



# ARCC UPDATE

March 2010

## *Alfa News*

by George Beston, Cobourg

I haven't written anything under this title for some time, because Alfa Romeo has been all over the news, being frequently mentioned in press releases relating to the Fiat/Chrysler combine and the steps it might take to improve its position in the North American market. Watch the newspapers and magazines and you'll keep up with the stories better than I can in the Update.

I can't help but notice that the stories in the press are different every time you hear one. It sounds like the Fiat 500 is coming for sure, but when the subject turns to Alfa we get some encouraging news, discouraging news, and then deferral. As Canadians, we can take some cheer in the reports that the Chrysler's Brampton assembly plant might be used to manufacture Alfas. Our hopes are then quickly dashed by management challenging the viability of Alfa Romeo anywhere, and one of the latest reports at the time of writing this is that Alfa won't appear in North America until 2012. This is just what we've been hearing since, oh, about 1995 – i.e. Alfa Romeo will return at some point just beyond the planning horizon. This variability reminds me of what Canadians say about their weather. In this context, if you don't like the current story, wait a minute, because it will change and you might like the next one.

The truth is that there are large forces at play with Fiat/Chrysler, and until the corporate financial picture is resolved, nothing else matters much. There are many examples of companies including Chrysler in the 1980's pulling themselves up by the boot straps and moving from near disaster to strength and vitality. For the sake of Canadian and American taxpayers in general and Alfa Romeo enthusiasts in particular, let's hope that this is one of them.

## *New Spider Concept Car!*

by George Beston, Cobourg

So, to cheer us up a bit, Pininfarina has introduced a design exercise at the Geneva show that is intended to be a replacement for the existing Alfa Spider. They declare it to be a celebration of two occasions, Alfa's 100th anniversary and Pininfarina's 80th. Named the *2uettottanta*, it has a crisp modern look and in profile it has the proportions of Honda's S2000.



*Press release photo.*

The design proposal drive train features a front/mid engine layout using the new turbocharged 1750 engine with 235 hp and 250 lb ft of torque and a six speed twin clutch transmission sending power to the rear wheels.



*Press release photo.*

Dimensions reflect a trim, compact vehicle. This should keep weight modest and performance potential high.

Tires on the prototype are custom made by Dunlop, and its carbon-ceramic brakes are supplied by Brembo.



*Press release photo.*

There's no indication on the show car as to how a trunk opening, convertible top or even side windows might be worked into the design.



*Press release photo.*

Thankfully, some thought has been given to the interior layout, but it's hard to imagine that a bright silver dash board would make it to production, even though it's more attractive than the ubiquitous black on most designs these days. It will be interesting to see if all of the attractive design elements are maintained if the prototype is developed any further.

## ***Notes on Goodwood Revival, 2009***

**by George Beston, Cobourg**

Despite some editorial head scratching, it turns out that the entry in the Goodwood Revival event identified in the last issue as a 6C3000M is anything but. In fact the vehicle carrying the race number 1 and the plate WAS 991 is a custom vehicle with a tube frame, Alfa 1900 mechanical components and an attractive body styled similarly

to a number of Alfa Romeo racing cars and prototypes of the mid-1950's.

This error was pointed out to me by Peter Marshall who thankfully reads this newsletter and has been kind enough to set me straight and provide further insights.

The 6C3000M that was entered at Goodwood is a restoration of the short-lived 6C3000M PR. It is now owned by Chris Mann who managed to track down the wreckage in South America, and restore the car to race ready condition.

Fusi states that this car, known as the 6C3000M PR (Passo Ridotto, or "shortened wheelbase") used an engine which had been reduced from 3.5 litres to 3.0 litres for the purpose of competing in the International Sports Car Category created in 1954, and the chassis was shortened by 5cm to 2.20 metres. During its first track test in May 1954 on the Monza circuit with Sanesi driving, the car left the track at the notorious Ascari bend and was wrecked with Sanesi suffering severe injuries and burns.

Ben Hendriks of Holland wrote an article on the 6C3000M series which was published in our own *Alfista* magazine Vol. 8 No. 4 in March 1984. Ben reported that no chassis number is known for the Passo Ridotto, and suggested that it might be one of the missing cars of the series which are presumed to be dismantled or renumbered. He also reported that Henry Wessel's conclusion in researching this car was that it was probably a Colli coupe rebodied by Touring in 1954.

No photos were ever taken of the original, and all we have had until now is a black and white drawing in Fusi.

This is the 6C3000CM PR as it appeared on the grid at Goodwood.



*Photo by Peter Marshall.*

## Home Made Tools

by George Beston, Cobourg

As a do-it-yourself home mechanic, it is not possible for me to know all of the needs I might have for specific tools, and it's definitely not practical to set about accumulating an inventory of every tool out there.

Keeping in mind that factory tools are primarily time savers, there are many opportunities to adapt more common tools and hardware supplies to create tools for limited use that are relatively expendable.

Creating such tools should be regarded as a challenge to your own ingenuity. Having said that, I don't mind throwing in the towel on occasion and calling on a professional who has the tools, skills and experience to get the job done without any fuss.

Here are some examples of the tools I have made and am holding onto for the next time I have to use them.

If anyone wants to share what they've done along similar lines, your humble Editor would be pleased to publish more articles on the subject!

### Spica Solenoid Lock Nut Wrenches



*Photo by George Beston.*

The open end wrench is what I came up with for loosening the lock nut on the cold start solenoid.

It was made from a stamped steel bicycle wrench that had a 1" opening, which is close enough to the 24 mm size of the locknut. It was shaped with a bench grinder for use in close quarters.

The modified socket wrench works to loosen the lock ring on the fuel cut off solenoid. (The fuel cut off solenoid has to be moved to change the air: fuel ratio of the Spica system) The tool is a 1 1/8" deep socket, cut down a bit with a Dremel tool and cut-off wheel to create four tabs which engage the slots in the lock ring.

### Differential Pinion Nut Wrenches



*Photo by George Beston.*

Both of these were cut from socket wrenches. The smaller tool is for a 105 series non-limited slip differential and the larger one is for a 115 series LSD.

The smaller tool is made from a 1 1/8" six point socket cut down to create six teeth 5mm wide and 7mm deep. The larger one is made from a 36mm six point socket and has teeth of similar dimensions. In this case the modification had to be done by a machinist because I wanted it turned on a lathe to get the desired tooth thickness with some accuracy.

### Cylinder Head Puller



*Photo by George Beston.*

The puller itself is a piece of scrap 3/4" plywood, cut wide enough to rest on the cylinder head studs with holes drilled down the middle to line up with spark plugs in the head. Also, it was scooped out at the front to clear the oil filler neck.



*Photo by George Beston.*

The threaded rod assemblies were made from scrap spark plugs with the porcelain insulator completely removed, 1/4" threaded rod and suitable nuts and washers. The nuts at the bottom of the spark plug threads were ground smaller so that they would pass through the spark plug openings.

To lift the head, the threaded rod assemblies were threaded into the front and back spark plug openings and the plate was put over them so that it would rest on the cylinder head studs. Then washers and nuts were threaded over the exposed ends of the threaded rod. When these nuts were tightened against the plate (and in turn, the cylinder head studs), the head lifted enough to free it from the block.

#### Thermostat Wrench – Early 105 series



Photo by George Beston.

This tool was made from a piece of 1/8 inch steel plate. It was cut (Dremel, again) by hand to fit the six sided / clipped corner shape of the thermostat. The flats on the thermostat are 46 mm across. The 3/8 inch square hole is for a ratchet or flex handle.

### Upcoming ARCC Events

#### Toronto Chapter

The Toronto club's official schedule of events is not yet available.

The AGM will be on March 25 at MiniGrid.

Tech sessions, Cruise Nights, Sunday Drives and other events are being planned. Watch for notice of a weekend get together with the Detroit AROC chapter in July!

#### Alfa Romeo Club of Edmonton

Dates are to be established. There will be a tech session in April, a road trip in May and an annual Rally in June.

#### Calgary Alfa Marque Society

#### Ottawa Chapter

Two key events are being planned: the "Eighth Annual Where are All the Italian Cars?" meet on May 8; and the Italian Day Parade on June 19.

#### Events of General Interest

AROC National Convention in Frederick, Maryland June 23-27.

Vintage Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, September 9-11.

## Martin Costa, 1929 – 2010

Martin passed away on January 17. A long-time member of our club, we will miss his presence at Toronto area events. He truly enjoyed Alfas and was always good company and a pleasure to talk with. Quoting from his obituary: "He was a 'Gentle'man who will always be remembered for his blue eyes and flashing smile driving off in his antique Alfa."

Our condolences have been expressed to Margit Duncan, his partner of 22 years.

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