 'touristic' rallies with the SM and Ghibli and hill climbs with the RS. The bug bit again and the obvious route was classic rallying. This means a pre 1970 model and the 1.7 ton Ghibli special is not exactly suitable.

Heavy discussions on the price/suitability equation ruled out a wide range of cars. Bob has fond memories of the very early Giulia Super he ran from the mid 60's and had spoken of it



Bob and Ann Linwood's Giulia Super splashes through a 'puddled' gravel stage on the way to second in class in the Classic Marathon. – (Photo: Francois Hasse.)



On the Mont Ventoux hill climb in the Porsche 2.7RS earlier in the year. Failure to read the regulations deprived the Linwoods of a win. - (Photo: Francois Hasse.)

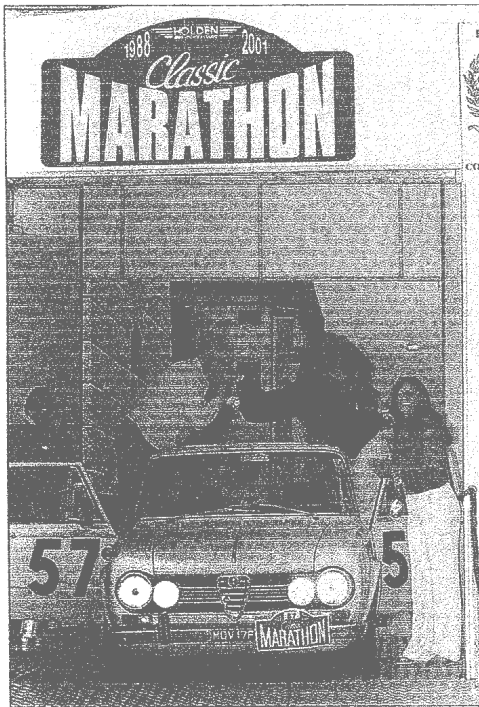


After the Rallye des Alpes Bob and Ann (to the left of the picture) have good reason to be happy after finishing first in category and second in the team award. - (Photo: Francois Hasse.)

frequently. It seemed to fit the bill. We bought a 1968 Giulia Super which had been tested and featured in Classic Cars magazine. It had been properly restored by Classicareo, Manchester, in its original Celeste (light blue). Ken Bell in Fleet rebuilt the engine with a nicely ported head with standard valves, fast road cams, polished rods, balanced crank and lightened mechanical clutch. We also balanced the prop shaft - that made a big difference. As filters and exhausts are not regulated, it has a GTA exhaust system, lengthened a bit to fit the saloon and the over the engine air filter has been discarded

in favour of trumpets and filter socks. Ken carried out various mechanical work and fitted the excellent Harvey-Bailey suspension kit. We put a sump guard around the beautiful but vulnerable bottom end - an essential investment. We also fitted a Kenlowe fan, which only needs to work on the steepest climbs on hottest days or in town. Everything else is standard. Then, last January, we drove it home to the South of France where we continued the rally preparation.

The few additional instruments have been mounted without drilling any visible holes in the original interior and for the same reason we have not fitted a roll cage. For safety, we have high-back seats and harnesses. Some rallies insist on mechanical trip meters so we chose a Retrotrip 2 as it is easy to calibrate and a lot cheaper than a Halda. Others allow some electronics so for them we have a Brantz Speedtable and an International 2 Pro Trip meter. My low tech essentials include a flexible map fight and a clip board (an old 18" x 13" wooden tea tray) with a large calculator stuck on it.



Time to be gallant and celebrate finishing second in class in the Classic Marathon. - (Photo: Francois Hasse.)

RALLY BAPTISM

Being retired, we decided that we could spend time visiting parts of Europe away from our normal routes, so we drive to and from everything, regardless of where it is. On some events it seems that practically everybody else has a support car with two or three mechanics/friends and a surprising number of cars arrive in transporters and have service crews - a real contrast to us. We have probably the cheapest car and do all our own servicing. Inevitably, some evenings we would both be under the car, often in the rain, swapping tools with the professionals around us but we've never yet missed dinner, although tomorrow's navigation is then done late at night.

For this first year of 'real' rallying we chose a programme of 8 events, all regularities of various forms. The competition/racing classes don't accept our non-F.I.A. cars and we prefer to drive and navigate together. Our first event was an International for Maseratis only on old Monte Carlo Rally roads in the South of France. Pleasingly, we won one stage and were third overall. We did three events in the Porsche 2.7 RS. The first was the Mont Ventoux hill climb where, but for a driver error on the fourth climb (should have read the regs about not braking before the line - 100 penalty points), we would have won the regularity. As it was we were second in class and 4th overall. The Alfa entry list was headed by Roger and Monty Sage in the wonderful 1933 8C. There were also Giulia GTV and GT; 1300 GT and a Giulia Super (not ours). There were two Club Porsche de France rallies with mostly modern models. The first