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Walter Röhrl blasts the 1975 Opel Ascona through Daun's forest stages

### EPIC TURNOUT FOR EIFEL FESTIVAL

30,000 rally fans take to the woods to be thrilled by top cars and drivers including Walter Röhrl

**JULY'S EIFEL RALLYE FESTIVAL** in Germany saw a full-capacity field of 130 historic rally cars descend on the forest stages of Daun, south of the Nürburgring, in a celebration of classic sideways action.

Double World Rally Champion Walter Röhrl was there with a 1975 Acropolis Rally-winning Opel Ascona, 1981 San Remo Rally Porsche 911, 1982 Monte Carlo-winning Opel Ascona 400, 1983 New Zealand Rally-winning Lancia 037 and 1986 Audi Sport quattro E2 from which to choose.

Cars from all eras took part, including Group 4 and Group B machines, but there was no actual competition or timing gear. Instead the event, supported by rally photographer and Slowly Sideways founder Reinhard Klein, gave owners a chance to drive their cars fast and thrill the 30,000-strong crowd.

Spectators could vote by text for their favourite cars in 'best looking', 'best sounding' and 'most sideways' categories – won respectively by an ex-works Lancia Stratos, Audi Sport Quattro E2 and Opel Ascona 400.



Darren Moon/Eurig Davies Ford Escort MkII RS heads for a win in Barbados

### ESCORT BEATS CHAMPIONS' 911 IN BARBADOS

BRITISH FORD ESCORT MKII RS pairing Darren Moon and Eurig Davies secured free entry to next year's Barbados Historic Rally Carnival by winning the Barbados Historic Rally on July 23.

Monsoon rains made conditions dangerous, but with the Escort RS of local favourites Greg Cozier and Jamie Marsh out of contention with clutch failure Moon and Davies pressed on through the night, beating the second-placed Jimmy McRae/Ian Grindrod Porsche 911 by 24sec.



## Simon Kidston

*Great car – not so sure about the owner*

**T**HE OFFICE PHONE RINGS late in the evening long after everyone else has left. 'That Enzo you got for sale – has it got luggage?' demands an abrupt voice with an American accent. 'I'm not sure,' I reply. 'Would you like me to find out?'

'So what else does it NOT have?' fires off the mystery caller. 'The car cover? The windshield sticker? Is it Classeechay-certified? And the mileage – was that, like, covered when it was being serviced?' Apparently he doesn't have time to find out because when pressed he hangs up without leaving his name. And the car he's scrutinising? A one-owner Ferrari Enzo. The mileage which concerns him? 116 miles. From new.

Modern supercars: they're gloriously irrelevant, a triumph of optimism over practicality, and the motoring world is a better place for them. Trouble is, some of the people they attract are the kind who tell their girlfriends off for not arranging their underwear in the right order in their wardrobes.

It gets worse when the cars are secondhand. When Marc Sonnery and I interviewed Lamborghini's early Seventies managers for our book on the Miura they revealed that one of the reasons Ferruccio Lamborghini decided to end production of the model wasn't because demand had waned or that he wanted to finish on a high note; instead he was worried his firm's image might be tarnished by the unsavoury characters who were beginning to be seen in older, used Miuras.

You'll know I have a soft spot for the Bugatti Veyron and I'm a firm believer that one day it will be mentioned in the same breath as the McLaren F1. You'll know that day has come when you start to see them more frequently in serious car collections than in Premiership football club car parks.

Today's poster car is without doubt the Ferrari F40. I love its aggression, whether the pugnacious Pininfarina styling or the mule-on-steroids kick in the pants you get from that twin-turbo V8. Well, the F40 is back in the limelight, with the market seemingly on heat, and when one on Modena plates passed me at speed the other day near the Ferrari factory I said to myself: 'I'd love to own one again.' But a little later that thought was followed by 'maybe not quite yet' when I saw a row of them being polished to death by middle-aged men in baseball caps and trainers at an Italian car show.

Perhaps it's simply that the older the car, the more eccentric the owners, and eccentrics tend to be good company. I loved recently finding out how fast a new Bentley Supersports will go (the answer is 'very', but not for long unless you have car-to-car refuelling). But I enjoyed a brisk drive in the English countryside in a friend's Speed Six even more, complete with bumps, jolts, flies in your teeth and negligible oil pressure or brakes.

So is it thumbs down for supercars? Absolutely not – I'm off now to try out the new McLaren whose understated image hopefully won't even figure on the radar of the stereotypical buyer who, to paraphrase a well-known broadcaster, owns a carpet warehouse in Huddersfield.

One final tip: anyone who wants to have a modern Ferrari 'Classiche'-certified can save themselves lots of money by buying the anorak, not the car.

*Simon Kidston lives and works in a world filled with the finest classics. In between acting as a consultant to collectors and performing as the multi-lingual presenter at top European events, Geneva-based Simon (www.kidston.com) finds time to enjoy his own cars, including a Porsche 911 Carrera 2.7 RS and a Lamborghini Miura SV.*