

Entering the Electronic Age

By MALCOLM MUGBRIDGE

Our beloved (?) Chairman's article on fitting a Lumenition Optronik Ignition kit to his Lomax prompted me into doing the same. Although I did have this task on my L.E.P. (Lomax Enhancement Program) I wasn't sure who produced a kit to cope with the peculiarities of the Citroën ignition set up. Starting either cold or hot always presented a problem despite much fiddling with the timing and dwell angle and this seemed like an answer to my prayers.

The kit took several weeks to come through, probably due to the fact that there is such a low demand for them that they are only produced to order. Mind you, at £87.51 (inc vat) I am not at all surprised. The fitting instructions are quite comprehensive and do not give any problems.

I decided to fit the optical switch first and that's when the major problem arose. My alternator is mounted back to front below the crankshaft pulley with its centreline opposite the contact breaker box. Naturally, once I had discarded the

original guts and cover plate and fitted the optical switch in its place the pulley end of the alternator ended up fouling the the optical switch as it is about $\frac{3}{8}$ " deeper than the old cover. Taking heart in the Lomax motto, "I will not be defeated", I was able to swing the alternator out to the offside and anchor it in place by making a hole in the bonnet (which still needs to be covered). It also necessitated coming down a couple of sizes in belt diameter to what must be the smallest alternator belt ever fitted to a 2CV/Dyane.

By comparison, fitting the power module was straight forward except for two minor points. The instructions advise not fitting the module near the battery, aerial or exhaust. The only position for it was within a couple of inches of the battery, so I put a thin aluminium plate between the two items as a screen but if anyone out there knows a good reason why this shouldn't be I would like to know. Unlike on Phil's kit, the only wire I had to shorten was the red power

supply which, in the absence of a balance resistor, I took from the positive terminal of the coil.

When it came setting the timing, turning the contact breaker box with a multimeter between coil negative and earth is supposed to give a variation in voltage reading and a final setting at a 12v max. Mine gave an almost continual 12v reading with only the merest whiff of variation. So, nil desperandum, I left the setting in approximately the last position before the voltage dropped to 0v and decided to start up.

Bearing in mind that it was a couple of degrees above freezing and it hadn't been started in six weeks, I was more than delighted when it started at the first attempt. Previously, it would have been half an hour and a flat battery before it showed any sign of life.

Driveability is much improved so, despite the irritations, it has been well worth the effort.

Chairman's note:

(Should that be "*Beloved* Chairman's note"?) I have been talking to various Club members about electronic ignition. Quite a few of you say that you are interested in fitting it but that Lumenition is too expensive. Tom Lucas, aka Ivor Spark, has told me he hopes to design his own electronic ignition which will be considerably cheaper. I'm holding you to it Tom! Once he has come up with a set of plans, the Citroën Specials Club will publish them. We haven't discussed the finer points of this yet but it may be that the plans are made available for a nominal fee so that we can swell the Club coffers. If you can't wait that long (I only fitted mine out of desperation when the points welded themselves together) Lumenition is available from Hypertronics in Willesden and Ripspeed in Edmonton. It must be available outside of London as well, but if it is I don't know where. If you know of a supplier who'll give Club members a discount on *any* make of electronic ignition, please let me know.