Maserati
The Citroën years 1968-1975

Marc Sonnery
English Piper, £30
ISBN 978 0 7603 4477 4

We had been eagerly awaiting the arrival of this thumb-cracking hardback, not least because it promised to illuminate a period of Maserati history that is largely shrouded in conjecture and misconstructions. And it does a commendable job of deciphering the actual and the apocryphal from one of the least-documented eras of Maserati lore, with input from some key players of the 1968-75 period.

Sonnery sets out his stall by outlining Maserati’s parlous state in the mid-to-late 1960s, and how it came to find some semblance of stability under Citroën’s protective cloak. The union led to such landmark automotive icons as the Citroën SM and Maserati Biturbo Khamsin and Merak, but what really appeals here is the information on the many offshoring, oddities and prototypes. We were particularly intrigued to read about the W8, and how its engine was originally to have powered the short-lived Maserati Quattroporte II. The politics surrounding this Mansur Ghandi-sundried super-saloon make for intriguing reading, as do the reasons put forward for why so few were made.

Bristol was the Tokyo car that never ventured trackside in anger, and the unloving Khamsin Spyder was as outside ‘shop’ that seemed only to grace the car’s factory, both of which are covered in some depth.

The chapter concerning the tie-in between Citroën and Léger is especially interesting, not least because we were hitherto unaware as to just how closely linked both firms were. Certain members of this parish have a soft spot for the Ligier JS2, which featured not least because we were hitherto unaware as to just how closely linked both firms were. Certain members of this parish have a soft spot for the Ligier JS2, which featured

So we’ll forgive the odd slip of the grammar.

Mercedes-Benz SL 192 series
BRADY, TERENCE
ISBN 978 1 85520 618 8

The science behind the speed

It was known as the Princess Diana SL, for obvious reasons, and it seemed fairly believable that the R129 was launched as long ago as 1987 – remember the r129-rollover-in-bar – possibly because it was production in June as recently as 1990. As we may come to appreciate this time more in years to come, as this generation of SL takes its place along the R121 and Pagoda as a classic Merc convert.

This is a truly production history with plentiful PR and brochure shots, but it’s quite simply reproduced and underwhelming in layout. It’s horrifically important, certainly entertaining? Perhaps less so.

Jaguar

ALL THE CARS
DAVID MACMILLAN
ISBN 978 0 85733 349 0

Interserie ‘les big bangers’ 1970-1975

Christian Mathieu, Editeur & Publisher, £25
ISBN 978 2 7603 3007 5

While much has been written about the Interserie ‘Les Big Bangers’ series held in Canada and North America from the mid-1960s, and even though he has been consumed in documenting the European spin-off that was inspired by it, Interserie (no accent for us Brits) began in June 1970 and rapidly attracted all sorts of racers; all sorts of cars; all sorts of events; and in spite of it being mixed in it ‘big bangers’ from the likes of McLaren, Porsche, March and many more. This well-illustrated hardback is a welcome arrival, then, and we have just two reservations: one that it’s only available in French, and the other that the photos tend to be tightly cropped on-track shots, meaning that more atmospheric shots such as the one pictured near-left – which shows Willy Kauhsen at the head of the German service to lap the track in the ‘70s, in a Porsche 917/10 in silhouette, in ane – are all rare.

The Crayford story

AS COACHBUILDERS GO, Crayford may not have achieved legendary status but it was nothing if not prolific. This fact comes across from the get-go in this entertaining hardback written by company co-founder David McMillan. It rips along at quite a pace, outlining the peaks and troughs of a fairly lengthy career once a major player in the British special car industry. And while you may be familiar with the numerous roof-removal conversions offered by this Kent concern, you may be unaware of its other activities. For example, there were V8-engine swaps for Ford Capri, imports of Canadian amphibians and the Italian Lanciacury, via manx-keelies and Merc estates (Sophia Loren had one). Low on gloss but with plentiful PR and brochure shots, but it’s quite cheaply produced with plentiful PR and brochure shots, but it’s quite simply reproduced and underwhelming in layout. It’s horrifically important, certainly entertaining? Perhaps less so.

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Mofat at the mountain

Stephen Stakes, Phase Three Posters, £15
ISBN 978 1 904673 0

THE ‘MOFFAT’ in the title is Steve Moffat, who dominated Touring Car races at Australia’s Mount Circuit, Bathurst, for much of the 1970s while driving Ford Falcons, initially as a works driver for Ford and later guided out of racing at the end of 1977 as a privateer. His team’s 1-2 finish in the 1977 Hardie Ferodo 1000 is regarded as the most sensational in the event’s history. Latterly he switched to Mazda RX-7, to his fans’ dismay, before returning to race Falcons in the late-80s and ’90s. In essence a picture book with captions – and there are lots of photos of hard-charging Falcons – this is a niche title, hence its eye-watering price. One for serious enthusiasts of Australian Touring Cars Only.

Motorcycles Quarterly

Complete book of classic Dodge and Plymouth muscle

Michael Kulkoski
ISBN 978 0 85520 617 1

The last complete by Brackenbury on Bristol appeared in 2001, and plenty has happened to the company since then – not least the takeover by Fraser Nash, and in spite of former owner Tony Crossy’s policy of not allowing the press to test the cars here, you find plenty of professional driving impressions on the Former and older models. Do the usual format of reproduction magazine features, derring-do all the way to the company’s earliest cars but, with 1957 i.e. the last time that last images appear, that one or two, an Bristol enthusiasts probably will probably be better than worthy the outlay. And the rest of the is pretty much the same, too, except for it’s pretty much the same, too, except for its fairly put-down-able.

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