

## GORDINI MAKING HEROES

Hi Stuart,  
Firstly, thank you for a great magazine... how you continue to find the content you do astounds me. The Gordini feature in the June 2017 issue took me back to my youth. I bought mine new in July 1969 and in November that year I attended the 9 hour at Kyalami where the Gordini of Scamp Porter ended 4<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> on Index of Performance – if memory serves. I was suddenly a hero by association!!

I remember driving to Durban in 1970 when the only freeway was between Mooi River and Durban. We left Mooi River at 5.20am and arrived at the Cuban Hat roadhouse at 6.25am – madness, and when I think about it now I cringe. On our return journey we hit a guinea fowl at some speed. It went through the windscreen and cracked the rear windshield. Fabulous days indeed.

Keep up the great work.

Regards,  
Tony Campbell

Hi Tony, thanks for the Gordini memories. I was chatting to another 1960s' Renault owner the other day about his Joburg to Durban dash in his R10. Imagining he was Porter or

Mortimer he attacked Van Reenen's Pass with vigour, and thanks to the lively rear end almost reversed the Renault and his girlfriend down into the valley. Luckily his girlfriend was having a nap and didn't realise how close to a prang they had come... the two soon got married and are together to this day.

I'm glad you mentioned the Cuban Hat. I have been looking into famous South African roadhouses and car meet-up destinations. In Jozi we have the Doll House in Louis Botha and Pretoria has the Lollipop roadhouse at the end of Stanza Bopape (Church) in Colbyn. Those south of Joburg might remember Uncle Charlie's back in the day, while those in Pretoria had The Flying Saucer (somewhere near the freeway intersection now named as such). From what I hear, Durban was all about the Cuban Hat and East London still has the Windmill, which opened in 1946.

You wouldn't happen to have any images of the Cuban Hat or any of the above mentioned, Tony? I am desperately looking for help sourcing images and memories of these venues and I reckon Cape Town, Bloem, Krugersdorp or PE must have had a few spots too. If you or any reader has a roadhouse tale to tell, please drop me a line.  
Stuart



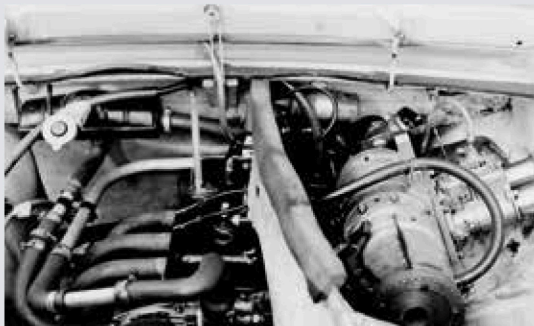
## ALCONI CHARGING

Dear Stuart,  
50 years after our family invested in an 1108cc Renault R10 Super it is great to see the Renault pot still boiling in recent correspondence. I was intrigued by your inclusion of the R10 Alconi in the 'Magic motorsport memories' letter in the correspondence section this month. Not only is it a modified R10 but it is arguably *the* ultimate modification of the R10 in that period, being the 1296cc supercharged version which was campaigned successfully against a 2000cc class BDA-engined Escort, a GTA Alfa Romeo Sprint, Group 5 Ford Mustangs and a Galaxie. It is a tribute to South African ingenuity that despite the lack of suitable OEM equipment, a plan was made and the supercharger is actually the cabin blower from a Viscount turboprop airliner of the period! If you look closely you might see the huge air intake lurking just inside the rear right quarter window. I have attached two pictures of the car which I took at a 1968/9 meeting which show some of the detail (and have since found their way into the Internet figurative hall of fame – quite rightly).

Regards,  
Carvel Webb



Hi Carvel,  
The Renault pot is really on the boil and I don't remember any other car that we have featured getting as much correspondence as the Renault Gordini. The racing exploits back in the period show just how powerful a marketing tool this avenue can be when done correctly. For those not able to get a Gordini, a regular R8 or R10 was a good step – and then of course there was the Alconi version for the local boy racers. My Renault R10, powered by a slightly down-on-compression 1100cc unit is by no means a rocket ship – your image of a the supercharged Alconi engine bay is now keeping me up at night. Thank you!  
Stuart



## A SMALL WORLD

Hi Stuart,  
I refer to the article by Howard Johnston in the June edition of your magazine in respect of the Bitter CD which he once owned and restored. I do not know if he knows that the Bitter CD which I once owned and which my son now owns in the UK is the exact same car he once owned. This is the car which got the prize as 'Best Coupé on Show' at the London Classic Car Show earlier this year and about which I wrote to you a few months ago.

This is also the same car Mike Monk wrote about in your magazine a few years ago when I still owned the car.

We live in a very small world.

Sincerely,  
Ronnie Grace

Hi Ronnie,  
Yes this world is small, as is the classic car fraternity. Considering the Bitter is so rare it is amazing to see how often it crops up. Somewhere around 2006 I too stumbled across this very same car when it stopped by our old Bryanston office. John Wessels was the man behind the wheel and I think it was about to undergo a tidy-up or restoration. The car was a metallic light blue at the time.  
Stuart



## PRAISING TEAMWORK

Hallo Stuart,  
I want to congratulate you and all the people on this June 2017 copy of my favourite magazine. The Gordini story was the best article on this car ever to appear in print. The content, layout and photos were spot-on. A new standard was set and if you can repeat or better this I see no reason why this magazine can't become a world player in the classic car world. Can we have a photo of the writer and photographer?

Regards,  
Dawid O'Neil

Dankie Dawid,  
Words and letters like this really make the effort worth it – so thank you. Other than holding flashes and moving the car around, I can't unfortunately take any credit for the Gordini article. Credit must go to the writer Carvel Webb and snapper Etienne Fouche. Both are passionate car people that eat, sleep and breathe classics (Carvel mainly a diet of Gordini) and regular readers of Classic Car Africa. Carvel proposed the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration article and when put in touch with Etienne, the pair independently sourced a car, location and even decided the type of photos they wanted in order to best show off the technical



aspects mentioned in the wording. I requested some portrait images of them for you but the truth is that both would rather stay behind the lens than in front of it. I will try to catch them at some stage though.

This publication belongs to you and all the readers as you steer us along the right path. We welcome any ideas, help and contributions as the people's stories are the ones that need telling and the ones that help elevate the publication above the rest.

Thanks for being part of the ride.

Stuart

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