

ECS Owners' Club Magazine



Issue 8

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Editor 's bit

You know I've been driving the Hawke for 18 months or so Row, and I still have a few things to finish off on it. I'm really 'used to it now, although I've only done about 2300 miles. It still surprises me when I press the loud peddle. I'm beginning to think that a V8 might be even more fun!

I, like all of you, am sorry to hear about the difficulties that GCS are going through at the moment, but I believe them to

be temporary, and so does Chris, as you'll understand from his piece below, and he's putting his money where his mouth is, so that should inspire everyone's confidence.

I have seen the some of the products of the new moulds, and they are superb, I know they have cost and arm and several legs and the delays have been long, but those moulds are excellent and so are the panels they produce. The fact also that they are available in finished colours will preclude the heart-breaking job of pulling the Hawke apart, just when you've got it together order to spray it, I remember it well!

Somewhere in this issue is the continuing saga of the Chairman's very long build!

Chris Pecover writes:

I'm sure that our secretary, Julie has mentioned it elsewhere, so I will just say that I was very sorry to hear that Garry and Colin have decided to take a break from Kit Car manufacture and consequently GCS Cars is no longer trading. I think that they have taken the right decision, in view of the lack of orders this year, and stopped before the company owed anyone money or kits. (Unlike several other companies in the past who not been so honourable!)

Having made the decision for all the right reasons, I hope that it will not be to soon before we see them back in business selling more of the kits that we have invested in, and derived a great deal of pleasure from. The break will hopefully enable them to re-evaluate their kit and the packages offered for sale,

and allow them to concentrate on improving the quality of some parts of the kits, as well as becoming more proficient at marketing and selling the kits. I'm sure that we'd all agree that the finished car looks great, but those initial contacts are so important, to encourage new customers and potential Hawke owners.

The situation has left me in a bit of a quandary, because as you may recall from the last magazine, I was planning to sell my V8 Hawke and build another. In fact, I bought a Rover SDI donor car in May and extracted the engine, gearbox, propshaft, etc, for my next Hawke kit. and I've been "playing around" with it for part of the summer while waiting to sell my car. Well my car was bought at the Donnington Show, and I finished engine preparations fairly quickly at the same time that I learned about GCS's immediate future. After a period of careful thought and a chat with Colin and Garry I am proceeding with my next build of a V8 Hawke. You can read what you like into that, but I have confidence that GCS will re-emerge as a stronger and more proficient manufacturer of Hawke kit cars.

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since the last issue of our magazine, or should I say a lot of sun on Hawke owners heads as the summer has been brilliant for hood down motoring. Anyway, after a very hot and sunny Bromley Motoring Pageant in June when several of us got a "bit sunburnt 'your committee agreed to buy a sun shelter (which will also give some protection from the wet stuff that normally falls out the sky). This was first used at on our club stand at Sandown where in spite of a breeze, it did a good job in protecting those club members who attended. Unfortunately there were not to many of us at Sandown which disappointed our Secretary who had gone to the trouble of organising a treasure hunt/quiz with prizes

for those members attending. I don't know if Sandown as a Show will be held next year, as even with new promoters this year it did not seem to be any better than the last couple of shows.

Donnington in September was quite pleasant weatherwise, it needed to be as I was camping for two nights at the race circuit. GCS offered to have my car on their stand as I was trying to sell it, and they were without a demonstrator to show. This meant that I had "quick" drive up to Donnington after work on the Friday, which with the hood down I thoroughly enjoyed! I can certainly sympathise with anyone who has to stay on any stand for the duration of this type of show as you encounter all sorts of people, which together with being on your feet all day can be quite tiring. Tony Beszant and his wife journeyed up from the Isle of Sheppey in the red V8 ex-Demo car to join John Puttock and his wife with their Burgundy 2 Litre sports version at the show and Saturday evening was most enjoyable as we all met a local Pub/Restaurant for a meal, drink and a chat.

I was able to sell my car at the show, and drove home, in the pouring rain, with a substantial cash deposit in my pocket and very mixed feelings about the impending departure of my car. It is quite a wrench to see "your" car, which you've built and know every nut, bolt, washer, electrical connection, etc., being driven away by someone else. I hope that the new owner looks after it carefully!

They say that you've got to break some eggs to make an omelette, so I put my "broken feelings" to one side after the sale of MOV7X, and got on with finishing off my next V8 Rover engine. I had looked for a long time for a suitable Rover donor

with a manual gearbox and fuel injection, but to no avail. In the end I compromised and found a carburettored version with a manual box. I know that I could probably have picked up a fuel injection system from a Range Rover or similar, but as the individual parts including "black boxes" of the injection systems are difficult (As rare as rocking horse sh*t) and expensive to come by, I settled for carbs.

The engine was in quite good condition for its mileage (80,000) with very good bores, crankshaft, and barely worn camshaft; the cam, big end and main bearings were all showing signs of wear through the white metal, which was to be expected. However as I was planning to replace all bearings anyway their condition didn't really matter that much. While the block was away at "Rovercraft" for reboring + 0.020" to take high compression pistons, fitment of line bored new camshaft bearings, flywheel lightening and total engine balance, I got on with the heads.

Each head has been ported, flowed and polished so that they can "Breathe" better, the valves have also been slightly reprofiled, and the manifold also worked on to aid good gasflow. It takes me quite some time to do each head, approximately one weekend (between trips to the shops with my wife!?!) and a couple of evenings to achieve the desired result. A new "Fast Road camshaft - RC87" found its way into the engine upon reassembly, which again I try not to hurry. The finished assembly looks very good (well I would say that wouldn't P) in silver and red engine lacquer, together with the odd bit of polished aluminium.

When driving my Rover donor car home, I had some problems with an unreliable hydraulic clutch master cylinder, which tipped the balance as far as I was concerned, in deciding to strip the

gearbox for inspection. Having just put it back together, I'm pleased to report that the box internals appear to be in excellent condition and more importantly, I didn't have any bits left over afterwards!

In the braking department, I've obtained a pair of "2 Pot" front disc callipers from an Austin Princess/Ambassador, which when fitted with a spacer kit can be fitted to the Cortina front uprights together with ventilated discs for better braking. I'll let you know how I get on with them!

As I write this piece, I'm looking around for a suitable Cortina to be my other donor car, although I doubt that I'll find one complete with an interesting number plate like I did last time. I plan to buy a 2 Litre Cortina so that I can have the most suitable rear axle for my V8 version. This means that I will have a 2 Litre engine and gearbox available if anyone wants a spare, or to upgrade from a 1600cc version. Please give me a ring if you're interested.

I'm not quite sure where they got my name and number from but I did receive a phone call and an introductory letter from a new insurance company, "Backford Insurance Services", who are offering a specialist car insurance scheme known as "The Running Board Replica Insurance Scheme to owners of certain types of kit cars, among others. I've given the details to our editor, so hopefully those details will feature somewhere in this edition. Their rates do seem to be very reasonable, and they don't seem to mind what sort of engine (!!!) you've got fitted. I'm not sure whether or not they are "at Lloyds" so you should personally satisfy yourself with regard to their standing in the insurance world.

That's all for now save to wish everyone a good Christmas and a happy Hawke-ing new year.

Insurance - How Low???

As Chris was saying in his piece, he did provide the information he received from Backford Insurance Services and it is reproduced below. From what I can see it looks very interesting. The rates do look very good. Chris tells me they were a little cagey about the exact levels of the premiums being known widely. Chris suggests that these rates are reserved for particular type of vehicle and driver. In other words they do not want the 200-bhp-in-an-orange-box-projectile brigade to ring up and ask for cover as they might be disappointed. Apparently they don't care where you live either. Any way give them a ring, mention the Hawke owners club, and that you've had sight of the details they sent to Chris, and see what rates you can get! But take heed of Chris' advice and make and satisfy yourself that they are OK before parting with dosh! (Ed.)

THE RUNNING BOARD REPLICA CAR SCHEME

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|-----------------------|--|
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Typical premiums, dependant on meeting the qualifying conditions vary with the value and mileage, (and age and driving record 1 should think - Ed.) but below are some examples:

| Value | Mileage | Premium |
|--------|---------|---------|
| £5000 | 1500 | £123.00 |
| £8000 | 3000 | £160.93 |
| £10000 | 5000 | £189.63 |
| £12000 | 7500 | £260.35 |

These premiums are written for agreed value and include Insurance' Premium Tax. Policies can be written on market value but they will attract an additional premium of £30.75. There are a few conditions so why don't you call us and see if you qualify. We think you'll be delighted with our quote

RING 0 151356 8776 AND SPEAK TO RAY, FRANK, (AFTER HOURS RING 01244 548718)

Tony & Maureen Beszant are enjoying The Red V8.

It all started with a friend at the bottom of my garden (his garden backs onto mine) he said he was going to build a kit car I thought well, Good Luck to him, I have seen those home built cars years ago - that was the end of that, until one day Bob the friend at the bottom of my garden said, "There is a Kit CarShow at Chatham this week end fancy having a look".

I went along on the Saturday and could not believe what I saw. We spent all day looking around at stalls with bits and pieces and of course the cars. The Hawke caught my eye. On Sunday I went back there with Maureen, we looked at lots of cars including "The Hawke Stand" and guess what, Maureen liked the Hawk just as much as me, well... almost.

Not having much spare time we decided to buy the demonstrator car 007 V8 this was on the 21st April 1995 since then we have been to Stoneleigh, Donnington, Sandown Park and Castle Coombe, we are also going to Exeter.

I have to say I love driving the Hawke both on short and long journeys, mind you what a summer I picked for 'MY FIRST KIT CAR'

Maureen has just grabbed my pen to say a few words!!!

My experience round the track at Donnington was very exciting to say the least. There were twenty cars on the track at the same time and we were eighteenth. Tony assured me that it was a lot safer on the track than on the road because

we would all be going the same way!! As soon as the Marshall car left the track and one of the cars started to . overtake I new, that was the green light for Tony. So it was change gear, foot down and GO, overtake as many cars as you can.

All was going well until Tony braked hard on one of the bends and the fire extinguisher that was under his seat rolled forward and stuck under the clutch peddle, with one hand on the steering wheel and the other hand fumbling about down by his feet trying to retrieve the extinguisher, we managed to get safely round the bend. When finally found the extinguisher was dumped straight onto my lap.

One more lap to go, I must admit I enjoyed racing round the track at 100+ mph. When we saw the officials at the end of the 5 laps I think we were second car in ... not bad for a beginner I said. When we got out of the car my legs felt like jelly and I was slightly shaking inside. The car went extremely well with no problems, "Tunny" Tony said he was not racing! Ummmm.

Now I have my pen back, I would like to say, have there only been three Hawkes built? Because that's all I have seen at the shows so far?

(I've seen 5 Hawkes in one place at one time Tony! - Ed.)

Hope to meet the rest of you Hawke Owners soon.

Tony & Maureen

Secretary's Report

"Tis the season to be jolly.. Tra la la la la, la la la la!!!! Well maybe not just yet, but it is creeping ever closer.

It seems ages since the summer newsletter, and when I look at the calendar I see it has been! I have been lapse myself and so cannot comment about others, but we do need your contributions to make this newsletter worth while

I personally have very little to report but Garry and Colin have asked me to write a few words on their behalf. As you may be aware by now, those of you who regularly buy the kit car magazines, GCS Cars have ceased trading. This is purely through their own choice, and is as a result of the bad year this year has been for them. They commissioned, and paid for, new moulds, which have unfortunately been delayed several times.

The time that running GCS was taking Garry and Colin was rapidly increasing. This combined with the hassles they were running into has made the project less and less enjoyable for them. As a result of all of these things, they have decided to take some time out to review the situation. Although they have stopped taking orders they do have some spares still in stock and will endeavour to supply customers with any parts they may still need.

I hope that this clarifies the situation for you all.

Meanwhile, I would like to suggest that we start thinking about club events for next year. It would be great if we could put some dates in the diary for "SUMMER '96", so

come on, get your thinking caps on. One idea could be to go down to Beaulieu (I think that's how you spell it) as a club during the summer, what do people think?

I hope to have my kit car on the road next summer, not a Hawke alas, but a Bullit, which is at the stage of having its roof cut off. Garry assures me that more will be done ... soon!! (I wait with baited breath).

Well that's all folks... 'Bye for now... and A Merry Christmas And Happy New Year to you all.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello again, welcome to the latest issue of our Magazine.

Do you believe anything or everything you read in the Press? If you are like me, the archetypal sceptic, you don't, but prefer to hear the facts. Due to whatever reason it has been reported in a kit car magazine that GCS Cars is finished completely - this is not true. They have been badly let down by the sub-contractor who was entrusted to manufacture the body mouldings, they have been let down so badly that they are without any supply of body parts and GCS could not supply kits as advertised.

I am assured "straight from the horses mouth" (sorry lads) that they are taking the winter months to hopefully regroup, sort out the moulds and start up again, so, all is not lost for club members who are still building their kits, GC S will still be able to give advice on any problems you may have. Alternatively, if you cannot get hold of them, try either myself, Chris, or Keith, and we will be only too willing to help in any

way we can.

On a lighter note, my own build is still in progress having fitted the hood, Black Double-Duck, looks the part. Despite comments from my "better half" I am not aiming for the slowest build time on record, but golf and cricket have got in the way this summer which, as she keeps saying, has been one of the best on record for open top motoring. Spring is my deadline (1996!).

If there are any Midlanders who are interested in a meeting around Christmas for a "jar" and a chat, give me a call and we will arrange something. All welcome for a "noggin and natter".

Finally, the usual request for contributions towards the Mag. - don't be shy

May I take this opportunity of wishing all in the Club a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

John Saunders

THE CONTINUING STORY OF CHASSIS NO. 002

BY JOHN SAUNDERS

In the Spring issue of the Magazine I had reached the stage of preparing the donor car's mechanicals awaiting the call from GCS. This came without too long a delay. I opted to collect the kit - this was my mistake as : Cost of Van hire + fuel = charge for delivery by GCS without the hassle. We crammed everything into a Luton Box Van and returned home safely with everything intact.

Having stowed all the bits away in the garage (including suspending the front wings from the roof!) the chassis was laid on axle stands and given the coats of Hammerite. Having already prepared the mechanical assemblies these were then dropped into position with relative ease. The only problem was the chassis had been drilled to accept a 5 speed box which has different fixing positions from the 4 speed box I intended to use. I made up two adaptor plates to suit after advice from GCS, so I quickly had a rolling chassis and more space in my garage!

The bodywork was tackled next - the tub had been aligned onto the chassis and pre-drilled by GCS so this was quickly bolted down using sponge between the tub and the chassis, tightening the bolts down evenly to avoid excessive loading on the tub. Next the front wings were fitted - here the datum off the bulkhead is a little imprecise but there is a fairly generous tolerance in the vertical plane, as long as the dimensions either side are equal it's OK. -The same applies to the rear wings - here it is advisable to keep checking the gaps between the tyre and the leading and trailing edges of the wings to achieve the optimum symmetry. Minor juggling may be necessary here. When the bracing stays were fitted the whole assembly seemed very rigid.

The nose cone fitting is down to personal preference as it can be fitted at a height and angle to suit ones own particular taste, as it determines the rake of the bonnet. It is just a matter of trying varying positions, standing back and seeing which appeals to you.

The next biggest challenge was fitting the bonnet halves. Cutting to size took quite some time for the first half, due to taking it very steady when trimming the excess off and kinking it in the exact position to fit as close to the tub as possible. The other half was cut in a much quicker time due to the experience gained from the first half. The two halves were then riveted to the central hinge.

The windscreen glass was then fitted to its frame. Here I had some fun, breaking two screens in attempting to fit the rubber seals. It would be fine until the last inch when the pressure would be too great and the screen would crack. I was by this time very friendly with the local glass cutter who was extremely interested in my project so he supplied me with some double glazing rubber insert to use on the inside and with Sikaflex on the outside for waterproofing the final solution was very effective AI also used an extra fixing in the bottom of the frame to take up any unevenness in the scuttle.

The doors came next and as always were a bit of a fiddle adjusting them to fit. I secured the hinge bolts with Nyloc nuts for extra safety. As each of the 4 hinges were tailormade I failed to identify each one - this only became apparent when the Paint Shop dismantled everything and we then spent time matching each hinge to each door location.

So now we had something which looked like a car.

..... to be continued