



Newsletter of the

Alfa Romeo
OWNERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



October 2009

In This Issue: September Meeting, Willow Springs, upcoming events, and more

Alfa Romeo

September	2 Board Meeting @ Luigi's	12-13 Time Trial & Race at Willow Springs	26 General Meeting - Tour @ Nethercull + Party @ Silverman's
October	7 Board Meeting @ Luigi's	10-11 Wine Tour	24-25 Time Trial & Race @ Buttonwillow
October	31 NO General Meeting		
November	1 Best of France & Italy Car Show & Concours	4 Board Meeting @ Luigi's	14 General Meeting, 1pm White Turkey Sale & Elections @ Dirks
December	6 Competition Committee Meeting	12 Holiday Party at the Kurkus home	13 Board Meeting and planning for 2008 at the Kurkus home

Our 2009 Calendar



1A



Arthur Russell
3852 Bledsoe Ave
Los Angeles, CA 90066-4018



Alfa Romeo Owners
of Southern California
17041 Malta Circle
Huntington Beach
CA 92649

Meeting Information

General Meetings are usually held the last Friday or Saturday of each month at various locations. Check the Calendar Information on the outside back cover for an overview of the year, and the Previews section on Page 4 for details of events planned for the near future.

AROSC Mailing Address:

Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California
17041 Malta Circle
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

AROSC Web Site:

www.arosc.org

Important Deadline & Info!

Please send classified ads, articles, letters, and photographs to the Editor in time to arrive by the monthly general meeting to permit publication in the next month's issue.

General Information

Alfacionada is the monthly publication of the *Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California*, a Chapter of the *Alfa Romeo Owners Club, Inc.*, a national non-profit organization of *Alfa* enthusiasts. Subscription to this newsletter is included as part of the annual *AROSC* membership fee of \$70; non-members of *AROSC* may subscribe for \$22 per year.

Permission is hereby granted to other *Alfa Owners Clubs* to reproduce any original material herein, provided credit is given to the author and to the *AROSC Alfacionada*.

Classified Advertising

Classified (non-commercial) ads are available as a free service to members and for a nominal charge of \$10.00 per insertion to non-members. Ad content must be *Alfa*-related or of special interest to the members.

Commercial Advertising Rates (modified for new page size)

Full page	\$275 per year	Membership Information
1/2 page	\$150 per year	See the inside back cover of <i>Alfacionada</i> .
1/4 page	\$100 per year	
Business card	\$100 per year	

This Month's Cover: Nick Zart got to drive an 8C Competizione -- see his article on this feat on page 15.

Disclaimer (a.k.a. Lawyer Repellent)

AROSC and the authors and editors of this newsletter assume no liability for the accuracy or legality of any technical information appearing herein. They are also not responsible for the safety or practicality of modifications performed by individuals or companies and described in these pages. You should always check with your mechanic before performing any work or modifying your car in any way.

AROSC BOARD of DIRECTORS - 2009

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'Wired' Notices: Jay Negrin
(310) 399-0538 (H) jimnegrin@verizon.net

Concours: Doug Adler
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Wine Tour: Margi Brown margibrown@thekernorg.com

2009 AROSC Previews -- An Outline of Coming Events

October 24-25 – Time Trial & Race at Buttonwillow

October 31 – NO General Meeting -- we will gather at the Woodley Park Car Show the next day.

Look for the meeting around noonish, while we dine under the Alfa Banner.

**DON'T MISS:
Nov. 1, Best of France & Italy Car
Show, Woodley Park
Nov. 13, General Meeting & Elections
@ Dirk Stoehr's**

November 1 – Concours at Best of France & Italy Car Show, Woodley Park + General Meeting!

Don't miss this largest showing of Alfas, Fiats, Peugeots, and Citroens in the area, if not the state. See flyer on page 18, and send in your \$15 by October 23 to save \$5 over paying at the gate. Look for the meeting around noonish, while we dine under the Alfa Banner.

November 4—Board Meeting at Luigi's, 7:30 PM

November 14 – General Meeting, Elections, and White Turkey Auction, Dirk Stoehr's facility, 1:00 PM NOTE DATE CHANGE!

This is the time to elect new board members, buy & sell those "white turkey" items, and see Dirk Stoehr's new facility and collection of cars and memorabilia. See info on page 19

December 6 – Competition Board Meeting

December 12– Holiday Party @ Kukus'

Another party and feast -- MJ & Sheila provide the meats, we pot-luck the side dishes and desserts. See flyer on page 20.

December 13 – Board Meeting, old & new, at Kukus'

Planning for 2010 will take place at this meeting -- have any ideas?

Nominees for Directors to AROC Board of Directors

The deadline for Nominees for Directors to the AROC Board of Directors is **Midnight, CST, January 15, 2010**. A chapter can nominate a person for a position on the board or any member can be nominated by 15 or more AROC members by petition. AROC will need a short biography (**250 words or less**) to print in the *Alfa Owner*. Any nomination biography longer than 250 words will be edited.

Ballots

Assuming that AROC is going to need an election for directors to the AROC national board, the **ballots** are going to be an insert in the **March** issue of the *Alfa Owner*. The secondary members on the Gold Family and Verde Family Memberships will be mailed a ballot. Voting will be concluded in April prior to the national convention.

The format is expected to be the bios of the candidates on the center two pages, with the ballot attached like a reader response card in the center of the magazine.

The nomination forms and letters have already been sent out to the Chapter Presidents and Board of Directors. If anyone is interested in running for Director, please contact your Chapter's President who has the information and form or contact Jolene Justus, AROC Administrator, at (816) 459-7462.

View from the Top -- *Mostly Ramblings of Il Presidente!*

Many thanks to Skip Marchetti for the insightful tour of his realm, the restoration shop at the Nethercutt Museum and to the 40 or so members and friends that showed up. We had a brief general meeting, including commentary about the quick responses by Brewster Thakery, Pres. AROC, to our concerns vis a vis AROC. This was followed by a nice gathering at the Silverman's afterward and though the temperature at lunch time was pushing one hundred, there was plenty of shade and a light breeze. My wife, Evie the Hostess, was all over the place hosting (with much appreciated help from our members and guests). I assume that 5 hours from first arrival to last to leave is a pretty good sign of an enjoyable get together.

The September Track event, judging by the smiles, weather, competition and camaraderie, was also a success. We ran our first High Performance Drivers Education (HPDE) program and that was a absolute success. This looks like it will be a grand venture going forward by offering opportunity, other than the intense instruction at our Schools, to help people improve their basic driving skills, get personal driving instruction and develop confidence in their vehicle. We also want to thank members of the Touring Car Club, who joined us at Willow Springs, for their participation in the weekends events. The new (used) transponder system seemed to work

really well, and even though times appeared to be a little slower (at least mine), results came quickly.

Our last event of the year will be the weekend of October 24th and 25th at Buttonwillow. We will use the full 3.2 mile configuration and will again offer HPDE. By now I probably sound like a broken record, but if you have never experienced instruction at a road track DO IT NOW. What is your life worth? Two days is less than your insurance deductible. Just to reiterate, HPDE is you in your car with an instructor, until or if you're capable (at instructor's discretion) to drive alone. As long as your car is anything but an unprotected convertible, can pass a simple tech inspection, and you have 100% cotton or wool long sleeve shirt and long-leg trousers, leather gloves and a helmet (we have some available), you can participate. Check it out at www.arosc.org -

The October General Meeting will be held on Sunday November 1st during the Best of France and Italy Concours. **For detailed information and on-line registration - www.franceanditaly.com** and the flyer on page 18. We will have an AROSC-judged Concorso during this event. We will also have our General Meeting during the club picnic prior to the awarding of Concorso ribbons. This event counts toward the year-end awards to be given out at our January Awards

Luncheon. For those who have never attended this Sunday in the park, we believe it is the largest gathering of French and Italian cars in the USA. It is a family- and pet- picnic-friendly environment. There is a slight fee for parking on the green (\$15 in advance, \$20 at the gate), which we encourage, but non-French and Italian cars can park for free in the parking lot or on Woodley. Concorso judging will start at 10:00 AM CIT (California Italian Time).

Here Ye, Here Ye: ELECTIONS!!!

As said many times before, **attendance** at this meeting is the surest way to **avoid** being nominated and elected to the Board of Directors **NOVEMBER 14th, 1PM to 4PM - The Saturday that could change your life.** (not just because of the snacks and beverages) We will have a General Meeting at Hallspeed: 3101 S Main St. (the intersection of S. Main and 31st St. in downtown Los Angeles, the new home of Dirk Stoehr's eclectic collection (say that fast) of Alfa Romeos and etceterini. This is one of the friendliest venues we attend. Don't believe me, just checkout all the prior kudos on the Alfabb. Dirk is an outstanding and generous host with an automobile and memorabilia collection as outgoing as his personality. See info on page 19.

In addition to our annual "White Turkey Auction", an opportunity to load or unload your garage of stuff you reeaaally need, we will hold our

election for next years Board of Directors (see article). An incentive for showing up is the fact that maybe **you can avoid being nominated from the floor. You do not have to be present to be elected, but if elected "you will serve"**. Actually the BoD is not a bad job. You get to have dinner out with some friends once a month and you get to be the volunteer selector as opposed to being the volunteer.

The other reason for attending this meeting is the White Elephant sale / auction. Clean out the garage. If Charlie Schwartz shows up to act as auctioneer, with a dash of wit and wisdom, everything will sell.

Time to mark your calendar - December 12th, the LEGENDARY annual Holiday party at our AROSC Club House, Villa Kulkus in Redondo Beach on December 12th from noon to 5PM. Great Kulkus BBQ, pot-luck side dishes & desserts, wine tasting, and rating supported by partygoers bearing gifts. See page 20.

The next day at the Club House is the BOD meeting to elect officers and to plan the 2010 schedule of events. Usually plenty of party food left over, and a need for great ideas. All are welcome. This is your club and your ideas have contributed to our general enjoyment and pleasure of life. Contribute ideas and participate in organizing events that will add to your pleasure of life - come even if you don't get elected!

Continued on page 8

Tech Article -- A Trip to the Dyno, and More Clicking Noise!

I've been writing about the clicking sound in the Spider since early last spring and have long since gotten tired of fixing things that aren't really broken. So, I finally took my own advice and took the Spider to the dyno.

My son proved prophetic when he speculated that the car would not make a clicking noise on the dyno. The car clicked happily on the trip to/from the dyno, but nary a click while it was on the dyno. In hindsight, the dyno operator had a tendency to crank it up to full torque. We probably should have done a run around the block beforehand to demonstrate the clicking sound. It might have helped him recreate the sound on the dyno.

Since there was no clicking sound, we opted for an impromptu dyno run. Compared to a 2005 run on the same dyno, there was gobs more torque down low, the same peak torque and virtually the same

top end hp. I'd like to say last month's exhaust cam swap was responsible for the improved bottom end torque, but I'm convinced carb tuning was a much bigger factor.

The 2005 run showed torque rapidly increasing to a peak around 4000 rpm just as you might expect in a Veloce. Fortunately we had a wideband O2 sensor on it which showed the car was excessively lean below 4000 rpm. Subsequent carb tuning improved the AFRs across the board and made the car much nicer to drive around town. Comparison of the two dyno runs tells the story. The 2009 dyno shows 90% of peak torque is achieved at 2500 rpm while the 2005 run didn't reach 90% of peak torque until 3500 rpm. Now I can drive the Veloce just like a regular car when I feel like it.

So much for bragging. On the clicking front, an Internet friend recommended purchase of a

get the January issue of *Afficionada* out early (LOL).

Keep the wheel side down.

We will make every effort to get the new schedule of events posted on the web site after the meeting and try to

*Norm Silverman, Rex
Evie Silverman, Regina*

More II Presidente:

remote listening device. I had no idea such specialized automotive tools existed, but they do. A search for "chassis ear" on Amazon yielded a bunch of hits. I bought a \$115 "squeak and rattle finder" that comes with six microphones built into heavy duty clips, a control box and headphones.

The first couple of test runs, made just this morning, demonstrated the

value of the new tool. There are no loose baffles in any of the mufflers, the clutch is quiet and so is the transmission. The second run ruled out the center support bearing for the driveline and the rear brake drums as sources. The rear end makes more noise than I like and it remains a possibility, but I'm planning a few more test runs. Maybe I will get lucky and it will still turn out to be something simple.

Mike R

Cyber Reminders

This goes out to all of you in Cyberland. As many of you might know, I have a service that I provide to club members who have email. I send out reminder notices approximately one week ahead of most club events and meetings. Occasionally I send out notices of non-club functions that are thought to be of particular interest to club members. This is strictly on a

volunteer basis, on both of our parts. You have to want to be included on my list to get the reminders. Those who are already getting the reminders are already familiar with it. Those who do not, may not be aware of this service that I provide.

Therefore, I am also asking all of you out there who have had changes to their email services recently, specifically those who now have a new email address/screen name, to email me with those changes. If you have not been notified of recent events via email, this may be the reason. If you want to continue receiving these reminders, I will need a current, working email address.

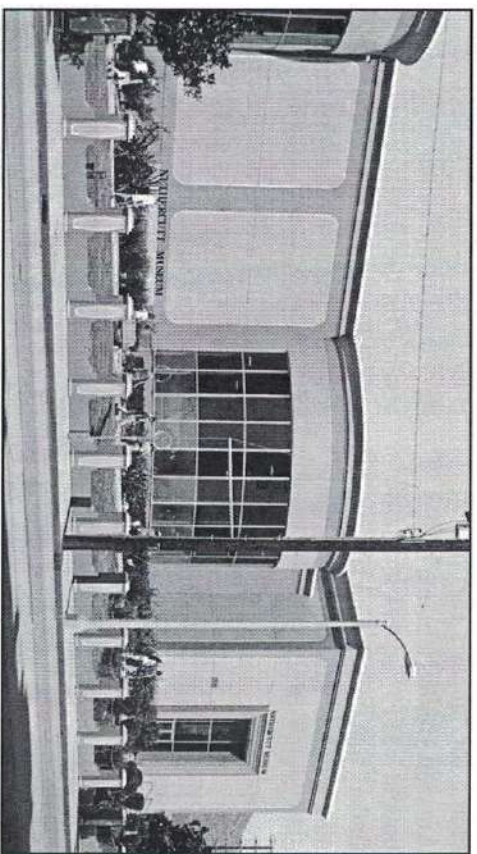
For those who wish to be included, but have not yet notified me, please contact me at my email address, included below, and let me know if you want to receive the reminders.

Thanks for listening,
Jay Negrin

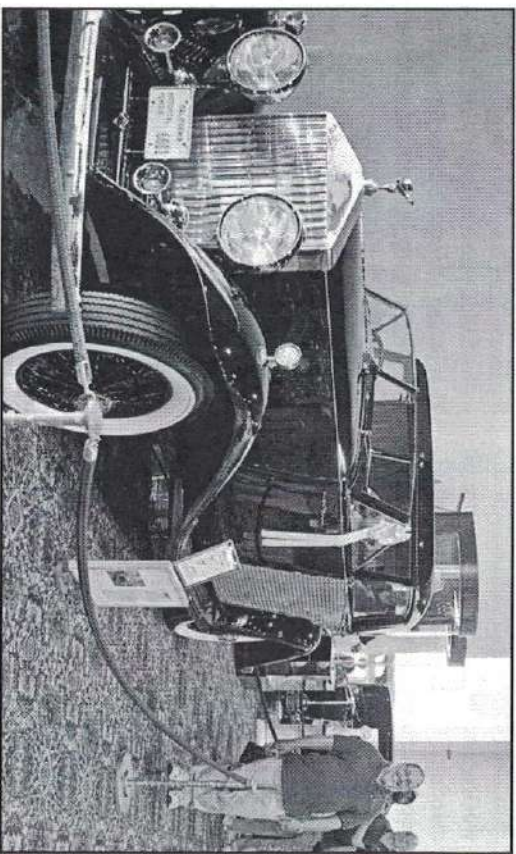
correction to E-address: jimnegrin@verizon.net

September Meeting -- Nethercutt Tour

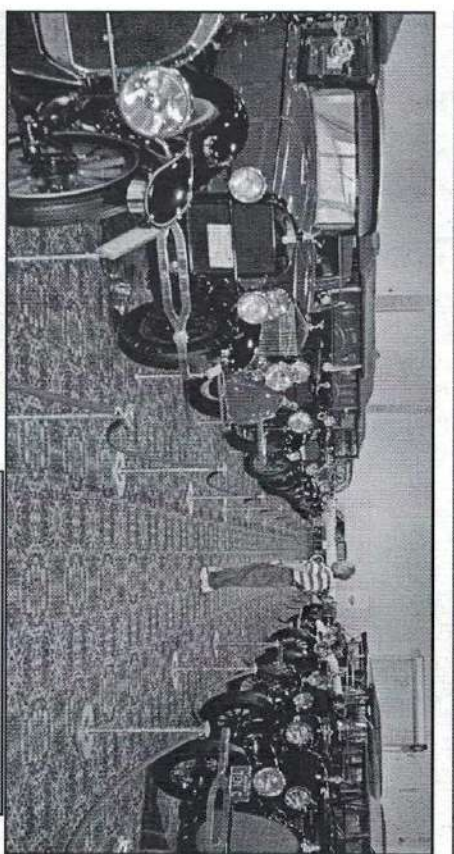
Photos by Tom Suter



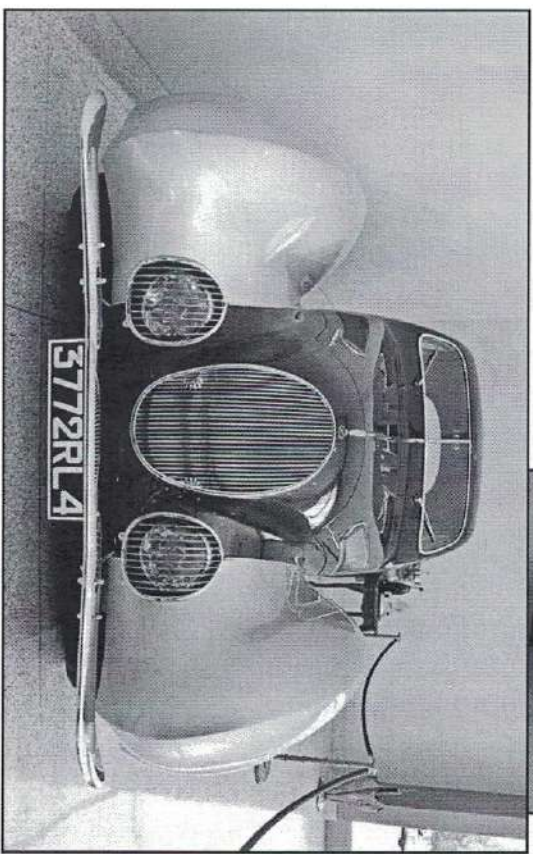
The Nethercutt Automobile Museum, across the street from the Tower building and restoration shop.



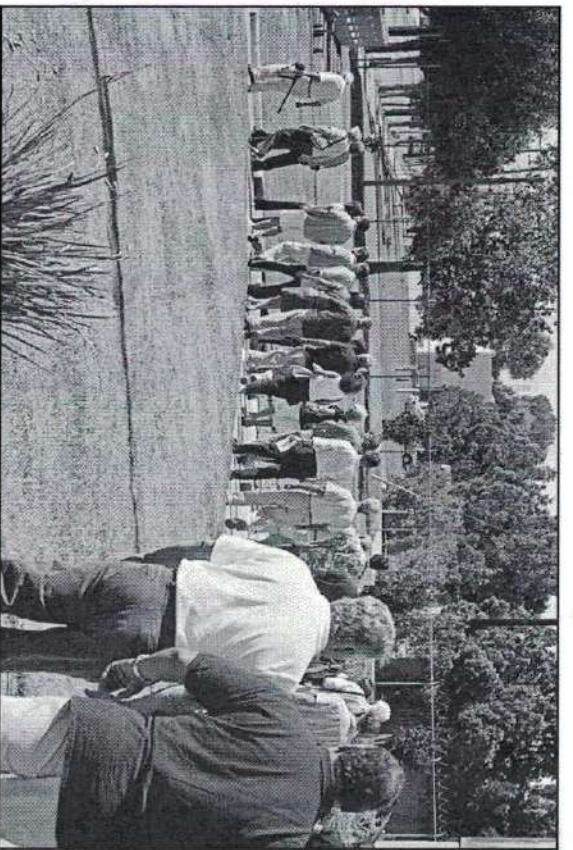
Jay Negrin found a car he wants -- a neat Rolls Royce with painted "cane" design, and an open-air chauffeur's seat. Riding in style! This is a much-awarded car.



Automotive wonderment: So many cars in one place!



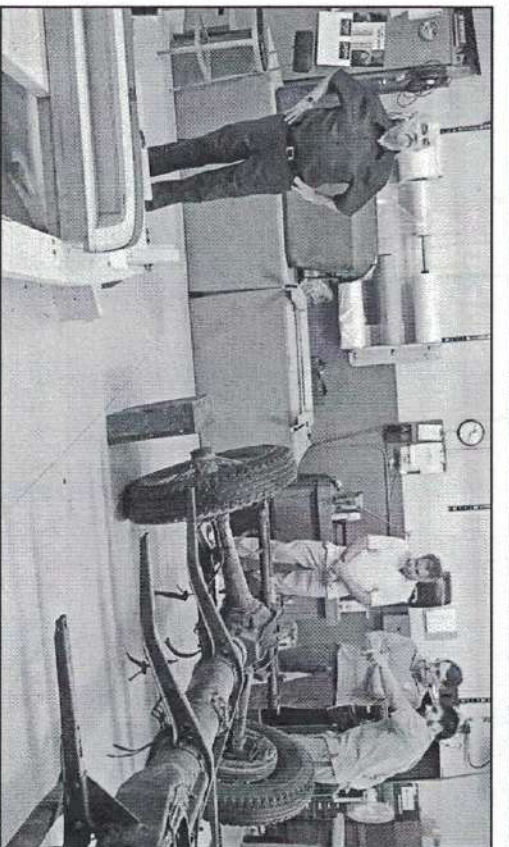
The beautiful Delahaye, seen in restoration a few years ago -- a winner.



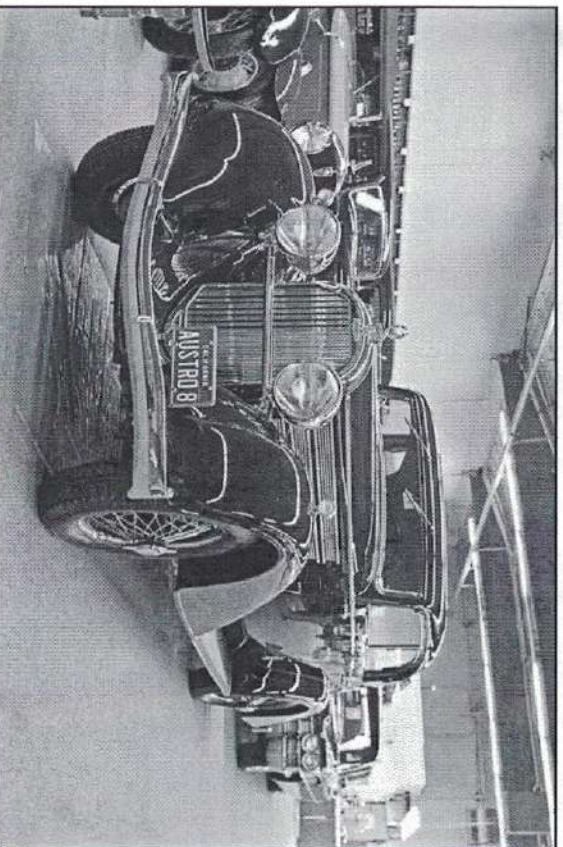
Time for the tour -- the group walks over to the restoration shop after viewing the contents of the Auto Museum.



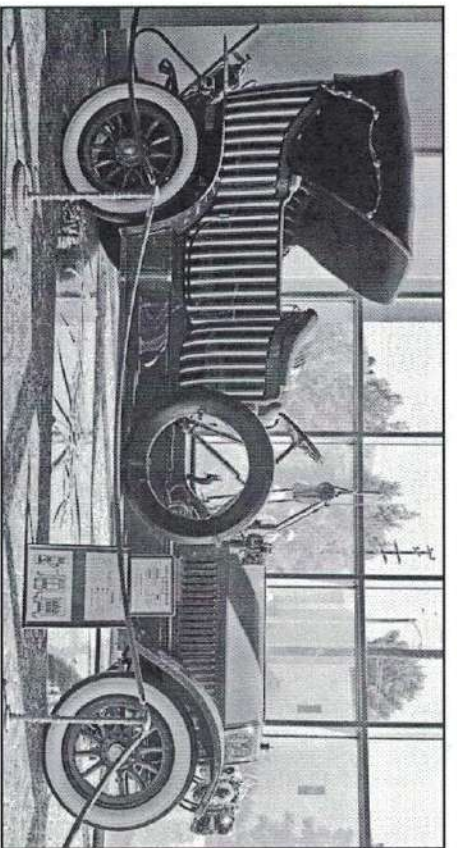
Our tour guide and museum honcho Skip Marchetti demonstrates the antique braiding machine for wiring harnesses. It has also been used to make braided shoe laces!



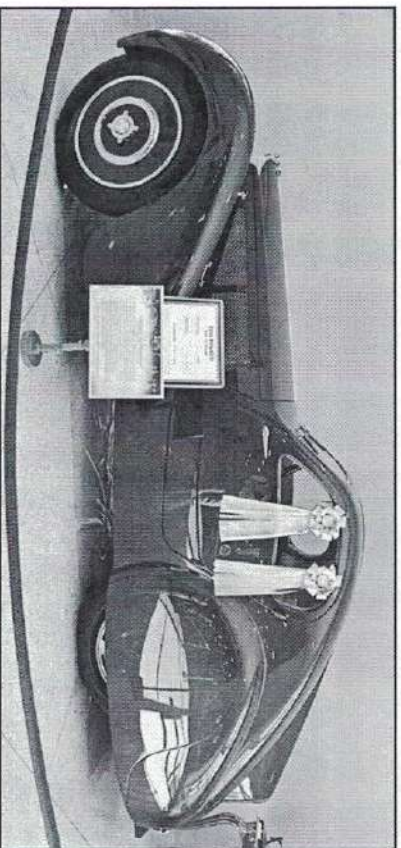
The project car for 2011 is this Austro-Daimler 8. Another one is below. It has a unique "tuning fork" style frame, with a large center tube which splits to a pair of rails to support the engine and transmission.



A finished and running version of the Austro-Daimler project car



An unusual old car, and a medal winner as well.



A beautiful Bugatti, with its many awards.



Lunch and a meeting in Norman's back yard -- thanks to Erie.

How I Got to Drive the Amazing 8C Competizione!

By Nick Zart

If you ever found yourself in one of those situations where you were at the right time, right place kind of thing, then you will understand my last weekend. I write mostly about electric cars these days and with a friend of mine we decided to investigate a little startup called I-DriveGreen that touts "we can drive green regardless of what we drive". As we were driving in, I was surprised to see a Maserati GT, and even more surprised to see next to it, the glorious Alfa Romeo 8C Competizione. Next to it was a Lamborghini Gallardo, a Corvette C6 Callaway and a Ferrari 430 Scuderia. I felt it was a cruel thing to show us these beauties when we were to drive boring old modern, soulless sedans. Little did I know.

I was talking to the co-founder JP Libert along with race drivers about cars and of course my love of Alfa Romeos, the night before. Next morning, before our first run, JP was talking about how we should drive our everyday mules, err, I mean cars with as much care as we would these exotics. This was becoming very painful to think about treating these floating

sofas as anything but special but I tried. He then turned to me, with a certain smile and said something like: "Nick, you like Alfas? Why don't you take the 8C for a spin?" It would be hard to describe what went on inside at that moment. It was something like a slow dual reaction of disbelief and complete exhilaration. Take the 8C for a spin? Did I just snooze and started dreaming or is the automobile God smiling at me?

Off we go to the cars. Trepidation, impatience, exuberance... does it even convey what I felt? I do not think so. It was more of an impossible dream come true. Walking around the car, you cannot help but get a sense how it is unlike anything on the road. Its subtle lines are reminiscent of a glorious Alfa Romeo past, a little retro hint here and there, a touch of the beautiful 33 Stradale, it has all the ingredients to satisfy any worthy aficionado. Opening the door, it becomes clear this handmade Alfa does its best to keep its curb weight down with ample use of carbon fiber. Sitting inside was a pleasant experience. Much like any Alfa

Romeos, everything is where it should be, right at hand's reach. The tachometer and other instruments are neatly nestled inside the arms of the steering wheels. Yes, Alfa thought this one out. Everything is digital, which takes a little time to get used to. The interior is mostly red but not overwhelming. The hand sewn leather seats are firm yet comfortable. They hold you well in place and will accommodate most sizes. If the outside hints at the past, the inside is resolutely modern.

The engine comes to life with an enthralling roar. The accelerator pedal is hard but gives you a good sense of how much power you are calling forth. As I start to move the car, I am surprised to feel how heavy it is at very low speeds. Once the car picks up speed, it is another story. It reminds me how clumsy an albatross is on the ground but how it glides effortlessly when it takes to the air. We warm up the engine for a few minutes on the sunny, windy, Sonoma back roads. The car is easy to drive and makes for a perfect daily driver. It effortlessly swallows bumps and curves as it reveals the condition of the road. This is one of the things that impressed me with it: Alfa Romeo did a splendid job at

making the suspension firm enough to relay what was going on with the road but at the same time, it was a pleasant ride that was not tiring. Enough, it is time to see what the performer has under the hood.

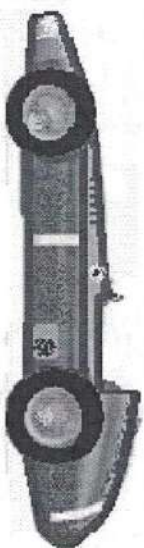
With a quick and precise sequential gearbox derived from Ferrari, it is easy to take advantage of the car's full potential. The paddle shifts are logically located on the column, which makes them easy to find in any position. In all honesty, I never felt much urge to use the 6th as the engine's thrilling roars makes you want to stay in 3rd, 4th and sometimes 5th. Under 3,000 rpm, it is a very well behaved GT cruiser. In many ways, it is the perfect wine-discovery GT as it effortlessly cruises up and down, left and right on those tight roads. Pass the 3,000 rpm and it is an entirely different story. The engine roars alive with a symphony of guttural sounds that begs its locked-up power to be delivered to the street. At higher speed, the steering becomes a little more firm and gives your forearms a bit of a work out. The car is razor-sharp precise. Throw it into any turns and it will oblige. It will take stay on course. Pushing the 8C into its last corner would

probably give you a trigger happy end but it does not seem to be vicious in any ways. A correction from the steering wheel or letting go of the gas will get it back on track. The car is obviously well designed and refined. It feels very balanced as I try to send it from one corner to another, it responds positively. I finally got to see how it felt on open straight roads. It gave me the impression of being polyvalent, equally at ease on narrow, windy roads or open straightaways, which surprised me despite its size.

The feeling the 8C left me with is that it is the perfect GT car. If the Maserati GT is beautiful,

I would not want to drive it in sporty mode on such narrow roads. If the Ferrari 430 is an all out car, it is a little too obvious and flamboyant. The 8C is the perfect middle ground between those two. It is equally happy in traffic and will not let you down if you feel the need to raise your adrenaline level. With only 200 of them made, 75 delivered in the U.S., I feel fortunate to have driven it in these circumstances. The car delivers exactly what an Alfa Romeo should be like: elegant, very sporty, crisp and sharp, and all around well behaved.

And to think the GTA is coming out...



CALROD LLC. & ADLER RESTORATION

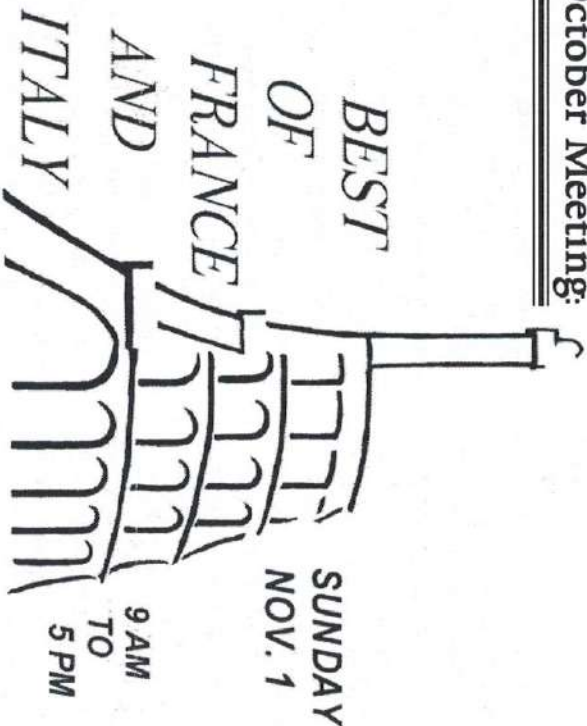
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October Meeting:



CAR SHOW AND SWAP MEET

FOR FRENCH AND ITALIAN CARS, MOTORCYCLES & SCOOTERS
JOIN US FOR A DAY IN THE PARK THIS IS A NON-JUDGED CAR GATHERING

DIRECTIONS: Woodley Park is in Van Nuys on Woodley Ave. between Burbank Blvd. and Victory Blvd.
Just North of the intersection of the 405 and 101 Freeways.

Info: (826) 797-4221 or www.franceanditaly.com

ENTRY FORM FOR PREFERRED ADMISSION AND PARKING

Years makes & models: _____

Owner's name: _____

Tel: _____

Address: _____

1st Car \$15, 2nd Car \$10, 3rd or more Free

1st Motorcycle \$10, 2nd \$5, 3rd or more Free

Swap Meet vendors _____

(Same price as cars for each vehicle) Amount Enclosed: _____

RELEASE STATEMENT (Must be signed by registrant)

I hereby agree to the following conditions for attending and entering vehicles in the Best of France and Italy at Woodley Park on November 1, 2009. I agree to release the organizers, volunteers, staff and the City of Los Angeles from any and all liability for injuries, damage, or loss arising from my entry and attendance at said event.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Mail Entry and Payment to:

BEST OF FRANCE AND ITALY
P. O. Box 2299
Toluca Lake, CA 91610-0299

Please make checks payable to: "BEST OF FRANCE AND ITALY" Please mail by Oct 23, 2009.

Register online at www.franceanditaly.com Late registration, \$20.00 at the gate

November Meeting: Saturday - 14th, 1PM Elections, White Turkey Sale, and Tour of Dirk Stoehr's Collection

Here Ye, Here Ye: ELECTIONS!!!

As said many times before, attendance at this meeting is the surest way to avoid being nominated from the floor and elected to the Board of Directors. You do not have to be present to be elected, but if elected "you will serve". Actually the BoD is not a bad job. You get to have dinner out with some friends once a month and you get to be the volunteer selector as opposed to being the volunteer.

NOVEMBER 14th, 1PM to 4PM - The Saturday that could change your life (not just because of the snacks and beverages). We will have a General Meeting at Italspeed: 3101 S Main St. (the intersection of S. Main and 31st St.), in downtown Los Angeles, 90007, the new home of Dirk Stoehr's eclectic collection of Alfa Romeos and etceterini. This location is about 5 blocks east of the Harbor Fwy (I-110) between Jefferson and Adams, and about 3/4 mile south of the Santa Monica Fwy (I-10). This is one of the friendliest venues we attend. Don't believe me, just checkout all the prior kudos on the Alfabb. Dirk is an outstanding and generous host with an automoblie and memorabilia collection as outgoing as his personality. There is ample street parking in the area.

In addition to browsing Dirk's collection, the other reason for attending this meeting is the Annual White Turkey sale/auction. Clean out the garage. This is an opportunity to load or unload your garage of stuff you reecaally need. If Charlie Schwartz shows up to act as auctioneer, ~~with a list of what and when every thing will sell.~~

Election Note:

At this time, the nominees are the incumbent board members. If you would like to join us on the board, please contact Norman or any other board member to be put on the ballot before it is mailed out. Ballots will be mailed around November 2, to allow time to respond by mail -- or bring it with you to the election meeting.

Alfa Club Holiday Party



Saturday, Dec 12th
Noon - 5:00 pm



Hosted by:

M.J. & Sheila Kutkus

South of Manhattan Beach Blvd and west of Inglewood Ave in north Redondo.

2304 Curtis Ave

→ Take the 405 to Inglewood Ave off ramp, south 1 mile to Curtis Ave, turn right, continue 1/2 mile to 2304. Parking allowed only on the south side of the street.

Redondo Beach, CA

Meet up with old friends, make new friends.

Alfa people are the best in the world!



Holiday Cheer!

Holiday Food

Beef Tenderloin Fillet - On the Spit
Grilled Chicken Romesco
Steamed Salmon Rosemary
Shrimp and Pasta Toss

Wine tasting table,
bring your favorite
wine to share!

Bring your specialty dish,
salad or dessert!

Soft drinks, tea and coffee

Door Prizes !!

RSVP to Sheila (310) 542-3448

Let her know how many in your party and what you will bring.

See you at the party!!

Summer at Willow

By Mike McKibbin

The last time I was at Willow Springs this time of year, it hit about 115 degrees and there was a tornado. I don't think it was quite that hot or windy this time, but Saturday sizzled. Crystal clear with a breeze which grew quite stiff by the end of the day, cars and people got hot.

My wife Gena occasionally sees me at the end of the day like Saturday, exhausted and beat up, and asks "why do you do this?" Because it's great. Speaking of being beat up, Mitch and I traded off this weekend, and I drove Big Dog. It's been a while, and for most of Saturday, the two of us did battle.

This event was ours, but shared with TCRA, and included three very significant changes. Brand new was the DE class, which ran with Group 3. Tony Presto is the duly anointed director, and the task of he and his team is to teach primarily novices in street cars how to high-performance drive on a trace track in traffic. The team did very well, although there were several moments (Paul Blankenship, on the way to one of his charges: "Oh Lord, have

mercy"). All in all, the students were ecstatic about the experience (Naomi Poulin stated her instructor, Beverly Major, was just "wonderful"), and the program would appear to have a bright future.

The other two changes are at least in part TCRA inspired. First, Group 2 is now officially reserved for the most advanced time trailers, and essentially allows open passing. The Club is still working out details, so for a while, like NASCAR in its attempts to equalize (at least for Chevys), the rules may shift around experimentally from event to event until a comfort level is reached. For most part, Group 2 participants are happy - it gives the group a semi-racing feel. Rob Rhodes was running Big dog in this group and was playing with Joe Cobbs' Mustang when he noticed something on his second run which would plague us for the rest of the weekend. More on that later.

The third change was time trial procedure: instead of lining up each group and sending 5 or 6 cars at a time out for 5 laps, each group was sent out for a twenty minute timed session. A few dissents were heard at the end, but mostly good

reviews. The real selling point is the additional track time available to make good laps.

Meanwhile, Big Dog was running at over 240 degrees and, over the first three sessions, was convincing me I had pretty much forgotten how to drive. Compounding things was the fact the the spark plug wires were popping off the plugs and melting against the headers. This occasional problem progressed to the point that we were losing 1 to 2 wires a session by the end of the morning on Sunday. Even insulating the wires with thermal tape brought only a limited reprieve.

The last time I drove our hot rod Mustang GT (now sporting a Fusion front end), Terry Major did the article and wrote, "Big Dog had issues." But in the qualifying race on Saturday, everything seemed to come together and, while I had my own issues (the senior moment cresting the hill at turn 6 being one), things went rather well and I finished 4th behind Bob Poulin, Cort Finchbough and Gary Stern (what the heck does he have in that Supra?)

I told Terry Major that Big Dog and I seemed to have reached an understanding. He said, "yeah, Big

Dog does what it wants, and you go along".

Sunday, 85 degrees, a little breezy. Perfect. Unfortunately, it seemed like a lot of Saturday runners were missing in action. By the time the money runs started in the afternoon, there were as many cars in race group as in time trial.

Matt Poulin blistered the track in time trial with a 1:32. Hard to believe this is the same kid who showed up at our camp area the previous night dressed like Chef Emeril Legasse and proceeded to barbeque chocolate chip cookies (fairly good, actually).1

Another amazing sight was Doug ender in his Alfa, which not only ran all day long for both days in both time trial and race group, but was smoking fast as well! I don't think I've seen that car do much under its own power other than get off the trailer before this event, so I couldn't resist suggesting to Doug after he got his trophy that the weekend is a lot more fun when the car runs. He smiled.

Speaking of running (or problems in connection therewith), Big Dog kept melting spark plug wires. Then, in the last practice, cresting the hill at turn 6, the steering

locked up for an instant and, after putting my heart back in my chest, it was back to the pits to discover (1) the belt shredded and a piece had temporarily disabled the power steering pump and (2)

embarrassingly, we didn't have a spare. Neither did Auto Zone (almost on a first name basis with them at this point), so we opted for a size too large, the old GT's tensioner (how did we have that hanging around?) instead of the fancy, racy new one (which couldn't contain the oversize belt), lots of thermal tape, and Big Dog was on the grid just before the pace car let. Unfortunately, the repairs ran through the time trial and Rob was a scratch.

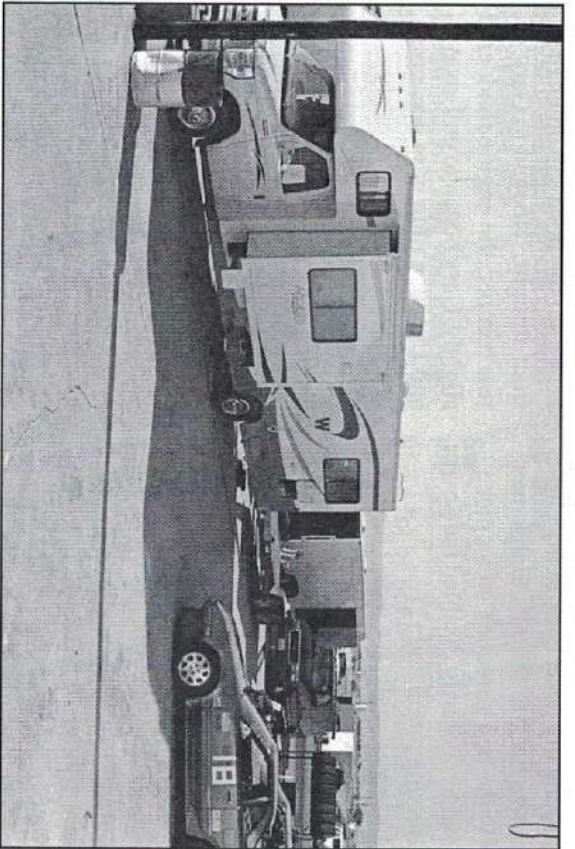
When the green dropped, suddenly Mitch in the Mustang Cobra was by me – nice start. Usually, the Mustang Cobra handles a bit like a slot car, but this weekend Mitch couldn't get it to handle at all, despite multiple experiments with tire pressure. Since he had no grip at all, I blew back by him in turn 8, actually passed Cort down the front straight and led him for about a lap, then pulled alongside Gary's Supra in turn 8, preparing for

battle, since Big Dog was on, at least until the third trip down the front straight. Hooked to Gary's rear bumper, the engine shuddered slightly, Gary began to pull away, and I knew a plug wire was gone. A couple of laps later it really starting running rough, and I figured I'd lost at least 2. As the race wore on, I could see Mitch coming in my rear view, but he still had no grip and he couldn't get close enough.

Meanwhile, Cort surprised everyone, caught Bob Poulin's screaming Beemer, then checked out to win, running the fastest lap of the weekend in the process. Further back, Don Wagner, who is going faster each time out, came up with his first class win. He almost looked bewildered as he took his trophy.

Buttonwillow is next, October 24-25.

So is the Rancho Cucamonga Founder's Day Parade. We actually have one Alfa Romeo committed. A few more would be nice. Save the date: November 14, 2009!



The Major's Compound.



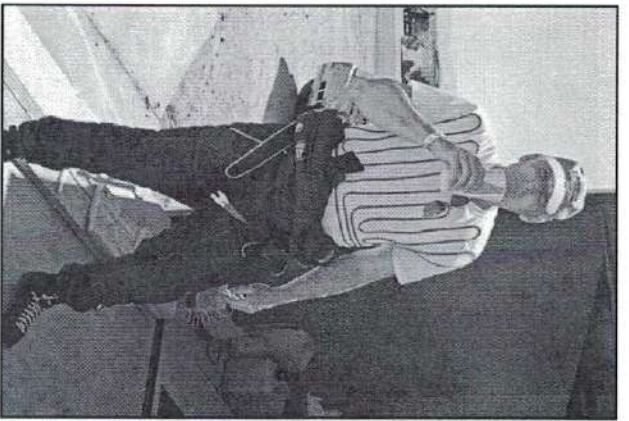
Seen at the driver's meeting: Matt Poulin has a neat umbrella to provide some much needed shade.



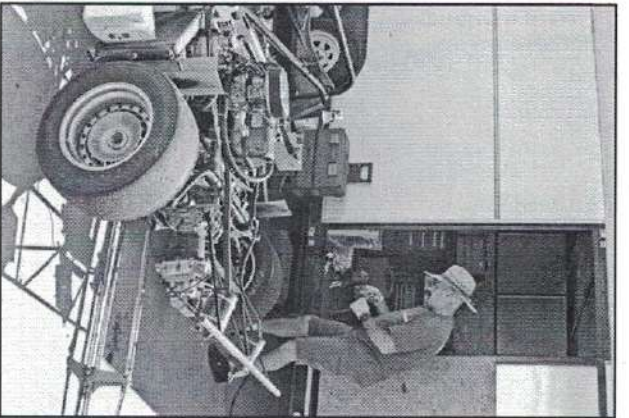
The Racer's meeting.



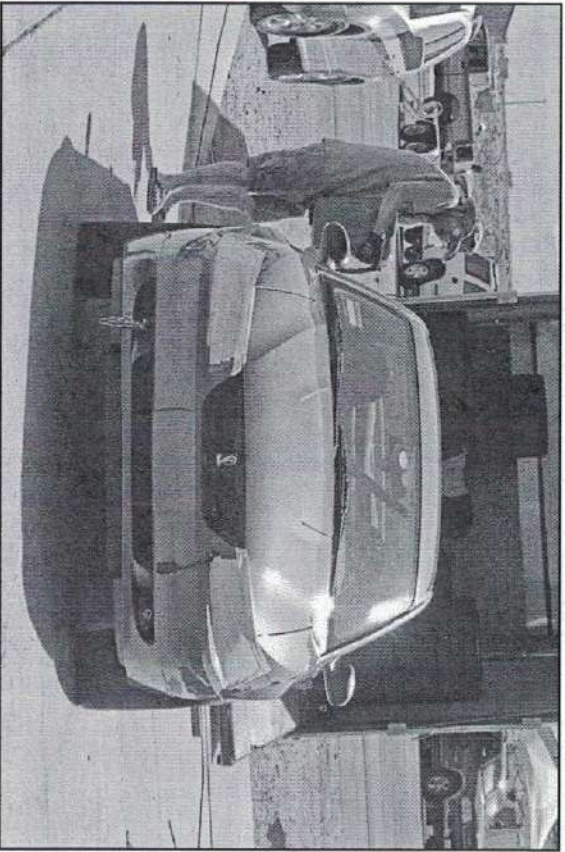
Terry Major gets suited up to run.



Terry Watson sports a "cool-suit" - must be Willow in the summer!



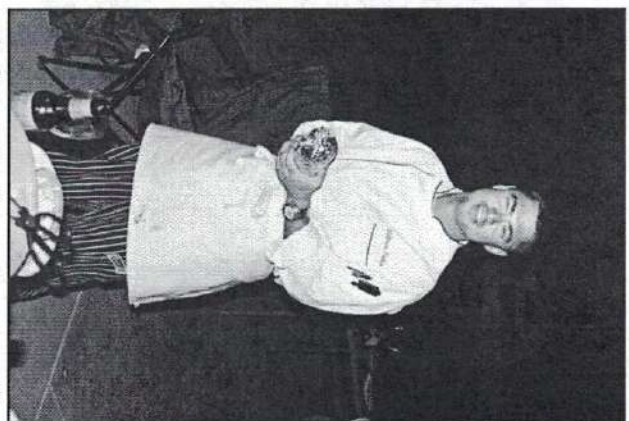
Steve Hamilton works on his Sports Racer.



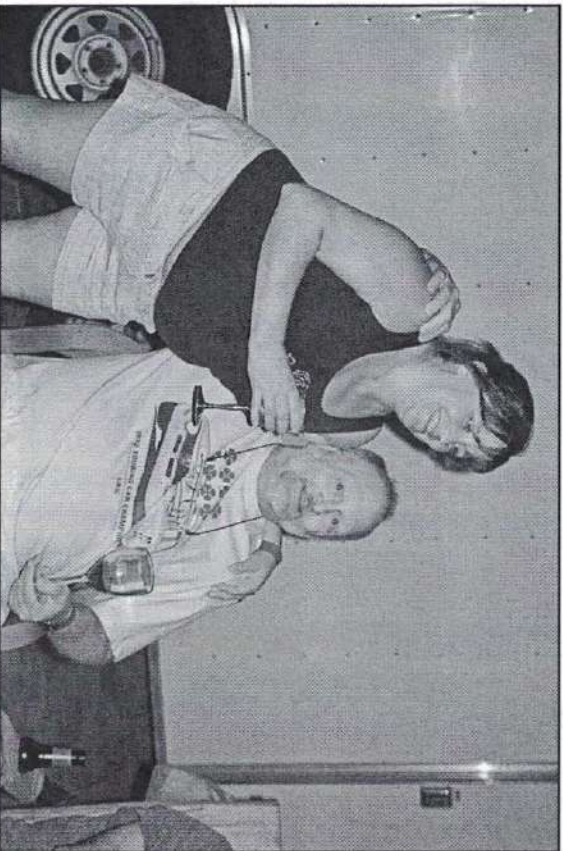
Mich gasses up the Mustang Cobra.



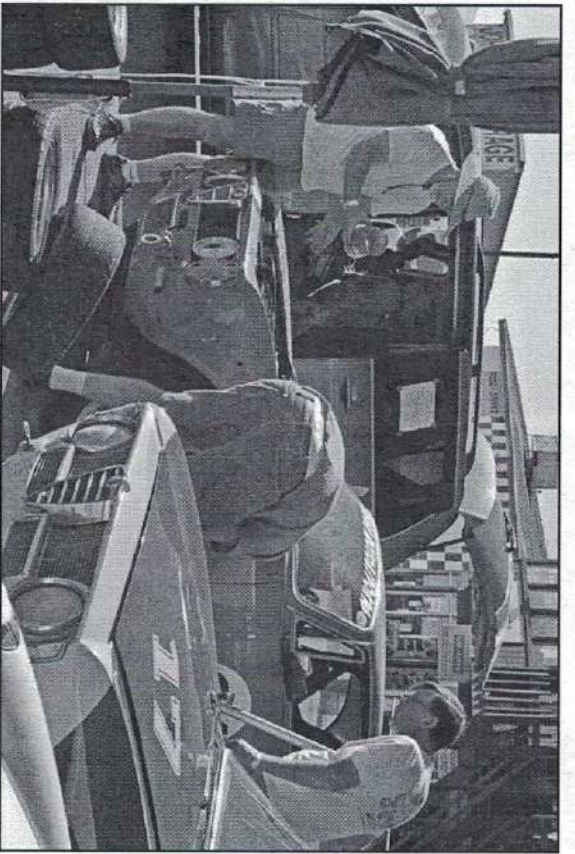
Saturday night's supper: steaks on the grill!



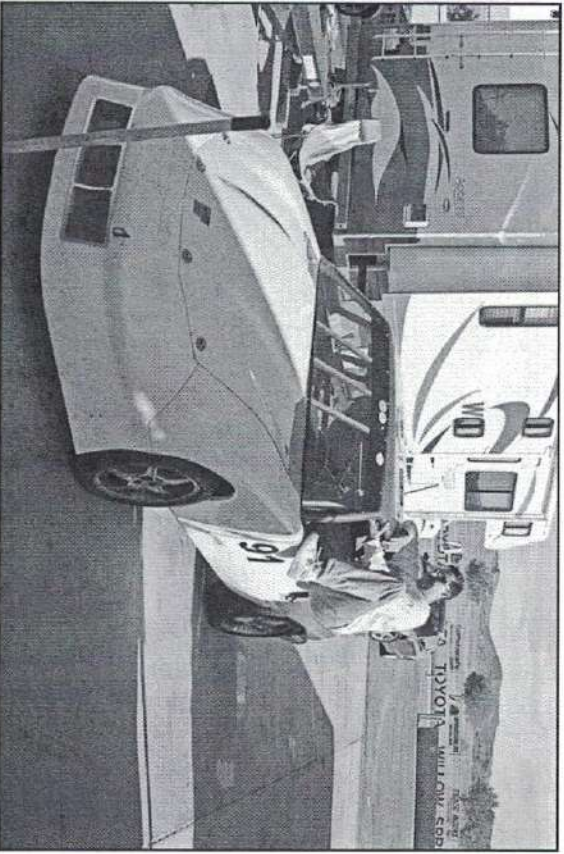
Chef Matt Poulin prepares to grill chocolate chip cookies!



Joy Fibro and Bruce Colby -- camera shy, Bruce?



Another amazing sight! They're not working on Doug Bender's Alfa (foreground) but on Art Russell's Alfa!



Rob Rhodes climbs into Big Dog -- just like in NASCAR. Yes, it really is a Mustang under that odd nose.



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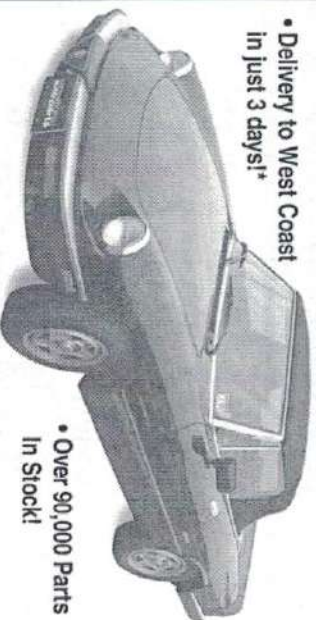
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