



ARCC UPDATE

November 2009

Europa Rally

by Brad Golden, Toronto

Like the summer of 2008, the summer of 2009 will likely not be remembered as one where we were able to spend much time with our beloved Alfas. So, it was not a great surprise when the weather on the morning of this year's Europa Rally was rather dreary: grey and damp.



Overall winner. Photo by RollyAstrom.

Despite the less than ideal weather, the turnout for the event was impressive. A fine array of current model Ferraris and a few lovely vintage models gathered at the rally starting point and exchanged greetings before the fun began.

The rally route was typically stunning, providing vistas of the City and countryside while affording picturesque glimpses of the region to the northeast of Toronto. The route ended at the recently completed Wyndance Golf Club where participants partook in a barbeque lunch while the rally tally was completed.

The winner of the Alfa component of the event was Michael DiPanfilo in his GT Jr., Mark Dimech navigating. Second place went to the Bryson Family who also took second prize last year and third place prize was awarded to John Romeo in his GTV6, with Domenic Guerra navigating. This was also a repeat from 2008.

Planning for next year's event will likely start in the spring; it would be great to see a large turnout of Alfas next year to compliment the impressive group of Ferraris and to provide a challenge to the Brysons who have vowed not to three-peat on their second place finish!



Winning Alfa. Photo by RollyAstrom.

Québec Gathering

by George Beston, Cobourg



Yves Boulanger sent along the accompanying photographs of a gathering at LE CHALLENGER golf club in St. Laurent on November first. Details are sketchy but some of this group are considering

the creation of "Fiat Alfa Romeo Quebec". We look forward to further news!



EFI Conversion (cont'd)

by George Beston, Cobourg

I've been writing about this topic for a long time and working on the project even longer. There are a lot of specific articles on this subject in the back of my mind, but this time around I've decided to provide an overview.

It all started simply enough. As an enthusiast with a technical bent (notice I didn't claim that I have any particular level of skill or expertise), I have sought out projects on the basis that they might be a cool thing to do, and that I might learn a thing or two along the way.

I've been around long enough to follow the transitions from traditional carburetors to basic mechanical (thanks to Alfa's SPICA system) and electronic fuel injection and beyond to today's sophisticated, intelligent and adaptive original equipment systems. With each step along the way, I've made an attempt to keep up with generally what they do and how they work, at least as an informed consumer.

I've also been following the availability of aftermarket programmable EFI systems and in particular, the ever-decreasing price of such systems. I decided to take the plunge a few years ago, and initially focused on the fabrication of throttle bodies to bolt in between the intake manifold and the air cleaner plenum to replace Weber carburetors. Previous articles have detailed the project which involved starting with a set of throttles from a SPICA system and building up throttle bodies around them.

About eighteen months ago, I finally purchased a computer, all the necessary sensors, the wires and other materials required to build the complete system. The computer I chose was a MegaSquirt, "Squirt'nSpark Extra" version. This decision was based on an affordable price and the system's

capability of providing both fuel and spark control. I also like the grass-roots support MegaSquirt has, and the fact that its tuning software is in the public domain.

Last winter was spent on the installation of the computer, an additional fuse box, the required wiring and sensors, and an appropriate fuel delivery system including pump, filters and return line. This was a tremendous amount of work for me. Here is an under-dash view of the electrical components. The piece on the left just beside the heater controls is the MegaSquirt relay board. The new fuse block is on the right, just inboard of the original fuses. The ECU is just visible in its location behind the radio opening.



The intent was to have the car (my Spider "1750" Jr.) back on the road this summer. Well, it didn't happen. I don't blame anyone but myself. The overall complexity of the project has resulted in a lot of head scratching and many consults with the ever-patient dealer who sold me the computer and associated hardware.

The good news is that I have done some initial programming and the engine has been running on a "fuel only" basis a number of times. The bad news is that it ran poorly and I've had to do some remedial work to set things right.

The first problem was a cold start issue. The only way I was able to get the engine running was by turning the ignition on and off without cranking a number of times. Accumulated fuel from the system's priming pulses was enough to get the engine started. This is not a difficult problem to resolve. It simply requires an adjustment of pulse width in the appropriate cold start table.

The biggest problem was a vacuum leak, which was a direct result of a slight flange mis-orientation on the throttle bodies. This made it difficult, but not impossible, to get the throttle bodies over the carburetor mount studs. The thin paper gaskets between the carburetor mounts and the throttle bodies were not up to the task of compensating for this poor fit. Of course, the vacuum leak resulted in high Manifold Absolute Pressure (MAP) readings and a correspondingly rich mixture. Further tuning was not possible pending resolution of this vacuum leak.

Other problems noticed so far include poor throttle synchronization and momentary interruptions of computer function that are reported as “resets” in the computer’s data logs.

To tackle the issues at hand, a number of changes have been made. Two things have been done to resolve the vacuum leak. New billet aluminum carburetor mounts using O-ring seals were sourced from Alfaholics in the U.K. and fitted to the intake manifold. Once attached to the manifold, the outer studs of these mounts were indexed by my machinist on his milling machine, and then the holes in the throttle body flanges were re-bored at the indexed locations to ensure good alignment and proper sealing.



The aluminum mounts have the secondary benefit of eliminating the support strut between the engine mount and intake plenum. The benefits that the rubber mounts provide, i.e. isolation from heat and vibration, are not required for fuel injection systems, so nothing has been lost.

The throttle bodies are now an easy fit over the studs in the mounts, as they should be.

I’ve been able to synchronize the throttles on the bench. This will, at the very least, be a good starting point for fine tuning on the car. Here’s a look at the bench setup. A small shop vacuum is pulling air through throttles that are propped slightly open with a small wrench. Adaptors made from 1.5” ABS plumbing pieces facilitate use of the UniSyn tool. Cylinder #3 is reading at the top ring in the sight glass here.

Possible reasons for the computer resets are bad grounds, alternator noise and electromagnetic interference. With new wiring everywhere, and given that running the engine with the alternator disconnected made no difference, the most likely culprit is electromagnetic interference from the original-style ignition wires that have metal cores and no shielding. A new set of Magnecor “KV85 Competition 8.5 mm Ignition Cables” has been acquired and installed, so I’m keeping my fingers crossed that this change will cure the reset problem. Speaking of Magnecor, they sell and ship directly to

consumers, have a website with useful technical information, and their catalogue includes many wire sets for Alfas. Their products are definitely worth considering.



At this time I’m in the midst of reassembly. I’m optimistic that my next attempts to run the engine will be more successful.

All photos by George Beston.

ARCC Classified ***For Sale***

1987 Milano for parts. This was the first Milano in Canada. It was parked in my mother’s driveway in the fall of 2003 and hasn’t moved since. Now Mom says it has to go – and before Christmas! I’d be happy to sell the whole thing as is and where is but if you want something in particular we can discuss who is going to pull the parts. Please leave a message at (416) 499-7129 or send an email to jwpalfa@gmail.com.



Upcoming ARCC Events

Alfa Romeo Club of Edmonton

Date	Time	Event
June 10	TBD	Wetaskawin
June 27	TBD	Porsche meet
July 14-19	TBD	AROC Convention
August 10	TBD	Rock'n August
August 29	TBD	Concours
September 21	TBD	Fall Colours Run
November	TBD	Italian Dinner
Dec. 13	TBD	Tree Hunt

Ottawa Chapter

Date	Time	Event
June 8	7 pm	Pub Night – Pub Italia
June 20	9:30 am	Italian Week parade
June 25	7 pm	Tech Session
July 1	10 am	Italian Car Show
July 14-19	TBD	AROC Convention
July TBD	TBD	Summer BBQ event
Aug.10	7 pm	Pub Night – The Swan
Aug.15 or 16	TBD	Beau's Brewery
September 13	TBD	Drive to Calabogie
September 19-20	TBD	Drive to Algonquin
October 17	TBD	Italian Car Christening Party
November 7	7:30 pm	28 th Annual Pot Luck

Toronto Chapter

Date	Time	Event
May 10	TBD	Sunday Drive
May 30	10:30 am	Restoration Shop Tour Legendary Motor Cars
June 4	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
June 21	TBD	Vintage Festival/Drive
July 2	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
July 5	TBD	Sunday Drive
July 14-19	TBD	AROC Convention
July 19	TBD	Summer Wine Tour
August 6	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
August 9	TBD	Sunday Drive
August 16	TBD	Picnic, BBQ
September 3	7 pm	Cruise Night La Paloma
September 27	8:30 am	Europa Rally
October 1	TBD	Cruise Night La Paloma
November 4	TBD	Director's Meeting & Pub Night
December 13	6:00 pm	Holiday Dinner That's Italian Ristorante
Feb 27, 2010	9:30 am	Directors' Meeting

Calgary Alfa Marque Society

Date	Time	Event
May 2	TBD	Drive to Nanton RCAF Museum Tour
May TBD	TBD	Garage Tour
June 6	TBD	3 Hills car show
June 27	TBD	Drive to Gleichen Blackfoot Museum Tour
July 11	TBD	Stampede Breakfast & Alfa Car Show TBC
July 14-19	TBD	AROC Convention
July 18	TBD	European Car Show, Stanley Park
July 25	TBD	Drive to Canmore via Hwy 1A
August 1	8:30am	Local meet & coffee
August 22	TBD	Drive to Chain Lakes & Picnic
September 10	7 pm	Parking lot meeting
September 26	TBD	High River Car Show

Alfa Romeo Club of Canada

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ARCC Update

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