

THE ALLARD REGISTER
&
SPORTS CAR ASSOCIATION

THE BULLETIN.

March/April, 1973.

Page 1.

Hon. Secretary: R. W. MAY, 8, Paget Close, Horsham, Sussex. RH13 6HD.

(Telephone: Horsham 61372)

Flashback to the Racing Car Show.

The Scribe writes:- "I bought an illustrated book (62 pages) from the Motor Books stand entitled 'Catalog of British Cars of 1949-1950'. Pages 6 and 7 show pictures of the following Allards: K type sports 2-seater, P type four-seater saloon, L type 4-seater tourer, and the M type d/h foursome coupe.

Edited by Peter Chambers and originally published in England. It is a U.S.A. edition published by Floyd Clymer of 1268 South Alvarado Street, Los Angeles 6, California and was priced at \$ 2, although I was only charged 30p for it."

THE IMHOF SPECIAL ALLARD

COUPE

by TOM LUSH.

The late Goff Imhof was probably the Allard Motor Company's most enthusiastic customer; having taken delivery of the first production car sold in 1946, followed by a Mercury engined coupe, and a second one for his mother; an extended chassis J.1. for mud trials, a sports special incorporating a development of the de Dion axle layout (used eventually in the standard J.2 models) and, in late 1950 having on order for delivery in March 1951, a Cadillac J.2.

At the end of the year, with his coupe getting a little tired, and the prospect of Caddy engines being more freely available during 1951, Goff discussed at length, with Sydney Allard, the possibility of building a closed sports car which could accommodate the big American engine at a later date.

Together with Reg Canham, at that time Sydney's Works Manager, a body design was drawn out by Goff, and to get the required dimensions it was decided to use a standard J.2. chassis lengthened by twelve inches, with body mounting points fitted to suit.

The massive tubular hoop which formed the standard bulkhead support was widened by seven inches each side, and the steering box mounting and pedal position moved to allow for the new driving position. Standard coil springs were fitted (but later modified after road tests).

A works order was issued on January 16th, 1951, and the chassis built under the number 2011. At this time the Allard sales were booming and the special chassis requiring many non-standard parts, had to take second place to production and was not ready for the body builders until the middle of the year. They too had problems, and by the time the car had returned to the works for final wiring and detail fittings it was the end of 1951 before it had its first road test.

The body was framed in light gauge tube, with aluminium panels, and in the interest of weight saving, perspex windows, without winders were fitted, the rear quarter lights opening to a limited extent with standard Allard saloon catches. A full width bench seat, covered in grey leather with pneumatic cushion seated three abreast, leaving room behind for several suitcases without obscuring rearward vision.

The vast competition experience of Imhof was evident in many points of design, for instance, the divided windscreen, with the driver's half made to open (for foggy conditions) and special wiper blade linkage to ensure full coverage of the swept area, excellent all round visibility, and a separate switched circuit for all electrical components. For foreign touring the dipped lights could be changed over by a special switch.

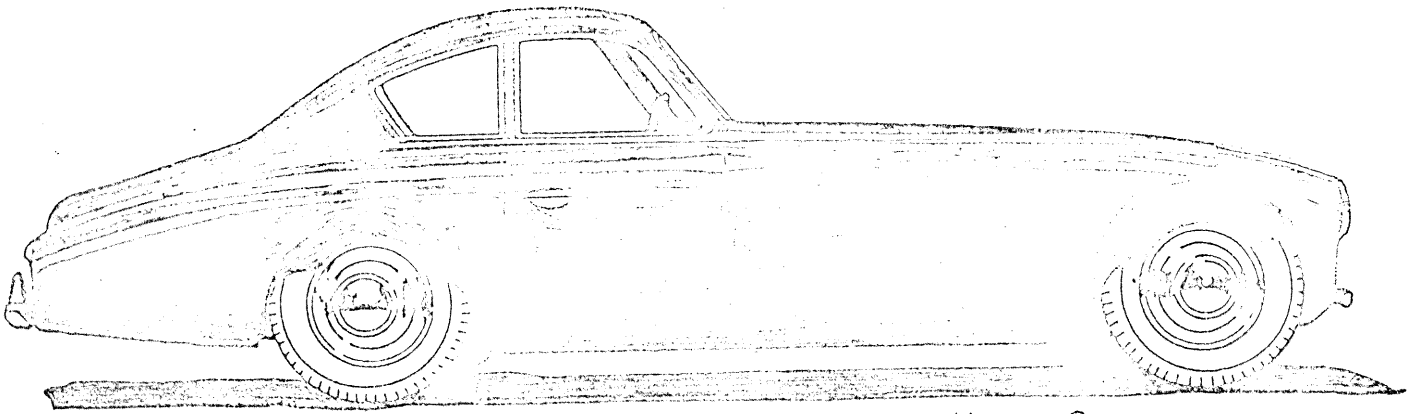
The spare wheel fitted into a horizontal compartment in the tail, between the two wing fuel tanks, each holding ten gallons and having independent fuel lines and pumps with change-over tap in the driving compartment.

Finished in gleaming cherry red, with grey trimming, the balanced lines looked modern even by today's standards and twenty years ago attracted a crowd of admirers whenever left in a car park.

For development purposes an over-bored Mercury of 4375 c.c. capacity was installed, and with aluminium cylinder heads and dual carburettors the unit was developing some 120 b.h.p. at 3,800 r.p.m.

The weight of some 26 cwt was rather more than had been calculated, and several suspension modifications, including remounting the rear shock absorbers, had to be made before the car was ready for performance testing.

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ALLARD IMHOF SPECIAL BUILT FOR MONTE CARLO
RALLYE IN 1952

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On February 27th 1952, the author accompanied Goff to the Motor Industry Research Association trial grounds at Lindley and the following figures were obtained:

0 - 50 mph in 7.9 secs.
 0 - 70 " " 16.5 "
 0 - 80 " " 21.5 "

Max. speed: West 95.7. East 97.6.

Weather: Cool and dry, no appreciable wind. (At a later date it is understood that the car covered the flying quarter mile at 102.3 mph.)

The first long distance journey of some 250 miles revealed several shortcomings, principally that the lengthened chassis lacked the substantial J.2. rigidity, and appreciable body movement was apparent at high speeds, together with wind noise, and severe over-heating when driven at full throttle over some distance.

Following this journey the cooling system was altered by re-shaping the ducting from the grille aperture to the radiator, and providing an extra duct each side to direct cold air into the engine compartment. These, and other modifications greatly improved matters but it was decided that the larger and heavier Cadillac unit would not perform successfully in the existing chassis without considerable re-designing, and the project was dropped.

Goff ran the car as a fast tourer for some considerable time, including many continental trips, and after it had been sold the Company heard of it in the South of France, in Cannes, and in fact sent out a complete replacement engine unit at the owner's request, the car having suffered some serious mechanical trouble. The car spent some time there, and over a year later was seen in South London, after which all trace was lost.

TOM LUSH.

The story is now taken up by member C. Mordaunt, who writes:-

The last advertisement for the car that Imhof put in Motor Sport was dated March, 1953. I believe it was sold to one of the directors of Performance Cars because in Motor Sport of July, 1954 there is an advertisement with a photo of the car with the following wording:-

"THE IMHOF ALLARD SPECIAL. This well-known 100 m.p.h. car which was fully reviewed in the Motor, 26th March, 1953, and in America in Cars, December, 1951, as well as Road & Track. Unique aluminium custom body offers exceptional luggage space for this type of car, together with J2's superb roadholding and high power/weight ratio. Bored and stroked Mercury engine dual carbs., aluminium heads, 120 B.H.P. at 3,800 r.p.m., 10,000 miles, immaculate. R. Leiby, 292, Great West Road, Heston, Middlesex."

This is the same address as Performance Cars. On another page in this issue, there appears an advertisement of Performance Cars showing a photo of a selection of sports cars they had for sale, and the Imhof Allard can be seen in the picture. When it was sold, I cannot trace the owner, or to whom he sold it. When I bought the car from member John Patterson, he gave me a bit of its history. Apparently when it passed from Imhof's possession it had two owners before being purchased by Miss Angela Farr, daughter of Tommy Farr, the boxer. After a period of time, she asked Performance Cars to sell it for her. Accordingly, it was advertised for £495 or thereabouts. Film stunt-man George Fisher bought it in 1961 and according to John Patterson, George kept the car until about late 1963 or early 1964, when due to an accident whilst filming at the Bray studios, he couldn't drive for approximately six months. He advertised the car and John bought it, and later I bought it from John.

The car was in rather poor condition, having no floor boards, no bulkhead, and damage to the front of the bodywork; indeed for a short time I despaired of making anything of it, but it did have wire wheels which John had fitted.

The first job was to take out the Jaguar engine and gearbox and open prop shaft. I wanted to make the car as near as original as possible. I had in the garage at that time a V8 Chev. engine which I had bought to put in my M type Allard coupe, but decided that this was a good engine to go into the 'Imhof'. I required other bits and pieces and all the original engine mounts to take the V8 engine. The Ford which was originally installed had been removed by John and fresh mounts welded in to take the Jaguar motor. I wrote to Tom Lush and he kindly loaned me drawings of the J2 and J2X chassis, which showed the position of the engine mounts, which enabled me to measure up and re-weld fresh mounts. Then came the problem of fitting the Chev. engine in with the Ford gearbox. Just about this time, John advertised a side change Ford 'box fitted with Lincoln gears and I decided that this was just what was needed. I bought it and found that the Ford 'box would not mate up with the Chev. engine. I contacted a friend of mine who offered to get a conversion plate over

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from the United States to take the Ford 'box as well as front mounts for the Chev. engine to fit the Allard front engine mounts. He also got me a centre gear change to fit the side change 'box. I duly fitted the Chev. engine and the Ford 'box fitted to the conversion plate, which was a Speed Gems. The front engine mounts were Hurst, and the gearchange was a Foxcraft. This was a straight through shift, very fast. I had to cut the front springs as the Chev. engine is very much lighter than the Jaguar. Incidentally, a point that might interest fellow members is that the Jaguar plate fitted straight on to the Chev. fly-wheel. After doing this I started checking all the mechanical parts, and decided to put new bearings in everywhere. I stripped down the De Dion, fitted new bearings, new oil seals, and reassembled it. Same with the front suspension, wheels; the clutch and pedal shafts renewed and rebushed. A new bulkhead was made up out of aluminium and new floor boards cut. As part of the driver's seat was missing, I had a bench seat 52" wide made up.

The dashboard had been cut about, but John had put in one of the original 140 m.p.h. speedos in the front. I managed to get all the switch-gear in again, and fitted an electric 8 cyl. rev. counter. The next problem was re-wiring as this was missing. I re-wired it myself and everything worked. No one was more surprised than myself!

Next I had to beat out the dents in the front bodywork and made another grille out of aluminium mesh. Then I resprayed it with three coats of Ford midnight blue. After this I had my first trip out in it, and a horrible 'clonk' came from the back end. I stripped it and found that it was perfect. I then found that the front universal on the prop shaft was out of line, and had to cut the rear mounts off and re-weld them one inch lower down. I found that the car then ran very well with a cruising speed of about 90 m.p.h. Whilst on holiday I decided to open it up on the main A.12 and the top speed was about 118 m.p.h. Petrol consumption on a long run was 20/21 m.p.g.; in town, however, it was a different story, about 8 m.p.g.

My wife and I attended and entered it in the Club's Concours d'Elegance near Leicester last June, and we were delighted to win the Premier Award.

CLIVE MORDAUNT.

Many thanks, Tom and Clive, on your combined effort, which has resulted in this very interesting article. ED.

Two photos (3 1/4" x 3 1/4") of the car taken at the concours d'elegance can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary. PRICE 45p the two, or £1 incl. postage.

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:-

D. Richland of St. Albans, Herts., England. K2.
Dr. G. D. Allard " Mississippi, U.S.A. -

FOR SALE

Distributor for Ford side valve V8 engine, (front mounting).
Offers to 'Athos' c/o Hon. Secretary.

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WANTED

Differential unit and hub unit for Allard De Dion back axle.
Lt. Col. G. Campbell, Mendham Lodge, Harleston, Norfolk, England.

PIT STOP from Champion Spark Club Company.

VACUUM LINE AND IGNITION TIMING

Most of you know that basic timing cannot be set correctly if there is sufficient vacuum present at idle to move the distributor breaker plate.

Of course, there are many cases where vacuum is low enough at idle to cause no breaker plate movement, and it's not actually necessary to remove the vacuum line before setting timing.

To be on the safe side, it's a good idea to disconnect and plug the vacuum line from all distributors prior to setting timing.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1973 ARE NOW DUE.

THE ALLARD REGISTER & S.C.A.

I enclose herewith £1 or \$ 3. Subscription for 1973.

NAME.....)
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.....Phone no.....) CAPITALS,
PLEASE.

Cash or cheque to R. W. MAY, Esq., 8, Paget Close, Horsham, Sussex. RH13 6HD.England.