

HOME MAID (MONOPOSTO)

By John Nash

This story started way back in 1989, just after I'd completed my Lomax and had a test drive of the Hudson Free Spirit prototype. This sowed the seeds for the idea of a single seater that I could use to go to work. Over the years various ideas were explored, however I came to the conclusion that Renault engined front wheel drive was the way forward. I did not want to reinvent the wheel so 'looked at' with a tape measure the DRK, to their owner's amusement at the 1993 Sandowne Show.

I wanted pre-war GP styled car, but the preliminary design threw up various problems. However, a model was made and shown to various club members at the 1994 AGM. I then made a full sized replica from cardboard and this highlighted the styling shortcomings. I then attended the Stoneleigh Show to obtain more details and whilst there spoke to 'Professor' Buckland and Free Spirit owners.

When I returned home with this information, I had a complete rethink and designed a spaceframed chassis. This was made from 25mm square tube with steel floors and bulkhead. All the life threatening welds, such as suspension mounts were entrusted to a certified welder, *(You need to be certified to be a welder! Ed.)*, but I undertook the rest. The steering column was positioned centrally and a Triumph pedal box was welded across the top chassis tubes making a very rigid structure.

A Renault rear arm was grafted onto a 2CV bearing housing to provide the handbrake and very firm location. Once the suspension arms, Spaks adjustable shocks and new 15 inch wire wheels on the front with a standard Renault at the rear were fitted, I had a rolling chassis which was then panelled with aluminium. I decided to fit a 1289 cc engine giving 64 bhp. This was plenty powerful enough for a light car. The exhaust pipe was made from stainless steel tube obtained from the local swimming pool steps *(Have they missed it yet? Ed.)* and designed to run inside the bodywork.

I wanted to keep the nose cone and body as narrow as possible so a Triumph 1500 radiator and electric fan from a Datsun Cherry were used. I obtained a complete set of Triumph Dolomite Smith's instruments and these were installed into a polished aluminium dashboard that had the Fablon trick applied to it. *(after polishing the aluminium John covered it with clear Fablon to stop it tarnishing. Ed.)* I drew the wiring diagram and made up the looms. This completed the major chassis work so bodywork could now start.

The nose was a loose copy of an Alfa 308. The centre section with screen, a Mercedes W154 and the rear, of various styles. The nose cone was cast from a mould taken from a chicken wire and plaster buck. The main body work was constructed from 3mm ply over formers that were bolted to the chassis. The rear compound curve section being stringers 10mm wide each one shaped individually and glued along their edges. This part of the build was the longest and most tedious job of all and took days to complete.

It was then covered in glass cloth and finished ready for painting. The bonnet and front side panels were aluminium. I had some clocking in time card holders and these made perfect sets of louvres, so were fitted to both lower sides and bonnet. the car's electrics were connected up and then it was presented for the MOT in November 1997. Because I had used enough parts from the donor, I could keep the original registration number, that was prefixed YPE and that summed up my feelings in getting the car on the road YIPPEEEEE!!

Best regards

John Nash

