

# L'Aronde

The Magazine of SIMCA Club UK

Volume 32 No.1 January-February 2012

**Simca**

**Matra**

**Talbot**



German 'Youngtimer' racing SIMCA Rallye 2, built and raced by Frank Breidenstein, who is president of their SIMCA Heckmotor Club. The car is now owned by SIMCA Club UK member Daniel Burrowes, seen in action below at Oulton Park.







Belgian Rallye 3 and Daniel Burrowes' Rallye 2 in background.....



Above; AKX109K (now with Peter Dammeyer) leads the SIMCAs out for the Concours track run





## **Editorial** January-February 2012

Another new **SIMCA-Talbot** year and now over 25 years since the last of 'our cars' were produced sees a welcome flow of articles for this issue.....

Cover shot shows some of the impressive rear engined **Simca** collection owned by Daniel Burrowes and his father Peter in the spacious setting of their new garage.

French Member Alexis Zaregradsky has had his **Horizon** featured in a movie and he describes the April 2011 shoot with pictures.....

Robert Chinnery fills the 'Members' Other Motors' slot with details and pictures of his, now rare, example of Citroen's answer to the Peugeot 205 Gti, the **Visa GTi**.

Just before the AGM, I'd found some old photos of our SIMCAs towing caravans and trailers. By coincidence, at the meeting Robert Chinnery mentioned he had photos of his **Solara** and caravan. He describes how he got the outfit for a bargain price, work involved in restoring and how well everything works.....

Guy Maylam has supplied a 1972 road test from **Custom Car** magazine where the newly launched 1294cc **Simca 1100 Special** (along with its predecessor the **1204 Special** possibly the first 'hot hatchback') is compared with the Triumph Spitfire Mk.3.

Your Editor's **twin cam SIMCA 1000** is taking shape despite the weather's best efforts to thwart things (the garage is too full of 'junk' to work in there.) Some setbacks have now been overcome and it just needs finally 'plumbing' up and the 1001 fiddly bits sorting.

The **Forthcoming Events** page is filling up nicely. The only downside being a few clashes of dates where events where we normally have a stand are on the same

weekend as major National and International **SIMCA/Talbot** events.



All **SIMCA 1100s** sold in the USA were 1204cc cars. Forum member Tsog has just bought a rare survivor over there and shots of its epic journey across the States and interesting 'race' history appear.

a number of 'archive' shots from the very much missed Zolder classic club race meetings celebrate the fact that we now have a number of enthusiasts desperate to get their hands on a 1000 (at last in the UK...!!) and finally the 'Mille' is getting the recognition it deserves here and has always had on the Continent. ....

**1200S Coupes** are all too rarely seen on the road in the UK. (OK... *I have two and should be doing something to put that right.* .Ed) A 'period' road test gives an enthusiastic verdict on the car.

I've carried some advertising over from the previous issue. Remember advertising in **L'Aronde** is free to club members....

Please note that, for members who don't renew their subscription for 2012, this is the last issue of **L'Aronde** we will be able to send. **A big thankyou to all members who have already renewed their subscription.**

**Do you own, or have owned other makes of interesting vehicles..??? Info and photos please.....see 'Members' Other Motors' in this issue.....Mick**



## Simca Club UK..... Directory

*Reformed by Bob Friendship in 1980 as the Simca Aronde Owners Register, later the Simca Owners Register. Now also incorporating the Talbot (1979-1986) Owners' Register*

Website [www.simcatalbotclub.org](http://www.simcatalbotclub.org)

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*The views expressed in articles or letters in L'Aronde are not necessarily the views of the committee of Simca Club UK*

*No responsibility will be accepted for loss, damage or injury arising in the consequence of anyone acting on information contained in this publication.*



**Talbot Tagora 2.2**, been stored in an agricultural building for 15 years. The farmer, Anthony Milsom wants to dispose of it and will sell it for scrap. He has given us the option of saving it first. Contact him on **01666 840772** at Home Farm House, Pinkney, Nr. Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 0NX.



**1982 Talbot MATRA Rancho**, in brown, featured in SIMCA article in October 2011 *Classic & Sportscar* magazine, comes with some body spares. Owned from new but sale due to plans for house move. **£3000.... Charles Robinson, 01246 852841 email [crobioo@aol.com](mailto:crobioo@aol.com)**



**MATRA Rancho XR2i**, grey. Converted to Ford XR2i EFi engine & 5 speed gearbox in '92, 66000 miles since then, resprayed grey in 2007. Sound chassis with no visible signs of rust, new MoT, **£1295ono. Titus Taylor, 07770 931811 [titustaylor1@hotmail.com](mailto:titustaylor1@hotmail.com)**  
See photo top of next column.....



**Talbot Samba Roller**, 1983, silver with yellow wheels, 1124cc engine, sunroof, very original 44309 miles, used daily until recently, no tax, needs washer pump and exhaust for MoT. Offers...??? **Justin ..01900 825436 Offers...???**  
Cockermouth, Cumbria



**Talbot Samba GLS**, 1982, Y reg., 1360cc, 5 speed box, Red, One owner, 11,500 miles genuine from new, Service history and handbooks, Taxed until Dec 2011 (tax is £140 p.a.), Mot'd until June 2012. Only one of 4 of this Samba model registered in UK currently on the road. Contact **Ray** on **07773228031** or email **[monica-63@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:monica-63@hotmail.co.uk)**



## **SIMCA CLUB UK**    *Services and Parts suppliers*

**CB MOTORS** Large stocks of spares –new and secondhand for *Simcas, Talbots and other older cars*    **Contact Dick Husband on** [Dick.Husband@btinternet.com](mailto:Dick.Husband@btinternet.com)    tel. 02476 325577 . Dick is now fully installed in new premises at **Unit 5, Acton Business Centre, Pool Road, Nuneaton CV10 9AE** and can offer all the services available previously.....  
See photo on page 25 showing CB Motors newly equipped MoT station

**COLIN HILL ....** Horizon / Alpine / Solara    Spares / Servicing / Recovery  
**01473 737325 / 07745 422498 /** [colinhill@hotmail.com](mailto:colinhill@hotmail.com) ...  
Exhaust Systems / Windscreens / Gear Change Rods / Driveshafts / Water Pumps /  
Alternators / Starters / Service items plus many bits you thought you couldn't get  
again, and free advice on these models.....

**Key Ward** has stocks of new and used parts for **SIMCA 1000's and 1100's** . he may just have what you are looking for!    **Contact him on 01246 278 508**    or Email [key.ward1204@btinternet.com](mailto:key.ward1204@btinternet.com)

**Guy Maylam** can supply some parts for **SIMCA 1100, 1301/1501's** and **CHRYSLER- TALBOT Horizon, Alpine, Solara, 180 and 2 Litres** and other models.  
**Contact him for the part you need on 01892 538598** Email [guymaylam@aol.com](mailto:guymaylam@aol.com)

**Michael Whitworth** has a stock of **Samba** parts, including suspension struts, suspension arms, gaskets, water pumps, filters, brake pads, shoes and cylinders and small electrical parts.    **Contact him on 01905 821 231**

**Mick Ward** has gaskets, ball joints, pads, shoes & cylinders for most 4 cylinder models. Also small electrical bits. 01 water pumps, some factory workshop manuals/handbooks, shockers and hoses    **01246 200045** Email [Scukmick@aol.com](mailto:Scukmick@aol.com)

### **Simca-Talbot sales items**

#### ***Badges etc.***

Windscreen stickers with Simca Club UK logo, **SIMCA** keyrings and original **SIMCA Owners Register** cloth badges all available @ £1 each from **David Chapman**  
Tel. **01737 765331** email [dn\\_chapman@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dn_chapman@tiscali.co.uk)

#### ***Talbot stickers, see Colin Hill's advert page 25***

***Clothing....*** T Shirts, polo shirts, caps etc have been available in the past with either the **SIMCA** logo or the **SIMCA Racing Team 'Dragon'**. Also **SIMCA & TALBOT** shirts were available from former member David Herraghty.....I don't think any have been ordered recently Will check up on supply situation for the next issue of **L'Aronde**.

Also stocks of the current windscreen stickers are running low. At the AGM there was some discussion on whether we needed a further supply and its format. My personal view is all we need is a sticker with **SIMCA Club UK** and the club web address [www.simcatalbotclub.org](http://www.simcatalbotclub.org) to cover all bases... Thoughts???    Ed.







***UK Track events where SIMCAs may be in action.....***

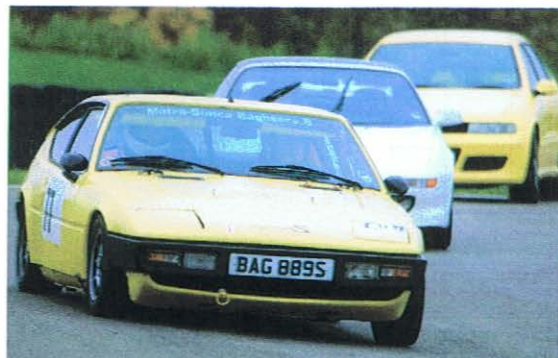
**Practical Performance Car trackday, Oulton Park Circuit (Cheshire), Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012**, Details & booking on <http://www.trackaction-online.co.uk/zencart/>  
*I'll probably be there with the FIMCA, hopefully with a bit more power. Ed.*

**Santa Pod 'Run what Ya Brung', In conjunction with PPC magazine, Sat 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.....** Booking tel **01234 782828** and £35 buys a day's fun on the dragstrip with a feature in the magazine... Hopefully this will be the first real 'test flight' of my Honda twin cam SIMCA 1000...in readiness for .....

**PPC '£999 Challenge 2012' Santa Pod, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June.** The annual match up of sub £1000 home brew 'race' prepared machinery. Usually won by (now cheap to buy 90's Jap coupes....) I've taken the mechanicals from a rusty Honda CRX and fitted them in the back of a 'real' car...!!! (which was itself rescued from a scrapyard back in '85..!!) Must be faster than last year's effort.....???????  
See website [www.ppcmag.co.uk](http://www.ppcmag.co.uk) for info

**PPC in the Park, Mallory Park Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2012** (see page on forthcoming events)

We are hoping to get as many of the 'hot' SIMCAs in the club as possible out at a track day later in the year...watch this space.!!!





## David Chapman Writes

### An eventful year

This year looks set to be a busy one in the Simca and Talbot world. Besides our National Rally at Donington Park on 1<sup>st</sup> July, we have the International Simca Meeting in Germany in May, French Car Day at Beaulieu on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July, and the 4<sup>th</sup> International Talbot meeting in France on 29/30 September in the Maine/ Loire Department of France. There will be a Talbot Tagora GL to win in a raffle, so if you want a Tagora, here is a great opportunity. For more information, visit [www.clubsimca.fr/manifestations/talbotmeeting/tm\\_2012/tm\\_2012.php](http://www.clubsimca.fr/manifestations/talbotmeeting/tm_2012/tm_2012.php) Previous French Talbot meetings have been very enjoyable. I look forward to seeing you at one or more of these events.

### Farewell Saab

So another "S" marque has followed Singer, Sunbeam and Simca into history. It seems very sad that such an innovative manufacturer which produced great cars like the Saab 99 and 900 should fail so soon after its separation from General Motors. The various Saab owners' clubs in Europe will ensure a good number of these cars will survive.

### Goodbye Espace

While the demise of Saab has looked likely for some time, the drastic cutting of the Renault range at the start of the year does not seem to have been anticipated by commentators. A third of Renault's UK dealers are to lose the franchise, and the following ranges are axed: Espace, Modus, Grand Modus, Laguna (hatchback, estate and coupe versions) and the Wind cabriolet. Only 800 Espace models were sold in the UK last year, and 1000 Lagunas. The latter was once a common sight on our roads, but the new model seems to have been ignored by many. The original Espace, developed by Matra and Simca but passed over by Peugeot, started the MPV revolution in this country, so it is sad to see it go. However, the current Espace was a larger and relatively more expensive vehicle than the original model of the mid 1980s, and there are so many other competent MPVs to choose if you are looking for one.

### Grand Horizon sale

I am trimming my Talbot Horizon fleet as storage costs, unlike investments, never go down, but only up. The following vehicles are available:

**1983 Talbot Horizon LS 1.3.** This car is one of the rare Series one and a half cars. In other words, it has the revised rear seat, smaller rear window and black rather than chrome bumpers, but retains the Simca gearbox. Finished in black, an option at the time, it has covered only 26,000 miles. Bodywork is good, but the rear turrets will need welding. Last on the road in 1999, it has been kept in indoor storage ever since.

**1985 Talbot Horizon LS 1.5 Automatic Series 2.** This car is finished in Cascade Blue and has twice been to Simca meetings in France. It has covered around 85,000 miles. It was last on the road in 2005, and been kept in indoor storage since then.

To help to ensure these cars are saved, I am looking for little more than scrap value, £170 each. If there are no takers, they will be scrapped. Please contact me if you are interested. My mobile number is 07764 191744. Many thanks.

At the beginning of 2011, an acquaintance from the small world of Simca-Talbot contacted me to inform me that the team in charge of the film adaptation of David Foenkinos' novel 'La Delicatesse' were looking for a blue **Talbot Horizon**. After a few telephone and email discussions, the decision was made, my **Horizon** was going to feature in their movie, filming of which was going to begin at the end of April 2011.

But why my Horizon? They wanted a solid, simple, practical and reliable car with a provincial image. An image that symbolises a **Talbot Horizon** above all.

This adaptation of the novel 'La Delicatesse' has been done by the author himself and his brother Stephane. The casting features in the main roles Audrey Tatou (known for her role in 'Le fabuleux destin d'Amelie Poulain' or in the 'Davinci Code') and Francois Damien (known for his hidden cameras and his roles in 'Bienvenue chez les Ch'ti' and 'L'amacoeur'). The **Horizon** was to be the vehicle of the heroine of the film, Nathalie who is played by Audrey Tatou.

**Resume of 'la Delicatesse'** *"He had passed through there. She had embraced him without reflecting on it.. Now she asked herself if she had done the right thing.. It is the story of a woman who is going to be surprised by a man.. Really surprised !*

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**, it is the first day of filming. A bit of stress but everything would work out well. The **Horizon** had gone through its annual check up 15 days previously and was put back on its steel wheels for the occasion. Filming would be at the beginning of the afternoon in department 95 in the Parisian region. The **Horizon** was to be filmed in its first scene with Audrey Tatou (*Nathalie*) at the wheel and Francois Damien (*in his role as Markus*). And what's more, the weather was fine..!!

Filming continued **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>**, **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>** and **Friday 29<sup>th</sup>**. This last day was going to be the big one for the **Horizon**, its day of glory, with inside and outside scenes both travelling and stationary.

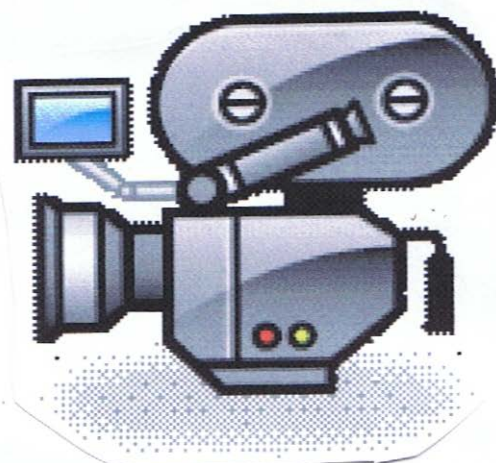
The film crew were friendly and received me as one of their own with my **Horizon**. **An unforgettable experience.! .....** And above all, captured on film and due for release on December 2011, and to buy on DVD for the future.













**The photos show my 1985 Solara Minx and the caravan I still use it to tow.... A 1985 15'0" Compass Citizen 350.....**

Both car and caravan are not only the same year but cost the same when I bought them, just £50 each.....the Solara in 1999 and the caravan in 2006.

As can be seen from the photographs, both had been standing for some time, three years, I think and needed a really good clean.. The caravan, being outside, had turned green and black. The results of Colin Hill's hard work can be seen in the before and after shots. I did keep all the vents open on the caravan so no more than a clean inside was required, no mould or mouse damage and rot in the furnishings.. I also made sure all towing gear, brake rods links etc were packed with grease and oil so all still worked; only new tyres were fitted.

I did manage a long weekend away...car, caravan and my friend Ella's dog can be seen in perfect harmony... a rare break in 2011...!!

I find the Solara a good steady tow car, it always has been. When 'Minx and Hunters' existed, I used to tow the caravan with the Solara from Suffolk to the Shakerstone show near Tamworth each year for a one week break. Driving with caravan in tow, the car is very steady on all types of road and into corners. It keeps straight even with lorries passing and is not affected by strange cambers etc. It also pulls very strongly, using high revs and low gears on hills and one eye on the temperature gauge, though I've never had an overheating problem or had to stop with bonnet up to cool off. Having had new rear shocks fitted two years ago, 'bot flop' at the rear is minimal even with the boot and back seat often full with all that is required when 'on Safari'. I've not kept a record of fuel consumption, but in years gone by on my longer towing journeys, I seem to remember 30mpg being normal.

**The first outing in 2012 will be the French Car Day at the Turks Head Pub, Hakeston, Woodbridge, Suffolk which Peter Chaloner has sent details of.... See forthcoming events**







Photo above shows **RCY938M**, the race prepared 1000 I still have at a Newark Classic Car show. After its retirement from racing in the late 90's, it towed the caravan to events a number of times. Power was no problem with 100+bhp from the 1294 engine and there was no fear of the 1000's structure suffering as, over the years, everything had been extensively braced to the rollcage and partly space framed.. When the racer was sold (*only to return to me in 2008*), the 1100 pickup took over its towing duties. The caravan was an early 70's 3 berth, the make/model of which now escapes me...I think *Malvern* and *Minster* appeared somewhere in its title. It was sold a few years ago as some of the two day meetings we once attended went to one day events and I needed the space..!!!



Same caravan, here seen at Newark Showground. This outfit caused a sensation at the **Raid 2000** UK International meeting at Beaulieu..... Kev and Lesley found the 1442 powered Bagheera coped with the load really well, on its journey from here in the North with only the left hand drive causing a few visibility problems. Some Bagheera 'buffs' doubted whether the structure of the MATRA was really up to it but the towbar had obviously been fitted from new in the Netherlands and the car had already benefitted from some of Kev's reconstruction anyway.... And it's still going strong..!!!



**XYD 77M**, my much travelled LHD **SIMCA 1000GLE** was once a regular sight at Midlands autojumbles towing a box trailer containing my 'wares'. 944cc coped with the usual load though the time I took my dad's milling machine to sell, it felt the extra weight. The trailer fell to bits before the 1000. Its Mini subframe now replaced with SIMCA 1100 rear suspension.....



**The CITROEN VISA GTi,..... one of motoring's best kept secrets**

My Citroen Visa GTi is one of only 16 known to the Citroen Car Club and was the only one on the road in 2011.....

I found the car 12 years ago in a used car lot near Colchester, Essex, obviously a trade in. It was in a sorry state and, with some bargaining, I got the asking price dropped from £900 to £200 ('cos the dealer had gone broke..!!). All the usual 'standing a long time' problems existed:- seized brakes, useless electrics, water and fuel leaks, poor running and plastic trim turning pink or white...etc.

In time all was put right enough for an MoT pass and I used the GTi as one of my 'work wagons' for five years until rust, re-occurring faults and other problems meant it was off the road. I can remember there were still Visa's on the road.... Not the quickest cars ever made, but the Gti always left the Essex 'Gary Boys' in their V6 Capris and RS Escorts on the line at the traffic light Grand Prix. The GTi was a little 'pocket Rocket'. On hard charged bends it never suffered the same fate as its Peugeot 205 GTi relation of coming out backwards when the panic stricken driver lifted off. This was due to the use of trailing arms and coils on the rear suspension instead of trailing arms and torsion bars.

In 2009 the car was re-activated by Rob Moss of Chevronics in Hitchin and Colin Hill. As mentioned before, it is a Peugeot 205. in respect of the power plant and other under bonnet bits. The rest, Citroen made up as they went along, so sourcing parts was a real nightmare. Also, there was no bodywork left under the plastic trims and the front bulkhead had rotted away.

All consumables, brakes, exhaust, tyres etc were replaced and, with all the welding and fabrication work done it was back on the road.. Engine wise, a new timing belt and service had the car performing like something being fired from a steam catapult. The rest of the bodywork only required a good polish and the trim, seats etc a good clean. All metal work was anti-rust treated inside and underneath.

It cost a small fortune to bring back to life, but is so worth it. The car is still a delight to drive and now is only used for sunny days and car Club meets. Also, as many of you know, it is the sheer fun of driving something on the road that is totally unique.





Honda bellhousing changed for later CRX DelSol hydraulic release type and SIMCA 1100 distributor fitted the engine & box were about to meet the car. A few bits had to be welded on to my adaptor plate as Honda had changed the bellhousing to gearbox flange slightly.... And I thought it was just the French manufacturers who made seemingly pointless changes year to year..!!!

Removing the SIMCA engine and box and getting the new unit to the engine crane, I noticed I was adding a fair bit of weight. For the future I have a much lighter flywheel and there's still scope to lose Kg's on the SIMCA's bodywork to compensate.

Once the gearbox was bolted up to the SIMCA rear subframe using the original lugs above the driveshafts, the engine end was supported on blocks so a suitable rear engine mounting crossmember could be fabricated..... The SIMCA's original crossmember couldn't be used as the deep part of Honda's sump gets in the way. A piece of box section steel was sawn and welded into shape to connect to the holes in the chassis legs for the original crossmember bolts. The new unit goes round the end of the engine to pick up the original Honda mounting. Brackets were welded on to pick up on the SIMCA bumper irons to stiffen things up.

The end result of the above means the Honda engine mounting protrudes through a hole cut in the rear panel. OK for this as a trackday car but maybe for a road car conversion a more compact mounting could be found to avoid the cutting.

The clutch hydraulics should connect up OK. A new slave cylinder was obtained on ebay and I've now found the fittings to adapt the SIMCA plastic pipe to the more normal brake pipe sizes used by Honda.

The 'plumbing' should prove simpler than the 1000 as both inlet and outlets on the Honda engine emerge over the gearbox reducing the piping to the front rad. I'll probably change the Rallye 2 rad for a larger capacity new Alpine/Solara

one I got for a reasonable £25 at Newark Autojumble recently.





Once everything is up and running, I'll find out whether a modified 1000 clutch plate working inside a Honda cover assembly is really up to the job. I have found a specialist (**CG Motorsport** of Leeds) who will make one off clutch plates if I have to spend for reliability.

Whether the Alfa 1600 jetting in the Dellortos works OK at speed is also to be seen.....

Any extra weight on the rear suspension shouldn't be too much of a problem. Extra negative camber on a 1000 is always a bonus. If it does ride too low, I always have the option of going back to standard height 1000 springs, as it currently runs on cut down ones

With more power and torque maybe I'll then be looking for higher gearing. I can go back to the 205x13 rear tyres if that is an issue although that would mean changing the rear wings/arches. No problem, I have the solution on the shelf in the garage bought at the 2010 Bastogne International meeting.....

The exhaust is a neater job than the 1000 set up. As noted previously, the Ebay bargain stainless 4 branch links up to a twin pipe crossing between the sump and bellhousing. On the other side of the engine a flanged joint connects to a right angle bend into a 2" bore oval silencer and then out at the back of the car. Only time will tell how noisy it will be. OK for Santa Pod (*those who've heard the jet car will know noise isn't an issue there..!!*) but maybe I'll need an extra silencer across the back to get below the 105db limit for trackdays at most circuits

Meanwhile, I'm not alone..... Sheffield member Steve Armitage has now bought a more powerful (160bhp) B series Honda Vtec engine which he is fitting to his trackday 1000.....

See more on our forum.....  
***Simcatalbotclub.proboards.com*** on  
***Transplants***.....



*Two shots of the engine mounted on its new crossmember*



*Below: RCY 938M, the 'guinea pig' or 'victim' of all this, seen here in its early 90's racing heyday.....*





*Right..* Mystery 60's Estate seen at Newark Autojumble on 29<sup>th</sup> January..  
**Can you identify make & model..????**

*Below:* Recently while sorting out piles of old paperwork, I spotted this cover shot from a July 1990 *Junior Education* mag. It shows a heap of well crushed, now classic cars. No prizes & no SIMCAs but **How many of the cars can you recognise from the remains.....???????**  
**Email your answers for the next issue.?**



**Topic Pack: Waste**

**Special: Primary Science Equipment**



# What is a sportscar in 1972: no 3

## SPITFIRE MEETS SIMCA 1100S

The fast French family flyer meets the thrice titillated Triumph.

It was inevitable that we'd get round to the Spitfire in this series of sportscars versus sporty cars. What wasn't so obvious perhaps is that we'd choose to line it against the Simca 1100 Special, an outwardly unexciting and typically boxy carrier of good catholic Frenchmen from an offshoot of the Chrysler Corporation which had hardly distinguished itself as a sporting name despite a very costly attempt to purchase the Matra charisma.

Even that became a lead balloon after J Stewart went to play with Marches and Jean-P Beltoise lost interest. But that didn't stop Simca, who, after launching the 1100 three and five door strictly practical fwd peoplecars, came up with a 1204S version using a hogged out motor and tighter suspension. It still looked like a slice of Camembert on wheels but Simca led on the chin with an advertising campaign showing a blurred out 1204S honking past a Midget with the invitation for all those chaps whose predilection for sporty motoring was not unfortunately matched by their attempts at birth control, to get where the action was and go blow off Midgets with the family along to lead the cheering.

We tried a 1204S some while ago and it managed to show a clean pair of Michelins to the Spitfire which we happened to have around at the same time. Things have happened to the Spitfire since then, during which time too Simca have had more thoughts about the 1204. You see 1204 seemed an odd number when all the other models were 1100 so with the foresight and acumen that has typified the French nation throughout the aeons of time, they drilled the motor out to 1300cc near as dammit

and called it an 1100 with a Special suffix just to show they weren't kidding. If that sounds to you as if they're infringing their *appellation contrôlée* then you aren't ready for the Common Market, *mon ami*. When you think of it, it's no dafter than a Morris 1000 delivered with a 1275 engine.

Triumph seem to be the only arm of Leyland in recent years to have made a success of the old 'If you can't replace it, revamp it' philosophy which was the mainstay of the British motor industry before the foreigners really put the frighteners on them. The Spitfire is now in its Mark 4 model variant and is probably the best example of old whines in new bottles in the business. Each time Triumph did a revamp it managed to improve things. Most significant of the Mk 4 changes was the revised rear suspension which answered the greatest criticism of the Spitfire—potentially dangerous rear wheel tuck in from the independent suspension. By fixing only one leaf of the transverse leaf spring to the diff and allowing the other leaves to pivot reduced roll stiffness, but kept the wheels aiming where they ought. To compensate, a tough anti-roll bar was fitted up front and this did exactly the right job in preventing the new rear end from wagging the car off-course.

The Spitfire started life in 1962 with the old 948cc Herald engine. In fact it was little more than a Herald chassis, running gear and motor with a two seat sports body and a peppier engine. Changes in the Herald line over the years were followed in the Spitfire and the car now uses a twin carb version of the latest 1296cc engine. Apart from the suspension and gearbox improvements, the Spit still uses the separate chassis that it always had with the double wishbone and coil spring set up at the front and

### SIMCA 1100 'Hot Hatchbacks'.....

The 1204, 1100 Special and Ti must have some claim on the title of 'first hot hatchback'...?????



*Kev Ward's 1204 Special, the only UK survivor known to the club.....*

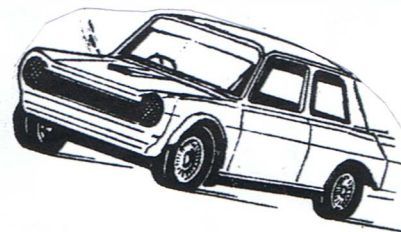
Here in the UK we were somewhat 'short changed' as far as performance SIMCA 1100's were concerned. ....

The short lived (1970 to '71) twin carb 1204 /Special was replaced by the single weber carbbed 1294cc 1100 Special, the subject of this road test. Mainland Europe received the 1100 Ti which had 1294cc, twin Weber DCNF's and alloy wheels. ( *UK 1000 enthusiasts were deprived of the Rallye 2 in the same way* )

In the USA, the 1204, but just in single carb form was the only SIMCA '1100' available. ( *see elsewhere in this issue for a survivor.* )

What must have been the ultimate 1100 was available from SIMCA Spain. The 1100 there was sold as the 1200. The Spanish 1200Ti could be had with a twin weber carbbed 1442 engine and, I believe was available in estate form too...!!!!

In Spain the 1100 (sorry 1200) was also developed further for rally use with both turbocharging and fuel injection tried well into the TALBOT era.





the independent transverse leaf rear, now modified as already explained.

It's a tough little chassis and if kept rust free it'll last for years. The only surprising thing is that no one has yet got round to a special body to fit tired Herald chassis. Body has remained subject only to detail change. We always did reckon it to be far prettier than the Spridget series and the various changes only served to improve. Latest changes have been the chopped off Stag-style tail and the high inset bumper with huge rubber nerfers beneath.

Motor is a simple four cylinder ohv, the 1296cc capacity coming from a bore of 73.7mm and stroke of 76mm. Twin HS2 sidedraught SU carbs and a very modest cam give 63bhp at 6000 with a 9.0:1 compression. Four-speed all-synchro gearbox now offers a very neat shift with ratios of 3.50, 2.16, 1.39 and 1:1 with a new higher rear end of 3.89 to give a higher, quieter cruising speed at a small sacrifice in acceleration over the Mk3.

The Simca when it first happened a couple of years back was a radical departure for a company which had had a fairly undistinguished model line up, ranging from a 1000cc rear-motor boxy sedan to a range of conventional larger cars in the mid capacity range. In fact the *milie* series is still produced, an unremarkable rival to the Renault 8 and the NSU Prinz, alongside the more conventional 1301 and 1501 sedans and station wagons.

The 1100 series is their most recent attempt at producing a utility family car, as demanded by the French market, while combining the new European criteria of handling and performance. The introduction of a hot version follows Renault practice to a large degree and is designed to offer the family man the sort of performance which would be expected of a French sportscar if the French ever got round to producing one.

The French have a much more practical attitude to car production than the British where styling counts for more than real road holding virtues. The boxy Simca then has to sell itself on its appeal as a load-carrying method of transportation with a performance and handling which belie its looks. Simca have gone the front-engined fronty-drive route which arch rivals Renault have taken giving the inherent advantages and disadvantages of this layout. Main advantage is one of interior space available in the basic passenger box without the need for bulky transmission and gearbox tunnels. The other advantage is the handling superiority which results from a well set up layout of this kind, viz the BMC 1100/1300 series.

The body shape is unremarkable but not unattractive. In fact it is more

attractive than the equivalent Renault which sells in far greater quantities. No 2 always tries harder—Old French Proverb. Basically one body style, featuring either two or four doors plus an estate style rear door on all models which gives sedan looks with the utility of an estate wagon.

The motor, 1294cc, 75bhp DIN, is mounted transversely at the front with a four speed all synchro gearbox driving through the front wheels. The increase in capacity shows not so much in top speed which still just tops the ton mark, but more in torque which gives the hardworking motor greater flexibility in all gears. Power comes from two twin choke downdraught Weber carbs as opposed to the single carb setup on the standard 1100. Front suspension is effectively simple with adjustable height torsion bars, upper and lower transverse links and an anti-roll bar. Rear independent suspenders are longitudinal suspension arms again operating torsion bars with a stabiliser bar.

Both cars, with their completely different characteristics, are nice to drive. With the Spitfire there is of course the more sporty feeling from a bitchin' looking two seater while the Simca works hard to kid you that you are a really groovy family man who has lost nothing in changing to a four seater, rather one who has gained in that the reclining seats and long rear luggage platform offer the opportunity for a fruitful grope providing you remember to shift the teddy bears and dolly mixtures off the ventilated upholstery beforehand. Both engines are willing revvers, encouraging exuberant use of the right foot and gearbox.

The Spit's gearbox is much more precise with a short throw notchy shift which can be pounded hard without complaint. Even power shifting on acceleration tests didn't frighten it into missing 2-3 shift and over revving. The Simca on the other hand has more usable power but with a gearshift that is as vague and rubbery as any front drive shift we've ever tried. Fiats, Renaults all have the same inability to design a gearchange which is as effective as the engine allows.

The Simca starts easily on the auto-choke and runs so smoothly that you do not realise how quick it is until you get the stop-watch out. In a straight line it pulls 30 in 3.8sec, 40 in 6.4, 50 in 8.8 and 60 in a creditable 13.3 which is pretty neat for a five door family hauler.

Spitfire by comparison feels much sportier in the traditional sense but seems to be making a lot of drama for the times recorded—30 in 4.2sec, 40 in 6.4, 50 in 9.0 and 60 in 13.3, even if Triumph claim 12.5 to 60. We're no slow drag racers when it comes to wringing the most out of someone

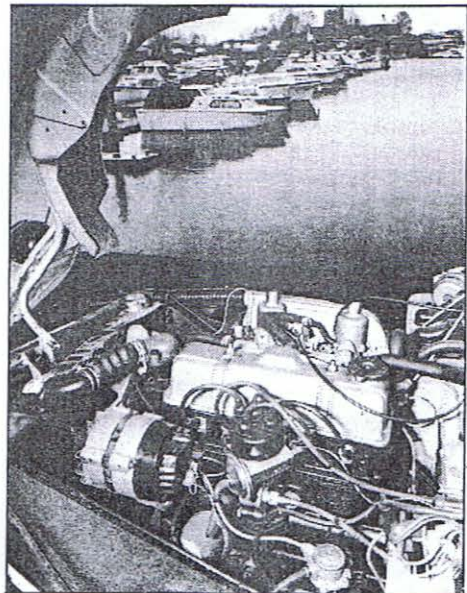
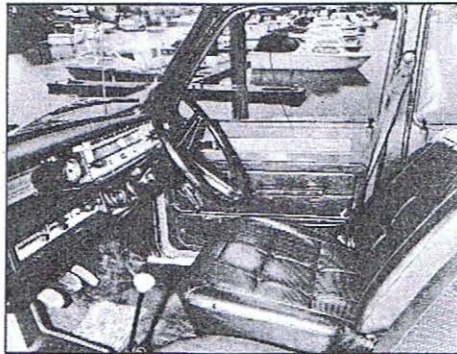
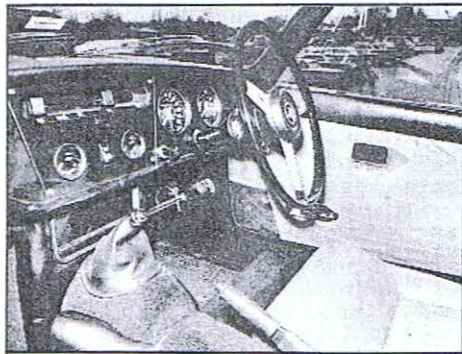
else's car. A very evenly matched set of times really which then leads us to handling to try and make a direct choice.

We thought the Simca superior until we tried both on the test track when the Simca rolled much more than we'd remembered, giving masses of understeer and heavy steering. The Spit however, more conventionally laid out, showed how much it had improved with a much more neutral handling characteristic and more control available through the throttle and the superlight steering combined. The Simca, with a few more suspension tweaks to give a more sporting bias at the expense of carrycot comfort would have been the superior in the handling department. As it was, the Spit on its skinny 4½in rims and its basic equipment SP radials proved much more predictable and easier to manage. The Simca came on 5½in rims and Michelin 145HR x 13s as standard. Much harder pressures helped the handling but adjustable shox with the wick turned up would have helped so much to control a body roll which with its bulk and high centre of gravity took too much control.

Both cars were modestly equipped with instruments and the Spitfire came with the optional Laycock overdrive which we have praised







before on sporting Triumphs—a real sporting asset. The Simca offered a higher standard of seating comfort with adjustable rake seats and a long longitudinal adjustment. In fact the Simca had an almost old fashioned seating position—comfortable but very high up offering a superb view but also giving more effect to the dramatic roll when cornering hard.

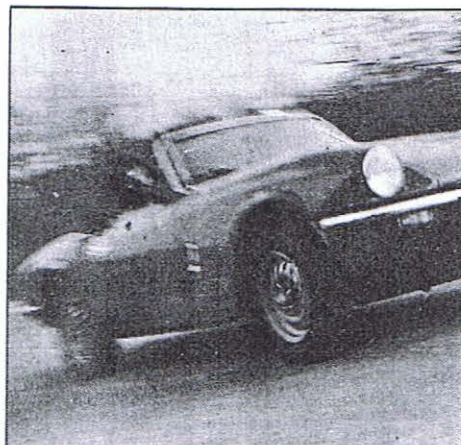
In sheer practical terms the Simca has so many advantages, even over boring family estates with much more mediocre performance. It's a very comfortable 4-5 seater with well shaped seats and well trimmed upholstery, the back seats of which fold down estate car fashion for a long rear loading platform. In position, the rear seats have a slot-in rear shelf over the rear luggage space so that it can be a normal car inside with a generous boot space behind. As a pure load carrier, its single lift-up tail gate is superb.

On the 1100S you also get sporting options like a tacho, electric washers, quartz lighting, clock and heated rear window.

To choose between the two you have to be brutal and forget trying to be a fresh air hero with a cricket club scarf blowing in the wind. If you don't, you will choose the Spitfire for its sheer wind-in-the-hair fun element and a performance which if not mind blowing, can be sufficiently exhilarating in pure fun terms. The Simca, with the almost identical performance, is still too much a family car which is going to make it anathema to most of our readers unless they are in the habit of carrying lots of people and/or baggage. Being cold blooded logical like your Monsieur Average Gaston with his four children and four chickens, pick the Simca. Like us, being impractical for the sake of a bit of motoring enjoyment, you'll probably want a Spitfire. Either way, for the money, you'd make a pretty neat choice.

Spitfire will cost you £1052.63 as tested with overdrive, £985.15 in stock four speed form. Simca comes in at £1083 with most extras included in three door form, £1121 in five door.

MH





AS we were able to announce briefly in last week's issue, Simca have completely revised the little Bertone-bodied coupé previously based on the Simca 1000. To make the car much more of a performance machine, the engine has been enlarged to 1,204 c.c. and a lot of changes made to the suspension and engineering details. The result is a genuine 107 m.p.h. sports G.T. with remarkably good roadholding and a surprising degree of refinement.

The engine is based on the alloy-head 1000 unit, but the block casting is new, although the cylinder spacings have not been changed. Bore size is up from 68 to 74mm and a new heavy-duty crankshaft has a throw of 70 instead of 65mm. This puts the capacity up from 944 to 1,204 c.c. and with two large twin-choke Solex carburettors and a compression ratio of 10.25 to 1 the maximum net power has been raised from 39 to 80 b.h.p. at 6,000 r.p.m. Maximum torque is similarly raised from 54 to 76 lb. ft. at 4,700 r.p.m.

A new cooling system is sealed, with the radiator moved to the front of the car (although the overflow bottle lives in the rear compartment). There is an electric thermostatically controlled cooling fan exhausting through two horizontal grilles in the front bonnet lid. An alternator replaces the d.c. dynamo and there is a branched exhaust system with dual outlets.

Transmission is unchanged, with a four-speed, all-synchromesh box incorporated in the trans-axle. The front and rear hydraulic circuits have been divided, but the brakes are the same type and size as before, the coupé having discs on all four wheels, although the saloon still sticks to drums.

The suspension, on the other hand, has been revised completely at both ends of the car. At the front, the transverse leaf is retained, but it is now clamped at its centre, with a separate anti-roll bar, instead of having a two-clamp mounting that caused the spring to double as the anti-roll bar as well. (This system was used on the Fiat 600 and Vauxhall (first series) Viva, but both have now changed away from it.) In the rear an additional universal joint at the outboard end of each driveshaft enables the rear wheel camber to be set negative with the car unladen. Michelin XAS tyres are standard.

Apart from the styling changes to incorporate the front radiator, the body has been revised in many details. Two long-range iodine-vapour auxiliary lamps are sunk into the new

front grille and fancy hub plates leave the wheel nuts exposed. Reversing lamps are standard and a new fresh-air ventilation system includes face-level outlets at each end of the fascia. Strident air horns are standard and there are two-speed wipers. An English Formula wood-rimmed steering wheel is standard and the fascia is covered in synthetic veneer.

#### Driving Impressions

Last week I was able to visit France and drive four examples of the new coupé on both the road circuit and banked track at Monthéry. During several laps at maximum speed a time equivalent to 107 m.p.h. was measured and Simca quote the standing quarter-mile acceleration as 18.0sec. At maximum speed (during which the typically French Jaeger speedometer was reading an incredible 121 m.p.h.) the car was extremely stable and the engine at between 6,500 and 6,700 r.p.m. was smooth and not unduly noisy.

On the road circuit the coupé was surprising. The engine does not display any rorty or particularly sporty characteristics, yet a watchful eye must be kept on the little rev counter to prevent running beyond the red line at 7,000 r.p.m. In first and second gears the car buzzes away merrily and feels very sweet and brisk. In third it takes much longer to climb over 6,000 and it pays to change up quite early into top. On the relatively short straights the car reached a genuine 95-100 m.p.h.

Cornered fast with the throttle wide open, the coupé is extremely stable and almost neutral in its handling. As soon as the power is reduced by lifting off there is a sudden change of weight distribution which causes the nose to dive in, just like a front-wheel-drive car. Cornered very hard indeed through the hairpin in second, a front wheel lifts in the first part of the turn and the inside rear wheel patters slightly on the exit, but the outside tyre digs in very hard and refuses to come unstuck.

The steering is superb, being both light and extremely positive. The front of the car responds immediately, so that the straw-bale chicanes (specially set up to slow us down at strategic points) could be taken extremely fast without any violent lurches building up in the quick right-left-right twitching of the wheel. Roll is very slight and barely noticed from the soft driving seat that hugs the body right up to the shoulders.

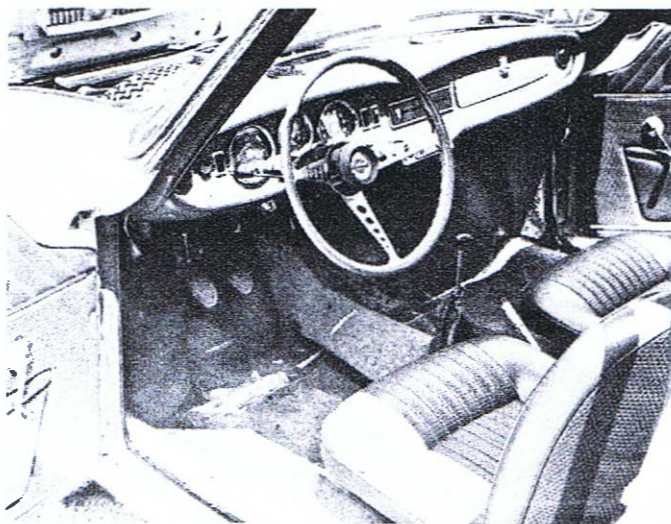
Noise level is low for a rear-engined car, although the front quarterlights were prone to whistle above 90 m.p.h.

# SIMCA 1200s COUPÉ

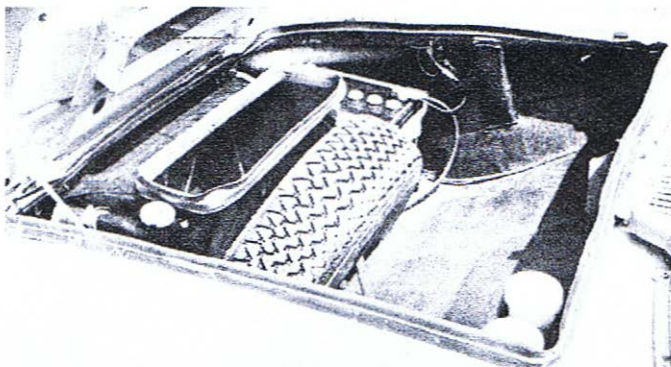
## DESCRIPTION AND TRACK IMPRESSIONS

BY GEOFFREY HOWARD

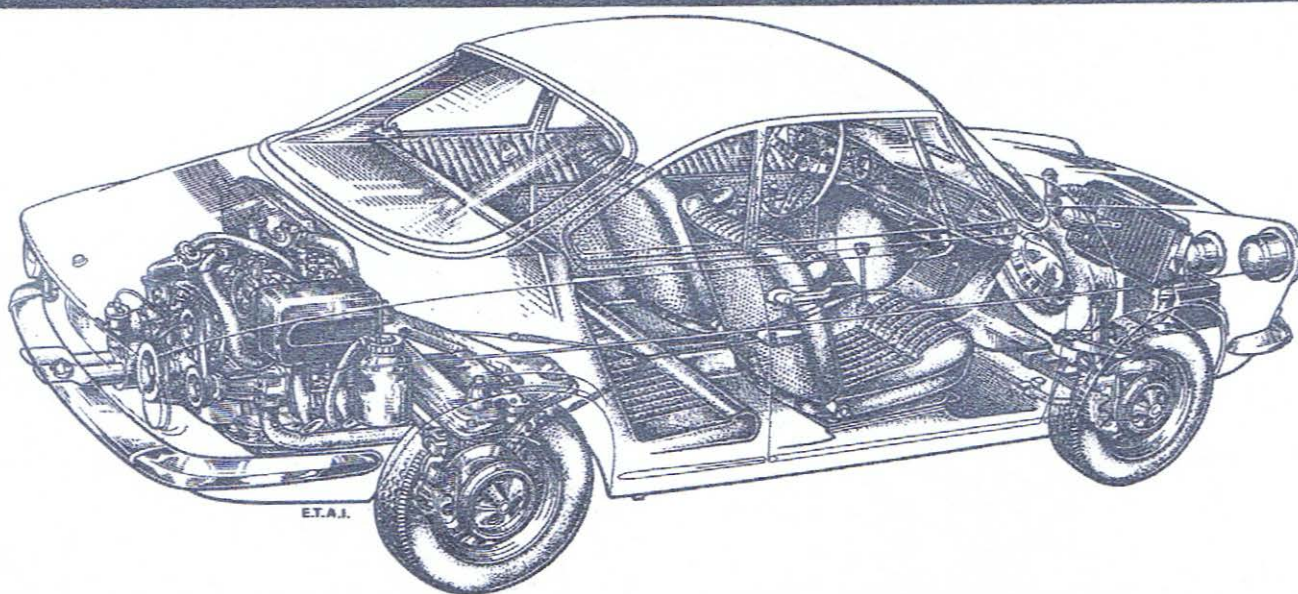
*Paul Frère flashes round the Monthéry banked track at maximum speed*



Above: The Formula wood-rim steering wheel matches the mock veneer fascia. Seats are well bucketed but they do not recline. Below: The radiator and battery has been moved to the front compartment and Michelin XAS tyres are standard







Above: Front and rear suspensions have been redesigned very effectively. Below: The new block looks larger than that of the 1000 and the carburetors nearly fill the right-hand side



At speed the coupé is very stable and I was able to try an emergency stop from 100 m.p.h. without any slewing from the straight line, although the back wheels were on the point of locking. Pedal pressures felt rather high during normal braking (there is no servo for the all-disc system), but the cars had spent most of a day being hammered round a racing circuit, which could have deteriorated the lining characteristics.

In France the price of the

Simca coupé will be NF 13,850 (£1,010), which puts it in the same class as the Renault-Gordini 1300, BMW 1600, VW Karmann-Ghia 1500 and Autobianchi Primula coupé. In England a figure of around £1,300 for left-hand drive versions was being discussed; right-hand drive models will not be built at the factory and a conversion costs just over £100 extra. Production is just starting now and there will be a car in England for the London Motor Show.



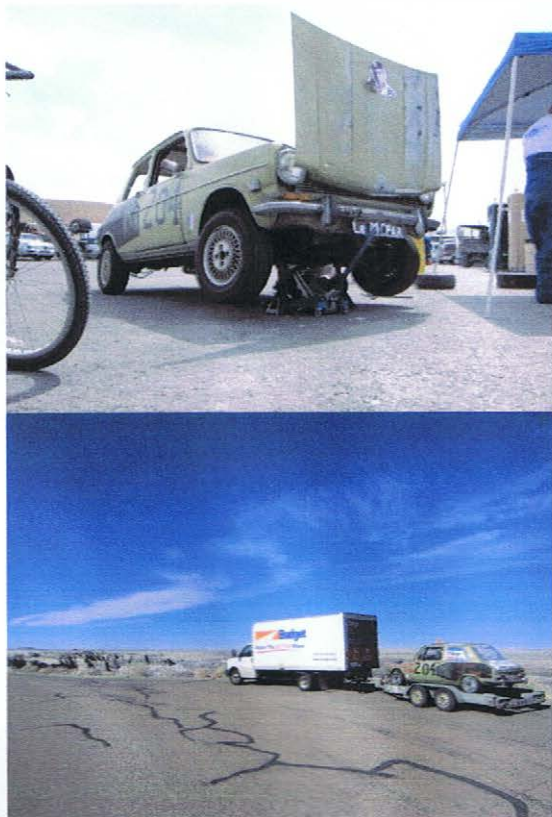
## ***Rare 1204 saved in USA.....***

The **SIMCA 1100** was sold as the **1204** in the USA and came with the longer stroke 1204 engine running on a single carb. New member Sam has bought a rare '71 survivor over there. The photos follow its long journey across the USA to Sam's from California. Its appearance is a result of its 'competition' history. It featured in the '24 hours of LeMons', basically one of a series of sub \$500 'banger' endurance events where it achieved fame, not necessarily for its speed!. Photos from simcatalbotclub forum and '24 hours of LeMons' websites.....





*More pictures of the LeMons 24 Hours 1204.....*



*Right: The 1204 during the 24 Hours of LeMons race seen here pushing the Mazda Miata (MX5) that eventually would come second overall. The SIMCA eventually won an award for 'effluence'...*



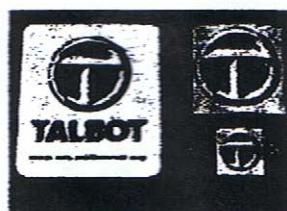
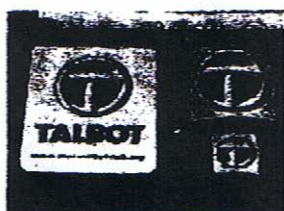
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inside the windscreen @ £3 each (25p less on multiple purchases) and 'T' roundel @  
£1.50 (8cm across) & £1 (4cm). Any size can be made up in a few days...(See below)







Photos taken by Tony Baker for the **SIMCA** article in last October's *Classic & Sportscar*.....



**Solara** spotted by **David Hart** just before Christmas in Chessington, Surrey. Maybe it belongs to one of our members.....???



From A recent issue of *Gazoline*.. something I hadn't seen before, the Rallye style striping and front wing transfers applied to the 1976 1000SR. UK market SR's never received this



And Mark Reilly's take on the above added to his dark green 1000 that featured on the NEC stand.....



*Next column:* Racing **Bagheera** not quite keeping to the 'straight & narrow'..... Photo *Echappement*.



## 1. Program of the meeting

**Thursday, 17/05/2012**

- Arrival of the participants<sup>1</sup>
- Opening of the meeting
- Welcoming of the visitors
- Opening of the swap meet/autojumble
- Car show, shop talks
- evening at the participants' individual discretion (bar, restaurant, barbecue)

**Friday, 18/05/2012**

- Breakfast
- Simca excursion (approx. 40km / 3 hours) to visit the Diebels brewery ([www.diebels.de/start.htm](http://www.diebels.de/start.htm))
- Swap meet/autojumble, car show, shop talks
- Evening: gala supper in the main hall on the camping site
- end = ???

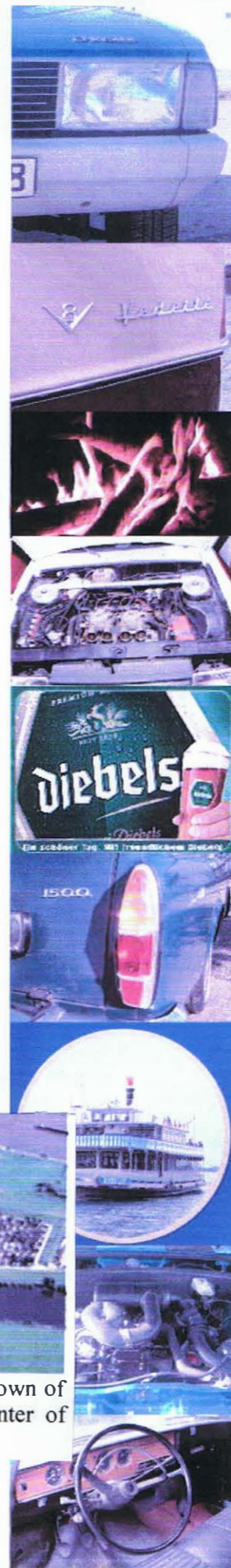
**Saturday, 19/05/2012**

- Breakfast
- Steamboat excursion on the Riverlady steamboat on the Rhine ([www.river-lady.de](http://www.river-lady.de)), snacks included
- Swap meet/autojumble
- car show
- shop talks
- Evening: Cold/hot buffet in the main hall on the camping site
- Award ceremony
- end = ???

**Sunday, 20/05/2012**

- farewell to the participants
- departure

### The camping site



The “Grav-Insel” camping site is located on an island in the middle of the Rhine near the town of Wesel on the Lower Rhine. This area is reputed to be the largest urban recreation center of Germany..

<sup>1</sup> Opening hours of the reception: daily 8:00 -20:00 o'clock, on Thursday till 23:00 o'clock  
With your car, you can enter the camping site area until 23 o'clock.





The 1100 VF light commercial range soldiered on along with the Rancho (that used the pickup as a base) until early 1985, a few years after the 1100 hatchbacks and estates were axed... UK models were badged SIMCA, DODGE then TALBOT over the years.....



TALBOT UTILITAIRES LEGERS