

FEBRUARY 1991

AlFacionada!

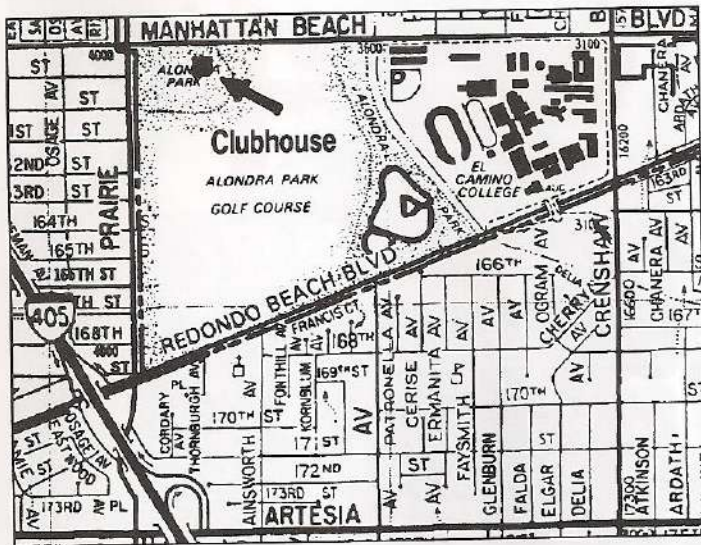


ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



Alfacionada is the monthly publication of ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, a regional chapter of ALFA ROMEO OWNERS CLUB, INC.

Subscriptions to this newsletter are included as part of the \$47.00 membership fee paid to AROC, Inc. Meetings are held monthly on the LAST FRIDAY of the month at 8 p.m. at Alondra Park Clubhouse, located at 3850 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Lawndale, CA unless otherwise noted in the newsletter.



Please send articles, letters, ads and photographs to the newsletter editor by the tenth of the month for publication in the next month's edition. Classified ads are available as a free service to members and at a nominal \$10.00 charge to non-members advertising Alfa related items. This newsletter and its authors and editors assume no liability for the accuracy or legality of any technical information appearing herein.

IMPORTANT DEADLINE:

All articles and classified ads are due by the 10th of the month to be featured in the following month's newsletter.

MODIFICATIONS DISCLAIMER:

AROSC is not responsible for the safety or practicality of modifications performed by individual members and described in these pages. The Club suggests you check with your mechanic before modifying your car in any way.

Cover: Polizia Alfa 33 cruises past bomb-proof doors on the streets of Palermo. Photo by Anthony Wu.

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Newsletter

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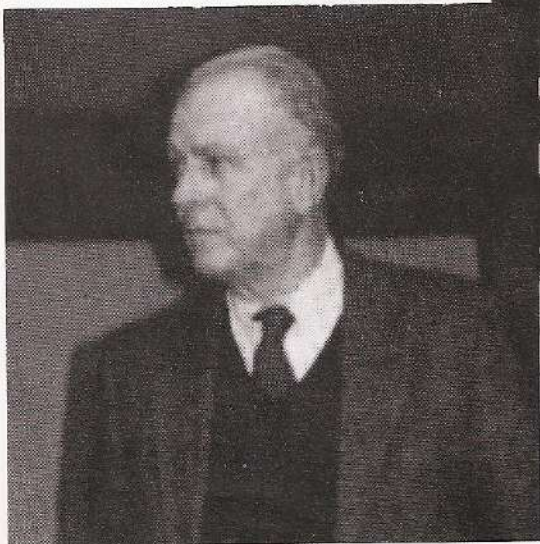
Editor's Desk

Louise Velazquez

As this issue goes to press we have just concluded one of our best January meetings ever. Several hundred of our members gathered for an evening that featured a wonderful presentation by **Strother MacMinn** on the evolution and current direction of automotive design. His insights and wry observations were enjoyed by all. We will have more on this meeting, including the year end Time Trial and Concours awards, in our next issue.

Two new contributors are featured this month: **Anthony Wu** has contributed an article and photographs on the use of Alfas by the Italian police and **Larry Meyer** premieres the first in his series of book reviews. Their time and energy is greatly appreciated.

The February 22 meeting will feature noted automobile writer and historian **Len Frank**. Len is best known for co-hosting *The Car Show* (with John Retsek) on KPFF every Saturday afternoon from 12-1:30. He has a passionate love of Alfas that we all share and we are happy that he is taking time out to pass on some of his experiences to us. Len is a genuine raconteur, and should make this a very interesting meeting for both car nuts and non-nuts alike.



CAUGHT: January Meeting featured rare appearance by elusive designer Strother MacMinn.



SPY Magazine

President's Column

William J. Pringle

Well, we've just finished a 4 hour meeting with the new board, hammering out the calendar for the upcoming year. I waited until the last minute to write this article so that I could report some of what transpired. (ALWAYS FOLLOW THE DEADLINE ESTABLISHED BY THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR!)

What we did was set-up some dates and events to remember: February 22 will be the general meeting at Alondra Park and the guest speaker will be Len Frank the renowned automotive writer and radio show host, the weekend of April 12, 13 & 14 should be a blast as we return to the Long Beach Grand Prix with a party and seats at the races, on May 5 you'll eat your heart out, literally, at the 1st "Mangia Miglia" (details coming soon); June 1st will be the annual winery tour, dinner, concours, meeting, etc., at San Antonio Winery. These are only a sampling-details of these and other events will follow in this and other issues of *Alfacionada*. Be there or be square!

Hats off to **Charlie Thieriot** and all the Time Trial Committee members who made a great event at Willow Springs the first weekend

in January. Everyone had a great time and really enjoyed the debut of the AROSC Racing program. I hope everyone is ready on March 23 & 24 at Willow again for round two! If you need to hone your driving skills beforehand, Mr. **John Green** and his now-famous driving school will be at **The**

Streets of Willow Springs for some excellent instruction (Ed. Note: see article in last month's *Alfacionada* for complete info). I have heard nothing but praise for this class act.

Some of the long-term goals for this administration will be updating the almost 30 year-old by-laws to make sure they comply with current legal practice. Helping out with research is Member-at-Large **Kristin Gurney**. I don't think she's related to Dan, but I'd like to thank her for all the work she's put in already. Related to this is my desire to establish a Nominating Committee so that we could have an election in November with oodles of candidates to choose from. It will be the responsibility of this Nominating Committee to seek out the best in the membership and twist their arm into running for a Board position. Be prepared because they will be calling on you...and they don't take no for an answer!

Continued Page 7



In Servizio Dello Stato Alfa Romeos in Italian Law Enforcement

Anthony Wu

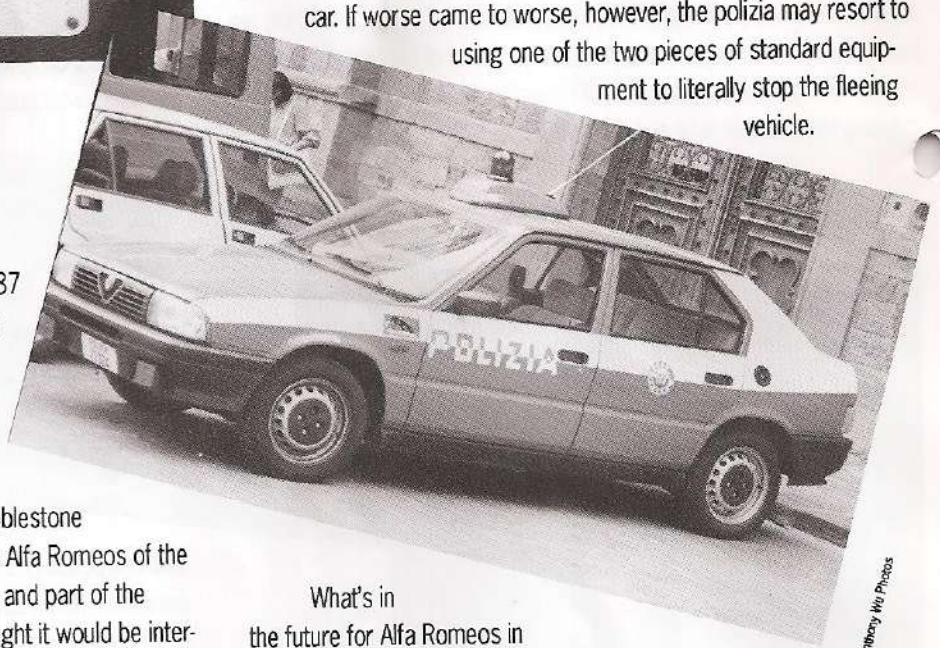
My interest in Alfa Romeos was sparked in 1987 while I was studying architecture in Italy with the California State University International Programs. I was one of the fortunate few to live in Florence and experience the Italian culture for a year. During that year, I became interested in the marque. It wasn't the thousands of Alfas on the cobblestone streets that grabbed my attention, rather it was the Alfa Romeos of the Italian polizia and the Carabinieri (the military police and part of the Italian army with jurisdiction in civilian affairs). I thought it would be interesting to write an article about a little known area of Alfa Romeo's history. It was always a thrill to see those Alfas roar down the streets with their blue lights flashing, European sounding sirens wailing, and the passenger officer waving what looked like an oversized "lollipop" in an attempt to part the traffic. I then wondered why our police back at home didn't drive sport sedans. (Better for us, I guess...)

I quickly learned that Italian law enforcement had mostly Alfas with a few Fiats mixed into their inventory. The polizia drove mostly Alfettas, Giuliettas, and Alfa 33s as their city patrol vehicles, while the more powerful Alfa 75s were used specifically on the autostrada by the polizia stradale (the highway patrol). The Carabinieri drive mostly

Alfettas, Giuliettas, Alfa 75s and Alfa 90s. Both these branches of law enforcement also drive Fiat Unos and Fiat Regatas for the transportation of their personnel.

There are many interesting differences between Italian and American patrol cars. Italian patrol cars are not as heavily laden with equipment as their American counterparts. A radio and a Beretta sub-machine gun are all that are used to do the job. There isn't even a metal grating to separate the front and back seats. The job of transporting suspects was left to the paddy wagons. In short, the Italian patrol cars were more or less stock Alfa Romeos. Performance of the law enforcing Alfas seem to be on par with stock Alfas and not "souped up". Little alteration seemed to be done on the vehicles. They all have manual transmissions and run on leaded gasoline without smog control. Tires and rims also appear to be stock.

It was rumored by my Italian friends that it is difficult to outrun the nimble Alfas on the autostrada. In the rare case when one did outrun the patrol car, the polizia would simply photograph the license plate of the car. If worse came to worse, however, the polizia may resort to using one of the two pieces of standard equipment to literally stop the fleeing vehicle.



Anthony Wu Photos

What's in the future for Alfa Romeos in law enforcement? From what I observed while in Italy, there are many various models of Alfas, ranging from the base model Giulietta to the top of the line Alfa 75 or Alfa 90. The same year, 1987, the 164 made its debut. It would be interesting to see the 164 in a police outfit. Who knows... perhaps if you're ever on an Italian vacation and traveling on the autostrada, you might catch a quick glimpse of a blue Alfa 164 in the rearview mirror of your rental Fiat as it dashes by you at 160 kph plus. Whatever you do, just make sure you don't get bitten by the Visconti serpent wearing a uniform.

Good News, Bad News & Just News

Stu Schaller

Hope all you Alfa nuts out there had a happy holiday season. 1991 started out with a bang for me. My Miata daily driver was rear-ended while it was parked, by a VW Jetta. The Miata stood up very well, trashing only the rear bumper, left taillight, and all the plastic surrounding it. The guy in the Jetta must have been doing at least forty, as his car was crushed all the way to the firewall, even tearing the complete shock absorber out of the body! I finally did get my 2000 Sprint, and the work that was done at Targa Florio, by Giuseppe and friends was done superbly, and at a very reasonable price, so it was worth the wait. There are still a number of things to do to the car, but at least it drives well. After putting an antenna on the car, I found that even the old Blaupunkt AM tube-type radio works!

I would like to give special thanks once again to all the people who contributed to our monthly raffles last year. Your gifts are highly appreciated.

The second issue of Alfa World just came out in English. It is a superb magazine, but a pity that it takes about four months to translate the original, Italian version into English. This issue has articles on the SZ and the 16 valve 33 (pity this car does not come into the U.S.), the 80th anniversary run, the 6C1750 and the type 75 (Milano) racing cars.

There seem to be Giulietta Spiders all over the place for sale, but few sprints. Be careful before you buy one however, as the cost of properly restoring one of these can run a great deal of money. Very good ones are running at least \$15,000, and if Veloce, as much as \$40,000.

If you are interested in attending our Long Beach Grand Prix affair, please contact me as soon as possible, at my new phone number (818) 772-2761. \$75 includes a party on Friday April 12th at the Hyatt Regency in Long Beach, plus a Sunday race ticket, and for \$125 you get all 3 days at the races plus the party. This should be a great event.



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Whatever your demographic category, as long as you've got Alfas in your blood, an AROSC membership offers the following potential benefits:

- *Alfacionada*, your guide to the LA area Alfa scene.
- Membership in the national Alfa Romeo owners club; *Alfa Owner*, its monthly magazine, with many articles on current Alfa events, rumors, technical, historical and competition topics. It also carries ads from all the major suppliers of aftermarket parts and accessories.
- Popular Time Trial, Race, and Concours Schedules
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Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

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AROSC First Race of 1991

Willow Springs Time Trials

Tina Van Curen

The weekend of January 5 & 6 saw the first wheel to wheel racing as part of the Alfa Club time trial program. A field of 17 cars entered the race. The surprise Saturday afternoon qualifying race got everyone to their feet and cheering, setting the mood for Sunday's Big Race.

The Sunday race finished off the weekend on a high note as **John Coté** and his GTAM collected the checkered flag and first place trophy. Second across the line was **Harold Rich** in his GTV-6 followed by **Duane Mead** in his TVR.

Close to 90 enthusiastic time trialers braved the vagaries of January in the desert to enter the first event of the season and were rewarded with picture perfect driving weather; cool, DRY and clear. Lap times were fast, engines cool and spirits high. Many people asked "Who is Bear and where have we seen him before?"

Two new lap records were set on Sunday:

Class D	Jeff Peltola	GTV-6	1:44.55
Class F	Rex Chalmers	Berlina	1:49.09

The trophy winners in each class were:

Class B	Fritz Moore	GTV	1:47.78
Class D	Jeff Peltola	GTV-6	1:44.55
Class D	Bob Henninger	Spider	1:49.80
Class D	Dan Ritter	Gullia Super	1:51.97
Class E	Alex brown	GTV	1:49.61
Class E	Brad Pearson	Spider	1:52.64
Class F	Rex Chalmers	Berlina	1:49.09
Class F	Ric Delgado	Spider	1:56.48
Class M	Bob Schwalm	Porsche 911	1:37.27
Class M	Raoul Hamm	Mustang	1:39.93
Class M	Bud Clark	Saab Sonnett	1:41.85
Class N	Scott Bilinski	Mazda RX-2	1:40.71
Class N	Kit Simmons	Mustang	1:41.79
Class N	Kurt Bilinski	Datsun 1200	1:44.17
Class O	George Kranen	T-Bird Turbo	1:45.21
Class O	John Purdie	Datsun 240 Z	1:45.48
Class P	Todd Kessler	Honda CRX S1	1:47.76
Class P	Steve Hamilton	Toyota MR2	1:47.91
Class P	Alan Ward	VW Jetta 16V	1:48.92
Class Q	Paul Blankenship	Ford Escort Gt	1:52.95
Class Q	Alisa Kincaid	Saab Sonnett	1:53.47
Class Q	Marco Ventura	Fiat 124 Coupe	1:53.71

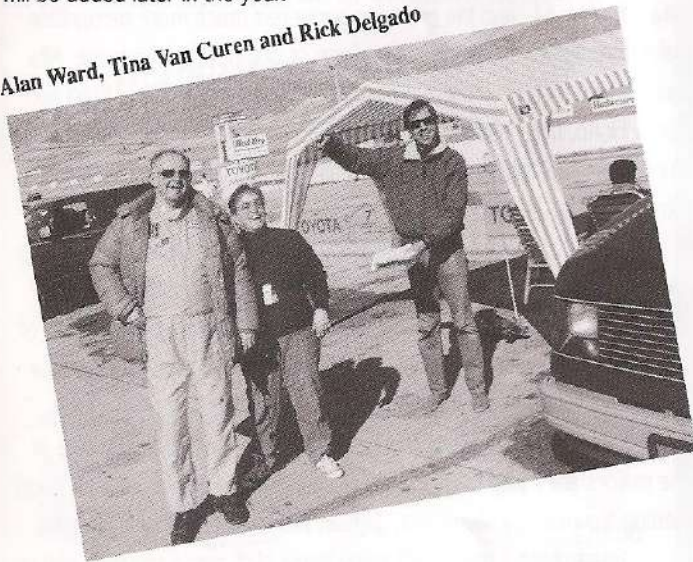
Concours Dates for 1991

The following are the dates of concours you may be interested in entering or attending for 1991. See **Phil Guiral** for details.

April 12	Main Str. Car Show Seal Beach pre-1975 only (213) 869-4977	
June 9*	Huntington Beach Concours (714) 842-2277	Huntington Beach
July 6	Rick Cole Car Auction (818) 506-6533	Newport Beach
July 28	Beverly Hills Concours (213) 657-4800	Beverly Hills
Aug 11*	Alfa Romeo Convention Concours	San Diego
Aug 18	Pebble Beach Concours (408) 649-2722	Monterey
Sept 14	Santa Barbara Concours (805) 969-2667	Santa Barbara
Oct 6	Newport Beach Concours (714) 756-0993	Newport Beach

These events will count towards year end points for our club. Others will be added later in the year.

Alan Ward, Tina Van Curen and Rick Delgado



President's Column From Page 1

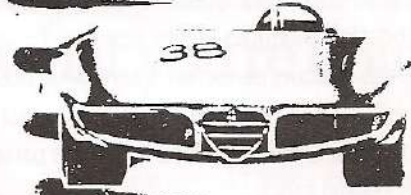
If you would like to comment on any of the above or any other concern, please feel free to drop a note to the Newsletter Editor or give me a call personally. My number is on the masthead, so don't be a stranger!

Mille Grazie.

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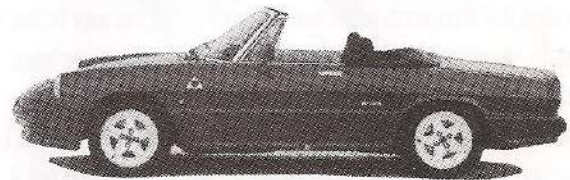
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Modificazioni

Shortening the Milano's shift lever

Lorenzo Gigliotti

Perfection cannot be mass produced, because satisfying the masses is at best a compromise. Relatively speaking, Alfa has never realistically gone after mass appeal which is one of the reasons that it has never boasted enormous profits. However, for those of us who are drawn to this marque, perfection is somewhat closer for us than for the less enthusiastic car owner. But even amongst Alfisti there is sometimes a desire to move even closer to a more personal perfection therefore this column exists ...

Michelangelo once claimed that he did not create sculpture but rather, he just removed the excess marble so that the image that had always been there could be free ... (rough paraphrase)

The simplicity of the following piece, submitted by **Barry S. Goldberg** of Los Angeles, illustrates how the removal of such a small amount of material can bring about a more perfect harmony between man and machine.

Sometimes the simplest change can bring you to the edge of perfection ...

Dear fellow Alfisti,

I've made a number of modifications to my Milano Gold to improve performance and drivability, but the one that I'd like share with you, I consider particularly elegant in that it was completely cost-free, required no mechanical know-how, took no more than an hour or two, and didn't even get me dirty.

"What can this miraculous mod be?" you might ask ... well, I took a hacksaw and cut an inch and a half off the shift lever. This significantly shortens shifts and makes the gear box nicer to use overall (fifth is no longer "way out there"). I think it also adds to the aesthetics of the car.

The shift lever has a shoulder and the factory shift knob has a narrow bore that widens out to accommodate this shoulder. You will have to ream the shift knob to its wider diameter all the way to the rubber insert to accommodate the shoulder sitting deeper in the knob after you cut the lever. (The shift knob is plastic and easy to work.)

If unsure, I'd recommend cutting a short piece off (perhaps 1/2") first to be sure that it's not too short for your liking. You can't put it back.

Have you performed a modification to your quasi-perfect machine? Come on and share.

Send info to:

Modificazioni, 17101 Bellflower Blvd., Bellflower, CA. 90706

AROSC Library Feature of the Month

Reviewed by Larry Meyer

1989-90 Alfa Romeo CART Indy Car Press Kits

Contents: Black & White prints, color slides, biographies and press releases, featuring the March-Alfa Romeo 89CE and 90CA cars and racing teams. [Donated by Stu Schaller]

Alfa has not yet found the way to impressive results in its return to high level, state of the art competition. Not only that, but the lead driver, Roberto Guerrero, was dumped off the team after the 1990 season. Nonetheless, if you would like to get acquainted with the very serious business of corporate-sponsored racing, these press kits present the team and cars in a very professional fashion, and provide a glimpse at P.R. efforts so essential to competing.

If you look at the Indy cars from a Fiat corporate strategy point of view, rather than that of Alfisti, it does make sense for Alfa to be in this unfamiliar arena. We may fondly remember the P2, P3, and Alfetta and dream of grand prix racing, but we have to admit that Alfa was absent from Formula 1 from the early '50's all the way to the late '70's, and was never really successful when they did return.

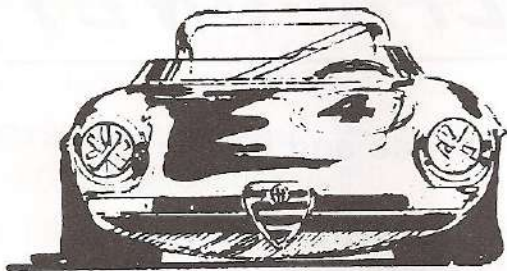
In contrast, Ferrari's great successes in F1 began in 1952 where Alfa left off in F1, and the prancing horse has much more recognition value throughout the world in that form of competition. Likewise, Alfa may have starred in the great road races such as the Mille Miglia and Targa Florio, but in Rallies, the modern counterpart, Lancia has built an impressive reputation, first with the Fulvia in the '60's, and later with the Stratos in the '70's.

So, what is left for new acquisition Alfa—in a word, CART. If you take Fiat's determination seriously to make a go of it in the U.S. via Chrysler and ARDONA, they why not shoot for the most visible level of competition here, starting with Indy? Personally, I'd also like to see a return to endurance racing in Europe and with the Camel GT series here, but I can certainly appreciate that it is a crowded field where all the majors are trying to make a statement, and it would not look good getting trounced by Mercedes, Jaguar, Nissan, Toyota, and Porsche.

Regardless, I think you'll enjoy these slick press releases and photos of Alfa's latest racing program.

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of reviews on books and other materials available from the AROSC Library. Contact Larry Meyer at (818) 440-1803 for details.

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Sunday, April 14th (ticket includes): • Race day seat and parking

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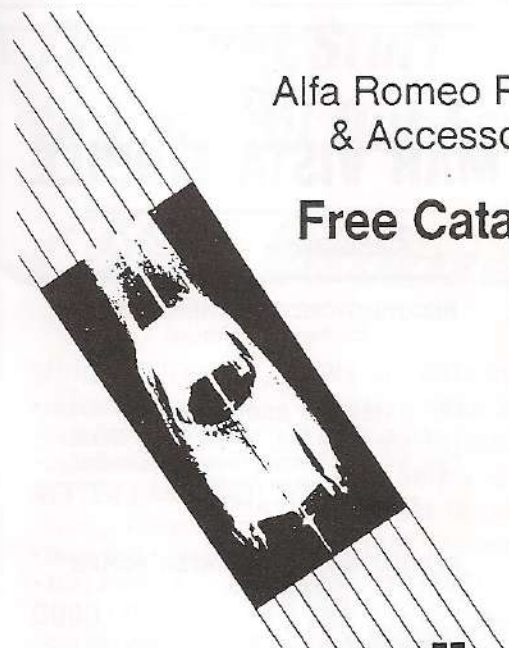


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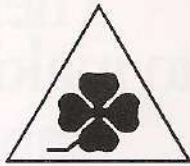
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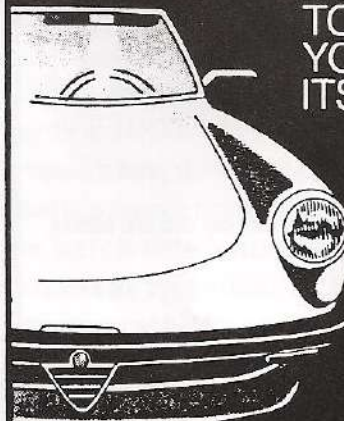
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1981 Spider Veloce Excellent condition, new tires, Nakamichi AM/FM cassette, rebuilt fuel injection pump, 88,000 miles, original owner. \$5500 obo. Call Jim at (213) 208-7380.

1982 GTV-6 Black/Blue 56K miles. Sperry Stage II value job. Cruise computer and manuals included. \$3,950. (805) 379-0973

1984 Spider Silver, blue interior, 50K mi., all option. New cloth top, hard top, spare motor, pile of Alfa spares. Interior 8, exterior 9, mechanical 10. \$7,200. Robin (714) 626-7442

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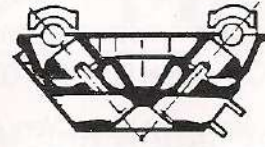
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